



ALAYA'S LOGIC

Actor Alaya F says she isn't a fully nepo baby as her mom had quit the industry before she was born

LEISURE P2



LAUNCH UNSUCCESSFUL

SpaceX's giant new rocket explodes minutes after blasting off on its first test flight and crashes into the Gulf of Mexico

INTERNATIONAL P10



INDIAN MEN IN FINAL

India enter final of men's recurve team event for the 1st time in 9 years in the Archery WC Stage 1

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

Odia jawan among 5 martyred in J&K

Jammu/New Delhi: Five Army personnel were killed and another seriously injured Thursday after their vehicle caught fire following a terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch, officials said. Among the deceased was Debasish Biswal, a resident of Khandayat Sahi near Sakshigopal in Puri district. He is survived by his wife Sushree Sangita and seven-month-old daughter. Army officials said that the vehicle in which the soldiers were travelling caught fire due to a grenade attack. They added Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has been briefed about the incident by Army chief General Manoj Pande.

P7

President Murmu to visit Odisha May 9

Bhubaneswar: President Droupadi Murmu will visit Odisha May 9 to grace the 12th Convocation of Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University at Baripada in Mayurbhanj district. This has been confirmed by Sampada Mehta, private secretary to the president in a letter addressed to Santosh Kumar Tripathy, the Vice-Chancellor of the university. "The President will be pleased to grace the 12th Convocation of Maharaja Sriram Bhanja Deo University at 1000-1100 hours May 9 at Baripada," the letter stated.

Internet suspension extended in Sambalpur

Sambalpur: The Odisha government Thursday further extended the suspension of internet services in Sambalpur district by another 48 hours as per an order issued by the Home department. It said that net services will remain suspended till 10.00am of April 22. However, the broadband and leased lines will be allowed to operate in the western Odisha district including Sambalpur city from 10.00am to 5.00 pm on Thursday. Many students who depend on online classes meanwhile complained that they were suffering a lot. They said they were being forced to trek to border areas with neighbouring districts including Boudh and Angul to avail of net facilities.

P5

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Legality of same sex marriage doesn't worry me. My concern is customs...like dowry!



ON A LEARNING CURVE: Students of a polytechnic school pose for a selfie at the Odisha Skill Conclave which started Thursday at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar

OP PHOTO

2 girls gangraped in Kalahandi

In the last 3 years, 10,000 cases of rape have been reported in Odisha as per the figures disclosed in the Assembly in March

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, April 20: Two tribal girls were allegedly gangraped in Kalahandi district when they were returning home with a woman after watching an opera performance in a nearby village in the wee hours of Sunday police said Thursday. The incident happened on the night of April 16. The matter however, was reported at the Bijepur police station Wednesday night and subsequently an FIR was lodged.

"The girls were returning home after watching an opera performance when five men waylaid them over a bridge. They forced the two girls and a senior woman accom-



panying them to go to a nearby jungle. However, the woman managed to escape. The girls were then raped by the five men," police said. Before leaving the secluded area, the accused threatened the girls not

to disclose the matter to anyone. The woman who had escaped reached the ground where the opera was being staged. She narrated their ordeal before the villagers. On hearing about the ghastly

incident, villagers reached the spot where the girls had been gangraped. By that time family members of the victims had also started looking for them.

After taking the victims home, family members deliberated on lodging a complaint with the police. They first reached out to the village leaders, who called a meeting where it was decided that the matter would be reported to the police as the accused belonged to a different community. This deliberation led to the delay in filing the complaint, local sources informed.

Police took the girls Thursday to the hospital to conduct medical examination. They have registered two cases in this connection. The girls had

to visit three hospitals as there were no female doctors in the first two they visited. Kalahandi SP Abilash G has assured that the accused will be arrested soon.

An investigation is underway to identify the accused, and they will be caught soon, Bijepur police station's inspector-in-charge Lingaraj Sethy said. He informed that the victims have failed to identify the accused as they were sexually abused in the dark. The five accused also had their faces covered. Sethy said charges under relevant sections of the IPC, POCSO Act, and the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act will be invoked in this case and the accused will be nabbed soon.

LAWYERS CAN'T GO ON STRIKE: SC

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 20: The Supreme Court said Thursday lawyers cannot go on strike or abstain from work and directed all high courts to constitute grievance redressal committees at the state level headed by the chief justice, where advocates could make representations for redressal of 'genuine problems'.

The apex court said that it is appropriate to have some forum where advocates can make representation pertaining to difficulty being faced because of procedural changes in filing/listing of cases or regarding misbehaviour of any member of the lower judiciary.

A bench headed by Justices MR Shah and Ahsanuddin Amanullah said, "We once again reiterate that no member of the bar can go on strike... Time and again this court has emphasised that advocates going on strike or abstaining from their work hampers judicial work."

The Supreme Court bench added, "It is appropriate that their genuine grievances are considered by some forum so that such strikes can be avoided and members of the Bar who might have genuine grievances may ventilate their grievances." The bench also pointed out that the Bar Council cannot approve of strikes and boycotts by lawyers.

Contd...P4

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VIATION
SENSEX	59632.35	↑ 64.55
NIFTY	17624.45	↑ 5.70
DOLLAR	82.05	↑ ₹0.08
EURO	90.06	↓ ₹0.05
GOLD	₹60,450	↑ ₹162
SILVER	₹75,643	↑ ₹171

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 43.2°C	42.0°C
	MIN 26.0°C	26.5°C
Humidity	63%	48%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Light to moderate rain	

No relief for Rahul in 'Modi surname' case

IF THE PLEA FOR STAY ON CONVICTION HAD BEEN ALLOWED, RAHUL COULD HAVE BEEN REINSTATED AS AN MP

AGENCIES

Surat, April 20: A court here rejected Thursday Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's application for a stay on his conviction in a criminal defamation case over his 'Modi surname' remark. The court of Additional Sessions Judge RP Mogera rejected Rahul's plea for stay on conviction which, if allowed, could have paved the way for his reinstatement as an MP. While the BJP hailed the Surat

court's decision as a 'victory' of the judiciary and the people, the Congress said it will continue to avail all options still available under the law.

Rahul's lawyer Kirit Panwala said the Sessions Court's order will be challenged in Gujarat High Court. Rahul's lawyer filed two applications April 3 along with his main appeal against the lower court's order sentencing him to two years in jail, one for bail and another for stay on conviction pending his appeal.



While dismissing Rahul's application, the court said his counsel failed to demonstrate that an 'irreversible and irrevocable damage' is likely to be caused to him if he is de-

nied the opportunity to contest election under section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

A Metropolitan Magistrate Court March 23 sentenced Rahul to two years in jail after convicting him under Sections 499 and 500 of the IPC for criminal defamation in the case filed by BJP MLA Purnesh Modi. A day later, Rahul, who was elected as the Lok Sabha member from Wayanad in Kerala in 2019, was disqualified under provisions of the Representation of the People Act.

P7

Summer vacation of schools starts today



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: In view of prevailing extreme heatwave condition across the state, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced Thursday that summer vacation of all schools up to Class-XII will begin from Friday. Vacation will start in all government and private-run schools, a notification issued by the School and Mass Education department said. It added that the re-opening of schools will be notified after due consultation with the concerned authorities.

Summer vacation was scheduled to begin in the first week of May. However, this year, the government has preponed the vacation in view of the extreme heatwave, officials said. Speaking to mediapersons here, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said, "Summer vacation of schools was supposed to start from May 4. However, in view of the extreme hot conditions, our Chief Minister has preponed the timing and it will start Friday."

As per the academic calendar announced earlier, summer vacation was scheduled from May 4 to June 16 with schools reopening

June 17. "Now that the closing date has changed, the final decision on reopening of schools will be taken after assessing the weather conditions in the coming days," Dash said.

The minister however informed that parent-teacher meeting scheduled to be held Friday will take place as announced. However, the parents have been advised not to bring their kids to the schools. The decision to close schools will certainly be a huge relief to the students. At many places, classes were being conducted despite power cuts and other hindrances.

Contd...P4

Bear breaks open car, guzzles 69 cans of soda

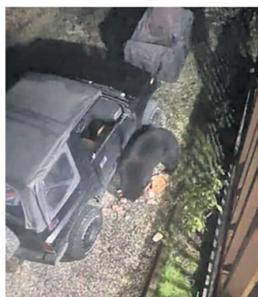
THE OWNER OF THE VEHICLE EVEN APPEALED TO THE ANIMAL TO SPARE THE CAR AS SHE HAS TO GO TO OFFICE

AGENCIES

British Columbia (Canada), April 20: Bears are known to be omnivorous animals. They devour flesh and also feast on berries and seeds. At times, their eating habits surprise many. They can be playful and ferocious too, as many Canadian campers will certify.

However, the recent incident of a bear guzzling soda has attracted huge attention on social media platforms. Not just one or two bottles, the bear drank 69 cans of soda and surprisingly left three for the person who stored the aerated drink.

A Canadian woman on the Sunshine Coast in this province woke up in the wee hours of Thursday listening to the barking



of her pet dog. It prompted Sharon Rosel to check why the dog was barking. What she saw left her completely flummoxed. In the dark of the night, Rosel re-



alised that the door of her car parked outside her house had been broken open. As she squinted her eyes, she realised it was not a human being, but a wild bear who

was searching for food.

CBC News, quoting Sharon said she was awakened by her dog around 3.00am Thursday and looked outside to see a black bear surrounded by shattered glass from her car window. "I saw that the bear was drinking soda from the cans stored inside the car. There were 72 cans of soda inside the car and in the morning, I just saw three left. Maybe the animal thought it was prudent for it to leave some of the cans for me," Rosel told CBC news.

Rosel also stated that from her balcony, she attempted to drive away the bear by spraying it with cold water. When that did not work, she started talking to the bear, imploring the animal to go away. She told CBC News that she made an

effort to reason with the animal, telling it that she needed the car to go to work next morning.

"Then I tried psyching the bear out by telling it I was a bear hunter. That didn't do anything either, so I had to stand by and just watch the animal destroy my car and devour the cans," Rosel said.

Rosel captured images of the bear invasion during the night as well as its aftermath the next morning, when many emptied cans were left next to the car. Once she shared the pictures on social media platforms, those became very popular online.

More than the cans however, Rosel is worried about the car repair expenses. "How do I tell the insurance people that a bear destroyed my car," she said.

leisure



I'M GRATEFUL TO BE ALIVE: MADISON

American singer Madison Beer feels 'grateful' to have survived her two suicide attempts. She told the *Call Her Daddy* podcast: "I did attempt twice and I'm really grateful that I was obviously unsuccessful. But I think people need to understand that it's really serious and not something to joke about."

K-POP STAR MOONBIN FOUND DEAD AT HOME

K-pop star Moonbin of the boy band *ASTRO* was found dead at his home. He was 25 years old. The singer was slated to perform with his fellow *ASTRO* star Sanha, at the 2023 *Moonbin & Sanha Fan Con Tour: Diffusion* in Jakarta May 13.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES

You will exhibit your worth in ample measure today. You will probably chalk out great plans and ideas at work, and this will be very beneficial. But despite this, Ganesh says, if you don't get the deserved recognition, don't lose heart. Learn to take setbacks without getting disappointed.

TAURUS

You will be feeling lively, lazy and out of sorts today, and will tend to ignore and neglect important tasks scheduled for the day. Ganesh urges you to guard against this tendency as you could miss out on opportunities that others could then benefit from. That way, you will surely lose out professionally, particularly if you are in business.

GEMINI

A crucial social event at home is on the anvil, and it will demand most of your attention. Intense business negotiations, which were going on for a long time, will come to a logical conclusion. The results are likely to be stacked in your favour. This, coupled with after-office parties, will ease out the stress.

CANCER

Today, you are likely to achieve something that you have badly wanted for a long time. It is very likely that you will get very emotional in the moment of victory today, predicts Ganesh. Your arrogance and overconfidence can throw you off track. You had better keep your emotional balance once you are through the victory lap.

LEO

Unlike Dennis or Calvin, expect your sometimes haughty and mostly naughty kids to behave 'just right' at the right time. It's not that children like to break rules, they just want to have some fun, reminds Ganesh. Keep this in mind while you go about arranging for special classes to improve their academic skills and performance.

VIRGO

Foreign contacts will in all likelihood be a source of monetary profits. Ganesh says you will perform wonderfully in anything you might choose to undertake today. Even your ambition of setting up an offshore business enterprise will take root today.

LIBRA

Ganesh says that today will be a lucky day for you. You may receive some financial gain. There will be some good news about your children's progress. This is the right time to invest in business. For financial investors and share brokers this period is beneficial, so make the most of it.

SCORPIO

Keep your guards up and be wary today, warns Ganesh. A heat seeker meant for someone else may hit you in mid-flight. But all that watchfulness will save you from embarrassment. Like those old fables, these experiences have a lesson in them, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

Expect yourself to be hit with religious fervour. You may find yourself in the spotlight for an event or inauguration. Ganesh indicates travelling, so pack your bags for a long-distance business trip.

CAPRICORN

Numerous projects and building work pressure can keep you busy, but get done with whatever you have on hand, for Ganesh says the day has a host of recreational activities lined up for you. This will also be the right time to reach out to more people, and devour whatever knowledge or information they have to offer. Moreover, you will experience complete personal freedom and will communicate freely with those around you.

AQUARIUS

Optimism rules today, and you are assured of your success. You are not usually affected by others' opinions, and that is how it should be. But you must keep in mind the inconvenience your decisions may cause people.

PISCES

Confusion and uncertainty will linger like dark clouds in today's sky which will rain on your decision making parade and make it hard for you to find tangible solutions to problems. Steer clear of controversy and try to delay any important decisions and stick to your daily routine, advises Ganesh.

IRRFAN'S FANGIRL

Anuska Kaushik shares her surreal experience

Mumbai: Actress Anushka Kaushik, who was seen in *Ghar Waapas* and *Thar*, recently spoke about working in Tigmanshu Dhulia's *Garmi* in an interview. She remembered staying in the same hotel where late actor Irrfan Khan had stayed.

Anushka said, "When I got to know about *Garmi*, I didn't know that it was going to be along the lines of Tigmanshu sir's critically acclaimed film *Haasil*. When I got to know that I was staying in the same hotel where the late legendary actor Irrfan Khan had stayed during the shooting of *Haasil*, I got really excited, and out of joy, I told myself that I would sleep on almost every bed because Irrfan sir had been here!"

"Though my dream of sharing screen space with him is unfulfilled, the fact that we shot *Garmi* in the same locations where Irrfan sir had shot *Haasil* like the same corridor at Allahabad University was quite surreal. The visuals were so vivid that I felt Irrfan sir's presence over there. We were fortunate enough to be a part of

Garmi," added Anushka. Anushka also features in Arbaaz Khan's *Patna Shukla* alongside actors like Raveena Tandon and the late Satish Kaushik.



Tinsel Town mourns Pamela Chopra's demise

Mumbai: Singer-songwriter-producer Pamela Chopra, wife of filmmaker Yash Chopra, passed away Thursday at the age of 74 after battling a prolonged illness. She was last seen in *The Romantics*, in which she recollects the journey of her husband, Yash Chopra and how the production transformed into a film conglomerate over the years. The documentary focused on the contributions made by Pamela to the studio and how she was the spine of YRF.

Several film personalities from the industry took to social media and expressed their condolences:

Ajay Devgn: My thoughts & prayers are with Chopra family in their hour of grief. RIP respected Pam Chopra Ji Om shanti

Sanjay Dutt: My heart is heavy with the news of Pamela aunty's passing. Her impact on the industry and the lives she touched will always be remembered.

Anushka Sharma: Rip Pam Aunty.

Anupam Kher: Goodbye Pam Chopra! You and Yash ji were an unbreakable and important part of my years in Mumbai!

Suniel Shetty: Sincere condolences to the entire Chopra Family at this hour of bereavement. Rest in Peace Pamela Chopra Ji.

Jackie Shroff: RIP #PamelaChopra ji

Madhuri Dixit: I will always remember Pam Aunty as an extremely elegant lady with a great sense of humor.

Among the industry notables to visit the Chopra house were Shah Rukh Khan, who arrived with son Aryan Khan, Aamir Khan, Shabana Azmi, John Abraham, Boman Irani, Vicky Kaushal and Katrina Kaif.



'I don't count myself as a fully nepo baby'



Mumbai: Actress Alaya F made her acting debut with the 2020 film *Jawaani Jaaneman*. The actress, who is the daughter of Pooja Bedi, a former Hindi film actress and Farhan Furniturewala, claimed in a recent interview that while she did come from privilege, she does not count herself as a 'fully nepo baby'.

Alaya told one of the news channels, "I don't count myself as a fully nepo baby, because you need to understand there are different levels to that. My mother was done with the industry; she had quit acting before I was born. I have not grown up among industry parties; that's not been my life. So sometimes it does get frustrating because there are levels of nepotism."

She further added, "At the end of the day, I do come from privilege and that's half of someone else's journey. It does get me into rooms, but it doesn't really guarantee me movies. But reaching there is the hardest part. You may agree or disagree that I am a nepo baby, but it's unfair to base everything I do on where I come from. I have tried so hard to do much more and continuously do good work."

Parineeti, Raghav get engaged

Mumbai: Ishaqzaade actress Parineeti Chopra had earlier sparked dating rumours with Aam Aadmi Party leader Raghav Chadha with her outings. However, their wedding already seems to be on the cards as the couple took the first step towards union.

Recently, Parineeti was seen wearing a silver band on her ring finger. As per media reports, Parineeti and Raghav got engaged in a traditional roka ceremony in the presence of close family members. The two will reportedly get married by the end of October this year.

Parineeti is not in a rush to get married as she is quite occupied with her professional commitments, the reports stated. Interestingly, Parineeti's cousin Priyanka Chopra Jonas, who will be soon seen in the streaming series *Citadel*, will be in India during the last week of October to attend the 23rd edition of the Jio Mami Film Festival.

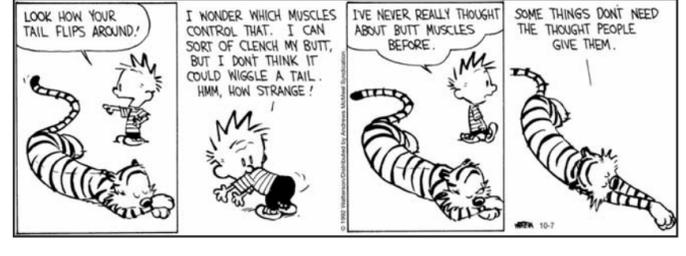
Meanwhile, on the work front, Parineeti will be seen sharing the screen with Diljit Dosanjh in the Imtiaz Ali directorial *Chamkila*. The film is said to be inspired by Punjabi singer Amar Singh Chamkila.



PEANUTS



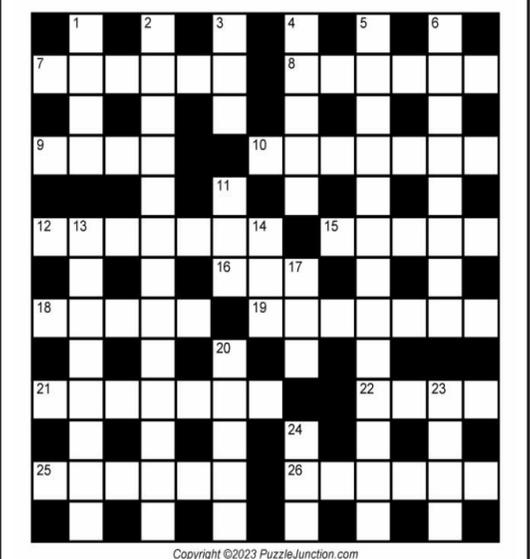
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 French brandy
 - 8 Immediately
 - 9 A mixture
 - 10 Silverback
 - 12 Strong air current
 - 15 Itinerary
 - 16 Clumsy sort
 - 18 Coffee grounds
 - 19 Type of dinner
 - 21 Case in point
 - 22 Wacky and wild
 - 25 Beloved of Aphrodite
 - 26 Bone filler
- Down**
- 1 Child's toy
 - 2 Support and approval
 - 3 Rink surface
 - 4 Soup utensil
 - 5 Large tropical reptile (7,6)
 - 6 Vigorously active
 - 11 Tabloid topic
 - 13 Some blondes
 - 14 Spigot
 - 17 Watch chain
 - 20 It might hold 7 Across
 - 23 Secluded place
 - 24 Mischief-maker

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.

9								4
	8	4				3		
7			1			8	9	
					9			1 4
2			3			6		
	1		2			6	9	5
					5			
3	9			8				
		7	3					

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

T	P	R	C	O	S
A	R	R	I	V	E
U	G	D	E	A	M
D	E	A	L	T	E
E	A	T	O	R	
E	P	I	T	A	P
R	E	P	A	R	
T	I	M	O	R	
O	S	B	E	D	
P	R	E	A	R	
S	T	R	E	A	
Y	E	A	K	E	

SUDOKU

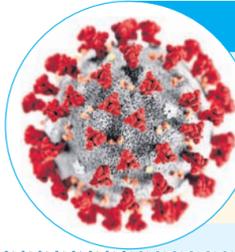
2	1	7	3	8	6	5	9	4
6	5	9	2	4	7	8	3	1
8	3	4	9	5	1	7	6	2
7	8	5	4	3	2	9	1	6
4	6	1	7	9	8	2	5	3
3	9	2	6	1	5	4	7	8
5	2	3	1	7	4	6	8	9
1	4	8	5	6	9	3	2	7
9	7	6	8	2	3	1	4	5

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



BUDDING ARTISTES

Students of BJEM School performed during the Annual Prize Giving Ceremony held on the school premises in Bhubaneswar, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,60,46,439	65,86,73,798	68,45,364
India	4,48,57,992	4,42,61,476	5,31,230
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

ODISHA SKILL CONCLAVE 2023

1L youths to be trained in future technologies

BRAND 'SKILLED IN ODISHA' IS READY TO SHINE ACROSS THE GLOBE, SAYS CHIEF MINISTER NAVEEN PATNAIK



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik along with other dignitaries during the inauguration of Odisha Skill Conclave 2023 at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: The brand 'Skilled in Odisha' is ready to shine across the globe, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said while inaugurating the Odisha Skill Conclave 2023 at Kalinga Stadium here, Thursday.

Patnaik called for enhanced cooperation between the Centre and states in new-age tech skilling in the country. "Odisha has made a budgetary provision of ₹100 crore for this year for the new scheme 'Nua Odisha' to train 1 lakh youths in future technologies like cloud computing, artificial intelligence, data sciences and other futuristic knowledge," said Patnaik.

"We need collective, collaborative effort between the Union ministries, state government departments, industry, academia and civil society to develop policies and programmes to promote skill development, and also ensure those skills are recognised and valued in the job market," he added.

The Chief Minister said that Odisha is devoted to this cause and has launched initiatives such as Mission Shakti for transforming the lives of 70 lakh women and supporting them become entrepreneurs.

"The country is going through significant transformation, rapid technological advancements and changing job markets have made it

imperative for us to invest in our human capital and equip our younger generation with the skill they need to succeed in the 21st century," said Patnaik.

Minister of State (Independent Charge), Skill Development & Technical Education (SD&TE) Pritiranjana Gharai said, "The state government has always been keen to partner with industries with modern and future technologies and make them affirmative in the process. Odisha has made great strides in the skill sector because of various prudent and proactive interventions by the government."

State government's Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) chairman Subroto Bagchi said, "Today's event is a testimony to the Chief Minister's vision of making Odisha a sandbox of innovation and building a reputation of the state's capital to become a global benchmark with transformational technology, literature, culture, sports events and medication as well as skilling."

Chief Secretary & Chief Development Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena said, "Skilling has been the buzzword of our times. We have seen a rapid change in technological landscape owing to development in robotics and artificial intelligence. This mega Skill Conclave will be a great platform for deliberation, convergence and collaboration among policy makers, industry leaders,

academicians and students."

In her welcome address, principal secretary to SD&TE department Usha Padhee said, "In Odisha, skilling is not just training, but a mission to transform lives. This event intends to bring all the stakeholders of skilling ecosystem under one roof for churning out ideas and giving a direction to the skilling community."

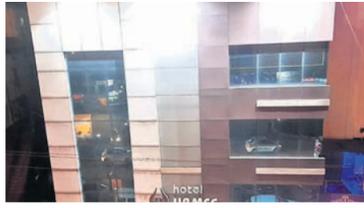
In his special address, Federation of Indian Chambers of

Commerce and Industry (FICCI) president Subhrakant Panda, said, "Theme skilling for the new world is appropriate because in the current scenario, it is important to impart skill sets which enhance employability, keeping in mind that the new age skills are important. Traditional skills are equally crucial to invest in people to enjoy demographic dividend."

SOA students' startup

Students of the Institute of Technical Education and Research (ITER), faculty of engineering and technology of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) put on show four innovative startup ideas on the inaugural day of Skill Odisha Conclave 2023. The students used advanced algorithm and hardware equipment to develop a system that can generate alerts to notify the concerned parties on occasions of accidental electrical fires, mainly in commercial and industrial organisations.

Bombs hurled at hotel in City



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: Unknown bike-borne miscreants hurled two bombs at Hotel Urmee near Rasulgurh Square here Thursday evening. One of the bombs went off damaging the hotel premises while another bomb didn't explode.

Locals claimed that the miscreants halted on the flyover in front of the hotel building and threw bombs. The explosion caused small holes in the glasses of the balcony on the first floor.

On being informed, Mancheswar police started a probe after registering a case on the basis of a complaint lodged by the manager of the hotel. Assistant Commissioner of Police, Sanjeev Satpathy, along with other staffers of the police station reached the spot for enquiry.

Sources claimed that some disputes involving the accused at the dance bar of the hotel might be reason behind the attack.

BJD, BJP star campaigner lists out

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: The ruling BJD and Opposition BJP Thursday announced their star campaigners' lists for the byelection to Jharsuguda Assembly seat which is scheduled for May 10.

Both the parties have submitted their 40-member campaigners' lists to the office of Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Odisha.

BJD supremo and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik topped the list while BJD General Secretary (organisation) Pranab Prakash Das has been placed at the second position. Senior BJD leaders and party's observer for the bypoll, Prasanna Acharya, Debi Prasad Mishra and Sharada Prasad Nayak have also been named in the list.

Similarly, ministers Niranjan Pujari, Ashok Chandra Panda, Pratap Keshari Deb, Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak, Tukuni Sahu and Rita Sahu have found place in the list.

The list also includes former ministers Susanta Singh, Arun Kumar Sahoo, Pratap Jena,



JHARSUGUDA BYELECTION

Snehangini Chhuria, Puspendra Singh Deo, Chandra Sarathi Behera and Dibya Sankar Mishra.

Several senior and young MLAs including Prasanta Muduli, Alaka Mohanty, Pranab Balabantray, Byomakesh Ray, Bikram Panda, Debesh Acharya, Prasanta Behera, Devi Ranjan Tripathy, Souvic Biswal and Rudra Pratap Moharathy have also been made star campaigners for the bypoll.

Odia film star Arindam Roy and BJD spokesperson Srimayee Sweta Snigdha Mishra will also campaign for party candidate Dipali Das in the election.

Similarly, BJP has named its state unit president Manmohan Samal, Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, Ashwini Vaishnav & Bisheswar Tudu,

Leader of Opposition Jayanarayan Mishra and vice-president Baijayanta Panda as its star campaigners.

Party MPs Pratap Sarangi, Suresh Pujari, Basanta Panda Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo, Jial Oram, Aparajita Sarangi and Nitesh Gangdev have been named as star campaigners.

Other BJP star campaigners like state in-charge Sunil Bansal, D Purandeswari, Vijaypal Singh Tomar, Samir Mohanty, KV Singh Deo, BJP chief whip Mohan Majhi, MLAs Kusum Tete, Bhabani Shankar Bhoi, Suraj Suryabanshi Sthitaprajna, Mukesh Mahaling, Shankar Oram, Nityananda Gond and Subash Panigrahi will also campaign for BJP nominee Tankadhar Tripathy.

Earlier, Congress had announced its star campaigners list. Now, the Jharsuguda is waiting for a high-voltage campaign by all the three principal parties in Odisha.

Notably, the bypoll is necessitated due to the murder of sitting MLA Naba Kishore Das January 29 this year. The bypoll will be held May 10 while the result will be declared May 13.

EOW nabs 2 from Soro in ₹4-crore fraud case

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: The Economic Offence Wing (EOW) of state Crime Branch Thursday arrested two persons from Soro area of Balasore district for allegedly duping several investors of ₹4 crore on the pretext of online trading. The accused were identified as Ripan Kumar Jena and Anupam Pradhan of Uttareswara under Soro police station.

Both Ripan and Anupam were arrested in connection with a case registered on the basis of a complaint lodged by Jitendra Kumar Das of Fakir Mohan Nagar in Balasore. Ripan, an MBA degree holder, is the managing director of Omm Agency and GRSS Greentech Pvt Limited.

"He (Ripan) along with co-accused Anupam, a post-graduate in Hindi, and others were into illegal collection of deposits from general public under the allurements of investing the same online in FOREX Trading, buying shares and investment in crypto, promising lucrative monthly returns of 8 per cent mutual profit on the invested amount," claimed EOW sources.

Jitendra alleged that the accused used to issue money receipts to the depositors, execute agreements and issue post-dated cheques of the company to win the faith of the victims.

They had reportedly transferred the return amount promised to the investors for initial few months but later stopped it and absconded by closing down the office.

Parent-teacher meetings today



In order to help the students in holiday homework, a district-level help desk-cum-call centre will be opened which will be operated by the teachers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: Although the state government Thursday declared early summer vacation for all the schools from April 21 due to sweltering heatwave, parent-teacher meetings (PTMs) will be conducted in all government and government-aided elementary and higher secondary schools (Class I to XII students) from 6:30am to 10:30am April 21. However, the parents were advised not to bring their children to the meetings.

As the government declared holiday early due to the extreme hot weather, the schools will provide holiday homework to parents which the children will do during the vacation, said a release issued by the government.

In order to help to the students in the homework, a district-level help desk-cum-call centre will be opened which will be operated by the teachers. The students can get answers to their questions from this help desk-cum-call centre. The move is aimed at strengthening academic monitoring through parental participation.

This apart, in the PTMs parents will be made aware of the academic programmes taken up by the schools to improve the performance of students.

Agenda for the PTM includes career counselling, awareness on scholarships, revamping of vocational education and most importantly, ragging free campuses.

The S&ME department had earlier decided to conduct four PTMs every year.




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For more details, please refer to the Notification No. 81 to 85/2020-Central Tax & Circular No. 143/13/2020-GST all dated 10.11.2020

Last date to opt for QRMP Scheme from Q1 of F.Y. 2023-24 is 30th April, 2023

Eligible registered person can opt in for any quarter from first day of second month of preceding quarter to the last day of the first month of the quarter

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Unicef commends state's immunisation coverage



90.5 PER CENT OF CHILDREN IN THE STATE ARE FULLY IMMUNISED, WHICH IS SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 76.4 PER CENT

20 OUT OF THE STATE'S 30 DISTRICTS HAVE ACHIEVED MORE THAN 90 PER CENT OF FULL IMMUNISATION COVERAGE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: Unicef India, in its global flagship report 'The State of the World's Children 2023: For Every Child, Vaccination' published Thursday, highlighted that Odisha has set exemplary standards in providing immunisation coverage to children. The state features among the top states of the country in this regard.

90.5 per cent of children in Odisha are fully immunised, which is significantly higher than the national average of 76.4 per cent as per National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 5.

This has been possible due to

unique initiatives by the state government to immunise children in hard-to-reach areas and encouraging the participation of community through Panchayati Raj institutions and self-help groups, especially in low-coverage areas. As a result 20 out of the state's 30 districts have achieved more than 90 per cent of full immunisation coverage.

Despite the significant challenges posed by the state's hilly terrain and forest cover, especially in the 144 tribal blocks and 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) residing in areas with non-navigational roads and seasonally cut-off villages, Odisha

has been successful in achieving such high rates of immunisation.

The state has manufactured special immunisation campaigns involving frontline workers traveling to remote pockets and reaching out to families for immunising their children.

The state government has duly investment in setting up an efficient cold chain system, ensuring that the potency and effectiveness of vaccines is maintained throughout the state, which the report reckons as an important step in providing quality immunisation coverage.

The report published by UNICEF based on new data collected by The Vaccine Confidence Project (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) reveals that popular perception of the importance of vaccines for children has remained firm or improved only in China, India and Mexico out of the 55 countries studied.

"The State of the World's Children 2023 report highlights India as one of the countries with the highest vaccine confidence in the world. This is a recognition of the Government of India's political and social commitment and demonstrates that the largest vaccine drive during the pandemic has paid off in building confidence and strengthening systems for routine immunisation to vaccinate every child," said UNICEF India Representative Cynthia McCaffrey.



RAZING DOWN: An excavator engaged by BDA pulling down an illegally constructed house at Baramunda in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

OP PHOTO

'Future of Work' exhibition in Capital April 23-28

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: The Skill Development & Entrepreneurship ministry along with the ministry of Education is organising an exhibition with the theme of 'Future of Work' from April 23 to 28, on the sidelines of the 3rd Education Working Group meeting under the G20 presidency, here at the CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (IMMT).

The exhibition will be inaugurated by Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and will provide a platform for technology leaders, influencers, and academics to brainstorm the evolving nature of work.



"The exhibition will feature participants from diverse sectors displaying technologies that will drive the future of work, like innovations in the modern workplace, inclusion of technology in traditional crafts, future skills, and innovative delivery models," in-

formed an official involved in the arrangements.

The exhibition will be accessible only to the G20 delegates April 26.

At the exhibition, more than 100 participants from India and G20 member countries will demonstrate their products, publications, artefacts, and other promotional materials to the attendees visiting. These exhibitors will include organizations offering new-age products/technology companies in traditional crafts sectors adopting technology, institutions providing future skills and education, and think tanks.

Along with the G20 delegates, representatives of various ministries and organizations, skill universities, along with key stakeholders in the

skill ecosystem and industry experts will be in attendance.

The visitors will get to be part of the following: future of work exhibition focusing on 3 sectors, agriculture, mobility & healthcare, and future of skills using immersive technology, interactive walls, holographic displays, Metaverse-AR/VR based solutions and experiences, reverse engineering and automated design solutions, drone technology, and ed-tech solutions leveraging AR/VR.

A unique 'Future of Work Experience Zone' is being setup to show the youth how the future of work will evolve by giving them a preview of the required advanced technical skills and softer transferrable skills to remain market relevant.

Summer vacation...

Continued from P1

Earlier, the state government had closed schools twice, first from April 12 to 16 and April then on April 19 and 20 in view of the heatwave.

According to a morning bulletin of India Meteorological Department (IMD) Jharsuguda town in western Odisha recorded a maximum temperature of 41.4 degrees Celsius till 11:30am, Thursday. Capital city Bhubaneswar sizzled with a maximum temperature of 43.2 degrees Celsius.

Lawyers can't...

Continued from P1

The court disposed of an application filed by District Bar Association of Dehradun seeking an appropriate forum for redressal of their complaints. It directed the registry to send the copy of this order to the registrar general of all high courts for taking steps in accordance with the order.

Justice Shah, who pronounced the order, also suggested how the panel can be formed. "The grievance redressal committee in the respective high courts may be headed by the chief justice and such a grievance redressal committee should consist of two other senior judges - one each from the judicial services and one from the bar - to be nominated by the chief justice as well as the advocate general of the state, chairman of the bar council of the state and the president of the high court bar association," he said.

The bench added that the high courts may also constitute a similar grievance redressal committee at the district court level.



LITERARY TRIBUTE: Odia Language Literature & Culture Minister Aswini Kumar Patra lighting the lamp to inaugurate the 32nd Gopinath Mohanty Memorial Lecture at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

OP PHOTO

CIVIL SERVICES DAY Bureaucrats to recommit to service

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: The Gopabandhu Academy of Administration, for the first time in state, is organising a state level event April 21 to celebrate the Civil Services Day, 2023.

Chief Minister Naveen Pattnaik will inaugurate the event at the Loka Seva Bhawan Convention Hall at 04:30pm and will address the gathering of civil servants.

The Civil Services Day is celebrated for the civil servants to

recommit themselves to public service and excellence in work. April 21 of each year is earmarked for this commemoration as the first Home Minister of independent India Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the young probationers of Indian Administrative Services this day in 1947 at Metcalfe House, Delhi, advising them to absorb the real 'spirit of service'.

In Odisha, with the '5T' model, the governance framework has undergone a tectonic shift, with other administrative reforms being im-

plemented to bridge the gap between the government and the citizens.

At the event, Amarjeet Sinha, currently posted as a member of Public Enterprises Selection Board, will deliver a talk on "Preparing the Civil Services for Transformative Governance" as the chief speaker. He was earlier the advisor to the Prime Minister, and has the distinction of having travelled over 90 per cent of India's districts to promote human development initiatives.

Lady's body found in Garib Rath toilet

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: The body of a 30-year-old lady was recovered Thursday from one toilet of Dhanbad-Bhubaneswar Garib Rath under mysterious circumstances. The police are yet to identify the deceased. However it is suspected that someone might have killed the lady.

Though the train reached Bhubaneswar railway station Thursday morning, the railway cleaning staff spotted the body while checking the coaches in the afternoon.

After being informed, Government Railway Police (GRP) officials along with a scientific team reached the spot to initiate an enquiry. The body was later sent to Capital hospital for post mortem which is scheduled Friday.

"We received information regarding the recovery of a body in the toilet of the coach at around 3pm. There are no serious injury marks. A minor injury mark and blood were spotted on her nose. We will collect details of passengers travelling in the particular coach. We are waiting for the post mortem report to know the exact cause of death. We have started investigation by registering an unnatural death case (28/23) in this matter," told Jaydev Biswajit, IIC of GRP police station, Bhubaneswar.

Food fest at CUO to promote millet



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: Under the G 20 Jan Bhagidari programme, the Central University of Odisha (CUO) celebrated Thursday a traditional food festival to promote millet and local cuisine.

The festival was inaugurated by university vice chancellor Chakradhar Tripathi and Debabrata Panda of department of biodiversity & conservation of natural resources coordinated the programme. Pradosh Kumar Rath of the department of journalism & mass communication was the designated nodal officer for this programme.

As part of this food festival, several millet dishes were prepared and exhibited by the university students, which were later

served to guests and faculty members.

These dishes included Kudo millet mango rice, ragi halwa, ragi cake, ragi poda pitha, ragi kakara, ragi cookies, little millet muduku, ragi muduku, ragi mixture, ragi laddu, pearl millet laddu, yam cookies, yam namkin, sprouted millet powder (chatua), and ragi soup, which contains high levels of fibre content.

Notably, the UN has declared 2023 as the International Year of Millet. India is on the way to become the global hub of millet production with more than 80 per cent of Asia's share of millet production. The central government has declared to celebrate this year as a Jan Andolan so that Indian millet recipes and value added products are accepted globally.

Mind-body connection is built into human brain

A new study has provided evidence representing literal linkage of body and mind in the very structure of the brain.

The study, which showed parts of the brain area controlling movement being plugged into networks involved in cognition, could help explain confounding behaviours such as resorting to pacing when feeling anxious and why people who exercise regularly report a more positive outlook on life.

These parts of the brain area were also found to control involuntary bodily functions such as blood pressure and heartbeat.

The study by researchers at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, US, is published in the journal Nature.

"People who meditate say that by

calming your body with, say, breathing exercises, you also calm your mind," said first author Evan M Gordon, an assistant professor of radiology at the School of Medicine's Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology.

These practices, while having been found useful such as in people with anxiety, have not been scientifically proved. "But now we've found a connection. We've found the place where the highly active, goal-oriented 'go, go, go' part of your mind connects to the parts of the brain that control breathing and heart rate. If you calm one down, it absolutely should have feedback effects on the other."

Gordon and senior author Nico Dosenbach, an associate professor



of neurology, had set out to verify the long-established map of the areas of the brain that control movement, using modern brain-imaging techniques by replicating Penfield's work with functional

magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI).

A staple of neuroscience textbooks, Penfield's map of the motor regions of the brain were depicted as a homunculus, Latin for "little

man". In the 1930s, neurosurgeon Wilder Penfield, MD, mapped such motor areas of the brain by applying small jolts of electricity to the exposed brains of people undergoing brain surgery, and noting their responses.

The research team built a high-density dataset by recruiting seven healthy adults to undergo hours of fMRI brain scanning while resting or performing tasks. They then built individualized brain maps for each participant.

Then, they validated their results using three large, publicly available fMRI datasets - the Human Connectome Project, the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development Study and the UK Biobank - which together contained brain scans from about 50,000 people. PTI

Muralidhar's transfer proposal recalled

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Collegium Wednesday recalled its earlier recommendation to transfer Orissa High Court Chief Justice Justice S Muralidhar to Madras High Court. The Collegium said that the recommendation to transfer Justice Muralidhar to Madras High Court was made in September 2022 but it remained pending with the Union government since then. Justice Muralidhar now has less than four months to demit office, the Collegium noted. "The Collegium resolved 28 September 2022 to transfer Dr Justice S Muralidhar, Chief Justice of the High Court of Orissa, to the Madras High Court. The recommendation has remained pending with the Government of India since then without any response. Dr Justice Muralidhar now demits office 7 August 2023 leaving less than 4 months' time," the resolution noted.

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Fresh Andhra ploy to rob Odisha's water

Reddy lays foundation stone for Mahendratanaya, Vamshadhara projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, April 20: Odisha and Andhra Pradesh had moved the Supreme Court after the neighbouring state tried to construct dams on Mahendratanaya and Vamshadhara rivers in Gajapati district.

However, the neighbouring state got a boost after the apex court ruled in its favour. Now, buoyed by the Supreme Court ruling, Andhra Pradesh has gone a step ahead and conducted 'Bhoomi Puja', breaking ground for the construction of dams on the two rivers, Wednesday.

The bitterness between Odisha and Andhra over sharing the water of Mahendratanaya and Vamshadhara rivers has reached flashpoint with the Andhra government going ahead with its irrigation project.

The matter came to light after Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy performed the ground breaking rituals and laid the foundation stone for the twin projects at Melliaputti in Srikakulam district, Wednesday.

As per reports, a reservoir and sluice dam will be built for an offshore irrigation project on Mahendratanaya and a reservoir on Vamshadhara at Heeramandalam. Both the projects will be constructed at an expense of ₹476.35 crore.

The reservoir at Heeramandalam will draw water from the Katraguda project on Vamshadhara river. The Mahendratanaya project will be constructed at an estimated cost of



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy performed the ground breaking rituals and laid the foundation stone for two river projects at Melliaputti in Srikakulam district, Wednesday

A reservoir and sluice dam will be built for an offshore irrigation project on Mahendratanaya and a reservoir on Vamshadhara at Heeramandalam

The twin projects, when completed and functional, are set to result in drinking water scarcity and affect agricultural activities adversely in Gajapati district

₹300 crore and the Vamshadhara project at ₹176.35 crore.

The twin projects, when completed and functional, are set to result in drinking water scarcity and affect agricultural activities ad-

versely in Gajapati district. It is alleged that the neighbouring state is leaving no stone unturned to rob Odisha's share of the river water. However, the state government here has failed to take any exemplary step to stop the bids of Andhra Pradesh.

In past, construction of an offshore irrigation project on Mahendratanaya by Andhra was opposed strongly by Gajapati district residents. Later, the state government decided to construct two upstream projects on the Mahendratanaya at Dambapur and Champapur in Rayagad block in 2007. Meanwhile, construction works on the upstream projects have been completed but the canal works are yet to start.

The two projects when completed will help provide irrigation and drinking water facilities to people of Rayagad and Gosani blocks. This could also prove to be a fitting reply to Andhra's highhandedness.

AP govt snaps power supply to Kotia school

Pottangi: The Andhra Pradesh government allegedly snapping power supply to Neredibalsa Ashram School in Neredibalsa village under Kotia panchayat in Koraput district has kicked off a fresh row between the two neighbouring states.

The school established by the state government in 2021 is a residential school having a 100-bed hostel for the students of Classes I-IV. The school was running on solar power but technical snags often render it useless. Taking advantage of the situation, the neighbouring state lured the school authorities to take power supply from their state.

The school took a power connection in the name of school managing committee president Ramachandra following which the AP discom started serving power bills in his name. However,

the neighbouring state snapped the power supply to the school after the school authorities failed to pay bills for the last six months.

As a result, around 60 students of the school are now forced to study reeling under the extreme heat wave conditions following the power cut, reports said. The power cut amid the heat wave has become a matter of serious concern for the students and their guardians.

Students alleged that after snapping of power supply amid the scorching heat, living in the hostel has become unbearable. "We cannot even sleep at night due to the heat. Fans are not working properly either," a student complained.

Notably, Andhra and Odisha have been locked in a bitter battle over territorial control of several bordering villages under Kotia gram panchayat.



However, lackadaisical attitude of the state government has emboldened the Andhra government to implement such projects, one after another.

Locals demanded that the state government should take immediate steps to safeguard the interest of people in Gajapati district.

SAMBALPUR VIOLENCE

Internet suspension extended till Apr 22



Sambalpur Collector Ananya Das and SP B Gangadhar held meetings with elderly persons of different colonies seeking their assistance to bring back complete normalcy

PNN & AGENCIES

Sambalpur, April 20: The state government Thursday extended the suspension of internet services in Sambalpur district by another 48 hours.

A fresh order issued by the state Home department said internet services will remain suspended till 10am, April 22. However, the broadband and leased lines will be operational in the western Odisha district including Sambalpur city from 10am to 5pm from Thursday.

The administration suspended internet services across the district following a violent clash between two communities in Sambalpur city April 12 during a bike rally and Hanuman Jayanti celebration, April 14.

Internet service has been suspended in the district for more than a week now in order to stop

the spread of rumours.

Many people including 10 cops were injured in the two back-to-back clashes in the city. One tribal youth was allegedly killed during the clash. However, police claim the murder of the tribal youth was not linked to the violence.

Meanwhile, reports of two makeshift shops being burnt down in the city were being verified by the police.

Sambalpur District Collector Ananya Das and SP B Gangadhar have started holding separate meetings of elderly persons of different colonies and seeking their assistance to resolve the issue in order to bring back complete normalcy in Sambalpur city.

Following the clashes, the administration imposed curfew in Sambalpur from the midnight of April 14 and it is in force till now. However, the day curfew has been lifted since Wednesday.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



2 sentenced to 10 years RI for drug peddling

PNN & AGENCIES

Balasure, April 20: The court of Second Additional District & Sessions Judge/OPID cum Special Judge, Balasure has convicted two persons for their involvement in drug peddling.

The court found Sk Jamir alias Chhotu and Prabhat Kumar Sethy of Sahadevkhunta police station limits in Balasure district guilty under section 21c/29 NDPS Act, 1985 and sentenced them to undergo rigorous imprisonment (RI) for 10 years and a fine of ₹1,00,000 each.

In default of the fine amount, the two convicts would undergo further RI of one year for the offences, the court ordered.

The case relates to seizure of 1 kg 130 gram contraband brown sugar from the possession of the accused persons November 5, 2020.

Vig nabs engineer over bribery

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, April 20: An assistant executive engineer of NH Division, Jharsuguda was arrested by the state Vigilance department after she was caught in the trap laid by the Vigilance sleuths, Thursday while demanding and accepting a bribe of ₹27,000 from the complainant contractor.

The official identified as Sanjukta Singha allegedly demanded the amount as bribe for releasing payment towards the final bill related to works executed by the contractor.

As per reports, the Vigilance laid a trap April 20 based on the contractor's complaint where in the accused Sanjukta Singha, AEE was caught red-handed by the sleuths at her office.

The entire bribe amount was recovered from her possession in the presence of witnesses. Both her hands gave positive chemical reaction confirming acceptance and handling of bribe money by her. Following the trap, simultaneous

searches for disproportionate assets were launched on her residential government quarter at Jharsuguda, her house at native village Korihanda under Bhograi PS limits and her office room at Jharsuguda.

In connection with the case, a case had been registered 19 April at Rourkela Vigilance PS.

Singha was recruited as assistant executive engineer and joined service April 26, 2021. After two months of training she was posted to on 26 June, 2021 and was continuing since then.

HEAT WAVE WOES

32 girl students fall ill owing to dehydration

PNN & AGENCIES

Sundargarh, April 20: The ongoing intense heat wave is taking a toll on students. As many as 32 girl students of the Swayamba Government Girls' High School at Koinda in Sundargarh district fell sick after they complained of pain in abdomen, headache, fever and nausea, a source said Thursday.

All 32 students were admitted to the nearby community health centre at K Balanga village. Doctors treating the students said they suffered from dehydration due to intense heat.

"The condition of all the students is stable. They are kept under observation and will be discharged from the hospital after their condition improves," a doctor said.

2 GO UNCONSCIOUS

PNN & AGENCIES

Ganjam, April 20: A girl appearing for Plus 3 first semester examination went unconscious at the main gate of Ganjam College, Thursday.

As per sources, the girl student lost her senses while getting her identity card checked at the college's main gate. Earlier, another girl had also lost her consciousness while writing her papers on the first day of the examination, Tuesday. The college authorities rescued both the girls and rushed them to the hospital where they recovered after treatment. This has happened as the examination is starting at 2pm in this hot summer, parents and guardians alleged.

Principal Praveen Kumar Nanda had informed the university authorities about the ordeal of the students. Guardians have demanded a change in the examination schedule to shift the seating to 8am to 11am.

Body of CRPF jawan found hanging from tree in forest

PNN & AGENCIES

Jajpur, April 20: The body of a CRPF jawan, who had been missing for the last three days, was found hanging from a tree in a forest in Jajpur district Thursday, police said.

The deceased has been identified as Suryakant Kuanr, a resident of Sompur village under the Erasama Police Station limits in Jagatsinghpur district, a senior officer said.

The body of the CRPF jawan was found hanging from a tree in the forest in Dhanmandal area, the officer said, adding that Tuesday, his motorcycle was recovered near Barunabant hill under the Badachana Police Station limits in the district.

Suryakant's family members lodged a complaint, mentioning that he was missing since April 17. A search operation with the help of a drone camera was conducted to trace him, but the effort



did not bear fruit, the police officer said.

Later, three police teams led by Jajpur Road Sub Divisional Police Officer and some forest personnel were formed to trace the missing jawan in the Barunabant hill.

"After the recovery of the motorcycle, we conducted a search operation on the hill. We found the body hanging from a tree there," Jajpur Road SDPO Sanjay Patnaik said.

The body has been sent for post-mortem examinations, he said, adding that an investigation has been initiated but it is yet to be ascertained whether the Central Reserve Police Force jawan died by suicide.

"Suryakant was a CRPF jawan and he was mentally very strong. We can't believe that he will kill himself. His disappearance from his native Sompur village and death on a hill in Jajpur should be investigated properly," said Bikash Mohanty, a relative of the deceased.

Suryakant had come home recently on leave for the last rites of his grandmother in his native village and was staying with his wife in Jagatsinghpur.

WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
ROURKELA (R&B) DIVISION, UDITNAGAR,ROURKELA
E-Mail Id-eeppwrkl@gmail.com
No.B-98: Government of Orissa "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No.:01/2023-2024 Dated:13.04.2023

- Number of works:8(Eight) number of Works
- Estimated cost: Rs. 10.41 Lakhs to 12.61 Lakhs
- Period of completion: 3(Three) calendar months
- Date &Time of availability of bid document in the portal: Dt. 27.04.2023 at 11.00A.M.
- Last date/ Time for receipt of bids in the portal: Dt 08.05.2023 up to 05.00 P.M.
- Date of opening of Bid: Dt. 09.05.2023 at 11.00 A.M.
- Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid: Superintendent Engineer, (R & B) Division, Rourkela, UditNagar.

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>"
Sd./- Superintendent Engineer
Rourkela (R&B) Division, Rourkela
OIPR-34068/11/0001/2324

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. ST-OT-AMC-AMARARAJA-314, Dt.: 13.04.2023
Name of work: PROVISION FOR COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT OF SMPBS BASED INTEGRATED POWER SUPPLY SYSTEMS MANUFACTURED BY M/S AMARA RAJA POWER SYSTEMS LIMITED IN KHURDA ROAD DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.
Tender Value : ₹95,54,304.24, EMD: ₹1,91,100/-, Cost of tender document: ₹5,900/-
Bidding Start Date: 24.04.2023, Date and Time of Closing of Tender : at 1100hrs. of 08.05.2023.
No manual offers send by Post / Courier / Fax or in person shall be accepted against the e-tenders. Even if these are submitted on firms letterhead and receipt in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.irps.gov.in>
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (S&T), PR-72/O/23-24 Khurda Road

Fake astrologer takes man on a ride, dupes ₹1.10L

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, April 20: Khantapada police in this district Thursday arrested a man on charge of defrauding ₹1.10 lakh from a youth of Subarnapur district on the pretext that a plain paper will turn into a ₹500 note when dipped in a certain chemical.

The accused was identified as Sunil Biswal, 45, a resident under Khantapada police limits in Balasure district and the victim as Santosh Kumar Mahakur of Birmaharajpur area in Subarnapur district. Police registered a case and arrested the accused after the victim lodged an online complaint in the Khantapada police station.

The accused was produced in the court and remanded to judicial custody after rejection of his bail plea. This was stated by SDPO Shashank Sekhar Behera at a press meet held at



the Khantapada police station, Thursday.

The SDPO said that Santosh of Birmaharajpur came in contact with a fraudster claiming to be an astrologer. The imposter using his tricks showed him that he can turn a piece of plain paper into a ₹500 denomination note by dipping it in a certain chemical. Taken by his words, Santosh expressed his interest to buy the chemical to turn plain paper to ₹500 notes.

The imposter asked him to contact one

Sunil Biswal in Khantapada area and gave the latter's phone number and address to Santosh. Accordingly, Santosh contacted Sunil on the given phone number and tried to strike a deal to buy the chemical.

As per discussion, Santosh withdrew ₹70,000 from an ATM and handed the cash over to Sunil and later paid ₹40,000 through the payment app PhonePe. After receiving the money, Sunil refused to give him any such chemical and thrashed Santosh before driving him away.

Realising that he had been duped, Santosh left for Sonepur, the district headquarters of Subarnapur district and lodged a complaint online with Khantapada police station, Wednesday. Police conducted a probe and arrested Sunil while seizing a mobile phone from his possession. A manhunt is on to nab the imposter, police added.

Chola
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Regional Office : 55 & 55/1, Chowringhee Road, 5th Floor, Chowringhee Court
Opp. Nehru Children's Museum in Rabindra Sadan, Kolkata - 700 071, W.B.
BRANCH ADDRESS : Annapurna Complex, 559, Lewis Road, Cuttack-Puri Road, Bhubaneswar - 751014

DEMAND NOTICE
DEMAND NOTICE ISSUED UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002

You, the under mentioned Borrower / Mortgagee is hereby informed that the Company has initiated proceedings against you under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and that the Notice under 13(2) of the Act sent to you by Registered Post Ack. Due for Borrower/s has been returned undelivered. Hence, you are hereby called upon to take notice and pay the outstanding loan amount mentioned against the said account with Interest accruing there from within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the Company will proceed against you by exercising its right under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of the Act by enforcing the below mentioned security to realize its dues with interests and cost. It is needles to mention that this notice is addressed to you without prejudice to any other remedy available to the Company.

Sl. No.	a) Loan Account Number b) Name and Address of Borrower / Co-borrower	Loan Amount	Date of Demand Notice & Demand Notice Amount & Date of NPA	Description of the Property / Secured Assets
1.	a) X0HEBHU00002901642 & X0HEBHU00002951694 b) 1. Bidyaraj Jena (Applicant) 2. M/s. Meena Bastralaya (Co-Applicant) 3. Sumita Jena (Co-Applicant) 4. Laxmidhar Jena (Co-Applicant) 5. Smita Mohanty (Co-Applicant) 6. Susama Jena (Co-Applicant) 7. Debraj Jena (Co-Applicant) All are at : Plot No. 31/A, Near BDA Park BJB Nagar, Near BJEM School, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Pin - 751014	Rs. 2,22,98,610.00 (Rupees Two Crore Twenty Two Lakh Ninety Eight Thousand Six Hundred Ten only)	10.04.2023 Rs. 2,62,08,103.00 (Rupees Two Crore Sixty Two Lakh Eight Thousand One Hundred and Three Only) as on 06.04.2023 together with future interest, penal charges, other charges Date of NPA : 06.04.2023	District - Khurda, Tahasil - Bhubaneswar, Under the Jurisdiction of Office of the District Sub-Registrar, Khurda (BBSR), P. S. - New Capital, P. S. No. 52, Mouza - Bhubaneswar Sahara Unit No. 30, Laxmisagar - 1, Mutation Khata No. 1593/1005, Shitibari Plot No. 2534, Area Ac. 0.096 Decs., Kisan -Gharabari - 1 Which Corresponding to Khata No. 1927, Plot No. 2534 which further corresponding to G. A. Plot No. A/32, Drawing No. C/3654, measuring an extent dimension and area (55 X 80) Ac. 0.096 Decimals approximately. Bounded by North - Conservancy Lane, South - Road, East - Plot No. A/31, West - Plot No. A/33.

Date : 21.04.2023
Place : Bhubaneswar, Odisha
M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited
Authorised Officer

We must watch over our thoughts. A bad thought is the most dangerous of thieves.

THE MOTHER



Schizophrenia at IMF

It has taken far too long, but it seems that the International Monetary Fund has finally internalised some hard truths about sovereign-debt reduction. Chief among them is that growing economies have an easier time repaying. As such, fiscal consolidation – the organisation's favoured strategy – undermines efforts to reduce debt-to-GDP ratios because it inhibits economic growth.

To be sure, this is hardly a new insight. John Maynard Keynes emphasised it nearly a century ago, and many have reiterated it ever since. It was certainly known to the negotiators who crafted the London Debt Agreement of 1953, which dramatically reduced West Germany's burden of public debt. The agreement between Germany and 20 of its external creditors provided favourable repayment terms linked to the country's future exports, creating the conditions for its postwar economic boom.

Still, better late than never. The IMF's latest World Economic Outlook presents the results of its own investigation into various debt-reduction programmes undertaken by 33 emerging-market economies and 21 developed economies between 1980 and 2019. "On average," the authors note, "consolidations do not lead to a statistically significant effect on the debt ratio." Instead, they find that higher GDP growth – "as captured by positive demand and supply shocks together" – is "an important force" responsible for roughly one-third of the observed debt reduction during that period. The analysis even recognises that fiscal expansion improved debt ratios in several cases, largely due to its positive effect on GDP growth.

Fiscal consolidation, the authors note, is more likely to reduce debt in a growing economy, under favourable financial conditions. But, given that such conditions may not always exist, and because retrenchment tends to impede GDP growth, austerity has rarely led to positive outcomes in debt-distressed countries.

As the IMF report notes, "unanticipated transfers" to state-owned enterprises and unexpected exchange-rate depreciations could undermine debt-reduction efforts. What the report does not mention, however, is that these developments are often an unintended consequence of the IMF's own programmes, which tend to require indebted countries to shift to market-determined exchange rates, raise interest rates, and cut state subsidies, thereby driving up business costs. By contrast, the report finds that debt-restructuring efforts have been more successful when they helped countries restore growth and avoid economic decline.

While this will not come as a shock to anyone who has tracked growth trajectories over the past half-century, the IMF's influence over countries' macroeconomic policies, and the growing number of governments in need of debt restructuring, makes the Fund's change of heart highly consequential. For decades, IMF programmes have assumed that cutting public spending was the only way to deal with debt distress. Now, the Fund seems to be acknowledging its past mistakes.

But it is unclear whether this welcome (albeit late) volte-face will extend beyond the IMF's research department and how it might affect the Fund's lending activities. Early indications are not promising. IMF leadership has repeatedly called for faster and more effective sovereign-debt restructuring, and, to its credit, has recently set up a roundtable of public and private creditors to hasten the process. But the response so far has been slow, cumbersome, inadequate, and mostly ineffective. Countries that have sought help under the G20's Common Framework for addressing debt distress in the developing world have faced inordinate delays, geopolitical wrangling, and unresponsive creditors.

Worse, the IMF's staff seems to be unaware of its latest report or has chosen to ignore it. The Fund's recent financing programmes include onerous conditions that will most likely have extremely damaging effects on developing countries' populations and economies.

For example, the recent agreement between the IMF and Sri Lanka emphasises fiscal consolidation, requiring the government to achieve a budget surplus within two years. It also conditions its funding on increases in energy tariffs, flexible exchange rates that will likely lead to currency devaluation, and higher interest rates. The programme (unrealistically) projects higher revenues without imposing wealth taxes or restricting illicit financial flows. All this will reduce demand in a country already reeling from 53.6% inflation, causing the economy to contract further. A similar focus on fiscal balance is evident in other proposed IMF programmes in Ghana and Zambia.

The IMF is not alone in this. As Isabel Ortiz and Matthew Cummins point out, a new wave of austerity is building as governments scale back public spending. With the world facing a confluence of economic and political crises, the return of austerity could have dire consequences, and not just for economic activity. It could also imperil global health at a time when future public-health threats are increasingly likely, in addition to hampering our ability to address climate change.

This is not just unnecessary – it is willfully harmful. When certain "solutions" have been shown to fail, or make the problem worse, they must be abandoned. While it is undoubtedly a step in the right direction that IMF researchers have finally acknowledged the obvious, it is not enough. After decades of causing avoidable misery, it is time for the IMF to put its money where its mouth is.

The writer, Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, is a member of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism.

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WISDOM CORNER

Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And if you gaze long enough into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back into you.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well.

VIRGINIA WOOLF

The simple act of paying attention can take you a long way.

KEANU REEVES

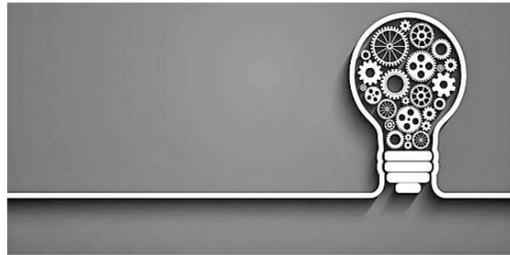
WORDSWORTH

Hearth-money

English kings and their advisors were ingenious in devising ways to tax their subjects. Hearth-money was brought in during the reign of Charles II in 1663. It was levied at two shillings a year on every hearth in the kingdom. This may not sound like a lot, but a couple of shillings went a great deal further than today's equivalent of 10 pence does now. It was also called hearth-tax and chimney-money. People hated it. It was repealed as one of the first acts of that curious composite sovereign William-and-Mary in 1689 on the grounds that it was not only a great oppression to the poorer sort, but a badge of slavery upon the whole people, exposing every man's house to be entered into, and searched at pleasure, by persons unknown to him. It should not be confused with hearth-penny, which was a pre-Conquest name for a payment of one penny a year by better-off householders to the papal see at Rome, a tax that ended with the Reformation. As every home had to have a hearth for cooking and heating, to have one was equivalent to being a house holder.

FOCUS INNOVATION

THE WAY FORWARD



Though India still has a long way to go to become a leader in developing cutting-edge, path-breaking and innovative technologies, the ecosystem that fosters innovation and sustainability has already been established for a take-off



Nikunja Bihari Sahu

ONE OF THE MAJOR FACTORS THAT MARS INNOVATION IN INDIA IS THE DISMAL PERFORMANCE OF ITS R&D SECTOR



Jayati Ghosh

With the world facing a confluence of economic and political crises, the return of austerity could have dire consequences, and not just for economic activity

Find time to read these stories abuzz in media: an entrepreneur designs shoes that expand as children grow earning lakhs a month; Assam man's 3D startup brings old memories to life raising ₹10.5 crore funding; Coimbatore woman's smart wheelchair with self-cleaning device bagging ₹1 crore on Shark Tank; farmer's innovative tree scooter helps climb Areca trees in a few second saving money; brother-sister duo are using drones to help farmers triple their income; scientist builds Solar Hamam to provide warm water to thousands in frigid Himalayas. All these stories of achievement have a common feature: Innovation!

Innovation is a method to adapt to new challenges by changing to new products and processes with the help of technology to meet the requirements of time. There is a difference between invention and innovation. In an invention, a completely new thing, hitherto unknown, is created whereas in innovation incremental technological changes are incorporated with the existing product. Historically, man's ability to survive can be traced back to crucial inventions from fire to wheels to agriculture among other things. However, over the years, our design of wheels, method of creating fire and the kind of agricultural practices have drastically changed to meet new challenges of life. Similarly, the new demands in recent years have pushed forward to seek for emerging technologies in the field of cyber security, IoT, AI, blockchain, robotics, 5G, quantum computing, 3D printing, metaverse and drones among other things because of man's incessant quest for innovation and improvisation for better efficiency and use.

India is among the fastest-growing economies globally and innovation has played a critical role in achieving this status. India's unicorn club is booming as is the overall startup landscape. Home to an impressive 107 unicorns with a total valuation of a whopping \$340.79 billion, India has emerged as the third largest ecosystem for startups globally (after the US and China) with over 77,000 recognised startups as of 2022.

Though India still has a long

way to go to become a leader in developing cutting-edge, path-breaking and innovative technologies, the ecosystem that fosters innovation and sustainability has already been established for a take-off. India must gear up its strategy through policies and programmes that are inclusive and sensitive to the aspirations of the country so that an innovation-driven and knowledge-based economy could be developed. Although in India, sectors such as IT, communication and pharmaceuticals have established themselves as global hubs in innovation and research, the country needs to do a lot in sectors such as agriculture, AI, computer hardware and infrastructure building to cater to consumers in global market.

One of the major factors that mars innovation in India is the dismal performance of its R&D sector. In India, R&D investment has been relatively low. In the past few years, R&D investment has declined from 0.8% of GDP in 2008-09 to 0.7% in 2017-18. This is lower than other BRICS nations: Brazil spends about 1.2%, Russia about 1.1%, China just above 2%, and South Africa around 0.8%, with the world average being about 1.8%. On the other hand, developed countries like the US, Sweden, and Switzerland spend about 2.9%, 3.2% and 3.4% respectively. Among all nations, Israel spends the most - 4.5% of its GDP on R&D. The rea-

son for the low spending on R&D in India is that most investments in R&D take time to produce results. In a country like India where there are bigger issues like hunger, education and healthcare to contend with, resources are often diverted towards mitigating them. However, these pressing concerns shouldn't be viewed as stumbling blocks; rather an opportunity to widen the ambit of R&D so as to come up with solutions to such issues. Further, there is a relatively low private participation in R&D sector in India which is another key hindrance in the country's overall low performance.

Secondly, the number of medium and large manufacturing firms in India is far less compared to small sized firms (having less than 50 employees) where R&D is not often recognised. This structural setup causes a number of stigmas in areas of productivity, economy of production costs and innovation and research.

Thirdly, Indian manufacturing sector is highly a labour intensive setup where it is feared that a switchover to innovative methods of automation would displace labour from the market to generate more unemployment in the country. However, this is not always true as innovation has the capacity to generate new jobs as well.

Fourthly, we are not able to channelise the potential of our vast young populace. Most bright

students and engineers tend to migrate to Western countries to join big companies in prospect of better earnings, job security and better opportunities. For example, 36% of NASA scientists, 34% of Microsoft employees, 28% of IBM employees and 27% of Intel employees are Indians. A right ecosystem to prevent this brain drain should have ushered in a more vibrant culture of innovation and research in India.

Fifthly, academic research in our universities and labs should be oriented in line with our market demands and should be closely tied up with industries not just for financial support and patronage, but also for marketing of their products.

Finally, in India, patent and trademark filing processes for intangible assets like creative works, scientific research, discoveries, new software are complex and face substantial procedural delays. According to the Economic Survey 2021-22, the average pendency for final decision in acquiring patents in India is 42 months as of 2020. This is much higher than 20.8, 20, 15.8 and 15 months respectively for the US, China, Korea and Japan respectively. This is also evident from the fact that China has now outpaced India in innovation and intellectual capacity although both nations started almost at the same time.

The government of India has taken a lot of initiatives to promote the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country through a number of flagship programmes like the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), the Startup India and the Make in India programmes. Incubation centres have been established across the country to provide space for budding entrepreneurs and young minds to translate their innovative ideas into viable business propositions with minimum risks. However, a lot more is to be done to transform India to stand on its innovative talents as a global destination for products and technologies.

The writer is Education Officer, Regional Science Centre, Bhopal.

SPECTRUM PROFESSION

Portfolio career – a bold new choice



Sabyasachi Dutta

INSTEAD OF HAVING A REPETITIVE DAILY GRIND A PORTFOLIO CAREER COMES LACED WITH THE CHARM OF VARIETY!

Some eighty years ago, Abraham Maslow propounded the 5 levels 'Hierarchy of Needs' theory in which at the bottom is the 'physiological need' – when a person's sole intention to earn is for addressing his basic requirements like food, clothing, and shelter. Once, this need gets fulfilled the person strives hard to scale up to the next levels eventually reaching the pinnacle aptly called – 'self-actualization'.

Earning money to quickly fulfil rudimentary physiological needs thus drives a person to search for solutions in multiple directions – at times even unethically 'moonlighting'. But that's a topic for another day.

Having said that, there's no denying people since long have been using their spare time to earn some extra bucks be it a college professor giving private tuition to students at home or a finance professional checking books of a small company in the neighbourhood after 'office hours'. Plenty of such examples can be found in various vocations and, nobody rose to object them as unethical - where a fully employed professional morphed occasionally into a 'freelancer' for a side gig.

That brings to focus the thought of utilising one's talent to the maximum if a) one is willing, has time while staying within the confines of ethical norms and b) elicit suitable assignments from employers who value their varied skills.

From this emanates the idea of having a 'portfolio career' that can be broadly defined as having a series of jobs, each maybe of short duration, rather than one job at a continuous stretch. In order to pursue a portfolio career, one must be willing to take risks while venturing into unexplored territories as each job could be unrelated to the one before.

A portfolio career is a working style where an individual combines multiple streams of income, while finding the sweet spot and continuously discovering their self-worth. Though it offers better work-life balance, if there are long spells of inactivity it could induce frustration. With a certain level of disillusionment around traditional fixed-time work, it's not surprising that many are now preferring a career that helps them choose what they work on, when they work and who they work with. It's noticed that

a person with a portfolio career has a variety of job types either full-time or temporary short-term ones and may work in various positions simultaneously or at different points in their career. Thus, exemplifying an unbound personality trait inherent in them.

A noticeable advantage of a portfolio career is the freedom it gives individuals to tailor their career and monetise their skills in different ways from multiple income sources. This has been found hugely helpful as people often need to align with the demands of changing times instead of remaining rooted in their narrow skill sets that could become obsolete suddenly.

Studies found many older workers prefer a portfolio career as it offers them the 'flexibility to choose' having traversed through a linear career path before. Instead of having a repetitive daily grind a portfolio career comes laced with the charm of variety!

Also, portfolio careers are gaining traction because many companies struggle to fill permanent roles with hard-to-find talents while keeping an upper hand to manoeuvre their short-term goals.

Add to that many positions come with no guarantee of their longevity.

Arguably, portfolio careers give professionals better financial security by spreading their sources of earnings and not having all their eggs in one basket. This helps to ring-fence oneself against any major financial crisis that could come if an individual loses a solo job. But a word of caution: Before switching from a full-time job to having a portfolio career it would be better to test the waters first.

Many present-generation professionals believe it's quite unlikely that a single job in a particular organisation will be able to provide the satisfaction, growth, and versatility that one yearns for. Whereas a portfolio career could help explore one's passion, have control over their career trajectory, and open multiple income taps. And those are broadly some of the inherent factors that are driving the fascination for having a 'portfolio career'.

The writer is Country General Manager of a British MNC in India. Views are personal.

Turncoats galore

Sir, Some politicians are having a field day in Karnataka after the announcement of elections whereas it should have been the reverse. Those denied tickets to contest from their parties are becoming turncoats to further their political careers. Even senior and seasoned politicians have changed parties at this fag end of the conclusion of the present Assembly. Those who have spent more than two decades with a party have ditched their parent organisation to join hands with a party they were opposing tooth and nail till yesterday for the sake of a ticket in the elections. One wonders what ideology they will propagate to the electorate. Most last minute turncoats in Karnataka belong to the ruling BJP and the beneficiary is the Congress that is tipped to return to power. Perhaps it is time something is done by all stakeholders by sitting across the table to prevent party hopping after the election dates are announced to inject hope and prevent repulsion among the voters in the entire election process. Otherwise, the option of 'nota' and abysmal turnout to the polling booths may as well become the order of the day.

Ganapathi Bhat, Akola

Tobacco conundrum

Sir, The comment made by the Supreme Court while hearing a petition regarding the sale of tobacco and pan-masala can be considered as a mirror of the will of the governments on this issue. What can be more ironic than this that while the common people are alerted and made aware through advertisements giving information about the serious diseases caused by the consumption of tobacco and giving the message to quit the consumption of this dangerous substance, whereas in everyday life, the sale of things which prove to be fatal goes on openly. During the hearing on this issue, the Supreme Court clearly said that selling gutkha is not selling nectar; why isn't this banned permanently? Apparently, the court has raised a fundamental question that if the government believes that gutkha or tobacco products cause serious harm to the health of the people, then why there is no concrete regulation regarding its production and sale. It is a paradox that on the one hand, strict rules and regulations are implemented by the government to make the health of the people safe across the country and their implementation is ensured, on the other hand, everyday life proves to be a health hazard.

Abhijit Roy, JAMSHEDPUR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

of the day quote

I personally do not have any reservation about same-sex marriage. India is a democratic country. Everyone here has the liberty to choose his or her life partner. This is my personal opinion

ABHISHEK BANERJEE | TRINAMOOL CONGRESS' NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY

We have become the most populated country in the world though the official figures are yet to come out. We are also the fastest growing economy in the world and our need for water is also increasing

GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT | UNION MINISTER

Understanding the public pulse in an important aspect and a deciding factor in the debate on the same-sex marriage in the country

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Modi calls up Danish PM

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday held a telephonic conversation with his Danish counterpart Mette Frederiksen, during which both the leaders reviewed the progress of India-Denmark Green Strategic Partnership. They expressed satisfaction at the high-level exchanges and growing cooperation, official sources said. Modi congratulated Frederiksen on her appointment as the Prime Minister of Denmark for a second term. He briefed her on India's ongoing presidency of the G20 and its key priorities, official sources added. Frederiksen appreciated India's G20 initiatives and conveyed Denmark's full support to it.

ED seizes crypto currencies

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Thursday said it has attached crypto currencies, gold coins and vehicles worth Rs 34.75 crore in connection with its investigation into illegal forex trading platform OctaFX, and its related entities. The attachment is in the form of bank balances, crypto currencies, vehicles, gold coins, and cash.

21 hurt in Kolkata gas cylinder blast

Kolkata: Altogether 21 people, including two minors, were injured in an LPG cylinder blast at a residential house in Kolkata's Garden Reach area Thursday evening, police said. The blast happened at around 6 pm when the occupants were preparing food, a senior officer of Kolkata Police said. "A fire broke out inside a room on the ground floor of a house on Bichalighat Road following a gas cylinder blast. Twenty-one people, including two minors, were injured in the explosion," he told PTI.

84% marginal farmers don't want to leave agriculture: Study

Small and marginal farmers with less than two hectares of land account for a little over 86 per cent of all farmers in India, but own just about 47 per cent of the crop area, according to the 10th agriculture census 2015-16

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: Around 70 percent of over 6,000 marginal farmers engage in non-farm activities for income support, but 84 percent of them do not want to sell off their land to pursue other economic activities, a new study has found.

According to the study conducted by the Development Intelligence Unit (DIU), a collaborative venture between Transforming Rural India Foundation and Sambodhi, marginal farmers are largely engaged

in non-agricultural activities like wage labour and livestock management to supplement their income. Small and marginal farmers with less than two hectares of land holding account for a little over 86 percent of all farmers in India, but own just about 47 percent of the crop area, according to the 10th agriculture census 2015-16.

The study titled 'Annual Survey Of State Of Marginal Farmers In India', highlights that 84 percent of the marginal farmers in spite of low profits and natural calamities are



not willing to quit farming, and are not interested in selling off their land to pursue other economic activities.

Classifying it by landholding size, the tendency to reduce farm-

ing increases with higher land holding while those with the lowest landholding wish to continue with farming. According to the survey, 93.9 percent of the farmers with 0 to 0.5 acres of land and 81.39

percent with 2 to 2.5 acres prefer to continue farming.

In contrast, only 5.32 percent of the smallest landholding farmers and 14.76 percent of the largest landholding farmers want to reduce this activity. Around 10.99 percent chose to reduce it in due course, while only 2.77 percent wanted to leave farming altogether. "The responses are both contrarian, and absence of pathway shows the vulnerability of the marginal farmer livelihood portfolio, particularly when hit by pandemic-like shocks," the survey said.

According to the data, Indian farms became more fragmented between 2010-11 and 2015-16, holdings continued to be inequitably distributed. During this period the

proportion of small and marginal farmers grew from 84.9 percent to 86.2 percent, a growth of about 9 million, while the total number of operational holdings grew from 138 million to 146 million.

Further, these 126 million farmers owned 0.6 hectares holding each on average, which is not enough to produce surpluses which can financially sustain their families.

To supplement the meagre income from cultivation, 68.3 percent of the marginal farmers are engaged in other income generating activities such as daily wage labour (78 percent), vocational business (60 percent) non-agricultural business (18 percent) and animal husbandry (12 percent) and salaried employment (12 percent).



Twenty-five airports in the country are using 100 per cent green energy while another 121 airports will be made carbon neutral by 2025

JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA | UNION AVIATION MINISTER

AARADHYA FAKE NEWS ROW

The Delhi High Court Thursday restrained a number of YouTube channels from spreading or continuing to broadcast videos that make false claims regarding Aishwarya Rai and Abhishek Bachchan's daughter Aaradhya Bachchan



Surat court's order 'fallacious': Cong

The Surat Court of additional sessions judge R P Moger Thursday rejected Gandhi's plea seeking a stay on his conviction. If allowed, the stay could have paved the way for his reinstatement as a Member of Parliament

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 20: A Surat sessions court order rejecting Rahul Gandhi's appeal for a stay on his conviction in a defamation case is "devoid of valid, sustainable legal reasoning" and seems to have been "overshadowed" by the high office of the Prime Minister, Congress alleged Thursday, while the BJP termed the order as a "slap on the Gandhi family's arrogance" and "victory" of the people.

"A most unfortunate and unsustainable legal decision of the magistrate has been upheld in an even more unsustainable and erroneous judgement of the Sessions court given today. The conviction has been upheld contrary to all basic elementary principles of law," Congress senior spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi told reporters at a press conference.

The judge has said "the appellate has insulted and humiliated Mr Modi, the Prime Minister", and then he mentioned "other 13 crore members of the Modi community", Singhvi noted.



The Congress also said it will "very shortly" move the High Court against the verdict, which it claimed was "fallacious" and contrary to the basic elementary principles of law

"It is clear that his entire decision is overshadowed and negatively influenced that Modi has been defamed but he has forgotten that Modi ji is not a complainant...So clearly unfortunately he is influenced by the

high office of the prime minister, forgetting that the PM is not the complainant," Singhvi said.

He said he will be moving the High Court to challenge the order. Sources said that Singhvi, himself a noted lawyer, is likely to appear before the High Court in Gujarat while challenging the Sessions court order against Rahul Gandhi's conviction.

Hailing the court verdict against Rahul Gandhi, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said the judgement is a "victory" of the judiciary and the people. Hitting out at the Congress, he said the court's deci-

RAHUL WAS ELECTED TO THE LOK SABHA FROM WAYANAD IN KERALA IN 2019
HE WAS DISQUALIFIED A DAY AFTER THE LOWER COURT SENTENCED HIM TO TWO YEARS IN JAIL MARCH 23 IN CONNECTION WITH THE CASE FILED BY BJP MLA PURNESH MODI

sion is "a blow" to the arrogance of the Gandhi family, "especially Rahul Gandhi."

"It's a slap on the Gandhi family's arrogance...Gandhi family had thought that they could get away after abusing backward classes. But that did not happen," Patra claimed.

Union Minister Anurag Thakur said Rahul Gandhi still has time to seek an apology from the nation. His conviction in the case proves that the Congress dynast intentionally insulted the OBC community of India in the name of abusing and attacking PM Modi, he alleged.

Anurag Jain appointed Road Transport Secretary as govt effects top level bureaucratic rejig

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: Senior IAS officer Anurag Jain has been appointed as Road, Transport and Highways Secretary as part of a top level bureaucratic reshuffle effected Thursday by the Centre.

Jain, a 1989-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre, is currently Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade. He succeeds Alka Upadhyaya, who has been appointment Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, according to a Personnel Ministry order.

Upadhyaya has been appointed in place of Rajesh Kumar Singh, who is now Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade in place of Jain.

Saurabh Garg, Chief Executive Officer of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), will be Secretary, Department of Social Justice & Empowerment.

Garg, a 1991-batch IAS officer of Odisha cadre, has been appointed in place of Anjali Bhawra, who will now serve as Secretary, National Commission for Minorities.

As many as 12 IAS officers have been appointed to different central government departments in Thursday's reshuffle.

Fertilizers Secretary Arun Singhal will be Director General, National Archives of India, the order said. Minority Affairs Secretary Mukhmeet Singh Bhatia has been appointed the Chairperson of National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention.

V Vidyavathi, who is currently Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, has been named as the Tourism Secretary. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has appointed her as Officer on Special Duty (OSD) in the Tourism Ministry.

Adani meets Sharad Pawar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 20: Industrialist Gautam Adani met Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president Sharad Pawar at the latter's residence here Thursday amid the Opposition's demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into the Adani-Hindenburg issue. The meeting, held at Pawar's residence Silver Oak in south Mumbai this morning, lasted for nearly two hours, sources said. Earlier this month, Pawar had



come out in support of the Adani group and criticised the narrative around the US short seller Hindenburg Research's report on the conglomerate.

Taking a position at variance from senior ally Congress, Pawar had said he favoured a Supreme

Court committee to probe allegations against the Adani group since the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would have a majority in the JPC based on numerical strength in Parliament and this would lead to doubts on such a probe.

The NCP supremo had later said although his outfit does not agree with the demand of anti-BJP parties for a JPC probe into allegations against the Adani group, it will not go against their stand for the sake of Opposition unity.



HAPPY MOMENT: White tiger cubs with their mother after they were released for public viewing in the arena of white tiger enclosure at Zoological Park by Union Minister for Environment Forest and Climate Change Bhopender Yadav in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

AMRITPAL'S WIFE PREVENTED FROM GOING TO LONDON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amritsar, April 20: Fugitive radical preacher Amritpal Singh's wife Kirandeep Kaur was stopped from boarding a flight to London at the Sri Guru Ram Dass International Airport here, sources said Thursday.

She was questioned by the immigration authorities and some other officials for more than three hours and thereafter, asked to return along with some relatives who had come to see her off at the airport. Singh married Kaur, a UK-based Non-Resident Indian, February 10.

Kaur, who is a British citizen reached the airport at around 12 noon to board the flight to London but was stopped by the immigration staff and later, the Punjab Police was informed. According to reports, she was stopped at the airport as there was a lookout circular (LoC) issued against her; however, there was no official word on it.

Punjab Police officials too refused to share any information about the incident. The Air India flight for London took off at its scheduled time of 1.20 pm. Kaur was going to the UK for the first time after her marriage.

More than a month after a police crackdown against Singh and his aides, the radical preacher continues to remain elusive even as a manhunt to nab him is underway. Police launched the crackdown against Singh and members of his outfit 'Waris Punjab De' March 18.



COVID SURGE

Special vigil on care-home residents

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, April 20: In view of a slight surge in the number of COVID-19 cases in the state in recent days, the Kerala Health Department on Thursday urged officials to keep extra vigil on the health of residents in care homes, and asked senior citizens, pregnant women and children to wear masks when stepping out of their homes.

As many as 2,484 COVID cases were reported in the state Wednesday, and Ernakulam, Thiruvananthapuram and Kottayam districts had the highest number.

While speaking at a meeting of district collectors and health department officials here, Health Minister Veena George gave directions to officials to pay special attention to care homes in various districts in the wake of an increase in cases.

If one of the residents was found to be infected with the virus, all the others living there were to be tested. Else their condition would likely be worse later, she said.



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Health Minister Veena George gave directions to officials to pay special attention to care homes in various districts in the wake of an increase in cases

Though the number of cases was on the rise, there was no cause for worry as hospitals across the state were well-prepared to face any situation and the health department had already strengthened preventive measures, she said.

The minister, however, pointed out that as the transmission rate of the disease was very high, those

suffering from diabetes and blood pressure as well as senior citizens, pregnant women, children and health workers should wear face masks when going out. Though the admission rate was also showing a slight increase, only 0.9 per cent of the total patients required oxygen beds so far and only one per cent required ICU beds, an official statement added.



US Air Force personnel during a joint exercise with Indian Air Force at Arjan Singh Airforce Station, at Panagarh in West Burdwan district

PTI PHOTO

Visva-Bharati asks Sen to vacate 'excess' land by May 6

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 20: Visva-Bharati University in an eviction order has asked Nobel laureate Amartya Sen to vacate the 13 decimals of land which he has been allegedly occupying in an unauthorised manner by May 6 or within 15 days of the publication of the last order on April 19.

Contending as per government of India advisories and CAG reports the century-old Central institution was in urgent need of getting control of encroachments and also submit report to the ministry, the notice said "Amartya Kumar Sen and all concerned persons are liable to be evicted from the said premises, if need be, by use of such force as may be necessary." "It is decided that 13 decimals of land having the dimension of 50 ft x 111 ft in the north-west corner of the scheduled premises is to be recovered from him," the notice said. "Thus he can lawfully occupy 1.25 acres of land only, as lesses (for the residual period of lease) in the scheduled premises. He does not have the authority to occupy 1.38 acres of land in the scheduled premises," the notice issued by Joint Registrar Ashok Mahato said on Wednesday.

A few days back the Central university had issued another notice



■ Sen has repeatedly trashed the charge saying while the 1.25 acres of land had been leased by Visva-Bharati to his father for a certain period, the contentious 13 decimals were bought by his father and he has all the necessary documents to prove that

■ A few days back the Central university had issued another notice to Sen, whose ancestral house 'Pratichi' in Santiniketan is inhabited by the Nobel laureate during his stay in Santiniketan, giving him time till April 19 to respond to the missive and vacate the "unauthorised" portion of land or face necessary action otherwise

to Sen, whose ancestral house 'Pratichi' in Santiniketan is inhabited by the Nobel laureate during his stay in Santiniketan, giving him time till April 19 to respond to the missive and vacate the "unauthorised" portion of land or face necessary action otherwise.

The vaction had maintained that Sen's reply to earlier showcause was "fallacious, factually incorrect" and Visva Bharati was the rightful owner of all these lands which had been encroached upon in past years including the 13 decimal land occupied by Sen.

Sen has repeatedly trashed the charge saying while the 1.25 acres

of land had been leased by Visva-Bharati to his father for a certain period the contentious 13 decimals were bought by his father and he has all the necessary documents to prove that.

Visva-Bharati University Faculty Association President Sudipta Bhattacharya said any decision by the university authority to raze down a part of the house of Sen, or any visible action to assemble people will be protested "peacefully and democratically" by teachers and students.

"The documents with state Block Land Revenue Officer (BLRO) proclaims Sen has the rights over the

entire 1.38 acres of land. Also as per the magistrate's order, no activity will be allowed on that land by any party and we hope Vice-Chancellor Bidyut Chakraborty will not do anything which will be in violation of that order," he said.

Bhattacharya further said the image of the document shared by Visva Bharati to media which claimed the Central university had leased 1.25 acres of land to Sen's father and not 1.38 acres should be fact checked.

"We may go to Santiniketan police station and hold peaceful democratic protest if the VC takes any action against Sen in May, as threatened in the letter. Any such move

will be detrimental to the image of Santiniketan, Visva Bharati and Bengal as Sen is the pride of the state and country," he said.

Visva Bharati SFI unit leader Somnath Sow said "We are waiting how far the varsity will go. And our members will do whatever needed to avert any eviction drive as per law." Visva Bharati spokesperson Mahua Banerjee said, "As specified in the notice, Visva Bharati had given several opportunities to Sen to reply to the show cause even before the start of proceedings. However, he did not respond to the issues raised in any of the aforesaid notices while his lead advocate sent a notice to express apology in all the print and electronic media for making fictitious, false, mala fide remarks."

Stating there is no challenge to the assertion that the scheduled premises belong to Visva-Bharati, of which 1.25 acres had been leased to Sen's father in the 40s and the 13 decimals of land occupied by him in "unauthorised" manner, she said, adding that the central university would have the right to take any action deemed legally appropriate to free the "encroachment" by May 6. To another question, if the university would wait till Sen's return to India in June to settle the matter, she said "may be not. Whatever steps are taken will be done as per law. Let's see."

Tiger estimation report to be released in July



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 20: A comprehensive tiger estimation report of West Bengal to be released in July is expected to throw light on the "real situation" about the population of big cats in three forest reserves of north Bengal, a top wildlife official said.

A detailed analysis will reveal if the three forest reserves - Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary, Neora Valley National Park and Buxa Tiger Reserve - can be classified as tiger reserves or described as places with a floating population of big cats, Bengal's chief wildlife warden Debal Roy said.

"We will give details in the comprehensive tiger estimation report of the state which will come out by July. As of now I can only say the findings at the three places in north Bengal is encouraging. There had been indications about the presence of tigers in these areas for a long, especially in Neora Valley National Park. Now there is reason to believe it is true," Roy said.

Several anti-poaching measures taken by the forest department in the last few years and a sustained public awareness campaign, involving locals, are now yielding results, the official said.

"A detailed analysis will give a comprehensive idea about the real situation," the chief wildlife warden said. Earlier tiger estimation reports had highlighted the concentration of big cats in the

■ Camera trap images had revealed the presence of big cats at Neora Valley National Park and Buxa Tiger Reserve

■ The tigers could have come from neighbouring Bhutan and Assam using a forested corridor dotted by rivers, an official said

Sunderbans where the last census put the figure at 100 based on camera trap technique.

Roy said the wide prey base and the conducive habitat contributed to the sustained growth of tigers, especially in the Sunderbans. "In Sunderbans, there is a wide and uniform distribution of deer and the forest department regularly releases deer in the Sajnekhali deer reserve area. There is also a significant population of wild pigs in the Sunderbans which help in creating an eco-system," he added.

State Forest Minister Jyotipriyo Mallick had earlier voiced dissatisfaction over the non-inclusion of the number of tigers in places such as Neora Valley National Park and Buxa Tiger Reserve in the all India report, released by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, recently.

Camera trap images had revealed the presence of big cats at Neora Valley National Park and Buxa Tiger Reserve. The tigers could have come from neighbouring Bhutan and Assam using a forested corridor dotted by rivers, the official said.

Mamata dials Stalin

Mamata Banerjee's telephonic conversation with Stalin comes at a time when the Raj Bhavan- State secretariat tiff in West Bengal has reached new heights over various issues



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, April 20: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had called her counterpart in Tamil Nadu M.K. Stalin and discussed the issue of the role of Governors in the different opposition- ruled states in the country.

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has himself informed about Mamata Banerjee calling him on this particular issue through a Twitter message on Wednesday. "Hon WB CM & Mamata Official spoke to me over phone to express her solidarity & admiration for our initiatives against the undemocratic functioning of Governor in non- BJP ruled states & suggested that all the Opposition CMs meet to decide the next course of action," Stalin's Twitter message read.

Mamata Banerjee's telephonic conversation with M.K. Stalin comes at a time when the Raj Bhavan-State secretariat tiff in West Bengal has reached new heights over various

issues. The latest being the clashes over Ram Navami in certain pockets of the state and the Governor C.V. Ananda Bose's surprise visits to different universities. On April 14, state education minister Basu launched a scathing attack against the governor over the latter's recent survey visits to different state universities.

"The manner in which the Governor is roaming around like a white elephant to different universities is not realistic, proper or as per the norms. We never showed any arrogance towards the new Governor. We want to cooperate with him. But he is misusing his powers and going beyond his limits again and again," Basu told mediapersons on that day. The minister also questioned the Governor's authority to sanction funds for the universities. "The funds announced by the Governor will come from the state exchequer. How can he make such announcements without consulting the education department," Basu asked.

BEAR STUCK IN WELL DIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, April 20: In a tragic turn of events, a giant bear which fell into a well in a residential area here Thursday died as it was under the water for over an hour subsequent to being tranquilized.

The rescue attempts took an unexpected and tragic turn when the animal went under the water after being tranquilised and could not be reached by the Forest officials and locals - who immediately entered the well - due to the depth of the water in it, according to visuals on TV



channels. A forest official said that a net was placed under the bear prior to tranquilizing it, but it could not contain the animal which slipped into the water and then went under the water after becoming unconscious. The calculations of the rescue

personnel about the depth of water in the well went wrong as they could not reach the animal after it went under water. Subsequently, a large amount of water from the well was pumped out using two motors and thereafter, fire force personnel entered the well and brought out the unconscious bear - which had been trapped inside the well for over 10 hours - in a net.

The bear was unconscious and appeared lifeless while it was loaded onto a Forest department vehicle and taken for medical examination.

Diet changed, coolers set up to beat the heat

The Kolkata Corporation has been asked to pump more water to the zoo as temperatures soared and animals tended to wallow in the small pools and baths that dot the garden

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 20: As Kolkata sized at 40-42 degrees Celsius, authorities at the more than 147-year-old Alipore zoo have come up with water sprinklers, special diets to beat dehydration, ice-blocks and bamboo sheds to keep the denizens of the zoological garden cool.

The Kolkata Corporation has been asked to pump more water to the zoo as temperatures soared and animals tended to wallow in the



small pools and baths that dot the garden.

"We are mixing oral rehydration solution (ORS) powder with the drinking water of animals and birds at the zoo. Ice blocks or ice cubes are also being put in tubs of some animals where they bathe," West Bengal Forest Minister Jyotipriyo Mullick said.

Besides, bamboo mats have been placed over some enclosures to keep the place dark and cool and water sprinklers have been deployed to keep the elephants in good humour. Similar steps are being taken across all the zoos in the state, wherever necessary, the minister said.

He also said that the zoo will

need more water and therefore he has written to the Kolkata Municipal Corporation asking them to pump more to the zoo which was inaugurated by the then Prince of Wales who later became King Edward VII in 1876.

So far, none of the animals and birds has fallen ill due to the heat, the minister said. "We had noticed that many animals in the zoo had cut down on their food intake during the ongoing heat-wave conditions and hence started taking special steps to give them relief," the minister said.

According to officials of the West Bengal Zoo Authority, misting is being carried out in individual animal enclosures in the zoo. A fog misting system creates a dry fog that reduces temperatures.

Air coolers have been placed in some enclosures and the water for birds is being changed twice,

the officials said. "All animals and birds are being given ORS twice a day and the timing of their meals has been changed. Water is being sprayed on the bellies and backs of tigers, lions and bears. It is also being ensured that their paws remain moist", they said.

The quantity of green vegetables has been increased for herbivores and fruits with more water content, such as watermelons and seasonal fruits have been increased for birds, an official said.

Veterinarians are on alert in case any animal falls ill. Besides, the zoo keepers are visiting all the enclosures thrice a day, the official said. As the heat is often fiercer than usual, measures have been taken to maintain the humidity level at above 60 per cent in the enclosure for snakes so that the reptiles do not suffer from fluid loss, the official said.

national

of the day quote

No decision has been taken on announcing a Lingayat leader as BJP candidate for the Chief Minister's post

In Punjab state also there was a similar situation. The voters have confidence in AAP, and based on the development work taken up in Delhi made a common man like me as the Chief Minister of Punjab. This trend will replicate in Karnataka as well

India attaches special importance to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in promoting dialogue on multi-dimensional political, security and economic subjects

SHORT TAKES

CUET-PG to be held from June 5-12

New Delhi: The Common University Entrance Test-PG for admission to postgraduate programmes in universities across the country will be conducted from June 5-12, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced Thursday. Candidates can apply for the exam till May 5. The application deadline earlier was April 19. "Common University Entrance Test (CUET)-PG will be conducted on June 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. Candidates are advised to regularly visit the NTA website for the latest updates regarding the examination," a senior official said.

1.4 kg gold seized at Delhi airport

New Delhi: Customs officials at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport here recovered 1.4 kg gold valued at ₹7,49,295.4 after searching an aircraft used for international flights. A customs official said they got intelligence inputs about this. "On the basis of input received and further developed by customs officers at IGI Airport, an aircraft used for international flights was searched upon completion of its international trip. During the search, customs officers found two objects affixed/stuck with adhesive tape on the upper side panel of the starboard side lavatory of the flight," said the official.

4 charred to death

Arvali: At least four workers were charred to death after a blaze broke out in a firecracker godown near Modasa town in Gujarat's Aravalli district Thursday evening, officials said. Charred bodies of four workers were recovered from the scene, Arvali Superintendent of Police Sanjay Kharat said. A local fire department official said that efforts are underway to control the blaze. He said a major fire call was declared and a rescue operation was going on with the help of teams from the Gandhinagar and Himmatnagar municipalities.

Man shot dead

Sambhal (UP): A 35-year-old man was allegedly shot dead following a dispute in the Rajpura area of this Uttar Pradesh district, police said Thursday. Superintendent of Police Chakresh Mishra said information was received that Malkhan Singh Yadav of Mehua Hasanganj village was allegedly shot following a dispute over keeping straw. Yadav was taken to the hospital by his family members but he succumbed during treatment, the police said.



Today is a black day in the democratic history of the country, which takes pride in being mother of democracy. The way Rahul Gandhi is being treated shows that BJP wants to end democracy. They want to establish one party system -- The BJP 'Rashtra' -- by sidelining the Constitution

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

150 FALL SICK DUE TO FOOD POISONING

Around 150 people fell ill after eating food at a village fair in Jharkhand's Dhanbad district, an official said. The incident occurred Wednesday evening in Huchuktand village of Dhanbad district. The Bhokta fair was organised on the occasion of a religious event and many food stalls were set up. Many people who ate food at the stalls complained of stomach pain, diarrhea, and vomiting after returning from the fair



UP cops recreate crime scene of Atiq, Ashraf killing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Prayagraj, April 20: UP Police Thursday recreated the crime scene outside the hospital in Prayagraj where gangster-politician Atiq Ahmad and his brother Ashraf were shot dead by three men on live television.

Members of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) and the forensic team visited the area outside Colvin Hospital to understand the sequence of events leading to the killing of Ahmad and his brother on the night of April 15. The policemen who were escorting Ahmad and Ashraf during the shootout were also called to the spot.

The three shooters were not brought to the crime scene. A heavy police deployment was made as the officials recreated the sequence of events beginning from Ahmad and Ashraf getting down from the police jeep until the firing by the three men who posed as mediapersons.



ADG Bhanu Bhaskar, Police Commissioner Ramit Sharma and Joint Commissioner of Police Akash Kulhari were present when the scene was being recreated. Police said recreating the crime scene is likely to provide clues in the investigation and on the basis of them the accused can be interrogated.

Situation in Sudan 'very tense': MEA

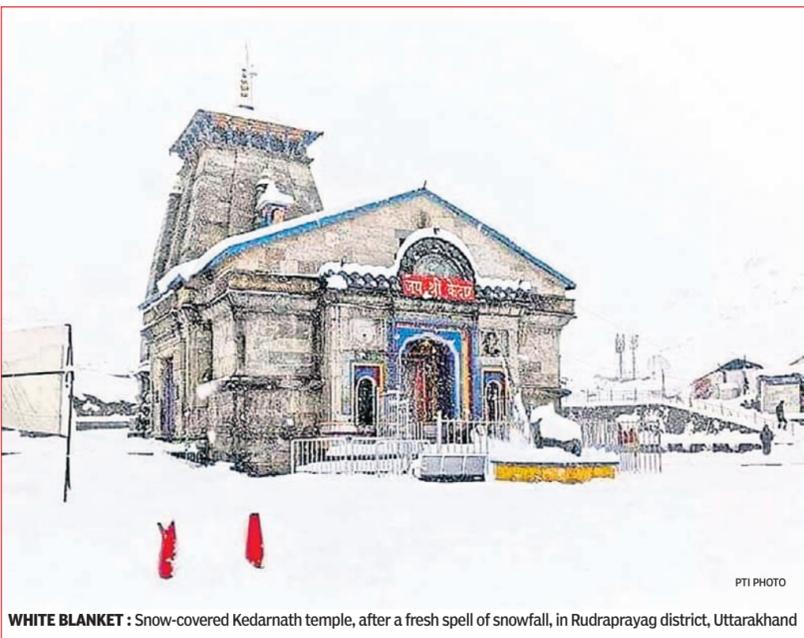
AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 20: As fighting between two rival forces rages in Sudan, India Thursday said the situation in that country is "very tense" and it is focusing on ensuring the safety and well-being of the Indian community, including working on contingency plans and possible evacuation.

New Delhi is keeping a close watch on the developments in Sudan besides being in touch with relevant countries, External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said at a media briefing and added that any evacuation plan will depend on the ground situation.

"We are in readiness of taking multiple options. There are contingency plans. We are in close touch with our teams on the ground. But it will all depend on how long there is a pause in the fighting or a ceasefire; where it is happening, what is available in terms of locations where we can safely take people away," he said.

Bagchi also said External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is expected to meet UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in New York on the situation in Sudan. Sudan has been witnessing deadly fighting between the country's army and a paramilitary group for the last seven days that has reportedly left around 200 people dead.



WHITE BLANKET : Snow-covered Kedarnath temple, after a fresh spell of snowfall, in Rudraprayag district, Uttarakhand

NARODA GAM MASSACRE CASE

Court acquits all accused

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, April 20: More than two decades after 11 Muslim community members were killed in the post-Godhra riots in Ahmedabad's Naroda Gam, a special court here Thursday acquitted all the 67 accused in the case, including former Gujarat minister Maya Kodnani and ex-Bajrang Dal leader Babu Bajrangli.

The Ahmedabad-based court of S K Baxi, special judge for Special Investigation Team (SIT) cases, acquitted all the accused in one of the worst massacres witnessed during the state-wide riots triggered by the Sabarmati train carnage February 27, 2002. The Naroda Gam case was probed by a Supreme Court-appointed SIT. A detailed court order was awaited.

Soon after the brief verdict was announced, some of the accused raised slogans of 'Jai Shri Ram' and 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' outside the court. Those acquitted include former Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) minister in the Gujarat government Kodnani (67), former VHP leader Jaydeep Patel and ex-Bajrang Dal leader Babu Bajrangli.

There were a total of 86 accused in the case, of which 18 died during the pendency of the trial, while one was discharged by the court earlier under section 169 of the CrPC (Code of Criminal Procedure) due to insufficient evidence against him. The CrPC section 169 relates to release of accused when evidence is deficient.

Reacting to her acquittal, Kodnani, who was a minister in the government headed by then-Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi, said, "The truth has truly won today." Advocate Chetan Shah, who represented 82 out of the 86 accused, said he made sure "innocents" were acquitted for which he presented a written argument in the court running into 7,719 pages. Advocate Shahshad Pathan, who represented the vic-



Vishva Hindu Parishad member Jaydeep Patel arrives in the court

■ The case pertains to the killing of 11 members of a minority community during communal riots in Gujarat. The verdict was delivered by special judge Shubhada Baxi

■ This case is among the nine major riots in Gujarat that ensued after the burning of the Sabarmati Express in Godhra February 27, 2002

■ Despite the Supreme Court's monitoring of designated courts for speedy trials of the 2002 Gujarat riot cases, it took several years to reach a verdict in the Naroda Gam case

tims, said the acquittal order will be challenged in the Gujarat High Court. "We will study the grounds on which the special court decided to acquit all the accused and challenge the order in the High Court. It appears the victims have been denied justice. The question remains as to who burnt 11 persons to death in the presence of policemen?" Pathan said. One of the accused who was acquitted said the special court's judgment has exposed those who conspired to frame innocents like him.

"The court has passed its order after studying all the aspects of the case. That the truth always wins has been proved again today," he said. The accused were booked under Indian Penal Code sections 302 (murder), 307 (attempt to murder), 143 (unlawful assembly), 147 (rioting), 148 (rioting armed with deadly weapons), 120 (B) (criminal conspiracy), and 153 (provocation for riots), among others. Riots broke out in the Naroda Gam area of Ahmedabad on February 28, 2002, during a

bandh called to protest the torching of the S-6 coach of Sabarmati Express by a mob near Godhra station a day earlier. As many as 58 train passengers, mostly kar-sevaks returning from Ayodhya, were charred to death."

The then-BJP president Amit Shah, now Union Home Minister, had in September 2017 appeared in the trial court as a defence witness for Kodnani. Former BJP minister Kodnani had requested the court to summon Shah to prove her alibi that she was present in the Gujarat Assembly and later at Ahmedabad's Sola Civil Hospital, and not at Naroda Gam, where the massacre took place. Six different judges have presided over the case.

When the trial started in 2010, S H Vora was the presiding judge. He was later elevated to the Gujarat High Court. Special judges who subsequently handled the case included Jyotsna Yagnik, KK Bhatt and PB Desai, all of whom retired during the pendency of the trial.

Assam, Arunachal sign pact to resolve border disputes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: Ending their over 50-year-old border dispute, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh Thursday signed an agreement in presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah here which will bring settlement to 123 villages located along areas the two northeastern states share.

Assam and Arunachal Pradesh share an 804.1-km-long border which has been in dispute since the latter was made a union territory in 1972. Shah said the dispute over 123 villages on both sides of the inter-state border has been resolved once and for all at a time when the country is celebrating its 75th year of Independence.

He said it was a historic event for both Assam and Arunachal Pradesh resolving their long boundary dispute amicably.

Shah exuded optimism that the boundary settlement would usher in all-round development and peace in the Northeast as the agreement ended the border dispute which has been lingering since 1972. "It is a big moment for the entire northeastern region which has been witnessing all round development ever since the Narendra Modi government came to power in 2014," he said.

The home minister said Modi has been actively promoting the growth of languages, literature

and culture of the Northeast and the recent record-breaking performance of Bihu dance was a shining example.

He said that the report of the Local Commission on the border dispute kept circling around for decades, which has now been accepted by both the states. Shah said today's agreement will prove to be a milestone in the direction of realising Modi's dream of a developed, peaceful and conflict-free Northeast. Shah said that since 2018, the central government has signed several accords including with Bru tribals, insurgent groups NLFT and some belonging to Assam's Karbi Anglong and es-

He said as compared to 2014, there has been a 67 per cent reduction in incidents of violence, 60 per cent reduction in the

number of deaths of security forces and 83 per cent reduction in the number of civilian deaths in the Northeast, which is a big achievement. The home minister said the Modi government has withdrawn the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act from most of places in Assam, 15 police stations in 6 districts in Manipur, all but 3 districts in Arunachal Pradesh, 7 districts in Nagaland, and entire Tripura and Meghalaya.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma (L) and Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu during signing of the boundary agreement between the two states in New Delhi

Sisodia kingpin of conspiracy, CBI tells HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: The CBI Thursday claimed before the Delhi High Court that former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, arrested in connection with the excise policy scam case, is involved in commission of grave economic offences and is key to unravelling the modus operandi of the crime.

The submissions were made by the CBI in a short written reply while opposing the senior AAP leader's bail plea, which it said was devoid of any merit and was an attempt to misuse the intricacies of law to thwart the progress of investigation in the case. While

the CBI contended that Sisodia is the "kingpin and architect of the conspiracy" and his influence and clout disentitle him to any parity with the co-accused enlarged on bail, the AAP leader urged the high court to grant him bail claiming no money trail linking him to the proceeds of alleged crime has been found.

His lawyers had sought parity for him with other accused who have got the relief and said Sisodia is not in a position to influence the witnesses in the case or tamper with evidence. On March 31, the trial court here had dismissed Sisodia's bail plea in the matter, saying he was "prima facie the architect" of the "scam".

Heatwaves may burden health, agriculture: Study

Heat waves made more likely by climate change may impede India's progress towards its sustainable development goals

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 20: Heatwaves in India are increasing in frequency, intensity and lethality, burdening public health, agriculture, and other socio-economic and cultural systems, says a study.

The study, "Lethal heat waves are challenging India's sustainable development" published in PLOS Climate by Ramit Debnath of University of Cambridge, Britain, and colleagues, suggests heatwaves made more likely by climate change may impede India's progress toward its sustainable development goals.

The intensity and frequency of heat waves are going to increase in the future due to cli-

mate change and governments need to act now to prevent worse impacts on public health and food security, experts said.

India has committed to achieving 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), including no poverty, good health and well being, and decent work and economic growth. However, current climate vulnerability assessments may not fully capture how heatwaves linked to climate change may impact SDG progress.

In order to analyse India's climate vulnerability, and how climate change may impact SDG progress, researchers conducted an analytical evaluation of India's heat index with its climate vulnerability index, a composite index



using various indicators to account for socioeconomic, livelihood, and biophysical factors. They accessed a publicly available dataset on state-level climate vulnerability indicators from the Indian government's national data and analytics platform to classify

severity categories. The researchers then compared India's progress in SDG over 20 years (2001-2021) with extreme weather-related mortality from 2001-2021.

The researchers found that heatwaves have weakened SDG progress more than previously estimated

and that current assessment metrics may not sufficiently capture the nuances of India's vulnerabilities to climate change impacts.

For instance, in estimating heat index, the study shows that nearly 90 per cent of the country is in danger zone from heatwave impact.

According to climate vulnerability index, around 20 per cent of the country is highly vulnerable to climate change. Similar effects were observed for the national capital, where heatwave impact estimates shows almost all of Delhi is threatened by severe heatwave impacts, which is not reflected in its recent state action plan for climate change.

However, this study had several limitations, for example the incongruent timeframe for climate vulnerability index data (2019-2020) and heat index data (2022). Future studies should incorporate more recent data.

According to the authors, "This study shows that heatwaves make more Indian states vulnerable to climate change than previously estimated with the climate vulnerability index.

Heat waves claimed more than 17,000 lives in 50 years in India, according to a paper authored by M Rajeevan, former secretary of the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences, along with scientists Kamaljit Ray, S S Ray, R K Giri and A P Dimri. Above-normal heatwave days are expected in most parts of central, east, and northwest India during this period. In 2023, India experienced its hottest February since record-keeping began in 1901. However, above-normal rainfall in March kept temperatures in check.

March 2022 was the warmest ever and the third driest in 121 years. The year also saw the country's third-warmest April since 1901.

international

of the day quote

The judiciary must reassess its role and become the protector of Constitution
SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PAKISTAN PM

Washington is not seeking to decouple the American economy from China's
KATHERINE TAI | US TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Uruguay received 1,219,198 foreign visitors in the first quarter of 2023, 11.6 per cent up from the same period in 2019
TABARÉ VIERA DUARTE | MINISTER OF TOURISM OF URUGUAY

SHORT TAKES

Sudanese military rules out talks

Khartoum: Sudan's military ruled out negotiations with a rival paramilitary force on Thursday, saying it would only accept its surrender as the two sides continued to battle in central Khartoum and other parts of the country, threatening to wreck the latest attempt at a ceasefire. The military's statement raised the likelihood of a renewed surge in the nearly week-long violence that has pushed Sudan's population to the breaking point. Alarm has grown that the country's medical system was on the verge of collapse, with many hospitals forced to shut down and others running out of supplies.

Imran's Instagram head abducted

Lahore: Authorities in Pakistan allegedly abducted the Instagram head of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf here Thursday as part of the federal government's ongoing crackdown against social media activists from ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan's party. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in collaboration with the intelligence agencies and police have launched a nationwide operation against social media activists, especially of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party following an alleged online smear campaign against Pakistan Army chief Gen Asim Munir.

Four protesters released on bail

Taipei: Officials in Beijing have released four women on bail who were arrested for joining rare nationwide protests in late November against China's tough anti-coronavirus policies, an activist said. One of the women, former book editor Cao Zhixin, had recorded a video before her detention saying, "If you're watching this, it means that I have been taken away by the police."

'Awesome' solar eclipse wows viewers in Australia, Indonesia

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jakarta, April 20: Under a cloudless sky, 20,000 eclipse chasers crowded a tiny outpost to watch a rare solar eclipse plunge part of Australia's northwest coast into brief midday darkness Thursday while temporarily cooling the tropical heat.

The remote tourist town of Exmouth, with fewer than 3,000 residents, was promoted as one of the best vantage points in Australia to see the eclipse that also crossed remote parts of Indonesia and East Timor. An international crowd had been gathering for days, camping in tents and trailers on a red, dusty plain on the edge of town with cameras and other viewing equipment pointed skyward.

NASA astronomer Henry Throop was among those at Exmouth cheer-

SpaceX giant rocket explodes after launch

ASSOCIATED PRESS

South Padre Island, April 20: SpaceX's giant new rocket blasted off on its first test flight Thursday but exploded minutes after rising from the launch pad and crashed into the Gulf of Mexico.

Elon Musk's company was aiming to send the nearly 400-foot (120-metre) Starship rocket on a round-the-world trip from the southern tip of Texas, near the Mexican border. It carried no people or satellites.

The plan called for the booster to peel away from the spacecraft minutes after liftoff, but that didn't happen.

The rocket began to tumble and then exploded four minutes into the flight, plummeting into the gulf.

After separating, the spacecraft



was supposed to continue east and attempt to circle the world, before crashing into the Pacific near Hawaii.

Throngs of spectators watched from South Padre Island, several miles away from the Boca Chica Beach launch site, which was off

limits. As it lifted off, the crowd screamed: "Go, baby, go!"

The company plans to use Starship to send people and cargo to the moon and, eventually, Mars. NASA has reserved a Starship for its next moonwalking team, and rich tourists are already booking

lunar flybys.

It was the second launch attempt. Monday's try was scrapped by a frozen booster valve.

At 394 feet and nearly 17 million pounds of thrust, Starship easily surpasses NASA's moon rockets — past, present and future. The stainless steel rocket is designed to be fully reusable with fast turnaround, dramatically lowering costs, similar to what SpaceX's smaller Falcon rockets have done soaring from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

Nothing was to be saved from the test flight.

The futuristic spacecraft flew several miles into the air during testing a few years ago, landing successfully only once. But this was to be the inaugural launch of the first-stage booster with 33 methane-fuelled engines.

78 killed, 73 hurt in Yemen stampede

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sanaa, April 20: A crowd apparently spooked by gunfire and an electrical explosion stampeded at an event to distribute financial aid during the Muslim holy month of Ramzan in Yemen's capital late Wednesday, killing at least 78 people and injuring at least 73 others, according to witnesses and Houthi rebel officials.

The tragedy was the deadliest in years that was not related to Yemen's long-running war, and came ahead of the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of Ramzan later this week.

Armed Houthis fired into the air in an attempt at crowd control, apparently striking an electrical wire and causing it to explode, according to two witnesses, Abdel-Rahman Ahmed and Yahia Mohsen. That sparked a panic, and people, including many women and children, began stampeding, they said.

Video posted on social media showed dozens of bodies, some motionless, and others screaming as people tried to help. Separate footage of the aftermath released by Houthi officials showed bloodstains, shoes and victims' clothing scattered on the ground. Investigators were seen examining the area.

The crush took place in the Old City in the center of Sanaa, where hundreds of poor people had gathered for a charity event organized by merchants, according to the

Houthi-run Interior Ministry. Distributing financial aid is a ritual during Ramadan, when the faithful fast from dawn to dusk.

People had gathered to receive about \$10 each from a charity funded by local businessmen, witnesses said. Wealthy people and businessmen often hand out cash and food, especially to the poor during Ramadan.

Interior Ministry spokesman Brig. Abdel-Khaleq al-Aghri, blamed the crush on the "random distribution" of funds without coordination with local authorities.

Motaher al-Maroumi, a senior health official, said 78 people were killed, according to the rebels' Al-Masirah satellite TV channel. At least 73 others were injured and taken to the al-Thowra Hospital in Sanaa, according to hospital deputy director Hamdan Bagheri.

The rebels quickly sealed off a school where the event was being held and barred people, including journalists, from approaching. The Interior Ministry said it had detained two organizers and an investigation was under way.

The Houthis said they would pay some \$2,000 in compensation to each family who lost a relative, while the injured would get around \$400. Yemen's capital has been under the control of the Iranian-backed Houthis since they descended from their northern stronghold in 2014 and removed the internationally recognized government.



ON THE BOIL: Demonstrators holding flares invade the Euronext Paris building in protest to the pension reforms at La Defense business district in Paris AP/PTI

NATO CHIEF VISITS KYIV

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, April 20: NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg defiantly declared Thursday that Ukraine deserves to join the military alliance and pledged continuing support for the country on his first visit to Kyiv since Russia's invasion just over a year ago.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged Stoltenberg, who has been instrumental in marshalling support from NATO's members, to push for even more from them, including warplanes, artillery and armoured equipment.

The Kremlin has given various justifications for going to war, but repeated Thursday that preventing Ukraine from joining NATO was a key goal behind its invasion, arguing that Kyiv's membership in the alliance would pose an existential threat to Russia.

NATO leaders said in 2008 that Ukraine would join the alliance one day, and Stoltenberg has repeated that promise throughout the course of the war — though the organization has established no pathway or timetable for membership.

"Let me be clear: Ukraine's rightful place is in the Euro-Atlantic family," Stoltenberg told a press



NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg talks during a joint press conference with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv, Ukraine AP/PTI

conference. "Ukraine's rightful place is in NATO." He said he and Zelenskyy discussed a NATO support program. "This will help you transition from Soviet-era equipment and doctrines to NATO standards and ensure full interoperability with the alliance," Stoltenberg said. "NATO stands with you today, tomorrow and for as long as it takes."

He noted Thursday's announcement by Denmark and the Netherlands that they plan to provide Ukraine with at least another 14 refurbished Leopard 2 battle tanks from early 2024. He added

Pak minister to visit India in May

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, April 20: Pakistan Thursday announced that Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari would travel to India next month to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting, a development that could provide an opportunity to break the ice between the two neighbours.

"Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will be leading the Pakistan delegation to the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) being held on May 4-5, 2023, in Goa, India," Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahrah Baloch announced at a weekly media briefing here, ending weeks-long speculation if he would attend the conference in person amidst major differences between the two nuclear-armed neighbours.

She said the foreign minister would be attending the meeting as External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had invited him to at-



tend the SCO moot. "Our participation in the meeting reflects Pakistan's commitment to the SCO Charter and processes and the importance that Pakistan accords to the region in its foreign policy priorities," Baloch said.

It would be the highest-level visit to India by any Pakistani leader in recent years and a possible opportunity to break the ice between the two nations. The ties between India and Pakistan came under severe strain after India's warplanes pounded a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist training camp in Pakistan's Balakot in February 2019 in response to the Pulwama terror attack.

Indian climber found alive

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, April 20: Indian climber Anurag Maloo, who went missing Monday after falling into a deep crevasse on Nepal's Mount Annapurna, has been found alive in critical condition by rescuers, his brother said Thursday.

Anurag, 34, a resident of Kishangarh in Rajasthan, went missing on Monday after he fell from around 6,000 metres while descending from Camp III. Mount Annapurna is the 10th highest mountain in the world. "He is found alive. He has been taken to the hospital in critical condition, but he is still alive," Sudhir Maloo, his brother, said.

"We will have to shift our focus towards the medical side now," Sudhir added. The rescue team that went looking for him in the crevasse he had fallen into has found and rescued him, according to



Sudhir. Seven Summit Treks confirmed Anurag had been found alive by seven Nepali climbers some 300 meters down into a crevasse, Myrepublica news portal reported.

He has been airlifted to Pokhara's Manjil Hospital, the report said. "His health is very critical. Doctors are looking after him," said Thaneswar Guragain, the general manager of Seven Summit Treks. A team of six Sherpa climbers led by Chhang Dawa conducted a ground search and found him in some 300m deep crevasse on Thursday morning, said Mingma Sherpa, Chairman at Seven Summit Treks.

Renowned Polish climber Adam Bielecki and his friend also joined the ground search and rescue team to locate Anurag. "His condition is very critical," hospital sources confirmed, The Himalayan Times newspaper reported.



tingling. "I feel so emotional, like I could cry. The colour changed from the corona and sun flares..." Copson said.

"It was very strong and the tem-

perature dropped so much," she added, referring to a sudden 5-degree-Celsius (9-degree-Fahrenheit) fall in temperature from 29 degrees Celsius (84 Fahrenheit) when the

moon's shadow enveloped the region. It was the fifth eclipse for Detroit resident Shane Varrti, who began planning his trip to Exmouth a year ago. "It's very exciting. All this effort has come to fruition," Varrti said.

In Indonesia's capital, hundreds came to the Jakarta Planetarium to see the partial eclipse that was obscured by clouds. Azka Azzahra, 21, came with her sister and friends to get a closer look by using the telescopes with hundreds of other visitors.

"I am still happy to come even though it is cloudy. It is happy to see how people with high enthusiasm come here to see the eclipse, because it is rare," Azzahra said. The call to prayer resounded from the city's mosques when the eclipse phase began as Muslims in the country with the world's largest

Muslim population said eclipse prayers as a reminder of God's greatness.

In East Timor, people gathered around the beach in Lautem municipality, waiting to witness the rare solar eclipse through their eclipse glasses. Some of them came from other countries and gathered with locals to have a clear view of the eclipse.

"Timor Leste is one of the unique countries where the experience is less humid, less cloudy, so we are expecting a clear sky, that's why many international astronomers wish to converge here. We are hoping that there is going to be a clear sky," Zahri Bin Ahmad, astrophile from the South East Asia Astronomy Network of Brunei said as they waited Thursday. People cheered as the sun and moon reached maximum eclipse.

of the day quote

The outlook (solar capacity) is very positive on the back of various steps taken by the government to help and support the domestic renewable energy sector

RAJ PRABHU | CEO, MERCOR CAPITAL

India's quick service restaurant industry is likely to witness 20-25 pc growth in the current financial year supported by demand uptick and increasing penetration driven by a rapid expansion of stores

SUPRIYO BANERJEE | VP & SECTOR HEAD (CORPORATE RATINGS), ICRA LIMITED

Adoption of technology is important. We have to reduce the cost. Unless we make flats at an affordable price, we cannot achieve Housing For All

ANAND KUMAR | CHAIRMAN, DELHI-NRERA

SHORT TAKES

HCL Tech Q4 net profit rises 11%

New Delhi: IT company HCL Technologies Thursday posted a 10.85 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to ₹3,983 crore in the fourth quarter of financial year ended March 2023. The company had posted a net profit of ₹3,599 crore in the same period a year ago. HCL Technologies' profit, however, declined on quarter-over-quarter basis by about 3 per cent from ₹4,096 crore - its highest ever profit in any quarter. The company's revenue from operations rose by about 18 per cent to ₹26,606 crore during the reported quarter from ₹22,597 crore in the March 2022 quarter. However, sequentially, its revenue declined marginally from ₹26,700 it reported in the third quarter.

Apple opens its 2nd store in Delhi

New Delhi: Apple chief executive Tim Cook Thursday welcomed customers at the company's first store opened in the national capital and second in the country. Located at Select Citywalk Mall in Delhi, the barricade for Apple Saket features a unique design that takes inspiration from Delhi's many gates. However, the Saket store is smaller than the Apple store opened in Jio World Drive at Bandra Kurla Complex Tuesday. The Apple Saket store in Delhi is half the size of the Mumbai store where the company will pay a portion of total sales from the store as rent or ₹40 lakh per month.

Strike-hit Blinkit stores start ops

New Delhi: Most of the stores of quick commerce player Blinkit have resumed operations after being affected by strike of delivery partners, according to a regulatory filing by Zomato. Blinkit, formerly known as Grofers India, was acquired last year by Zomato. Recently the operations of the platform were affected by the strike of delivery partners who were protesting against reduction in payouts per order.

Koo sacks 30%

Mumbai: Home-grown social media platform Koo has fired 30 per cent of its staff in recent months, a report said Thursday. A spokesperson of the Tiger Global-backed company was quoted in the report as saying that the global sentiment is currently more focused on efficiency than growth and businesses need to work toward proving unit economics. The company, before the layoffs, had around 260 employees. Last year, it laid off 15 employees.



I am very confident that this Apple-India partnership has a lot of headroom for investments, growth, exports and jobs - doubling and tripling over coming years

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR | UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND IT

WIPRO TO LAUNCH SNACK BRAND

Wipro Consumer Care and Lighting Thursday announced the acquisition of Brahmins - a Kerala-based traditional vegetarian, spice mix and ready-to-cook brand - and it has also drawn up plans to launch its snacks brand targeting the southern market



Monetary tightening cycle not over: MPC minutes

The central bank, which effected six back-to-back hikes in the key short-term lending rate since May 2022 to check high inflation, decided to take a pause early this month. The cumulative rate hike since May 2022 is 250 basis points

REUTERS

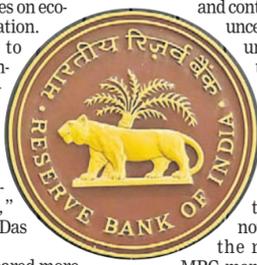
Mumbai, April 20: India's current rate tightening cycle may not be over as more hikes could be warranted to align inflation towards the central bank's medium term target of 4%, minutes of this month's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting showed Thursday. The MPC, comprising three members from the central bank and three external members, surprised markets by holding the key lending rate steady at 6.50% April 6 in a unanimous decision, going against expectations for a 25 bps increase. A poll conducted after the April 6 meeting showed the MPC will

likely keep interest rates unchanged at least until the end of this fiscal year as it evaluates the delayed impact of previous hikes on economic growth and inflation.

"We will continue to monitor all incoming information and undertake forward-looking assessment of the evolving economic outlook and stand ready to act, should the situation so warrant," Governor Shaktikanta Das said. Most members appeared more concerned about inflation than in their commentary after the previous policy meeting in February

when the bank raised rates by 25 bps.

"Because of erratic weather and continuing global uncertainties, and until it is clear that inflation is well on the path to reaching the target, it is necessary to emphasise that this may not be the end of the rate hikes," MPC member Ashima Goyal said. The decision by OPEC+ to cut crude output and the possibility of



It is clear that the war against inflation has not yet been won, and it would be premature to declare an end to this tightening cycle

JAYANT VARMA | MEMBER, MPC

weak monsoon rains could both push up inflation in India and necessitate a monetary policy response, Varma said.

"On the growth front, early warning signs of a possible slowdown are visible to a greater extent than in February. In the current situation of high inflation, monetary policy does not have the luxury of responding to these growth

headwinds."

Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor Michael Patra said the process of getting inflation back to target could turn out to be gradual and uneven, but the MPC should shepherd the process through potential bumps while containing second-round effects and anchoring inflation expectations.

The government has mandated the central bank to ensure that retail inflation based on the consumer price index (CPI) remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side. The retail inflation in March fell to a 15-month low of 5.66 per cent and came back to the Reserve Bank's comfort level of 6 per cent.

Nokia Q1 net sales surge 10% as India biz jumps four-fold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: Finnish telecom gear maker Nokia Thursday reported a 10 per cent increase in global net sales to 5,859 million euros in the first quarter ended March 2023, on account of over a four-fold jump in Indian business. The company registered 5,348 million euros in net sales in the same period a year ago. Boost in Indian sales saved the company from the reduced spending in North America and other geographies.

Nokia India sales zoomed by over four-fold to 853 million euros during the reported quarter from 200 million euros in the March 2022 quarter on account of fast pace deployment of the 5G network in the country. Nokia reported a 9 per cent or 160 million euros dip in North American business to 1,666 million euros from 1,826 million euros on a year-on-year basis.

Overall Nokia's business came down by 272 million euros but India alone added net sales of 653 million euros. India is the third biggest contributor to overall sales of Nokia after the US and Europe.

Dalal Street sees topsy-turvy trade

EQUITY MARKETS SETTLE WITH MARGINAL GAINS IN HIGHLY VOLATILE TRADE



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 20: Market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended with marginal gains Thursday after falling in the past three days, helped by fag-end buying in energy, telecom and utility stocks.

Investors remained cautious amid renewed foreign fund outflows and prevailing risk-off sentiments ahead of US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision, traders said.

In a highly volatile trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 64.55 points or 0.11 per cent to settle at 59,632.35. During the day, it hit a high of 59,836.79 and a low of 59,489.98. The broader NSE Nifty went up by 5.70 points or 0.03 per cent to finish at 17,624.45.

Falling for the third day the BSE Sensex declined 159.21 points or 0.27 per cent to settle at 59,567.80 Wednesday. The Nifty dipped 41.40 points or 0.23 per cent to end at 17,618.75.

Among the Sensex firms, Asian Paints, NTPC, Tata Motors, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, Larsen & Toubro, Wipro, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, ITC, HDFC Bank and Maruti were the biggest winners. Hindustan Unilever, Infosys, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, Nestle, Axis Bank, Reliance Industries and HDFC were among the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge ended marginally lower by 0.03 per cent, while small-cap index climbed 0.10 per cent. Among indices, services jumped 0.89 per cent, utilities climbed 0.85 per cent, telecommunication (0.81 per cent), power (0.74 per cent), industrials (0.63 per cent), capital goods (0.58 per cent), FMCG, metal, commodities, energy, IT and oil & gas were the laggards.

Meanwhile, global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 1.89 per cent to \$81.55 per barrel. Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) offloaded equities worth ₹1,169.32 crore Thursday.

Gold may lose sheen

JEWELLERS EXPECT TIMID SALES THIS AKSHAYA TRITIYA AS THE YELLOW METAL PRICES ARE SHOWING NO SIGNS OF RESPITE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 20: The recent surge in gold prices, which is hovering around ₹60,000 per 10 grams, is likely to dampen consumer demand this Akshaya Tritiya, with jewellers expecting a 20 per cent decline in sales in volume terms.

"With gold prices crossing ₹60,000 per 10 grams recently has made consumers wary of buying the yellow metal. Even though the prices have come down a little bit since then, prices remain bullish. This will affect the sales during Akshaya Tritiya, considered auspicious to buy precious metals. We expect a 20 per cent dip in volume from last year," All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC) chairman Saiyam Mehra told PTI.

Currently, the gold price is ruling at ₹60,280 per 10 grams level in the domestic market.

During Akshaya Tritiya, 40 per cent of the business is done in the south, 25 per cent in the west, 20 per cent in the east and the remaining 15 per cent in the north, he said.

Echoing a similar view, former GJC chairman and NAC Jewellers (Chennai) Managing Director Anantha Padmanabhan said that the ruling high gold prices will have an impact on demand this Akshaya Tritiya.

"We are already seeing the impact of the sudden rise in gold



JEWELLERS EXPECT GOLD SALES TO PLUNGE 20%

GOLD PRICE IS RULING AT ₹60,280/10 GRAMS

RECENT TAX CHANGES A WORRY FOR GOLD FUNDS

Though a major gold buying festival, this year Akshaya Tritiya faces life-time high prices of gold and a lukewarm response from consumers over the last few weeks.

SOMASUNDARAM PR | CEO, WORLD GOLD COUNCIL INDIA

prices and we expect a 10 per cent decline in sales in terms of value this Akshaya Tritiya compared to last year. In terms of volume, we are expecting a 20 per cent decrease in demand," he added. However, if there is a sudden dip in gold prices it will boost sales, he added.

Comm-trendz Risk Management Services CEO Gnanasekar Thiagarajan said the gold prices, which are currently ruling at ₹60,280 per 10 grams level, though bullish, are likely to remain stable for some time.

"At present, there are no major triggers to make gold prices volatile, like the US economic data. Even, the current geopolitical situation like the Russia-Ukraine war and oil prices, among others have not affected the gold prices recently," he said.

It always takes time for consumers in India to get used to the surge in gold prices, therefore, the demand is likely to remain lower during Akshaya Tritiya this year, he added.

World Gold Council Regional CEO, India, Somasundaram PR said that gold purchases are an inseparable part of Akshaya Tritiya celebrations for millions of Indians. It is considered a sign of prosper-

GST evasion detection nearly doubles in FY23

Over ₹1.01 lakh crore was detected and ₹21,000 crore was recovered

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: GST evasion detection by tax officers almost doubled year-on-year to over ₹1.01 lakh crore in the just concluded 2022-23 fiscal, an official said.

During the last fiscal, a recovery of ₹21,000 crore was made by the officers of the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI).

The official said the government is taking steps to increase compliance and using data analytics and human intelligence to identify fraud. "DGGI officers have detected evasion to the tune of ₹1,01,300 crore in 2022-23. Of this, recovery of ₹21,000 crore have been made," the official told PTI.

In 2021-22, DGGI, the investigative agency under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, detected evasion of over ₹54,000 crore and made a tax recovery of over ₹21,000 crore.

The total number of Goods and



Services Tax (GST) evasion cases has gone up this fiscal with about 14,000 cases detected in 2022-23, up from 12,574 cases in 2021-22 and 12,596 cases in 2020-21.

The modus operandi adopted by fraudsters included short payment of tax by undervaluing taxable goods and services, wrong availment of exemption notifica-

tions, wrong availment of the input tax credit, non-payment of tax on supply of taxable goods and services, and fraudulent availment of the input tax credit on the basis of invoices from fake firms.

In a reply to the Lok Sabha last month, the Finance Ministry said total GST evasion detected between July 2017 to February 2023 was close to ₹3.08 lakh crore, of which over ₹1.03 lakh crore was recovered. GST authorities had arrested 1,402 persons for evading taxes in the last five-and-a-half years till February 2023.

Merchandise exports on course to cross \$500bn: Exporters

Exporters feel that free trade agreements with the UAE and Australia will provide a huge platform to boost exports in merchandise and service markets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: The country's merchandise exports are likely to cross \$500 billion this fiscal due to healthy demand for domestic goods in key global markets, including the US, and benefits from trade pacts, according to exporters.

They said that other destinations like Russia would give a huge boost to the country's outbound shipments, particularly in the agri and food processing sectors.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) said they

are targeting to take the shipments to \$500 billion-510 billion during the current financial year. Services exports are likely to reach around \$390 billion in 2023-24 from \$322.72 billion in 2022-23.

"Production-linked incentive scheme too will provide an impetus to our exports as domestic production would jump due to the in-



centives," FIEO Director General Ajay Sahai added.

Ludhiana-based engineering exporter and Hand Tools Association President SC Ralhan

said there are healthy signs of economic growth in the US, which accounts for about 18 per cent of India's total outbound shipments. "Order books are good and we ex-

pect that going by the current trend, our exports would cross \$500 billion this fiscal," he said.

Mumbai-based exporter and Chairman of Technocraft Industries Sharda Kumar Saraf too said that this fiscal would be better than the last year for India's exports.

"The impact of the Russia-Ukraine war is tapering off as industry has found an alternate route for trade and sources of energy. In India, there is a significant

improvement in infrastructure and that would give solid support to exporters," Saraf said.

Going by the current trend, the exports would cross USD 500 billion in 2023-24, he added.

Engineering exporter and Director of Gecco Trading Corporation Khalid Khan said that labour-intensive sectors are doing good and it would help in increasing the shipments. "I expect that the export growth will be better than the last fiscal," Khan added.

BIZ BUZZ

Barik new regional head of Union Bank Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar: Niranjan Barik has joined as the new Regional Head of Union Bank of India, Bhubaneswar region. Prior to this, Barik was working as the Regional Head in Balasore region. He had joined the bank as probationary officer in the year 2003 and worked in different functional capacities in different places. During his tenure as Regional Head in Bhubaneswar region, he is likely to give more emphasis on CASA, RAM and NPAs recovery.



Together with goods and services, we are targeting exports of \$900 billion this fiscal

AJAY SAHAI | DIRECTOR GENERAL, FIEO

Director of Gecco Trading Corporation Khalid Khan said that labour-intensive sectors are doing good and it would help in increasing the shipments. "I expect that the export growth will be better than the last fiscal," Khan added.

Faf, Siraj lift RCB CSK hope for Stokes boost ahead of SRH clash

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, April 20: Four-time champions Chennai Super Kings will hope their star all-rounder Ben Stokes finally takes the field after recovering from his injury when they go up against Sunrisers Hyderabad in their IPL match here Friday.

In a relief to CSK, Stokes, who was suffering from a toe injury and missed three IPL matches, took part in the net practice Wednesday after regaining fitness and is available for selection.

The England Test captain's return will be a big boost for CSK as they return to their fortress following a close win over Royal Challengers Bangalore. Their opponents Hyderabad, however, copped a defeat at the hands of Mumbai Indians.

The Super Kings batters have been able to put up good scores, thanks to the starts provided by Devon Conway and Ruturaj Gaikwad at the top while the big-hitting Shivam Dube has managed a few impactful knocks.

Ajinkya Rahane has been a revelation, batting with a lot of freedom and going after opposition bowlers, but in an orthodox man-



ner and though the rest of the batters have not done much, the crowd, especially in Chennai, will expect to see a vintage Dhoni uncorking some huge hits. While the CSK batting unit has been finding the runs, the bowlers have been inconsistent and fielding below par.

Sri Lankan pacer Matheesha Pathirana did an admirable job in the match against RCB but the same cannot be said of the others, though Tushar Deshpande has got better with each game.

CSK will be wary of the fact that they were trumped in the previous home game by Rajasthan

Royals, losing by three runs as the middle-order could not force the pace leaving Dhoni and Ravindra Jadeja too much to do at the end.

The Super Kings will look to strangle SRH batters with spin as is their wont and the trio of Theekshana, Jadeja and Moeen Ali could prove more than a handful.

CSK has won four of their last five matches against Hyderabad and the home team would hope to extend the run.

SRH, on the other hand, would be expecting their batting unit to click and the onus would be on

captain Aiden Markram to rise to the occasion. The other batters in the line-up need to step up if Hyderabad hope to upset CSK's appeal at Chepauk.

Loss of wickets in the powerplay has set Sunrisers back and head coach Brian Lara said after the defeat to MI that someone in the middle-order needs to bat deep and finish off games.

The impressive Harry Brook will be the man to watch in the Hyderabad line-up and if he gets going he could prove a handful for the CSK bowlers.

Local lad Washington Sundar, who plays for SRH, will be hoping to get a game and perform well in front at his home ground. He has been up and down while the bowling unit's inconsistency has hurt their chances.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mohali, April 20: Faf du Plessis played a special knock (84, 56b, 5x4, 5x6) despite a rib injury before Mohammed Siraj produced his best figures (4/21) in the IPL to set up a 24-run win for Royal Challengers Bangalore against Punjab Kings here Thursday.

Playing as an 'Impact Player' due to his injury, Du Plessis plundered 84 off 56 balls and shared a 137-run opening wicket stand with stand-in captain Virat Kohli (59, 47b, 5x4, 1x6) to steer RCB to 174/4 after being put in to bat.

Though in-form skipper Shikhar Dhawan was unavailable for the second game in a row, Punjab had enough firepower to chase down 175 but lost too many wickets at the start of the chase.

Siraj delivered with wickets with the new ball as well as in the death overs and secure a welcome victory for his team. Jitesh Sharma's counter-attacking 41 (27b, 2x4, 3x6) for Punjab went in vain. It was RCB's third win in six games while Punjab suffered their third loss in six matches.

Siraj was too hot to handle in the powerplay as he removed left-han-

der Atharva Taide with a sharp inswinger off the second ball of the innings before removing the dangerous Liam Livingstone in the fourth over. Both lbw dismissals came after successful DRS reviews.

Wanindu Hasaranga then castled Matthew Short with a googly before run-outs of Sam Curran and Harpreet Singh made matters worse for the home team.

At 97/6 - after the dismissal of opener Prabhsimran Singh (46, 30b, 3x4, 4x6), the game looked done and dusted but Jitesh kept Punjab in the game with some clean hitting, especially down the ground. He ran out of partners eventually.

Earlier, at 91 for no loss in 10 overs, RCB were on course for 200 plus total but Punjab bowled well in the middle and death overs to restrict the opposition.

Du Plessis, like he often does, was not afraid to show his stumps to the spinners to free his arms for the big shots. The first half of Kohli's innings was more fluent. It was the fourth fifty plus score for the RCB openers this season, highlighting their consistency.

RCB would be a tad disappointment with the total they ended up with after a flying start from Du

Plessis and Kohli, who fired their team to 59 for no loss in the powerplay. Arshdeep Singh and Curran employed the short-ball tactic against Du Plessis and Kohli with the new ball but it did not work.

The Indian star began with his trademark cover drive off spinner Harpreet Brar before pulling a short ball from Arshdeep over short fine leg for another four in the third over.

Du Plessis got going with a couple of sixes off Brar, who opened the bowling alongside Arshdeep. The South African made room for a massive straight six over Brar's head and followed it up with another one wide of long on. However, his best of the lot was the straight six off pacer Nathan Ellis as he stood still to slap it over the bowler's head.

RCB could only manage 83 runs off the last 60 balls. Rahul Chahar and Curran could not take wickets but did not allow the batters to break free.

BRIEF SCORES: RCB 174/4 (Faf du Plessis 84, Virat Kohli 59; Harpreet Brar 2/31) beat PBKS 150 (Prabhsimran Singh 46, Jitesh Sharma 41; Mohammed Siraj 4/21, Wanindu Hasaranga 2/39) by 24 runs.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: David Warner (57, 41b, 11x4) led from the front for Delhi Capitals after bowlers restricted Kolkata Knight Riders to 127 in a rain-hit IPL match here, Thursday.

Chasing a target of 128, Delhi started on a good note as Warner and Prithvi Shaw (13) added 38 runs inside five overs before the latter's departure. Warner continued to score at an end as Delhi lost wickets at regular intervals.

Warner got out in the 14th over which reduced DC to 93/4. Manish Pandey (21) and Aman Hakim Khan then got out which put pressure on DC lower order. However, Axar Patel (19 n o) and Lalit Yadav (4 n o) took DC home with four balls to spare.

Earlier, Ishant Sharma rolled back years as Delhi Capitals bowling attack finally joined the party with a collective effort, restricting KKR to a paltry 127 on a spicy deck.

Warner won a good toss and opted to field as Ishant (2/19), playing his first IPL match in over two seasons, was bang on target with 13 dot balls and hitting those immaculate three-quarter length just



like yesterday.

In rhythm, he still hits 140 clicks but once he was done with his four overs, he literally collapsed in the dug-out chair as Prithvi Shaw came in as 'Impact Player'. His India days are well over and Ishant certainly would like to remain an 'IPL' player till his body allows him to take rigours of top flight cricket.

Mukesh Kumar (1/34) also bowled well in the Powerplay while Axar Patel (2/13), who hasn't enjoyed favourable match-ups against left-handers, removed the danger-

ous Rinku Singh as KKR lost wickets in clumps.

If Ishant, Mukesh and Axar were brilliant in the front 10, Kuldeep Yadav (2/15), who got Jason Roy (43), was brilliant as he created doubts in the minds of the batters by varying his pace.

The pitch had a liberal tinge of green and Anrich Nortje (2/20) bowled an ideal Test match length and the grass covering helped in a bit of deviation as in-form Venkatesh Iyer just managed to dangle his bat and the ball flew to Mitchell Marsh standing at first

slip.

It was undoubtedly the ball of the innings but credit goes to Ishant as he didn't let Roy get away with a good start. The bit of moisture after a delayed start due to steady drizzle had also freshened up the track and the bit of extra bounce found the batters in a bit of a problem.

Mukesh got rid of Litton Das and the ball that Ishant bowled to dismiss Nitish Rana reared up and he couldn't check his lofted shot.

However, the wicket that completely changed the course was Rinku's slog sweep and the ball bounced tad extra to take the top edge. Once Rinku was gone, KKR batting unit seemed like losing the battle in its head as Andre Russell (38 n o), despite hitting four sixes, couldn't do enough to get his team to a par-score.

BRIEF SCORES

KKR 127 (Jason Roy 43, Andre Russell 38 n o; Axar Patel 2/13, Kuldeep Yadav 2/15, Ishant Sharma 2/19, Anrich Nortje 2/20) lost to DC 128/6 (David Warner 57, Manish Pandey 21, Axar Patel 19 n o; Varun Chakravarthy 2/16, Nitish Rana 2/17, Anukul Roy 2/19) by 4 wickets.

INTER SET UP MILAN DERBY IN LAST 4 STAGE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Milan, April 20: The Milan clubs are set to meet again in another Champions League semifinal a decade after their last encounter in the final four of Europe's elite club competition.

Inter drew 3-3 against Benfica Wednesday to complete a 5-3 aggregate victory over the Portuguese team. That came a day after AC Milan prevailed against Napoli in their quarterfinal.

After Nicolò Barella's opener for Inter, Fredrik Aursnes restored some hope for Benfica shortly before halftime. But Lautaro Martinez and substitute Joaquin Correa netted in the second half to help Inter reach their first semifinal since José Mourinho led the team to the treble of the Champions League, Serie A and Italian Cup in 2010.

Inter nevertheless managed to relinquish a two-goal lead as Antonio Silva and Petar Musa netted late on for Benfica. The Nerazzurri will face their city rival in a repeat of the 2003 semifinal.

Both Inter and Benfica came into the match at San Siro on a poor run of form. Inter had only won one of their past eight matches in all competitions - the first leg in Lisbon - while Benfica had lost three straight matches for the first time since the 2018-19 season.

The Nerazzurri took the lead in the 14th minute, as Barella rode a tackle and played a one-two with Martinez before curling a delightful effort into the top left corner.

However, a defensive lapse saw Benfica reduced the deficit as Aursnes got in front of Denzel Dumfries to head in Rafa Silva's cross. However, Inter scored in the 65th minute through Lautaro before Correa finding the nets.

Antonio Silva headed in a free-kick for the visitors before Musa drilled through a sea of legs in stoppage time to at least end Benfica's losing run.

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY AWAITS ROLL BALL PLAYERS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: The Odisha roll ball team, comprising 11 emerging players, will take part in the U-17 National Roll Ball Championship at Balewadi Stadium in Pune, April 21-26.

The same venue is also hosting the 6th Roll Ball World Cup - also April 21-26. SO this gives the players an opportunity to get the motivation to work hard and raise

their game.

All the emerging players of the state were congratulated and felicitated at the Kalinga Stadium here Wednesday by Ranjit Kumar Parida, joint secretary, Sports & Youth Services Dept., Govt of Odisha and Partha Sarathi Jena, state secretary, Odisha Roll Ball Association.

The team: Dev Kumar Nayak, Ayush Jena, Pratik Arnav Jena, Abhisant Panigrahi, Kaustav

Pattnaik, Arman Sudidhi, Preet Pritam Jena, Swastik Sukumar Paharaj, Prithish Aryan Jena, Rohit Kumar Bhoi and Sai Sriyanshi Raut.

A DSYS initiative

The Department of Sports and Youth Services (DSYS), Govt of Odisha is organising a summer camp - Kalinga Multi Sport Summer Camp - at the Kalinga Stadium here May 1-22 in a bid to discover budding talents.

The camp will witness the kids, aged 8-12, participate in various sports disciplines like athletics, weightlifting, football, basketball, kabaddi, judo, gymnastics and volleyball. However, a participant can choose only one sport to participate.

The camp will take place in two time slots - 6:30 am to 8:30 am and 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm - from Monday to Saturday. The participants will have a rest day - Sunday.

Haaland fires City into CL semifinals

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Munich, April 20: His 48th goal for Manchester City this season, Erling Haaland scored again Wednesday for City to advance to a Champions League semifinal against Real Madrid with a 1-1 draw against Bayern Munich in the second leg of their quarterfinal.

The Norway forward missed a first-half penalty but atoned by sealing City's progress with a 4-1 win on aggregate by scoring on a counterattack in the 57th minute, just after Bayern missed a good chance at the other end.

Bayern's lack of confidence after losing the first leg 3-0 in Manchester showed as it failed to take advantage of numerous chances.

The penalty was awarded after City defender Manuel Akanji was cited through VAR for handball. Bayern counterpart Dayot Upamecano was also penalized for handball when Ilkay Gundogan's cross grazed the bottom of his arm in the 35th, but Haaland blasted that spot kick just over the bar.

Kevin De Bruyne played Haaland through to settle it early in the second half, when the unfortunate Upamecano slipped as he tried to recover.

City did little in manager Pep



Erling Haaland reacts after scoring against Bayern, Wednesday

Guardiola's return to the club he led to three consecutive Bundesliga titles between 2014-16, but the vis-

itors didn't need to thanks to their commanding lead from the first leg and Bayern's lack of efficiency.

Indian recurve team in World Cup final



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Antalya, April 20: India stormed into the final of the men's recurve team event for the first time in nine years after registering three wins in the ongoing Archery World Cup Stage 1, here Thursday.

The trio of Atanu Das, B Dhiraj and Tarundeep Rai will face China in the gold medal clash on Sunday in pursuit of India's first World Cup gold medal in the men's recurve team event after 13 years.

The men's recurve team, which got a first-round bye after qualifying as the fourth seed, faced a stiff challenge to begin with as it defeated 13th seed Japan 5-4 with a 29-28 win in the shoot-off.

The Indians shot two perfect 10 from three attempts (10, 10, 9) to seal the issue in the tie-breaker after both the teams were locked 4-4 (49-52, 57-

52, 54-51, 52-57) following four sets of intense shooting.

Thereafter, it was an easy sailing for the Indian trio that got past 12th seed Chinese Taipei and ninth seed Netherlands by identical 6-2 margins to set up a summit clash with second seed China.

It was an easy outing against Chinese Taipei as the Indian men's recurve team raced to 4-0 lead before sealing the issue 6-2 (55-54, 57-54, 51-53, 58-56) with four 10s including an X (closer to the centre).

Next up, were the Netherlands who were on a high after eliminating top-seed and tournament hosts Turkey (6-0), a team that included the reigning Olympic champion Mete Gazoz. The Dutch raced to a 2-0 lead but the Indians came back strongly to win 6-2 (56-58, 57-53, 57-55, 56-54).