

Kriti's love criteria

Actor Kriti Sanon reveals her aversion to dating apps and prefers traditional romance

LEISURE | P2

Biden, Trump rematch

US President Biden and his predecessor Donald Trump clinch their parties' presidential nomination

INTERNATIONAL | P10

Markets crash

Equity benchmark index Sensex crashes over 900 points to sink below the 73,000 level due to widespread selling pressure

BUSINESS | P11

Vidarbha fight back

Skipper Akshay Wadkar and Karun Nair's fighting knocks help Vidarbha prolong Mumbai quest for 42nd Ranji Trophy title

SPORTS | P12



UP IN ARMS: Members of All Assam Students' Union take out a protest march after the Union government notified the rules for implementation of Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, in Sonitpur of the eastern state, Wednesday

BJD-BJP alliance: Crucial meet at Naveen Niwas today

Bhubaneswar, March 13: At a time when speculations about a possible alliance between BJD and BJP gathered further steam as Odisha didn't figure in the second list of 72 candidates declared by the saffron party for Lok Sabha polls, Wednesday, and the BJD is yet to declare any of

BJP's second list out

NEW DELHI: Union ministers Nitin Gadkari, Piyush Goyal and Anurag Singh Thakur, and three former CMs figured in the BJP's second list of 72 candidates for the Lok Sabha polls announced Wednesday.

its candidate, a crucial meeting is scheduled to be held at Naveen Niwas here Thursday. The BJP top brass from the state has been camping in New Delhi for the last three days, while a crucial meeting was reportedly held with Union Home Minister Amit Shah over the issue late Wednesday evening. BJP state president Manmohan Samal, organisational secretary Manas Mohanty, party's state

in-charge Vijay Pal Singh Tomar, co-in-charge Lata Usendi and some other leaders have discussed with Shah about the final shape of the alliance, though the details were not available. On the other hand, BJD supremo and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has convened a meeting of party's senior leaders at his residence here at 4:30pm.

State gets 22 new NACs, 1 Municipality

BHUBANESWAR: The state government Wednesday announced the formation of 22 new Notified Area Councils (NAC) in 13 districts and upgradation of Bhanjanagar NAC in Ganjam to a Municipality. The new NACs are: Manamunda, Purunakatak and Baunsuni in Boudh, Loisingha and Sindhekela in Bolangir, Sohela in Bargarh, Baliapal and Khaira in Balasore, Dhamra in Bhadrak, Rasol in Dhenkanal, Narla and Madanpur Rampur in Kalahandi, Kujang in Jagatsinghpur, Bolagarh in Khurda, Sharankul in Nayagarh, Sakhigopal and Kakatpur in Puri, Rengali and Bamanda in Sambalpur, Subalaya, Ulunda and Rampur in Subarnapur. "Keeping in view the demands of the people, increasing population, development and economic growth, the CM has decided to set up these new NACs. He expressed hope that the new councils would work for the overall development of the region," the CMO statement said.

Pay hike for teachers & ULB functionaries

Junior teachers to get ₹20,000, Mayors ₹50,000

Bhubaneswar, March 13: With elections round the corner, the state government Wednesday announced remuneration hike for junior teachers and functionaries of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in the state. While the salary of junior teachers has been hiked from ₹13,800 to ₹20,000 per month, the Mayors of Municipal Corporations will now get ₹50,000 instead of ₹8,000 and the Deputy Mayors ₹20,000 instead of ₹5,000 earlier, an official at the CMO said.

On education front, the announcement will benefit as many as 12,784 junior teachers, who have worked for more than three years in primary and upper primary schools. The hike will be implemented with retrospective effect from January 1, 2023. The government decided to increase the remuneration after considering the demands made by the junior teachers in the state, the official said. An additional annual expenditure of ₹95 crore will be borne by the government for the hike, he said. Similarly, the monthly remuneration of Mayors has been hiked from ₹8,000 to ₹50,000 and Deputy Mayors from ₹5,000 to ₹20,000 per month, according to a release issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). The remunerations of municipal council chairpersons and vice-chairpersons have also been increased from ₹1,500 to ₹15,000 and from ₹1,200 to ₹10,000, respectively.

₹25K HONORARIUM FOR PADMA AWARDEES

In recognition to the significant contribution of Padma awardees to the society, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has decided to pay an honorarium of ₹25,000 to the awardees from April this year, the Chief Minister's Office said in a statement. The Padma awardees from the state have enhanced the glory of Odisha through their talent and service to mankind, it said. Till now, the President has conferred Padma awards on 105 eminent personalities from Odisha, which includes 90 Padma Shri, 11 Padma Bhushan and four Padma Vibhushan.

Similarly, the remuneration of the Notified Area Council (NAC) chairpersons has been increased from ₹1,000 to ₹10,000 and that of deputy chairpersons from ₹800 to ₹7,500. The corporators of municipal corporations who were getting ₹700 per meeting as allowance, will now get ₹2,000. The allowance of councillors of various municipalities and NACs has been increased from ₹150 to ₹500. Apart from this, the members of the standing committee of the metropolitan corporation will get a daily allowance of ₹200 during the meeting. This increase has been made following the recommendations of the 5th State Finance Commission and amendments in Odisha Municipal Corporation Rules-2004, and Odisha Municipality Rules-1953, the CMO release said.



IRREGULAR by MANJUL
No actor can bring Oscars to India. Seems our supreme leader will have to achieve it too...

Now, Gemini can't answer poll queries

Washington, March 13: Google is restricting AI chatbot Gemini from answering questions about the global elections set to happen this year, the Alphabet-owned firm said Tuesday, as it looks to avoid potential missteps in the deployment of the technology. The development comes at a time when advancements in generative AI, including image and video generation, have fanned concerns of misinformation and fake news among the public, prompting governments to regulate the technology. When asked about elections such as the upcoming US Presidential match-up between Joe Biden and Donald Trump, Gemini responds, "I'm still



election-related queries for which Gemini will return responses," a company spokesperson said Tuesday. Apart from United States, national elections are set to be held in several large countries including South Africa and India, the world's largest democracy. India has asked tech firms to seek government approval before the public release of AI tools that are "unreliable" or under trial, and to label them for the potential to return wrong answers. Google's AI products are under the scanner after inaccuracies in some historical depictions of people created by Gemini forced it to pause the chatbot's image-generation feature late last month.

ELECTORAL BONDS

We've named parties: SBI

A day after submitting details of electoral bonds before the Election Commission of India, State Bank of India (SBI) Wednesday said it has filed a compliance affidavit in the Supreme Court giving details of the buyers of the interest-free bearer instruments with date of purchase and denomination, and names of political parties who have redeemed those.



12. It said details, including date of purchase of each electoral bond, names of the purchaser and the denomination of the bonds purchased have been furnished.

The affidavit, filed by SBI's chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara, said the bank has also furnished to the EC details like date of encashment of the electoral bonds, the names of political parties which received the contributions and the denominations of the bonds. "A total number of 22,217 bonds were purchased during the period April 1, 2019 till February 15, 2024. At the time of collating the information for the ECI, the details were segregated as below..." it said.

The affidavit said between April 1, 2019 to April 11, 2019, a total of 3,346 electoral bonds were purchased and 1,609 redeemed. It further said from April 12, 2019 to February 15 this year, a total of

Will disclose bond details in time: CEC

JAMMU: Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar Wednesday announced sharing details of electoral bonds 'in time' and asserted that the commission believed in complete transparency. Speaking to reporters at the end of his visit to Jammu and Kashmir, Kumar also said that the poll body is ready to hold Assembly as well as Lok Sabha elections in the Union Territory. Kumar, who ended his nationwide visits ahead of the Lok Sabha election schedule announcement, was asked whether the ECI would be disclosing the details of the electoral bonds purchased since April 12, 2019 following a direction from the Supreme Court.

18,871 electoral bonds were purchased and 20,421 were redeemed. "The SBI has ready records in which the date of purchase, denomination and name of buyer were recorded, and (in relation to the political parties) the date of encashment and the denominations of the bonds encashed were recorded," the affidavit said. It said in compliance with the apex court's directions, a record of this information was made available to the EC by hand delivering in digital form (password protected) before the close of business hours March 12.

OrissaPOST

BUSINESS EMINENCE AWARDS

23 March 2024 | Bhubaneswar

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BEYONCE TO DEBUT IN COUNTRY MUSIC

Singing legend Beyoncé is making her foray into country music. The singer-songwriter has announced the name of her latest album, *Cowboy Carter*, which is set to drop March 29, reports *Mirror.co.uk*.

BILLY CLAPS BACK AT SHARON STONE

Actor Billy Baldwin, known for his role in the 1993 film *Sliver* alongside Sharon Stone, is outraged by Stone's allegations of being coerced into intimacy with him. Hours after her remarks emerged, he accused Stone of being hurt as he shunned her advances and said he was weighing up whether to write a book about the many disturbing, kinky tales he knows about the *Casino* actress.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Go with the flow. At least that's what Ganesh suggests where relationships are concerned. You can be your assertive self some other time. Today, you can be large-hearted and fulfill your beloved's wishes, maybe even propose. What say?

TAURUS
You are likely to get into arguments today, predicts Ganesh. You should avoid any open confrontation. Legal disputes may bother you as well. Try your hand at meditation or resort to music of your preference to relax and unwind. It is best if you delay the start of any important activity today, suggests Ganesh.

GEMINI
Today, your house gets a facelift – a new rug, matching cushion covers, or a brand new kitchen. This will take up most of your time. First, you will be busy furnishing and setting up your home, and then you will spend your time flaunting it to your friends, relatives, neighbours, bosses, colleagues, acquaintances.

CANCER
You will take on new responsibilities, says Ganesh. So you will be busy in your task. You may feel exhausted due to hectic work. So it entails mental tension.

LEO
Guides help other people choose the right path in life and to select the correct alternatives. It is a good day for those who are in the teaching or coaching professions. It is also a progressive day for those working in MNC's. Ganesh's blessings are with you.

VIRGO
All the work done in the past will reap rich rewards today, says Ganesh. You'll direct things your own way, and in no way would you take orders from anyone. But don't go overboard with all the authority and keep a cool, calm head.

LIBRA
Nothing overshadows your love for your children today. And love is precisely what drives you incessantly to give them the best possible of everything. Be it special classes for that extra edge in education, or a visit to a holy place to seek divine blessing, you will do it all today. And spending time with children isn't all – you may end up taking a small but sweet trip in the evening, says Ganesh.

SCORPIO
Yet another mundane day in your life, as nothing exciting is on the cards. However, be cheerful and keep trying hard to bring in some spice in life. You never know when the planets change their mood and make an exciting future. Keep the hope alive, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Remember that actions always speak louder than words. You will, in all probability, finish your work that has been seeking your attention for long now. You shall also successfully bring continuing disputes to the table and resolve them logically.

CAPRICORN
Some people do backbreaking work throughout their life, and still don't taste the sweet taste of success. While in your case, success will be easy as pie. You are already loaded with work and some new projects – assignments will be added to that. But, you are not complaining as some recreational activities will refresh your mood and energy.

AQUARIUS
It's an uphill struggle today! But the heavens are on your side, and you will be saved from being swindled. Otherwise, it's an eventful day at work. You may initiate big business deals and new projects as well. It will take all your energy, and Ganesh suggests you hit the deck early.

PISCES
For those in the creative fields of marketing or advertising, today is an extraordinary opportunity to tweak your marketing mix into bringing in maximum profits with bare minimum efforts. Your health interests will also take priority now, and you will find yourself spending more time in the gym, says Ganesh.

Mumbai: Legendary actress and Padma Shri awardee Waheeda Rehman has donated her personal film memorabilia to the Film Heritage Foundation (FHF) for preservation.

The actress was honoured with India's highest film honour, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, last year. The roles she played in films have gone on to become classics in the history of Indian cinema. In a career spanning over five decades, she has worked in more than 90 feature films. Her accolades also include a National Film Award and the Padma Bhushan in 2011.



Waheeda donates her personal film souvenirs

As per *Variety*, the memorabilia includes the saree she wore to the premiere of *C.I.D.* in 1956, her photo albums and photographs, and lobby cards from *Kaagaz Ke Phool*, *Chaudvin Ka Chand*, *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam*, and *Baat Ek Raat Ki*.

She said in a statement accessed by *Variety*, "I'm giving all this to the Film Heritage Foundation because these are very important memories that need to be preserved. People who are interested in learning about films and the history of Indian cinema can look back at this valuable memorabilia that is preserved at the FHF archive. I hope you all enjoy seeing all these albums."

The donation was supported and enabled by Sohail Rekhi and Kashvi Rekhi, the son and daughter of Rehman.

CRITICS' CHOICE AWARDS 2024

12TH FAIL BEST FILM, VIKRANT BEST ACTOR



HERE IS THE LIST OF WINNERS:

- Best Feature Film:** *12th Fail*
- Best Director:** PS Vinodraj (*Koozhangal*)
- Best Actor:** Vikrant Massey (*12th Fail*)
- Best Actress:** Shefali Shah (*Three of Us*)
- Best Supporting Actor:** Jaideep Ahlawat (*Jaane Jaan*)
- Best Supporting Actress:** Deepthi Naval (*Goldfish*)
- Best Writing:** Devashish Makhija (*Joram*)
- Best Editing:** Abhro Banerjee (*Joram*)
- Best Cinematography:** Avinash Arun Dhaware (*Three of Us*)

- SPECIAL CATEGORY Gender Sensitivity Award:** *Fire in The Mountains*
- Extraordinary Contribution to Cinema Award:** Usha Khanna

Mumbai: The Critics' Choice Award winners for 24 categories, including feature films, short films, and web series from India, were announced. In addition to acting and film, web-series awards and two special awards for gender sensitivity and the Extraordinary Contribution to Cinema Award were handed out. The award show was hosted in Mumbai.

12th Fail won Best Feature Film along with a big acting award for Vikrant Massey. Shefali Shah won the Best Actress Award for her performance in *Three of Us*. Jaideep Ahlawat took home the Best Supporting Actor trophy for *Jaane Jaan*, and Deepthi Naval's performance in *Goldfish* won her the Best Supporting Actress trophy.

In the web series category, *Kohrra* won big (Best Web Series). *Jubilee's* Vikramaditya Motwane won Best Director and an acting award for Sidhant Gupta in the Best Supporting Actor (Web-Series) category. Karan Johar's chat show *Koffee With Karan 8* won Best Unscripted Show, and Disney+Hotstar won Best OTT Platform of the Year.

Kriti believes in old-school love

Mumbai: Dating apps are a complete 'no' for actress Kriti Sanon, who is gearing up for her upcoming film *Crew*. The National Award-winning actress is set to appear on the streaming chat show *No Filter Neha*, where she made the revelation that she is quite 'old-school' when it comes to the subject of love.

In the latest promo of the show, the *Dilwale* actress said, "I have told everybody around me that if you have anybody in mind please let me know. I can't do dating apps, I am a bit old school that way. I believe in effort, gesture and romance."

She further mentioned, "I need someone who is honest, loyal, extremely loving, and tall. I am not describing 7-8 men, it's just one guy. I just need a

robot I guess. Am I asking for too much, these are just the basics." *No Filter Neha* Season 6, is available to stream on JioTV and JioTV+.



26TH KALINGA NATYA MAHOTSAV - DAY III

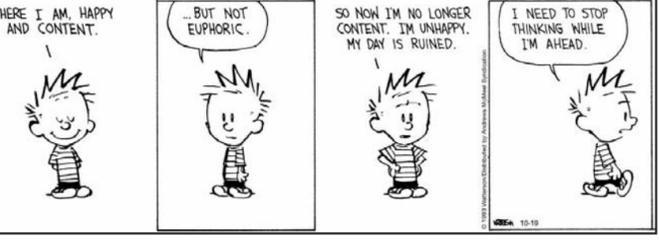


A scene from the Odia play *Seshha Sakhyata* staged on the third evening of the multilingual drama festival, organised by Satabdri Kalakara, at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Wednesday. Dramatised from the work of eminent playwright Gopal Chotray, the play was directed by Gourang Rout.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

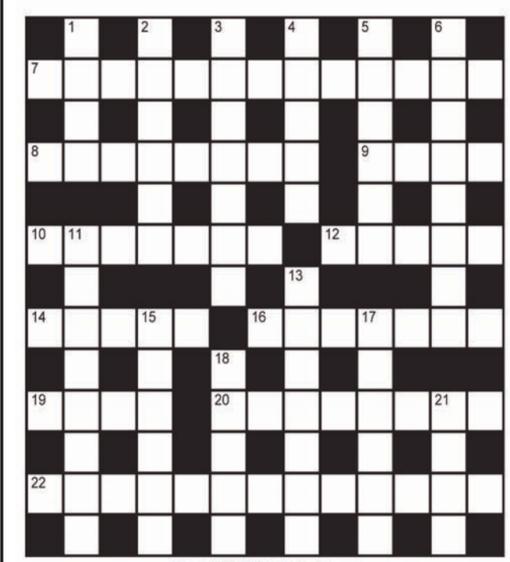


BREVITY



FUN post

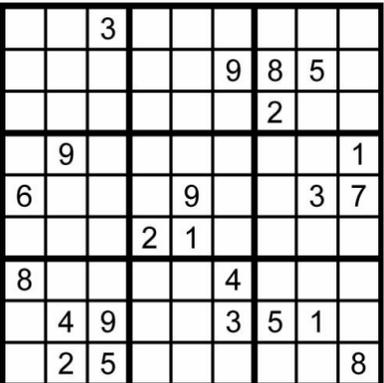
CROSSWORD



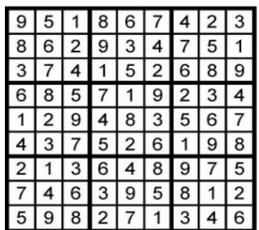
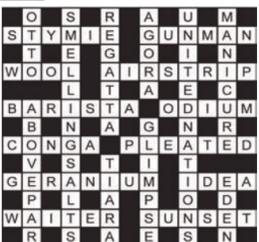
- Across**
 - 7 Cleanse
 - 8 Military wake-up
 - 9 Fire
 - 10 Impressive country house
 - 12 Small natural hill
 - 14 Basketry, e.g.
 - 16 Blood sucker
 - 19 Yen
 - 20 Relative by marriage (3-2-3)
 - 22 Perfect likeness (8,5)
- Down**
 - 1 Surrender
 - 2 Secret or hidden
 - 3 First-rate
 - 4 Roast host
 - 5 Accord
 - 6 Disciplinary
 - 11 Computer info printed on paper (4,4)
 - 13 Massacre
 - 15 An elaborate party
 - 17 Straw hat
 - 18 Up and about
 - 21 Seaweed

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Boost to police infra

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 13: In a move towards ensuring a more secure and citizen-centric Odisha, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated 29 new police stations, outposts and SDPO buildings across the state on virtual platform, Wednesday.

With this huge boost to infrastructure, Odisha Police will serve the people with a more professional approach, Patnaik said thanking police force and others involved in the endeavour to turn the vision of a safer Odisha into a reality.

“Taken up under the 5T initiative, these infrastructures represent our commitment to creating a safer environment and our dedication to transform law enforcement to foster positive connections between the police and the public,” the chief minister said, adding that Wednesday’s inauguration of infrastructures is a concrete step towards a more secure and citizen-centric Odisha.

Focusing on gender sensitivity and inclusivity, Patnaik said, “My government has always recognised the importance of gender sensitivity. Each building features separate desks for



women and children, along with counselling rooms for victims. In Odisha, we stand by the fundamental principle of ‘inclusivity’. I am glad that in each of these buildings, ‘accessibility for all’ is ensured with ramps and facilities for persons with disabilities.”

He further said that with state-of-the-art facilities like Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) integration and surveillance cameras, Odisha is leveraging technology for efficient and effective

law enforcement.

5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian, who moderated the programme, said that the police organisation is sincerely following the Mo Sarkar mandate. The feedback has been quite good from different places. He expected the police administration to work with a more people-friendly approach.

Minister of State for Home Tushar Kanti Behera, Police DG Arun Kumar Sadangi and top Home department as well as police officers were present on the occasion.

Mercury touches 39° Celsius in state

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 13: Mercury Wednesday touched the 39 degrees Celsius-mark in many parts of Odisha, recording the highest temperature so far this month, weather officials said.

According to the Bhubaneswar Metrological Centre, Boudh was the hottest place in the state at 39.5 degrees Celsius, closely followed by Bhawanipatna at 39.4 degrees Celsius.

The maximum temperature in Bolangir was 38.9 degrees Celsius, while Sonepur recorded 38.7 degrees Celsius, followed by Titilagarh (38.5 degrees Celsius) and 38 degrees Celsius in both Talcher and Nayagarh.

State Capital Bhubaneswar recorded a maximum temperature of 35.4 degrees with the humidity levels at 86 per cent.

However, light rainfall also occurred in a few places in Bhadrak, while dry weather prevailed in other parts of the state.

The weather office said that the maximum temperature would further rise by 2-4 degrees Celsius over the next 24 hours and thereafter fall by 2-3 degrees Celsius in many places across the state, but there will be no large change in night temperatures.

Visitor entry to Olive Ridley mass nesting sites banned

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 13: The Forest department Wednesday said the mass nesting sites of Olive Ridley sea turtles in the state will remain out of bounds for visitors till the hatchlings are born.

The mass nesting of the turtles is likely to begin in the next few days, three months after the mating season in deep sea, which usually takes place in November-December.

“All the mass nesting sites of Olive Ridley sea turtles shall be closed for visitors from the beginning of the nesting period till the birth of the hatchlings,” an order by the Forest department said.

The nesting sites are located at Gahirmatha beach in Kendrapara district, Devi river mouth in Puri and Rushikulya river mouth in Ganjam district.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) Sushanta

Nanda, in an order said, “It is seen that visitors, who are going to mass nesting sites of Olive Ridley sea turtles for the purpose of observing the phenomena of nesting and hatchling emergence, are using bright lights for observation and for photography/ videography of the turtles.”

“In some cases, inappropriate behaviour of visitors is observed. These activities together with crowding of the nesting sites would be disturbing the normal process of turtle nesting and hatchling emergence to a great extent,” he said.

The order pointed out that Olive Ridley sea turtles are protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and these activities come under the definition of ‘hunting’ as per provisions of the Act.

Every year, lakhs of Olive Ridley turtles come to the banks of the mouths of rivers Dhamara, Devi and Rusikulya in Odisha to lay eggs.



Nine arrested for hatching burglary

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, March 13: In two separate incidents, the twin city Commissionerate Police has arrested nine history-sheeters when they were planning to burgle houses in the City here, an official said, Wednesday.

In the first incident, Chandrasekharpur police officials, acting on a tipoff, raided a secluded location near Rail Auditorium here and nabbed four persons when they were planning to carry out burglaries late Tuesday night.

“We took four persons into custody, while another managed to flee the place. All four had earlier been booked for crimes like thefts. Efforts are on to nab him at the earliest,” said Chandrasekharpur inspector in-charge (IIC) Prakash Chandra Majhi. In the second case, Badagada police officials took five persons into custody when they found assembled at Basughai to hatch a conspiracy for burgling houses late Tuesday night. “They were planning to burgle houses when we arrested them. All are history-sheeters,” said Badagada IIC Trupti Ranjan Nayak.

NSUI activists clash with cops

Bhubaneswar: Members of National Students’ Union of India (NSUI), the student wing of Indian National Congress, Wednesday scuffled with the police here during their march towards Naveen Niwas, the residence of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, to protest ‘unemployment and deplorable educational system’ in the state. Holding posters and banners, activists of NSUI, led by its state president Yashir Nawaz, took out the protest march from Rajmahal Square in Bhubaneswar.

AMID DEATHS DUE TO ATTACKS, CENTRE TELLS STATES TO BAN 23 DOG BREEDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 13: The Union government has directed states to ban the sale and breeding of 23 breeds of dogs, including Pitbull Terrier, American Bulldog, Rottweiler and Mastiffs, amid rising instances of people dying due to pet dog attacks.

The directive issued to states and Union Territories (UTs) bars

people from keeping as many as 23 breeds of dogs as pets.

In a letter dated March 12 to chief secretaries of all states and UTs, the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying also said that these breeds of dogs, which have already been kept as pets, should be sterilised to prevent further breeding.

Flagging serious recent issues of death of human beings

due to dog bites by some ferocious breeds of dogs kept as pets, the department said it has received representations from citizens, citizen forums and Animal Welfare Organisations (AWOs) to ban some of the breeds of dogs from keeping



them as pets and other purposes.

The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying had set up an expert committee under the chairmanship of the Animal Husbandry Commissioner with members

from various stakeholder organisations and experts in view of the representations.

The panel has identified 23 breeds of dogs, including mixed and cross breeds, as ferocious and also dangerous for human lives.

Pitbull Terrier, Tosa Inu, American Staffordshire Terrier, Fila Brasileiro, Dogo Argentino, American Bulldog, Boerboel

Kangal, Central Asian Shepherd Dog and Caucasian Shepherd Dog are among the breeds sought to be banned from the Centre.

Other breeds are South Russian Shepherd Dog, Tornjak, Sarplaninac, Japanese Tosa and Akita, Mastiffs, Terriers, Rhodesian Ridgeback, Wolf Dogs, Canario, Akbash Dog, Moscow Guard Dog, Cane Corso and Bandog.

DSPL-843

Marking A New Era of e-Governance In Odisha

Inauguration of Online Incentive Management System and New District Websites

by Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik

11.30 AM, March 14, 2024 Bhubaneswar

OIPR-16003/13/01/153/2324

10% all-women polling booths in each Assembly constituency



basic facilities, the office of the CEO will provide ₹25,000 to each of the model polling booths. The amount will be spent on making these polling centres attractive in a bid to encourage maximum voters to exercise their franchise.

Every model polling station should be clean, Dhal told Collectors during the meeting. To greet voters, the polling stations will have an attractive welcome gate, mascot, red carpet and flowers, selfie zone, play area for children and seating chairs for electors.

The CEO also said that facilities like uninterrupted power supply, ceiling fans/coolers, separate toilets for women and men, provision of drinking water, waiting area for voters, ramps for the differently-abled persons, wheelchairs, volunteers, display board, ORS sachets, and first aid kits will also be made available at the model polling stations.

During the meeting, Dhal said that a 'voter guide' pocketbook will be distributed to all families to increase the polling percentage in the coming elections.

At least five booths in each Assembly constituency will be managed by all young electoral personnel, one booth by persons with disability (PwD) and 10 per cent will be managed by all women, Dhal said.

In the model women polling stations, all staffers, including police and security personnel, will be women. Similar arrangements will be made for all youth and all PwD booths.

The political parties have also been asked to deploy their young, PwD and women representatives in the respective model booths, he said.

To ensure the availability of

Bhubaneswar, March 13: The Election Commission (EC) has decided to set up 10 per cent all-women polling booths in every Assembly constituency in Odisha for the upcoming Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in the state, an official said Wednesday.

During a virtual meeting, state's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Nikunja Bihari Dhal directed all Collectors-cum-District Electoral Officers (DEOs) to set up such model polling booths to be managed only by women in every Assembly constituency.

NODC formation need of the hour: Congress

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, March 13: Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee member Navajyoti Patnaik, Wednesday, shot a letter to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik seeking formation of Northern Odisha Development Council (NODC).

Drawing CM's attention towards disparities across regions, Patnaik wrote in the letter, "While the establishment of the Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) in 2000 has undoubtedly catalysed progress in the Western regions, it is imperative that we

undertake a similar initiative towards addressing the pressing developmental needs of the northern part of our state."

"Since its inception, the WODC has been allocated over ₹2,500 crore, comprising 42,820 approved projects directing resources toward initiatives such as irrigation, education, and infrastructure. While this investment has seen some development in the western areas, it is disheartening to witness the continued marginalization of the northern districts."

With its expansive coastline, substantial mineral reserves, vast agricultural lands, and vibrant tribal culture, the northern region holds immense promise as a potential economic powerhouse. "The lack of adequate infrastructure, prevalent skill gaps, and insufficient investment has stymied its growth trajectory, resulting in elevated unemployment rates," the letter said.

City event promotes 'green plastics' use

Bhubaneswar : Carbonut, in collaboration with the Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology (CIPT) and the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC), hosted a symposium titled 'green economy with green plastics' at the IPT Conference Hall, CIPT, here Tuesday. The event brought together experts and stakeholders from various fields to discuss the need for sustainable practices in plastic usage and the transition towards a green economy. Distinguished guests at the event included Smita Mohanty, head and principal scientist, CIPT, who emphasized the importance of green plastics and the need for citizen engagement in adopting eco-friendly habits. Mohanty elaborated on the significance of understanding the decomposition process of green plastics. Bimal Das, consultant infrastructure and superintendent engineer, Works Department, spoke about the detrimental effects of plastic pollution on oceans and water bodies. He urged the audience to consider making plastic usage a more sustainable practice. Dillip Kumar Dash, representing the Odisha Pollution Control Board, emphasised the necessity of phasing out fossil fuels and carbon emissions by 2070.

'Our initiatives empower women entrepreneurs'



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, March 13: Startup Odisha, in collaboration with FICCI FLO, organised the FLO WE-Pitch Innovation Challenge Contest, a dynamic initiative aimed at empowering and celebrating women entrepreneurs in the state.

Held at O-Hub, Wednesday, to commemorate the International Women's Day, the event provided a vibrant platform for visionary women to showcase their innovative ideas and talents.

The contest provided participants with an array of benefits including cash prizes, felicitations, visibility and opportunities for incubation.

Startup Odisha Executive Chairman Omkar Rai, Oberai Hospitality Managing Director Saveen Kaur Oberai and SUTA Co-founder Sujata Biswas graced the occasion. In his speech, Raid said, "Our partnership with FICCI FLO and initiatives like the FLO WE-Pitch Innovation Challenge Contest play a crucial

role in promoting women entrepreneurship and driving inclusive growth."

The event featured a meticulous selection process, with finalists chosen through rigorous in-person interviews. The finalists were provided the opportunity to showcase their ideas at the final event.

Out of seven startups, three were selected for their innovative ideas and were felicitated. They are Vatsalya Wellness Private Limited, Dentivent Private Limited and Chocolaca Enterprises LLP.

With the state having over 1,800 startups, and 43 per cent are led by women entrepreneurs, the event served as a powerful platform to amplify the voices of women business leaders.

The FLO WE-Pitch Innovation Challenge Contest stands as a testament to Startup Odisha's commitment to inspiring, fostering innovation, and empowering visionary women to leave an indelible mark in the entrepreneurial landscape.



YOUNG TALENT: Students participate in a cultural programme during annual day celebrations of Tapobana Vidyamandira in Puri, Wednesday

Naveen unveils sports infra in Koraput

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 13: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday inaugurated an integrated sports complex at Jeypore in Koraput district and 26 multipurpose indoor stadiums spread over 12 districts of the state.

Patnaik said his government gives priority to sports for building a strong youth society in Odisha.

Spread over 11 acres of land, the sports complex at Jeypore has a natural football ground and synthetic athletic track, gym-



nastic centre, swimming pool, tennis and basketball open courts, and spectator gallery having a seating capacity of 500 people.

The chief minister said the sports complex at Jeypore will serve the purpose of the youths of Koraput, Nabarangpur and Malkangiri districts.

As many as 26 multi-purpose indoor stadiums have been constructed in 12 districts to further strengthen Odisha's efforts to promote a healthy lifestyle and create a sports environment.

It has facilities for sports like badminton, table tennis, yoga, chess, weight lifting and gym.

The indoor stadiums were established in Jaleswar, Balasore, Bargarh, Bijepur, Barpali, Padmapur, Attabira,

Kabisuryanagar, Purusottampur, Gopalpur, Kodala, Bhanjanagar, Aska, Sorada, Jagatsinghpur, Paradip, Kendrapara, Joda, Jatni, Malkangiri, Balimela, Khariar Road, Binika, Rajgangpur, Brajrajnagar and Belpahar.

Patnaik said that all these indoor stadiums will take the sports culture further in the state.

"This will create many opportunities for our children, especially in the field of professional sports. Children from villages and small towns can participate in various sports competitions in large numbers," he said.

ECoR to run five special trains during Holi festivity

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 13: For Holi this year, East Coast Railway (ECoR) has decided to run five pairs of special trains from its jurisdiction, officials informed here Wednesday. The special trains have been arranged keeping in mind high demand during the festival season and to clear the additional rush of passengers in regular trains on crucial routes, the officials informed.

These special trains will run to Pune, Patna and Nizamuddin while services of other special trains running through ECoR jurisdiction have also been extended during the period.

"During this Pujya season, ECoR has created additional with special trains and by augmenting additional coaches in regular trains. Passengers can book their tickets online on IRCTC website, through mobile app and from PRS counters," said an official.

The 08327/08328 Sambalpur-Pune-Sambalpur Holi Special from Sambalpur will leave at 22.00pm on every Sunday between March 17 and March 31. In the return direction, 08328 Pune-Sambalpur Holi Special



from Pune will leave at 9.15am on every Tuesday between March 19 and April 2.

"This train will stop at 21 Stations enroute including important Stations like Bargarh Road, Bolangir, Titilagarh, Kantabanji, Khariar Road, Raipur, Nagpur, Manmadnagar between Sambalpur and Pune," said the official.

The 08477/08478 Puri-Patna-Puri Holi Special from Puri will leave at 16.45pm on every Monday between March 18 and March 25. In the return direction, Patna-Puri Holi Special from Patna will leave at 13.15pm on every Tuesday between March 19 and March 26.

The 08475/08476 Puri-Nizamuddin-Puri Holi Special from Puri will leave at 4.50pm on every Friday between March 22 and March 29, 2024. In the

return direction, the special will leave Nizamuddin at 23.35pm on every Saturday between March 23 and March 30, 2024.

Similarly, the 08571/08572 Visakhapatnam-Nizamuddin-Visakhapatnam Holi Special from Visakhapatnam will leave at 8.20am on every Saturday between March 23 and March 30. In the return direction, the special from Nizamuddin will leave at 23.35pm on every Sunday between March 24 and March 31.

The 08517/08518 Visakhapatnam-Patna-Visakhapatnam Holi Special from Visakhapatnam will leave at 9.25am on every Wednesday between March 20 and March 27. In return direction, the special train from Patna will leave at 13.00pm every Thursday between March 21 to March 28.

Man gets 10-yr RI for sexual misconduct

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, March 13: A local court Wednesday sentenced a man to ten years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) for sexually assaulting a differently-abled woman. The man is identified as Krushna Chandra Das, a neighbour from the victim's village under Balipatna police station limits.

In his judgment, Additional Sessions Judge, Pradeep Kumar Behera convicted Krushna under Sections 294 (Obscene act), 506 (Criminal intimidation), 376 (2) (J) (Raping a woman) and 376 (2) (I) (Inflicting physical assaults to the man).



According to an FIR lodged at the Balipatna police station, Krushna entered the victim's house December 28, 2019, while her parents were away. He misbehaved with the victim and started touching her inappropriately.

Besides, Krushna has been slapped with a penalty of ₹10,000, as per the court order.

According to an FIR lodged at the Balipatna police station,

Krushna entered the victim's house December 28, 2019, while her parents were away. He misbehaved with the victim and started touching her inappropriately.

As the victim resisted, Krushna assaulted and dragged her forcibly inflicting injuries on her body, the FIR said.

When the victim's mother, Dipanjali Bhoi protested strongly and asked Krushna about the incident, the latter abused her and threatened to kill her entire family.

Dipanjali registered a complaint at the police station, alleging Krushna of sexually misbehaving with her daughter. Upon receiving the complaint, the cops launched an investigation into the matter and apprehended the accused. Later, they filed a charge sheet in the court.

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	72761.89	↓ 906.07
NIFTY	21997.70	↓ 338.00
DOLLAR	82.89	↑ ₹0.06
EURO	90.64	↑ ₹0.07
GOLD	₹65,823	↑ ₹342
SILVER	₹74,720	↑ ₹870

WEATHER		
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	35.4°C	34.8°C
Min Temp	26.0°C	25.2°C
Humidity	86%	85%
Rainfall	Trace	Nil
FORECAST		
LIGHT TO MODERATE RAIN/		

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

Bengali-speaking immigrants hail CAA

IMMIGRANTS IN KENDRAPARA AND JAGATSIHPUR DISTRICTS ARE NOW HOPING THAT THEY WILL FINALLY GET INDIAN CITIZENSHIP



The Chanakana slum under Paradipgarh panchayat is home to a large number of Bengali-speaking people in Paradip

on or before December 31, 2014. A large number of Hindus from Bangladesh had come here and to Paradip during the 1971 Indo-Pak war. They were served deportation notices in 2005. In spite of the notice, they have continued to live here and in Paradip illegally. Now they are hoping that they will finally get Indian citizenship after the implementation of CAA.

Among the immigrants living in Odisha, 1,649 are residing in Kendrapara district, 1,112 in Jagatsinghpur district, 665 in Malkangiri district, 313 in Bhadrak district, 150 in Balasore district, 106 in Nabarangpur district and two in Bargarh district. These are the official figures, but in reality the numbers

are much more. The question however, is who will carry out the religion-wise segregation. Sarpanch Sanjay Behera of Paradipgarh panchayat in Jagatsinghpur district alleged that 90 families of immigrants are residents of Chanakana slum under Ward No-25. All of them are Muslims, he pointed out. Sources said that many of the Muslims, in order to get Indian citizenship, are rechristening themselves and their family members with Hindu names. Sanjay also said that Muslim Bengali-speaking immigrants can be found in Chandni, Lockpada, Bangalipada and other slums in Paradip. Locals have alleged that the number of Bangladeshi immi-

grants has increased due to apathetic attitude of the administration, political patronization and vote-bank politics.

Senior BJP leader Bhubanmohan Jena informed that 1,237 immigrants were rehabilitated in Kendrapara district during the India-Pakistan war in 1971. Many Hindus and immigrants of other religions from Bangladesh fled their own country and took shelter in various parts of India including this district after being persecuted by fundamentalists. However, as per a census in 2011, the number of immigrants has swelled to 76,000 in this district.

Youth leader Bijay Shukla from Mahakalapara block said that the CAA has come as a huge relief for scores of poor immigrants living in the remote regions of this district. They were deprived of various government-sponsored welfare and development schemes as they had no land of their own. They were even deprived of housing benefits, food security and social justice due to this reason. Former sarpanch Narayan Halder said that he has been living in this district as a Hindu immigrant since 1971. However, now the CAA has brought relief for him and others of his clan.



AWARENESS THROUGH PALA: Artistes spreading awareness on consumer protection through cultural folk ballad form 'Pala' at a programme held at Asuramunda Ashram School under Sonepur block of Subarnapur district, Wednesday

2 killed in road mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bangiriposi, March 13: Two persons died on the spot as the truck in which they were travelling crashed into a sidewall and then fell 25 feet off a bridge over Subarnarekha canal near Jagannathkhunta village on NH-18 under Bangiriposi police limits in Mayurbhanj district, in the wee hours of Wednesday. The deceased were identified as the driver of the ill-fated truck 50-year-old, A Narayana and his assistant 40-year-old K Chinna Rao. Both were residents of Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh.

According to police officials, the log-laden truck (Registration No: 7-T F-9388) was on its way from Visakhapatnam to Nepal when it met with the accident. The driver of the truck lost control and the vehicle fell off the bridge at around 3.00am. Police said over-speeding could be one of the causes which led to the fatal mishap.

Both the driver and helper were rescued by locals in critical condition and sent to a nearby hospital. However, both succumbed to their injuries while undergoing treatment at the hospital. Locals informed the police who arrived at the spot. Police have seized the truck and initiated a probe to ascertain the cause of the accident. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem. Police are also trying to contact the family members of the deceased.

14 held for fishing in restricted area

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, March 13: Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary personnel have arrested 14 fishermen and seized a fishing vessel on charges of entering the 'No Fishing Zone', an official informed here Wednesday.

Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary ranger Pradosh Moharana informed that officials have also seized three VHF sets, two GPS sets, one fish-finder, four nets and 7.5 quintals of fish from the possession of the fishermen who were arrested Tuesday night.

According to the ranger, since the mass nesting of the endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles is round the corner, the Forest department has restricted fishing inside the sanctuary area to provide a congenial atmosphere to the endangered species. Patrolling has also been intensified inside



the sanctuary Moharana said the Forest department personnel noticed the trawler in the prohibited zone of the sanctuary near Chinchiri, just six kilometres from the coast. It was intercepted and the arrests were made. Among those held is a sexagenarian fisherman from West Bengal.

All the 14 have been booked under Section 27, 29, 31 of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. They were produced Wednesday before the JMFC court in Rajnagar which remanded them to jail custody, the ranger said.

Mystery surrounds Rourkela man's death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, March 13: The body of a man with his throat slit was found Wednesday here near a school close to Lamti village. After finding the body, locals informed the police who arrived at the spot and sent it for post-mortem. The deceased has been identified as Devanand Sunyani, 48, a resident of the same village under Dharudihi police limits. Police suspect it to be a case of murder and have initiated a probe.

Sundargarh SDPO, Himansu Barik stated that prima facie it is a case of murder. "The deep cut on the throat indicates that it is a case of murder. It is a not a self-inflicted wound. The way the throat has been slit is evidence enough that the gruesome act was carried out by someone else. The wound is very deep," Barik said.

Youth found dead, 1 held



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kantabanji, March 13: The blood-stained body of a youth was found under mysterious circumstances from the house of his relatives at Jhupudipada under this police limits in Bolangir district Tuesday morning, cops said Wednesday. The deceased has been identified as Jagannath Gahir, 35, a resident of Bhawanipatna in Kalahandi district. Police suspect it to be a case of murder.

Sources said Jagannath had come to Belapada village under Sadar police limits in Bolangir district for some work Monday. However, he could not return home and went to his uncle-in-law's house at Jhupudipada village to spend the night there.

After finishing dinner Jagannath went to sleep Monday

night in a room along with Akash Bag, 22. His body was found in a pool of blood Tuesday morning. On being informed, officials of the Kantabanji police station reached the spot, seized the body and sent it for post-mortem. Police suspect that an argument broke out between Akash and Jagannath. During the argument, in a fit of rage Akash killed Jagannath.

Police have detained Akash for questioning. Later he was forwarded to court after registration of a case (No-96/24) under Section 302/34 of IPC at Kantabanji police station. As his bail plea was rejected by the court, Akash was sent to the local sub-jail, police said. They informed that the body of Jagannath has been handed over to his family after post-mortem.

Family cries foul after missing boy found hanging from tree

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baliguda, March 13: In a shocking incident, the body of a 12-year old minor boy, who was missing since Tuesday, was found hanging from a mango tree under mysterious circumstances near Srirampur village under Kotagada police limits in Kandhamal district Wednesday morning. The deceased boy was identified as Subham Pradhani, son of Dhawaja Pradhani, a resident of Odia Sahi locality in the same village.

Police said family members of Subham had failed to trace him since Tuesday despite searching for him frantically. Locals spotted his body hanging from a mango tree near the village Wednesday morning and informed his family members who reached the spot immediately.

Family members then lodged a complaint at the Kotagada police station alleging that Subham had been murdered. Personnel from Kotagada PS reached the spot and brought down the body. They sent it to Tumudibandha community health centre for post-mortem and are now awaiting the report to ascertain the cause of death.

Sisters die due to food poisoning

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, March 13: In what can be termed as a scene out of a horror movie, two sisters breathed their last in a suspected case of food poisoning at Purandarpur village under Budhikapudi panchayat in this district Tuesday night. The deceased were identified as four-year-old Itishree and her sister, two-year-old Lipi, daughters of Tankadhar Maharana.

What is however, worrying to note here is that in an effort to revive the girls who were senseless, family members branded Lipi with a hot iron rod. Despite her agonising screams this superstitious process continued for some time. Police however, said that they have no information regarding the 'branding'.

Locals said that both sisters after consuming food Tuesday evening, suffered from incessant loose motion and vomiting. They were rushed to the Keonjhar district headquarters hospital. However, Itishree died on the way while Lipi breathed her last while undergoing treat-



ment. CDMO Kishore Chandra Prusty suspected the deaths occurred due to food poisoning. The bodies were sent for post-mortem following which they were handed over to family members.

Patana additional tehsildar Sharan Kumar Jena, Turumunga PS IIC Dharmendra Shanti and ASI Sujata Mohanta also visited the hospital and initiated an investigation.

Two separate cases (No-6/24 and 7/24) have been registered at the Turumunga PS. Police are now waiting for the post-mortem report to ascertain the exact cause which led to the death of the siblings.

Cash incentives for Sundargarh students

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, March 13: The administration here Wednesday launched a scholarship programme for the meritorious students of the district. Students who have secured more than 60 per cent marks in last year's annual high school certificate (HSC) examination were awarded with cash incentives at an event specially organised here. A total of ₹12.92 crore were spent on the occasion with the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) being one of the primary supporters of the initiative.



the Sundargarh district education office. The event was attended by Talsara MLA Bhawani Shankar

Bhoi, Sundargarh Zilla Parishad president Sushree Kunti Pradhan and Tanaya Mishra, chairperson of Sundargarh Municipality.

District Collector Gavali Parag Harshad explained the objective of the programme. "This initiative of DMF will help students in pursuing higher education in their lives. Bhoi said that the efforts of the district administration will help students in mining-affected blocks achieve their ambitions. Pradhan on the other hand pointed out that the cash incentive will help students to fulfil their goals and 'further their education'.

Mishra on the other hand pointed out that education has always been an instrument of social change and the administration must keep on investing in the sector as much as possible.

Later more than 1,000 students were handed cash incentives. Students who scored more than 90 per cent got ₹40,000 while those scoring between 80 to 90 per cent were given ₹20,000 each. Those scoring between 70 to 80 per cent got ₹15,000 while those getting between 60 to 70 per cent were presented with ₹7,000. Laptops sponsored by OSEPA were also distributed to six visually-challenged children of the district.

Birthday Blessings

PRANEEL DASH
Mishrapada, Angul

On this auspicious day we pray before Mahaprabhu Sri Jagannath to shower peace and all happiness in your life. Wish you a bright future.

Best Wishes From: Japa, Jema, Aai, Bapa, Mama, Bhama Franshu, Friends and Relatives.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS

No. MCS/Stores/E-Procure/Tender Notice Dtd.: 07.03.2024

SL. NO. 01 : TENDER NO. 92245199, DESCRIPTION: AIR SPRING ASSEMBLY OF 140 KN. QUANTITY: 20 NOS.

SL. NO. 02 : TENDER NO. 92245202, DESCRIPTION: AUTOMATED MAGNAFLUX TESTING MACHINE FOR LHB COACHES. QUANTITY: 01 NO.

Tender closing date and time: at 1500 hrs. of 03.04.2024 (for Sl. No.1) & at 1500 hrs. of 08.04.2024 (for Sl.No.2).

Complete information including e-tender documents is available in website www.reps.gov.in

Dy. Chief Materials Manager, Carriage Repair Workshop, PR-1169/OI/23-24 Macheswar, Shubaneswar

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, MALKANGIRI
Odisha, PIN - 764045, Ph: 06861-230244, E-Mail: eomalkangiri@gmail.com
Lt. No. 1168/Dev/2024 e-NOTICE Dated: 11.03.2024

BID IDENTIFICATION No. EOMKG/11/2023-24

No. C-3302: The Executive Officer, Malkangiri Municipality, Malkangiri on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites for bidders of eligible class, registered with any State Govt. and bidders of equivalent grade/class registered with Central Govt./PSU/MES/Railways according to norm of e-procurement system in online mode for the work as per DTCN.

- Name of the Work : As per DTCN
- Number of Work : 39 Nos.
- Estimated Cost : As per DTCN
- Period of Completion : As per DTCN
- Date and Time of availability of Bid document in the portal : From 10 hours of Dt.13.03.2024 to 17 hours of Dt.21.03.2024
- Last date and time for receipt of Bid in the portal : 17 hours of Dt.21.03.2024
- The Bid receive online shall be opened on : 11 hours of Dtd.22.03.2024
- Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid : Executive Officer, Malkangiri Municipality

Further details can be seen from the Procurement Portal: www.tendersodisha.gov.in
OIPR-13125/11/0031/2324 Sd/- Executive Officer, Malkangiri Municipality

DR. SYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE SUPERSPECIALITY HOSPITAL
(ESTABLISHED AS A SECTION 8 COMPANY UNDER THE AEGIS OF DR. SYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES & RESEARCH FORUM)
Regd. Off.: BALARAMPUR, IIT KHARAGPUR CAMPUS PASCHIM MEDINIPUR, WB - 721301

Advt. No.: R/03/2024 Dated February 26, 2024

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Superspeciality Hospital invites Online Applications from Indian Nationals for 'Full-Time' contractual position of Consultant / Senior Registrar and Junior Registrar.

For details and updates visit: <http://www.iitkgp.ac.in/non-teaching-positions>
CBC 21255/12/0001/2324 निदेशक/Director

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT

Department of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India has opened the NOS Portal for inviting online applications for study in Masters and Ph.D courses abroad under National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for low income students belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Denotified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes, Landless Agricultural Labourers and Traditional Artisans category for the selection year 2024-25.

The portal will remain open for inviting the applications from 15-2-2024 to 31-3-2024.

The link of the portal is www.nosmsje.gov.in

The detailed guidelines for filling the form are available on the portal. Before filling the form, the candidates are advised to check their eligibility as per the Scheme Guidelines.

Scan QR code for more details

SBI STATE BANK OF INDIA, NOWRANGPUR BRANCH
AT- MAIN ROAD, P.O./DIST.- NABARANGPUR

Sl. No.	Details of the property documents missing	Document number	Name of the Owner of the property documents
01	Regd. Sale Deed	"e" Registration Id No.1332101790 Dated 10.12.2021 at DSR Nabarangpur	Sri Balam Harijan
02	ROR/Patta	Khata No. 4030/308 of Nabarangpur Mouza	Sri Balam Harijan
03	Conveyance Deed	Regd Id 1702/1998 Dated 10.09.1998 At DSR Nabarangpur	Sri P Nagaraju

Sd./- Branch Manager
SBI, Nowrangpur

FOCUS HEALTHCARE COST

SC BALM FOR MASSES



It is indeed distressing to note that healthcare has become big business in the country and the private nursing homes charge rates that even the middle class finds difficult to pay

would be attached to district hospitals in PPP mode to address shortage of qualified medical doctors. However, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) expressed concerns by public health experts that inviting the private sector to manage public hospitals was tantamount to backdoor corporatisation of civil hospitals.

A recent development that should be welcomed is the initiative by the insurance regulator to allow subscribers to avail cashless treatment at any private hospital or nursing home, irrespective of whether it is part of an insurer's network or not. Earlier to get treated in such a nursing home, which was not part of an insurer's network of facilities, patients had to pay the full amount and go through the cumbersome process to claim reimbursement.

It goes without saying that health is critical to human well-being and, as such, there is a need to look into the whole issue and evolve an effective solution. The judiciary has made the right intervention though this was needed much earlier. Now it is the prerogative of the Centre to direct the states to check the functioning of private nursing homes and hospitals and ensure not just standardisation of rates but see to it that at least 20% of beds are reserved for the poor from whom only the actual cost of surgery and minimum doctor's fees are recovered.

Only talking of 'health for all' has no meaning unless effective steps are taken by the Centre and the states. Maybe some time, the judiciary will also have to intervene and direct the states to ensure that the poor citizens of the country are not deprived of basic health facilities. As socio-economic development is intrinsically linked to better health, the present landmark order, if adhered to, will bring about a drastic change in the functioning of private health centres.

INFA

That health is a neglected sector in India has been echoed by experts over the years, but the government has not taken adequate measures to ensure that benefits reach all sections of society. It is, in this connection, that the very recent Supreme Court order merits special attention. The order directed "all hospitals and clinical establishments must display rates charged for each type of service provided and facilities available for the benefit of patients at a conspicuous place in the vernacular as well as in the English language and charge rates for each type of procedure and service within the range of rates determined and issued by the Centre from time to time, in consultation with the state government."

reserve some beds for the poor and the economically weaker sections, but this is not done, and the state governments do not check whether these health centres actually treat the poor.

The question that comes up is how will the poor get proper treatment? There is no survey undertaken in the country to determine how many poor people are not properly diagnosed and, as such, treatment is not received by them. Moreover, cost of treatment in private sector is quite high, especially of life-threatening diseases.

It is a well-known fact that rural health centres and hospitals run by the government are in a pitiable state of affairs with very few specialists and even general doctors not being able to give proper attention to the huge number of patients. Moreover, equipment is lacking and specialised treatment, in most cases, is not possible.

Some experts question that there is no proper survey to find out how much people from the lower segments of society have to spend to get proper treatment, how many of them can really afford this treatment, how much they have to travel to avail of this treatment? It has been found that poor people have been found to sell their

fixed assets like land, even part of building, apart from jewellery and take huge loans at high rates of interest, mostly from moneylenders.

Though such order for standardisation of rates should have been taken decades back to prevent health being treated as a business, the present order, if acted on seriously, would greatly benefit the common man.

It is worth referring to a WHO report which rightly highlighted the fact that countries reducing investment in health after the COVID outbreak does not augur well as health security is complementary to economic security. To address gaps and prepare for the next pandemic, the director of Southeast Asian region of WHO stressed on investments and strengthening six pillars of health systems - service delivery, health workforce, access to medical products, vaccines and technologies, health information systems, and financing backed by political commitment.

The government proposal of setting up hospitals in PPP mode in select underserved districts has not been implemented as business houses are not interested to set up such centres in remote rural areas. It was envisaged that medical colleges



Dhurjati Mukherjee

THE JUDICIARY HAS MADE THE RIGHT INTERVENTION THOUGH THIS WAS NEEDED MUCH EARLIER



Richard K. Sherwin

For fundamentalist Christians in America, what matters is not the factual truth of Donald Trump's sinful, un-Christian character, but rather the belief that divine forces are acting through him

Care not for time and success. Act out thy part, whether it be to fail or to prosper.

SRI AUROBINDO



Dogma & Democracy

Now that Donald Trump is the Republican Party's presumptive presidential nominee, it seems fitting to address a source of perplexity that has persisted ever since he arrived on the political scene: How can America's fundamentalist Christians be so enthusiastic about so thoroughly un-Christian a politician?

This seeming paradox is rooted in Christian fundamentalist thought itself. At its heart is a special code of meaning-making that enables believers to see and hear what others do not.

Consider the words of Jesus in the Book of Matthew (13:16-17): "But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." The meaning of these words can be properly decoded only by the faithful. Prophetic signs may well appear to those who see through the lens of faith. The ill-equipped are likely to behold something entirely different, or perhaps nothing at all.

It's like the figures we see in Landscape with the Fall of Icarus, a painting long attributed to Pieter Bruegel. Something miraculous has just occurred: Icarus has fashioned wings of wax that allowed him to soar into the sky, but his flight and disastrous fall (after veering too close to the sun) causes barely a stir in the tide of human events. A plowman continues to plow. A shepherd dozes (as his sheep wander off into the sea). A ship in the distance sails past a boy drowning near its bow. As WH Auden writes in "Musee des Beaux Arts," whether it is a tragic death or a miraculous birth, "everything turns away." That's what it's like for those with eyes that do not see: they calmly sail on.

If you see and think outside the hermeneutic code of Christian fundamentalism, you might be forgiven for viewing Trump as a ruthless, wholly self-interested man intent on maximising power, wealth, and carnal pleasure. What your spiritual blindness prevents you from seeing is how the Holy Spirit uses him - channeling the "secret power of lawlessness," as the Book of 2 Thessalonians describes it - to restrain the advent of ultimate evil, or to produce something immeasurably greater: the eschaton (end of history), when the messiah comes again.

In this account, what matters is not the factual truth of Trump's sinful character, but rather the higher truth that spiritual forces are acting through him - "immanentizing the eschaton," as the twentieth-century political philosopher Eric Voegelin put it - rendering Trump a divine instrument to stage off the anti-Christ, perhaps to realise heaven on earth. According to this Christian fundamentalist belief, even Trump's use of totalitarian political means may be justified if that is what it takes to destroy the ultimate evil or usher in the ultimate good.

Understanding this theological framework helps us to recognise the futility of railing against "post-truth" politics. To be sure, the use of disinformation to sow confusion, cynicism, and despair about our ability to discern truth from falsity is a familiar feature of totalitarianism.

Liberal democracies cannot long survive without a legally protected institutional infrastructure that safeguards the meaningful exercise of free speech. This is what free-speech purists fail to understand when they use First Amendment doctrine to defend illiberal attacks on the electoral process. The goal of such attacks (or "anti-speech acts") is to jam deliberation - to sow confusion and mistrust - by propagating demonstrably false information upon which others are meant, or are reasonably expected, to rely. Profiting from falsehood constitutes a fraud upon the public.

Nonetheless, those who oppose Trump and his illiberal followers will not succeed if they think the political challenge before them is simply a matter of ensuring the triumph of factual truth over deliberate lies. An even deeper challenge remains. It concerns the very fabric of liberal democracy, a concern the founders of the American republic viewed with such urgency that they made it the subject of the very first words of the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion."

When Alabama Chief Justice Tom Parker recently wrote in support of the court's ruling that human embryos "cannot be wrongfully destroyed without incurring the wrath of a holy God, who views the destruction of His image as an affront to Himself," he and the court manifestly abridged the First Amendment's anti-establishment clause. It is a testament to the thoroughness of Trump's ascendancy - culturally, politically, and legally - that adherents of Christian nationalism so brazenly seek to fuse Christian and American identity.

The First Amendment simultaneously protects free speech and freedom of religion, because the framers understood that these values are linked. If state officials seek to justify their exercise of power on the basis of their own particular faith, no fact or argument, no matter how eloquently expressed, logically reasoned, or empirically compelling, will suffice to oppose it. Whether native to faith's ruling code or a stranger, each will seem blind and deaf to the other.

Over a half-century ago, the US Supreme Court described the "core value" protected by the First Amendment as every individual's right to participate meaningfully (either as a speaker or a listener) in a "free and unhindered debate on matters of public importance." When that right becomes a religiously coded privilege, liberal democracy, like Icarus, plunges into the sea.

Will enough Americans take notice and act before tragedy strikes? The answer depends on whether a national consensus still holds concerning pluralism and tolerance as essential concomitants of liberty and equality for all.

The writer is Professor Emeritus of Law at New York Law School.
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IN JEST THIS

Don't lose hope for a shorter workweek



Melvin Durai

OF COURSE, THERE ARE MANY INDUSTRIALISTS AND OTHERS WHO WANT WORKERS TO BE MARRIED TO THEIR JOBS

If you are currently working five days per week, you may be excited to hear about the four-day workweek pilot in the UK. In 2022, 61 companies participated in the six-month experiment, allowing their full-time employees to work just four days a week. The employees were paid the same and didn't have to work any extra hours on those four days, nor did they have to delete TikTok and Netflix from their phones.

A whole year has passed since the end of the experiment, and at least 54 companies (89 per cent) are continuing the four-day workweek policy, with 31 making it permanent, according to researchers from the think tank Autonomy, which helped organise the experiment with the groups 4-Day Week Campaign and 4-Day Week Global.

According to surveys, employees at these companies are enjoying better physical and mental health. Their work-life balance and job satisfaction have

also improved. As one employee said, "I love my job, now that I don't have to do it as much." Indeed, absence makes the heart grow fonder. Just ask all the kids who look forward to school after the holidays. Some of them are even eager to see the maths teacher again.

In a similar way, getting three days off work can help you recharge your batteries and allow more time for the dissipation of any hatred you have for your boss. If you're lucky enough to have a great boss, it might be a co-worker that you need to recover from.

Employees in the UK experiment worked an average of 31.6 hours in four days, a reduction from 38.2 in five days. Not all of them got the same days off. Some were actually saying "Thank God it's Monday." And others found themselves feeling the Friday morning blues.

What about company productivity? Surely it took a nose-dive. Not necessarily. Almost

half of the companies reported that overall performance either stayed the same or improved. Employees worked hard at being more efficient. They had shorter meetings and spent less time discussing Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.

The four-day workweek experiment appears to be a promising success, but you are probably asking yourself, "How does this affect me?"

Well, if you currently work five days a week, the dream of working four days isn't just a fantasy anymore. You might be able to pull it off, depending on your field and the leverage that you and your co-workers possess (having compromising pics of your boss helps). You might have to work 9- or 10-hour days to appease your boss and you might have to be far more efficient in your Instagram scrolling.

If you currently work six days a week, as many people do in India, China and other coun-

tries, the four-day workweek may seem like a pipe dream. But perhaps it will help convince your employer that a five-day workweek wouldn't be so bad.

Of course, there are many industrialists and others who want workers to be married to their jobs. Chinese billionaire Jack Ma, co-founder of Alibaba Group, believes in the "996" schedule, expecting employees to work from 9 am to 9 pm for six days a week. That's 72 hours, including meal times. No time for family. If your mom calls while you're working, you'll have to hang up quickly. "Sorry Ma, I work for Ma."

Convincing Jack Ma of the benefits of fewer work days won't be easy. If you've been making 20 gadgets in six days and tell him that you can continue making 20 in five days instead, he'll say, "If you can make 20 in five days, you should be making 24 in six days. Why are you slacking off?"

Silent epidemic

Sir, The findings of a recent study are indeed alarming, shedding light on a critical issue in India concerning "zero-food" children. The study indicates that 19.3% of children aged 6-23 months consumed nothing in a 24-hour period. This places India third globally, with a rise from 17.2% in 2016 to 17.8% in 2021. India, accounting for 6.7 million zero-food children, constitutes nearly half of the global total, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions. South Asia bears a significant burden, with 8 million affected, highlighting the urgency for tailored solutions. Health experts attribute the problem to mothers struggling with feeding care rather than food access, emphasising the need for immediate, tailored interventions to ensure the nutritional well-being of young children. Recently, the Supreme Court of India delegated the decision on establishing community kitchens to states and Union Territories to provide nutritious food to the underprivileged, addressing hunger, starvation deaths, and malnutrition. The persistent issue of malnutrition in India, particularly in children, necessitates ongoing attention. Calls for further research focus on unraveling the underlying causes of zero-food prevalence, understanding barriers to optimal child-feeding practices, and exploring how socioeconomic factors influence child-feeding behaviour.
Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Political gimmick

Sir, The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) has been perceived as a "political gimmick" strategically timed before the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Critics question the timing, suggesting that if the Union government was genuinely committed to the CAA, it could have been notified earlier. The sudden notification just before the elections raises suspicions regarding its true intent. Moreover, there is skepticism about the CAA being used as a tool to deceive the public, especially considering the complexities of granting citizenship. The assertion is clear: discrimination based on religion or caste is unacceptable, and the CAA's potential for such discrimination is troubling. The issue extends further as questions arise about the inclusivity and effectiveness of the CAA. People wonder whether the CAA portal will genuinely accommodate individuals from all religions, or if it will perpetuate biases.
Vijaykumar HK, RAICHUR (KARNATAKA)

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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WISDOM CORNER

Seek not the favor of the multitude; it is seldom got by honest and lawful means. But seek the testimony of few; and number not voices, but weigh them.
IMMANUEL KANT

Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man.
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Better pass boldly into that other world, in the full glory of some passion, than fade and wither dismally with age.
JAMES JOYCE



Women keep poachers at bay in Kaziranga

In 2023, the Assam Forest Department recruited more than 2,500 frontliners, comprising foresters and forest guards, and out of them, there were 300 young women from the northeastern state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kaziranga (Assam), March 13: Dressed in olive greens with a rifle slung on their shoulders, the members of an all-woman anti-poaching team are at the frontline of the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve to protect and conserve its wildlife and bio-diversity.

The 'King Cobra Camp' in the park's Eastern Range of Agorotoli has six members, and it began functioning in 2023, a senior official said. The UNESCO World Heritage Site has 54 female frontliners at present, comprising forest guards, foresters and some in the Rhino Protection Force, she said. "Kaziranga is proud to have women frontliners, which has been made possible years after it was declared a National Park and a Tiger Reserve," the park's director, Sonali Ghosh, said. In 2023, the Assam Forest Department recruited more than 2,500 frontliners, comprising foresters and forest guards, and out of them, there were 300 young women from the northeastern state, she said.

"These women are performing extremely well, and are a big support, especially in dealing with tourists and community interaction," Ghosh said.



They are engaged in the same patrolling and jungle duties as their male counterparts, the director said.

Forest Guard Rashmi Bora, a member of the all-woman camp, said everyday is a new learning experience inside the park. "It involves a lot of hard work, no doubt, but I am gaining crucial information about various wild animals and how they need to be conserved for a balanced environment," Bora said.

Bora said though she misses home at times, the "environment at the camp is good and I like being here". Agorotoli Range Officer Bidyut Bora said of the six-members in the camp, five are forest guards and one is a

forester.

"These women are a part of the park's conservation efforts, and are engaged in regular foot-patrolling duties along with drone patrolling," he said. Besides at the entry points, they are involved in ticket checking of tourists, the official said.

Forest Guard Priyanka Bharali said their daily duty begins at 7 am, and they again go for foot or elephant-back patrolling from 6 pm along the embankment areas. "We visit particular areas in the range, which are vulnerable to various threats. We try to ensure that the animals do not move out of the protected areas to neighbouring villages to reduce human-animal conflict," she said.

Another guard Deepamoni Mili said that sometimes, they have to face unforeseen circumstances and take quick decisions to resolve issues. "On several occasions, when the forest guards accompany the tourists during the safari, some animals emerge, and we have to open blank fire to chase them away and take the tourists back to safety," she said.

According to Forest Guard Deepanjali Bora, at times, the animals come too close, while on some occasions, tourists create problems by talking loudly. "We have to be strict with the tourists so that animals do not get disturbed and no untoward incident takes place," she said.

"The tourists should follow all the rules and regulations so that neither the animals nor the people are disturbed," her colleague Rashmi said. Ghosh pointed out that the women are trained on how to deal with wildlife as well as external forces affecting the conservation process.

"Once they are recruited, they undergo rigorous training in the police training centres of the state for three months," she said. There is also a forestry and wildlife training module for them, Ghosh added.

PM inaugurates semiconductor facility in Assam



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, March 13: Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually laid the foundation stone for a Rs 27,000-crore semiconductor assembly and test facility in Assam's Morigaon district Wednesday.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who was present at the event organised at the site of the facility in Jagiroad, said today is a landmark day for Assam and the North East.

"Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji is laying the foundation stone for the Rs 27,000 crore Tata Semiconductor Assembly and Test facility at Jagiroad," the chief minister posted on X. Quoting the prime minister, Sarma posted on the microblogging site, "Today we are also creating history and taking a strong step towards a bright future."

The chief minister had earlier said that people were eagerly awaiting this "game-changing project" which would herald a new dawn for Assam and the North East. "Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi: People of Assam eagerly await this game-changing project which has moved from conception to implementation in a record time period. Yet another testimony to the limitless possibilities that your governance offers," the chief minister wrote on social media. The greenfield project of Tata

Electronics at Jagiroad will involve an investment of Rs 27,000 crore and generate employment opportunities for more than 30,000 people.

The first phase of the facility is expected to be operational by mid-2025. Sarma also said the government is transforming Assam and the North East into "an epicentre of big bang investment and projects".

The company will build the facility focusing on three key platform technologies - wire bond, flip chip, and a differentiated offering called integrated systems packaging (ISP), with plans to expand the roadmap to advanced packaging technologies in the future.

Semiconductor assembly and testing is a critical part of the value chain where wafers manufactured by semiconductor fabs are assembled or packaged and then tested before they are finally used in the desired products.

The proposed facility will serve the growing global demands across key market segments like AI, industrial, and consumer electronics, the company said.

The project will provide an immense boost to industrialisation in North-East India. It is envisioned under the Centre's semiconductor policy being driven by the India Semiconductor Mission and the Assam government's electronics policy.

'Mission Bharosa' launched in UP for safety of school kids

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, March 13: The Uttar Pradesh government has officially launched 'Mission Bharosa', its portal and mobile application to ensure the safety of school children.

Recognising the critical importance of safe transportation of school children, this initiative focuses on implementing appropriate measures, including police verification of drivers and attendants, to ensure safe journey to and from school for students.

Vehicles of any type, whether bus, van, auto-rickshaw or e-rickshaw used in transportation of children, are to be registered and integrated on the Bharosa platform and the condition, mandatory documentations and other safety features of school transport vehicles will be verified by the Regional Transport Office (RTO).



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said, "Bharosa provides a framework to establish proper coordination among various stakeholders like RTO, police, Education department, schools, CMO, transport owners, parents and citizens using an advanced Artificial Intelligence machine learning-enabled technology platform that strives to provide safe driver and vehicle for transport of children."

Lucknow Municipal Commissioner Inderjeet Singh said, "Mission Bharosa stands as a beacon of commitment to the safety and security of our school-going children. In a world where every journey counts, especially for the young minds heading towards education, this proactive initiative takes lead in ensuring their well-being. Mission Bharosa prioritises safe transportation of school children."

7,396 golden langurs in India: Survey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, March 13: The population of endangered golden langur in India has increased to 7,396 from a previous estimation of 6,000, according to a recent survey.

The survey was conducted in various habitats of the animal, covering the Manas Biosphere Reserve and all fragmented forests of north-western Assam. The survey was jointly conducted by the Primate Research Centre NE India (PRCNE), the forest department, the Bodoland Territorial Council, the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON) and the Conservation Himalayas in two phases.

"The team observed 7,720 golden langurs in 706 unique groups and 31 lone males or floating males," Senior Scientist of Primate Research Centre NE India Dr Jihosuo Biswas said. "With estimating minimum population size, we found 7,396 golden langurs in 707 groups, inclusive of bisexual and male bands, along with 31 lone males," he said.

The 2008-09 estimation showed that there were 6,000 golden langurs in India, while the current head-count exercise suggested an increase in the population size but the satellite imagery shows shrinkage of forest cover which negatively impacts their habitats, Biswas pointed out.

There are two major sub-populations - the northern extended population, which encompasses the western part of the Manas Biosphere Reserve, and the southern fragmented population, which occurs along the



The survey was conducted in various habitats of the animal, covering the Manas Biosphere Reserve and all fragmented forests of north-western Assam.

southern side of the national highway-27 up to the Brahmaputra river in the south, he said.

The northern population of golden langurs in Manas Biosphere Reserve is estimated to be 5,566 in 534 groups and 23 lone males, while the same in southern fragments is estimated to be 1,830 langurs in 173 groups and 8 lone males, he said.

"The major population of golden langurs in the Manas Biosphere Reserve was found in Ripu reserve forest, and the number was 2,847, followed by Chirang reserve forest with 2,000 animals, and Manas National Park with 719," he said.

Similarly, in the southern fragments, the major populations were found in Chakrashila Wildlife Sanctuary of Kokrajhar district with 838 golden langurs, and Kakojana reserve forest of Bongaigaon district with 464, Biswas said.

Additionally, the group size was found to be larger with an

average of 10.69 per group as compared to 9.24 per group in the previous estimation.

In the first phase, the survey covered the western part of the Manas Biosphere Reserve, including Ripu Reserved Forest, while the second phase focused on fragmented forest habitats of golden langurs in Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar, and Dhubri districts of Assam.

The survey applied the occupancy framework of the block count method to assess the abundance, spatial distribution and densities of golden langurs, SACON's Principal Scientist Dr H N Kumara said.

"This method is applied for the first time for golden langur, which is considered to be relatively simple, cost-effective, and robust, especially for arboreal, small group-living primates," Kumara said. The demographic analysis, however, indicates an unstable situation in fragmented habitats. Despite regular infant recruitment, the percentages of juveniles and immature individuals compared to adults were invariably low in all fragmented habitats, Biswas said.

Setback for Oppn bloc in Assam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, March 13: In a jolt to the Congress-led Opposition alliance in Assam, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) Wednesday announced that its MLA Manoranjan Talukdar will contest from the Barpeta Lok Sabha seat, for which the grand old party has announced its candidature.

Addressing a press conference here, CPI (M) Assam State Secretary Suprakash Talukdar said the party has decided to field its veteran leader and legislator Talukdar from the Barpeta seat. The MLA currently represents the Sorbhog assembly constituency, which falls under the Barpeta Lok Sabha seat.

The Barpeta seat is currently represented by Congress MP Abdul Khaleque, who has been denied ticket this time and Deep Bayan will fight the polls from the linguistically as well as religiously sensitive constituency. Bayan is the president of Assam Pradesh Congress Seva Dal and a senior spokesperson of the APCC. CPI (M) is a part of the United Opposition Forum Assam (UOFA), formed in the state with 16 parties in line with the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA).

Another UOFA member, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has already announced candidates for three seats in Assam.

The Communist Party of India (CPI) also said that it is considering contesting from a few seats in the state. From the ruling front, BJP's alliance partner Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) has nominated senior leader, former minister and sitting Bongaigaon MLA Phani Bhusan Choudhury to contest from Barpeta for the general elections. Out of the 14 Lok Sabha seats, the Congress announced candidates for 12 seats.

Eight railway stations in Amethi get new names

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, March 13: The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has granted a No Objection Certificate (NOC) to the Uttar Pradesh government's request to rename eight railway stations in Amethi district.

This approval follows a proposal submitted to the MHA February 12, 2024, said a government spokesman.

The proposed name changes are as follows: Kasimpur Halt to Jais City, Jais to Guru Gorakhnath Dham, Bani to Swami Paramhans, Misrauli to Maa Kalikan Dham, Nihalgarh to Maharaja Bijli Pasi, Akbarganj to Maa Ahorwa Bhawani Dham,



Warisganj to Amar Shahid Bhale Sultan, and Fursatganj to Tapeshwarnath Dham.

Rekha Sharma, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager of the Lucknow division of Northern Railways, said: "The renamed railway stations will soon be updated by the Railway CRIS (Centre for Railway Information Systems). Additionally, we anticipate receiving the NOC from the state public works department for the station renaming process soon."

Large-scale violation of COTPA in UP restaurants: Study

On the occasion of No Smoking Day, observed on the second Wednesday of every month, hotel associations, doctors, and cancer victims across the country are urging the government to strengthen tobacco control laws

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, March 13: A joint survey conducted by King George's Medical University (KGMU) and the Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI) has found that several hotels and restaurants in the state



were violating the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), which prohibits smoking in certain public spaces.

On the occasion of No Smoking Day, observed on the second Wednesday of every month, hotel associations, doc-

tors, and cancer victims across the country are urging the government to strengthen tobacco control laws to make India 100 per cent smoke-free. The survey covered four cities in Uttar Pradesh -- Lucknow, Kanpur, Gautam Buddha Nagar and Gorakhpur --

and included 205 locations, comprising 69 hotels, 81 restaurants, and 55 resto-bars. According to the survey findings, none of the restaurants had a designated smoking area, and among the establishments, none met the specifications for ventilation and safety. Moreover, 99.5 per cent of them lacked signage specifying 'No Smoking' or 'Smoking' areas.

In Kanpur, 100 per cent of the resto-bars, and in Lucknow, 94 per cent of them provided smoking aids on their premises.

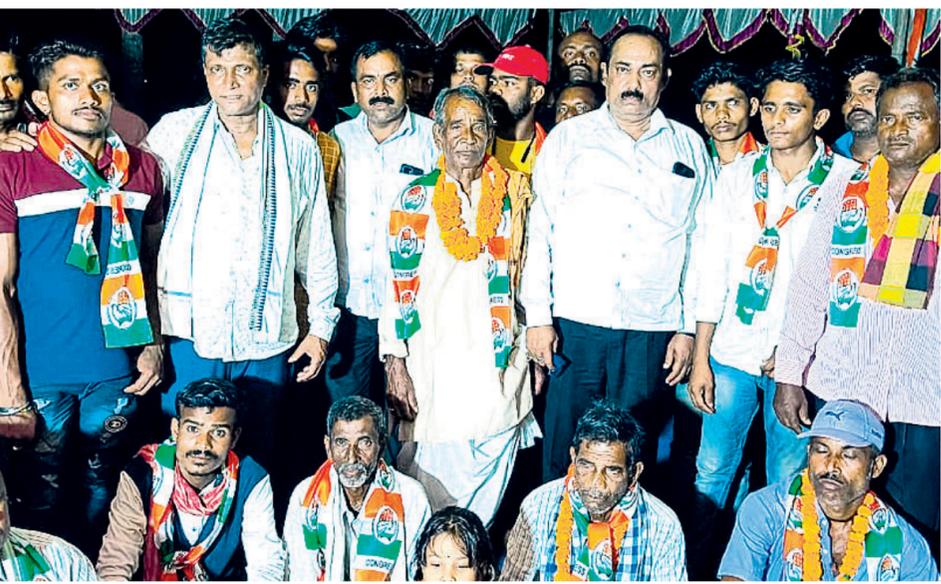
Dr Surya Kant, in-charge of the Tobacco Cessation Clinic and Head of the department of respiratory medicine at KGMU, warned of the dangers of passive smoking. He explained, "When a person smokes, they inhale only 30 per cent of the smoke, while 70 per cent remains

in the environment as environmental tobacco smoke."

Dr Kant further emphasised that tobacco smoke contains over 7000 chemicals, 70 of which are carcinogenic, making passive smoking equally harmful as active smoking. In India, smoking is banned in all public places under the COTPA 2003.

Section 4 of this Act prohibits smoking in any place accessible to the public. However, COTPA 2003 allows smoking in certain public places like restaurants, hotels, and airports, but only in designated smoking areas.

"Exposure to passive smoking occurs in eateries, specifically hotels, restaurants, bars, pubs, and clubs, putting the lives of thousands of non-smokers at risk," said Dr Kant.



MERGER MEET: Several BJD and BJP workers joined Congress at a merger meeting held at Sundarpur panchayat under Chandbali block in Bhadrak district, Wednesday



WOMEN POWER: Aul MLA and state Energy Minister Pratap Deb and other guests at a women's rally of ruling BJD held at Gobindpur Gandhi Memorial College ground in Aul of Kendrapara district, Wednesday

BJP's 2nd list of 72 LS candidates out

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 13: Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari, Piyush Goyal and Anurag Singh Thakur, and three former chief ministers, including Haryana's Manohar Lal Khattar, figured in the BJP's second list of 72 candidates for the Lok Sabha elections announced Wednesday, while the ruling party dropped former Union ministers Sadananda Gowda and Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' from their seats.



Gadkari and Thakur will seek re-election from Nagpur in Maharashtra and Hamirpur in Himachal Pradesh respectively. In the Beed constituency in Maharashtra, Pankaja Munde has replaced her sister and incumbent MP Pritam Munde. Of the 72 seats for which the party announced its candidates, 20 each were from Maharashtra and Karnataka, seven from Gujarat, six each from Haryana and Telangana, five from Madhya Pradesh, two each from Delhi,

Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, and one each from Tripura, and Dadar & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu. Tejasvi Surya, the BJP youth wing president, will contest again from Bangalore South while Union minister Shobha Karandlaje has been shifted from her Udupi Chikmagalur seat to Bangalore North, represented by former Union minister and Karnataka chief minister Gowda in the outgoing Lok Sabha. Yaduveer Krishnadatta

Wadiyar of the erstwhile Mysore royal family replaces Pratap Simha, who was recently in a row for recommending passes to two persons who breached Parliament's security, as the BJP candidate in the Mysore seat. Former Karnataka BJP president Nalin Kumar Kateel has been dropped from Dakshina Kannada in favour of Brijesh Chowta, who has served in the Army. In Karnataka, Union minister Pralhad Joshi will fight from Dharwad while former chief minister BS Yediyurappa's son BY Raghendra will contest from Shimoga again. In Delhi, the BJP has fielded two new candidates -- Harsh Malhotra from East Delhi and Yogendra Chandolia from North West Delhi -- dropping the party's sitting MPs Gautam Gambhir and Hans Raj Hans. With this, the BJP has named candidates for all seven Lok Sabha seats in Delhi, dropping six incumbents. Ashok Tanwar, who recently joined the BJP after having a

Cong promises ₹1L cash transfer to women, 50% quota in central govt jobs



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 13: Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, the Congress Wednesday announced five guarantees for women, including annual direct cash transfers of Rs 1 lakh to one woman from each of the country's poorest families and 50 per cent quota in all new recruitments in central government jobs.

Under the Mahalakshmi guarantee of the party, one woman from every poor family will be given an annual assistance of Rs 1 lakh through direct cash transfer. Besides, the Congress will ensure 'Aadhi aabaadi, poor haq', under which 50 per cent of all new recruitments in central government jobs will be reserved for women.

In a post on X, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the party has announced the 'Nari Nyay' guarantee, under which it is going to set a new agenda for the country's women. Kharge said prior to this, the Congress has announced its guarantees on participatory justice, farmer justice and youth justice. "Needless to say, our guarantees are not empty promises and statements," he said in his post in Hindi on the microblogging platform. "Our words are set in stone. This is our record from 1926 till now, when our opponents were being born, we have been making manifestos, and fulfilling those declarations. All of you keep giving your blessings to the Congress party and strengthen our hands in this fight to save democracy and the Constitution," Kharge said. Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi made the announcements at a women conference in Maharashtra's Dhule.

Under the 'Shakti ka Samman' guarantee, the Centre's contribution to the monthly pay of ASHA, anganwadi and mid-day meal workers will be doubled, Kharge said. Under the 'Adhikar Maitri' guarantee, the Congress will appoint an 'adhikaar maitri' in every panchayat to serve as a para-legal functionary to educate women about their legal rights and assist them in their enforcement. Under the Savitri Bai Phule Hostels guarantee, the Congress-led Centre will double the number of hostels for working women in the country, with at least one in each district. "Today @INCIndia President @kharge ji unveiled the five guarantees for Nari Nyay, which @RahulGandhi took forward at the Mahila Melawa Meeting in Dhule. Earlier, we had announced the guarantees for Kisan Nyay, Hissedari Nyay, and Yuva Nyay," All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X.

Anandapur Cong workers in a fix



and Anandapur blocks, and has also started unifying the party workers. Addressing the public outreach programmes, Jayadev is seen lambasting the BJD government in the state and the BJP regime at the Centre. Chatters are abuzz that Jayadev is doling out Rs 500 each to people who attend the party meetings -- a move to exhibit his strength before the rival parties. Political analysts are of the view that Jayadev and his supporters, who were missing from the scene since 2019 elections, have suddenly become active and this is well understood.

Congress workers, however, are in a dilemma as to who is going to get the party ticket from Anandapur -- Jayadev or his son Manoj. The confusion emanates from the fact that the party banners have the photographs of both Jayadev and Manoj. While a section of Congress workers say that Jayadev will retire from active politics and give a chance to his son this time, some others are of the view that the former OPCC president may contest from the seat, keeping in view the future political developments in the constituency.

However, apart from Jayadev and Manoj, there is no other ticket aspirant in Congress. Congress has embraced defeat in 2009, 2014 and 2019 and continued to remain in second position. The party secured 48,960 votes in 2009, 60,296 votes in 2014 and 45,657 votes in 2019 elections. It is evident that the vote share of Congress has dwindled since 2014. Party workers and voters are expressing resentment over the performance of the aged-old party, especially when there are hints that there would be an alliance between BJD and BJP in the upcoming polls. Many voters are now questioning the 'once in a blue moon'

CHANDBALI ASSEMBLY SEGMENT

Jolt to BJD as 1000 workers join BJP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandbali, March 13: As many as 1,000 workers of ruling BJD here deserted the party and joined the saffron party at a merger meeting held at the BJP office in Kherang Bazaar under this Assembly segment in Bhadrak district, Wednesday. The exodus of BJD workers in such large numbers ahead of the elections has delivered a jolt to the ruling party amid a buzz over an alliance between the BJD and BJP. Notably, Chandbali is the Assembly constituency of BJP state party president Manmohan Samal. Over 700 ruling party workers hailing from 300 families and led by BJD leaders Bapi Majhi and Prasant Majhi joined the saffron party at a merger meet-



ing presided by Prabhas Subhadarshan Moahanty at the party office. Similarly, over 200 BJD workers hailing from 20 families in Rajnagar panchayat joined the saffron party at the merger meeting. BJP state vice-president Biranchi Tripathy, district president Hemant Padhi, youth leader Sitanshu Mohapatra, actor Jina Samal welcomed and inducted the BJD workers into BJP by

presenting them scarf and saffron cap of the party. Among others, BJP's district vice-president Kamalakanta Sutar, state Krushak Morcha member Upendra Roul, district Krushak Morcha president Ashok Roul, district Mahila Morcha president Kalpana Jena, Aradi zone president Kishora Nayak and a host of BJP leaders were present at the merger meeting.

BJD looks to retain Bhadrak LS seat amid alliance buzz

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, March 13: Amid the confusion surrounding the formation of BJD-BJP alliance, the ruling BJD has rolled up its sleeves to maintain its winning streak in Bhadrak Lok Sabha constituency (SC) which has been under its kitty since 1995. While some of the voters want the two parties to form an alliance and contest the election, a majority of them are not in favour of such a pact. Sensing the voters' mood, the district unit of the ruling BJD has urged the party authorities to field a candidate from this seat again in the upcoming election to retain it once again. The Bhadrak Lok Sabha constituency, reserved for the candidates of Scheduled Caste (SC) community, comprises seven Assembly segments including five in Bhadrak district as well as Soro and Simulia seats in



neighbouring Balasore district. The issue acquired prominence after reports indicated that the Lok Sabha constituency might be handed over to BJP in case of an alliance. This has sparked resentment among the ruling party workers and leaders. After reports surfaced, BJD's Bhadrak district president Jagannath Swain, party's district youth wing pres-

ident Mukund Samal, district student wing president Deepti Surya Biswal, district women wing president Bidyutlata Nayak and some other office bearers have written a letter to the Chief Minister apprising him of their demand. They have also informed and requested Nabin Odisha chairperson Kartik Pandian, party's organisational secretary Pranab

Prakash Das and district observer Sanjay Das Burma to consider their demand. The BJD leaders said there are 1.80 lakh voters from the minority community residing in various places under the territorial jurisdiction of Bhadrak Lok Sabha constituency. A majority of the voters from minority community are aligned with BJD and have been voting

for the party in each election. The BJD will be deprived of the minority votes if BJP fields its MP candidate from this seat after an alliance is formed. This was stated here by BJD's district unit president Jagannath Swain in a press release issued recently. Swain further said all the voters under Bhadrak Lok Sabha segment are highly conscious and can exercise their rights without any fear and favour. He has requested the party authorities to take these facts into consideration and field a BJD candidate from Bhadrak Lok Sabha constituency which will only help the party to strengthen its position here. In the 2019 general elections, the BJD candidate here defeated his BJP counterpart by a margin of 28,803 votes. However, the saffron party is laying more focus on this constituency this time with an aim to contest from here.

national



Our government schools are so good that there is no difference between the children of the rich and the poor. We have fixed the government hospitals, opened mohalla clinics, provided free bus rides to women

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

21 INDIANS DETAINED IN SRI LANKA

Sri Lankan authorities have detained 21 Indian nationals for illegally operating a computer-operated business in the island nation, violating the relaxed tourist visa norms, authorities said Wednesday. The 21 Indian men in the age group of 24 to 25, who were in Sri Lanka on tourist visas, were detained Tuesday by the Department of Immigration and Emigration, a senior immigration officer said



Mod inks ₹8,073 crore deal for Indian choppers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 13: The defence ministry Wednesday signed two contracts with a combined value of Rs 8,073 crore with the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd for acquisition of 34 advanced light helicopters and associated equipment for the Indian Army and the Coast Guard.

Out of 34 Dhruv Mk-III helicopters, the Army will get 25 and the Coast Guard will receive nine, according to the ministry.

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) had cleared the two procurement projects last week.

"Consequent upon approval of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), the Ministry of Defence signed two contracts for a combined value of Rs 8073.17 crore with the HAL on March 13 for acquisition of 34 Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) Dhruv Mk III along with operational role equipment for Indian Army (25 ALHs) and Indian Coast Guard (09 ALHs) under Buy (Indian-IDD) category," the ministry said.

It described the acquisition under the Indian-IDD (Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured) category as a significant move towards indigenisation in defence manufacturing.

The ALH Dhruv Mk III UT (Utility) - the Indian Army version - is designed for search and rescue, transportation of troops and casualty evacuation among other roles.

It has proved its performance in high altitude regions like Siachen Glacier and Ladakh, the ministry said in a statement. The ALH Mk III MR (Maritime Role), the ICG version, is designed for maritime surveillance, search and rescue, rappelling operations and also for transportation of troops.

It has proved its mettle even in adverse atmospheric conditions over sea and land, the ministry said.

of the day quote

Farmers are unhappy with the present rulers. There is unhappiness among onion farmers in Nashik, Dhule, Pune and Satara

SHARAD PAWAR | NCP (SP) CHIEF

It was a difficult situation. Missiles were being fired but our PM called Russian President (Vladimir) Putin, Ukraine President (Volodymyr) Zelensky and US President (Joe) Biden, and on his appeal, the war was stopped for four-and-a-half hours and our students were evicted

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

The Constitution of India stipulates equal opportunity for all the political parties to take part in the elections and it should be adhered to by all means

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Foreign footballer faces racism

Malappuram (Kerala): A football player from Ivory Coast was beaten up by a mob of spectators and also allegedly racially abused a few days ago during a soccer match between local clubs in north Kerala, police said Wednesday, adding that an FIR has been registered, naming 15 persons as accused. The incident came to light as a video of the assault went viral on social media and the foreign national lodged a complaint with the Malappuram District Police Chief Tuesday alleging that he was racially abused and pelted with stones during the match by some of the spectators who also beat him up.

Two UNLF (P) members held

Imphal: Two "important" members of the banned United National Liberation Front (P) have been arrested in a joint operation carried out by the Manipur Police, NIA and CRPF, officials said Wednesday. They said Thokchom Thoiba, a self-styled army chief of the proscribed outfit, and Lieutenant Colonel Laimayum Ingba, the head of its intelligence department, were arrested in the operation. The two men were immediately put on a flight to Delhi for a thorough interrogation by National Investigation Agency (NIA) officials. Thoiba was not a part of the UNLF (P) when it signed a peace agreement with the Centre in November last year.

10th India-Italy JDC meeting held

New Delhi: Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane and Italian Secretary General of Defence and National Armament Director Lt Gen Luciano Portolano co-chaired the 10th India-Italy Joint Defence Committee meeting here Wednesday during which both sides discussed a wide range of defence industrial and military cooperation issues.

EC appointment: SC to hear plea Friday

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Wednesday agreed to hear March 15 a plea of an NGO challenging the exclusion of the Chief Justice of India from a panel meant for selecting the CEC and election commissioners on the grounds that the poll panel should be insulated from "political" and "executive interference" to maintain a healthy democracy.

ROW OVER CAA

OPPN ESCALATES ATTACK ON CENTRE



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Kolkata, March 13: The BJP Wednesday accused Opposition parties of stoking communal passion over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and asked them to stop spreading "lies" about the new law, as leaders of rival parties escalated their attack on the Modi government over its implementation.

Amid continuing anti-CAA protests in Assam and Kerala, former Union minister and BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad slammed opposition leaders like Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his West Bengal counterpart Mamata Banerjee and maintained that CAA-2019 does not take away citizenship of any Indian or jobs.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader has made a very strange statement, Prasad told reporters in reference to Kejriwal's claim that the BJP government at the Centre can't provide jobs to Indians but wants to give them to those coming from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

Chief Minister Banerjee asserted that CAA-2019 is linked with the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and that is the reason why she is opposing the new legislation. The TMC supreme said she doesn't want detention camps in West Bengal, like those in Assam. Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu and Kerala—M K Stalin and Pinarayi Vijayan—have also strongly opposed the CAA. Union Minister and senior BJP leader Anurag Thakur also lashed out at the opponents of the CAA, saying thousands of Dalit

The CAA that seeks to grant citizenship to undocumented non-Muslim migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who came to India before December 31, 2014 was rolled out Monday

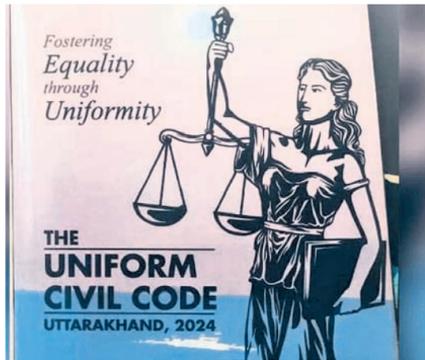
families from the neighbouring countries now living in India were waiting for citizenship.

Speaking at a programme at Delhi BJP office, Thakur said the CAA is a law for providing citizenship and not for taking it away. After partition of the country, the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru promised that minorities living in the neighbouring countries will be preserved but the Congress in last 75 years did nothing for it, he said.

The former law minister also dismissed the assertion of some states ruled by non-BJP parties that they will not implement the Act, saying it is a central law and is required to be implemented. Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai also lashed out at opposition parties, claiming "there is no humanity left in them".

Rai, a senior BJP leader, also asserted that while Prime Minister Narendra Modi has "fulfilled his own promise" with the notification of CAA, the opposition was indulging in "appeasement politics" and acting out of "vote bank concerns".

In Uttarakhand, Uniform Civil Code Bill now a law



It is a moment of great joy and pride for people of the state that the Uniform Civil Code Bill passed by our government in the Uttarakhand Assembly has been approved by the Honorable President Smt Droupadi Murmu

PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMI | UTTARAKHAND CM

UTTARAKHAND IS THE FIRST STATE IN THE COUNTRY AFTER INDEPENDENCE TO ADOPT THE UCC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, March 13: The Uniform Civil Code Bill, passed by the Uttarakhand Assembly February 7, has become a law with President Droupadi Murmu giving her assent to it.

Uttarakhand is the first state in the country after Independence to adopt the UCC.

"It is a moment of great joy and pride for people of the state that the Uniform Civil Code Bill passed by our government in the Uttarakhand Assembly has been approved by the Honorable President Smt Droupadi Murmu," Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said in a post on X.

The President gave her assent to the Uniform Civil Code, Uttarakhand,

2024 under Article 201 of the Constitution of India March 11, a gazette notification by the government of Uttarakhand said.

"With the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code law in the state alongside providing equal rights to all citizens, the oppression of women will also be curbed," Dhami said.

"Uniform Civil Code will play an important role in promoting harmony by proving the importance of social equality," he said in a statement.

The state government is determined to protect the interests of citizens and maintain the essential character of Uttarakhand in accordance with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he added.

State BJP president Mahendra Bhatt also expressed happiness over the President's approval to the UCC. "It will give equal rights to all citizens," he said in a statement.

Uttarakhand BJP media in-charge Manveer Chauhan said it is the fulfilment of a major commitment made by the party to the people of the state ahead of 2022 state Assembly polls.

Saini govt wins trust vote

AGENCIES

Chandigarh, March 13: Nayab Singh Saini-led BJP government in Haryana Wednesday won the confidence motion by voice vote in the state assembly here, a day after he took oath as the new Chief Minister.

Five of the Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) MLAs left the House when the trust vote was taken up during the Assembly's special session. The JJP, which was part of the previous Khattar government, had issued a whip, asking its 10 legislators to remain absent from the Assembly during voting on the confidence motion.

Speaker Gian Chand Gupta put the trust motion for voting by voice vote which the Saini government won. Former state Home Minister and senior BJP leader Anil Vij, who had left in a huff the party meeting where Saini was picked up chief minister on Tuesday, was present in the House.

During the voice vote, besides JJP's 10 MLAs, lone legislator of

the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) was also not present in the House. JJP MLAs Devender Singh Babli, Ram Kumar Gautam, Ishwar Singh, Ram Niwas and Jogi Ram Sihag left the House when the trust vote was taken up.

Congress members asked Speaker Gupta to conduct voting through secret ballot but he refused saying there was no provision in the rules for the same. Earlier, Saini had moved a motion to seek a vote of confidence in the Assembly. A two-hour discussion took place on the motion.

Speaking in the House, Saini said, "Our government not only has the trust of the MLAs, but we also have trust of the people of Haryana." The BJP having 41 MLAs on its own was comfortably placed even without support of the JJP. Besides JJP's 10 MLAs, INLD member and one Congress member were also not present which reduced the strength of the House to 78.

In the 90-member state Assembly, the BJP also enjoys the

Khattar resigns as MLA

Chandigarh: Hours before he was named as the BJP candidate for the Karnal Lok Sabha seat, former Haryana Chief Minister M L Khattar Wednesday announced he was resigning as the MLA from the Karnal Assembly segment. "From today, our chief minister will look after the Karnal assembly constituency," he said, in an indication that the BJP might field Nayab Singh Saini in that seat.

support of six of the seven independents as well as of lone Haryana Lokhit Party MLA Gopal Kanda.

The main opposition Congress has 30 MLAs. The BJP named Saini as Haryana's new Chief Minister Tuesday, hours after the surprise resignation of Manohar Lal Khattar from the post along with his Cabinet ministers.

SNIPPETS

Two new warships for Navy launched

Kolkata: Two new warships built for the Indian Navy to augment anti-submarine operations in coastal waters and low-intensity maritime operations were launched here Wednesday. The two anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft (ASW SWC) built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited (GRSE) were launched by Neeta Chaudhari, wife of Chief of Air Staff of Indian Air Force, Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari. She named the ships INS Agray and INS Akshay.



Mukhtar Ansari gets life sentence

Varanasi (UP): A special Varanasi court Wednesday sentenced gangster-politician Mukhtar Ansari to life imprisonment in a three-decade-old fake gun licence case. The MP-MLA court of judge Awanish Gautam also slapped a fine totalling Rs 2 lakh on Ansari under various penal provisions, district government counsel Vinay Singh said. He said the case against Ansari was registered under IPC sections 467 (forgery), 468 (forgery for the purpose of cheating) and 120B (criminal conspiracy), along with provisions of the Arms Act at Mohamadabad police station of Ghazipur district in December 1990. According to the government counsel, Ansari joined the court proceedings via video conference from Banda Jail, where he is currently lodged. According to police officials, around 60 cases are pending against the gangster-politician in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, New Delhi and other states. He has so far been convicted in at least seven cases.



CBI summons Shajahan's brother

Kolkata: The CBI Wednesday summoned a brother of suspended Trinamool Congress leader Shajahan Sheikh and a few others close to him for questioning in connection with the mob attack on Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials in West Bengal's Sandeshkhali January 5, officials said. A CBI team went to Sandeshkhali in North 24 Parganas district and, with the help of the local police, reached the house of Shajahan's brother Alamgir Sheikh. Officials said that Alamgir was not present at home, and the notice for questioning was served to his family. The notice was also served to a few other people, considered close to Shajahan who was arrested last month by the state police.

OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, DHARMAGARH (Dt)- KALAHANDI

No.780/DMH E-mail:nacdharmaagarh@gmail.com Dated:13.3.24

DETAILED TENDER CALL NOTICE

Name of the Work	Tender of Weekly Market (Friday & Monday)
E.M.D.	Rs.20,000/-
Tender Notice No. & Date	No.568, Date 19.02.2024
Agency	As per eligibility
Period of Tender	ONE YEAR
Available of Documents	14.03.2024 to 27.03.2024 (in Office hour) in NAC Office
Last date of receipt of documents	Upto 01.00 PM of 27.03.2024
Date of Opening of Bid	04.00 PM of 27.03.2024
Name and Address of the Officer Inviting the Notice	Executive Officer, NAC, Dharmagarh, Kalahandi
Details can be seen from	https://www.nacdharmaagarh.in

Sd./- Executive Officer
NAC, Dharmagarh
OIPR-13163/11/0016/2324

OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER: ATHMALLIK DIVISION

At/Po-ATHMALLIK, DIST-ATHMALLIK, Odisha-759122

Email ID:- dfoAthmallik@gmail.com

dfo.athmallik@odisha.gov.in, Phone No.8895641929

Letter No.1461/1F-Accounts/2023-24

Dated Athmallik the 12th March, 2024

TENDER CALL NOTICE FOR HIRING VEHICLES

No.MM-510:Sealed tenders are invited from interested Reputed Travel Agencies/ Tour Operators or private individuals to provide approximately 11 (Eleven) Nos. of Vehicles (BS VI compliant Diesel driven AC/ Non-AC), which shall conform to the Terms and Conditions (Annexure-II) for official use at different Ranges (Location details of the vehicles to be engaged is in - Annexure-IV) under Athmallik Forest Division on monthly rent basis to reach in the O/o the Divisional Forest Officer, Athmallik Forest Division, on or before **27.03.2024 up to 04.00 P.M.** through Registered/Speed Post/Courier Service and can also be dropped in the Tender Box placed in the Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Athmallik Forest Division. The tenders will be opened in the same office on **27.03.2024 at 05.00 P.M.** The Standard Bidding Document and Terms and Conditions can be downloaded from <https://angul.nic.in>, <https://odishaforest.in> and also can be obtained from the Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Athmallik Forest Division from **15.03.2024 to 27.03.2024** during office hours.

Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer
Athmallik Forest Division
OIPR-08125/11/0027/2324

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, BOUDH

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA e-Procurement Notice

Bid Identification No.24/BMID/2023-2024

E-mail ID: bmidbhd@gmail.com

Letter No.1175/ Date:12.03.2024

No.A-1719: 01. Name of Work : Repair to Bandhapada MIP in Boudh Block of Boudh District under MIPSP Scheme

02. Numbers of Work : 01 (One) No.

03. Tender Amount : Rs.12.70 Lakhs

04. Class of Contractor : "D" & "C"

05. Tender Paper Cost(Online) : Rs.6,000/-

06. Period of Completion : 03 (Three) Calendar Months

07. Availability of Bid document : From 19.03.2024 at 10.00 AM to 04.04.2024 at 05.00 PM in website (www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

08. Last date & Time of receipt of Bid : 04.04.2024 at 05.00 PM through online

09. Date of Opening of Bid Documents : 05.04.2024 at 11.00 AM in the Office of the SE, M.I.Division, Boudh

10. Date of Lottery if Required : 08.04.2024

11. Digital Signature Certificate of Bidder : The Bidder must process compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)

13. Name and Address of the OIT : Superintending Engineer, M.I.Division Boudh, At/Po-Malisahi, District Boudh PIN-762014

Further details can be seen from the Government of Odisha Website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in Sd./- Superintending Engineer M.I.Division, Boudh

OIPR-32279/11/0023/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER SAMBALPUR IRRIGATION DIVISION, SAMBALPUR

E-mail id: sidsambalpur@gmail.com

e-Procurement Notice No. SESID-03/2023-24

Bid Identification No.SESID-03 (01-18)/2023-24

No.960 Date:11.03.2024

No.A-1718:Bid documents consisting of work, estimated amount put to tender, cost of tender paper, EMD, time of completion, class of contractor, the set of terms & conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in e-Procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in> complete online process only.

1. Nature of Works	: Canal & Road Works
2. Nos. of Works	: 18 Nos.
3. Bid Identification No.	: SESID-03 (01-18)/ 2023-24
4. Estimated Cost	: 5.36-25.95 Lakhs
5. Earnest Money Deposit	: Referred to DTCN
6. Cost of Tender Paper	: Referred to DTCN
7. Period of Completion	: Referred to DTCN
8. Date and Time of availability of Bid document in the Portal	: Dt.18.03.2024 at 11.00 AM to Dt.03.04.2024 upto17.00 PM
9. Last Date/Time for receipt of Bids in the Portal	: Dt.03.04.2024 upto 17.00 PM
10. Date of Bid Opening	: Dt.04.04.2024 at 11.00 AM
11. Clarification seeking Date	: Dt.18.03.2024 at 11.00 AM to Dt.03.04.2024 upto17.00 PM
12. Date of Lottery (if Required)	: To be intimated later.
13. Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Superintending Engineer Sambalpur Irrigation Division, Sambalpur At/Po-Khetrajpur- 768003 Dist-Sambalpur Email Id:sidsambalpur@gmail.com

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in said website.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
OIPR-32129/11/0005/2324 Sambalpur Irrigation Division, Sambalpur

international

of the day quote

China has stressed multiple times that the boundary question does not represent the entirety of the China-India relations which should be placed appropriately in the bilateral relations and managed properly

Attempting to send aid via air, sea is admirable in a way. But focusing on such palliative solutions rather than focusing on the real issue seems, to us, as seeking to escape from the root of the issue

There has actually been a rise in extremist activity that is seeking to hijack our democratic institutions. It is important that we have the tools to tackle this threat

SHORT TAKES

Russia kills 234 Ukraine fighters

Moscow: The Russian Defense Ministry said Tuesday night that Moscow's military and security forces killed 234 fighters while thwarting an incursion into Russian border regions earlier in the day. In a statement, the ministry blamed the attack on the "Kyiv regime" and "Ukraine's terrorist formations," insisting that the Russian military and border forces were able to stop the attackers and avert a cross-border raid. It also said the attackers lost seven tanks and five armored vehicles. The reports of border fighting earlier Tuesday were murky, and it was impossible to ascertain with any certainty what was unfolding in Russia's Kursk and Belgorod regions.

Nepal PM wins trust vote again

Kathmandu: Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" Wednesday won a vote of confidence in Parliament, as the country struggled to maintain political stability. Prachanda, 69, a former guerilla leader from the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) -- the third largest party in the House of Representatives (HoR) -- received 157 votes in the 275-member House of Representatives. The vote comes days after the Maoist leader dumped the Nepali Congress and forged a new alliance with the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist).

Haiti's future being planned on two tracks

TRADITIONAL POLITICAL POWER, GANG POWER: HAITIAN POLITICS HAS LIVED IN THESE TWO WORLDS FOR DECADES

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Port-au-Prince, March 13: Haiti's future is being planned on two tracks -- one involving traditional political power, the other focused on the power of gangs.

After an intense session of international diplomacy in Jamaica, a group of Caribbean nations and the United States announced Tuesday that Haiti's best hope for calming violence rests with a council of influential figures who would elect an interim leader and could steer the country toward fresh presidential elections.

Putin warns West of N-war

Russia, which inherited the Soviet Union's nuclear weapons, has the world's biggest store of nuclear warheads

Moscow, March 13: President Vladimir Putin warned the West Wednesday Russia was technically ready for nuclear war and that if the US sent troops to Ukraine, it would be considered a significant escalation of the conflict.

Putin, speaking just days before a March 15-17 election which is certain to give him another six years in power, said the nuclear war scenario was not "rushing" up and he saw no need for the use of nuclear weapons in Ukraine. "From a military-technical point of view, we are, of course, ready," Putin, 71, told Rossiya-1 television and news agency RIA in response to a question whether the country was really ready for a nuclear war.

Putin said the US understood that if it deployed American troops on Russian territory - or to Ukraine - Russia would treat the move as an intervention. "(In the US) there are enough specialists in the field of Russian-American relations and in the field of strategic restraint," said Putin, the ultimate decision maker in the world's biggest nuclear power. "Therefore, I don't think that here everything is rushing to it (nuclear confrontation), but we

Russia is ready for negotiations on Ukraine, but they should be based on reality - and not on cravings after the use of psychotropic drugs

VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA



are ready for this." Putin's nuclear warning came alongside another offer for talks on Ukraine as part of a new post-Cold War demarcation of European security. The US says Putin is not ready for serious talks over Ukraine.

Putin sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine in February 2022, triggering full-scale war after eight years of conflict in eastern Ukraine between Ukrainian forces on one side and pro-Russian Ukrainians and Russian proxies on the other.

Putin said Russia was ready for serious talks on Ukraine. He said he trusted no one and Russia would need written security guarantees in the event of a settlement. "I don't trust anyone, but we need guarantees, and guarantees must be spelled out, they must be such that we would be satisfied," Putin said.



Many young people go to die (in war). Let's pray to the Lord to give us the grace to overcome this madness of war, which is always a defeat

POPE FRANCIS | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

FAILED ATTEMPT

Kairos, a small, solid-fuel rocket made by Japan's Space One, exploded just seconds into its inaugural launch Wednesday as the firm tried to become the first Japanese company to put a satellite in orbit



US, UN express CAA concerns



REUTERS

Washington, March 13: The US government and the United Nations Tuesday expressed concerns about a contentious religion-based citizenship law, with the UN calling the legislation "fundamentally discriminatory in nature."

Rights advocates have criticised the 2019 Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) - which the Indian government moved to implement Monday. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International say it discriminates against Muslims.

Just weeks before Indian elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government has been pushing to implement the law, which makes it easier to get Indian citizenship for non-Muslim refugees from three Muslim-majority South Asian nations: Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Rights groups note the law

leaves out Muslim minority groups like Shia Muslims from those countries while also excluding neighboring countries where Muslims are a minority, like the Rohingyas in Myanmar. "As we said in 2019, we are concerned that India's Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 (CAA) is fundamentally discriminatory in nature and in breach of India's international human rights obligations," a spokesperson of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights told Reuters.

He added the office was studying whether the law's implementation rules comply with international human rights law.

The US has also signaled reservations. "We are concerned about the notification of the Citizenship Amendment Act on March 11. We are closely monitoring how this act will be implemented," a US State Department spokesperson told Reuters separately.

"Respect for religious freedom and equal treatment under the law for all communities are fundamental democratic principles," the State Department spokesperson added in an email.

Activists and rights advocates say the law, combined with a proposed national register of citizens, could discriminate against India's 200 million Muslims - the world's third-largest Muslim population. Some fear the government might remove the citizenship of Muslims without documents in some border states.

TIDBITS

Bird flu strain raises alarm



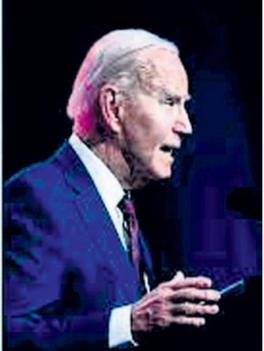
Sao Paulo: The deadly H5N1 bird flu virus has spread more aggressively than ever before in wild birds and marine mammals since arriving in South America in 2022, raising the risk of it evolving into a bigger threat to humans, according to interviews with eight scientists. Of more immediate concern is evidence the disease, once largely confined to bird species, appears to be spreading between mammals. This strain has already killed a handful of dolphins in Chile and Peru, some 50,000 seals and sea lions along the coasts, and at least half a million birds regionwide. To confirm mammal-to-mammal transmission, scientists would likely need to test infections in live animals. "It's almost certainly happened," said Richard Webby, a virologist at St Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. "It's pretty hard to explain some of these large infections and die off without having mammal-to-mammal spread."

Thunberg blocks Swedish Parl again



Stockholm: Swedish police Wednesday again forcibly removed Greta Thunberg and other climate activists who were blocking the entrance to parliament, driving them away in a police van for the second time this week. Thunberg and dozens of other environmental campaigners on Monday began blocking the main entrances to Sweden's parliament in a sit-down protest against the effects of climate change and what they said was political inaction. Police did not intervene at first, but removed the demonstrators when the protest resumed Tuesday morning. Thunberg, 21, became the face of young climate activists as her weekly protests, starting in 2018, in front of the Swedish parliament quickly grew into a global youth movement with large rallies across continents.

Biden, Trump clinch Prez nominations



THE US PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES KICK OFF GRUPELLING REMATCH, FIRST SINCE 1956

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, March 13: US President Biden and his predecessor Donald Trump have clinched their parties' presidential nomination, setting the stage for a 2020 rematch during the November elections. Biden, 81, won the Democratic presumptive nomination

Tuesday after easily clinching the presidential primaries in Georgia, as the number of delegates in his kitty crossed the halfway mark of 3,933 pledged delegates. A total of 1,968 delegates were required to win the Democratic nomination.

He would formally be declared the party's nomination during the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in August.

Trump, 77, reached the 1,215 delegates necessary with an allocation of delegates from Washington state.

Trump will be officially nominated at the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee this

July. He will lead the Republican Party in a third consecutive presidential election after clinching the nomination Tuesday.

Their rematch, long anticipated, but hardly clamoured for, is broadly expected to mirror the 2020 campaign, though Trump will run this time under the spectre of 91 felony charges.

Trump is scheduled to become the first former American president to go on trial in a criminal case March 25 in New York, where he faces charges he falsified business records to hide hush money payments to a porn star.

Biden defeated Trump in the 2020 November elections, an outcome still challenged by the Republican leader. He has faced only nominal opposition to become the Democratic nominee.

Trump has defeated several Republicans in primary elections, including Indian-origin former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. Other candidates, including Trump's former vice president, Mike Pence, dropped out months ago for lack of voter support.

Biden said he is honoured to become his party's presumptive nominee and warned of another Trump presidency.

Nigerian kidnappers demand \$620k for release of students



REUTERS

Kaduna, March 13: Gunmen who kidnapped 286 students and staff from a school in northern Nigeria last week have demanded a total of 1 billion naira (\$620,432) for their release, a spokesman for the families of the hostages, and a local councillor, told Reuters.

The school children, some older students and members of the school staff were abducted March 7 in the town of Kuriga, in Nigeria's northwestern Kaduna State, in the first mass kidnapping in the country since 2021.

Jubril Aminu, a community leader who acts as a spokesman for the families of the hostages, said he had received a call on his phone from the kidnappers Tuesday.

"They made a total of a 1 billion (naira) ransom demand for all the pupils, students and staff of the school," Aminu said.

"They gave an ultimatum to pay the ransom within 20 days, effective from the date of the kidnap. They said they will kill all the students and the staff if the ransom demand is not met."

Idris Ibrahim, an elected official from the Kuriga Ward municipal council, confirmed the ransom demand and the amount.

"Yes, the kidnappers called the community through Jubril Aminu's number and made the demand," he said.

"They called from a hidden number but the authorities are working on getting the number," Ibrahim told Reuters.

He added that the security forces were taking "adequate measures" to secure the release of the students.

Samuel Aruwan, Commissioner of Internal Security and Home Affairs in Kaduna State, did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment about the kidnappers' demands.

The ransom demand amounts to more than \$2,000 per hostage, or more than the annual per capita income in Nigeria, according to International Monetary Fund data.



cludes a role for civil society alongside the Montana one, but some observers say that is far from enough. "The fact that Haiti's civil society and religious sector will only have observer status" on a transitional council dominated by members of the country's disgraced political class and its allies should tell you a lot," said Michael Deibert, author of "Notes From the Last Testament: The Struggle for Haiti" and "Haiti Will Not Perish: A Recent History."

Desalin party, which is run by former senator and presidential candidate Moise Jean-Charles. He is now an ally of Guy Philippe, a former rebel leader who led a successful 2004 coup and was recently released from a United States prison after pleading guilty to money laundering.

Philippe was a charismatic leader who was instrumental in the 2004 rebellion against former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and had powerful ties to police, politicians and the business elite.

Former Prime Minister Charles Joseph has a party called EDE/RDE, which also has a vote. Also on the council is the Fanmi Lavalas party backed by Henry.

Robert Fattou, a Haitian politics expert at the University of Virginia, said that membership in the group announced Monday appeared to overlap with at least one other group that was founded in recent weeks to calm Haitian civil unrest in the same general way.

BIGGEST OBSTACLES

Solutions to past crises have overly emphasized foreign nations' ability to resolve problems in Haiti, said Francois Pierre-Louis, a professor of political science at Queens College at the City University of New York.

"The US government and the international community have not allowed Haitians to decide on their own what needs to be done, and that is done two ways," Pierre-Louis said. Specifically, outside actors have undermined civil society and failed to punish bad elements, he said, making the work of constructing a functional society infinitely more difficult.

But Haiti's domestic instability may have gone so far that only an armed force from overseas can impose order, said Eric Farnsworth, vice president of the Council of the Americas and the Americas Society. People must be ready to welcome that force. "It's a no-win situation," he said.

of the day quote

We have asked banks to undertake comprehensive review of the gold loan business



VIVEK JOSHI | FINANCIAL SERVICES SECRETARY

For FY25, the power ministry has asked for 874 million tonnes of coal. We will fulfill this requirement also. We are going to cross 1 billion tonne coal production by this March



PRALHAD JOSHI | UNION MINISTER

India is a top priority for us. We have five countries, which we call as leapfrog jump countries and one of them is India. For Decathlon, India is already among the top ten markets globally (in revenue terms). We wanted to get it into the top five



STEVE DYKES | CHIEF RETAIL & COUNTRIES OFFICER, DECATHLON

SHORT TAKES

'Gross negligence by Byju's auditors'

Mumbai: Chartered accountants' apex body ICAI has "found gross negligence on the part of the auditors" of the now-crippled edutech firm Byju's, said its president Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal Wednesday. Besides, the top official also said the accounting body is also planning to inspect the books of payments major Paytm. "Our inspection has found gross negligence on accounting practices by individual auditors of Byju's and accordingly we have recommended to the Financial Reporting Review Board (FRRB) to take punitive actions on auditors concerned," Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal, the president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), told PTI here.

₹500cr scheme to promote e-mobility

New Delhi: The heavy industries ministry Wednesday announced a new scheme to promote e-mobility in the country with an outlay of ₹500 crore for four months beginning April 2024. The new scheme is for 2-wheelers and 3-wheelers. The second phase of FAME-II or Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India programme ends March 31, 2024. Announcing E-Mobility Promotion Scheme 2024 (EMPS 2024), Heavy Industries Minister Mahendra Nath Pandey said the Modi government is committed to promoting e-mobility in the country. The scheme will be for four months till July 2024, the minister said. Under the scheme, a support of up to ₹10,000 per 2-wheeler will be provided.



The biggest risk for sustained capital formation and sustained economic growth is in our short-termism

V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN | CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISOR

BLOODBATH AT D-ST

A sharp fall in smallcap and midcap indices played spoilsport for the markets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 13: Equity benchmark index Sensex Wednesday crashed over 900 points to sink below the 73,000 level due to widespread selling pressure amid a sharp fall in smallcap and midcap indices.

Besides, deep losses in utility, energy and metal stocks and recent selling by foreign investors added to the gloom, analysts said.

Benchmark indices started the session on a positive note, but the selling intensified during afternoon trade, with all sectoral indices ending in the red. The 30-share index tanked 906.07 points or 1.23 per cent to settle at 72,761.89. During the day, it dropped 1,152.25 points or 1.56 per cent to 72,515.71.

The Nifty plummeted 338 points or 1.51 per cent to 21,997.70.

Power Grid was the biggest loser in the Sensex pack, sliding over 7 per cent, followed by NTPC, Tata Steel, Tata Motors, JSW Steel, Bharti Airtel, Titan, Reliance Industries and Hindustan Unilever.

In contrast, ITC, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Nestle, Bajaj Finance and HDFC Bank were the gainers.

"In contrast to the global up-trend, the unfavourable risk-reward balance of mid and smallcap stocks, fuelled by prolonged premium valuations, has aggravated the downfall. Meanwhile, FMCG and con-



SENSEX TANKS 900 POINTS TO SLIP BELOW 73K

NIFTY PLUMMETS 338 POINTS TO 21,997.70

There may be some early froth, and it may be a little bubbly but the markets are not out of control

UDAY KOTAK | INDUSTRY VETERAN

₹13.47L-cr wiped off

Dalal Street investors became poorer by ₹13.47 lakh crore in a single day Wednesday amid heavy selling in the equity market, where the BSE benchmark Sensex tumbled over 900 points. The market capitalisation (mcap) of BSE-listed companies eroded by ₹13,47,822.84 crore to ₹3,72,16,602.67 crore.

trarian plays like gold are offering some refuge. Other than the premium valuation no fundamental issue is noticed to drawback the long-term growth image of domestic midcaps," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge tanked by 5.11 per cent, while the midcap index declined by 4.20 per cent.

All the indices ended in the red, with utilities tumbling 7.21 per cent, metal dropping by 5.75 per cent, services (5.71 per cent), telecommunication (5.45 per cent), oil & gas (5.16 per cent), commodities (4.28 per cent) and industrials (4.23 per cent).

A total of 3,516 stocks de-

clined, while 400 advanced and 60 remained unchanged on BSE.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹73.12 crore Tuesday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 1.09 per cent to \$82.81 a barrel.

India's industrial production growth slowed to 3.8 per cent in January, while the February retail inflation at 5.09 per cent remained within the Reserve Bank's comfort zone for the sixth straight month, according to the latest government data.

The BSE benchmark ended 165.32 points or 0.22 per cent higher at 73,667.96 Tuesday. The Nifty ended flat at 22,335.70, up 3.05 points or 0.01 per cent.

US passes bill to force ByteDance to divest TikTok or face ban

AGENCIES

Washington, March 13: The US House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a bill Wednesday that would give TikTok's Chinese owner ByteDance about six months to divest the US assets of the short-video app used by about 170 million Americans or face a ban.

The bill passed 352-65, with bipartisan support, but it faces a more uncertain path in the Senate where some favor a different approach to regulating foreign-owned apps that could pose security concerns.

The measure is the latest in a series of moves in Washington to respond to US national security concerns about China, from connected vehicles to advanced artificial intelligence chips to cranes at US ports.

TikTok, which has more than 150 million American users, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Chinese technology firm ByteDance Ltd.

The lawmakers contend that ByteDance is beholden to the Chinese government, which could demand access to the data of TikTok's consumers in the US any time it wants.

TikTok has long denied that it could be used as a tool of the Chinese government.

Tata Motors to invest ₹9K-cr for new plant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, March 13: Tata Motors has signed a memorandum of understanding with Tamil Nadu government, committing an investment of ₹9,000 crore to establish a manufacturing facility in the state, Industries Minister TRB Rajaa said Wednesday.

The proposed facility would generate 5,000 new jobs, he said in a social media post. However, he did not mention where the unit is expected to come up.

Top officials of the auto major exchanged documents with government officials in the presence of Chief Minister M K Stalin in this connection.

"#TataMotors and the Government of Tamil Nadu are revving up for an epic journey! In the presence of our Honourable @CMOTamilNadu Thiru. @MKStalin avargal, @TataMotors today signed an MoU with the Government of Tamil Nadu to establish a cutting-edge vehicle manufacturing facility, committing an investment of ₹9000 crore and generating up to 5000+ #JobsForTN," Rajaa said in a post on X.

"For the FIRST time EVER, TN has attracted TWO BIG Automobile Manufacturing



#Investments within a span of just 2 months," he said in another post.

The other big ticket investment bagged by the state government is from Vietnam based Vinfast which has committed to invest ₹16,000 crore for an electric vehicle manufacturing facility in the southern district of Thoothukudi.

"Over the past couple of years, Tamil Nadu has hit the fast lane and become the ultimate hub for investments, showcasing our Chief Minister's dedication to fostering top-tier employment for our vibrant youth and amplifying our industrial prowess."

"We're not just building factories; we're engineering dreams and accelerating towards a brighter, more prosperous future!# Investment #AutoCapitalOfIndia" Rajaa added.

OBTAIN NEW PAYTM FASTAG: NHAH

NHAH has advised Paytm FASTag users to obtain a new FASTag from another bank before March 15 to ensure a smooth travel experience and avoid inconvenience at toll plazas, an official statement said Wednesday. This will help avoid penalties or double fee charges while commuting on National Highways



Youths need patience, faith, hope and hard work: Sahu

Stalwart Projects, a real estate developer with over 13 years of experience in Bhubaneswar, has been at the forefront of redefining real estate development, crafting exquisite residential and commercial spaces that epitomise sophistication and functionality. In a bid to do something for the society, **Sharat Kumar Sahu**, Founder, Chairman & Managing Director of Stalwart Projects Private Limited (SPPL), left his job in a public sector bank and started this journey with the vision to provide employment. Hailing from a small town in Sundargarh district, his dedication towards building dreams from the ground up has taken SPPL to new heights today. In a conversation with **Orissa POST**, Sahu shares his entrepreneurial experience. Excerpts...



How is the demand for housing projects in Odisha market?

There is a huge demand for various categories of housing projects in the Odisha market. Especially the demand for special housing (duplex) and luxury (multi-facility) apartments is higher than other projects.

How important are RERA regulations for home builders?

At present, the buyer can assert his right to the home developers because of RERA regulations, government policies and laws. Earlier, because there was no vigilance from RERA or the government, builders used to work arbitrarily. As a result, buyers were facing various problems. Now that everything is being done as per government and RERA regulations, there is transparency in the industry and buyers' trust has significantly uplifted.

Which category of customers prefer to buy a house?

People of all walks need a house to live in society, while having a house in the city is a dream of affluent customers. If possible, the customer buys a house according to his convenience and needs. Basically, doctors, lawyers, CAS, teachers, IT professionals and engineers are primary buyers. Along with them government job holders and businessmen emphasise on luxury as per their capital and demands.

Amid taxation and registration hassles, how do you plan and manage a project?

At present one has to do a project and keep track of all

the necessary accounting documents till the end of the project like government expenditure etc. While looking at the needs and demands of customers on the one hand, government and regulatory policies and taxes also have to be taken into account.

How do you view the new registration rules of the state government?

For the past few years, there have been some government restrictions and regulations that have been a barrier to both buyers and sellers. However, at present, after extensive discussion on the proposals of all stakeholders the government has taken a welcome step. As long as all parties are happy with the result, there will be no issues in terms of transaction and ownership.

How is the impact of the price hike affecting the business?

Currently inflation and market pricing are big problems for housing projects. Cost of raw materials and human resources required for housing projects along with govern-

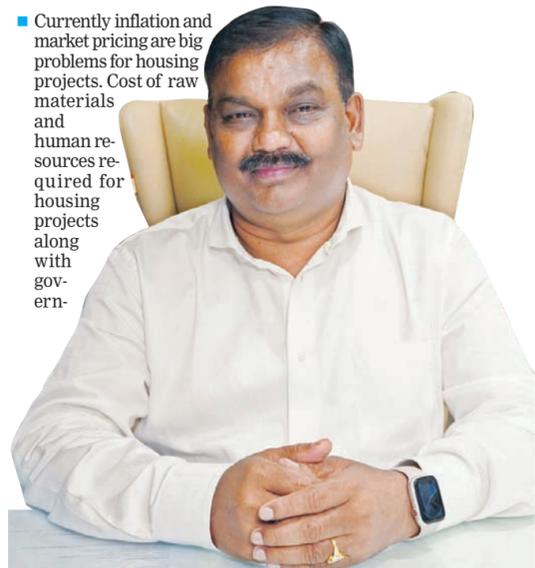
ment taxes have increased by 5 per cent over the past few years. The land required for the project also has to be purchased at a higher rate from the freehold owners.

What would be your message to aspiring entrepreneurs?

Housing construction is a major sector in the domestic market. Enthusiastic and aspiring youths need patience, faith, hope and hard work to directly and indirectly see their contribution in this sector.

Are there any projects in anvil?

New projects are required for business growth. The company is going to launch several housing projects in the coming days. A special housing project for senior citizens at Gangapada in Bhubaneswar will come up in near future.



BAT sells 3.5% stake in ITC for ₹17,485cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

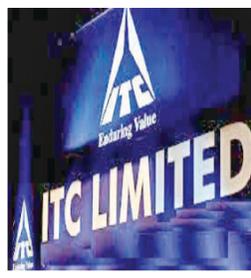
New Delhi, March 13: British multinational BAT Plc Wednesday sold 3.5 per cent stake in ITC Ltd for Rs 17,485 crore through open market transactions.

Even after completion of the block trade, BAT will remain a significant shareholder of ITC, with 25.5 per cent holding in FMCG-to-hotel conglomerate ITC.

Singapore Government, Monetary Authority of Singapore, Lockheed Martin Corporation, Goldman Sachs (Singapore), Cophall Mauritius Investment, BofA Securities Europe SA, Societe Generale, Morgan Stanley Asia Singapore Pte, and Ghisallo Master Fund LP picked up shares in ITC.

BAT sold more than 43.68 crore equity shares in 48 tranches, amounting to a 3.5 per cent stake, through its affiliate Tobacco Manufacturers (India) Ltd.

The shares were disposed of at an average price of Rs 400.25 apiece, taking the deal size to Rs 17,484.97 crore, according to the block deal data available with the BSE.



As of December 2023, BAT through its affiliates - Tobacco Manufacturers (India) Ltd, Myddleton Investment Company Ltd, and Rothmans International Enterprises Ltd - owned a 29.03 per cent stake in ITC.

ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund (MF), Motilal Oswal MF, Nippon India MF, SBI MF, Max Life Insurance Company, IMF, Capital Group, Kuwait Investment Authority, The People's Bank of China, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development were among the buyers of the shares.

The scrip of ITC ended the day with a gain of 4.49 per cent at Rs 422.40 apiece while the BSE benchmark closed in the red.

RBI to import gold without paying import levies

REUTERS

Mumbai, March 13: India has allowed its central bank to import gold without paying import levies, the government said in a notification issued late Tuesday. Gold importers from the world's second biggest gold consumer need to pay basic customs duty and Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC).

As of September 2023, the Reserve Bank of India held 800.79 metric tonne of gold, including gold deposits of 39.89 tonne.

Of that, 388.06 tonne is held overseas and 372.84 tonnes is held domestically, according to the RBI's latest reserve management report.



World's 1st AI software engineer unveiled

Named Devin, Cognition's AI software engineer can write, debug and deploy code to create functioning websites and videos

AGENCIES

Washington, March 13: US-based start-up Cognition has launched what it calls the world's first AI software engineer.

Named Devin, Cognition's AI software engineer can write, debug and deploy code to create functioning websites and videos. Devin is a software development assistant in the vein of Copilot, which was built by GitHub, Microsoft and OpenAI, but, like, a next-level software development assistant.

This AI software engineer has the capability to take a single com-



mand and turn it into a functioning website or software programme. According to reports, Devin can also identify and rectify

bugs, reducing the time and effort required for troubleshooting. Instead of just offering coding suggestions and auto-complet-

ing some tasks, Devin can take on and finish an entire software project on its own.

It is equipped with its own command line, code editor, and browser which helps it to operate independently

In a video, Cognition Chief Executive Scott Wu demonstrated how Kevin operates. As it works, Devin shows all the tasks it's performing and finds and fixes bugs on its own as it tests the code being written.

"Teaching AI to be a programmer is actually a very deep algorithmic problem that requires the system to make complex decisions and look a few steps into the future to decide what route it should pick," Scott Wu told the Bloomberg.

"It's almost like this game that we've all been playing in our minds for years, and now there's this chance to code it into an AI system," he said.

Barca, Arsenal sail on Jena has high hopes for Paris

ODISHA LAD EXPECTS MORE THAN ONE MEDAL IN JAVELIN AT PARIS OLYMPICS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona/London, March 13: After four years, Barcelona are again celebrating a triumph in the knockout stage of the Champions League. The five-time European champions returned to the quarterfinals with a 3-1 win over Napoli Tuesday.

Arsenal, on the other hand, reached the Champions League quarterfinals for the first time since 2010 after beating Porto 4-2 in a penalty shootout, ending a streak of seven eliminations in the round of 16.

David Raya saved Galeno's spot-kick to seal the win for Arsenal, which had won the game 1-0 to level the aggregate score at 1-1 Tuesday. Wendell also missed his penalty for Porto, hitting the post with his team's second attempt at the Emirates Stadium.

In Barcelona, Fermin Lopez, Joao Cancelo and Robert Lewandowski scored for Barcelona as it advanced 4-2 on aggregate after a 1-1 draw in the first leg in Italy three weeks ago.

Amir Rrahmani scored for Napoli, which couldn't repeat their last-eight appearance from last season, when they won a knockout round for the first time. Barcelona had been eliminated in the group stage the last two years and hadn't reached the quarterfinals since 2019-20, when they lost to Bayern Munich.

The Champions League could be Barcelona's last realistic chance for a title this season. They were eliminated in the Copa del Rey and trail Spanish league leaders Real Madrid by seven points. Coach Xavi Hernandez already announced he will leave at the end of the season.

The victory also means extra income for Barcelona, which has been struggling financially recently. The Catalan club is unbeaten in six meetings with Napoli in all competitions.

They struggled to keep the Italian side from threatening after taking the early lead at Estadi Olimpic Lluis Companys. Goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen, making his 100th UEFA appearance, was tested often by Napoli's attack.



(From R) Joao Cancelo celebrates his goal with Firmin Lopez and Robert Lewandowski in Barcelona, Tuesday

Barcelona had a few chances to increase their lead on counterattacks before Lewandowski sealed the win from close range in the 83rd after an assist by substitute Sergio Roberto. Lewandowski has scored 13 goals in his last 13 knockout stage games in the Champions League.

Lopez put the hosts ahead with a shot from the middle of the area in the 15th minute following a dummy by Lewandowski after a low cross by Raphinha, who also set up Cancelo's goal two minutes later. The Brazil forward hit the post from inside the area and the ball bounced back for an easy strike by Cancelo.

Napoli got on the board in the 30th with Rrahmani

finding the net with a low left-footed shot for his

first European goal. Barcelona teenager Lamine Yamal had a goal disallowed for offside in the 68th. The last time Barcelona played in the quarterfinals they had also eliminated Napoli 4-2 on aggregate.

Portugal — when Galeno scored the winner deep into stoppage time — but went level through Leandro Trossard's 41st-minute goal. Neither side could find another goal despite extra time as Porto's disciplined defensive tactics largely held Arsenal at bay.

Arsenal had been eliminated at this stage seven years in a row under Arsene Wenger between 2011-17, the last time the London club played in the competition.

tack in his European debut. Meanwhile in London, Arsenal trailed 0-1 from the first leg in



DAVID RAYA

AGENCIES

Chandigarh, March 13: Rising men's javelin thrower Kishore Kumar Jena feels medal prospects in javelin are not only limited to Neeraj Chopra as the Odisha star is confident of more than one javelin medal at the Paris Olympics later this year.

"As per rule, three players can compete from one country in javelin throw. That increases the probability of winning more medals in Paris. We are all training hard for the Summer Games and if we can stay consistent and injury-free, India can do better than Tokyo," said Jena in an exclusive conversation with SAI Media on the sidelines of the 'KIRTI' launch.

Jena was a top attraction at the launching of the Khelo India Rising Talent Identification (KIRTI) programme by the Anurag Thakur, Union minister of youth affairs and sports, here Tuesday.

The Summer Olympics are just a little more than 130 days away and Jena is working hard towards making it a memorable outing for the country along with Olympic and World Champion Neeraj Chopra.

Jena, who is currently training at the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports (NSNIS) in

Patiala, has been making headlines ever since he went toe-to-toe with Chopra at the World Athletics meet in Budapest last year. For the first time in the history of the Asian Games, Chopra and Jena made it a javelin one-two in Hangzhou last year.

"I believe 2024 will be a great season for me as compared to last year. Practice is going well and I am getting support from every quarter be it Sports Authority of India (SAI), TOPS (Target Olympic Podium Scheme) or Athletics Federation of India (AFI).

"I am sure my performance will be better as I will give it my 100 per cent, rest is on the Almighty and what happens on that particular day," said the 28-year-old from Odisha, who will return to outdoor competition for the first time in 2024 at the Doha leg of the Diamond League season in May.

Jena, who comes from a farming family in Puri district, went for an exposure trip to Gold Coast in Australia last month where he was accompanied by long-time coach Samarjeet Singh Malhi. He did different kinds of weight training to improve his core and shoulder strength.

So, what will be his target in Doha? Will it be throwing the javelin 90 metres? Will Chopra's

presence put pressure on him? "I haven't thought of it (90 metres) till now. My aim is to keep improving my results and overcome my weaknesses. I keep taking suggestions from Neeraj bhai.

"I don't see him (Chopra) as my competitor. Whenever I encounter some problem I take his advice as he is one of the nicest human beings I have ever come across. He doesn't hold back when it comes to offering the right advice," said Jena.

During the Hangzhou Asiad there was a minor scare for Chopra as his first 'good' throw was not considered by officials. Later, Jena posted his personal best of 87.54m to push Chopra to give his all.

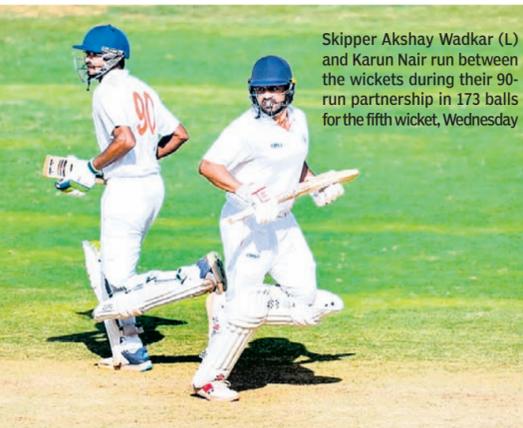
The Olympic champion finally came up with a monster throw of 88.88m to defend his gold medal. Jena settled for silver and more importantly, met the qualifying mark for Paris 2024.

"At that time I was happy that I had qualified for Paris 2024. I went up to him (Chopra) and even told him that I have qualified. He boosted my confidence saying I can post a bigger throw. Like everyone my aim is to win a medal but that is not entirely under my control and I will go for my personal best at my maiden Olympics," Jena signed off.



Anurag Thakur felicitates Kishore Kumar Jena during the launch of 'KIRTI' programme in Chandigarh

Vidarbha prolong Mumbai's wait for 42nd Ranji crown



Skippers Akshay Wadkar (L) and Karun Nair run between the wickets during their 90-run partnership in 173 balls for the fifth wicket, Wednesday

Mumbai, March 13: A dogged fightback from Vidarbha, led by Karun Nair (74, 220b, 3x4) and skipper Akshay Wadkar (56 batting, 91b, 6x4, 1x6), prolonged Mumbai's wait for a 42nd Ranji Trophy title as the visiting side reached 248/5 in pursuit of a mammoth 538 on the fourth and penultimate day of the final here Wednesday.

Set an improbable target to win the summit clash after being outplayed since the first day afternoon, Vidarbha put up a resolute show with the bat to frustrate their hosts by resorting to stonewalling for the majority of the day.

Nair was at the forefront of their resistance keeping Mumbai at bay. But the right-handed batter ultimately fell to the brilliance of Musheer Khan (2/38) late in the day, with the 19-year-old producing a superb bowling show after setting up the game with 136 in the second innings.

Wadkar was accompanied by Harsh Dubey (11 batting) at stumps on the penultimate day of the match with Vidarbha requiring another 290 runs to win having five wickets in hand.

Mumbai managed a couple of wickets each in the first two sessions and the vital scalp of Nair in the last. They took the second new ball in the 82nd over

DC march into WPL final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 13: The big-hitting Shafali Verma led the way with a blazing 37-ball 71 (7x4, 5x6) as a dominant Delhi Capitals secured direct qualification into the final of the WPL with a seven-wicket hammering of Gujarat Giants here Wednesday.

Table-toppers Delhi Capitals entered the game looking to bag a direct spot in the final and once their bowlers restricted Giants to 126/9 with a disciplined show at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, the hosts inched closer to realising their goal.

In the final Sunday, the Capitals will play the winner of the eliminator between Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bangalore.

As she is wont to, Shafali launched into a flurry of boundaries to help her side complete the chase of 127 without much ado. DC finished the game with as many as 41 balls remaining.

The duo of Shafali and Jemimah Rodrigues (38 n.o, 28b, 4x4, 1x6) then bludgeoned Meghna Singh for 20 runs, and Ashleigh Gardner was also carted for 28 runs in two overs.

Earlier, Delhi Capitals' bowlers produced a fine effort to restrict Gujarat Giants to a modest total.



Shafali Verma (R) and Jemimah Rodrigues take DC home against Giants

ALCARAZ, SINNER ADVANCE TO INDIAN WELLS QUARTERS



CARLOS ALCARAZ

JANNIK SINNER

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indian Wells (US), March 13: Second-ranked Carlos Alcaraz avenged a previous loss to Fabian Marozsan, winning 6-3, 6-3 to reach the quarterfinals of the BNP Paribas Open as the top remaining seed in the men's draw.

A day after 'lucky loser' Luca Nardi stunned No.1 Novak Djokovic in the third round at Indian Wells, Alcaraz Tuesday advanced easily over the Hungarian who ousted him from the Italian Open in May. Alcaraz, the defending champion at Indian Wells, will face Alexander Zverev, who rallied past Alex de Minaur 5-7, 6-2, 6-3.

Marozsan was a qualifier and the No.135 player in the world when he upset Alcaraz — then on the verge of taking the top spot

in the rankings — 6-3, 7-6(7-4) in the third round in Rome.

Australian Open champion Jannik Sinner beat Ben Shelton 7-6(7-4), 6-1 later Tuesday for his 18th consecutive victory. The third-ranked Italian has won 15 matches in a row to start 2024, claiming titles at Melbourne and Rotterdam. It was the 150th hard-court victory for the 22-year-old Sinner, who became first player born in the 2000s to reach that milestone. Sinner advanced to the quarterfinals to play Jiri Lehecka, a 6-2, 6-4 winner over Stefanos Tsitsipas.

On the women's side, Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk beat Russian Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-4, 6-1, and Anastasia Potapova defeated Jasmine Paolini 7-5, 0-6, 6-3.

LAKSHYA, TANISHA-ASHWINI IN ALL ENGLAND PRE-QUARTERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, March 13: World Championship bronze medalist shuttler Lakshya Sen moved into the second round with an easy straight game win over Denmark's Magnus Johannesen at the All England Championships here Wednesday.

The 22-year-old brushed aside the Dane 21-14, 21-15 in 40 minutes in the men's singles opening round contest. In the round of 16, he will meet another



Danish opponent in fourth seed Anders Antonsen.

The women's doubles pair of Tanisha Crasto and Ashwini Ponnappa also progressed to the round of 16 with a comfortable 21-13, 21-18 win over Hong Kong's Yeung Nga Ting and Yeung Pui Lam. The unseeded Indian duo will take on the fifth seed Chinese duo of Zhang Shuxian and Zheng Yu in the pre-quarterfinals.

Priyanshu Rajawat lost to Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo. Rajawat went down 19-21, 21-11, 9-21.