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leisure



CARREY ANNOUNCES ACTING RETIREMENT

Hollywood star Jim Carrey has announced that he's retiring from acting. When revealing his plan in a new interview, the actor said that he feels he's done enough after nearly five decades of his career, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

SUPERMODEL HADID LANDS RECURRING ROLE IN RAMY

Supermodel Bella Hadid will have a recurring role in the third season of Hulu's critically-acclaimed comedy series *Ramy*, which follows Ramy Youssef playing a fictionalised version of himself trying to navigate life as an American Muslim in New Jersey.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You are currently high on life. Today is a good day to complete all those tasks you put on the back burner. It's also a great day to do the things you hate doing (read: cleaning up your closet). If you were looking to bring in a new business strategy, Ganesh gives the thumbs up!

TAURUS
There is a strong possibility that you will put off those you love and respect on account of your unpleasant behaviour. Ganesh underlines the need to hold your temper as well as your tongue. You need to keep extra cool this day. This is a day full of romantic possibilities.

GEMINI
You have great business plans and can't wait to launch a few of your ideas today. Your colleagues will lend you their complete support. You may spend the evening decorating your home or finding peace in the arms of your beloved.

CANCER
You will finalise business dealings with your partners today. Your high spirits may be subdued later in the day. However, as evening approaches and you get ready for a party, you will be back in your elements, cracking jokes and generally putting a smile on people's faces.

LEO
Since when was a day complete without a little bit of a scruff and a small squabble? These are the annoying little situations that remind you just how better the alternative is. Ganesh portends a day in which you are joined with a propensity for quarrels.

VIRGO
Your professional life may just bounce up higher than ever today, predicts Ganesh. Expect incentives as well today. Executing plans to perfection will come naturally to you. In the evening, family will drown you in their unconditional love.

LIBRA
We all have our own worlds to manage, and play the superhero for. And our family, friends and work are what make up our world. Ganesh foresees a day in which you shall remain engrossed in managing these different aspects of your life. Expect to find your financial prospects shine bright on the professional front, and bask in the approval that you receive for your actions.

SCORPIO
Proposals of your choice will come your way today says Ganesh. You shall probably retreat into your shell in the afternoon. But the passing hours will bring out a different you. At work, you shall greatly impress your boss with sparkling results, predicts Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Expect to be on the go for business related work. Money matters will be a pressing issue in the afternoon. Be the team player and catch all that comes your co-workers' way. Expect to relax and end the day on a cheerful, romantic note.

CAPRICORN
In all probability, you will be in a bizarre frame of mind. At work, there will be a sudden turn of events that shall suddenly create a tottering pile of tasks on your table. In financial matters, you are likely to remain very cautious. In the evening, you can relax and enjoy yourself with your sweetheart, suggests Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
Today, you will realise the importance of time in the business world. Ganesh says you will understand how much risk is involved in going about things in a haphazard manner. As a natural corollary, you will revamp and reschedule a lot of your plans, whether it's business or travel or just a family vacation.

PISCES
Your decision-making ability will be at its finest today, with all your spontaneous split-second decisions hitting the mark. However, do not get carried away by your early successes and temper your responses, for there could be implications later.

Harnaaz shuts down trolls body-shaming her

New Delhi: Miss Universe 2021 Harnaaz Kaur Sandhu was recently body-shamed and social media users called her "fat". Now, during an event, Harnaaz revealed that she is suffering from Celiac disease. Addressing the trolls, Harnaaz said, "I'm one of those individuals who was first bullied that 'she's too skinny' and now they bully me saying 'she's fat,'" she said at an event in Chandigarh.

She added, "Nobody knows about my Celiac disease. That I can't eat wheat flour and many other things."

Harnaaz Kaur Sandhu also shared that she has always felt confident in her skin and added, "I am one of the courageous and confident girls who believes even if I'm fat, even if I'm thin, it's my body, I love myself."

The Miss Universe walked the ramp at Lakme Fashion Week wearing a gown with a halter neck. The photos and videos had gone viral on the web and many had trolled Harnaaz for her weight gain. One had commented, "Wow the rolls in the back" and another one had writ-

ten, "Plus size realness." "Have you gained some weight?" another one had asked.

Celiac disease is an autoimmune condition which leads to malnourishment, loss of bone density, fertility issues, neurological diseases, and sometimes even cancer. It also can lead to both weight gain as well as weight loss and is also associated with long-term digestive problems.

AGENCIES



Sonal admits to nepotism, favouritism

Mumbai: Jannat actress Sonal Chauhan, who is currently shooting in Dubai with Akkineni Nagarjuna for *The Ghost*, admits to nepotism and favouritism. The actress shares how she lost out on good projects because the makers wanted to work with their favourite set of actors.

She says, "I wouldn't deny that the film world is full of nepotism and favouritism. It exists in showbiz like it does in every other field. I have lost out on good projects because the makers wanted to work with their favourite set of actors and I had to move out. Then, you are left with two options - feel sad about yourself and cry about it or just move on."

Sonal shares how it is important to be persistent and patient in showbiz. She says, "You win some and you lose some. I don't believe in crying over something. We need to be persistent and patient and at the same follow our goals. I feel if you persist, then something will come to you sooner. It is all a matter of chance and luck. One has to keep working at getting good projects and chasing their dreams." AGENCIES

Odia-Hindi trans movie T eyes Cannes nomination

Bhubaneswar: The producers of Odia-Hindi bilingual movie *T*, based on the life of transgender Meghana Sahoo, have submitted it for the official selection at Cannes film festival this year.

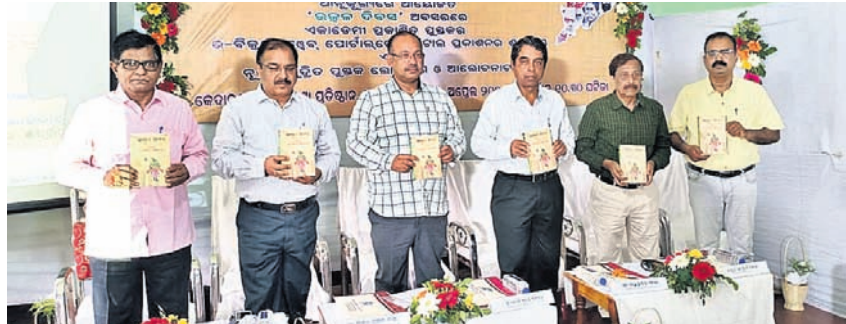
Film's director Jitesh Kumar Parida said "Most of the transgenders are maligned in real life and mistreated every day. They are forced to either beg or make a living as sex-workers. Instead of highlighting their plights, Indian film industries mostly portray them in a negative light. However, in international movies and documentaries, the world of the transgender was portrayed as trans-utopia, where gender differences are celebrated and even revered."

He adds: "Entire team is excited after it was confirmed submission of the film to official selection in the Cannes film festival as we have never seen a biopic of transgender. We are also planning to launch a trailer event in the Indian pavilion at Cannes in supports with FICCI."

The film is produced by Jitesh Kumar Films & RR Motion Pictures (UK) Ltd and co-produced by Mohit Kumar Puri and Himadri Tanaya Das. *T* features Debashis in the central role with Usashi Mishra playing a pivotal character.



CELEBRATION OF UTKAL DIVAS OSA launches e-Sale of books, digital publication facilities



Bhubaneswar: Odisha Sahitya Akademi (OSA) Friday observed Utkal Divas here by launching the e-Sale of books published by the Akademi and the digital publication of Odia Virtual Akademi.

Among others, the event was attended by the Odia Language, Literature and Culture department Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi and OSA president

Hrushikesh Mullick. The constant support of readers will help in the growth of Akademi as well as the Odia language and literature, said Panigrahi. OSA secretary Prabodh Kumar Rout said the books published by the Akademi can be purchased by the readers across the globe through online retail platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, IndiaMart and others. A reader can also go through the books digitally from the web portal of Odia Virtual Akademi,

he added. OSA will launch 3,000 Kindle type tablets and an Odia learning app with the help of the Odisha Knowledge Corporation, he further informed.

Akademi president Hrushikesh Mullick said, OSA now has made its presence felt at every corner of Odisha. He went on to reveal that the Akademi will organise two events on Odia language in Raigarh of Chhattisgarh and Manjusha of Andhra Pradesh. PNN

PEANUTS



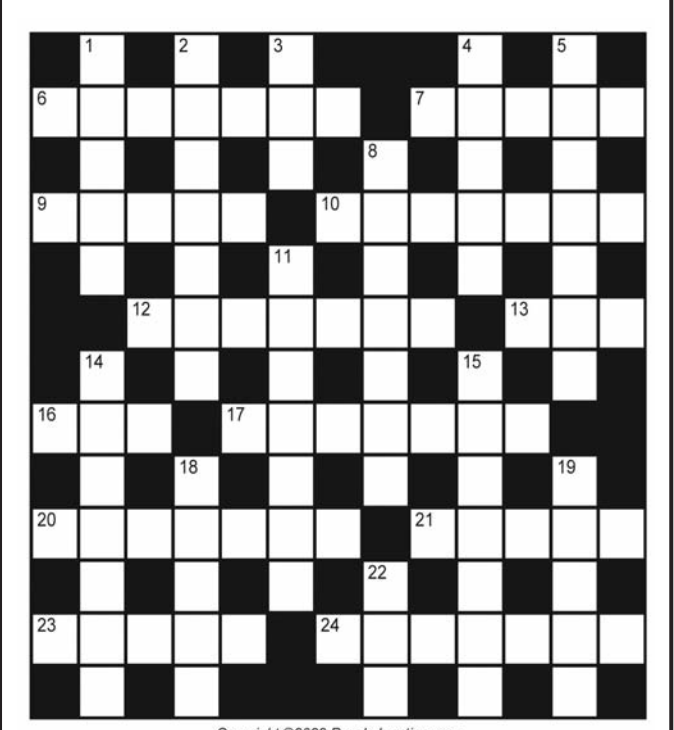
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



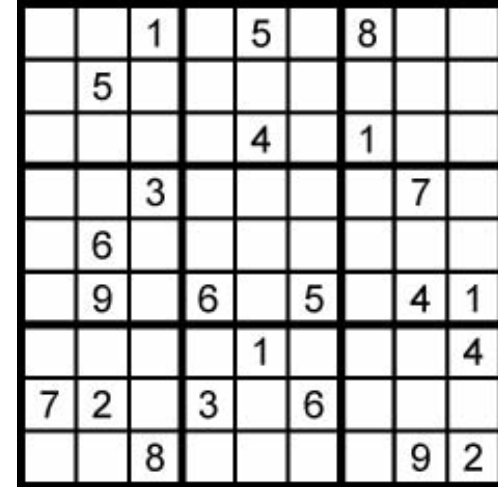
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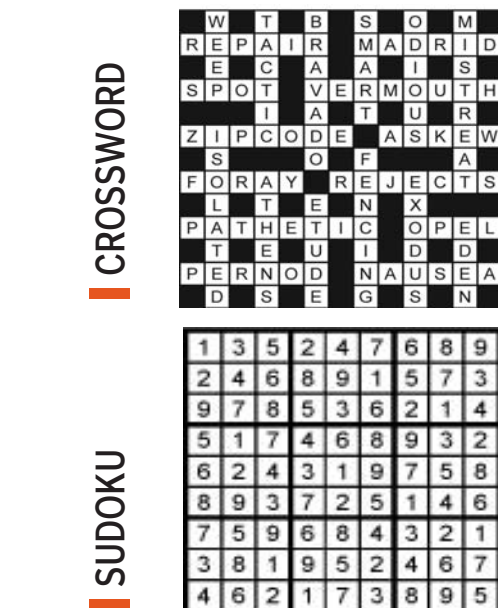
- Across
- 6 Odourless gas
 - 7 Sachet scent
 - 9 Cockeyed
 - 10 Erode
 - 12 Study
 - 13 Sri Lanka export
 - 16 Like some scientists
 - 17 Rocket
 - 20 Retail come-on
 - 21 Throw out
 - 23 Winged supporter?
 - 24 Older woman
- Down
- 1 Slow on the uptake
 - 2 Legendary Arabian bird
 - 3 African antelope
 - 4 Textile
 - 5 Rotating shaft
 - 8 Make unhappy
 - 11 Treeless grassy plain
 - 14 Rabbit tunnels
 - 15 Loafer
 - 18 Dissuade
 - 19 Animal life
 - 22 Cygnet's father

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



HARSH REALITY

Actor Sonal Chauhan says she won't deny that the film world is full of nepotism and favouritism

LEISURE



POPE APOLOGISES

Pope Francis apologises to indigenous people for suffering abuses in Canada's Catholic-run residential schools

INTERNATIONAL P8



INDIA FACE ENGLAND

India look to annex top spot in standings by beating England in the 2-leg FIH Pro League tie, starting today

SPORTS BACK PAGE

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BHUBANESWAR | SATURDAY, APRIL 2 | 2022

P1

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



What vacation!? In the first meeting after winning the polls, party has assigned us tasks to win next elections

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX	34.5°C	33.6°C
	MIN	26.7°C	26.5°C
	Humidity	81%	80%
	Rainfall	Nil	Nil
	Forecast	Dry weather very likely	

Free rice scheme extended

Approximately 8.09 lakh beneficiaries will benefit from the scheme which will cost the government ₹91.70 crore

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 1: On the occasion of 'Utkal Dibasa', the Odisha government extended Friday distribution of free rice to the beneficiaries covered under its own State Food Security Scheme (SFSS) for six more months. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has directed concerned officials to extend distribution of additional five kilograms of rice per month free of cost to beneficiaries from April 2022. This information was provided by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) in a statement. Earlier, the benefit of 5kg free rice was extended for the beneficiaries



from December 2021 to March 2022.

About 8.09 lakh beneficiaries covered under the scheme will be benefited by the free distribution of rice. For this purpose, the Odisha government will distribute 24,270 tonne of rice from the state pool with an expenditure of ₹91.70 crore, the release said.

This will facilitate beneficiaries enrolled in the SFSS to remain at par

with those under National Food Security Act (NFSA), the CMO said.

Notably, the Union government has recently extended the free foodgrains distribution scheme under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) for six more months from March 2022. Under the PMGKAY, the Centre gives an additional 5kg of rice or wheat per month to beneficiaries of

FMFL LIQUOR GETS CHEAPER

Bhubaneswar: Foreign Made Foreign Liquor (FMFL) and wine will be cheaper in Odisha as the state government has reduced excise duty on these products in its new Excise Policy for 2022-23. In order to reduce disparity in MRP with neighbouring states and also to promote high quality FMFL and low strength wine, this decision was taken, sources said. However, the excise duty for Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) and beer will remain unchanged. There has been a nominal increase in license fee, MGQ (minimum guaranteed quantity), application fee for manufacturers, suppliers as well as retailers in this year's policy.

the (NFSA) over and above their usual free monthly quota. The Centre had launched the PMGKAY in April 2020 during the first wave of Covid-19.

The Leaders' Choice

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2 new coal blocks for JSPL in Odisha

With additional coal reserves at its disposal, the steel-making behemoth is set to enhance capacity at the Angul plant

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 1: The Naveen Jindal-led Jindal Steel & Power Limited (JSPL) has bagged Utkal B1 and B2 coal blocks in the Angul-Talcher coal belt in addition to the coal it gets from Utkal C. The addition of the two new blocks will now enable JSPL to enhance its capacity for making green steel.

The High-Level Clearance Authority of Odisha, headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, had approved JSPL's proposal to expand the capacity of its steel plant to 25.2 MTPA at Angul by 2030. This would be the world's largest and greenest single-location steel plant

when it becomes operational. It would definitely increase Odisha's USP on the global steel map.

The capacity expansion will increase JSP's investment in the state to more than ₹1,25,000 crore from ₹45,000 crore at present. It will also create employment opportunities in the state.

"We won the Utkal B1 & B2 coal block on 17th punya tithi of OP Jindal Ji who had a vision of using indigenous coal to make steel. Getting the coal blocks will help us translate the shared dream of 'Bauji' and legendary leader Biju Patnaik ji to a reality and bring prosperity to Odisha through value addition of natural resources and industrialisation," Jindal said in a tweet.

"Odisha is our karmabhoomi and we are firmly committed to its overall development," he added.

Sarmistha confesses to murder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 1: In a major development in cameraman Manas Swain murder case, prime accused Sarmistha Rout has confessed to the crime, police said Friday. They said she confessed before the investigative officer under Section 27 of the Indian Evidence Act. Sarmistha confessed to have kidnapped Manas from Palaspur village under Chandbali police limits in Bhadrak district along with other accused in

her car February 7 morning, police said in a release.

Sarmistha said after abducting Manas, they took him to the Dayal Ashram here. There the other accused brutally assaulted Manas leading to his death. Then February 8, they took the body to Ranpur area in Nayagarh district and disposed it. The group then headed towards Chandikhole and on the way disposed of the spade, gunny bag and sari Sarmistha was wearing during the assault on Manas.

UKRAINE TAKES WAR TO RUSSIA

1st-of-its kind airstrikes have been carried out by helicopters flying at low altitude

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kyiv, April 1: Russian authorities have accused Ukraine of carrying out an air attack on an oil depot in its territory, the 'BBC' reported Friday. The attacks supposedly took place very late Thursday night. Ukraine however, is yet to claim responsibility for the attack in Belgorod. If it does so it would be the first time Ukrainian aircraft have flown into Russian airspace to strike a target, bringing the war home to the super power.



A video shared on Twitter shows a blaze near apartment blocks in Belgorod, some 40km from the border with Ukraine. Some clips appear to show rockets hitting the oil depot.

Local governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said in a Telegram message 'there was a fire at the oil depot because of an air strike carried out by two Ukrainian army helicopters, which entered Russian territory at low altitude'. "Nobody was killed, but two people have been injured" he added.

Ukrainian authorities have neither confirmed nor denied Governor Gladkov's allegations.

BUSINESS EMINENCE AWARDS

TODAY

Inaugurator
Shri Naveen Patnaik
Hon'ble CM, Odisha

Chief Guest
Shri Suresh Ch. Mohapatra, IAS
Chief Secretary, Govt. of Odisha

Chief Speaker
Shri Naveen Jindal
Chairman
Jindal Steel and Power

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NEKTA N S S MISHRA
STATE RANK #1

GEETI GAYATREE PANDA
STATE RANK #2

SOORAJ NANDA
STATE RANK #3

JEE (Advanced) - State Rank #1 for 3 years in a row

GOUTAM DAS
STATE RANK #1
2021

SIBASISH ROUT
STATE RANK #1
2020

SAYANTAN DHAR
STATE RANK #1
2019

REGISTRATIONS OPEN SAI ENTRANCE TEST (SET) FOR CLASS XI (OFFLINE) ON 28 & 29 MAY, 2022

SAI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL - SIS

CBSE XII Board 2021 Results	Above 75%	First Class
99.3% students scored above 75%	100%	100%
Science	100%	100%
Commerce	98.3%	100%
Humanities	100%	100%

CBSE X Board 2021 Results

Students scored above 75%	Above 60%	100%
287	97.6%	100%
Above 75%	97.6%	100%
Above 90%	65.6%	

SAI INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL - SIRS

Rank	Percentage	Above 60%	100%
1st Rank	99.5%	91.7%	100%
2nd Rank	99.2%	91.7%	100%
3rd Rank	98.8%	45.4%	

CBSE X Board 2021 Results

Students scored above 75%	Above 60%	100%
91.7%	91.7%	100%
Above 75%	91.7%	100%
Above 90%	45.4%	

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Utkal Diwas: Prez, PM greet people

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 1: President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Governor Ganeshi Lal, and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday extended their greetings to the people of Odisha on the occasion of Utkal Diwas. Utkal Diwas marks the formation of Orissa as a separate state under the British in 1936 by splitting Bihar and Orissa province following a long struggle by its people. Taking to Twitter, President Kovind said, "On Odisha Day, my greetings to the people of the state. The land of the temples of Jagannath, Lingaraj, Konark and other rich heritages, Odisha gave the world a message of peace and love, shunning violence. My best wishes for the progress of the state." The Prime Minister tweeted, "On the special occasion of Utkal Diwas, best wishes to the people of Odisha. Odia people are making landmark

contributions to India's progress and Odia culture is globally admired. I pray for Odisha's development in the times to come." Governor Ganeshi Lal recalled the contribution of those who had taken the lead role in the creation of a separate state. **Best state in India by '36: CM** CM Naveen Patnaik at the Utkal Diwas celebration at Exhibition Ground here said, "Odisha is our motherland and we all should work together for its development. Great leaders like Madhusudan Das, Gopabandhu Das, Krishna Chandra Gajapati, Fakir Mohan Senapati, Gangadhar Meher among others made tremendous sacrifices for the state's independence." He then added, "By 2036, we will lead by becoming the best state of the country. Our culture is our identity. We have set the example by handling disasters and fighting Covid. In development of sports sector, Odisha has done a commendable job."

CELEBRATING STATEHOOD



Dignitaries including Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro, Information and Public Relations Minister Raghunandan Das and Culture Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi at the state-level celebration of Utkal Diwas at the Exhibition Ground in Bhubaneswar, Friday

CS launches portal for EV incentive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 1: Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra Friday launched the portal for disbursement of the incentives under the Odisha Electric Vehicle Policy-2021 from Lok Seva Bhawan here. CS directed the officials to make the portal robust by linking it with portals of banks and to automate the entire process. He also sanctioned the first subsidy through the portal in favour of one two-wheeler vehicle owned by Trolochan Behera under RTO-II of Bhubaneswar. Principal Secretary Bishnupada Sethi said, "Electric Vehicle Policy is a lead progressive policy, and the portal designed for disbursement of the incentives is first of its kind in the country. The portal has been developed within least possible time through technical expertise of NIC." Transport Commissioner Arun Bothra said that incentives like subsidy against purchase of electric vehicles would be directly disbursed to the vehicle owners through this portal.

Foreign liquor now cheaper

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 1: The Foreign Made Foreign Liquor (FMFL) and wine will become a little cheaper in Odisha as the state government has reduced the excise duty on these products in its new excise policy adopted for the year 2022-23. In order to reduce disparity in MRP with neighbouring states and also to promote high quality FMFL and low strength wine, this decision was taken, sources said. However, the excise duty on Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) and beer has been kept unchanged. There has been a nominal increase in licence fee, MGQ (minimum guaranteed quantity) and application fee for manufacturers, suppliers as well as retailers in this year's policy. In view of encouraging response to premium Off shops opened in Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) & Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) areas in 2021-22, some more such shops have been proposed in BMC, Berhampur, Sambalpur & Rourkela Municipal Corporations



However, the excise duty on Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) and beer has been kept unchanged in the new excise policy adopted for 2022-23

as well as four other municipalities, sources said. In order to encourage low alcoholic drinks, a separate licence fee slab of Rs 5 lakh/annum for standalone

microbrewery has been introduced without restaurant licence. The fees for temporary bar licences have been reduced. Similar fee for additional bars in On shops has been rationalized in the new policy. In order to promote ease of doing business, the emphasis on automation of various processes like permit, passes, licences, payments will continue under the 5T Action Plan of the state government, said the policy document. The State Excise department has decided to strengthen its enforcement activities through improved

intelligence collection, better infrastructure and resources, enhanced deployment of enforcement staff as well as use of technology for monitoring and supervision. In order to restrict entry of inexperienced suppliers or brands with unverified credentials in the Odisha market, certain qualifying criteria for brand registration has been introduced in this year's policy. According to the new policy, no licence shall be granted to a liquor shop named after deities or eminent personalities (living or dead). It is also observed that some liquor shops are using the word 'sarkari' in the name of the shop. So, the department has clarified that no Off shop can use 'sarkari or government' in their name. The license holder may use 'Licensed FL Off shop' signage, clarified the new policy. Home delivery of liquor shall continue in addition to counter sale. All guidelines issued earlier relating to social distancing to contain the spread of Covid will remain in force. All other features of the existing excise policy will continue in their original forms, sources said.

PARLIAMENT THIS WEEK

Heritage Corridor, rice among major issues raised in House

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 1: The third week of the second phase of the Budget Session witnessed a plethora of developments for Odisha with the visit of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to Parliament House and tug of war between BJD and BJP over the construction work around Srimandir. While BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi made scathing allegations against the state government in Lok Sabha over the construction work continuing around Shree Jagannath Temple, BJD MP Pinaki Misra refuted her claims and advised her to consider doing some work at Lingraj Temple in the state Capital instead of creating hurdles in Puri. Sarangi had alleged that illegal construction work is continuing around Srimandir without any special permission from ASI or NMA. Pinaki refuted the allegations and said that the state government is strictly following the rules and the



work is being done after obtaining NOC from NMA. He said the ASI was also involved in the work and they aren't digging big holes at the site. The state government is constructing four toilets. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik visited the Parliament House for the first time since the outbreak of Covid-19. He convened a meeting of BJD MPs to follow up on various state specific issues. MPs from different political parties met Patnaik at the central hall. Members of BJD retiring from Rajya Sabha Prasanna Acharya and Sasmit Patra in their farewell speech shared their memories. Sasmit shared how much astonished he

was when he heard about his selection to the panel of vice-chairman of the Upper House and his conversation with Chairman Venkaiah Naidu on this. Prasanna Acharya expressed gratitude to every member of the House for a great journey. Acharya also reiterated the demand of Bharat Ratna for Biju Patnaik. The BJD raised the parboiled rice issue in the Upper House. Sasmit Patra urged the Centre to lift excess quantity of parboiled rice from Odisha. BJD MP Suresh Pujari demanded the inclusion of Sambalpur language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. BJD MP Bhartruhari Mahtab and Congress MP Saptagiri Ulaka urged the Centre to include several tribes of Odisha in the ST list. While BJD MP Anubhav Mohanty urged the Centre to commence a national level championship of Malkhambh, Amar Patnaik asked the Union government when 25,000 villages of Odisha would get internet connection.

BOOST TO CANCER CARE



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurates a state-of-the-art cancer centre at Apollo Hospitals in Bhubaneswar, Friday

Highest ever freight loading by ECoR

THE EAST COAST RAILWAY HAS LOADED 232.13 MT FREIGHT IN 2021-22 FISCAL AGAINST 204.90 MT IN 2020-21 FINANCIAL YEAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 1: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has loaded the highest ever freight in the just concluded 2021-22 financial year and created history by securing the top position in freight loading in the Indian Railways. The ECoR has been securing top position in freight loading for the last four years. It has loaded 232.13 million tonnes (MT) of freight in 2021-22 fiscal against 204.90 MT in 2020-21 financial year, logging an incremental growth of 13.28 per cent. The ECoR has earned revenue to the tune of Rs 23,012.32 crore from freight traffic in 2021-22 fiscal. This is the highest figure in Indian Railways.



During the period, the ECoR has carried 52.8 MT freight from Talcher area, 21.6 MT from Paradip, 21 MT from steel plants, 15.2 MT from Dhamara, 14 MT from Visakhapatnam, 13.7 MT from KK Line, 9.9 MT from Gangavaram port, 8 MT of Aluminium from its jurisdiction and 20.6 MT from other areas. According to sources, 152.46 MT of freight was carried from Khurda Road division, 66.88 MT from Waltair division and 12.79 MT from Sambalpur division. The ECoR has run 44 Oxygen Special Trains towards different destinations of the country during the pandemic in short notice.

Centre suggests Odisha to export parboiled rice



POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 1: Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Piyush Goyal Friday suggested to Odisha and other states to export their excess stock of parboiled rice. During the question hour in the Rajya Sabha, BJD MP Sasmit Patra asked the Union Minister whether the Centre would consider the export of parboiled rice if there was no demand for the same in other states. Replying to this, the Union Minister said Centre cannot export food grains procured under the National Food Security scheme due to certain obligations under WTO. "We are not permitted to export ration procured under the National Food Security scheme. In 1995, then Union Government had agreed to certain conditions of the WTO banning the export of food grains procured under the National Food Security scheme. If the state governments or private entities want

to export the excess quantity of rice, then the Centre will welcome this. The state governments should come forward in this regard," Goyal said. He made it clear that the Centre would procure the raw rice only. The Food Corporation of India (FCI) can only procure the raw rice, which is in demand in many states. Parboiled rice is not in demand in other states, he said. "We can only distribute the kind of rice that people want to eat. We cannot force people to eat a particular type of rice. The Food Corporation of India can only procure the kind of rice that is in requirement in other states. Since parboiled rice is not a requirement in other states, the FCI cannot procure the excess rice under the central pool," added. He also informed the Upper House that Odisha can produce parboiled rice as per its requirement and the FCI will make reimbursement against that but excess rice will not be procured under central pool.

BOLANGIR RECORDS 43°C, HIGHEST SO FAR

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 1: Odisha clocked the highest temperature this summer as the mercury touched 43 degrees Celsius in Bolangir district Friday, the Met office said. At least eight places recorded a maximum temperature of at least 40 degrees or more as hot winds intensified from the northwest, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological

Centre said. Titilagarh logged 43.6 degrees Celsius, the highest in the state. The all-time high in the town for the month was 48.5 degrees Celsius April 24, 2018, according to the department. The temperature in Bolangir town was 42.4 degrees, while it was 34.5 and 33.6 in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack respectively, a bulletin stated. The Met underscored that



there would be no significant change in the maximum tem-

perature in the next four-five days. It will be above normal by 3-4 notches at many places and over 40 degrees at some areas in interior Odisha. The weather officer has pleaded with the people to take precautionary measures for hot weather while going outside from noon to 3 pm in these areas. It has predicted light to moderate rainfall or thunderstorms at a few places in Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj,

Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Rayagada, Gajapati, Koraput for two days from Sunday. There may be downpour in some areas in north-coastal Odisha next Monday, it added. The Met has forecasted that the maximum temperatures would be normal to below normal over most parts of the state in April, while it may be above normal in many areas of western and southern Odisha.

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Returning to roots

His initiative of growing medicinal plants on a small patch of land may not make much of a difference now, but the small attempt can cause a social movement in future, claims Pupun Sahu who has raised a herbal garden on his own to help out the locals

RASHMI REKHA DAS, OP

The traditional practice of healing with medicinal plants is as ancient as human civilization. The plants remained the only source of treatment till the iatrochemistry came into existence in 16th century. However, the practice of destructive harvesting coupled with apathy of the authorities concerned has left several healing plant species on the verge of extinction.

While the depletion of medicinal resources hasn't bothered the men who really matter, surprisingly a Class-VII dropout from Nayagarh has realised the need of conserving healing plants.

His initiative of growing medicinal plants on a small patch of land may not make much of a difference now, but the small attempt can cause a social movement in future, says Pupun Sahu, son of Bhagaban Sahu of Bharikila village near Nayagarh town.

He has grown over 600 medicinal plants on an acre of land on the premises of Mahima ashram in his vicinity. Besides, he has created two mini forests on the Kusumi riverbank to

combat natural calamity.

Pupun started planting saplings in 2013. After giving up on his studies at an early age, he switched to carpentry. However, he couldn't enjoy it.

On the other hand, he had observed how people of his village used to suffer from frequent cyclones in the absence of an adequate number of trees on riverbanks. So, quitting carpentry, he decided to create a few mini forests on the Kusumi riverbank to combat cyclones. During his plantation drive he also came to know about the medicinal value of plants and how they save lives in the forms of medicines available in the market. Along with developing green cover around his village, he also wanted to create a forest of medicinal plants.

At the beginning it was very tough to take care of the trees as no one came forward to help him out. But some of his friends gradually came on board as the results started showing, says Pupun.

Sharing his opinions about the reason behind the depletion of medicinal plant resources, he adds: "Everyone knows the monetary value of healing plants. Still they are on the brink of disappearance because the indigenous people, who know how to



bounds, it can't develop medicines in labs without extracting the essence from plants. But despite the extensive research at highest level, the medicinal value of thousands of plants has still remained unexplored. Ayurveda encourages all human beings not just to learn about medicinal herbs and plants, but to grow and preserve them also for their well being and that of their off-springs."

The 29-year-old has not only planted the trees, he also has acquired sound knowledge on the usage of the plants.

Explaining the benefits of Basil, a common plant in every household, says, "The plant symbolises peace, piety, and virtue. If the juice of basil leaves is taken along with honey, it can cure chronic cough, cold, and bronchitis. Its oil is an antiseptic and insect repellent, while the paste of its roots may work as an antidote to snake and scorpion bites."

Papu also explains the benefits of having Flame of the Forest (Palasha) trees in our courtyard. "According

to the Charaka Samhita, Palasha seeds are insecticidal and Ayurvedic physicians use them to compound medicines for diarrhoea and dysentery. Juice made from the tree's roots, bark, and leaves are administered for regulating menstrual flow, and in stomach ailments such as colic and intestinal worms. Besides, an ointment made from its leaves is useful for boils, pimples, swellings, and hemorrhoids."

Coming back to the mini forests created by him, he says, the forests were torched by some envious local youths. However, it didn't dampen his spirit. He continued to work hard and managed to bring the density of the forest back. He did everything for the growth of the trees. Often he has to trek several miles to transport water to save the plants.

In the past, people of Bharikila and those living in its surroundings used to buy the medicinal plants from other places. But now, Papun's herbal garden has come in handy for them. "People from nearby villages frequently come to my herbal garden to get relief for their seasonal ailments. It feels really good when someone gets benefited by these medicinal plants which are given free of cost," said Pupun with a sense of pride while singing off.



Pupun at work

“Our Government has been steadfast in its efforts towards empowerment of our tribal communities and preservation of their traditions. We are working tirelessly to transform the tribal-rural economic system.”

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister



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THE MOTHER

'Message' from PMO

The appointment of Amarjit Sinha, former Union Secretary for Rural Development and, more significantly, former advisor to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as Member of the Public Enterprise Selection Board (PESB) has been watched keenly by babus. Not only does Sinha fill a key gap in the board, but many have taken it as an optimistic sign.

Sinha has joined Mallika Srinivasan, who is the chairperson of PESB and who, just a few months ago, had requested the Centre to relieve her of her excessive burden at PESB and the Centre had complied by changing the resolution on the functioning of the public sector head hunter. With Sinha coming on board, a section of senior babus sees in his appointment a 'message' from the PMO itself. It is hoped that with his experience as a former union secretary and advisor to Modi, Sinha brings competence and seniority as well as the confidence of the administration in making PESB an independent body.

It seems as if Sinha's selection for the post was decided in the context of Mallika Srinivasan seeking to be free of demanding routine responsibilities at PESB. It is believed that Sinha will now take up a bulk of that load. And he has the green light from the highest authority.

A badly handled transfer

It took a directive from the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) for the Haryana government to withdraw the transfer order of SS Saini, Assistant Conservator of Forests, Panchkula, issued in December last year, posting him as Divisional Forest Officer, Kaithal, displacing Ranbir Singh Dhull, who is Deputy Conservator of Forests, Kaithal.

The decision to withdraw the transfer order came only after CAT directed the state Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal to file an affidavit in the matter after Dhull challenged the order in CAT. In his petition, Dhull claimed that his transfer was not approved by the Civil Service Board and that Saini was posted to Kaithal without issuing Dhull's further posting order. Curiously, the state government initially claimed that Dhull had been transferred to Kaithal 'mistakenly'.

With the tribunal accepting Dhull's argument, the government has retracted and withdrawn Saini's transfer order. Meanwhile, it remains to be seen whether it will now take a call on whether Dhull will stay in his current posting or be transferred, hopefully without further 'error' and more embarrassment. That will be decided once Kaushal files the government's affidavit in this bungled transfer case.

Bihar faces contempt over defying SC

The Nitish Kumar government in Bihar finds itself in a fix, after defying a Supreme Court ruling on the appointment of the Director-General of Police (DGP). Not only will its appointee SK Singhal have to go, but the government itself faces a contempt case for ignoring the ruling of the apex court while appointing Singhal as officiating DGP.

Sources have informed DKB that a state government has to send a list of eligible candidates to Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to shortlist them before naming the DGP. The Bihar government ignored this procedure. Further, in earlier rulings the Supreme Court had given clear direction to administrators of all states and union territories not to appoint an officiating DGP. But the Nitish government ignored these when naming Singhal as officiating DGP. Now it will have to explain its stance to the court.

Share a babu experience! Follow [dilipthecherian@twitter.com](https://twitter.com/dilipthecherian). Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

- It is easy to hate and it is difficult to love. This is how the whole scheme of things works. All good things are difficult to achieve; and bad things are very easy to get. **CONFUCIUS**
- Be content with what you have; rejoice in the way things are. When you realize there is nothing lacking, the whole world belongs to you. **LAO TZU**
- Hope is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear. If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today. **THICH NHAT HANH**

WORDSWORTH

Sledging

This originally Australian term was well known in the cricketing world by the early 1980s. It refers to a kind of unpolite verbal taunting designed to put opponents off their game that has become common in the past couple of decades. Among the famous examples that every cricket fan can quote are the mock question asked of Ian Botham as he arrived at the crease, "How's your wife and my kids?" The origin of the term isn't obvious. Most dictionaries say, a little cautiously, that it derives from sledgehammer, based on the comment in the first known printed example, from *World of Cricketing Monthly* in 1977, that "The term comes from subtle as a sledgehammer". Another school of thought holds it's from the surname of Percy Sledge, an American soul singer who was popular with the Australian cricketers at the time and who was particularly famous for his hit of 1966 *When A Man Loves A Woman*. As so much sledging consists of sexual references, this is taken to be especially relevant. These two origins are neatly conflated in the story told by the Australian spin bowler and commentator Kerry O'Keefe in his book *According to Skull* in 2004. He says it was coined in the early 1970s at a barbecue he attended with the teams from South Australia and New South Wales after a day's play. One of the NSW players got out of line: *He made inappropriate comments to a lady and the fellow was ruled by John Benaud, our middle-order batsman, to be out of order. Benaud added that the transgressor's outburst was as "subtle as a sledgehammer" and he momentarily became known as "Percy Sledgehammer" (a reference to the artist who belted out When A Man Loves A Woman). The "Percy" soon disappeared and for the remainder of the season anyone who used over the top language was known as a "sledge".* Lexicographers are too sceptical a breed to take stories such as this at face value, despite the ear-witness testimony. But it does seem highly likely. Incidentally, the first part of sledgehammer derives from an Old English source that is connected with the verb *slay*. So sledging is more appropriate than you might think.

LOL

Thankful he's drunk

The drunken wino was stumbling down the street with one foot on the curb and one foot in the gutter. A cop pulled up and said, "I've got to take you in, sir. You're obviously drunk."



The wino asked, "Officer, are you absolutely sure I'm drunk?"

"Yeah, buddy, I'm sure," said the cop. "Let's go." Obviously relieved, the wino said: "That's a relief - I thought I was a cripple."



Bertrand Badré & Benoit Mercereau

CLIMATE ADVOCATES HAVE FAILED TO PERSUADE INVESTORS AND FIRMS TO ACT BECAUSE THEY HAVE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND WHAT ULTIMATELY DRIVES BUSINESS

Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards are the talk of the investment world these days. But despite the trillions of dollars of investments that have been labeled "ESG," this form of investing has yet to have much real-world impact.

This is especially true on the environmental front (though such investments' social impact has not been much more evident). Investor coalitions to combat climate change have exploded onto the scene, promising to steer a massive amount of capital toward "green" businesses and industries. At last year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), private financial institutions pledged to mobilise \$130 trillion – a figure greater than global GDP – for clean energy. And yet, the climate outlook is only worsening. Last month's report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change offered "the bleakest warning yet" about what awaits humanity on a rapidly warming planet.

Welcome to the world of greenwashing: Though firms' owners have committed to cutting carbon dioxide emissions, they have not actually ordered firms' managers to do so. But, instead of blaming investors or companies, ESG activists should consider why there is such a large, persistent gap between public commitments and action. Simply put, climate advocates have failed to persuade investors and firms to act because they have failed to understand what ultimately drives business.

Like it or not, most investors quietly share Milton Friedman's view that "the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits." Investment managers hear from clients when their financial returns are too low, not too high. Most investors would like to do good in addition to doing well, but they also prefer it when the right hand can claim ignorance of what the left hand is doing – when they can seize on the exhortation to

FOCUS INVESTMENTS

THE ESG OPPORTUNITY



If you are an investor who wants to make more money, you should embrace ESG thoughtfully, with a focus on improving material issues. And if you are an ESG activist, you should urge investors to do their (traditional) job seriously, by identifying where maximising positive impact also maximises profit

"save the world" while continuing to maximise profits with ruthless efficiency.

ESG advocates should acknowledge investors' reality rather than trying to fight or change it. Because businesses will be held accountable by their investors if they do not make more money, ESG proponents must make the business case for such standards. If a company's positive ESG impact will increase its profits, investors will stop at almost nothing to maximise that impact.

For the business case to be persuasive, it needs to be thoughtful and realistic. According to research by Arabesque, 88 per cent of "operational performance studies show that solid ESG practices result in better operational performance." But while ESG can unlock shareholder value, not all ESG actions will boost profits. For example, whereas raising wages by 10 per cent will benefit employees and help to attract and retain talent, tripling wages would likely endanger a firm's financial viability.

Investors therefore should identify the "material" ESG issues that directly affect a firm's bottom line. Financially immaterial ESG issues can still be relevant for overall impact, but as George Serafeim of Harvard Business School puts it, "spending resources on immaterial issues is like philanthropy."

Identifying material ESG issues is not always easy. The French retirement home Orpea was highly rated in ESG terms; but earlier this year, its stock price fell by 60 per cent, following allegations that it was mistreating elderly patients.

Investors also must set priorities among the various ESG components. ESG ratings are a weighted average of hundreds of indicators. Even if all were material, it would not be feasible for any firm to set hundreds of new goals for itself. Instead, investors must focus on the ESG initiatives that will boost shareholder value the most. Collaborative platforms like ESG for Investors offer free tools with which to frame such an approach

for more than 2,000 firms.

Financial incentives will elicit the desired response from investors and firms much more reliably than will exhortations to save the planet. By focusing on ESG actions that will unlock the most shareholder value, we can create a virtuous circle between financial returns and real-world impact. Research by ESG for Investors suggests that adopting best practices on just two key ESG issues – emissions and waste management – can boost a firm's share price by 22 per cent, on average.

If all firms reduced their CO2 emissions in line with their most advanced peers, global emissions would fall by 65 per cent, and those firms' share prices would increase by 8 per cent, on average. Moreover, adopting best practices in waste management would reduce global waste by 72 per cent and give shareholders a 5 per cent windfall, on average.

Now that we have these new data and tools, ESG proponents should stop bickering and start recognising ESG for what it is: a tremendous business opportunity. If you are an investor who wants to make more money, you should embrace ESG thoughtfully, with a focus on improving material issues. And if you are an ESG activist, you should urge investors to do their (traditional) job seriously, by identifying where maximising positive impact also maximises profit.

Once these basic principles are widely adopted, we can start to add more complexity. There will need to be more discussions about measuring and auditing impact, fleshing out norms and standards, and adding non-financially material impact into the mix. An unwavering business approach could unlock the potential of old concepts, giving them – and all of us – a more promising long-term outlook.

The writer is a former managing director of the World Bank. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY

Sweeping reforms in higher education



Bhaskar Nath Biswal

MORE STRESS IS GIVEN ON ONLINE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES SO AS TO INCREASE THE GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO TO 50 PER CENT BY 2035

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 proposed to create multidisciplinary higher educational institutions (HEIs) in the country and to implement the same, the UGC constituted a task force to prepare the draft guidelines for smooth transition to the new policy. The objective of the draft guidelines framed by the task force is to transform HEIs into large multidisciplinary institutions and strengthening the infrastructure required for these institutions. The draft guidelines discuss various proposed approaches. There will be a giant leap in the higher education arena of the country after the implementation of NEP 2020.

The draft guidelines propose to transform our HEIs into three types; research intensive universities, teaching intensive universities and degree awarding autonomous colleges. The universities will be large enough to accommodate 3000 or more students. By 2035 all affiliated colleges will become degree awarding multidisciplinary autonomous institutions either alone or in collaboration with nearby institutions in the form of clusters or by becoming a constituent part of a university. It may open new departments or collaborate with other constituent colleges to become a multidisciplinary institution.

Under the collaborative system of management, a small institution offering limited subjects can integrate their programmes with those of nearby multidisciplinary institutions to offer more job oriented programmes. For example, an institution offering B.A. can integrate with another multidisciplinary institution offering a B.Ed. course, resulting in the Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP). Reforms such as multidisciplinary education result in multiple entries and exits of students in different programmes which further necessitates storing of credits in the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) which supplies the data to HEIs for awarding of degrees and diplomas as merited by students.

The National e-Governance Division (NeGD) of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has developed the ABC platform under a Digilocker Framework to facilitate the task of transfer of credits. The ABC will ensure the opening, closing, and validation of Academic Bank Accounts, credit verification, credit accumulation, and credit transfer for students. All HEIs will need to register in the ABC for facilitation of credit mobility. However, a well designed Students Induction Programme (SIP) is necessary to orient the students about the new re-

forms and the opportunities available to them. The UGC is thinking on formulating the SIPs.

More stress is given on online learning opportunities so as to increase the gross enrolment ratio to 50 per cent by 2035. The portals of SWAYAM where hundreds of courses are offered can be opted by students to receive multidisciplinary education. The Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM) Regulations, 2021 which provides the credit framework for online learning courses, enables an HEI to allow its students to complete 40 per cent of the total courses being offered in a particular programme in a semester.

Capacity building in human resources required to cope up with the new reforms can be achieved by utilising initiatives like Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching (ARPIT), and Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP). Proper counselling mechanism will be available to students to help them make suitable decisions related to employment opportunities.

Single stream colleges are the foundation of Indian higher education system which are connected to universities through an affiliating system. But majority of them are lacking good infrastructure, finance or job oriented courses. Now they can form clusters to increase

the enrolment by offering multidisciplinary programmes in collaboration with other universities, prestigious government institutions, and reputed industrial houses and also avail of courses offered in the online and Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode. The cluster of colleges will be managed by the Board of Directors, Academic Councils and Finance Committees. All the member colleges in a cluster are considered to be affiliated to a university and the affiliating university will affiliate the cluster of colleges as one unit.

To implement all these reforms, the government and the universities have to play a greater role like granting timely approval to the proposals, and selection of members of various committees. The hub-and-spoke model can be implemented where a certain number of HEIs will be identified as the 'hub' institutions and transform them into multidisciplinary institutions. In turn, these 'hub' HEIs can develop a number of 'spoke' institutions in near future. They will have a multiplier effect and by the end of the decade there will be at least one large multidisciplinary HEI in or near every district of the country.

The writer is Head, Department of Commerce, Nowrangpur College, Nabarangpur. Views are personal

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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Autism awareness

Sir, The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has looked into many crippling human disabilities and deformities so that these brothers and sisters can integrate themselves into the mainstream and pro-actively participate in active deliberations akin to the more fortunate ones. In addition to technology, education and employment play major parts in securing the people with physical and mental disabilities. Developmental disorder that it is, a person with autism tends to withdraw into a shell due to impaired ability to communicate with the surroundings. Also termed Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), speech and non-verbal interaction is seriously hampered in autism compelling the affected to go through a repetitive behaviour. Diagnosable as early as one year, proper scientific intervention can mitigate the developmental problems to a large extent for the same reason. The wide spectrum of autism also means an individual can live with the two extremes – seriously challenged or perfectly normal. The puzzling ways of autism – that often go undetected till later life – have made the disorder a professional challenge. There are specific milestones in a child's developmental curve, and parents should know what to expect of their little ones at appropriate stages in life. Slight deviation should propel a parent to seek the guidance of experts. What and when are two crucial words in medicine which no parent can afford to ignore. The evaluation of a child, suspected to have ASD, through a diagnostic schedule is essential. "Autism", is "autos" from Greek and the "self-isolation" requires a comprehensive and empathetic observance and evaluation. Known to run in the family, the unknown cause of autism makes it interesting to professionals who have relied mainly on behavioural therapy and language therapy to corner the disorder denoting a marked shift from the past. Correcting accompanying deficiencies and psychological disorders go hand-in-hand. **Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA**

Ducking curbs

Sir, US deputy national security advisor Daleep Singh warning India that ducking Russia curbs will have consequences is another attempt to lord over us. Singh also stated it is foolish to expect Moscow to rush to New Delhi's defence in the event of China breaching the Line of Actual Control. The US deputy NSA played a crucial role in designing American sanctions against Russia, but his comments portray him in poor light. India must not be cowed down by such threats and continue buying cheaper gas from Russia if it is to benefit the country. **NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE**

Piped water projects get ₹1,441cr OMBADC funds



REPRESENTATIVE PHOTO
The work of seven mega drinking water projects has begun in Baripada, Kaptipada, Shymakhunta, Kuliiana, Badasahi, Khunta, Gopabandhunagar, Bangiriposi and Saraskana blocks

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, April 1: The state government has sanctioned ₹1,441 crore from Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC) to execute drinking water projects in 14 blocks of Mayurbhanj district. "Several drinking water projects are being executed by Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department to ensure safe drinking water to each household in Sadar block and Udala sub-division of Mayurbhanj district," said Ashok Mishra, executive engineer of Baripada RWSS division.

is being set up at Jamshola at a cost of ₹225.58 crore. The project will have sink well to draw water from Subarnarekha river and provide drinking water to 14 panchayats under Saraskana block, eight panchayats under Kuliiana and three panchayats under Bangiriposi block.

Moreover, another drinking water project will be set up at Nakhara and Uthaninuaaon near Budhabalanga river. This project with an estimated cost ₹245.45 crore will provide drinking water to 268 villages under Badasahi and Gopabandhunagar blocks.

Yet another mega drinking water project, estimated at ₹230.55 crore, will come up near Budhabalanga river at Dhoanishola. This project will provide drinking water to people in 16 panchayats under Bangiriposi block and nine panchayats under Kuliiana block.

That apart, the government has allocated ₹125.10 crore for another drinking water project at Asurahada near Budhabalanga river to ensure drinking water to a panchayat under Shymakhunta block and 11 panchayats under Baripada block. Another project will be set up at a cost of ₹107.04 crore at Mankadapal near Budhabalanga.

Rape victim, not accused, punished

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, April 1: In a horrendous incident, a minor rape survivor was tied to a utility pole and severely beaten up in full public view by a kangaroo court at a village under Ranpur police limits in Nayagarh district Thursday evening.

The Class X girl was 'punished' because her family members had lodged a complaint against her rapist. This move of the family annoyed some village chiefs who dragged the victim out of her home, tied her to a pole and then assaulted her.

The mother of the victim was also not spared. Meanwhile, the accused are also exerting pressure on the girl's parents to withdraw the FIR. According to sources, the minor victim was abducted and raped by a man identified as Abaju Parida, 32, about three months ago. Parida had then warned her not to disclose anything about the incident. However, the minor girl narrated her ordeal to her parents who then approached the village committee.

A meeting was called where the victim's family was advised not to lodge an FIR. However, as the rape survivor was not given justice, the girl's family subsequently lodged an FIR with Ranpur police seeking justice. Acting on the FIR, Ranpur police swung into action and arrested seven persons including five women and forwarded them to a local court.

BERHAMPUR JAIL SCHOOL Teacher crunch hits studies

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, April 1: Absence of regular teachers at the study centre of National Open School in Berhampur Circle Jail has hit the studies of the inmates. And this at a time when 41 inmates are all set to appear for Class X and XII examinations this month.

Reports said 52 inmates had registered their names for the final examinations of Class X and Class XII. Out of them, 44 had registered their names for Class X while 8 for Class XII exams.

However, their numbers declined after nine out of 44 inmates registering for Class X examination and two out of 8 inmates for Class XII were released on bail. As a result, 35 inmates will now sit in Class X examination scheduled for April 7 while six will appear for Class XII examination, jailor Satya Narayan Behera said.

Providing education and vocational training to the prisoners is part of a move by the prison authorities and the state government to help undertrial and other prisoners return back to mainstream. However, lack of regular teachers in the study centre has shattered their dreams. As many as 850 prisoners hail



52 inmates had registered their names for the final examinations of Class X and Class XII. Out of them, 44 had registered their names for Class X while 8 for Class XII exams

ing from various districts are currently lodged in Berhampur Circle Jail out of which many inmates have evinced their interest in receiving higher education. Keeping these things in mind, the jail authorities have established an open school in the circle jail premises.

Earlier, many prisoners have received higher education during their period of stay in the jail and have put it into work after their release from the jail. However, for lack of teachers and Covid pandemic the inmates were unable to appear their respective examinations for the last three years. The jail authorities have taken special measures for the studies

and examination of the inmates. They have also appointed three prisoners to teach and prepare the inmates for their examinations. The prisoners who have been appointed as teachers are all graduates. The Circle Jail and a Kendriya Vidyalaya nearby have been selected as examination centres.

The jail authorities will receive the question papers in Sanchar mode (online) which will then be distributed to the inmates to write answers. The candidates were issued admit cards/hall tickets for examinations. The answer sheets of the inmates will be sent to NOS authorities through post for evaluation and declaration of results, Behera added.

PROUD MOMENT



A bicycle rally was jointly organised by 'Lions' Club Jajpur Road Steel City', 'Vyasagar Sunday Cycling Club' and 'Utkal Centre Point' to mark the celebration of Utkal Diwas at Jajpur Road, Friday

Dhenkanal Mango Hub to get new lease of life

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, April 1: The lone Mango Hub in Dhenkanal district that stopped functioning after a few years of its launch in 2014 will be revived soon, official sources said.

Mango farmers in the district would no more have to resort to distress sale of their produce like the last several years. The popular varieties of mango like Dasher and Amrapali will again find their ways to national and international markets after the hub revives, the sources asserted.

They also said Dhenkanal administration has recently initiated the process in this regard. Climatic condition and soil type in the district are quite conducive for cultivation of Dasher and Amrapali mangoes which have been proved over years. Even as huge quantities of the tropical fruit are produced here, these have good demands in



HORTICULTURE BOOST
Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had laid the foundation stone for the hub June 27, 2013 at Gobindpur near NH-55 under Sadar block in the district

Delhi, Kolkata, Jharkhand and Bangladesh markets. When contacted, Collector Saroj Kumar Sethi said, "Dhenkanal district administration is expediting the commissioning of the Mango Hub."

It is pertinent to mention here that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had laid the foundation stone for the hub June 27, 2013 at Gobindpur near NH-55 under Sadar block in the district. It was then built in public private partnership (PPP) mode at a cost of ₹11 crore.

The multi-purpose and season-based marketing facility was promoted by state Horticulture and Agriculture departments with a joint investment of ₹10 crore.

For lack of management, the Mango Hub was closed. However, subsequently in 2020, Agriculture department had proposed to hand over it to the regulated market committee in Dhenkanal, but the hub's fate was again pushed into uncertainties due to Covid-19 pandemic outbreak. As per state Horticulture department, the district produced 43,200 metric tonne mango in 2019 and 15,240 metric tonne in 2020.

Class X girl falls to death

Sundargarh: A Class X girl died after falling off the roof of the hostel she was residing in at Patuadihi village under Lefripada police limits in this district Friday. The deceased was a student of the local Panchayat Samiti High School. While the school authorities termed it as an accident, the family members of the girl said she committed suicide because of the physical torture meted out to her by one of her teachers. Lefripada police sent the body for autopsy and are investigating the case. A complaint has been lodged by the deceased girl's family in this connection. The principal and hostel warden have been detained for questioning, reports stated.

Lady teacher slaps colleague

Malkangiri: A video of a lady teacher slapping a male teacher in the presence of higher authorities has gone viral on social media. The video is from Government High School in MPV 65 village under Tigal Panchayat in Kalimela block of Malkangiri district. If reports are to be believed, she slapped the male teacher over to some running dispute that arose after the latter passed some remarks at the former. Later, the lady teacher got enraged and slapped him repeatedly in front of others. The incident drew severe criticism from the locals. On the other hand, the school managing committee president said the incident took place over past enmity between the two teachers.

Children's park near cemetery irks locals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, April 1: Residents of Laxminarayan Nagar area in ward-40 under Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) Friday expressed resentment over opening of a children's park near a cemetery.

Construction work of the park was earlier stalled in the wake of Covid-19 outbreak which has been completed recently.

As per sources, Berhampur Development Authority (BeDA) has been carrying out construction of new parks at available open spaces in different wards within the civic area. Existing children's parks in some of the wards were previously restored and repaired, while some are still underway.

However, the opening of a park near a cemetery is terrifying, locals opined. "Children and elderly persons dislike going to the park as it is located in the close vicinity of a

cremation ground. We had opposed when the construction work started and most of the residents are not visiting the park since the day when it was opened for public," a number of locals rued.

Cremation of bodies is often done and 10-day rituals (Dasaha) are also performed at the cemetery. The discarded materials like clothes, flowers, mats, green coconut shells, earthen pots and several other objects used in such inauspicious rites are usually seen lying in front of the park, they added.

The BeDA and BeMC authorities do not bother to clean the premises on a regular basis, the residents alleged.

When contacted, BeDA secretary Sambit Rout said, "Construction, restoration and repair works in many parks were stalled due to the enforcement of model code of conduct during the recent rural and urban elections."

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national

of the day quote

A competition is on among Maharashtra's three ruling allies - Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress - to get the minority community votes

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | BJP LEADER

The BJP government should have a 'charcha on paper leak' in Uttar Pradesh. Last year, on November 28, lakhs of youth suffered a blow due to the UPTET examination paper leak. In the name of action, nothing happened except pretentious steps

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

Will continue to highlight and expose bigotry of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi

K.T. RAMA RAO | TRS WORKING PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Terrorist killed

Srinagar: A Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces at Turkawangam area in south Kashmir's Shopian district, police officials said Friday. Based on a specific input regarding presence of terrorists in Turkawangam area of Shopian, a joint cordon and search operation was launched by police along with Army's 44 Rashtriya Rifles and CRPF. "During the search operation, as the search party proceeded towards the suspected spot, the hiding terrorists fired indiscriminately upon the search party which was retaliated effectively leading to an encounter," they said.

Trader shot at

Patna: A prominent trader was shot at by two bike-borne assailants in the state capital's Phulwarisharif, an official said Friday. The incident happened around 9.30 pm Thursday at the Azad market. The local traders rescued the victim, Tashvir Malik and rushed him to the nearby Patna AIIMS hospital where his condition was critical.

2 killed, 15 injured

Amaravati: At least two persons were killed and 15 others injured in a road accident in Andhra Pradesh's Anantapur district Friday. The police said a Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) bus, which was on its way from Bangalore to Hyderabad, rammed into a stationary truck near Miduthuru village in Anantapur's Peddavadugur mandal.

Sex racket busted, nine arrested

Ghaziabad: Ghaziabad Police busted a sex racket running at a spa here and arrested nine people, including four women, in connection, an official said Friday. Of the nine arrested person, four have been identified as Rashid Alvi (26), Nitin, Ajay Kumar (38), Kunal Kumar (32) and Ankit (24). "The centre located at Mahagun Mall in Ghaziabad was being used to run a prostitution racket," an official said.

24 students test positive

Panaji: The BITS Pilani in South Goa has moved its classes online after 24 students on campus tested positive for Covid over the last few days, the institute's public relations officer Arjun Halarnkar said Friday. The official also said that eight more samples have been sent for testing Friday.

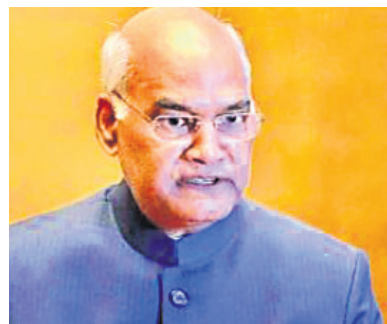


The promises of "achhe din" (good days) and depositing Rs 15 lakh into the bank accounts of people were nothing but 'April Fools' Day' jokes

SANJAY RAUT | SHIV SENA LEADER

KOVIND LEAVES FOR TURKMENISTAN, NETHERLANDS

President Ram Nath Kovind Friday embarked on a seven-day state visit to Turkmenistan and Netherlands. This happens to be the first ever visit of an Indian President to Turkmenistan and first to Netherlands after 34 years



Lavrov, Modi meet amid Ukraine crisis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 1: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday conveyed to Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov that India stands ready to contribute in any way to the peace efforts to resolve the conflict in Ukraine and called for early cessation of violence in that country.

The prime minister communicated this when Lavrov called on him after holding wide-ranging talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, a day after arriving in India on a two-day visit. Ahead of his meeting with Modi, Lavrov said at a media briefing that India, with its "just and rational" approach towards international problems, can support the peace efforts if it chooses to play such a role.

"Foreign Minister Lavrov briefed the prime minister on the situation in Ukraine, including the ongoing peace negotiations," the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a statement. "The prime minister reiterated his call for an early cessation of violence, and conveyed India's readiness to contribute in any way to the peace efforts," it said.

On Wednesday, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said that India can use its influence with Russia to convince it to stop the war in Ukraine. Asked if he sees Prime Minister Modi being a possible mediator between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin, Kuleba said "if Prime Minister Modi is willing to play that role, we would welcome his efforts".

At the media briefing, Lavrov said India can contribute to the peace efforts if it "with its position of just and rational approach towards international problems, (thinks) it can support such a process and no one would be against



The meeting lasted for 40 minutes and Lavrov also informed the Prime Minister about various bilateral initiatives

Ahead of meeting Prime Minister Modi, Lavrov has said US pressure would not affect the India-Russia relationship and added if India wants to mediate for resolution to the Ukraine problem, such a process can be supported

it. "He was responding to a question on whether India can play the role of a mediator in defusing the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. The Russian foreign minister reiterated that it was for New Delhi to decide if it sees a "role which provides resolution of the problem in this present condition, and to provide equality and security," Lavrov also complimented India's "independent" position on the conflict while describing it as an "important and serious" country that does not come under any influence of the US.

"I believe that India's foreign policy is characterised by independence and the concentration on the real national legitimate interests," he said. Lavrov said Russia also follows the same approach and policy, and it has made both the "big" countries good friends and an important part of each other's international relations. We always respect each other's interests, he said.

In a statement on the Lavrov-Jaishankar talks, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the two sides discussed developments pertaining to Ukraine. It said they assessed the overall state of cooperation and considered the implications of recent developments on trade and economic relations. The MEA said Jaishankar underlined that as a developing economy, global volatility in different domains is of particular concern to India. "It is important for both countries that their economic, technological and people to people contacts remain stable and predictable," it said.

The external affairs minister emphasised the importance of cessation of violence and ending hostilities. Differences and disputes should be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy and by respect for international law, UN Charter, sovereignty and territorial integrity of states," it said.

Lavrov arrived in New Delhi on Thursday evening after concluding a two-day visit to China.

THREAT MAIL SENT TO NIA

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 1: The Mumbai branch of National Investigation Agency has received an email threatening to harm Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the sender claimed to have "20 kg RDX".

The threat mail mentions that he is ready to harm millions of people along with the Prime Minister. "...I have met with some terrorists, they are going to help with rdx, I am happy that I have got bombs very easily and now I will blast everywhere... I have planned it. 20 sleeper cells will be activated and millions of people will be killed..."

The NIA and other intelligence agencies were trying to trace the sender. Sources close to the development have said that they were tracking the IP address and were gathering other information about the sender. As of now, the NIA has not given any official information in this respect.

1.86 cr cases heard virtually

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 1: Courts across India heard about 1.86 crore cases via video conferencing during the pandemic, the Parliament was told Friday.

However, the decision of virtual mode of court hearing is a matter which is under the purview of the judiciary and the Central government has no role to play in this matter, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju told the Lok Sabha. "Since the lockdown started, the district courts heard 1,23,19,917 cases while the High Courts heard 61,02,859 cases (totalling 1.84 crore) till February 28, 2022 using video conferencing (VC). The Supreme Court held 2,18,891 hearings till March 14, 2022, since the beginning of lockdown period making it the world leader in virtual hearings," he said in his reply to a question.

27 women judges appointed: Govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 1: The Supreme Court Collegium recommended 39 women for appointment as high court judges in the last one year, out of whom 27 were appointed and the remaining 12 cases are under various stages of the process, Lok Sabha was informed Friday.

In written reply to a question, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said in the present system of appointment of Supreme Court and HC judges through the Collegium system, the onus to provide social diversity and representation to all sections of the society, primarily falls on the judiciary.

Responding to the question on the representation of women in courts, he said the government remains committed to social diversity in the appointment of judges in the higher judiciary and has been requesting chief justices of various high courts that while sending proposals for appointment of judges, due consideration be given to suitable candidates belonging to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities and women.

Punjab House passes resolution to transfer Chandigarh to state



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, April 1: The Punjab Assembly Friday passed a resolution seeking immediate transfer of Chandigarh to the state, with Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann accusing the Centre of trying to upset the balance in the administration of the Union Territory and other common assets.

The resolution, which was moved by Mann, was passed by the House in the absence of the two BJP legislators, who had earlier staged a walkout.

Except the BJP, members of all political parties including the AAP, Congress, SAD and the lone BSP legislator came out in support of the resolution and dubbed

the Centre's move as "dictatorial and autocratic."

The one-day special session comes amid a political row sparked by Union Home Minister Amit Shah's announcement that central service rules will apply to the employees of Chandigarh. Under the rules, retirement age of Chandigarh employees will increase from 58 to 60 years and women employees will get childcare leave of two years instead of the current one year. The Centre has notified the rules.

Chandigarh is the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana.

Mann said in the coming days, they will seek time from the president, the prime minister and the Union home minister over this issue and assured the House that Punjab's side will be strongly put up before them. He urged all parties to come together to protect the interests of Punjab.

Alluding to the similar positions taken by previous state governments on Chandigarh, he said the House has in the past too passed a number of resolutions urging the Central government to transfer Chandigarh to Punjab.

COOLING OFF



A tiger swims to cool himself on a hot day at Alipore Zoological Garden, in Kolkata

PTI PHOTO

Too early to do away with face masks: Experts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 1: Even though some states have decided to stop penalising people for not wearing masks as COVID-19 cases continue to drop, healthcare experts are of the opinion that it is too early to completely do away with the restriction.

They have advised people to voluntarily mask up in order to also stay protected from infections such as influenza and swine-flu, apart from coronavirus. The Maharashtra and Delhi governments recently decided to ease the restriction on the compulsory wearing of face masks in public, a norm that was in place for two years and its violation attracted a fine of Rs 2,000.

Reacting to the development, renowned virologist T Jacob John said since the pandemic is "over" in India, the use of mask is no longer needed to reduce the SARS-CoV-2 transmission. The mask mandate has lived its time and there is no longer justification for its continuation as "mandate".

But it is a good idea to promote the voluntary wearing of masks in public places to reduce inhalation of dust and other respiratory transmitted agents, including TB bacilli, flu virus, other respiratory viruses like syncytial virus, adenovirus, common cold viruses etc, he said.

"It is a habit that will reduce diseases. Currently, we see kidney transplant patients wearing masks; everyone will benefit - in buses, trains, aeroplanes etc," John, the former director of the Indian Council for Medical



Research's Centre of Advanced Research in Virology, said.

"My personal opinion is that there ought to be active promotion of mask-wearing in all hospital

premises, in outpatient clinics and all queues and waiting areas. There I am not averse to even a mandate. For staff and patients, relatives, visitors etc," John added.

Dr Ravi Shekhar Jha, Additional Director and Head of the Department - Pulmonology, Fortis Escorts Hospital, Faridabad, said mask should continue to be mandatory and it is premature to give up this habit completely.

"The disastrous second wave, that took many young lives across the world, was something that the modern world had not seen before. People had become a little complacent after the first wave and that probably led to an unchecked rise in fatal cases. Though it is true that majority of susceptible Indians are vacci-

nated, what we must keep in mind is that vaccine doesn't protect us against infection. Even if the infection is not fatal, it keeps you weak for many months," he said.

"We all know about the long Covid. Therefore, it is best to not get infected. So far, science has proved that masks are the only major contributors to preventing infection," Jha said. Another important consideration here is that though COVID-19 has probably weakened, the country saw a reduction in the number of swine flu cases due to masks and sanitation practices.

"Swine flu is more fatal than Covid and the combination called flurona can also be prevented by this. Therefore, in my opinion, masks must not be taken out of fashion...Too early," he noted.

of the day quote

I have complete faith in Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil. He is doing a good job
UDHAV THACKERAY | MAHARASHTRA CM

The ministry has decided to join hands with the Indian Academy of Pediatrics for validation of the data on malnourished children in the country
SMRITI IRANI | UNION MINISTER FOR WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

This (opposition unity) has been Congress' stated position. The Congress president and the working committee have repeatedly stressed this. In the past the Congress has taken the initiative to bring all on one platform
ANAND SHARMA | CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

Terror module busted in J&K

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Police, along with Army's 55RR and CRPF, have busted a terror module of proscribed terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) in South Kashmir's Pulwama district by arresting three terrorist associates, officials said Friday. They have been identified as Owais Altaf, resident of Jandwal, Aqib Manzoor, resident of Gudoora and Waseem Ahmad Pandit, resident of Karimabad Pulwama.

₹4.76 crore cash seized

Amaravati: Police in Andhra Pradesh's West Godavari district seized Rs 4.76 crore cash being carried without any valid documents from a private bus Friday. During the routine checking of vehicles at Veeravalli toll plaza in Nalljarla mandal, police found the huge cash in the luggage carrier under a seat of a bus belonging to a private travel operator.

Blast kills technician

Gurugram: A 45-year-old technician, who used to repair air-conditioners, died in a compressor blast on Friday morning, an official said. The incident occurred in Manohar Nagar near Pataudi Chowk in Gurugram. The victim, identified as Sanjay, was asleep when the incident took place.

Techie held

Hyderabad: A woman techie, supplying cannabis to some IT employees and youth in Hyderabad, has been arrested, police said Friday. Kondapaneni Mansi was arrested at Kompally in Medchal district. According to police, she, along with her husband and two others, were selling ganja (cannabis) to customers on March 12. While police arrested two youths with 1.2 kg ganja, the couple managed to escape.

Engineer arrested

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested a Railway engineer, posted in Nagpur, for demanding and accepting bribe of Rs 1.80 lakh, an official said Friday. The accused was identified as A.B. Chaturvedi, Assistant Divisional Engineer (South), Central Railway, Nagpur. The premier probe agency said a case was registered against the said officer on a complaint where the complainant stated that the accused engineer was demanding a bribe of Rs 1,80,000 to pass some bills of the complainant's firm.



The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has guided the nation from time to time and helped in vaccine-related research leading to India having its own indigenous vaccine
MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

WELCOME MOVE

To reduce road accidents, Punjab Friday launched the Integrated Road Accident Database, making Punjab the first state to initiate ultra-modern technology equipped with GIS maps for reducing road accidents to the minimum level



People hesitate to approach police: CJJ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 1: Chief Justice of India NV Ramana Friday offered a straightforward advice to police officers complaining about harassment after government change, asking them to be impartial, saying "when you endear yourself to powers, you will have to face consequences".

He also said that the CBI's credibility has come under deep public scrutiny with the passage of time as its actions and inactions have raised questions in some cases, and called for creating an "independent umbrella institution" to bring various investigating agencies under one roof.

Delivering the 19th DP Kohli Memorial Lecture on CBI foundation Day on 'Democracy: Role and Responsibilities of Investigative Agencies', the CJJ said despite having many achievements to its credit, with some personnel making the supreme sacrifice, it is ironical that people hesitate to approach police in times of despair.

He said the image of the institution of police is regrettably tarnished by allegations of corruption, police excesses, lack of impartial-



People hesitate to approach the police in times of despair. The image of the institution of police is regrettably tarnished by allegations of corruption, police excesses, lack of impartiality and close nexus with the political class

N V RAMANA | CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA

The choice is ours," he said.

Justice Ramana told police officers that they must remember that their allegiance must be to the constitution and the rule of law, and not to any person. "When you stand upright, you shall be remembered for your courage, principles and valour. The political executive will change with time. But you, as an institution are permanent. Be impermeable and be independent. Pledge solidarity to your service. Your fraternity is your strength," he said.

He also stressed that every institution within our democracy must derive its legitimacy either directly from the Constitution, or from a law that is made in the true spirit of the Constitution.

ity and close nexus with the political class. "Often, the police officers approach us with the complaint that they are being harassed after the change in the regime. When you try to endear yourselves to the powers, you will have to face the consequences," he said.

Justice Ramana said the need of the hour is to reclaim social legitimacy and public trust. "The first step to gain the same is to break the nexus with the political executive. Often the best of talents enter this system in expectation of recognition and accolades. But, if the threat of infection looms large,

honest and upright officers find it difficult to stand by their oath," he said.

He said the truth is that no matter how deficient and non-cooperative the other institutions may be, if you all stand by your ethic and stand united with integrity, nothing can come in the way of your duty. "In fact, this stands true for all institutions. This is where the role of leadership comes into play. The institution is as good, or as bad, as its leadership. A few upright officers can bring a revolution within the system. We can either go with the flow or we can be a role model.

NEPALESE PM DEUBA ARRIVES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 1: Nepalese Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba arrived here Friday on a three-day visit that is expected to inject fresh momentum into bilateral ties.

A high-level delegation is accompanying Deuba. He and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold wide-ranging talks on Saturday, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar are also expected to call on the visiting leader. It is Deuba's first bilateral visit abroad after becoming prime minister in July last year for a fifth time following a spell of political turmoil in Kathmandu.

Deuba had visited India in each of his four earlier stints as prime minister of Nepal. His last visit to India in his capacity as the prime minister was in 2017. "A fond welcome to a special friend. PM of Nepal @SherBDeuba arrives in India for an official visit from 01-03 April 2022. This is his first bilateral visit abroad after assuming office in July 2021," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi tweeted.

Nepal is important for India in the context of its overall strategic interests in the region, and the leaders of the two countries have often noted the age-old "Roti Beti" relationship.

The country shares a border of over 1,850 km with five Indian states - Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Land-locked Nepal relies heavily on India for the transportation of goods and services.

Nepal's access to the sea is through India, and it imports a predominant proportion of its requirements from and through India.

The India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950 forms the bedrock of the special relations between the two countries.

"The upcoming visit will provide an opportunity to the two sides to review this wide-ranging cooperative partnership and to progress it further for the benefit of the two peoples," the MEA said Monday.

ENSURING SAFETY



A sewadar communicates through a walkie-talkie, introduced for the first time at Golden Temple for better communication and security, in Amritsar

KEJRIWAL HOUSE VANDALISM

Delhi HC seeks status report

A bench of Acting Chief Justice Vipin Sanghi and Navin Chawla, hearing a petition by AAP MLA Saurabh Bhardwaj concerning the incident, granted time to Delhi Police to file its status report in connection with the ongoing investigation in sealed cover

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 1: The Delhi High Court Friday sought a status report from police in relation to the alleged attack outside the residence of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal earlier this week and said that an "element of fear" was sought to be created by the "unruly crowd" and the police force at the spot was "inadequate" and "outnumbered".

A bench of Acting Chief Justice Vipin Sanghi and Navin Chawla,



hearing a petition by AAP MLA Saurabh Bhardwaj concerning the incident, granted time to Delhi Police to file its status report in connection with the ongoing investigation in sealed cover.

"Some took law into their hands. There is element of fear sought to be created. That is evident. The police force was inadequate... They did try to stop them but they were

outnumbered," the court observed.

Delhi Police, represented by Additional Solicitor General Sanjay Jain, told the court that the police has registered an FIR on its own in relation of the alleged attack and taking all steps to address the safety concerns. He added that all the evidence, including the CCTV footage from cameras around the CM residence as well

ANIL DESHMUKH CASE

SC junks plea for SIT probe



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 1: The Supreme Court Friday junked a plea by Maharashtra government seeking direction to hand over the probe against former Home Minister Anil Deshmukh from the CBI to the special investigation team (SIT).

A bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul said: "sorry dismissed!" The top court declined to interfere with the Bombay High Court order, which declined to entertain the Maharashtra government's plea seeking a court-monitored probe by a SIT against Deshmukh.

Senior advocate C.A. Sundaram, representing the Maharashtra government, submitted before the bench that the state government objected to the ongoing CBI probe against Deshmukh, with Subodh Kumar Jaiswal as the CBI director.

Sundaram vehemently argued that Jaiswal was the former DGP of Maharashtra and also chairman of the police establishment board at the relevant time, which examined the transfer and post-

ing of the police officers concerned. The bench, also comprising Justice M.M. Sundresh, said: "We will not touch this matter".

Sundaram said the present CBI chief will either be possibly an accused or definitely a witness. "I am not going into likelihood of bias, a person who is relevant as a witness or an accused, he was directly involved," he said.

Sundaram emphasised that "if this is the situation that has arisen your lordship may constitute SIT or whoever to investigate the matter". After hearing arguments, the bench said it is not keen to entertain the state government's petition.

In April last year, the CBI registered a case against Deshmukh and others under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act and Section 120B of the Indian Penal Code. Deshmukh, a senior Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader, is under investigation on allegations of bribe-taking for police transfers and postings, during his period as the home minister.

SKM won't name members for Centre's MSP panel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 1: The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) Friday said it will not name its members for a committee to be set up by the Centre over the Minimum Support Price (MSP), unless its mandate is known.

The SKM, an umbrella organisation of farmers' unions, on March 21 had held a nationwide protest against Centre for its alleged failure to come good on its promises, including one on the formation of the committee on MSP.

"SKM declines to name its nominees for the committee unless its mandate and terms of reference are known," said a statement issued by SKM leaders. "Unless we are fully aware of the nature and agenda of this committee, it would not be worthwhile to participate in any such committee," it said.

It said that SKM coordination committee member Yudhvir Singh had received a call from the agriculture secretary on March 22, inviting 2-3 names from the outfit for the committee.

However, the outfit said, the verbal communication failed to clarify crucial details about the committee such as its constituent members and its mandate.

'Terror groups using women over ground workers for attacks'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, April 1: The petrol bomb attack by a burqa-clad woman on a security force bunker in Sopore town of Jammu and Kashmir has highlighted the desperation of terror groups in seeking services of women over ground workers for carrying out subversive activities in the valley officials said here.

According to the officials, the woman, identified as Hasina Akhtar from Baramulla area of north Kashmir, allegedly came in contact with pro-Pakistan separatist

Asiya Andrabi, already in jail for terror funding case registered by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), during 2008.

The woman, covered in a burqa, was captured in CCTV footage hurling the petrol bomb at the security bunker in Sopore on Tuesday evening. There was no injury in the incident and she managed to escape.

She was, however, arrested by Sopore Police, Inspector General of Police (Kashmir range) Vijay Kumar said, adding, there are three FIRs registered under UAPA against her. The woman was caught on CCTV installed at various places



across the valley and later her identity was established after police talked to various sources spread across the apple-town of Sopore

as well as adjacent Handwara district.

One of the cases against 38-year-old Akhtar is one of 2021 for pasting posters of banned Lashker-e-Taiba terror group in Handwara of north Kashmir. Officials said that terror groups, facing heat from the security forces, have now been engaging women over ground workers for carrying out their nefarious designs which include hurling grenades or acting as couriers.

A class 10 passout from Hanafia school, Akhtar was arrested by Jammu and Kashmir Police in 2021. She is out on bail since

December last year. Several raids were carried out and Sopore police was actively working on nabbing her. IGP Kumar said that she had been working as an over ground worker of LeT. "We have been noticing employing of women by terror group of late. Last year, two burqa-clad women assisted terrorists in an attack on residential guard of a BJP worker in the outskirts of Srinagar city at Nowgam in which we lost one policeman. "Some more such women are on police's radar and we have been handling with them professionally," the IGP said.

international

of the day quote

I'm authorising the release of 1 million barrels per day for the next six months -- over 180 million barrels from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve

JOE BIDEN | US PRESIDENT

As the culprit and leading instigator of the Ukraine crisis, the US has led NATO to engage in five rounds of eastward expansion in the last two decades after 1999

ZHAO LIJIAN | CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

No one should kid themselves - Russia is going to be the junior partner in this relationship with China. And the more leverage that China gains over Russia, the less favourable that is for India. I don't think anyone would believe that if China once again breached the Line of [Actual] Control, Russia would come running to India's defence

DALEEP SINGH | US DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

SHORT TAKES

Nepal Home Minister becomes acting PM

Kathmandu: Nepalese Home Minister Bal Krishna Khand was Friday given the responsibility of the acting Prime Minister after Sher Bahadur Deuba left for India on a three-day visit. President Bidya Devi Bhandari, on the recommendation of Prime Minister Deuba, designated Home Minister Khand as the acting Prime Minister in his absence. Minister Khand will look after the daily administrative works of the Prime Minister for the next three days.

4 killed in 2 SK air force plane crash

Seoul: Two South Korean air force planes collided in mid-air during training and crashed near their base Friday, killing all four people aboard the aircraft, officials said. Both planes were KT-1 trainer aircraft -- South Korea's first indigenously developed planes -- that took off from an air force base in the southeastern city of Sacheon one after another for flight training, the air force said in a statement. The collision occurred about five minutes after the first aircraft took off and about 6 km (3.7 miles) south of the Sacheon base, the air force said.

Coal mine mishap kills eight miners

Citluk (Serbia): An accident Friday in a coal mine in central Serbia killed eight miners and wounded 18 others, authorities said, adding that the workers apparently suffocated from too much methane gas. The accident in the Soko coal mine, located 200 km (125 miles) southeast of Belgrade, the capital, occurred shortly after 4 am. Officials said an investigation was underway to determine exactly what happened.

Pennsylvania cops killed in shooting

Lebanon: A Pennsylvania police officer was killed and two officers were injured Thursday during a shooting while responding to a domestic disturbance, Lebanon Mayor Sherry Capello said. Police went to a home in the city at about 3:30 pm for the disturbance call. Nearly an hour later gunfire broke out and officers radioed they were hit, Capello said at a brief news conference. All three Lebanon City Police Department officers were taken to hospitals.

Pope makes historic apology to Indigenous Peoples of Canada

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vatican City, April 1: Pope Francis Friday made a historic apology to Indigenous Peoples for the "deplorable" abuses they suffered in Canada's Catholic-run residential schools and said he hoped to visit Canada in late July to deliver the apology in person to survivors of the church's misguided missionary zeal.

Francis begged forgiveness during an audience with dozens of members of the Metis, Inuit and First Nations communities who came to Rome seeking a papal apology and a commitment for the Catholic

Church to repair the damage.

The first pope from the Americas said he hoped to visit Canada around the Feast of St Anna, which falls July 26 and is dedicated to Christ's grandmother.

More than 150,000 native children in Canada were forced to attend state-funded Christian schools from the 19th century until the 1970s in an effort to isolate them from the influence of their homes and culture. The aim was to Christianize and assimilate them into mainstream society, which previous Canadian governments considered superior.



The Canadian government has admitted that physical and sexual abuse was rampant at the schools, with students beaten for speaking their native languages. That legacy of that abuse and isolation from

family has been cited by Indigenous leaders as a root cause of the epidemic rates of alcohol and drug addiction now on Canadian reservations.

After hearing their stories all week, Francis told the Indigenous that the colonial project ripped children from their families, cutting off roots, traditions and culture and provoking inter-generational trauma that is still being felt today. He said it was a "counter-witness" to the same Gospel that the residential school system purported to uphold.

"For the deplorable conduct of those members of the Catholic

Church, I ask forgiveness of the Lord," Francis said. "And I want to tell you from my heart, that I am greatly pained. And I unite myself with the Canadian bishops in apologising."

The trip to Rome by the Indigenous was years in the making but gained momentum last year after the discovery of hundreds of unmarked graves outside some of the residential schools in Canada. The three groups of Indigenous met separately with Francis over several hours this week, telling him their stories, culminating with Friday's audience.

SL Prez urged to dissolve cabinet, form interim govt



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Colombo, April 1: Following violent protests near Sri Lanka President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's house Thursday night, 11 government-affiliated parties have urged him to immediately dissolve the Cabinet and form an interim government with the consent of all parties to resolve the ongoing economic crisis.

The parties, which worked to bring Rajapaksa to power and form the government in

2019, said the current cabinet cannot be continued with the economic crisis that has forced people to suffer without fuel, electricity, LP gas, medicine, milk powder and other food items. The group was led by former Energy Minister, Udaya Gammanpila and former Industries Minister Wimal Weerawansa, who were sacked by the President following their public criticism against Finance Minister Basil Rajapaksa, who is the President's brother, March 2. They had charged him with responsibility for economic mismanagement and the country's present plight.

The two ex-ministers had formed a coalition comprising 11 political parties who are with the government. Started by a group of apolitical citizens, a protest was organised at Mirihana, a Colombo suburb close to President Rajapaksa's residence Thursday evening. Later the crowd walked up to the President's house chanting protest slogans like "Gotabaya go home".

Amid protests against the police attacks, people torched a bus, jeep, and a three-wheeler belonged to police. In turn, police had arrested 53 people, including a woman, while 24 policemen and 15 civilians including three journalists have been injured and admitted to a hospital. Opposition parties Friday charged that the peaceful protest was turned towards violence by a pro-government group which joined later. Police curfew was imposed on parts of capital Colombo and its suburbs until the morning.

RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE

China rejects sanctions as war tops summit agenda

China is renewing its criticism of Western sanctions against Russia and says it won't be forced to choose sides in the conflict in Ukraine

AGENCIES

Brussels, April 1: China Friday renewed its criticism of Western sanctions against Russia, as top European Union officials sought assurances from Beijing that it would not help Moscow circumvent the economic measures imposed in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry also laid blame for the war in Ukraine at least partially on the United States for pushing to expand the NATO military alliance closer to Russia's borders. Twenty-one of the EU's 27 countries are also NATO member states.

At a virtual summit, European Council President Charles Michel, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell sought signs from Chinese President and Communist Party leader Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang that Beijing would help to end the war in Ukraine. Von der Leyen said lead-



ers from both sides "exchanged very clearly opposing views" on many topics but expressed hopes that China would use its influence as a major power and permanent member of the UN Security Council to convince Russia it should put an end to the war. She added that she expects China at least not to interfere with Western sanctions targeting Russia, even if Beijing does not endorse them.

China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian earlier warned at a daily briefing that his country "disapproves of solving problems through sanctions, and we are even more opposed to unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction that have no basis in international law." Zhao said when it comes to Ukraine, Beijing would not be forced to "choose a side or adopt a simplistic friend-or-foe approach. We should, in particular, resist the

Cold War thinking and bloc confrontation."

"As the culprit and leading instigator of the Ukraine crisis, the US has led NATO to engage in five rounds of eastward expansion in the last two decades after 1999," he said, adding that NATO membership almost doubled from 16 to 30 countries, and pushed "Russia to the wall step by step."

China says it is not taking sides in the conflict but it has declared a "no limits" partnership with Russia and refuses to condemn the invasion. Beijing routinely amplifies Russian disinformation about the conflict, and does not refer to it as an invasion or a war in keeping with Russian practice.

Michel and Von der Leyen did not say whether they received guarantees from Chinese officials that Beijing would not provide financial or military aid to Russia.

Imran indirectly slams US again

AGENCIES

Islamabad, April 1: Ahead of Sunday's no-trust motion against him, Prime Minister Imran Khan Friday said a "powerful country", which is supporting India, is angry with Pakistan because of his recent visit to Russia.

Addressing the Islamabad Security Dialogue, Khan emphasised that an independent foreign policy was crucial for the country, and said the reason why Pakistan could not touch its peak potential was its dependency syndrome on other powerful nations.

"A county without an independent foreign policy remains unable to secure the interests of its people," he said.

During his speech, Khan also praised India for its independent foreign policy that was centred around its people. "They protect their independent foreign policy," the Dawn newspaper quoted him as saying.

Khan said it was being said that Pakistan could not upset the US, but India due to its independent foreign policy was buying oil from Russia.

"The US says it cannot say anything to India due to its independent foreign policy," Imran said, adding that despite being a US ally, India was fostering ties with Russia. He said as per the US, India was a sovereign state, so "what are we then?" he asked. Khan said taking independent decisions while keeping high the interests of a nation was extremely important rather than submit-



My life is in danger: PM

Imran Khan said that he has credible information that his life is in danger but asserted that he is not afraid and will continue his fight for an independent and democratic Pakistan. In an interview with ARY News ahead of Sunday's no-confidence motion in the National Assembly against him, Khan said the "establishment" (the powerful military) gave him three options - no-confidence vote, early elections or resignation as the Prime Minister.

Referring to the US, Khan said a "powerful country" had expressed displeasure over his recent visit to Russia, the official APP news agency reported.

Khan's comments came a day after Pakistan summoned the Acting US envoy in Islamabad to the Foreign Ministry over a "threatening" letter and an alleged "foreign-funded plot" against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government led by Khan.

'Putin bathes using deer horn extract'

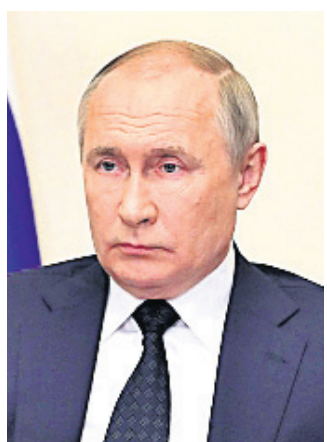
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Moscow, April 1: Investigative journalists have reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin is being briefed by 10 doctors when he travels, while he himself is interested in unconventional medicine, such as taking baths using deer horn extract.

"Projekt" investigation for Putin's 70th birthday found that in 2016-2017, the President was accompanied by an average of five doctors.

Coincidentally, in November 2016, Putin did not appear in public for five days, and during that period, 12 medics checked into the Rus sanatorium in Sochi at the same time, Ukrayinska Pravda reported. By 2019, Putin was accompanied by an average of nine doctors.

"Projekt" notes that oncologist Evgeny Selivanov, who deals with



thyroid issues, is the most frequent traveller with the President. He is described as "the doctor who can be the first to detect thyroid problems, including cancer problems". The publication has also revealed

Putin's interest in baths made from an extract of antlers, soft, unshrunk horns of red deer. Sergei Shoigu, then head of the Ministry of Emergencies and Disaster Response, was the first person in the Russian elite to become interested in antler baths.

In the mid-2000s, he brought Putin to Altai for the first time and convinced him of the benefits of the treatment, claiming it improves the cardiovascular system and rejuvenates the skin. On one trip, the newly health-conscious Putin immersed himself in a bathtub filled with a distinctive reindeer horn broth, the report said.

An acquaintance of the President claims he has been warned there is no conclusive evidence of the benefits of antler baths. But Putin liked it, and has been to Altai on several occasions since.



A woman walks her children to school in the snow in Poleymieux au Mont dor, outside Lyon, central France. PTI PHOTO

First audio recorded on Mars reveals two speeds of sound

After NASA's Perseverance rover landed on Mars in February last year, its two microphones started recording, allowing scientists to hear what it is like on the Red Planet for the first time

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Paris, France, April 1: The first audio recordings on Mars reveal a quiet planet with occasional gusts of wind where two different speeds of sound would have a strange delayed effect on hearing, scientists

said Friday. After NASA's Perseverance rover landed on Mars in February last year, its two microphones started recording, allowing scientists to hear what it is like on the Red Planet for the first time. In a study published in the Nature journal on Friday, the scientists gave their first analysis of the five hours of sound picked up by Perseverance's microphones.

The audio revealed previously unknown turbulence on Mars, said Sylvestre Maurice, the study's main author and scientific co-director of the shoebox-sized SuperCam mounted on the rover's mast which has the main microphone.

The international team listened to flights by the tiny Ingenuity helicopter, a sister craft to Perseverance, and heard the rover's



laser zap rocks to study their chemical composition -- which made a

"clack clack" sound, Maurice told AFP. "We had a very localised sound

source, between two and five metres (six to 16 metres) from its target, and we knew exactly when it was going to fire," he said.

The study confirmed for the first time that the speed of sound is slower on Mars, travelling at 240 metres per second, compared to Earth's 340 metres per second. This had been expected because Mars' atmosphere is 95 percent carbon dioxide -- compared to Earth's 0.04 percent -- and is about 100 times thinner, making sound 20 decibels weaker, the study said.

"I PANICKED" But the scientists were surprised when the sound made by the laser took 250 metres a second -- 10 metres faster than expected. "I panicked a little," Maurice said. "I told myself that one of the two measure-

ments was wrong because on Earth you only have one speed of sound." They had discovered there are two speeds of sound on the surface of Mars -- one for high-pitched sounds like the zap of the laser, and another for lower frequencies like the whir of the helicopter rotor.

This means that human ears would hear high-pitched sounds slightly earlier. "On Earth, the sounds from an orchestra reach you at the same speed, whether they are low or high. But imagine on Mars, if you are a little far from the stage, there will be a big delay," Maurice said. "All of these factors would make it difficult for two people to have a conversation only five metres (16 feet) apart", the French CNRS research institute said in a statement.

of the day **QUOTE**

Supplies of balance equipment/material from Russian entities may get affected.

Visits of engineers/technical advisors from Russia for project commissioning activities may get affected

RAJ KUMAR SINGH | POWER MINISTER

I say with a lot of sadness that the kind of cooperation which could have been received and should have been received from the states in encouraging these projects in industrial corridors has been, unfortunately, very slow

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE MINISTER

With every passing day as more hosts join the growing homestay community on the platform, we look forward to offering extra choices and homestay options as per varied stay demands and needs of discerning travelers

VIJAY PRAKASH | CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, MAKEMYTRIP

SHORT TAKES

FY 2021-22: HAL scales new peak

Bangalore: Hindustan Aeronautics Limited said Friday it has recorded highest ever revenue of over Rs 24,000 crore (provisional and unaudited) for the financial year ended on March 31, 2022, registering a six per cent growth over the previous fiscal. The corresponding figure for the previous year stood at Rs 22,755 crore. "Despite the challenges of the second wave of Covid-19 during the first quarter of the year and the consequent production loss, the Company could meet the targeted revenue growth with improved performance during the balance period of the year," said HAL CMD, R Madhavan.

Coal India logs record output

New Delhi: State-owned Coal India Limited (CIL) Friday reported a record coal production in FY22 at 622.6 million tonne, registering an annual growth of 4.4 per cent. In 2020-21, coal production stood at 595.2 million tonne (MT). Coal supplies to power generation companies during FY22 also touched a record of 540.4 MT, up 21.4 per cent as compared to 445 MT in FY21. "CIL ended FY22 scripting a historic high in coal production, offtake and coal despatch to power plants... Amid rising coal demand from the country's (power) generation companies," the company said.

Forex reserves down by \$2.03bn

Mumbai: Continuing their downward trajectory for the third consecutive week, the country's foreign exchange reserves declined by \$2.03 billion to stand at \$617.648 billion in the week ended March 25, RBI data showed Friday. In the week ended March 18, the forex kitty had declined by \$2.597 billion to \$619.678 billion. It had plunged by \$9.646 billion to \$622.275 billion in the week ended March 11. During the reporting week, the fall in the reserves was mainly on account of a decline in the foreign currency assets (FCA), a major component of the overall reserves.

Investment via P-notes surges

New Delhi: Investments in the Indian capital market through participatory notes (P-notes) rose to Rs 89,143 crore till the end of February, with experts saying the positive trend is likely continue in the coming months on expectations of strong corporate earnings by India Inc which will enthrone foreign investors.



Australia will sign a trade agreement with India on Saturday that will eliminate tariffs on 85 per cent of Australian goods entering India, helping farmers and miners to diversify export markets
SCOTT MORRISON | PM, AUSTRALIA

STARTUPS STARTING BIG

Domestic startups have raised over \$12 billion during the first three months of 2022 as compared to \$4 billion during the same period in the previous year, says a report. According to data tracking platform Fintrackr, 528 startups, including 324 in their early stage and 123 in their growth stage, have announced their funding rounds worth \$12.06 billion during the first quarter of this year



ALL-TIME HIGH

GST mop-up at ₹1.42L cr in Mar

This is the ninth month in a row that the total GST mop-up has come in above the ₹1-lakh-crore mark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 1: GST collection in March touched an all-time high of over Rs 1.42 lakh crore, an increase of 15 per cent annually, on the back of rate rationalisation and anti-evasion steps, the finance ministry said Friday.

With the record collection, the Centre's Goods and Services Tax (GST) mop-up has exceeded the revised budget target of Rs 5.70 lakh crore set for the previous fiscal ended March 31, 2022.

The previous high for collection of revenues from goods sold and services rendered was in January 2022 at over Rs 1.40 lakh crore.

The average monthly gross GST collection in the last quarter (January-March) stood at Rs 1.38 lakh crore, against the average collection of Rs 1.10 lakh crore. Rs 1.15 lakh crore and 1.30 lakh crore in the first, second and third quarters, respectively.

"Coupled with economic recovery, anti-evasion activities, especially action against fake billers have been contributing to the enhanced GST. The improvement in revenue has also been due to various rate rationalization measures undertaken by the Council to correct inverted duty structure," the ministry said in a statement.

TREND IN TOTAL GST COLLECTIONS

Month	Amount	YoY change
March 2022	1,42,095cr	15%
Feb 2022	1,33,026cr	18%
Jan 2022	1,40,986cr	18%
Dec 2021	1,29,780cr	13%
Nov 2021	1,31,526cr	25%
Oct 2021	1,30,127cr	24%
Sept 2021	1,17,010cr	23%
Aug 2021	1,12,020cr	30%
July 2021	1,16,393cr	33%
June 2021	92,800cr	2%

The record GST collections have also been aided by the strong sales activity of corporates in March, as they raced to close the fiscal with high topline growth. This had a direct bearing on GST, which is a transaction tax

MA MANI | PARTNER, DELOITTE INDIA



The gross GST revenue collected in March 2022 was Rs 1,42,095 crore, of which Central GST was Rs 25,830 crore, State GST Rs 32,378 crore, Integrated GST Rs 74,470 crore (including Rs 39,131 crore collected on import of goods) and cess was Rs 9,417 crore (including Rs 981 crore collected on import of goods).

During the month, revenues from import of goods were 25 per cent higher while the revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) were 11 per cent higher than the revenues

from these sources in March 2021. Total number of e-way bills generated in the month of February 2022 was 6.91 crore as compared to 6.88 crore in January 2022 despite being a shorter month, which indicates recovery of business activity at faster pace, the ministry said.

The government has settled Rs 29,816 crore to Central GST and Rs 25,082 crore to SGST from IGST as regular settlement. In addition, the government has settled Rs 20,000 crore of IGST on ad-hoc basis in the ratio of 50:50 between

State records 27% growth in revenue realisation: Govt

Bhubaneswar: For the FY 2021-22, the Central GST, Central Excise & Customs, Bhubaneswar Zone has shown remarkable growth in revenue realisation. Till the end of March, 2022, total revenue of approximately Rs 50978 crore has been collected from various taxes, namely, GST, Customs and Central Excise registering a phenomenal growth of 27% as compared to previous financial year which is highest amongst all the large tax paying states of the country (other than Lakshadweep and Ladakh). The Chief Commissioner of Bhubaneswar Zone, R Mangababu, has stated that this overall growth in tax collection is mainly due to increased industrial and economic activities in the zone as evident from GST collection. So far as the import and export is concerned, Bhubaneswar Zone has collected Rs 11154 crore of customs duty in this financial year (up to March, 2022) registering a growth of about 63.46% as compared to previous year.

Centre and states/UTs in March. "The total revenue of Centre and the States in the month of March 2022 after regular and ad-hoc settlements is Rs 65,646 crore for CGST and Rs 67410 crore for the SGST. Centre also released GST compensation of Rs 18,252 crore to States/UTs during the month," the ministry said.

MCL ends FY'22 with historic growth of 14%



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 1: Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) ended the financial year 2021-22 on a high note, clocking 168 million tonne coal production with an impressive growth of about 14% over previous fiscal 2020-21.

The FY'22 overall remained the year of achievements for the production subsidiary of Coal India, as it has set new milestones in all the performance parameters vis-a-vis coal production, despatch and overburden removal (OBR). Addressing the Annual Press Conference here, OP Singh, Chairman-cum-Managing Director, said, "The last fiscal has been a great year, full of achievements for the company, and I am happy to inform that MCL's achievement in coal production had been 103% of target at a record 168.17 million tonne for the financial year ended yesterday."

"Besides, the company has despatched 176.17MT coal to the consumers, with a growth of about 21% over previous year. Similarly,

MCL has registered a growth of more than 18% in overburden removal at 207 MCuM (million cubic meters), which will help us for increasing coal production during the current fiscal," the CMD said.

Singh was accompanied by KR Vasudevan, Director (Finance) and Keshav Rao, Director (Personnel) on the dais while SK Pal, Director (Technical/Projects & Planning) joined through video-conferencing.

Singh said that MCL had been successful in meeting the rising demand of coal during the third quarter of last FY year 2021-22, despite challenges posed by pandemic.

Speaking about the future of coal demand, Mr Singh said, "It is estimated that the coal demand would continue to remain high in the coming times."

The company's CMD informed, would produce 176 million tonne coal in financial year 2022-23.

MCL is the largest coal producing company in the country, having its mining operations spread over in Sundergarh, Jharsuguda and Angul districts of Odisha.

ATF price hiked by 2%; commercial LPG up

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 1: Jet fuel prices Friday were hiked by 2 per cent - the seventh straight increase this year - to an all-time high, reflecting a surge in global energy prices.

Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) - the fuel that helps aeroplanes fly - was hiked by Rs 2,258.54 per kilolitre, or 2 per cent, to Rs 1,12,924.83 per kl (Rs 112.92 per litre) in the national capital, according to a price notification by state-owned fuel retailers.

Meanwhile, rates of LPG used by commercial establishments like hotels and restaurants, was increased by Rs 249.50 to Rs 2,253 per 19-kg cylinder.

However, prices of cooking LPG used in household kitchens were not changed. Rates of such gas were hiked by Rs 50 to Rs 949.50 per 14.2-kg cylinder on March 22.

Likewise, there was no change in the price of petrol and diesel on Friday. Prior to the second pause in 11 days, auto fuel rates had gone up by Rs 6.40 per litre.

While jet fuel prices are revised on 1st and 16th of every month, LPG rates change once a month. Petrol and diesel prices are revised daily based on equivalent rates in the international market. The increase in ATF price comes on back of the steepest ever hike 18.3 per cent (Rs 17,135.63 per kl) effected March 16.

Fuel prices have been increased in India because energy prices globally have risen on back of sup-



CNG price hiked by 80 paise, PNG by ₹5

New Delhi: CNG price in the national capital Friday was hiked by 80 paise per kg, while piped cooking gas rates were increased by a steep Rs 5 per cubic metre on the back of the government raising input natural gas prices to record levels. CNG price in the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi has been increased to Rs 60.81 per kg from Rs 60.01, according to information posted on the website of Indraprastha Gas Ltd (IGL) - the firm which retails CNG and piped cooking gas in the national capital. This is the sixth increase in CNG prices in the last month. In all, rates have gone up by about Rs 4 per kg. The domestic PNG price has been increased by Rs 5 per Standard Cubic Metre (SCM) with effect from April 1, 2022, partially cover the hike in input gas cost, the company said.

ply concerns following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and demand returning after being hit by the pandemic.

V-GUARD LAUNCHES 'ROMANZA ART'

New Delhi: V-Guard Industries Ltd, India's leading consumer electrical and electronics manufacturer, has introduced its premium new decorative dust repellent art fan, "Romanza Art". The fans market is estimated at 10,000 crore (FY23) growing at a CAGR of 7-8%. V-Guard has a share of about 3-4% in the organised market slightly more indexed towards the South. The premium decorative segment is estimated to be valued at 4200 crore (FY23) and is growing at a CAGR of 28-30% with increasing adoption of premium products by consumers. V-Guard has a 5% share in this segment. Romanza is also equipped with a 400 RPM speed which makes it best in class. An anti-stain and anti-fade coating ensures a sustained new look for the fan. Backed by a 5-year warranty, superior gloss and matte surface finish and prolonged corrosion resistance makes Romanza Art Fan truly one of its kind. Romanza is attractively priced at Rs 4850. Commenting on the new launch V Ramachandran, Director & COO, V-Guard Industries Ltd said, "We are delighted to unleash our premium fan Romanza Art this summer. In synch with the aspirations of the new age consumer we have manufactured in our own state of the art manufacturing facility this aesthetically superior fan inspired by contemporary Indian & floral art form. Moreover, we packed our fan with a host of superior features empowering our discerning consumers with a fan that is truly one of its kind".



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MAKERS WARN OF SUPPLY WOES

Auto sales in India surge

REUTERS

New Delhi, April 1: Carmakers in India reported a sharp rise in annual sales for the fiscal year 2022 Friday, but warned of future risks from global supply chain disruptions.

Maruti Suzuki, India's biggest carmaker, said sales rose 13% in the fiscal year ended March 31 to 1.65 million units, growing for the first time in two years. But the company warned that "the supply situation of electronic components continues to be unpredictable".

"This might have "some impact" on the production volume in the current fiscal year, Maruti said in a statement. Maruti, which sells one in every two cars in India, is majority owned by Japan's Suzuki Motor Corp.

Automakers globally have been forced to make sharp production



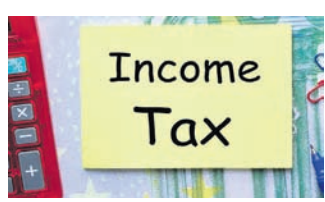
cuts over the past year as supply chain disruptions and booming demand for consumer electronics have led to an acute shortage of semiconductors. This has resulted in long wait times for car buyers. Now, Russia's invasion of Ukraine is expected to worsen the problem as both countries supply raw materials used to manufacture semiconductors, Indian ratings

agency ICRA said. "The impact of the crisis in the form of higher fuel and commodity prices also poses a risk to (automobile) demand prospects, in case it materialises into a long drawn out war," ICRA said.

Tata Motors, which is also India's largest electric carmaker, reported its highest ever annual sales of passenger vehicles, up 67% to 370,372 units from a year ago. Its electric car sales grew nearly four times to 19,000, the company said in a statement, despite "two waves of Covid, semi-conductor crisis and steep increase in commodity prices".

"Going forward, semi-conductor situation remains uncertain. We will continue to monitor the evolving situation closely," said Shailesh Chandra, managing director, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles and Tata Passenger Electric Mobility

Govt notifies ITR forms for 2021-22



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 1: The finance ministry has notified new income tax return forms which, among other things, will seek additional information with regard to overseas retirement benefits and interest accrued on provident fund deposits exceeding Rs 2.5 lakh a year.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has notified the forms ITR-1 to ITR-5. The ITR forms for corporates and trusts (ITR 6 and 7) will be notified later.

ITR-1 form, to be filed by individuals having income up to Rs 50 lakh, has been kept broadly the same as last year. However, the assessee will have to provide information about income from overseas retirement fund while calculating net salary.

The assessee will have to disclose whether the overseas retirement fund is in a notified country. The ITR-2 form seeks information regarding the interest accrued in provident fund on contribution exceeding Rs 2.5 lakh per annum.

In order to tax high-value depositors in the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), the government last year said interest on employee contributions to the provident fund over Rs 2.5 lakh per annum would be taxed from April 1, 2021.

This form is filed by individuals and Hindu Undivided Family (HUF) not having income from business and profession.

ITR-3 is filed by people having income as profits from business/profession, while ITR-5 is filed by LLPs. ITR-4 can be filed by individuals, HUFs and firms with total income up to Rs 50 lakh and having income from business and profession.

ON THE FIRST DAY OF TRADING IN THE NEW FINANCIAL YEAR, THE BSE BAROMETER RALLIED 708.18 POINTS OR 1.21 PER CENT TO SETTLE AT 59,276.69

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 1: Equity markets made a robust start to the new financial year Friday, with the Sensex rallying over 708 points to recapture the crucial 59,000-mark on across-the-board buying amid



a supportive trend overseas. Foreign fund inflows and positive macroeconomic signals added to the momentum, traders said.

On the first trading day of FY23, the BSE barometer surged 708.18 points or 1.21 per cent to settle at 59,276.69. During the day, it jumped

FOR 2021-22 FISCAL, THE BSE SENSEX JUMPED 9,059.36 POINTS OR 18.29%, AND THE NIFTY RALLIED 2,774.05 POINTS OR 18.88%

AS MANY AS 2,721 STOCKS ADVANCED, WHILE 674 DECLINED AND 106 REMAINED UNCHANGED

828.11 points or 1.41 per cent to 59,396.62.

The broader NSE Nifty advanced 205.70 points or 1.18 per cent to finish at 17,670.45.

NTPC hogged the limelight in the 30-share Sensex pack, spurring 5.93 per cent, followed by PowerGrid, IndusInd Bank, State Bank of India, HDFC, Mahindra & Mahindra, HDFC Bank, Bajaj Finance and Maruti.

Only five constituents closed lower - Tech Mahindra, Sun Pharma, Dr Reddy's, Titan and Infosys, slipping up to 0.80 per cent. On a weekly basis, the Sensex zoomed 1,914.49 points or 3.33 per cent, while the Nifty climbed 517.45 points or 3.01 per cent.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap index jumped 1.71 per cent and the midcap gauge gained 1.39 per cent in Friday's session. Among BSE sectoral indices, utilities (3.44 per cent), power (3.16 per cent), oil & gas (2.73 per cent) and realty (2.34 per cent) were the lead gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) remained net buyers as they bought shares worth Rs 3,088.73 crore on Thursday, according to stock exchange data.

Umesh, Russell help Knights crush Kings



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 1: Umesh Yadav (4/23) continued his dream run with a four-wicket haul before Andre Russell (70 n o, 31b, 2x4, 8x6) returned to his brutal best to fire Kolkata Knight Riders to an easy six-wicket win over Punjab Kings here Friday. It was KKR's second win in three games while Punjab suffered their first loss of the season after the win over RCB.

Umesh produced career-best T20 figures to help KKR dismiss Punjab for a below par 137 in 18.2 overs. It was supposed to be a straight forward chase but Rahul Chahar (2/13) raised Punjab's hopes with a double wicket maiden to reduce KKR to 51/4.

However, Russell came out in the middle and changed the game with his barrage of sixes to make it a cake-walk in just 14.3 overs. He smashed three sixes off Odean Smith in an over that went for 30 runs.

Earlier, KKR bowlers stifled a power-laden Punjab Kings batting line-up. With heavy dew setting in later half of the games, fielding

first has become a no-brainer this IPL and KKR skipper Shreyas Iyer called it right at the toss.

Punjab, who had successfully chased 200 plus in their opening game, enjoyed a good powerplay that yielded 62/3 in six overs.

Sri Lankan Bhanuka Rajapaksa (31, 9b, 3x4, 3x6) looked in sensational touch at the Wankhede Stadium. His breathtaking effort was perhaps the lone bright in an otherwise underwhelming innings.

Umesh's new ball partner Tim Southee (2/36) and KKR's retained spinners Varun Chakaravarty and Sunil Narine were also too good for the Punjab batters.

TODAY'S MATCHES

MI	V	RR
Time: 03:30 pm		
GT	V	DC
Time: 07:30 pm		

TELECAST
Star Sports channels & Hotstar

Livingstone (19) and Kagiso Rabada (25) chipped with runs taking the total close to 140.

BRIEF SCORES
PBKS 137 (Bhanuka Rajapaksa 31, Kagiso Rabada 25; Umesh Yadav 4/23, Tim Southee 2/36) **lost to KKR 141/4** (Andre Russell 70 n o, Shreyas Iyer 26, Sam Billings 24 n o; Rahul Chahar 2/13) **by 6 wickets.**

CSK's veteran all-rounder Dwayne Bravo Thursday went past Lasith Malinga (170 wickets) to become the IPL's highest wicket-taker during his team's match against LSG as Deepak Hooda became the West Indian's record 171st victim in his 153rd IPL appearance. Bravo and Malinga are followed by Amit Mishra (166)

IPL's ticketing partner BookMyShow Friday said that audience capacity for the current season has been increased to 50 per cent from April 6. The Maharashtra government had initially allowed 25 per cent crowds at all the venues

India eye top spot in FIH Pro League

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 1: Fairly well-placed after eight games, the Indian men's hockey team would look to annex the top position in the standings when it takes on England in a double-leg FIH Pro League tie, starting here Saturday. The second match of the tie will be played Sunday.

Tokyo Olympic bronze medalists India have so far played eight matches this season and are placed second in the standings, behind Germany (17 points), with 16 points.

The Indian team defeated South Africa 10-2, 10-2 before winning a game and losing one against France (5-0, 2-5) and Spain (5-4, 3-5). Recently against Argentina, the Indians lost 2-2 (1-3 in shoot-out) before registering a thrilling 4-3 win in the second match.



Going into tie against England, defence remains a major concern for the Indians as the backline wilted under pressure in every match. Conceding soft goals has been India's bane and vice-captain Harmanpreet Singh had no qualms in admitting that, saying the defenders need to improve their decision making going forward.

On the contrary, India's forwardline has been impressive, scoring as many as 42 goals in the eight games. Mandeep Singh, in partic-

ular, has been at his best inside the opposition circle, scoring some important goals, including the last-minute match-winner against Argentina in their previous game.

Captain of the Olympic bronze-medal winning side, Manpreet Singh is the backbone of India's midfield alongside Hardik Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Nilkanta Sharma and Sumit.

The presence of four world-class dragflicking options - Harmanpreet, skipper Amit Rohidas, Varun Kumar and young Jugraj Singh -

hand India a clear edge over their opponents.

Jugraj has been a revelation since making his senior team debut, striking a brace in the second game against Argentina before providing the assist to Mandeep for the winner.

In their last meeting, India defeated England 3-1 in the quarter-finals of the Tokyo Olympics last year. On paper and in world rankings too, India hold an edge over England. While the Indians are ranked fourth, the Englishmen occupy the seventh spot.

England, on the other hand, are placed seventh in the Pro League standings with six points from two wins and as many defeats. England started their Pro League campaign on a positive note beating Spain 6-1 and 3-2 before losing 1-3 and 0-2 to Argentina.

England are on a rebuilding phase under new captain Tom Sorsby and head coach Zak Jones, and are looking at the Pro League matches to gain valuable experience ahead of the Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

OSAKA RALLIES INTO MIAMI OPEN FINAL

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Miami Gardens, April 1: Naomi Osaka's eyes welled with tears when her match ended, an all-too-familiar scene for her in recent years.

The seeded Osaka defeated No.22 Belinda Bencic 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 Thursday in the Miami Open semifinals. She's in a championship match for the first time since the 2021 Australian Open, and will meet either No.16 Jessica Pegula or No.2 Iga Swiatek Saturday.

She hid her face in an orange towel a few times right after the match ended, at least one tear clearly making its way down her



right cheek. Osaka entered this tournament ranked No.77 in the world, will leave Miami no worse than 36th and would be back in the top 30 if she wins the title.

It has been a long, trying and often emotional ride for Osaka since her win in the 2018 US Open final over Serena Williams. She was rattled during a loss at Indian Wells March 12 following a derogatory shout from a spectator, withdrew from last year's French Open to address her mental state and left last year's US Open in tears.

Pegula and Swiatek - who will replace the now-retired Ashleigh Barty as the No.1-ranked women's player in the world next week - were meeting in the other women's semifinal.

Meanwhile, Daniil Medvedev came into the tournament as the

No.2-ranked men's player in the world. Hubert Hurkacz ensured he will stay there.

Hurkacz - the No.8 seed and defending Miami champion - wore down the top-seeded and cramp-riddled Medvedev 7-6(9-7), 6-3 Thursday in a men's quarterfinal.

Hurkacz will next meet No.14 Carlos Alcaraz of Spain in the semifinals. Alcaraz defeated unseeded Miomir Kecmanovic of Serbia 6-7(5-7), 6-3, 7-6(7-5) Thursday night in the last men's quarterfinal.

The other semifinal pits sixth-seeded Casper Ruud of Norway against unseeded Francisco Cerundolo of Argentina.

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nirf INDIA RANKINGS 2021

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32nd Best in Engineering Category
21st Best in Medical Category
14th Best in Dental Category

THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

601-800 in Engineering Technology
601-800 in Computer Science
601+ in Clinical, Pre-clinical & Health
401+ The Asia University Ranking

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

3rd Best Private Indian Institution
21st Best Indian Institution
401-450 in QS Asia University Ranking 2022
801-1000 in QS World University Ranking 2022

TIMES HEALTH CARE ALL INDIA CRITICAL CARE HOSPITAL RANKING SURVEY 2021

Institute of Medical Science & SUM Hospital, SOA
10 departments ranked 1st in Odisha
6 departments are amongst top 2 in Odisha
10 departments are amongst top 5 in eastern region, India.
Institute of Dental Sciences
Ranked 1st in eastern region, India.

QS IGAUGE DIAMOND

DIAMOND UNIVERSITY RATING

TIMES ENGINEERING RANKING-2021
2nd in Odisha

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