



**MOTIVATING FACTOR**  
 Actor Yami Gautam says she gets an adrenaline rush by attempting something very different as an actor  
**LEISURE P2**



**NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION**  
 SL's opposition party SJB said Friday it will move a no-confidence motion against Prez Gotabaya Rajapaksa's govt  
**INTERNATIONAL P10**



**SINDHU, SRIKANTH ADVANCE**  
 Shuttlers PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth storm into the semifinals of the Korea Open badminton tourney  
**SPORTS P12**

**REDDY ELECTED BeMC DY MAYOR**



**Berhampur, April 8:** After emerging victorious for the position of mayor in the Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC), the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) also grabbed the deputy mayor's post with its candidate Vivek Reddy winning against BJP's D Karunakar in the elections conducted Friday.  
 Reddy, who is the Corporator of Ward No 42, got 34 votes in the elections to win the deputy mayor's post. It should be stated here that BJD's Sanghamitra Dalei was earlier sworn-in as the new Mayor of Berhampur. She had registered a thumping victory in the mayor elections defeating Sabita Suar of the BJP by a margin of 20,236 votes in the recently-conducted ULB polls in the Silk City.  
 Election for the post of deputy mayor in the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) will be conducted Saturday. BJD's Subhash Singh has already been elected mayor of the Cuttack Municipal Corporation.

**RUSSIAN MISSILE KILLS 50 UKRAINIAN CIVILIANS**

**Chernihiv (Ukraine):** A Russian rocket attack early Friday morning on a packed railway station in Kramatorsk, a city in the eastern Donetsk region in Ukraine left 50 civilians dead and over a 100 injured. All were waiting to board trains to head towards safe destinations. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that 'thousands' of people were at the station when it was hit by a Russian missile. He accompanied a social media post with photos that showed a train with smashed windows, abandoned luggage and bodies lying in what looked like an outdoor waiting area.



**PATEL CANNOT LEAVE INDIA FOR NOW: COURT**

**New Delhi:** A Delhi court directed Friday former Amnesh International chief, Aakar Patel not to leave the country without its prior permission. It also stayed an order directing the CBI to withdraw a Look Out Circular (LOC) issued against him in a case relating to the alleged violation of FCRA. Special Judge Santosh Snehi Mann of Rouse Avenue Court passed the order on a petition filed by the CBI. Patel meanwhile has also filed a contempt plea against the CBI stating that the probe agency had not followed the court's order Thursday which ordered for the removal of the LOC circular with immediate effect.



**JSW Cement**  
 The Leaders' Choice  
 1800 266 266 1 (toll free)

**PAYING OBEISANCE**



A child along with his family members offers prayers on the first Friday of the holy month of Ramadan at a mosque in Unit-IV in Bhubaneswar

**Nilagiri IIC, IO shunted**

Both the OHRC and the EGI have condemned the shackling of journalist with the former seeking a report from the police within 15 days



Nilagiri PS IIC Draupadi Das

**Balasure, April 8:** In a bid to diffuse the situation arising out of shackling of journalist Loknath Dalei at the Balasure DHH, authorities Friday transferred the inspector-in-charge (IIC) of Nilagiri police station, Draupadi Das and investigation officer (IO) of the case Subarna Behera, to the Balasure district police headquarters. Eastern Range Inspector General (IG) of Police, Narasingha Bhol said that the two will remain attached to the police headquarters till the completion of the probe.  
 Bhol also said that the incident is a 'serious matter' and a DSP rank officer has been assigned charge of the probe. One havildar has already been placed under suspension, he added.  
 Bhol termed the incident as 'unfortunate' and 'unlawful'. "Chaining a journalist to a hospital bed while he was undergoing treatment is an unfortunate and unlawful act.

Action will be taken against erring officials following the probe," Bhol told reporters.  
 There was widespread condemnation of the incident. The Editors Guild of India (EGI) in a statement demanded stringent action against those guilty of chaining the journalist.  
 "The inhumane manner in which journalists, stringers, and district reporters are often treated by the police in an effort to suppress any independent reporting is a matter of grave concern," the EGI said. "Action must be taken against those who misuse state power," it said in a statement.  
 Meanwhile, the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) took suo motu cognizance of media reports Friday and directed Bhol to submit a report within 15 days regarding the incident.

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**



It's very suspicious... Let's protest... The company has written something in an Indian language I don't understand

**Paid booster shots for most adults from Sunday**

Immediately after the govt announcement, SII said its vaccine for the end-users will be available for ₹600

**New Delhi, April 8:** Precaution dose of Covid-19 vaccines will be made available to all aged above 18 years at private vaccination centres from April 10, the Union Health Ministry announced Friday. All those who have completed nine months after the administration of the second dose will be eligible for the precaution shot, it added.  
 "It has been decided that the precaution dose of Covid-19 vaccines will be made available to the 18-plus population group at all private vaccination centres," the Health Ministry said in a statement.  
 "Adding an extra layer of safety! Precaution dose to be available to 18+ age group from 10th April, 2022, at private vaccination centres. All 18+



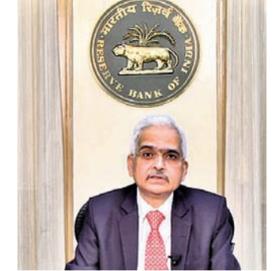
who have completed nine months after administration of second dose would be eligible for precaution dose," Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Twitter.  
 After the announcement, vaccine maker Serum Institute of India (SII) said the precaution dose of its Covishield vaccine will be priced at ₹600 per shot for eligible individuals. "End-users will pay ₹600 for the booster dose and the hospitals will get vaccines at discounted prices," SII CEO Adar Poonawalla said in a statement.  
 So far, approximately 96 per cent

of all those above the age of 15 years in India have received at least one Covid-19 vaccine dose, while about 83 per cent have received both doses, the ministry said.  
 The ongoing free Covid-19 inoculation programme through government vaccination centres for the first and second dose to the eligible population as well as the precaution dose to healthcare and frontline workers and those above 60 will be accelerated, the ministry said.  
 The Health Ministry order however, means that unlike the booster shots announced for healthcare workers, frontline staff and those above 60, the third jab will not be free for most adults.  
 The decision to open up the booster to all adults was taken as infections grow in many countries and for some Indians it is hard to travel abroad without a third dose. Countries such as Israel, for example, do not consider vaccination complete in the absence of booster doses.

**RBI raises inflation target**

**Mumbai, April 8:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised Friday the retail inflation target for the current financial year to 5.7 per cent on the back of rising global prices amidst the ongoing geo-political tensions, even as it expected the prices of cereals and pulses to soften on prospects of good winter crop harvest. In its earlier policy review in February, the RBI had projected retail inflation to be at 4.5 per cent in 2022-23.

The RBI also slashed economic growth projection to 7.2 per cent for the current fiscal from 7.8% estimated earlier amid volatile crude oil prices and supply chain disruptions due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.  
 Das said external developments during the past two months have led to the materialisation of downside risks to domestic growth and upside risks to inflation.  
 "Global food prices along with metal prices have hardened significantly. Economy is grappling with a sharp rise in inflation. It is now projected at 5.7 per cent in 2022-23 with Q1 at 6.3%; Q2 at 5%; Q3 at 5.4% and Q4 at 5.1%," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said while unveiling the first monetary policy review for the current fiscal year.



**Trade with Russia govt matter: Das**

**Mumbai:** The RBI is working with the government to thrash out a payment settlement solution for Indo-Russian trade, which is hit by the economic sanctions imposed on Moscow after it invaded Ukraine. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the economic blockade of Russia is a matter that the government has to deal with first, and as far as the central bank is concerned, obviously, 'we will not do anything which goes against the sanctions'.

Retail inflation is hovering above the RBI's upper tolerance level for the past couple of months. It was 6.07 per cent in February and 6.01 per cent in January, mainly due to an uptick in food prices.

**Odisha SHGs to get AAI boost**

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has taken the initiative to allocate space to Self Help Groups (SHGs) at several airports including the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here for selling/showcasing the self-made products of their regions. It certainly will be a huge boost to Odisha's SHGs.  
 The AAI has already started coordinating with the respective state governments on this issue. The scheme has been named as 'Airports as Venue for Skilled Artisans of the Region' (AVSAR), sources said Friday.  
 Apart from Bhubaneswar, airports at Ranchi, Kolkata, Varanasi, Indore, Bhopal, Vadodra, Ranchi, Belagavi, Madurai, Coimbatore, Calicut and a few others have been included in this scheme.  
 The main objective of the scheme is to provide opportunities to help the indigent to mobilise their households into functionally effective self-earning groups for self-reliance and self-dependence.  
 Under this scheme, an area of 100-200 square feet has been earmarked at each AAI operated airport. The space will be allotted to the various SHG's in turns for durations of 15 days each.  
 Few outlets have already been commissioned at Chennai, Agartala, Dehradun, Kushinagar, Udaipur and Amritsar airports wherein SHGs operated by local women, are showcasing and marketing their homemade local products like puffed rice, packaged papad, pickles, bamboo-based ladies bags/bottles/lamps sets, etc to the travellers. The project is all set for takeoff at the BPIA soon.  
 The initiative to strengthen SHGs by allotting space at AAI airports will provide huge visibility to these groups and help them to promote/market their products to the wider spectrum, reaching out to larger population, the sources informed.  
 The interested SHGs can submit their applications on AAI portal (airport wise) for allotment at the airport where the SHG is located.

**Air health services begin in Nuapada**

**Nuapada, April 8:** In a bid to ensure quality healthcare services to all, the Odisha government Friday began air health services Friday in Nuapada district for free.  
 Under the Mukhyamantri Vayu Swasthya Seva (Air Health Services), a team of seven super specialist doctors arrived at the Gotama Airstrip here at around 8:30am on a flight from Bhubaneswar. They will provide treatment to 175 patients at the DHH for two days, before flying back.

The Odisha government will bear all costs incurred towards the service. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has launched the health services to people of remote and backward areas of Odisha As quality health service remains a far cry in the remote districts, the government will fly specialists to those places to address the needs of people.  
 The service would be available in Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Kalahandi and Malkangiri. If required, critical patients will be airlifted to the Odisha capital and Cuttack for treatment.

**LEMON NOT 'TANGY' ANYMORE**

Sudden escalation of prices is forcing consumers to look for other refreshment options

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** With summer temperatures turning harsher by the day, people in Odisha are looking in all directions for cooling off. One of the favourite methods to beat the summer heat is with a glass of water with lemon juice.  
 However, lemon prices have suddenly sky-rocketed in the state and it is burning holes in the pockets of the consumers. Even a few days back people could buy four pieces of lemon at ₹10. And now, only one costs ₹10 at Chhatrabazaar, the largest wholesale and retail vegetable market in Cuttack. The rising lemon



prices are causing severe problems to the consumers. Other than a glass of lemonade, lemon is also used to prepare various types of curry to get a tangy flavour.  
 Why this sudden escalation in

lemon price? Debendra Sahoo, secretary, Traders Association in Cuttack cited insufficient production for the rise in prices. "Local demand is usually met with production from Bargarh, Angul, Keonjhar and Berhampur. The production of lemon has not been sufficient this season," Sahoo said.  
 Amid all this the customers are the worst sufferers. Sangeeta Sahoo a resident however, is tackling the situation in a different manner: "I prefer to grow lemons and other small agro products in my terrace to beat the price rise," she said.  
 Home-maker Krishna Mohanty said the rising lemon prices have forced her to look for other options. "Now two lemon pieces cost ₹20. So we have to turn to other options like using concentrated lemon juice to refresh ourselves," she said.

# leisure



## MOVING TO DUBAI BROUGHT ME A SENSE OF CALM: LINDSAY LOHAN

Actress Lindsay Lohan says living in a country where paparazzi is illegal has been life-changing for her. Taking part in Vogue's Life in Looks video series, Lohan said: "It just really happened, how I moved to Dubai. I got there, and I felt a certain sense of calm."

## LOPEZ, BEN AFFLECK SPARK ENGAGEMENT SPECULATION

Singer-and-actress Jennifer Lopez, 52, and the 49-year-old actor Ben Affleck who rekindled their romance in 2021, after calling off their engagement in 2004 - were recently reported to be considering tying the knot again, and now Jennifer has been spotted out and about sporting a diamond ring on her left hand.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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

#### ARIES

Today you will have an eye for beautiful and outlandish things. There is a possibility that you may even contemplate starting a business related to these things. Ganesh feels, though, that you will not be able to reach any conclusion about it. But you will keep the option open.

#### TAURUS

Logic may be your forte today, but in the game of life, sometimes the heart wins and sometimes the head. Your analytical skills will help you understand things better, in turn, making you wiser. You may feel an urge to spend on music cassettes, CDs and electronic gadgets.

#### GEMINI

Today will be a day filled with energy and enthusiasm. You will have an optimistic view of life and this will help you attain success. You will be able to exercise your free will and take up tasks to your liking. While the day will be busy, it will also be rewarding, says Ganesh.

#### CANCER

Lack of support from family members will disable your efforts. Children also disappoint you. Discord or difference of opinion in family is indicated. Beware of neighbours. Yet, says Ganesh, face circumstances with a smile.

#### LEO

You will be filled with extraordinary self-confidence today. You will be able to take firm decisions when it comes to work related issues. You will not face any difficulties in completing your tasks today, and will achieve success.

#### VIRGO

It is quite possible that you will love financial challenges that are thrown at you, as they whet your appetite for success. You will come up with innovative ideas and improved methods of problem-solving. Ganesh assures you that your current business ideas will work wonders.

#### LIBRA

Trivialities should be the least of your concerns today. Do not let the small things faze you out. Remember that it is the overall picture that matters, and not one small stroke of the brush. Bear this in mind, since you may come under some pressure from subordinates at your workplace. Just remember to consider all possibilities before making any decisions.

#### SCORPIO

According to Ganesh, you will be soaked in your work today. During the day, you may be loaded with duties and responsibilities, however, evening has a different story to reveal. Exciting as ever, a get away with friends may be liberating and relaxing.

#### SAGITTARIUS

Suddenly, you discover that you are fully dedicated to your family. Kith and kins form the crux of your life, says Ganesh. Showing your love and affection to your kids will give you a feeling of satisfaction. Spend some quality time with your partner!

#### CAPRICORN

Forced to some backbreaking work today, you will feel exhausted by the end of the day. It is a cut-throat competition when it comes to the business world. Your arch rivals are looking out for one small opportunity to damage your business and reputation. But, you are no less. You understand their moves. Ganesh predicts that you will be ready with the equally strong counter attack and fight back.

#### AQUARIUS

You may receive some good news from the foreign shores today. The day will bring on a positive note and it will remain like that for the whole twenty-four hours. You'll be in a mood to merry and it will be transformed to everyone around you, says Ganesh.

#### PISCES

The day will be exceptional for working people as the planets seemed to be aligned perfectly, portends Ganesh. You will achieve all the expected results in the office and/or at work today.

## Chura Ke Dil Mera by Drew breaks Internet



**Los Angeles:** While Hindi film diva Shilpa Shetty has already stolen the hearts of many with her 1994 iconic party track *Chura Ke Dil Mera*, its Hollywood star Drew Barrymore and Lilly Singh's version of the peppy number that has set the internet on fire now.

Comedian Lilly Singh recently met the *The Extraterrestrial* star on her talk show *The Drew Barrymore Show* and made her shake a leg on the iconic 1994 Bollywood dance song *Chura Ke Dil Mera*.

In the video shared by Singh on her Instagram handle, she could be seen grooving to the signature steps of the Alka Yagnik-Kumar Sanu song that featured Shilpa Shetty and superstar Akshay Kumar.

"Finally met @drewbarrymore and she legit stole my heart. Also, didn't she nail this?! Ugh. A queen. I had an absolute blast on @thedrewbarrymoreshow today" Singh, 33, captioned the post.

Soon after she posted the video, scores of fans chimed into her comments section, with Akshay Kumar also writing "This is all @drewbarrymore @lilly," with a red heart emoticon.

For the unversed, *Chura Ke Dil Mera* from *Main Khiladi Tu Anari* (1994) was sung by Kumar Sanu and Alka Yagnik. AGENCIES

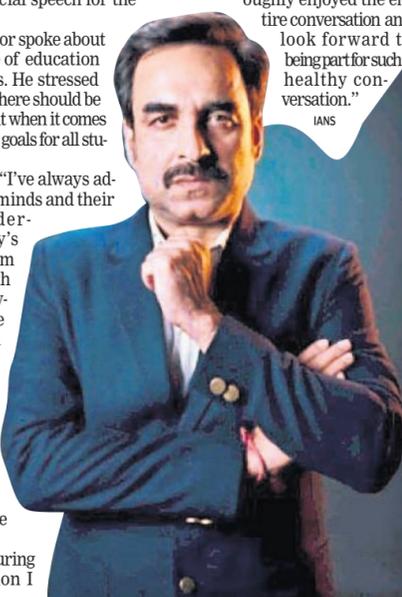
## Pankaj's motivational talk with Kharagpur IITians

**Mumbai:** Pankaj Tripathi, who has been shooting for the next instalment of cult buddy comedy franchise *Fukrey* in Delhi, took time off the sets and made a special visit to one of India's reputed educational institutes - IIT Kharagpur - to deliver a special speech for the students.

The *Mimi* actor spoke about the importance of education in today's times. He stressed on the fact that there should be clarity of thought when it comes to life and career goals for all students alike.

Pankaj said, "I've always advocated young minds and their ways of understanding today's education system and dealing with it. It was my privilege to be the part of a session in conversation with the students of IIT Kharagpur, which is one of the most reputed and oldest educational institutions in the country."

He added: "During the conversation I tried to share my experience, knowledge that I gained over the years benefiting them in some way or the other. It was a two communication session an exchange of knowledge and wisdom between the newer and experienced generation. I thoroughly enjoyed the entire conversation and look forward to being part for such healthy conversation."



## Yami talks about her adrenaline rush

**Mumbai:** Actress Yami Gautam, who has been creating waves with her performances in films such as *Dasvi* and *A Thursday*, says she has attempted something very different and as an actor she gets her adrenaline rush from doing that.

Talking about the same Yami shares, "I had a lot of fun playing a Haryanvi cop in the film (*Dasvi*) and I'm ecstatic about the initial response to my performance. My family, my team, and some friends, who are always honest about their opinions with me, watched it a few days ago and I'm glad they strongly connected to my character throughout the film.

"Now, I'm excited to hear what the audiences have to say about it. I've attempted something very different and as an actor, I get my adrenaline rush from doing that."

Yami has an exciting slate ahead with *OMG 2*, *Dhoom Dham*, and a few more unannounced projects. IANS

## Bhoomika clocks 5 years in industry, gets nostalgic

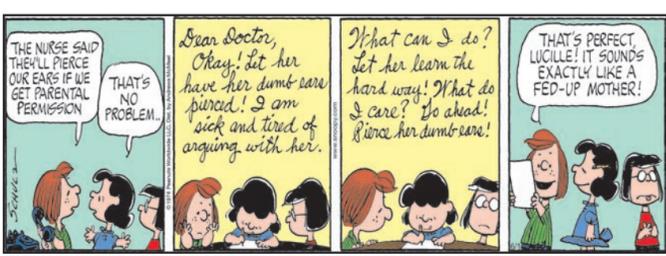
**Bhubaneswar:** Odia actress Bhoomika Dash got nostalgic as her film *Tu Mo Love Story* clocked five years Thursday. Though Bhoomika made her debut as a child artiste in 2014 (*Rumku Jhumana*), it was *Tu Mo Love Story* which launched her as a female lead opposite Swaraj Barik.

The movie not only was a commercial success, she also bagged the best debutante honour at an award show.

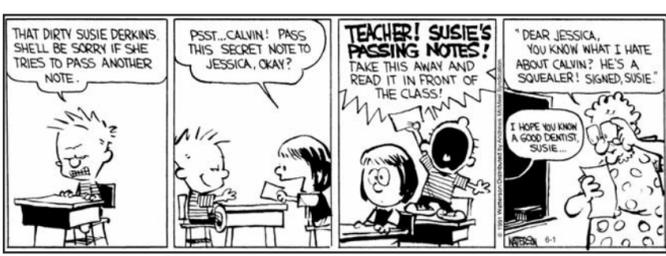
Taking to Instagram, Bhoomika shared some throwback photographs and wrote, "I have been fortunate to work in some of the landmark films in the history of Odia cinema. When you love your work, time flies and it's happened to me. As I completed five years as a lead actress, I feel I have just started my journey. I am raring to go actually for my next decade in cinema. Thank you to the team of *Tu Mo Love Story*."

The actress goes on to add: "Thank you Tapas sir, Tarang Cine Production House for giving me the opportunity and of course my fans, well wishers, family and loved ones." PNN

### PEANUTS



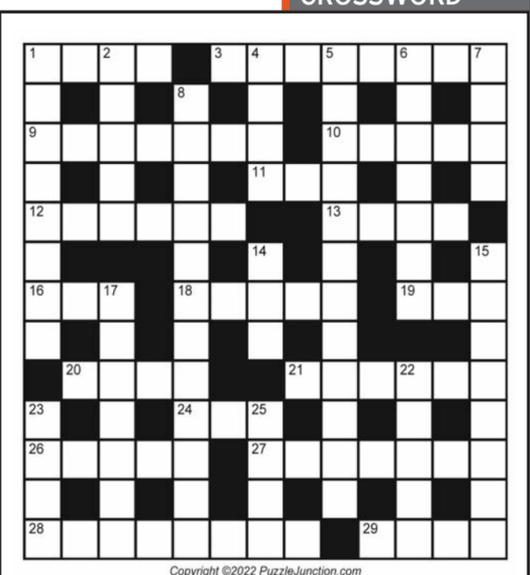
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



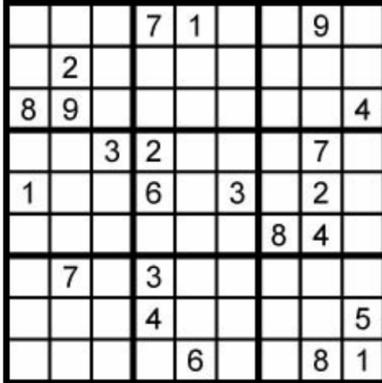
### FUN post CROSSWORD



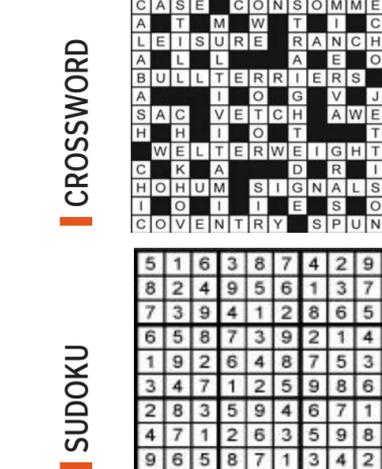
- Copyright ©2022 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 Identical
  - 3 Rural acreage, at times
  - 9 Football stat
  - 10 Soup scoop
  - 11 Stir-fry pan
  - 12 Write down
  - 13 Computer image
  - 16 Beluga yield
  - 18 Antler point
  - 19 Kind of story
  - 20 Parodied
  - 21 Building material
  - 24 Quick swim
  - 26 Tedium
  - 27 Worship
  - 28 Peel and Steed, e.g.
  - 29 Wild plum
- Down**
- 1 Parting word, in Kyushu
  - 2 Kind of raise
  - 4 Over again
  - 5 Dairy equipment, once (7,5)
  - 6 Backbreaking
  - 7 Hard to fathom
  - 8 Sweetened porridge (5,7)
  - 14 Towel holder
  - 15 Antiquated
  - 17 Strike out
  - 22 Recipe direction
  - 23 Epsilon follower
  - 25 Jetty

### 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



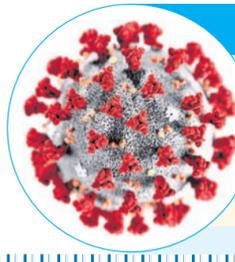
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## CULTURAL FETE

Artistes perform Odissi at Nrutyanjali organised by Puri Dance Academy at Annapurna Theatre in the Holy City, Friday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	49,70,32,234	43,26,98,990	61,97,139
India	4,30,33,067	4,25,00,002	5,21,573
Odisha	12,87,823	12,78,485	9,121

# Srimandir heritage corridor: Replies sought from govt, ASI



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, April 8:** The Orissa High Court (HC) Friday sought replies from the state government and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in connection with Srimandir heritage corridor project in Puri. The HC pronounced the order while taking up a case filed by Dillip Baral, a resident of Puri. A division bench of Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice Radhakrishna Patnaik directed the state government and the ASI to reveal details about the heritage corridor project, including the ongoing construction work, the required approval from the authorities concerned and any threat to the existing structures. The bench asked the state government and the ASI to submit

their replies by April 17, while posting the matter to April 21 for further hearing. In his petition, Baral informed the HC that the Centre is the real custodian of Srimandir. However, the state government has not received any approval from the Centre for the heritage corridor project. The petitioner had also informed the court that the vibration caused by the ongoing construction work for the mega project might pose a serious threat to the temple structure. Baral also claimed that a few cracks had been detected on the Nata Mandap of the 12th century recently. Notably, the ruling BJD and the main opposition BJP were engaged in a political slugfest over the heritage corridor project. Raising the issue in the Lok

The HC pronounced the order while taking up a case filed by Dillip Baral, a resident of Puri

The bench asked the state government and the ASI to submit their replies by April 17, while posting the matter to April 21 for further hearing

The petitioner had informed the court that the vibration caused by the ongoing construction work for the mega project might pose a serious threat to the temple structure

Sabha recently, BJP's Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi alleged illegality in the implementation of the ambitious project. She claimed that the state government was going ahead with the project in prohibited areas near Srimandir in violation of the norms. However, the BJD claimed that there had not been a violation of any law in the implementation of the project. The ruling party has maintained that the project is being carried out in coordination with the ASI. BJD MP Pinaki Misra said: "The work is being carried out after getting an NOC from the NMA (National Monument Authority), and the ASI is also a part of the project."

# 8 BJB students' admissions to be nixed

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** The Higher Education (HE) Department Friday directed the Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC) to cancel the admission of eight students of BJB Autonomous College, who have submitted fake disability certificates. In a letter to the OCAC, HE department deputy director Rajesh Kumar Sahoo said: "I am directed to inform you for the cancellation of eight students of BJB Autonomous College, Bhubaneswar, who had taken admission by producing fake PwD certificates for the

## FAKE DISABILITY CERTIFICATE ROW

session 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22. The list of such students including Puja Pradhan, Amrit Ranjan Gochhayat, Kamini Sahoo, Preeti Ranjan Pradhan, Arpita Jena, Lovelin Pradhan, Jyotsna Rani Ojha and Gourav Jena is sent to you. You are requested to update the Student Academic Management System portal after the cancellation of the admission of such students." Earlier BJB College principal Niranjan Rath had lodged FIRs

## 2 held for selling fake certificates

**Bhubaneswar:** The commissionerate police Friday arrested two persons for allegedly selling fake disability certificates to the students of BJB Autonomous College who were recently caught getting admission by submitting forged documents. The accused were identified as Manas Kumar Bej, 33, of Badagada Poda Sahi under Badagada police limits and Niranjan Moharana, 40, of Jagatsinghpur district. Sources claimed that both Bej and Moharana used to make various duplicate certificates. The cops during the course of investigations found that the accused received Rs 40,000 from each of the students in lieu of the fake disability certificate.

against eight students for furnishing fake disability certificates to enroll themselves into the institute. The illegal act came to the fore after the college authorities discovered some discrepancies in the documents furnished by a few students. During investigation, it was found that eight students had submitted forged disability certificates to get admission into the college.

# Drive against MV rules violations conducted

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** In a bid to minimise road accidents across the state, the Transport Department launched a massive drive against bigger vehicles such as heavy trucks, tippers and dumpers which openly disregard Motor Vehicle (MV) rules. As per sources, around 1,585 vehicles were checked, out of which 218 vehicles were penalised for not complying with the safety standards under chapter VII of MV Act. Moreover, 98 vehicles have been seized for the MV offences. "Some of the vehicles did not have Rear Under-Ride Protection Device (RUPD) & Side Under-ride Protection Device (SUPD) which cause side and rear collisions. Many of the vehicles did not have back light, brake light and side indicator lamps. Fitness Certificate

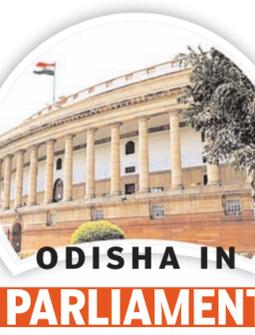
(FC) of such vehicles was cancelled," a Transport Department official said. Meanwhile, around 110 vehicles were found to be overloaded and 78 vehicles were driving with excess speed. The vehicles plying with overload were detained and the excess load was offloaded after collecting challans. Around 64 vehicles were plying without valid tax, 70 of them didn't have valid permit and 75 did not have valid insurance. "Due to overloading, the braking system and steering system of some of them were not working effectively. In some case, the loaded materials were not covered properly in accordance with the MV laws. The spillage due to non-covering of goods causes problems for other commuters and very often leads to accidents," the official added.

# Why isn't BJD addressing elephant in the room?

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, April 8:** The second phase of the Budget Session witnessed the heat of hike in prices of commodities like petrol and diesel as the opposition parties kept pressing for discussion on inflation. However, the BJD refrained from raising the issue vehemently in the Parliament. Despite being the fourth largest party in the Rajya Sabha, the BJD, did not move any motion in the House to demand discussion on the price rise, which has been affecting the common people across the country. The ruling party of Odisha claims to follow equidistance policy in national politics by maintaining equal distance from the national parties or from ruling and opposition parties. But it seems that in the run-up to its equidistance policy, the BJD has been distancing itself from rais-

ing public centric issues, which have a nation-wide impact. The Congress, Trinamool Congress, DMK and other parties had moved several adjournment motion notices in the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha to hold discussions on price rise. The opposition parties had also created din in both houses when the Chair refused their demand. On many occasions, leader of opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge urged the Chairman to allow the discussion keeping in mind the frequent rises in the fuel prices and other essentials. Telangana Rashtra Samithi even staged a walk out from the House in protest at the Chairman's decision of not allowing discussion on the burning issue which has distressed the ordinary citizens.



ODISHA IN PARLIAMENT

**Despite being the fourth largest party in the Rajya Sabha, the BJD, did not move any motion in the House to demand discussion on the price rise** whole day Tuesday. Like previous sessions, the regional party raised the issue of par-boiled rice, Bharat Ratna Biju Patnaik, formation of legislative council and several other region specific issues in the current session too. The Union government in this session also rejected the BJD's demand of lifting excess quantity of par-boiled rice and other demands like the formation of legislative council were not heeded.

The regional party also supported all bills passed in the session. While a few party MPs were critical towards some legislations such as the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill, 2022, they ended their speeches by supporting these contentious legislations. Since the beginning of the 17th Lok Sabha, the BJD has supported several controversial legislations in the Parliament like a bill on Triple Talaq, the Citizenship Amendment Bill (now act) etc. Shedding light on the party's stand in Parliament, a senior BJD leader, requesting anonymity, said that it was not friendship but fear was the reason behind the regional party's approach at national politics. "We don't want to trouble them (BJP) in Delhi and in return they would not be harsh upon us in Bhubaneswar," he said.

# Over 30% Indian districts vulnerable to extreme forest fires: CEEW study



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 8:** More than 30 per cent of Indian districts are vulnerable to extreme forest fires, said a study released Thursday, warning such wild fires have risen by over 10 times in the last two decades. The study conducted by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) highlighted that in the last month alone, significant forest fires were reported in states like Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The CEEW study also found that Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Maharashtra are the most prone to high-intensity forest fire events caused by rapid change in the climate. "As global temperatures rise, instances of high-intensity forest fires have surged across the globe, especially in areas with dry weather. Over the last decade, there has been a sharp rise in forest fires across the country. Some of these fires have had severe impacts on fragile ecosys-

tems and local economies. We need to strengthen our predictive and forest fire alert systems further to limit the damage caused by forest fires. State and district-level government officials must also prioritise enhancing the capacity of frontline forest officials and forest-dependent communities to prevent forest fires. Scaling up training on creating effective forest fire lines and using drones, especially in known forest fire hotspots, could significantly reduce loss and damage," said Arunabha Ghosh, CEO, CEEW. The study also found that over the last two decades, more than 89 per cent of total forest fire incidents have been recorded in districts that are traditionally drought-prone or have been witnessing weather swapping trends i.e., flood-prone areas turning drought-prone and vice-versa. Kandhamal (Odisha), Sheopur (Madhya Pradesh), Udhampur (Uttarakhand), and East Godavari (Andhra Pradesh) are some of the forest fire hotspot districts that are also

showing a swapping trend from flood to drought. "Sharp increase in forest fires over the last two decades calls for a significant course correction in our approach to managing forest fires. The recent incident at Sariska forest reserve, the fourth such incident in a week, shows why managing forest fires in a changing climate scenario is a national imperative. Going forward, we should recognise forest fires as a natural hazard and earmark more funds for mitigation-related activities. Restoration of forest lands and efficient mitigation of forest fires could also help protect the food systems and livelihoods of communities traditionally dependant on forests," said Abinash Mohanty, Programme Lead, CEEW. The study said that local air quality could deteriorate significantly during a forest fire and called for the state governments or state forest departments to re-purpose public buildings like government schools and community halls by fitting them with air filters to create clean air shelters for communities worst impacted by fires and smoke from forest fires. It also recommended that forest fires should be recognised as a disaster under the National Disaster Management Act (NDMA). "This could help strengthen the National Plan on Forest Fires through improvement in financial allocation under the NDMA and creation of a specialised cadre trained to contain and combat forest fires. Policymakers should also consider developing a real-time alerts system only for forest fire incidents," the study said.

**REGIONAL OFFICE: BHUBANESWAR**  
Bank of Baroda, Regional Office, Bhubaneswar, 1st Floor, Bivab Gulmohar, Behera Sahi, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751012, Odisha, Ph.: 0674-2421210, Fax: 0674-2421614  
E-mail: rm.orissa@bankofbaroda.co.in

**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE**

**SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES "APPENDIX-IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8(6)]"**

**E-Auction Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6(2) & 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.**

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s), Mortgagor(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Immovable properties Mortgaged /charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" AND "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis for recovery of dues in below mentioned accounts. The details of Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s)/Guarantor(s)/Secured Asset/s/ Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction Date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below-

Sl. No.	BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagor(s)	Description of the Immovable Properties	Demand/ Possession Notice Date/ Outstanding (Secured Debt.)	Date & Time of E-auction	Reserve Price		Status of Possession (Constructive / Symbolic / Physical)	Property Inspection Date & Time
					EMD	Bid Increment		
1.	<b>SAMANTRAPUR BRANCH/ Borrowers: 1) M/s. Archana Enterprises, Prop.: Mr. Amiya Kumar Samal, Plot No.: 825, Koradakanta, Bhubaneswar-751010, 2) Mrs. Archana Mohanty, 3) Mr. Amiya Kumar Samal, Both are at Plot No.: 25(P), Sumitra Complex, Flat No.: 4A/11 Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751407</b>	Equitable Mortgage of Flat No.: 11 A, 4th Floor, Sumitra Complex having super built up area 620 sqft., Satya Nagar, Bhubaneswar Sahar Unit-10, Bhubaneswar constructed over Khata No.: 107, Plot No.: 116/1050, Area: Ac.0.002dec out of Area: Ac.0.096.42dec., corresponding to Khata No.: 82, Plot No.: 25, KISSAM: Gharabari, P.S.: Bhubaneswar, Dist.: Khorda, Odisha, in the name of <b>Mrs. Archana Mohanty and Mr. Ananta Kumar Samal</b> , Bounded by- East: Private Plot, West: Flat No. 4A-10, North: Govt. Road, South: Flat No. 4B-12.	02.09.2021 / 13.12.2021 / ₹28,05,918.06 + interest w.e.f 13.09.2021 and charges incurred	13.05.2022 2.00 PM to 05.00 PM	₹27,50,000/-	₹2,75,000/-	Symbolic	10.05.2022 2.00 PM to 5.00 PM
2.	<b>GOBINDAPRASAD BRANCH/ Borrower: Mr. Hrushikesh Rout, Sai Ram Optical and Eye Clinic, Near Rasulgurh Police Outpost, Rasulgurh, Bhubaneswar-751025</b>	Equitable Mortgage of Flat No.: 106 on 1st Floor, Block Jamuna, Carpet Area: 673.00 sqft., Uma Green Apartment situated at Mouza : Pubasasana, P.S.: Pipili, Dist.: Puri, PIN-752104, Khata No.: 287, Plot No.: 1559, Area: Ac.1.210dec., in the name of <b>Mr. Hrushikesh Rout</b> , Bounded by- East: Flat No. 105, West: Flat No. 107, North: Corridor and Flat No. 103, South: Open and common road.	03.04.2021 / 10.03.2022 / ₹21,61,272.25 + interest w.e.f 30.03.2021 and charges incurred	13.05.2022 2.00 PM to 05.00 PM	₹20,51,000/-	₹2,05,100/-	Symbolic	10.05.2022 2.00 PM to 5.00 PM
3.	<b>NILADRI VIHAR BRANCH/ Borrowers: 1) M/s. Adarsh Enterprise, Prop.: Mr. Manoj Ranjan Pattanaik, 2) Mr. Manoj Ranjan Pattanaik / Guarantor: Mrs. Trupti Pattanaik, W/o-Manoj Ranjan Pattanaik, All are at Plot No.: 538, Budheswari Colony, P.S.: Laxmisagar, Cuttack Road, Bhubaneswar-751006</b>	Equitable Mortgage of Land and Building situated at Mouza: Bhubaneswar Sahar Unit No.: 30, P.S.: Laxmisagar, Khata No.: 113, Plot No.: 530, Corresponding to Khata No.: 1593/1022, Plot No.: 538/4772, Area: Ac.0.056dec., in the name of <b>Mr. Manoj Ranjan Pattanaik</b> , Bounded by- East: Jyoti Ranjan Pattanaik, West: Govt. Land (Plot No. 537 & Road), North: Pramod Ranjan Pattanaik, South: Hotel Millan Palace.	04.12.2021 & 20.12.2021 / 15.02.2022 / ₹23,35,434.37 as on 20.12.2021 + upto date interest and charges incurred	13.05.2022 2.00 PM to 05.00 PM	₹1,00,39,000/-	₹10,03,900/-	Symbolic	10.05.2022 2.00 PM to 5.00 PM

**TERMS & CONDITIONS: The interested bidders shall login www.mstcecommerce.com to deposit EMD amount online latest on 12.05.2022 by 5.00 PM.**

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided in: <https://www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm>, [www.mstcecommerce.com](http://www.mstcecommerce.com) and <https://ibapi.in>

Also, prospective bidders may contact the Authorised Officer on Tel. No.: (0674) 2421210, 7077727060, 7077722155, 7077727032

**STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE TO THE BORROWERS / GUARANTORS / MORTGAGORS FOR SALE UNDER RULE 8(5), 8(6) AND 9(1) AS PER AMENDED SARFAESI ACT 2002.**

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 08.04.2022  
Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

**OrissaPOST**  
English daily

**WANTED**

**SENIOR SUB-EDITORS:-**

- Applicants must have atleast 3 years editorial experience and proficiency in QuarkXPress. Responsibilities will include copy editing, rewriting stories, fact-checking, prioritising news and writing engaging headlines.

**REPORTERS:-**

- Minimum 3 years' reporting experience in English media.

**Location: BHUBANESWAR**

Apply within 7 days to : [recruitment@orissapost.com](mailto:recruitment@orissapost.com)

Pay & perks will be the best in the industry for deserving candidates.

**Notice**

We wish to inform our esteemed customers, intermediaries and public at large that we are relocating our branch office presently situated at First floor, Mishra Complex, Kalimandir Road, Jharsuguda - 768201 Odisha to a new location as given below. The relocated branch shall be open for servicing within 2 to 3 months. You are requested to take note of the same and visit our website [www.icicilombard.com](http://www.icicilombard.com) for the relocated branch office or download IL take care app to avail services available for your policy including renewals and claim related assistance.

**New address (Relocation)**  
Second floor, Ria tower, Beharamal, Opposite to Manta Marble, Jharsuguda - 768203, Odisha.

**Old address (Closure)**  
First floor, Mishra Complex, Kalimandir Road, Jharsuguda - 768201 Odisha

For ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd.

All the concerned are requested to take note of the same.

**ICICI Lombard**

Corporate Address: ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited, ICICI Lombard House, 41A, Veer Surendra Marg, Near Siddhi Vinayak Temple, Pashchim, Mumbai 400 025, Insurance is the subject matter of solicitation. Trade tags displayed above belong to ICICI Bank Ltd. and its affiliates. Financial Corporation and is owned by ICICI Lombard SEC Ltd. under license. RBI Reg. No. 115 / 2011 - 2012. For more info: 1800 2000 1800. For more info: 1800 2000 1800. CN 187200M0200RCL29428. Website: [www.icicilombard.com](http://www.icicilombard.com). Email: [customerservice@icicilombard.com](mailto:customerservice@icicilombard.com)

**Bank of India**

**ZONAL OFFICE: BHUBANESWAR ZONE**  
Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015

**REQUIREMENT OF PREMISES**

Detailed notification inviting offers for 1000-1200 Sq Ft premises for opening of one Digital Banking Unit (DBU), Bank of India in Bhubaneswar Centre on urgent basis precisely in the prominent place at any of the following preferences i.e. **Sahid Nagar to Rajmahal Square/ Jayadev Vihar to Patia/Acharya Vihar to Forest Park/ Nayapalli/CRP Square** preferably on the main road and on Ground floor is available in our website [www.bankofindia.co.in](http://www.bankofindia.co.in). For submission of offer it may be obtained up to 2:00 P.M of 16.04.2022 from our office at above address, alternatively, the format can be downloaded from our website also. Last date for submission of offer is up to 4.00 P.M on 16.04.2022 at Zonal Office, Bhubaneswar. Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone

# ₹823cr shot in the arm for irrigation

## SC allows OMDC to dispose of iron ores

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, April 8:** The Supreme Court (SC) has allowed the Orissa Minerals Development Company (OMDC) to dispose of lying mined material at Belkundi iron ore mine and Bagaiburu iron mine in the state.

A three-judge bench of the SC headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana allowed the OMDC after the submission made by solicitor general Tushar Mehta that the SC had earlier permitted the resumption of mining by the company and that the state government had no objection.

"We have allowed private parties, doesn't look nice to stop government organisations. At least here, the money will come to the government," the bench observed.

During the hearing, advocate Prashant Bhushan submitted that several applications were moved by private companies and government corporations seeking permission to sell material lying on the site.

He submitted that the court might ask the central empowered committee to examine if the material lying was mined illegally or not.

## 5 dists now Cov free

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** At least five of the 30 districts of Odisha have turned Covid-free with no active cases, a health department official said.

There are no active cases or fresh infections in Puri, Nayagarh, Keonjhar, Kalahandi and Koraput districts, he said.

Meanwhile, the state on Friday registered 22 new cases, raising the tally to 12,87,823.

The death toll, however, remained unchanged at 9,121 as there was no report of any fatality for the eighth consecutive day, the official said.



In order to transform dams, reservoirs and water bodies into buzzing recreational spaces, the state government has decided to develop their periphery under the Periphery Development of Reservoirs and Water Bodies scheme with an outlay of ₹50 crore for a period of three years

Initially, the periphery of 18 dams and reservoirs will be developed. The state government has planned to spend ₹5 crore this year and ₹27 crore in 2023 and ₹18 crore in 2024

cution of the ambitious initiative, district-level committees, led by respective district collectors, will be formed. While the chief engineer (project) will be the member secretary, the chief engineer (dam safety), the district tourism officer and district education officer will be the members of the committee.

The committee will have its say on the maintenance and cleanliness of the area, entry fee/parking fee/picnic spot fee and operation and maintenance (O&M) activities. The O&M will be undertaken jointly by the Tourism Department, district administration and eco-development committee.

After basic development, a few tourist spots will be handed over to the Tourism Department for further development with the addition of extra amusement themes and maintenance, it was learnt.

Meanwhile, in order to transform dams, reservoirs and water bodies into buzzing recreational spaces, the state government has decided to develop their periphery under the Periphery Development of Reservoirs and Water Bodies scheme with an outlay of Rs 50 crore for a period of three years.

According to the Water Resources department, the state has 163 large dams. Initially, the periphery areas of 18 dams and reservoirs will be developed. The department has planned to spend Rs 5 crore this year and Rs 27 crore in 2023 and Rs 18 crore in 2024, it was learnt.

Museum-cum-activity centres and interpretation centres will also come up near the water bodies as part of the project.

For proper planning and exe-



An excavator engaged by the Bhubaneswar Development Authority pulled down illegal structures in Jharpada area of the City, Friday

OP PHOTO

# Road blockade over Jharpada eviction

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** Tension ran high near Ganesh Mandap in Jharpada area here as locals and BJP party workers protested against an eviction drive alleging political vendetta by the ruling BJD for its defeat in the recently conducted municipal polls.

Taking action against illegal encroachments, the Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) conducted the drive, removing makeshift shops and vending carts



from the area. Irked by the move, the BJP workers staged a road blockade at the Golei Chhaka in Laxmisagar.

Alleging that the drive was carried out of political revenge after a BJP candidate became local cor-

porator in the recently-concluded urban elections, the protestors burnt tyres and sat in the middle of the Cuttack-Puri Road.

Traffic was halted on the busy Cuttack-Puri Road for few hours with hundreds of vehicles stranded along the road. The situation was further aggravated when the police forcefully removed the protestors.

"It is a political revenge. Carrying on the eviction drive within a short notice is not acceptable. If the government is not able to provide livelihood to people, they have no

right to destroy the source of people's income," said BJP leader Suniti Mund.

The saffron party members later met DCP Umashankar Dash and apprised him of the ordeals of the small traders who were evicted without being given enough time.

Dash said: "The eviction is a continuous process and various government agencies request the police for the eviction drive. Today's eviction was carried out at a market area under Laxmisagar police limits as per the usual process."

## Foul play alleged in WB tourist's death in Puri

AGENCIES

**Puri, April 8:** The death of a tourist from West Bengal who fell off the third floor of a hotel at the sea beach in Puri has sparked allegations of foul play and created a sensation in this pilgrim town.

The deceased has been identified as Chayan Sarkar alias Prem from North-24 Parganas in West Bengal. He allegedly fell from the third floor of a hotel balcony Thursday and was rushed to the Puri district headquarters hospital from where he was shifted to AIIMS-Bhubaneswar. The tourist died at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar, police said.

Chayan along with five friends had checked into the hotel April 6 and stayed in room No-404. His parents, who have reached Puri, have alleged that he was murdered and lodged a case at the Sea Beach police station. The victim's father alleged that his son's friends had killed him in a planned manner and therefore brought him to Puri to execute the crime. Puri Additional SP Mihir Pandda said the police have registered a case based on allegations by the victim's father. He said a forensic team has been engaged in the investigation.



Commissionerate Police handed over stolen two-wheelers to their rightful owners at a camp organised at Bhubaneswar DCP office in the City, Friday

OP PHOTO

## 25 awardees in handlooms glorify 16th Toshali National Crafts Mela

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** The participation of awardees in the special attraction of 16th Toshali National Crafts Mela. Padmashree awardee from Punjab has exhibited stunning 'Phulkari' design in this Mela. Among others, six Santha Kabir Awardees, 15 National Awardees and three State Awardees have participated in this Mela. Amongst Santha Kabir Awardees two from Odisha and four from J&K, Telangana and UP have participated and exhibited their unique products.

Handloom products showing 'Ikot' design from Odisha and woolen, silk, cotton saree, dress materials, stole and shawl of other states have been the attraction of the mela. The awardees' handloom products have become the subject of inspiration for others.

The 16th edition of Toshali National Crafts Mela in Bhubaneswar, inaugurated by Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on March 28, is attracting visitors with an average footfall of more than one lakh persons every day. The Mela is being held

## Among others, six Santha Kabir Awardees, 15 National Awardees and three State Awardees have participated in the fair

at Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar. The annual Mela aims at offering an open forum to artists and artisans from across the country and also seeks to preserve and nurture the traditional art forms, handicrafts and handlooms.

This year, the Toshali Mela has over 450 stalls, and artisans from across India are participating in it.

Odisha is a state of unique culture and art. Our State has earned name and fame for our ikat design in handlooms. 'Ikot' from Sambalpur, 'Bomkei' from Sonepur and Boudh, 'Khandua' and 'Maniabandha' designs from Athagarh, 'Habaspuri' from Kalahandi, 'Natural Dye' from Kotpad, 'Tasar' from Gopalpur, Fakripur and Mankidia have expressed the artistry and excellence of our weavers.

## 9 students from City AIIMS get ICMR grant

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** Nine students from AIIMS-Bhubaneswar have been awarded with the prestigious ICMR Postgraduate Thesis Grant for January 2022 session.

Raghavendra V Balagot from Orthopedics, Pratika Gahlot from Microbiology, Sunkoji Srujan, Anju Ashok A K, Bharath Kumar Koppisetty and Alia Tahseen from Biochemistry, Srijan Mandal from CMFM, and Govind Mishra and Shampa Maji from Pharmacology departments have been awarded with the grant, sources said.

Dr Sujit Kumar Tripathy, Dr Vinay Kumar Halur, Dr Suchanda Sahu, Dr Gautam Kumar Saharia, Dr Prakaruti Dash, Dr Suchitra Kumari, Dr Priyamadhab Behera, Dr Debashis Hota and Dr Rituparna Maiti were the guides for the students. At least 45 medical and 5-6 dental postgraduate students from different medical colleges across the country receive this grant in every six months. AIIMS-Bhubaneswar Director Prof Mukesh Tripathi and Medical Superintendent Dr SN Mohanty congratulated the nine students.

## BRINGING BIGGEST KNOWLEDGE LIBRARY TO SCHOOL KIDS

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** The collaboration between Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA) and Mind Wars, a freely downloadable platform within the Zee5 app, will bring the largest knowledge library to hundreds of thousands of school children from all over Odisha, as well as activate exclusive quiz programmes/contests for Odisha schools.

The OSEPA, the apex education authority in the state, within whose fold are more than 64,000 government and private schools, has joined hands with Mind Wars, India's largest knowledge platform for school students and an initiative of Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd.

# Dust storms in Middle East to raise monsoon rains in India: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 8:** Climate change triggered higher frequency of dust storms in the Middle East. It is likely to increase rainfall in India during the monsoon season, according to a study by researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar.

The study, published recently in the journal Climate and Atmospheric Science, shows that dust emitted from the Middle Eastern deserts and transported to Arabian Sea could enhance rainfall over south Asia, especially during severe drought episodes over the Indian region.

A previous study showed that desert dust aerosols emitted from the middle-eastern and North African deserts increase rainfall over India at short time scales of

about a week or two.

This is made possible due to the warming induced by this dust over the Arabian Sea, which acts as a source of energy to speed up the winds and moisture towards the Indian region.

The researchers said this relationship is now stronger during drought years associated with El-Nino. El Nino and La Nina are climate patterns in the Pacific Ocean that can affect weather worldwide.

The team also indicates that this dust induced rainfall enhancement is widespread across the whole south Asian monsoon domain, often occurring as a pulse that triggers short term increased rainfall in an otherwise dry situation.

"India has faced droughts or large-scale deficits and changes in the spatial pattern of monsoon rainfall due to ongoing climate



change," said V Vinoy, Assistant Professor, School of Earth Ocean and Climate Sciences, IIT Bhubaneswar.

"However, with global warming in place and changing wind patterns, we can expect a rise in dust storms across Middle Eastern deserts in the coming years. This dust may get transported to the Arabian Sea under favourable con-

ditions and trigger short heavy rain spells over the Indian region," Vinoy said.

The researcher team including Gopinath Nandini and Satyendra Kumar Pandey, both from IIT Bhubaneswar, noted that it is well established that anthropogenic or human caused factors reduce rainfall and continue to do so for decades.

The silver lining is that there is a short period of respite to this drying trend in the form of increased short-time scales rainfall, they said.

"With the increasing potential of El-Nino like conditions in the future, this dust induced effect will become increasingly important in understanding changing characteristics of rainfall over India," Vinoy explained.

The researchers want to draw attention to this critical observation and point to the need for tracking dust storms and their emissions to understand their effect on monsoon rainfall and even on air quality which is another growing problem for India.

"Normally, while ascertaining the air pollution levels on regional scales, we look at PM 2.5, which comprises many different species, with dust being the most domi-

nant species over India," Vinoy said. "However, recent studies have shown a decline in the desert dust over India due to increased pre-monsoon rains over the North-western parts of India, potentially due to regional effect of climate change," he added.

The researchers noted that human activities with associated emissions will continue to rise due to the country's economic development. Increased dust over the Middle Eastern deserts transported over the Arabian Sea increases short period rainfall over India, they said.

While on one hand, dust emitted over India is declining, on the other, dust over the Arabian Sea is rising leading to increased rainfall. "It will be interesting to see how these changes combined impact air quality and rainfall," Vinoy added.

**FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS**

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

**Man gets life term for raping minor**

**PHULBANI, April 8:** A local court in Kandhamal district Friday sentenced a 55-year-old man to life imprisonment after convicting him for raping an eight-year-old about four years ago. Special Judge of the POCSO court, Bhaskar Chandra Sahu, passed the order after holding the accused guilty under various sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. According to prosecution, the man had forcibly dragged the girl, who hails from his village, to his house and raped her after tying a piece of cloth round her mouth in July 2018. He then threatened her to kill her if she disclosed the incident. An FIR was lodged by a family member at Khajuripada police station the same day and he was arrested.

**Pangolin seized in Bolangir; 2 nabbed**

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police has rescued a pangolin from Bolangir district, an official said. On the basis of reliable information, a team of STF conducted a raid with the help of Bolangir forest officials Thursday night at Ainlapalli village under Tusura police station area in Bolangir district and rescued the scaly animal. Two persons were found in possession of the pangolin, the official said. While the accused persons were handed over to Bolangir forest officials for necessary legal action at their end, the pangolin was given to the divisional forest officer (DFO) for safe custody.

**Farmers allege scam in LI project**

**Nayagarh/Gania, April 8:** Scores of farmers of Chhamundia panchayat under Gania block in Nayagarh district have alleged misappropriation of funds during execution of a lift irrigation (LI) project worth over ₹22 lakh. Although the amount has been spent on the lift irrigation point along Brutanga river, the farmers alleged that the work has been substandard while funds have been misappropriated. "The project is of no use for us. The contractor concerned has swindled the money. He has installed wooden poles instead of electricity poles to draw electricity for the project. Wires are hanging precariously while bill for the project has been passed," locals alleged.

**Asst engineer with ₹4.76cr assets held**

**BHUNANAGAR, April 8:** Vigilance sleuths Friday arrested Kartikeswar Roul, assistant engineer of Minor Irrigation Division in Bhanjanagar Water Resources department of Ganjam district, after seizing his assets worth over ₹4 crore. "We are conducting raids on the properties of the accused, Kartikeswar Roul, who is an assistant engineer of the Minor Irrigation Division in Bhanjanagar. On the first day, we found assets worth ₹2.76 crore, including two flats and a double-storeyed house in Bhubaneswar, bank and insurance deposits of ₹37.23 lakh, two plots in Bhubaneswar and five in Ganjam," said A James, Vigilance Superintendent of Police (SP), Bhubaneswar division. After getting reliable information, the Vigilance officials Thursday raided the house of the engineer's

second wife in Bhubaneswar and seized 580 gram gold and ₹2 crore cash, which is the highest cash seizure in the history of Odisha vigilance, she said. "His seized assets are valued at ₹4.76 crore along with his wife's 580 gram gold and since he is a Class II officer, the wealth might have been amassed through illegal means or corruption," James added. According to the official, a case has been registered against Roul under the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018. He will be produced in the court Friday and will be brought under remand for further investigation. Vigilance Director YK Jethwa said: "We have enhanced our focus on illegal assets/cash stashed in bank accounts of relatives as well as those stacked in houses of close contacts by corrupt government officials."



Students explained their projects to officials, teachers and visitors at a block-level science, mathematics and environment exhibition organised at Balaji Government High School in Rangailunda area of Ganjam, Friday

**DRINKING WATER CRISIS IN JAJPUR**  
**Ramco guzzles groundwater**

*Locals allege that excessive use of groundwater by Ramco plant has led to a sharp depletion in the water table which results in drinking water crisis during the summer*



**Jajpur, April 8:** The Ramco Cement plant in Dharmasala area of Jajpur district lifting around 100 kilo litre of groundwater through three bore wells on a daily basis has invited sharp criticisms as well as anger from the locals, especially when people in peripheral villages are struggling to get safe drinking water in this scorching summer. As per a report, the engineer-in-chief of the Water Resources department in August 2008 had given permission to Ramco to draw 100KL of groundwater on a daily basis to meet its needs for construction activities and drinking purpose. However, the company has been using the groundwater to meet the daily needs of the plant. Locals alleged that excessive use of groundwater by the plant has led to a sharp fall in the water table, as a result of which they have to face water crises in summer.

They pointed out that the Ramco authorities are harnessing the groundwater with impunity as they have the support of a local political leader. It is a fact that industries are instrumental to economic development of the state. The state government and the local administration have always given priority to industries than the concerns of the locals. The Ramco plant operating at Haridaspur is a case in point. The administration is least bothered about the water crisis faced by peripheral villages. In fact, several influential people of the locality are working as contractors for the company. And the company is taking advantage of this. Ramco is keeping its supporters on its payroll. In Kalinganagar industrial com-

plex, several companies like Emami, Sagar and JSW have set up their units after getting support of the locals at public hearings. But for Ramco this is an exception. Ramco, based at Burudhumagar of Tamil Nadu, has set up the cement plant on 100 acres of land by investing ₹440 crore. IPICOL has provided the land. Villagers claimed that the company has dug up a pond outside its premises to get water. But it is not possible for the plant to meet its water needs from this pond for 15 days, they said, adding that the pond dries up during summer. The company has dug up three bore wells on its premises as an alternative. Though the Water Resources department has installed water meters for the company, the latter is pilfering water to evade water tax.

**India flight-tests SFDR booster successfully**

*SFDR-based propulsion enables the missile to intercept aerial threats at very long range at supersonic speeds*

**BALASORE, April 8:** India Friday successfully flight-tested Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) booster, a missile system, at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur off the Odisha coast here. The SFDR-based propulsion enables the missile to intercept aerial threats at very long range at supersonic speeds, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) said. The test demonstrated reliable functioning of all critical components involved in the complex missile system and met all the mission objectives, it said. The performance of the system has been confirmed from the data captured by a number of instruments like telemetry, radar and electro optical tracking systems deployed by ITR.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated DRDO for the successful trial of SFDR. He termed it as an important milestone towards development of critical missile technologies in the country. The SFDR has been developed by Defence Research and Development Laboratory, Hyderabad, in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories such as Research Centre Imarat, Hyderabad and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, Pune.

**2 teachers suspended for fake certificates**

**Jajpur:** Two government school teachers of Korei block in Jajpur district were suspended for allegedly submitting fake caste certificates to get appointments. The two teachers have been placed under suspension following departmental proceedings against them for submission of forged caste certificates to get the jobs, according to an order of the block education officer, Korei. BEO Sudarshan Mallik said he conducted an inquiry into the allegations of the fake caste certificates produced by both the teachers to get the jobs. "During the inquiry, we found that they belong to backward classes but they have produced the forged scheduled caste certificates to get the appointments," the official added.

**Nilagiri, a perfect destination for hockey stadium**

**Sajmagad, April 8:** Bestowed by nature with amazing infrastructure, the tribal-dominated Nilagiri block in Balasore district can be a perfect destination for a hockey stadium. Gifted with picturesque temples, waterfalls, thick greenery and hillocks, the beautiful sub-division can be a perfect place for a hockey stadium like Rourkela. Hockey has been a way of life for the youths here in the tribal-dominated Nilagiri area. Though there are many budding talents, they are deprived of the exposure to international-level games due to lack of facilities. A hockey stadium can give a dimension to their talents. There has been a growing demand for a hockey stadium among



always shown interest in this sport. If given a chance, they can put the game and name of Odisha on the international map of hockey. The facility would aid in the revitalization of hockey not only in the district, but in the entire world," the Collector said. "I have a vision to make Nilagiri a hockey hub like Sundargarh and Dhenkanal," he added. From building wider roads to developing sports and recreation centres, from fixing the drainage system to moving overhead power lines underground, and from uplifting the parks to beautifying its streets, Nilagiri can also attract a huge number of tourists if developed into a hockey hub. Along with hockey, there would be a massive infrastructure de-

velopment in terms of roads, electricity, water supply and other community facilities. This would not only help the sport lovers, but world-class facilities and stadiums make a big difference in the lives of the people here. The spotting and nurturing of talent across the district can certainly be a big boost for the both Odisha and the entire country. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's announcement of setting up India's biggest hockey stadium in Rourkela, even bigger than Kalinga Stadium in the Capital city, has drawn a euphoric response from sports lovers in the district. The sports facility with a capacity of over 20,000 will co-host the 2023 Men's Hockey World Cup along with the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar.

**Kendrapara mushroom farmers in dire need of mandis, cold stores**

**Kendrapara, April 8:** Farmers here are reportedly turning away from mushroom cultivation citing lack of mandis (marketing facilities). This development comes close on the heels of state Agriculture Minister Arun Sahoo's statement in the Assembly that Odisha is the largest producer of lemon and mushroom in India. Over 200 families under Rajnagar block are engaged in mushroom cultivation and each family earns at least ₹7,000 per month. However, the farmers have expressed displeasure on timely sale of mushroom post harvest. Some women mushroom farmers Padani Rout, Amita Das, Swarnalata Das and Saraswati Behera said that getting a job offer is like a dream for them in this district. They had migrated to Andhra Pradesh and were working at a prawn gheri in the southern state. However, they had to return home after the farm was closed due to the outbreak of Covid pandemic. They returned home but unavailability of livelihood opportunities always troubled them. They were struggling to earn for their family when Odisha Livelihood Mission formed self-help groups and encouraged them to take up mushroom cultivation as a livelihood initiative. The women and girls got together and underwent training in 2016 before starting mushroom cultivation. Each family is now earning around ₹7,000 from the cultivation per month. They said that their produce has gained acceptance as a vegetarian food rich in iron and vita-



**OVER 200 FAMILIES UNDER RAJNAGAR BLOCK ARE ENGAGED IN MUSHROOM CULTIVATION AND EACH FAMILY EARNS AT LEAST ₹7,000 PER MONTH**  
**THE PADDY STRAW MUSHROOM CULTIVATED BY THEM IS SOLD AT ₹200 TO ₹220 PER KG IN THE RETAIL MARKET WHILE THE TRADERS BUY THEM FROM THEIR DOORSTEPS AT ₹180 PER KG**  
**LACK OF COLD STORAGES IN THE DISTRICT TO STORE THEIR HARVEST IS TROUBLING THEM**

mins. It is popular as a food among people. Earlier, mushroom was not available throughout the year and they have to wait till the rains. Now, mushroom cultivation has become a cottage industry in Rajnagar block. The paddy straw mushroom cultivated by them is sold at ₹200 to ₹220 per kg in the retail market while the traders buy them from their doorsteps at ₹180 per kg, the women farmers said. However, lack of cold storages in the district to store their harvest is troubling them. They have to harvest the mushroom twice a day and sell it as soon as possible or else it will perish. Often they have to resort to distress sale as it is perishable item. Lack of marketing facilities in the district has aggravated their problem. They demanded establishment of mandis in every panchayat. Scientist Surya Narayan Mishra of Krishi Vigyan Kendra said the move has resolved the unemployment problem and made the women self-reliant in the district. Mission Shakti project manager Kailash Senapati said efforts are on to establish over 200 mandis in various panchayats of the district.



Students of Bahanaga Junior College in Balasore district imparted self-defence training, Friday

FOCUS INT'L RELATIONS

# THE DIPLOMATIC RUSH



**On a closer scrutiny of India's position on Ukraine, one could fairly infer that India's stance so far has been fraught with risks unless New Delhi takes a proactive role in bringing about a cease-fire between Russia and Ukraine**

In the last few weeks New Delhi has witnessed footfalls of a bevy of foreign diplomats. The Foreign Ministers of Russia and Mexico, the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom, the US Deputy National Security Advisor, and the Netherlands Security Advisor were in New Delhi last week. That is not all. A week before, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida was in Delhi. The Israel Prime Minister would have been in New Delhi if he didn't fall ill with Covid. The Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi came calling in an unofficial visit. Apparently, he was popping by enroute from Kabul to Kathmandu. Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison had a digital meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Also, the German Deputy National Security Advisor was in New Delhi.



Dr. DK Giri

**INDIAN PARTNERS IN THE QUAD ARE VERY WARY OF INDIA DIVERGING ON A SERIOUS ABERRATION OF INTERNATIONAL NORMS IN UKRAINE. THIS REFLECTS POORLY ON THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA**

The sudden rush in the diplomatic traffic to Delhi is not hard to explain. Deeply worried by the ongoing war in Ukraine, the foreign diplomats were rushing to Delhi for at least two reasons. One, they are perhaps hoping that India can help halt the war and broker a peace agreement between Russia and Ukraine, by implicating the West. Second, they may be wanting to get India to change its position on the war and get her on their side. The second possibility was expressed by Deputy NSA of Germany Jens Plotner, "we will surely come to the common conclusion that (this war) can't go unchecked." He was hopeful of nudging India into the Western block despite India and Germany having divergent approaches.

India is seen to be in a vantage position vis-à-vis both Russia and the West. New Delhi continues to do business with Russia mainly in arms and oil. In the face of US sanctions on countries trading with Russia, New Delhi is going ahead with the purchase of S-400 missiles and the oil at a discounted rate. The Indian Finance Minister has confirmed that India has already received oil for three to four days consumption in the country. At the same time, India is in the security cordon created by the United States, vis-à-vis China,

namely the QUAD, comprising India, Japan, Australia and the US. New Delhi also has expanded trade and economic activities with the US and its allies. Therefore, New Delhi's proximity with Russia and USA perhaps makes the world think that India could be the bridge between the two blocks. At the same time, Indian partners in the QUAD are very wary of India diverging on a serious aberration of international norms in Ukraine. This reflects poorly on their relationship with India; hence, they would like to sort this gap out by diplomatic parleys with India. Remember the strong words used by the Japanese Prime Minister in New Delhi as he called out Russia's invasion of Ukraine. He said, "Moscow's action had shaken the foundation of the international order". The US Deputy NSA, the other QUAD partner, was more direct with India. He said, India's continued trade will have an impact on India-US relations. In particular, there will be consequences for countries, including India, which attempt to circumvent or backfill America's sanction against Russia. Both the USA and Australia have been critical of India's attempted rupee-rubble trading.

position on Ukraine, one could fairly confidently infer that India's stance so far has been fraught with risks unless New Delhi takes a proactive role in bringing about a cease-fire between Russia and Ukraine. Days ago, New Delhi abstained from voting on a Russia-led resolution that sought to lay the blame of deaths and destruction, and gross human rights violation at the door of Ukraine. So, if New Delhi had taken a neutral position in order to contribute its diplomatic heft in finding a solution, then it is a prudent position.

I have maintained and as other observers contend that the road to peace in Ukraine goes through Delhi. The war in Ukraine is, ironically, a historic opportunity beckoning Prime Minister Modi to play a world role. If Modi fails to do so, the position he has taken so far in the name of strategic autonomy, a euphemism for non-alignment will backfire on India and may haunt in future. Because one can hardly be neutral when a sovereign and independent country has been violated by blatant armed aggression, notwithstanding the provocations for such an unlawful action. We hope as many countries do, New Delhi will rise to the occasion.

On a closer scrutiny of India's

Well, how could India perform

this role? On what premise or framework? The UN charter, in article 33 recognises the promise of international mediation for peaceful resolutions of international disputes. Such mediation has been used for years in the past to facilitate reconciliations and agreements.

In the present case, both Russia and Ukraine and its Western backers will agree to mediation as the war seems to go on and on. This is causing inflation of prices and dilution of America's international image. Russia has also been hit by the sanctions imposed by the European Union and G-7 countries. Moscow will therefore want an end to the war. The Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov hinted at India's peace brokering role, he said, no one will mind if India were to mediate in the ongoing conflict.

I have suggested in the past that India should propose international neutrality of Ukraine, like Austria and Switzerland have been. This would allay the Russian fear of losing Ukraine to Western influence. Similarly, the West will reconcile to keeping Ukraine beyond NATO and not raise the hackles of Russians. Ukraine can work as a buffer between Russia and the West. Besides, India would have managed to decouple Russia from China. Their moving closer, as they have signed a no limits partnership recently is ominous for India.

All in all, there is scope for India to play the world role. How one wished that Modi had this strategic thinking deep in his mind! He has the confidence of both the USA and Russia. So New Delhi fits the bill for the mediator. In creating the process conducive to a cease-fire, Modi should define his own mediation techniques, have a working definition of mediation and proceed. India should also put forth a proposal to comply with the status quo as it existed before the war. Modi has perhaps ticked all the boxes in his position and scope of leadership. It is the time to show some mettle so that countries and companies contemplating coming to India are not put off.

INFA

## Solving Babu Crisis

It's a crisis. Critics often say that India has too much bureaucracy. But actually, as admitted by the Centre, there are not enough babus. The Minister of State for PMO and Personnel, Jitendra Singh recently informed Parliament that there is a shortage of 1,515 IAS officers.

Recently, a parliamentary standing committee had also recommended to the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) to "significantly increase" the annual intake of IAS officers given "the evolving needs of Indian administration." The shortage perhaps explains why there are not enough IAS officers on Central deputation or even in the states. Clearly, the initiatives taken by the Centre to increase the number of IAS officers haven't worked, even though the annual intake of IAS officers was increased to 180 and IPS officers from 150 to 200 in 2020. Vacancies have also been filled by inducting officers from the state services, which apparently is against the rules which state that non-cadre officers cannot be posted to cadre posts.

The civil services rules state that 22 per cent of the total sanctioned strength of IAS officers, which is 6,709, should be deputed to the Centre but currently only 6 per cent of IAS officers are on Central deputation.

Now sources have informed DKB that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has formed a four-member committee, headed by former DoPT secretary C. Chandramouli to analyse the reasons for the dearth of babus and offer solutions. However, it is unlikely to be an easy task. DoPT officials believe that simply increasing intake will not fix this crisis. It could create hurdles in postings and promotions of babus.



### BABUDOM BYTES

Dilip Cherian

#### Ex-babus in Yogi's cabinet 2.0

Taking VRS just before the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections turned out to be a good move for ex-IPS officer Asim Arun. He fought the poll on a BJP ticket and has now been sworn in as a minister of state (independent charge) in the new Yogi Adityanath government.

A 1994-batch officer, he probably paid his 'dues' when he was the head of the state anti-terror squad (ATS) and as police commissioner of Kanpur.

Another retired babu, whose progress was closely watched by observers, AK Sharma who has worked closely at the Centre and was reportedly sent to UP by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to assist the Chief Minister, has been made a Cabinet Minister. Their appointment is even more interesting given that Yogi has dropped many big names and former ministers from the Cabinet. Clearly, these ex-babus now wield a bigger influence than your regular BJP netas in the state.

#### Cooperative federalism will have to wait

The game of political one-upmanship between the Centre and Maharashtra is escalating and putting a further strain on the already fraying Centre-state relations. In the latest salvo, the Mumbai Police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW) has started a probe against a few Enforcement Directorate (ED) officers for alleged extortion.

Sources have informed DKB that the EOW move comes just a day after the ED provisionally attached immovable properties belonging to a relative of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray in a money laundering case. The EOW is also pushing ahead with an inquiry into the alleged role of a senior BJP leader's son in a land deal. However, Maharashtra is not the only state to challenge the Centre on its jurisdiction to investigate alleged serious crimes in the states. The CBI and ED are the obvious targets of the state's ire. And on this issue, it is of one mind with two other non-BJP governments, in West Bengal and Kerala.

A breakdown in trust between the Centre and the Opposition-ruled states has been evident for some time now. The effect is being felt in the administrative machinery. Getting bogged down by political manoeuvres is hurting the Central and state agencies alike. Instead of doing their mandated work, they are investigating each other. And initiating rival probes against officers is hardly where it will end. Cooperative federalism remains a distant dream.

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

### WISDOM CORNER

- Health is the greatest gift, contentment the greatest wealth, faithfulness the best relationship. **BUDDHA**
- Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself. **LEO TOLSTOY**
- Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love. **MOTHER TERESA**

### WORDSWORTH

#### Adoxography

Few dictionaries, not even the Oxford English Dictionary, give room to this word, so it is left mostly to non-lexicographers to define it, which they often do in terms such as "good writing on a trivial or base subject". Near, but not quite right. It's a modern word to describe an ancient way to train young people in the art of rhetoric. They would be challenged to compose a speech praising an unpleasant idea such as poverty, ugliness, drunkenness or stupidity. So a better definition would be "rhetorical praise of things of doubtful value". Anthony Munday published a book on the method in 1593, a translation of an Italian work, under the title *The Defence of Contraries*. It contained brief disquisitional examples on topics such as "ignorance is better than knowledge" and "it is better to be poor than rich". Its preface claimed that it would be particularly useful to lawyers. The root is Latin adoxus, paradoxical or absurd, but not from the classical language. It was first used by the Dutch scholar Erasmus around 1536, who took it from an identical ancient Greek word that meant inglorious. It was based on the root doxa, opinion or belief, which is also the basis of doxology, a formula of praise to God, and also of paradox. The noun was first used in 1909 in *The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire* by Terrot Glover, though it was preceded by the adjective, adoxographical, which appeared in the *American Journal of Philology* in 1903. Dr Alex Leeper, the Warden of Trinity College, Melbourne, commented in *Notes and Queries* that year that it was an "ungainly word" and that it "will not, it is to be hoped, take root in the language." His hope wasn't fulfilled, though it remains rare.

### LOL

#### You could feed them a lot faster

Panda There was once a man from the city who was visiting a small farm, and during this visit he saw a farmer feeding pigs in a most extraordinary manner. The farmer would lift a pig up to a nearby apple tree, and the pig would eat the apples off the tree directly. The farmer would move the pig from one apple to another until the pig was satisfied, then he would start again with



another pig. The city man watched this activity for some time with great astonishment. Finally, he could not resist saying to the farmer, "This is the most inefficient method of feeding pigs that I can imagine. Just think of the time that would be saved if you simply shook the apples off the tree and let the pigs eat them from the ground!" The farmer looked puzzled and replied, "What's time to a pig?"

### SPECTRUM PANDEMIC

## Avoiding COVID complacency



José Manuel Barroso

**WITH 2.8 BILLION PEOPLE UNVACCINATED, THE CORONAVIRUS STILL HAS AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO CIRCULATE AND MUTATE, POTENTIALLY GIVING RISE TO NEW, MORE DANGEROUS VARIANTS AND FRESH RESURGENCES**

History has shown that some of the most dangerous periods of pandemics come when life returns to normal too soon. A century ago, a premature "all clear" helped the second wave of Spanish influenza claim far more lives than the first, after a more virulent strain emerged. Today, many G7 and G20 countries are relaxing COVID-19 restrictions and shifting their focus away from pandemic response to pandemic prevention and preparedness (or to other issues entirely). But until every country achieves its national vaccination target, we cannot know whether we are out of the woods.

With 2.8 billion people unvaccinated, the coronavirus still has ample opportunity to circulate and mutate, potentially giving rise to new, more dangerous variants and fresh resurgences. Even in the face of other pressing crises such as the war in Ukraine, COVID-19 must remain a high global priority. The only way to eliminate the uncertainty and put the pandemic behind us is for global leaders to finish the job they started, by helping the dozens of lower-income countries that are still struggling to achieve adequate vaccine coverage.

These countries need help scaling up their vaccine delivery systems

and turning doses into actual vaccinations. Now that high-income countries have achieved high coverage rates, the hoarding and bottlenecks that previously hindered global supply have eased. In fact, global vaccine supply is outstripping global demand for the first time. That's good news for the global vaccination effort, and particularly for low-income countries where less than 15% of people have received their first shot. But it also underscores the challenge of getting doses into the arms of people living in difficult-to-reach, resource-poor environments.

The last mile was always going to be the longest. In what has been the largest, most complex global immunization effort ever, even wealthy countries have struggled with their vaccine rollouts. In lower-income countries, political fragility often compounds the problem of weak health systems.

Yet even with these challenges, 40% of people (on average) in the world's 92 lower-income countries have received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine. That is remarkable, and much of it is thanks to COVAX, the global effort to deliver vaccines equitably. COVAX has made available 1.4 billion doses, with nearly 90% going through the Gavi COVAX

Advance Market Commitment (AMC) to lower-income countries that would have struggled to get access otherwise. This is extraordinary progress compared to six months ago; but it is still not enough to reduce the risk of future resurgences, let alone end the pandemic.

While many lower-income countries have come far in their immunization efforts, dozens of others are still struggling to administer vaccines fast enough, and to reach those most at risk. That is why we at Gavi are proud to join with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's government in hosting the Gavi COVAX AMC Summit in Berlin this week, as part of the German G7 presidency, together with co-hosts Senegalese President Macky Sall and Indonesian President Joko Widodo. There, we will launch a new phase of COVAX to help countries scale up their delivery systems, and to ensure that they receive the right vaccines, in the right volumes, at the right time.

By helping to cover ancillary costs for essential items – such as syringes, transportation, and insurance – this new phase will do more to ensure that donated doses reach more people in the countries that need them. And to address issues such as the risk of further

supply shocks or the possible need for variant-specific vaccines, we are launching a new Pandemic Vaccine Pool to protect COVAX's supply from future disruptions.

Even, or especially, during periods of geopolitical friction, the best solutions often can be found in global public goods that serve everyone's interest. Fostering their provision requires all countries to work together in a spirit of multilateral cooperation, even if they remain at loggerheads on other issues. Vaccinating the world remains the only way to end the pandemic and the uncertainty that comes with it. But this effort can succeed only with the support of wealthy countries.

Political leaders are increasingly focusing on the need to strengthen preparedness for future pandemics. They are right to do so. But to demonstrate their resolve, they must commit the funds needed to prepare for whatever else the current pandemic may throw at us.

*The writer, a former president of the European Commission (2004-14) and prime minister of Portugal (2002-04), is Chair of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.*  
©PROJECT SYNDICATE, 2022.

#### Between the devil & the deep sea

**Letters**  
TO THE EDITOR  
Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: [edit@orissapost.com](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)  
**OrissaPOST**  
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010  
**Gundu K. Maniam**, GHAZLABAD

#### Pakistan in total turmoil

Sir, Pakistan Supreme Court strikes down a decision to reject no-trust motion and now Imran Khan can't dodge another motion. That is quite a statement by the Pak SC! Looks like they are taking the Pakistan establishment bull by the horns. There may still be some hope for Pakistan to free itself from the military which has been ruining the country. In a unanimous verdict, the Bench also declared dissolution of Parliament as unconstitutional. The Bench restored Parliament and declared the advice by Imran to President Alvi to dissolve the Assembly as unconstitutional. The court ordered the Speaker to call the session of the Assembly on April 9 at 10 am to organise the no-confidence vote. The Opposition has said it has 172 votes in the 340-seat House to oust the PM, after several members of his own party and a key coalition partner defected. Thus, Pakistan's Supreme Court struck down National Assembly Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri's move to dismiss a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan, in a major blow to the cricketer-turned politician, and ordered the National Assembly be restored. The latest political chaos has spilled over to the country's largest province of Punjab, where 60% of Pakistan's 220 million people live and where Imran's ally for chief provincial minister was denied the post after his political opposition voted in their own candidate. Pakistan is in total turmoil and an adverse verdict on the floor of the house may cause political unrest and a chaotic situation in the country.

**CK Subramaniam**, NAVI MUMBAI

# national

## of the day quote

The government is working tirelessly to augment India's health infrastructure with a focus on ensuring good quality and affordable healthcare to citizens

We are living in a century where we cannot limit ourselves to the boundaries of our institution. We need to go beyond boundaries to explore technologies and innovation in the field for common good

As on March 31, 2022, against the sanctioned strength of 1,104 judges in the high courts, 717 judges are in position, leaving 387 vacancies of judges to be filled

### SHORT TAKES

#### Four of family killed in blast

**Vijayanagara (Karnataka):** In a tragic incident of fire mishap due to an explosion in Air Conditioner (AC), a couple and their two children were killed in the early hours of Friday in Mariyammanahalli village of Karnataka's Vijayanagara district. The house was also gutted in the incident. The deceased have been identified as Venkat Prashanth (42), his wife D. Chandrakala (38), their son Advik (6) and daughter Prerana (8). Another couple living in the house managed to escape.

#### Woman stabbed to death by son

**Gurugram:** In a gruesome incident, a son brutally murdered his mother over a suspected property dispute in Gurugram's Shivpuri area, police said Friday. The incident happened around 8.30 p.m. Thursday, police said. The accused Manish Bhandari stabbed his 66-year-old mother Veena Kumari on the neck and chest several times with a sharp-edged weapon, leaving her seriously injured. She was rushed to the civil hospital, where she was declared dead by the doctors.

#### Leopard found dead in Bengal

**Jalpaiguri:** A leopard was found dead in West Bengal's Jalpaiguri district Friday morning, officials said. It is suspected that the leopard was hit by a vehicle, they said. Morning walkers first spotted the carcass on a road near Totapara tea garden. The carcass has a deep wound on its head, indicating that it was hit by a vehicle, forest officials said.

#### Racket busted

**Bangalore:** In a major crackdown, the Karnataka police have busted a human trafficking racket with arrest of seven persons. The City Crime Branch (CCB) sleuths have rescued 17 women who have been all set to be transported to Dubai. The police have gathered information on 95 women being sent to Dubai and seized 17 passports.

#### Accident claims 3

**Jammu:** Three persons were killed Friday in a road accident in J&K's Udhampur district. Police said three persons, including a woman were killed in the accident at Garani village of Udhampur district. The accident took place when a motorcycle moving on highway hit a divider causing injuries to all three riders.



India is the only country in the world that considers as family members not just those living within its boundaries but people living across the world

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

### ₹16 CR COLLECTED: DATA

In the last one year, the Delhi government has issued 14.82 lakh challans amounting to over ₹154 crore for various Covid violations in the city but managed to collect only ₹16.79 crore from the fine, according to official data



## Birbhum killings direct fallout of TMC leader's murder: CBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, April 8:** The CBI, in its preliminary report on the Birbhum killings in West Bengal, said that the massacre was carried out in a "planned and organised manner" and was a result of "direct fallout" of the murder of local TMC leader Bhadu Sheikh.

In the over 20-page report, the central probe agency has also stated that the seven persons whose charred bodies were recovered from inside one of the burnt houses in Bogtui village, were "assaulted before being burnt alive".

"The brutal incident of burning and killings at Bogtui is the direct fallout of the killing of one Bhadu Sheikh at Bogtui More on the same day (March 21) at 8.30 pm," the report said.

"After the killing of Bhadu Sheikh, his close associates and members of his group went berserk, formed unlawful assembly, and in furtherance of their common object, started burning the houses and killing the family members of the rival group in a very planned and organised manner," it said.

The Central Bureau of Investigation's findings said that



The CBI's findings said that the rivalry was "long standing" between two groups -- one of Bhadu Sheikh and another of Palash Sheikh and Sona Sheikh

The cause of the rivalry was related to "their previous enmity for dominance in the local area and for control over income from illegal collection of money from commercial vehicles and other illegal activities"

the rivalry was "long standing" between two groups -- one of Bhadu Sheikh and another of Palash Sheikh and Sona Sheikh.

The cause of the rivalry was related to "their previous enmity for dominance in the local area and for control over income from illegal collection of money from commercial vehicles and other illegal activities".

Nine people died of burn injuries after their houses at Bogtui

were set afire by miscreants last month. The CBI took over the investigation following a Calcutta High Court order and registered a case on March 25. The probe agency had Thursday arrested four people from Mumbai in connection with the killings.

TMC leader and former president of Rampurhat Block-1 Anarul Hossain and 21 others, who were arrested by the Birbhum Police, are also in CBI custody.

## Girl's body found in Asaram's UP ashram

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Gonda, April 8:** The body of a minor girl, who went missing from her house four days ago, was recovered from a car parked in self-styled godman and rape convict Asaram's ashram in Uttar Pradesh's Gonda district Friday.

The car had been parked in the ashram premises in Bimour village of Nagar Kotwali area since past several days. When a foul smell emanated from the car in the morning, the ashram staff opened the vehicle and saw the body inside after which they informed the police.



The police reached the spot, took custody of the body and sent it for post-mortem. Initial investigations suggest that it is a case of murder and the body was hidden in the car, the police said.

Police and forensic teams are searching the ashram and the car. Further investigations are underway.

## Court setback for Patel

Patel had previously worked on topics related to 2002 Gujarat riots and presented a report "Rights and Wrongs" and has been writing columns for publications in India and Pakistan



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, April 8:** A Delhi court Friday directed Aakar Patel, the former Amnesty International India head, not to leave the country without its prior permission and stayed an order directing the CBI to withdraw a Lookout Circular (LOC) issued against him in a case relating to the alleged violation of the Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (FCRA).

The order came on a revision plea filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) earlier in the day. Granting interim relief to the CBI in the matter, Special CBI Judge Santosh Snehi Mann directed Patel stayed the earlier court order.

During the course of the hearing, the CBI's counsel argued that the probe agency was not given time to challenge the order. Vehemently opposing the relief to Patel, the CBI also refused to file a compliance report in relation to Thursday's order highlighting that they have already approached the court seeking a revision in the matter. Taking note of the CBI counsel Nikhil Goel, the court said it is necessary to give the opportunity to file a formal reply and stayed the earlier court order in re-

vision. Further, the matter has been posted for a detailed hearing on April 12.

On Thursday, apart from recalling the CBI's Lookout Circular, Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Pawan Kumar of the Rouse Avenue court had also sought a written apology from the CBI director.

"In this case, a written apology from the head of CBI, i.e., Director CBI acknowledging lapse on part of his subordinate to the applicant would go a long way in not only healing wounds of the applicant but also upholding trust and confidence of the public in the premier institution," the court order read.

Journalist and writer Patel was on his way to the US when he was stopped from leaving the country at the Bengaluru airport on Wednesday citing a lookout circular issued against him by the CBI in connection with an FCRA (Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 case.

Patel had previously worked on topics related to 2002 Gujarat riots and presented a report "Rights and Wrongs" and has been writing columns for publications in India and Pakistan.

## Shah's Hindi push draws ire

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

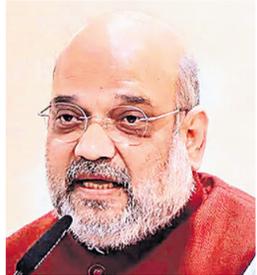
**Bangalore, April 8:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent Hindi language push has drawn ire in Karnataka with Opposition leader Siddaramaiah Friday criticising it.

"The statement is not only against the federal principles of the country but also an insult to other languages. Amit Shah should immediately withdraw the statement," he said. Also, the social media in the state is abuzz with comments under the hashtag #IndiaAgainstHindiImposition.

Siddaramaiah, a former Karnataka Chief Minister, dubbed it as an attempt to impose Hindi language in the country, saying he won't be quiet if any attempt is made to impose Hindi.

"Time has come for the non-Hindi states to stage a protest," he noted. Some Kannada organisations have also reacted, submitting they won't be quiet if Hindi is imposed in the state.

Amit Shah has stated that peo-



Amit Shah has stated that people from different states should speak in Hindi, not English

ple from different states should speak in Hindi, not English and he also stated that Hindi should be accepted as an alternative to English.

"Amit Shah's diktat of asking states to use Hindi as a language of communication instead of English is objectionable," Siddaramaiah, a Congress veteran, said. "As a Kannadiga with self-respect, I condemn Shah's statement," he said.

"We are not against Hindi, English, Tamil, Malayalam,

Gujarati languages. However, the priority in Karnataka should be given to the Kannada language. If any attempt is made to impose Hindi, it is not possible to remain quiet," he said.

Siddaramaiah said it is unfortunate to see Shah promoting Hindi language, and "carry out the slavery of Hindi" by neglecting his mother tongue Gujarati, as he hails from Gujarat.

"Mahatma Gandhi who hailed from Gujarat was a proponent of diversity, different languages, ethos. But, it is a tragedy that Amit Shah sees a role model not in Mahatma Gandhi but in Veer Savarkar, a pseudo-nationalist and proponent of 'one culture' and 'one language', the Congress leader said.

## Central teams sent for scrutiny

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 8:** The Central government has sent three-member teams to Maharashtra, Kerala, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh for a random scrutiny of claims filed for ex gratia due to COVID-19 death.

The Union Health Ministry said Friday that this is in pursuance of a Supreme Court order dated March 24.

The three-member team to Maharashtra will be led by Dr Sunil Gupta, Principal Consultant, National Centre for Disease Control.

Dr P Ravindran, advisor, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Calicut will lead the team to Kerala; while Dr S Venkatesh, Principal Advisor, NCDC is heading the Gujarat team.

The three-member team to Andhra Pradesh will be headed by Dr S K Singh, Director, NCDC. The ministry said in a statement that the teams will examine the on-field implementation of the ex gratia being paid as per the directions of the Supreme Court and guidelines issued by National Disaster Management Authority.

## SC upholds amendment to FCRA provisions

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, April 8:** The Supreme Court Friday affirmed the validity of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment (FCRA) Act, 2020, which imposes new conditions on the receipt and use of funds by NGOs.

A bench headed by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar upheld the 2020 amendments made to the FCRA Act, 2010. The detailed judgment in the case will be uploaded on the top court website later in the day.

The Centre had told the Supreme Court that there exists no fundamental right to receive unbridled foreign contributions without any regulation, while defending the amendments made in 2020 to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act. The MHA emphasized that FCRA aim was to ensure foreign contribution does not adversely impinge upon the functioning of parliamentary institutions, political associations, and academic, and other voluntary organisations as well as individuals in India. The

later notified as State Bank of India, New Delhi branch.

The petitioners claimed the amendments were arbitrary and stringent, which made the functioning of NGOs extremely difficult. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in a 355-page affidavit filed in the Supreme Court, said Parliament has enacted the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, laying down a clear legislative policy of strict controls over foreign contributions for certain activities in the country.

## Woman delivers under cellphone light

The woman's mother and husband were worried over her safety but luckily the baby was born without any complication



**Visakhapatnam, April 8:** A woman delivered a baby under the light of phones, torchlights and candles at a government hospital in Narsipatnam of Andhra Pradesh.

With NTR Government Hospital plunging into darkness due to power cuts gripping the state and failure of the generator at the hospital premises, the staff asked the attendants of the woman to arrange as many cellphones, torchlights and candles as possible. The woman had

started experiencing labour pains and the doctors and other medical staff on duty had no other option but to ask the woman's husband, mother and others accompanying her to arrange the light. The incident occurred on the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday.

The woman's husband said the staff asked him to bring the candles around midnight. They then asked him to arrange cellphones

and torch lights. He could arrange a few. The woman's mother and husband were worried over her safety but luckily the baby was born without any complication. "We kept praying to god as anything could have happened," said the man. "It was a very difficult situation. We had not even heard of a delivery being carried out under cellphone and torchlights," he said. The woman and other pa-

tients at the hospital said they went through hell as it was pitch dark and very hot with mosquitoes adding to their woes. The hospital officials said the generator had developed technical problems. They have been using the generator regularly for the last few days due to daily power cuts.

Meanwhile, reacting to the incident, opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP) general secretary Nara Lokesh said that it shows how bad the situation in the state is. He also posted on Twitter a picture of a government hospital in Jangareddygudem. He wrote that newborn babies and their mothers are going through hell at the hospital due to power cuts. He blamed the YSRCP government's inefficiency for the crisis.

Growing demand due to harsh summers has triggered electricity shortage in the state. Authorities have imposed a 50 per cent cut due to mounting deficit.

## WATER THERAPY



A zookeeper (unseen) sprays water on a hippopotamus at Kamla Nehru Zoological Park, on a hot day in Ahmedabad

## Rise in Covid cases: Centre writes to 5 states

**New Delhi:** The Central government has written letters to five states reporting marginal surge in Covid cases to continue monitoring the spread of fresh infections, officials said Friday. The Union Health Ministry has asked five states namely -- Kerala, Haryana, Maharashtra, Delhi and Mizoram -- to continue monitoring the spread of infection and undertake prompt steps to manage the Covid spread. Rajesh Bhushan, Union Health Secretary, has directed these states in the letters to conduct regular monitoring and follow up action in emerging areas of concern. "A sustained and significant decline in the number of Covid-19 cases has been observed in India over the past 2 months, with the country reporting less than 1,000 daily new cases for the past few days. Further, weekly positivity rate has remained below 1 per cent," he said in the letter. The letter sent to Principal Secretary (Health), Delhi, reads that there has been an increase in the weekly new cases from 724 new cases in the week ending April 1, to 826 new cases till Friday, accounting to 11.33 per cent of India's new cases.

**Govt. of Odisha** No. A-27  
**Office of the Superintending Engineer**  
**Khurda Irrigation Division, Khurda**  
**1st Corrigendum to**  
**'e'-Procurement Notice No. 01 (KHD) of 2022-23**

<b>Bid Identification No.</b>	: KHD 01-01 of 2022-23 to KHD 01-05 of 2022-23 (5 Nos. of works)
<b>Availability of Tender online for bidding is rescheduled i.e.</b>	: From 10.00 A.M. of 08.04.2022 to 18.04.2022 upto 11.00 A.M.
<b>Date of Opening of Bid is rescheduled i.e.</b>	: 18.04.2022, 12.30 P.M.

All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.  
**Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Khurda Irrigation Division, Khurda**  
 OIPR-32078/11/0002/2223

# Pelting at Pawar's house

Chaos prevailed outside the high-security Pawar residence Friday afternoon as striking workers of the MSRTC staged angry protests shouting slogans including 'Jai Shri Ram', pelted stones and hurled shoes at the veteran leader's home blaming him for their plight



including "Jai Shri Ram", and pelted stones, hurled shoes at their home, while some managed to reach the main door of the house.

Taken aback by the unexpected 'attack', NCP MP Supriya Sule, Pawar's daughter, rushed out right into the midst of the agitating workers crowding there and appealed to them to remain calm, and sit for negotiations.

"With folded hands, I am pleading to you... please keep calm, my parents and my children are inside the house and I am concerned for their safety. Don't indulge in such behaviour," said Sule fervently with chaos all around her.

Pawar, 81, is accorded Z-Plus category security and the unprecedented attack raised questions on possible intelligence failure, particularly since the home department is handled by NCP's Minister Dilip Walse-Patil. Ordering the police to submit a report on the incident, Walse-Patil said there could

be some "unknown political force of a political party" that was behind the swoop on Pawar's household, and the government has taken it very seriously.

"They kept womenfolk at the forefront so the police couldn't take any restrictive measures. We are enquiring into the episode and all those found guilty will not be spared," said Walse-Patil.

Earlier, Sule repeatedly urged the state transport workers that she was "prepared to sit for negotiations at this minute", but they were in no mood to listen.

"I kept telling them... I can sit right now for discussions. Please stop this agitation. Nothing will come out of it. Unless you stop the agitation, how can we talk in this ruckus," she said.

Soon afterwards, a posse of senior police officers rushed there, and brought the situation under control, pushing back the state transport employees who have been on the

warpath since the past five months. The transport staffers' action - the transport department is held by Shiv Sena Minister Ani Parab, evoked strong condemnation from political circles and the social media.

Later, Sule expressed gratitude to the police for rushing to save her family from the assault and renewed her appeal for sanity to resolve the transport workers' issues, even as Tourism Minister Aditya Thackeray - son of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray - visited the Pawar family.

The MVA leaders blamed one of their leaders Adv Gunratna Sadavarte for the assault on the Pawar home despite negotiations underway with the government at the highest level.

Several NCP leaders and ministers such as Jitendra Awhad, Dhananjay Munde, Majeed Memon, MPs, MLAs and others visited the Pawars, strongly slammed the attacks and some pointed fingers at the Opposition BJP for allegedly masterminding the attack.

An NCP leader said that many of the attackers were drunk and the swoop on Silver Oaks "was pre-planned" even though the matter is sub-judice. Some time later, the police teams managed to detain many of the agitators and cleared the vicinity by evening.

The MVA has repeatedly made it clear that the MSRTC merger with the state government is not possible and for all pending issues the verdict of the courts should be awaited.

## STUBBLE TROUBLE



A farm worker burns paddy stubble at a field in Nadia, Friday

PTI PHOTO

## FB group to hold poetry contest on Mamata

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, April 8:** A Facebook group which is reportedly backed by the Trinamool Congress has announced a poetry competition on West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

According to the group called 'Banglar Gorbo Mamata', participants can submit their poetries with the hashtag #PoetryForDidi.

The participants can also directly send their poetries to the

group's inbox.

The group owners promise to feature the selected poetries on their timeline page.

"Here is a golden opportunity for the well-wishers of Didi. Write poetries with Didi as the subject. The selected poems of good literary quality will be featured on the page of Banglar Gorbo Mamata," says a notification from the page.

A Trinamool Congress source said that following the advice of the vote-strategist Prasant Kishor's

I-PAC, Banglar Gorbo Mamata floated to highlight the popular developmental schemes undertaken by the West Bengal government since it won the 2021 elections.

When contacted, state Water Resources Minister, Manas Ranjan Bhunia told IANS that there might be some specific reasons for this initiative which he is not aware of.

"I do not handle these affairs and hence I am not in a position to comment on it," he said.

# Bengal mulls its own edu policy as counter to NEP



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, April 8:** The tussle between the Union government and the Mamata Banerjee-led West Bengal government has now reached the education section.

State Education Minister, Bratya Basu, late Thursday evening announced that the state government has decided to formulate its own State Education Policy (SEP) and not implement the Union government formulated National Education Policy.

"The Union government, like many other aspects, are trying to force the NEP on the different state governments. However, we are not agreeable to that and hence we have decided to formulate the state's own education policy," he told media persons. A 10-member committee has been constituted to give a report on this count within the next two months. This includes Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, the noted faculty from Columbia University, historian and former Trinamool Congress Lok Sabha

member, Sugata Basu, former Vice Chancellor of Calcutta University, Suranjan Das and Sanskrit language specialist, Nrishinha Prasad Bhaduri, among others.

Sources from the state Education Department told IANS the committee, before submitting the said report within the next two months, will also study the independent education policies pursued by the non-BJP state government like those in Maharashtra and Kerala.

Bhaduri said that the state government has every right to have its own education policy. "Anyway, it is a welcome move. A country like India with such diversity of culture and huge population can never have a uniform pan-India national education policy," he said.

According to arguments of the Union government, the national education policy aims to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3 per cent (2018) to 50 per cent by 2035.

# Will resist BJP bid to impose Hindi: TMC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, April 8:** The TMC Friday said any effort to impose Hindi by the BJP-led Centre on non-Hindi speaking states will be resisted.

The party's assertion came a day after Shah, presiding over the 37th meeting of the Parliamentary Official Language Committee here, said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has decided that the medium of running the government is the official language, and this will definitely increase the importance of Hindi.

Shah, noting that 70 per cent of the agenda of Cabinet's agenda is prepared in Hindi, also maintained that the language should be accepted as an alternative to English, and not local languages.

Pointing out that Hindi was not India's national language, the TMC said his agenda of "one nation, one language and one religion" will remain unfulfilled.

"If Amit Shah and the BJP try to impose Hindi on non-Hindi speaking states, it will be resisted. The people of this country, where there is so much diversity, will never accept such a thing."



"Even India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had said that Hindi will not be imposed on non-Hindi speaking states until they are willing to accept it," senior TMC leader Sougata Roy said.

Echoing him, senior TMC leader Sukhendu Sekhar Ray said attempts to project Hindi as the na-

tional language is against the "spirit of the Constitution".

"We are against this agenda of Hindi imperialism... This is how fascism grows. Imposing Hindi is against the tenets of federalism," Ray said.

Pro-Bengali advocacy organisations, such as 'Bangla Pokkho',

also said that Hindi imperialism will not be tolerated.

"We want equal rights. We defeated the British; we would defeat Hindi Imperialism too. They (BJP leaders) want to turn India into Greater Uttar Pradesh. They want to capture jobs, markets, businesses etc. We will fight till the end," Kaushik Maiti, a senior leader of Bangla Pokkho, said.

Noted academician Pabitra Sarkar claimed that the statement was "premature" and "unacceptable".

"This is a very premature statement made without taking into cognizance the views of others. There is a history of resistance in southern India against the imposition of Hindi," he said.

The West Bengal unit of the BJP came out in support of Shah's statement and said any opposition to his views is "politically motivated".

"Whatever Amit Shah Ji has said is based on ground reality. Those who are opposing it are doing it to politicise the matter. They should study our country's history before making a remark," BJP state spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya said.

# BJP conspiring to make Mumbai UT: Shiv Sena



AGENCIES

**Mumbai, April 8:** The Shiv Sena again claimed Friday that there is a strong move among a section of Bharatiya Janata Party to make Mumbai - the country's financial capital - into a Union Territory.

Sena MP and chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut claimed that a group of BJP leaders including ex-Mumbai MP Kirit Somaiya are chalking out a plan to the effect with the help of some businessmen, realtors, and others.

This has been going on for the past couple of months or so. A detailed presentation has also been made to the Union Home Ministry in this regard, he said, adding he has evidence in the matter.

Raut said there is a possibility that this group is likely to move the courts citing that the percentage of Marathi-speaking people in

Mumbai has gone down and hence it should be made a UT under the direct control of the Centre.

On several occasions in the past, the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) has accused the BJP and Centre of making attempts to carve out Mumbai from Maharashtra to bring the megalopolis under its jurisdiction as a UT. In January 2021, BJP-ruled Karnataka's then Deputy Chief Minister Laxman Savadi had sparked a major political row by demanding that Mumbai should be handed over to Karnataka and until then its status should be changed to a UT.

However, the MVA allies Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress had slammed the proposal and said Mumbai has always been an integral part of Maharashtra, will remain so, and any plans to dilute it would be resisted stiffly.

# Pandemic WFH: 75% Mumbaikars agonised by bone, joints problems

The survey conducted by prominent Mumbai hospitals covered 5,005 citizens who were compelled to work from home, comprising 65% women and the rest men, all aged between 31-40 years

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mumbai, April 8:** A staggering 75 per cent of all Mumbaikars, who were compelled to work from home (WFH), suffered from various types of bones and joints health issues, during the past two years of the Covid-19 pandemic, claimed a medical survey released here Friday.

The survey, conducted by the Fortis Hospitals at Mulund & Kalyan, Hiranandani Hospital, Vashi, and SL Raheja Hospital, Mahim - guided by Dr Kaushal Malhan, Dr Manish Sontakke and Dr Siddharth M Shah - covered 5,005 citizens, comprising 65 per cent women and the rest men, all aged between 31-40 years.

Of these 75 per cent - or three-fourths of the WFH crowds - 8 per cent complained of numbness in arms or legs, 14 per cent had pains in the lower body with difficulties in getting up, 19 per cent experienced



stiffening of the legs and lower back while 26 per cent revealed pain or tingling in the neck and shoulders due to constant use of devices. While 73 per cent did not have a proper WFH set-up at their residences, 56 per cent resorted to multi-tasking like taking care of elders, schooling for kids, managing household chores while doing official duties.

Some 41 per cent of Mumbaikars spent at least 10 hours daily on WFH, 40 per cent juggled 2-4 hours for household, outdoor chores, 14 per cent sacrificed their weekend for these duties, and 18 per cent confessed to being glued to their mobiles when not on the computer.

At least 58 per cent admitted that their abilities to balance official duties and household chores were hampered due to the physical, bone or joint problems, for which 26 per cent blamed their disrupted

sleep cycles, 24 per cent to single-handedly managing their official-domestic functions, 17 per cent attributed it to longer work hours or some ill family members, 14 per cent blamed lack of exercise or improper eating and 9 per cent claimed they had no time to consult their doctors.

For their health issues, 42 per cent of Mumbaikars underwent time-sensitive scheduled procedures or emergency surgeries, 26 per cent avoided their operations as they were scared of visiting hospitals, 58 per cent delayed, 18 per cent self-medicated, 15 per cent ignored their pains and only 14 per cent consulted their family physicians.

The orthopaedic surgeons appealed to people to maintain a healthy lifestyle with proper eating, workouts, etc, to avoid any deterioration in the future.

# French silk expert wants to see Murshidabad in global Silk City network

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, April 8:** Celebrated French textile artist and silk expert Isabelle Moulin Thursday said that she intends to put West Bengal's well-known "Murshidabad Silk" in the global Silk City network.

"Two days ago, I launched the membership of Bangalore - the first Indian city in the global Silk City network. Now, we have nine countries and 13 cities. If everything goes fine, then with time, I hope 'Murshidabad Silk' too can make it to the network. The network helps artisans, and craftsmen to exchange knowledge, build trade relations and understand various craftsmanship techniques," Moulin said during an interactive session with select mediapersons here at Oxford Bookstore.

Moulin said she would travel to Murshidabad district, and interact with craftsmen, local experts of silk, and study the culture of silk artists. She said that the entire initiative would be carried out in partnership with Institut francais India, Embassy of France and Crafts Council of West Bengal.

According to her, the knowledge of the artisans is not just very specific but also precious.

"If we lose this knowledge, it would be absolutely catastrophic.



Now with the open market, I am sure India will catch up as far as the use of silk is concerned in various sectors. The silk-producing cities here including Murshidabad can play a huge role as a change-maker

ISABELLE MOULIN | SILK EXPERT

My study will not only aim to preserve that but would give it a global platform," Moulin said.

According to her, the global Silk City network so far has 12 "best silk-producing cities" from all over the globe across eight countries as its member. She said, to date, Indian silk had been only catering as a fabric for the Indian people and not a lot of export has happened. She further said silk is more than just a fabric for garments, adding, silk is used in artificial intelligence-driven technologies, surgeries, dental implants and face creams.

## of the day quote

Tribal communities are worshippers of nature but development is also required  
**HEMANT SOREN** | JHARKHAND CM

The current mining policy is being reviewed meticulously so as to formulate a new comprehensive pro-people mining policy  
**BHAGWANT MANN** | PUNJAB CM

The BJP government has built more houses for poor in eight years than the Congress and others in the past 60 years  
**GIRIRAJ SINGH** | UNION MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### 4 killed in accident

**Hyderabad:** Four labourers were killed and 14 others injured in a road accident in Telangana's Hanamakonda district Friday, police said. The accident occurred when a truck hit an auto trolley carrying the labourers. The collision took place near the Mandiripeta village in Shyampet mandal of the district.

### Rajnath to visit US

**New Delhi:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will pay a four-day visit to the US beginning April 11 primarily to participate in the fourth edition of the India-US '2+2' ministerial dialogue. Announcing the visit on Friday, the defence ministry said Singh is also scheduled to travel to the US Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) headquarters in Hawaii after his trip to Washington DC. Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will hold the '2+2' dialogue with US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin and Secretary of State Antony Blinken on April 11 in Washington. In a statement, the defence ministry said Singh will visit the US between April 11 and 14. "The 2+2 dialogue will review bilateral cooperation across domains and chart out the way forward," it said.

### 23 arrested

**Jaipur:** At least 23 people have been arrested in connection with a violence April 2 in Rajasthan's Karauli town during which shops and motorcycles were set afire, DGP M.L. Lather said Friday. The violence had broken out between two groups during a bike rally that was taken out on the occasion of Nav Samvastar. Interacting with the mediapersons, the senior police officer said a total of 10 FIRs including one by the Kotwali Police Officer of Karauli, and 9 by other persons have been registered.

### Heroin seized

**New Delhi:** The Border Security Force has handed over two women from the Border Security sector in Ferozepur to the Punjab police after recovering 1.2 kg heroin from them, officials said here Friday. According to the BSF, the recovery was made Thursday evening. In another incident on April 4, the BSF chased and fired at a group of smugglers and recovered over 2 kg contraband, suspected to be heroin, from them.

### 3 get death rap

**Guwahati:** A court in Assam Friday sentenced to death three persons convicted for their involvement in the rape and murder of two minor girls last year, officials said. The District and Sessions Court in Assam's Kokrajhar handed death sentence to Farizul Rahman, Najibul Ali Sheik and Muzamil Sheik for rape and murder of two minor girls of the same family belonging to a tribal community.

# Unaccounted assets worth ₹100 crore found in ACB raid



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Jaipur, April 8:** Unaccounted wealth, including property and jewellery worth Rs 100 crore, has been found at the residence of Surendra Singh Rathore, the Chief Executive Officer of Bio-fuel Authority (CEO), officials said here Friday.

Rathore was arrested for taking a bribe of Rs 5 lakh on Thursday. Bio-fuel Authority is a Rajasthan government entity under the state Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Department.

During the raid, which continued till late Thursday night, the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) sleuths also found documents and expensive liquor from Rathore's house and, hence a case under the Excise Act has also been registered against him at Jyoti Nagar police station.

Director General (ACB) B.L. Soni said, "When the team went to raid his residence on Thursday, he openly threatened us saying what can the ACB do. I have a turnover of Rs 1,000 crore," he said.

Accused Rathore had demanded Rs 20 lakh bribe from the complainant on Wednesday in lieu of allowing his business to run in an uninterrupted manner and also for renewal of license, said Soni,

THE TEAM FOUND FOUR LUXURY VEHICLES, WHICH INCLUDED JAGUAR LAND ROVER, BALENO, FORTUNER AND MAHENDRA THAR

THE ACB TEAM HAD TO USE THE COUNTING MACHINES TO CALCULATE THE EXACT AMOUNT OF HUGE CASH SEIZED

adding that the team acting on a complaint arrested Rathore and contract worker Devsh Sharma red-handed while taking a bribe of Rs 5 lakh.

Four different places, including his residence, farm house and apartment in Jaipur city were raided, he said. Around Rs 4 crore cash, 20 property documents, including flats, shops, farm houses, etc., were found.

The team also found four luxury vehicles, which included Jaguar Land rover, Baleno, Fortuner and Mahendra Thar. His son has been in the mining business. The ACB team had to use the counting machines to calculate the exact amount of huge cash seized. A case has been registered against the accused under the Prevention of Corruption Act and investigation is being undertaken, he added.

# Govts maligning judges unfortunate: CJI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 8:** The Supreme Court Friday termed as "unfortunate" and rued the "new trend" of maligning judges by governments if judicial pronouncements are not as per their liking.

The stinging observations were made by a bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana while hearing two separate appeals filed by the Chhattisgarh government and an activist respectively challenging the high court's decision to quash an FIR registered against a former IAS officer for allegedly amassing wealth beyond known sources of income.

The bench, also comprising justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli was miffed over some allegations made against the judiciary in the case. "Whatever fight you may take, that is alright. But do not



try to malign the courts. I am watching in this court also, it is a new trend," the CJI observed.

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for the state government in one of the two appeals, said that he was not pressing "that point at all". "No, we are watching it every day. You are a senior

# VYAPAM SCAM SC to hear plea of whistleblower

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 8:** The Supreme Court Friday agreed to hear on April 11 a plea of a doctor, a whistleblower in the Vyapam scam, against his arrest by Madhya Pradesh police from a place in the national capital in connection with an FIR lodged for his social media post on alleged question paper leak.

A bench of Chief Justice N V Ramana and Justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli took note of the submissions of senior advocate Vivek Tankha, appearing for Dr. Anand Rai, that the accused had been arrested from a hotel in Delhi on Thursday night in the cases in which the other accused is out on bail on furnishing of a bond. "The whistleblower of the Vyapam case has been arrested even though the principal accused is on bail," the senior lawyer said while seeking urgent listing of the matter. "We will list this on Monday," the CJI said.

The FIR against Rai has been lodged in March this year by Laxman Singh Markam, an Under Secretary level officer who is working as an officer with the Chief Minister's office in Madhya Pradesh. As per the Facebook post of the accused, the question and answer keys of a state examination were leaked from the phone of the officer posted with the CMO and this led to the registration of the case.

The petition, filed through lawyer Sumeer Sodhi, has challenged the April 4, 2022 order passed by the Madhya Pradesh High Court at Jabalpur by which his plea seeking quashing of the FIR was dismissed. The plea also challenged the order of the high court vacating the interim protection granted to Rai from any coercive action by the state police in the case.

"The present case highlights the instances where a mighty and vindictive state may leave no stone unturned in order to harass a citizen and abuse the process of law to convert a possible individual case of defamation into an FIR," the plea said.

"The petitioner before this court is the whistleblower of the infamous Vyapam scam arising out of the state of Madhya Pradesh and therefore the State has had an axe to grind against him," it said.

The Ministry of External Affairs has been engaging interns for a decade, reflecting an intent to expand the foreign policy discourse in the country and tap into talent beyond the government

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER



## KOVIND TO VISIT GUJARAT

President Ram Nath Kovind will be visiting Gujarat from April 9 to 11, the Rashtrapati Bhavan said Friday



SSB Dog Squad perform during the passing out parade of the 68th BN Sashastra Seema Bal, at Tezpur in Sonitpur district, Assam

# Schools get hoax bomb threats

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, April 8:** Multiple private schools in Bangalore Friday received bomb threats via e-mail, following which City Police were rushed to the spots, along with a bomb disposal squad to carry out search operations, and the threats have turned out to be "hoax".

According to senior police officials, they have received information that at least five schools in the city received the bomb threat. Stating that bomb detection and disposal teams were also sent to schools that received threats separately, Additional Commissioner of Police Bengaluru (East) A Subramanyeswara Rao said, "Searches have been done at all the schools and no item that causes worry has been found."

Investigating teams are probing the e-mail, Rao said. "We will find out at the earliest as to who is behind it and take necessary action," he said, adding that mails have come from different email-ids and it will be investigated. Police officials said they have assured parents and teachers that there is no need for worry.

Police evacuated schools that received the threat and parents were asked to come and pick up the children, they said, adding that it



According to senior police officials, they have received information that at least five schools in the city received the bomb threat

was also ensured that exams that were going on at few schools, were not disturbed. Class 10 exams are currently on in the state.

The e-mail threats to schools read, "A very powerful bomb has been planted in your school, attention is not a joke, this is not a

joke, a very powerful bomb has been planted in your school, immediately call the police and suffer, hundreds of lives may suffer, including yours, do not delay, now everything is only in your hands!"

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said there seems to be a conspiracy to disturb peace in Karnataka, which is a progressive state. Stating that he has instructed police to take it seriously and to not take any chances, he said, "Those behind (the hoax threat) will be arrested soon. All the necessary precautionary measures will be taken and thorough investigation will be done...There is no need to worry."

# Case filed against seer for hate speech

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Sitapur (UP), April 8:** Six days after video of a Hindu seer's hate speech outside a mosque in Uttar Pradesh's Sitapur district went viral and sparked outrage, police have registered a case and are investigating the matter.

The Sitapur police said in a statement on Twitter on Friday that a case under relevant sections has been registered and further steps are being taken on the basis of witnesses' statements.

The two-minute video containing the hate speech is said to have been recorded on April 2 when the seer, identified as Bajrang Muni Das, the mahant of Maharshi Shri Lakshman Das Udasin Ashram in Khairabad town, was

taking out a procession on the occasion of Navratri and Hindu New Year.

Bajrang Das Muni can be heard saying in the video that if any Hindu girl is teased by a man belonging to a particular community, he would himself rape a woman of that community.

He also made some more objectionable comments.

It is alleged that when his procession reached near a mosque, he started giving the hate speech on a loudspeaker.

"I am telling this to you with all the love that if a single Hindu girl is teased by you in Khairabad, I will openly bring your daughter and daughter-in-law out of your home and rape her," he is heard saying in the video.

# Scientists decode the reason behind Chamoli disaster

SCIENTISTS OF THE WADIA INSTITUTE OF HIMALAYAN GEOLOGY HAVE FOUND THAT THE REGION WAS SEISMICALLY ACTIVE BEFORE THE DISASTER HIT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, April 8:** Little more than a year after the deadly ice-rock mass avalanche in Chamoli district in Uttarakhand that led to the death of more than 200 people and a substantial economic loss, scientists have been able to decode

the reason behind the disaster.

Scientists of the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology have found that the region was seismically active before the disaster hit. They also found a noteworthy sequence of precursory signals of rock-ice detachment preceded by a formation of a new structure via self-assembly or self-organisation called the dynamic nucleation phase.

"Retreating Himalayan glaciers and associated melt along with unstable slopes are subject to trigger landslides by rainfall during monsoon or by induced seismicity in the region. Also, the snow, ice, and rock avalanches may threaten people and infrastructure downstream in mountainous areas worldwide. This is why the area requires constant monitoring of seismicity as well as glacier status," the study said. Since its inception, the WIHG



has been actively involved in understanding the processes responsible behind such disasters and focusing on detecting significant and unmet activities with a dense network of seismic stations in the vicinity of Himalayan glaciers. As a part of this process, it also tried to trace the reasons behind the disaster that took place on February

7, 2021. A group of nine scientists analysed the satellite images of the avalanche zone and found that it shows gradual growth of cracks and the joint near the crown of the weak wedge that has controlled the head scarp for the last five years. "These cracks further started to open up and led to successive advancement of a weak zone near

the crown of the wedge failure. The initiation of ice-rock mass avalanche has been recorded as seismic precursors, which were continuously active for 2.30 hours, before the main detachment took place," the study published in the journal Scientific Reports said.

Scientists analysed and verified the seismic signals with field evidence to evaluate the velocity of dynamic flows and associated impacts. Such high-quality seismic data allowed them to reconstruct the complete chronological sequence and evaluate effects since the initiation to the advancement of debris flow.

Apart from the human loss, the impact of the flash flood was too high to sustain modern structures i.e., two hydropower projects, bridges and roads. The high-flow intensity of the flood disturbed

the stability of the Raini village, and thus the area is prone to landslides, especially during the monsoon.

Seismic monitoring systems are well suited to detect mass movements such as debris flow, landslides, avalanches, etc. The ability to see such activities by a seismic network before the main failure could provide a scope for developing an early warning system for the region.

An integrated early warning system can alert the people towards the mitigation of any such impending disaster. The EWS should be based on seismic data from the seismometers, hydrological data from automatic water level recorders and meteorological data from automatic weather stations installed as a network in the vicinity of glacierised basins of the Himalayas, the study said.

# international

## of the day quote

The proper handling of the South China Sea issue by both sides has provided an important foundation for China-Philippines friendly cooperation, benefited the two peoples, and effectively safeguarded regional peace and stability

There can be no separate agreements behind Belarus's back. Since you dragged us into this - principally Western countries - the position of Belarus naturally needs to be heard at these negotiations

It is like adding fuel to the fire which is not constructive to the de-escalation of the conflict, even less to advance peace talks. The relevant resolution will deprive Russia of its membership of the UNHRC. Such a hasty move sets a dangerous precedent

## SHORT TAKES

### Myanmar Central Bank dy guv shot at

**Bangkok:** A deputy governor of Myanmar's Central Bank was shot at her home, less than a week after tough new regulations were issued ordering that foreign money held in bank accounts in the military-ruled nation must be exchanged for the local currency. There were conflicting accounts of whether Than Swe, appointed to her post after the military seized power, survived the attack Thursday. She is believed to be the senior-most official associated with the military-run administration to be shot since February last year, when the army ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. The takeover triggered widespread peaceful protests that were quashed with lethal force, triggering armed resistance that some UN experts now characterize as civil war.

### New Japan moves hit Russian officials

**Tokyo:** Japan is expelling eight Russian diplomats and trade officials and will phase out imports of Russian coal and oil. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Friday that Moscow must be held accountable for "war crimes" in Ukraine and pointed to a "critical moment" now in efforts to get Russia's government to end its invasion of Ukraine. He said Japan will also ban imports of Russian lumber, vodka and other goods, and will prohibit new Japanese investment in Russia. It will also step up sanctions against Russian banks and freeze assets of about 400 more individuals and groups. Reduction of Russian fossil fuel imports is a difficult choice for resource-poor Japan, and could mean a shift for its energy policy toward more renewables and nuclear power.

### Israel shooting: Gunman killed

**Jerusalem:** Israeli police Friday shot dead the gunman who had fled after killing two persons and injuring 13 others, including four critically, in the central Tel Aviv area when it was packed with people enjoying the start of the weekend and shopping ahead of the Passover holiday in the Jewish nation. The shooting incident happened Thursday evening at a time when Israel is struggling with a string of terror attacks over the past three weeks that has caused loss of 13 lives so far.

# Rockets kill 50 at Ukraine rail evac hub

While Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused Russia of firing on ordinary people, the Russian defence ministry was quoted by RIA news agency as saying the missiles said to have struck the station were used only by Ukraine's military and that Russia's armed forces had no targets assigned in Kramatorsk Friday

REUTERS

**Kyiv, April 8:** Ukraine said as many as 50 people, including five children, were killed and many more were wounded and lost limbs in a rocket strike at a railway station packed with civilians fleeing the threat of a major Russian offensive in the country's east. As regional authorities scrambled to rush civilians out of harm's way, a group of European Union leaders meanwhile visited Kyiv to offer President Volodymyr Zelenskyy support and assure him there will be a path to EU membership for Ukraine. Zelenskyy called the strike on the station in Kramatorsk in the eastern region of Donetsk region a deliberate attack on civilians.

Regional governor Pavlo Kyrylenko said the death toll rose to 50 from an earlier reported 39 as some of the dozen wounded had died after being taken to hospital or medical centers. He said the station was hit by a Tochka U short-range ballistic missile that contained cluster munitions, which explode in mid-air, spraying small lethal bomblets over a wider area. "They wanted to sow panic and fear; they wanted to take as many civilians as possible," he said.

The use of cluster munitions is banned under a 2008 convention. Russia has not signed the convention but has previously denied



In this image from video published on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's Telegram channel, a smoke rises after Russian shelling at the railway station in Kramatorsk, Ukraine, Friday

**"If at the beginning they exclusively targeted railway tracks, then now it's not only tracks, but also firing a missile containing cluster munitions which are meant for people. This is absolute confirmation that this strike was intended against civilians. They wanted to sow panic and fear, they wanted to take as many civilians as possible"**

PAVLO KYRYLENKO | GOVERNOR, EASTERN DONETSK REGION, UKRAINE

using such munitions in Ukraine. The Russian defence ministry was quoted by RIA news agency as saying the missiles said to have

struck the station were used only by Ukraine's military and that Russia's armed forces had no targets assigned in Kramatorsk Friday. Zelenskyy said no Ukrainian troops were at the station. "Russian forces fired on an ordinary train station, on ordinary people, there were no soldiers there," he told Finland's parliament in a video address. The White House decried the "horrific and devastating images" of the station attack. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, in Kyiv with the head of the EU executive Ursula von der Leyen, also condemned the strike.

"This is yet another attempt to close escape routes for those fleeing this unjustified war," he said on Twitter. Moscow has denied targeting civilians since invading

## EU SANCTIONS ON PUTIN'S DAUGHTERS

**Brussels:** The European Union has imposed sanctions on two adult daughters of Russian President Vladimir Putin as part of a new package of measures targeting Russia's economy, businessmen and oligarchs in retaliation for the Kremlin's invasion of Ukraine, according to two EU officials. The EU included Maria Vorontsova and Katerina Tikhonova in its updated list of individuals facing an assets freeze and travel ban. The two EU officials from different EU member countries spoke Friday on condition of anonymity to The Associated Press because the updated list of individuals and en-

tities sanctioned has not been published yet. The move from the European bloc follows a similar move two days earlier by the United States. In the wake of evidence of torture and killings emerging from war zones outside Kyiv, the EU decided to impose a fifth package of measures. Britain too has added Putin's two daughters to its sanctions list, following similar moves by the US and the European Union. The government said Friday it is imposing asset freezes and travel bans on Putin's daughters as well as Yekaterina Vinokurova, daughter of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Ukraine February 24 in what it calls a "special military operation" to demilitarise and "denazify" its neighbour. Ukraine and Western supporters call that a pretext for an unprovoked invasion. Ukrainian officials say Russia is regrouping forces after withdrawing from the capital Kyiv's outskirts for a new thrust to try to gain full control of the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk partly held by Moscow-backed separatists since 2014. Ukraine's military general staff said Friday that Russian forces were focused on capturing the besieged southeastern port of

Mariupol, fighting near the eastern city of Izyum and breakthroughs by Ukrainian forces near Donetsk. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell condemned the "indiscriminate attack" in Kramatorsk. "This is yet another attempt to close escape routes for those fleeing this unjustified war and cause," he said on Twitter. After civilian deaths in the town of Bucha were widely condemned by the West as war crimes, Zelenskyy said the situation in Borodyanka - another town northwest of Kyiv - was "significantly more dreadful". He offered no further detail or evidence against Russia.

# Imran refuses to leave crease

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Islamabad, April 8:** Hours before a no-confidence vote against him in Parliament, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan Friday seemed to accept the writing on the wall and urged his supporters to stage peaceful protests across the country when the "new imported government" comes into power Sunday.

In an address to the nation ahead of the no-trust motion Saturday where he has little chances of surviving unless some miracle takes place, 69-year-old Khan also expressed disappointment over the Supreme Court's verdict on the National Assembly deputy speaker's controversial decision on the rejection of no-trust motion against him.

"I will not accept this imported government, I will take to street. Only people can bring me to power and I will come back with the help of the people," he said, adding that his supporters should come out on Sunday evening after the new government is expected to be set up. He taunted the opposition to announce new elections and face the nation with him. "That is why I dissolved the assembly because I want people to elect the new gov-



ernment," he said. "I am ready for the struggle. Join me in peaceful protest," said Khan, who has effectively lost the majority in the 342-member house. The opposition parties need 172 members in the 342-member house to orchestrate the downfall of Prime Minister Khan and already they showed the support of more than the needed strength. Now Khan faces the possibility of being the first Prime Minister in Pakistan's history to be voted out in a no-confidence motion. In a landmark 5-0 verdict, a five-member bench headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial Thursday unanimously struck down the deputy speaker's ruling on the rejection of the no-confidence motion

against Khan and ordered restoration of the National Assembly, saying the Prime Minister's move to dissolve Parliament and call early elections was "unconstitutional".

The court also ordered the speaker of the lower house to call the session of the national assembly on April 9 at 10 am (local time) to organise a no-confidence vote.

"I respect the Supreme Court and the judiciary, but the apex court should have looked at a threat letter before issuing its verdict," Khan said in his address - perhaps last to the nation as the prime minister of the country.

"I am saddened by the verdict, but I accept it," he said, adding that the apex court could have at least asked for and looked at the document because this is a very big issue and there was no discussion on it in the court.

Khan in recent weeks has talked about a "threat letter" and claimed that it was part of a foreign conspiracy to remove him as he was not acceptable for following an independent foreign policy.

He said that he has a great wish that people could see the document but he refused to share it due to national security. But he shares his gist in his own words.

## Proud Boys member pleads guilty over Jan 6 Capitol riots

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Washington, April 8:** A North Carolina man Friday became the second member of the extremist group Proud Boys to plead guilty to conspiring with other group members to stop Congress from formally certifying Joe Biden's 2020 election victory.

Charles Donohoe, 34, pleaded guilty during an appearance in federal court in Washington to charges of conspiracy to obstruct an official proceeding and assaulting or impeding federal officers. His plea agreement includes a provision to cooperate in the ongoing Justice Department cases against other Proud Boys members. Federal sentencing guidelines call for a prison term of about six to seven years, although terms of his sentence will be up to a federal judge.

The indictment against Donohoe and other members of extremist groups, such as the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers, have been a focus of the Justice Department's sprawling investigation of the January 6, 2021 insurrection.

# SL Oppn to move no-trust motion against govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Colombo, April 8:** Sri Lanka's main Opposition party Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) Friday announced that it will move a no-confidence motion against the government of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and is prepared to impeach the embattled leader if he fails to address the concerns of the public facing hardships due to the worst economic crisis.

As protests continued across the country, demanding resignation of the President and the entire Rajapaksa family from the government, Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa also called for the Executive Presidency to be abolished, saying power should be divided between the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. "The government must pay heed to the public demand for the Rajapaksa to quit, if not we will bring a no confidence motion," the leader of the SJB told Parliament.

The SJB has begun to collect signatures from MPs for the no-confidence motion, according to media reports. Rajapaksa earlier proposed the creation of a unity government, but the main Opposition



party Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) rejected the idea. Premadasa said that he cannot agree to an interim government with President Rajapaksa remaining as President. The SJB said that it is also prepared to impeach the President. He also submitted a set of proposals to Parliament on behalf of the SJB to address the economic crisis in Sri Lanka. The Opposition backs the public protests happening all over the island, demanding the resignation of the President and the entire Rajapaksa family from the government. Opposition JVP legisla-

## CALL FOR CLIMATE SAFETY



A banner saying 'End fossil fuels now' has been hung from Tower Bridge by climate activists from Extinction Rebellion in London, Friday

with governing party lawmakers calling for the appointment of an interim government to avoid possible violence.

Parliament has failed to reach a consensus in three days of debate on how to deal with the economic crisis. The President and his older brother, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, continue to hold power, despite their family being the focus of public ire. Five other family members are lawmakers, including Basil Rajapaksa, Irrigation Minister Chamal Rajapaksa and a nephew, Sports Minister Namal Rajapaksa.

The government speakers defend the ruling family, saying the President need not resign as protests were meant to achieve "extra constitutional aims".

Meanwhile, newly-appointed Finance Minister Ali Sabry, who resigned from the post within 24 hours of his appointment, returned to the position and would head the government's negotiating team at the IMF as the island nation struggles to combat the unprecedented shortage of foreign reserves.

Former Justice Minister Sabry told Parliament that he had resigned from the post to give way for

## Pak court sentences Hafiz Saeed in 2 more terror financing cases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lahore, April 8:** An anti-terrorism court in Pakistan Friday sentenced Mumbai terror attack mastermind and banned Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed to 32 years in jail in two more terror financing cases.

Earlier in five such cases, the 70-year-old radical cleric had already been convicted for 36 years imprisonment.



The total sentence of 68 years imprisonment will run concurrently. Saeed may have to spend not many years in jail because his sentence will run concurrently, a lawyer told PTI.

On Friday, anti-terrorism court (ATC) judge Ejaz Ahmad Bhuttar handed down 32 years jail term to Saeed in two FIRs - 21/2019 and 90/2019 registered by the Counter Terrorism Department of Punjab Police, a court official told PTI.

"In the 21/19 and 99/21, he was sentenced for 15.5 years and 16.5 years, respectively," the official added. The court also imposed a fine of PKR 340,000 on Saeed.

He said Saeed was brought to the court from the Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore where he has been imprisoned since 2019 in strict security.

Saeed, a UN-designated terrorist on whom the US has placed a USD 10 million bounty, was arrested July 2019 in the terror financing cases.

Saeed-led JuD is the front organisation for the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) which is responsible for carrying out the 2008 Mumbai attack that killed 166 people, including six Americans.

The US Department of the Treasury has designated Saeed as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist.

The global terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is instrumental in pushing Pakistan to take measures against terrorists roaming freely in Pakistan and using its territory to carry out attacks in India. Pakistan has been on the 'grey list' of the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) since June 2018 for failing to check money laundering, leading to terror financing, and was given a plan of action to complete it by October 2019.

Since then, the country continues to be on that list due to its failure to comply with the FATF mandates.

Pakistan has so far avoided being on the black list with the help of close allies like China, Turkey and Malaysia.

## of the day quote

We have been consistently investing in Gujarat, making it one of our largest manufacturing campuses. The inauguration of this facility demonstrates our commitment to partnering India's grid expansion and clean energy targets

**SANJEEV SHARMA** | COUNTRY HEAD & MD, ABB INDIA

We have looked carefully at our product positioning and at the end of the day we think IndiGo is positioned quite correctly in the sweet spot that is important for all customer segments - safe, on time, hassle-free and courteous service

**RONJOY DUTTA** | CEO, INDIGO

Since inception, SJVN has spent more than ₹340 crore in various CSR activities in the verticals of education, health, sanitation, infrastructural development, women and child care, sustainability, assistance during natural calamities etc

**NAND LAL SHARMA** | CMD, SJVN

## SHORT TAKES

### One-time window to govt coal firms

**New Delhi:** The government Friday said it has approved a proposal to provide a one-time window to public sector undertakings to surrender coal mines that are not in operations without any penalty. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the proposal during its meeting Friday, the coal ministry said in a statement. The CCEA "has approved the Ministry of Coal's proposal for providing a one-time window to the Central and State PSUs to surrender non-operational mines without penalty (forfeiture of bank guarantee) and without citing any reason," the statement said.

### Forex reserves dip to \$606.475bn

**Mumbai:** In the steepest weekly fall ever, India's forex reserves slid by \$11.173 billion to \$606.475 billion as the currency came under pressure due to geopolitical developments, according to the Reserve Bank data released Friday. For the previous reporting week ended March 25, the overall reserves had slid by \$2.03 billion to \$617.648 billion. The steep fall in the reserves was because of a decline in the core currency assets, which fell by \$10.727 billion to \$539.727 billion.

### IHC to invest \$2bn in Adani's green biz

**New Delhi:** Abu Dhabi-based conglomerate International Holding Company will invest \$2 billion in three green-focused companies of Adani Group, helping tycoon Gautam Adani's units fund expansion plans. Adani Enterprises Ltd, the group's flagship firm, will get ₹7,700 crore (\$1.02 billion) by issuing preferential shares to IHC, while Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) and Adani Transmission Ltd (ATL) will receive ₹3,850 crore each via the same equity instrument, the group said in a statement.

### Ruchi Soya jumps nearly 15 per cent

**New Delhi:** Stock of Ruchi Soya Industries Friday jumped nearly 15 per cent after listing of shares of the company pursuant to its Follow on Public Offer (FPO). The stock zoomed 12.94 per cent to settle at ₹924.85 on BSE. During the day, it jumped 14.79 per cent to ₹940. On NSE, it gained 14.71 per cent to close at ₹938.



It is noteworthy that more than 34.42 crore loan accounts amounting to ₹18.60 lakh crore have been opened under the Scheme for the creation of income-generating activities

**NIRMALA SITHARMAN** | FINANCE MINISTER

## STARTUP WOES

Edtech platform Unacademy, which laid off nearly 600 employees, contractual workers and educators - about 10 per cent of its 6,000-strong workforce across the group - said Friday that it is focused on becoming profitable by the end of the Q4 this year in its core business, while investing for growth in group companies



# RBI maintains status quo, trims GDP hope

Stating that the economic activity is barely above pre-pandemic levels but continues to steadily recover, Das said the central bank will engage in a gradual withdrawal of liquidity over a multi-year timeframe beginning this year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 8:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Friday kept borrowing costs unchanged at a record low for the 11th time in a row in a bid to continue supporting economic growth despite inflation edging higher in the aftermath of Russia's war in Ukraine.

RBI's six-member Monetary Policy Committee voted to hold the benchmark repurchase or the repo rate at 4 per cent, Governor Shaktikanta Das said.

The panel decided to stick to an accommodative stance "while focussing on withdrawal of accommodation to ensure that inflation remains within the target going forward while supporting growth".

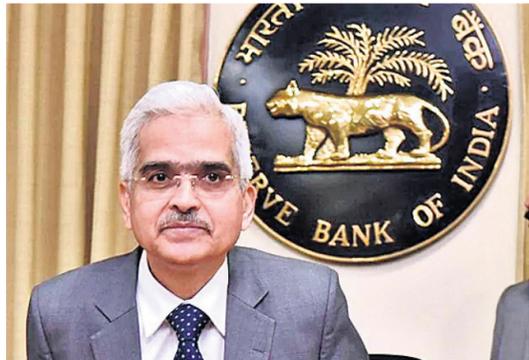
As it now anticipates a much faster rise in inflation than earlier - the inflation forecast has been raised to 5.7 per cent for the fiscal that started on April 1, up from its 4.5 per cent estimate in February.

The RBI announced a new tool that will soak up excess cash in the banking system, restoring the width of the liquidity adjustment facility to 50 basis points - a step seen as moving away from the ultra-loose monetary policy embraced during the pandemic.

Das said the global economy is seeing "tectonic shifts" from the war and extreme volatility in commodity and financial markets.

"Caught in the cross-currents of multiple headwinds, our approach needs to be cautious but proactive in mitigating the adverse impact on India's growth, inflation and financial conditions," he said.

Inflation has held above the targeted 6 per cent levels so far this year, casting doubts on the RBI's strategy of keeping interest rates low to bolster growth.



## EXPERTS' TAKE

The RBI monetary policy announcement is a pragmatic assessment of the current uncertain economic environment. The RBI has rightfully re-calibrated the growth and inflation numbers and announced a slew of measures to support the government borrowing program in a non-disruptive manner

**DINESH KUMAR KHARA** | CHAIRMAN, SBI



The current repo rate will be beneficial for the real estate sector as home buyers will continue to witness ease in home loan rates. We appreciate RBI's faith in maintaining liquidity to keep the real estate industry optimistic about growth in the future, especially after the sudden impact on the real estate players followed by the rising costs of raw materials

**HARSH VARDHAN PATODIA** | PRESIDENT, CREDAI

The geopolitical scenario on the global front and other challenges have led the RBI to lower its growth forecast but the Indian economy appears to be well placed to withstand the shock supported by its

forex reserves and stable financial sector. The governor said global crude oil prices remain volatile at elevated levels while food, as well as metal and other commodity prices, have also hardened significantly.

Private consumption and fixed investment - key drivers of domestic demand - however, remain subdued.

"Escalating geopolitical tensions have cast a shadow on our economic outlook," he said. "Sharp increase in domestic pump prices (of petrol and diesel) could trigger broad-based second-round price pressures."

Among other measures announced included a discussion paper on climate risk and sustainable finance, a committee to examine and review the current state of customer service in the RBI regulated entities, extending card-less cash withdrawal through ATMs across all banks, and rationalisation of the net worth requirement for operating units on the interoperable platform for bill payments Bharat Bill Payment System.

"As the daunting headwinds of the geopolitical situation challenge us, the RBI is braced up and prepared to defend the Indian economy with all instruments at its command," he said. "As we have demonstrated over the last two years, we are not hostage to any rulebook and no action is off the table when the need of the hour is to safeguard the economy."

The goals of price stability, sustained growth and financial stability are guiding factors.

During the pandemic, the RBI offered liquidity facilities of ₹17.2 lakh crore, of which ₹11.9 lakh crore was utilised. So far ₹5.0 lakh crore has been returned or withdrawn on the lapse of various facilities on their due dates.

"The extraordinary liquidity measures undertaken in the wake of the pandemic, combined with the liquidity injected through various other operations of the RBI have left a liquidity overhang of the order of ₹8.5 lakh crore in the system," he said.

## HIGHLIGHTS

■ Policy repo rate unchanged at 4%; marginal standing facility rate & bank rate too remain unchanged at 4.25%.

■ Monetary stance to be accommodative with focus on withdrawal of accommodation to keep inflation within target.

■ GDP growth projection for FY'23 slashed to 7.2% from 7.8%; growth projections based on assumption of crude oil (Indian basket) price at \$100 a barrel during FY'23.

■ Inflation forecast hiked to 5.7% for FY'23 from 4.5%.

■ Escalating geopolitical tensions to cast a shadow on economic outlook.

■ Robust Rabi output to support recovery in rural demand, pick-up in contact-intensive services.

■ Investment activity to gain traction with improving business confidence, pick up in bank credit, government capex plans.

■ Opening time for RBI regulated financial markets to be restored to pre-pandemic timing of 9:00 am from April 18.

■ Gradual withdrawal of ₹8.5 lakh crore liquidity overhang to be undertaken over several years.

■ Rationalised housing loans norms extended till March 31, 2023.

■ RBI will come out with a discussion paper on climate risk and sustainable finance.

■ Committee to be set up for review of customer service standards in RBI regulated entities.

■ Card-less cash withdrawal facility to be extended to all banks and ATM networks using the UPI.

"The RBI will engage in a gradual and calibrated withdrawal of this liquidity over a multi-year time frame in a non-disruptive manner beginning this year."

## Sensex snaps 3-session slide as RBI keeps rates, stance unchanged

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 8:** Equity benchmarks posted smart gains Friday after three days of losses as the RBI kept the policy rate unchanged at a record low and maintained its accommodative stance but flagged inflationary pressures amid the war.

The BSE Sensex climbed 412.23 points or 0.70 per cent to settle at 59,447.18. Similarly, the NSE Nifty gained 144.80 points or 0.82 per cent to finish at 17,784.35.

ITC was the top performer in the Sensex pack, spurring 4.36 per cent, followed by M&M, Dr Reddy's, Titan, Reliance Industries, Asian Paints and Tata Steel.

In contrast, Tech Mahindra, Maruti, NTPC, HCL Technologies, Sun Pharma, HDFC twins and Bharti Airtel were the laggards, slipping as much as 1.31 per cent.

"Market was cautious during the last 2-3 days ahead the RBI meet and its future policy stance. Measures being in-line with market expectations led to a relief rally. The focus has shifted to the Q4 earnings season, which will start next week, initiated by the IT and Banking sector," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

On a weekly basis, the Sensex slipped 170.49 points or 0.28 per cent, while the Nifty shed 113.90 points or 0.64 per cent.

Siddharth Bhamre, Research Head, Religare Broking Ltd, said, "For us the most important take away from the policy is that RBI has kept its ammunition intact and is well prepared to safeguard the Indian economy from any external shocks."

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge jumped 0.99 per cent and the midcap gained 0.93 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, power gained the most at 1.99 per cent, followed by FMCG (1.93 per cent), basic materials (1.91 per cent), utilities (1.81 per cent) and oil and gas (1.76 per cent).

## Equity MFs see record net inflow of ₹28,463cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 8:** Equity mutual funds attracted an all-time high net inflow of ₹28,463 crore in March, on continued interest by retail and HNI investors, who used market correction as a good buying opportunity.

This was significantly higher than the net inflow of ₹19,705 crore in February, ₹14,888 crore in January and ₹25,077 crore in December 2021, data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed on Friday.

With this, during FY 2021-22, the equity-oriented categories received a robust net inflow of ₹164,389 crore, compared to the net outflow of ₹25,966 crore during the FY 2020-21.

Equity oriented categories have been witnessing consistent net inflows since March 2021, after the second wave of COVID hit India and resulted in the correction in the markets. This highlighted the positive sentiment among investors.

Prior to this, such schemes had consistently witnessed outflows for eight months from July 2020 to February 2021 losing ₹46,791 crore.

Within the equity segment, all categories saw net inflows during the period under review with Multi-



The net infusion, which also marks the 13th straight month of net inflow, indicates the underlying bullishness among investors despite record outflow by foreign funds

cap category being the biggest beneficiary with a net inflow of ₹9,695 crore. Besides, large & mid-cap fund and large-cap fund witnessed over ₹3,000 crore net infusion each.

However, the debt segment saw a net outflow of ₹1.15 lakh crore last month, after witnessing a net inflow of ₹8,274 crore in February. Overall, the mutual fund industry registered a net outflow of ₹69,883 crore in March, as compared to a net infusion of ₹31,533 crore in the preceding month.

## Tax collections soar 34% in FY22

Gross tax collection of Rs 27.07 lakh crore during April 2021 to March 2022 has exceeded the budget estimate of ₹22.17 lakh crore by ₹5 lakh crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 8:** India's gross tax collections soared to a record high of ₹27.07 lakh crore in the fiscal year ended March 31 as mop-up from income, corporate taxes, customs and GST jumped, taking the tax-to-GDP ratio to the highest in 23 years, Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj said Friday.

The tax-to-GDP ratio jumped to

11.7 per cent - the highest since 1999. In 2020-21 fiscal, the ratio stood at 10.3 per cent.

Bajaj said the overall tax buoyancy showed a "healthy, robust figure". The tax buoyancy came in at about 2, which means the increase in tax collection was around twice as fast as nominal GDP growth rate.

"A lot of technology is being used where GST figures are now being matched with income tax figures and compliances are being ensured. So all these have resulted in better compliance and better revenues both in direct and indirect taxes," he told reporters here.

The gross tax mop-up showed a 34 per cent increase over last year's (2020-21) collection of ₹20.27 lakh crore. Direct taxes, which comprise income tax paid by individ-

## ALL-TIME HIGH



uals and corporate tax, came in at ₹14.10 lakh crore, a growth of 49 per cent over last fiscal, which Bajaj said was perhaps the highest growth rate in a "long time".

Corporate taxes grew 56.1 per cent to ₹8.58 lakh crore, while personal income tax collection jumped 43 per cent to about ₹7.49 lakh crore.

During the year, ₹2.24 lakh crore

worth income tax refunds were issued to 2.43 crore entities.

In indirect taxes, while customs collection zoomed 48 per cent to over ₹1.99 lakh crore, CGST and cess mop-up soared 30 per cent to ₹6.95 lakh crore. Excise mop up, however, dipped 0.2 per cent to ₹3.90 lakh crore during the 2021-22 fiscal.

Overall, indirect taxes grew 20 per cent to ₹12.90 lakh crore.

"The direct taxes are more than indirect taxes (in 2021-22) and I hope this trend will continue in the coming years," Bajaj added.

To a question on the Russia-Ukraine war, he said "the effect on economy is worrisome but would depend on a number of factors like commodity prices and its effect on supply chain".

## DRINKS FIRMS SPOOKED

# India refuses to exempt some plastic straws from ban

THE BAN ON ITEMS SUCH AS STRAWS PACKAGED WITH SMALL PACKS OF JUICES AND DAIRY PRODUCTS THAT EARN \$790 MILLION IN ANNUAL SALES IS PART OF INDIA'S DRIVE TO STAMP OUT POLLUTING, SINGLE-USE PLASTIC TRASH THAT CHOKES RIVERS AND DRAINS

**New Delhi, April 8:** India has rejected demands from large global and domestic beverage firms to exempt some plastic straws from a ban that takes effect July 1, fanning fears of disruption in a multi-billion-dollar industry.

"We are worried as this comes during peak demand season," said Praveen Aggarwal, chief executive of an industry group, Action Alliance for Recycling Beverage Cartons (AARC), referring to India's sweltering summer temperatures. "Consumers and brand owners will face major disruptions."

For months, his alliance, which groups PepsiCo, Coca-Cola Co, India's Parle Agro, Dabur and milk firms, has lobbied for the straws to be exempted, saying there were no alternatives.

Aggarwal's comments came after the environment ministry rejected the group's demands, telling it in an April 6 memo that the industry "should move towards uptake of alternatives", after being given more than a year's notice of the change.

Hugely popular for affordable rates that range from 5 rupees to 30 rupees, or the equivalent of 7 US cents to 40 US cents, the small packs are part of India's much bigger market for juice and milk



products, AARC says. Pepsi's Tropicana and Dabur's

Pepsi, Coca-Cola stare at disruptions as July ban nears

Small beverage packs with straws hugely popular in India

Company demands to exempt such straws rejected - ministry

Industry fears alternatives will raise costs, hit business

Frooti mango drinks are among the beverages sold in the small-pack format, and the packaged straws let buyers quench their thirst while on the go.

AARC repeatedly pushed the government to exempt such straws from its ban, saying nations such as Australia, China and Malaysia allowed their use, in letters sent to the environment ministry in October, and seen by Reuters.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government believes such tiny straws are a "low-utility product" that leads to littering and should be scrapped for paper straws or spout pouches instead, said a source familiar with the

government's thinking, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"All types of plastic straws must be banned," said Chitra Mukherjee, a waste management expert in the capital, New Delhi, as they ranked among the top 10 types of marine debris.

But three senior industry officials said their companies feared disruption in supply of juices and drinks, while turning to options could boost product costs and hit business.

Aggarwal said the industry would require at least 15 to 18 months to build a supply-chain solution with other types of straws. "We will try and convince the government again," he added.

# Gill, Tewatia hand Titans thrilling win

# MI need to fire in unison to beat RCB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Pune, April 8:** More than the individual brilliance, Mumbai Indians need to fire as a unit if they have to effect a turnaround as they gear up to clash with Royal Challengers Bangalore in an IPL match here Saturday.

Mumbai Indians are enduring a poor beginning to the season as they have lost their first three games to remain pointless in the tournament so far.

MI lost by four wickets to Delhi Capitals before suffering a 23-run and five-wicket defeat at the hands of Rajasthan Royals and Kolkata Knight Riders respectively.

It is imperative for Mumbai that their skipper Rohit gets some run under his belt. Despite their struggles, a few players have done well individually. With scores of 81, 54, 14, Ishan Kishan has been a revelation at the top for MI, while young Tilak Varma (22, 61, 38) has made an impression in the middle-order.



The inclusion of Dewald Brevis, known as 'Baby AB', and fit-again Suryakumar Yadav has provided some solidity to MI's batting line-up.

Kieron Pollard is always a threat for rival bowling attack. While MI's batting has been sorted to some extent, it is the team's bowling which needs to do better.

While its domestic bowlers - Basil Thampi and Murugan Ashwin - need to step up, it is the performance of its foreign recruits Australian Daniel Sams and Tymal



Mills which is a cause of concern. Sams and Mills leaked runs aplenty against KKR. Jasprit Bumrah, who has been MI's best bowler, too went for runs against KKR. RCB, on the other hand, have registered two wins from three games and are looking good after starting the season on a losing note.

RCB, led by South African Faf du Plessis, lost to Punjab Kings by five wickets in their opener before registering back-to-back wins over KKR (by 3 wickets) and Rajasthan

Royals (4 wickets). Du Plessis looked in good touch alongside Dinesh Karthik and Shabaz Ahmed, but the team would be hoping that Virat Kohli gets back to runs. RCB's batting unit will receive a big boost in the form of Glenn Maxwell, who is available for selection against MI.

On the bowling front, Sri Lankan spinner Wanindu Hasaranga has been impressive, while the likes of David Willey and Harshal Patel would have to do well to restrict MI. MI also would be looking for some consistency from Mohammed Siraj and Akash Deep.

**TODAY'S MATCHES**

CSK vs SRH  
Time: 03:30 pm

MI vs RCB  
Time: 07:30 pm

**TELECAST**  
Star Sports channels & Hotstar

# CSK face SRH in battle of strugglers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Navi Mumbai, April 8:** Battling poor form, opener Ruturaj Gaikwad will be under the scanner when strugglers Chennai Super Kings and Sunrisers Hyderabad face off in the IPL here Saturday, looking to register their first win.

Three successive losses have put new skipper Ravindra Jadeja under immense pressure and he would hope his teammates can script a turnaround against the Sunrisers, who too are smarting from two reverses.

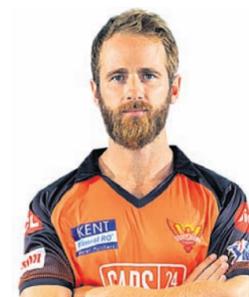
One of the most decorated teams in the history of the IPL, CSK have endured a tough season so far, with the team struggling on multiple fronts, especially batting.

Gaikwad, last edition's leading scorer, has struggled with his footwork and his scores of 0, 1, 1, has put CSK under pressure at the top. The Maharashtra batter, who had scored 635 runs across 16 matches in 2021, will look to find his rhythm against Sunrisers.



There is a lot of experience in CSK's batting but it didn't help them against Punjab Kings. While Robin Uthappa had scored a fifty in one of the games, the likes of Moeen Ali and Ambati Rayudu have failed to capitalise on their starts.

Skipper Jadeja, too, will need to give a better account of himself, even as 'de facto' captain MS Dhoni looks to keep guiding the team. In CSK's last outing, Shivam Dube's entertaining fifty was the only bright spot for the 'yellow



brigade'. In bowling, all-rounder Dwayne Bravo, IPL's leading wicket-taker, has been the most successful bowler for CSK. Along with death-overs specialist Chris Jordan, Bravo had squeezed the run flow and pulled things back in the back 10 against PBKS, but they need support from others.

The absence of injured pacers Deepak Chahar and Adam Milne have affected CSK's plans, while rookie Mukesh Choudhary has

struggled with the new ball. The Sunrisers have failed to chase down targets on two occasions, resulting in a 61-run loss against Rajasthan Royals and a 12-run defeat at the hands of new entrants Lucknow Super Giants.

Among the bowlers - pacers Bhuvneshwar Kumar, T Natarajan, Umran Malik, foreign recruit Romario Shepherd and spinner Washington Sundar - all have been among the wickets.

But their batters have not complemented the bowlers with skipper Kane Williamson failing to play an inspiring innings so far. The likes of Abhishek Sharma, Rahul Tripathi and Nicholas Pooran too have not been able to convert the starts.

Aiden Markram and Washington Sundar played a good innings against RR but couldn't stay longer against LSG. Williamson will hope his team wins the smaller battles in the game of small margins to turn things around at the DY Patil Sports Academy.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 8:** Rahul Tewatia (13 n o, 3b, 2x6) turned out to be the 'Man' for Gujarat Titans despite Shubman Gill's masterclass of a knock (96, 59b, 11x4, 1x6) as the all-rounder clobbered successive sixes off the last two deliveries of their innings to help his side secure a six-wicket win over Punjab Kings in an IPL encounter here, Friday.

Needing 19 off the final over, it all came down to 13 off the final three balls. An overthrow brought Tewatia into strike with David Miller (6 n o) struck at the other end. However, Tewatia struck two sixes to finish off the match.

It was after Gill doing most of the hardwork, but was unfortunate as he missed out on a century. Titans, chasing 190, were off to a flying start before losing Matthew Wade (6) with the scoreboard reading 32/1 in 3.2 overs.

After then, Gill found an able ally in Sai Sudharsan (35) as the duo added 101 runs for the second wicket. Rahul Chahar (1/41) broke the stand in the 15th over. Then Gill and skipper Hardik Pandya (27) forged together 37 runs before Gill became Kagiso Rabada's (2/35) second victim on the day. Pandya got run out in the first delivery searching for a quick single.

Earlier, England all-rounder Liam Livingstone (64, 27b, 7x4, 4x6), this IPL's costliest foreign player, made full use of a lucky reprieve to smash a second consecutive half century and help Punjab Kings post 189/9.

Livingstone, who was bought for Rs 11.5 crore, scored the bulk of the runs for Kings after being asked to bat first. He shared 52 runs for the third wicket with opener Shikhar Dhawan (35) to revive the Punjab innings after they were 43/2 after the powerplay.

Livingstone, who had hit 60 off 32 balls against CSK in the previous match, survived by the skin



Shubman Gill

of his teeth in the ninth over, when he was on 14, as Titans captain Hardik's foot touched the boundary ropes while trying to take a high catch off spinner Rashid Khan (3/22).

The potent Gujarat Titans bowling attack made a brief comeback with debutant Darshan Nalkande (2/37) and the seasoned Rashid claiming wickets in quick succession. From 153/5 in the 16th over, Punjab

were reduced to 162/9 but Rahul Chahar and Arshdeep Singh stitched a valuable 27-run partnership for the unconquered last wicket to take their side to a stiff total.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Punjab Kings 189/9 (Liam Livingstone 64, Shikhar Dhawan 35; Rashid Khan 3/22, Darshan Nalkande 2/37) lost to Gujarat Titans 190/4 (Shubman Gill 96, Sai Sudharsan 35, Hardik Pandya 27; Kagiso Rabada 2/35) by 6 wickets.

# Barcelona held by 10-man Frankfurt



Saving the blushes: Ferran Torres reacts after scoring the equaliser against Eintracht Frankfurt, Thursday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Frankfurt, April 8:** Barcelona failed to win an away match in the Europa League for the first time after they were held 1-1 by 10-man Eintracht Frankfurt in the first leg of the quarterfinals.

Ferran Torres salvaged the draw in the second-tier European competition with an equaliser following a series of fluent passes around the box in the 66th minute Thursday.

Barcelona were knocked out of the lucrative Champions League in the team's first post-Lionel Messi season. It is playing for the first time in the Europa League and never won its precursor, the UEFA Cup, reaching the semifinals on four occasions but not getting to a final. Frankfurt won the UEFA Cup in 1980.

Rebuilding under recently hired coach Xavi Hernandez, Barcelona has relied on big away performances to get to the last eight, beating Napoli (4-2) and Galatasaray (2-1) on the road after first-leg home draws.

In other games, 10-man West Ham also drew 1-1 with Lyon. The Hammers reached the quarterfinals of a European competition for the

# Sindhu, Srikanth in Korea Open semis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Suncheon, April 8:** Top Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth progressed to the semifinals of the Korea Open Super 500 badminton tournament with contrasting wins here Friday.

Third seed Sindhu, a two-time Olympic medalist, notched up her 17th win over familiar foe Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrungphan 21-10, 21-16 in the women's singles quarterfinals. She will next face second seeded Korean An Seyoung, an opponent who has beaten her twice last year.

In a battle between two former world number ones, it was World Championships silver medalist Srikanth, who rode on his power and precision to outwit local hope Son Wan Ho 21-12, 18-21, 21-12 in a men's singles quarterfinal match that lasted just over an hour.

Srikanth had a 4-7 record against the Korean, having lost to him on last three occasions. However, the

Indian played better badminton Friday to come up trumps against an opponent, who is coming back to international badminton after a two-year hiatus.

The Indian, seeded fifth, will next face third seed Jonatan Christie of Indonesia, who had claimed the Swiss Open last month. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty failed to make it to the semifinal after going down fighting 20-22, 21-18, 20-22 to Korean pairing of Kang Minhyuk and Seo Seungjae.

In women's singles, Sindhu had no issues in disposing off Busanan, whom she had beaten at Swiss Open final last month. The Thai lead 5-2 in the opening game but after that it was a Sindhu show as she kept the match under her tight grip.

Leading 11-7, Sindhu produced an eight-point burst to pull away from the Thai and grab the lead in the match. Things were similar after the change of sides as Sindhu held an 8-2 lead and kept moving ahead as the Thai crumbled.



# Eves stun World No.1 Netherlands

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, April 8:** The Indian women's hockey team stunned Olympic champions Netherlands 2-1 in the first match of their double leg FIH Pro League tie here Saturday. This was India's fourth win in the FIH Pro League.

The Indians scored through Neha (11th minute) and Sonika (28th), both from penalty corners, to hand the home team a 2-0 lead at half-time. After the change of ends, the Netherlands scored from a penalty corner through Jansen Yibbi in the 40th minute to reduce the margin.

Even though the Netherlands have arrived here with a second-string side, it was a creditable performance from the Indians as they were also without three key players - Lalremisiami, Salima Tete and Sharmila Devi, who were part of India's historic fourth-place finish in the Tokyo Olympics.

Netherlands have come here without any player from their successful Olympic campaign. India avenged the 1-5 drubbing against the Netherlands in the pool stage of the Tokyo Games.

The victory took India to the second spot in the standings with



Indian players celebrate a goal against the Netherlands, Friday

15 points from seven games, while the Netherlands continued to lead the table with 17 points from as many matches.

The Indians took the lead from their first real attack of the match, which came off a penalty corner through an alert Neha who deflected home from Navneet Kaur's pass after the initial effort was kept out by the Dutch defence.

Early in the second quarter, Rajwinder missed a golden opportunity to double India's lead

with only the Dutch goalkeeper to beat as she sent her shot wide. Two minutes from halftime, India doubled their lead from another penalty corner through Sonika, who calmly slotted home following a goalmouth scramble.

Ten minutes into the third quarter, the Netherlands secured a penalty corner which resulted to a penalty stroke after the ball hit Monika's body in front of goal.

India captain and goalkeeper Savita guessed the direction right

# INDIA ENTER SEMIS

**POTCHEFSTROOM:** The Indian women's hockey team continued its unbeaten run and defeated South Korea 3-0 here Friday to enter the semifinals of the FIH Junior World Cup for only the second time. The Indians, who topped the pool stage with an all-win record, scored through Mumtaz Khan (11th minute), Lalrindiki (15th) and Sangita Kumari (41st) to emerge winners in the quarterfinal match. India's best result in the tournament remains the bronze medal finish at the 2013 edition in Monchengladbach, Germany, where they defeated England 3-2 in shootout following a 1-1 stalemate in regulation time. India will next face the winner of the other quarterfinal between three-time champions Netherlands and South Africa Sunday.

but couldn't keep away Yibbi's shot as the Netherlands reduced the margin to 1-2.

Thereafter, the Dutch women put the Indian defence under tremendous pressure with continuous raids but the home team defence stood like a rock to garner full three points and rare win over the Netherlands.

# Chahal recalls 2013's horrific dangling scene

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 8:** In a shocking revelation, India leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal said he had a close save in 2013 when a drunk Mumbai Indians player dangled him from the 15th-floor balcony of a Bangalore hotel.

Going into the flashback mode during a chat with Ravichandran Ashwin, the video of which has been shared by their new IPL franchise Rajasthan Royals, Chahal said not many people knew about his near-death experience as he has kept it to himself.

"My story, some people know about it. I have never spoken about this, I never shared this. In 2013, I was with the Mumbai Indians. We had a match in Bengaluru. There was a get-together after that. There was a player who was very drunk, I will not take his name. He was very drunk and was looking at me and he just called me. He took me outside and he dangled me from the balcony," Chahal told Ashwin.



Karun Nair was also part of the episode titled "comeback stories". Chahal, who joined RR this season after a seven-year stint at Royal Challengers Bangalore, was then playing for MI.

He admitted that things could have gone wrong if his hands had slipped. Recalling the horrific incident, Chahal added, "My hands were around him. Had I lost my grip, I was on the 15th floor... Suddenly many people who were there came and got the situation under control. I kind of fainted. They gave me water, then I realised how responsible you should be if you go out anywhere."

"So, this was one incident where I felt I made a narrow escape. Had there been the slightest of mistake, I would have fallen down." Chahal played just one match for Mumbai Indians in the 2013 season of the IPL and then joined RCB in 2014, after which he achieved stardom thriving under Virat Kohli's leadership.