



Prashant Kishor may join Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 16: With the Congress reeling from a string of defeats, poll strategist Prashant Kishor Saturday gave a detailed presentation to its top brass at Sonia Gandhi's residence on the way forward for 2024 general elections, while expressing readiness to join the party.

AICC general secretary KC Venugopal said a decision on Kishor's suggestions, including on whether he will join the party, will be known in a week. There had been intense speculation in the past too on the possibility of Kishor joining the Congress including before the recent assembly polls.

Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and other senior party leaders were present at the four-hour meeting at the Congress president's 10 Janpath residence that discussed the party's strategy for the upcoming Assembly and Lok Sabha polls.

Drop LOC against Aakar Patel: Court

New Delhi: In what has come as a respite for former Amnesty India chief Aakar Patel, a Delhi court has directed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to withdraw a lookout circular (LOC) issued against him. The lookout circular has been preventing Patel from going abroad. The court also said the CBI need not apologise, as directed by a trial court earlier, to the human rights campaigner, who is also a fierce critic of the Narendra Modi government. The CBI was ordered by a court April 7 to 'immediately' drop the lookout circular or airport alert against Patel, who was stopped from flying to the US April 6.



Bangladeshi gang behind ATM heist in City

Bhubaneswar: The Commissionerate Police Saturday claimed to have cracked a loot case in which the criminals uprooted an SBI ATM at Indira Housing Colony in Lingipur area under Dhauli police limits April 4 midnight. They made away with ₹20 lakh cash from the machine. A four-member team of city police with the help of Bangalore police Friday arrested two members of a Bangladeshi gang. The accused were identified as Khokan Molla, 35, and Mijanur Rehman Molla, 39. Khokan belongs to Bagerhat in Bangladesh while Rehman claims to be a resident of Basanti area of 24 Pargana in West Bengal which the sleuths suspect to be wrong.



Summer vacation cut short

■ S&ME dept informs the Collectors that this year's summer vacation will be of 11 days - from June 6 to 16

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 16: In bid to help the students catch up with their studies that have been disrupted due to Covid-19 pandemic, the state government has curtailed the annual summer vacation to 11 days for this year.

School and Mass Education (S&ME) department principal secretary Bishnupada Sethi Saturday informed all the district Collectors that summer vacation will be curtailed and allowed for a brief period from June 6 to June 16, 2022.

In order to compensate the learning losses arising out of Covid-19 during the last two years, Learning Recovery Plan (LRP) as envisaged by Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA) will be implemented with the existing teachers during morning classes, he said.

The state government has taken a few other measures for class promotion, new admission/readmission and teaching hour of students



studying in different schools, said Sethi.

Class promotion for the students from Class I to VIII will be completed by April 20, 2022. New admission/re-admission for Class I to IX will be conducted from April 20 to 30, 2022.

As per the new assessment policy introduced by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Class IX students have to appear for the Summative Assessment (SA)-II Examination.

However, the conduct of SA-II and declaration of results for Class IX students and their promotion to

- Morning classes will continue until further order. The teaching hour will be from 6 am to 9 am from May 1 to June 5, 2022
 - MDM will be supplied to the eligible beneficiaries
 - Govt is planning to introduce practical exams for Class IX and X students
- Class X must be completed by May 10, said the principal secretary.
- Meanwhile, ongoing morning classes will continue until further orders. The teaching hour will be from 6 am to 9 am from May 1 to

June 5, 2022 and cooked mid-day meal (MDM) will be supplied to the eligible beneficiaries in the schools, he added.

S&ME Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said the new academic year will begin May 1 and the course curriculum, which was not covered due to the pandemic, will be covered by engaging own teachers and third party.

"We have initiated a tender process to hire a third party, which will make assessment about the learning gap and accordingly, the course curriculum will be prepared and covered by our own teachers and also by the concerned third party," said the minister.

Moreover, the state government is also planning to introduce practical exams for Class IX and X students, he added.

According to a Baseline Assessment conducted by OSEPA in October 2021, 40.09 per cent students of Class VIII had secured less than 20 per cent marks and 12.94 per cent of students secured 40-50 per cent marks in Mathematics.

Similarly, 42.50 per cent students could not score above 20 per cent marks, while 13.27 per cent secured 40-50 per cent in English language.

BJP draws blank in bypolls



Supporters of TMC leader Shatrughan Sinha celebrate after his victory in Asansol parliamentary constituency

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata/Kolhapur, April 16: The Trinamool Congress Saturday made a clean sweep winning both the Asansol Lok Sabha and Ballygunge Assembly seats in West Bengal while the Congress and the RJD bagged one constituency each in Maharashtra and Bihar in the bypolls to these seats with the BJP drawing a blank.

Congress candidate Yashoda Verma was maintaining a significant lead over Komal Janghel of the BJP in Khairagarh Assembly bypoll in Chhattisgarh where counting was underway. In West Bengal, movie actor-turned politician Shatrughan Sinha of the TMC defeated BJP's Agnimitra Paul by 3,03,209 votes in Asansol. The BJP had won the seat in the 2019 Lok

Sabha polls by 1.97 lakh votes when Babul Supriyo who was then in the BJP beat TMC's Moon Moon Sen. Supriyo, who was nominated by the TMC from the prestigious Ballygunge Assembly constituency, defeated CPI (M)'s Saira Shah Halim by a margin of 20,228 votes.

In a boost to the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) combine in Maharashtra, the Congress won the bypoll to the Kolhapur North Assembly constituency, retaining the seat by defeating the BJP by a margin of over 18,000 votes. Congress-MVA candidate Jayashri Jadhav bagged 96,176 votes, while BJP's Satyajee Kadam polled 77,426 votes.

RJD in Bihar wrested the Bochahan assembly seat from the ruling NDA, with its candidate defeating the BJP nominee by a big margin of over 35,000 votes.



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OLIVIA THIRLBY JOINS CHRISTOPHER NOLAN'S OPPENHEIMER

Actress Olivia Thirlby is set to join the cast of Christopher Nolan's biographical feature film *Oppenheimer*. The film is based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer* by Kai Bird and the late Martin J. Sherwin.

KJ APA, ISABEL MAY BAG LEAD ROLES IN THE WONDER TWINS

New Zealand actor-singer KJ Apa, who is known for his work in *Riverdale* and *1883* actress Isabel May have been signed for lead roles in the live-action DC comedy, *The Wonder Twins* for HBO Max.



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ARIES

Today, a romantic link-up is about to be delivered at your doorstep, all wrapped in silver and tinsel! So, Ganeshha hopes you are prepared. Don your best attire, check your breath and practice some sweet-talking. After all, who knows what the evening will lead to? Only Ganeshha, and he's smiling an impish grin! Need more clue?

TAURUS

This opt a good day for being too firm or demanding. Ganeshha advises you to steer clear of conflicts, arguments disputes. If you cannot avoid confrontation be sure you are the one who will have to step back. Loss of face and self esteem may be unavoidable.

GEMINI

You will lend your innovative and imaginative spark to your initiatives, which will be quite a few, says Ganeshha. Love will bring you immense satisfaction. And you will develop a special bond with your spouse or beloved.

CANCER

Today, every word coming out of your sweetheart's lips will be music to your ears. Your relationship with your relatives will be harmonious. You may steer clear of your troubles, if you learn to restrain.

LEO

The oath of friendship that you once took as a bunch of raggedy misfits still holds true, and your best buddies are the ones who will stand by your side through hell or high water. Ganeshha sees in you the desire to cherish such friends and prove your appreciation by treating them with graceful munificence.

VIRGO

Today, you shall balance business and entertainment equally well. The day will be like an endless party, says Ganeshha. The emptying of pockets will be proportional to the amount of time you spend doing nothing. But spend prudently, advises Ganeshha, and let it not worry you.

LIBRA

Connect and Express — these are the two things you must aim for at work today. You tend to do both things supremely well, be it in a business dialogue on phone, in writing, or in meetings. Getting across to people is not an issue today. But all this work aside, the lingering feeling of wanting to chill out with your sweetheart may become more substantial towards the evening. Watch a film together, suggests Ganeshha.

SCORPIO

Try adding an entirely new dimension to the way you approach relationships today, advises Ganeshha. Being tractable will help iron out the creases in relationships with closed ones. But be wary of complete subjugation, warns Ganeshha.

SAGITTARIUS

Confidence-building measures will need to be taken up. Be the herald, and usher in new vigour and confidence in people around you. Your business is set to skyrocket and a fair share of profits are in the offing, says Ganeshha.

CAPRICORN

Memories of the bygone days will flash through your mind, creating a wave of nostalgia and compelling you to get in touch with old pals. On the other hand, there may be a feeling that your loved ones are demanding more than you can give, says Ganeshha.

AQUARIUS

Today will be about pleasure and pain! Plumbing, cleaning, grocery shopping, cooking... you can expect anything to weigh you down. Later, you can relax in a hot soak by candlelight, or unwind with a soothing aromatic massage. Ganeshha says you'll be grateful for the pleasures only after the pain.

PISCES

While you may have a wide circle of acquaintances, it is only a select few who you bless with your munificence. And that is precisely what you will be busy with, as a day filled with socialising and leisure-filled activities beckons, says Ganeshha.

Sonali feels glad to watch great acts

Mumbai: Actress and judge Sonali Bendre was left stunned looking at *DID L'il Masters 5* contestants Sadiya Parveen and Vartika's performance on 'Do you love me'.

She mentioned how she felt grateful that she is still alive today and is able to witness such a great act.

Sonali said: "I have come back on a reality show after 4 years, and I am so happy that I took this decision. In fact, when I look back, I am so glad that I am still alive today and I get to witness such amazing performances."

"I was so stunned by the act that I even forgot to clap. It was phenomenal. Vartika's choreography was just outstanding. I could've never imagined this song being performed in such a different way. Sadiya also matched up to Vartika's

level and the whole act was just a treat to the eyes. I am extremely stunned by this performance," she added.

DID L'il Masters 5

The dance reality show judged by Sonali Bendre, Mouni Roy and Remo D'Souza airs on Zee TV. IANS



IN SYNC



Odissi dancers performed on the second day of the 43rd edition of Baishakhi Festival organised by Chinta 'O' Chetana, at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

Mom-to-be Kajal pens emotional post for hubby

Chennai: Actress Kajal Aggarwal, who is in the family way, has penned an emotional post to her husband Gautam Kitchlu, to not just thank him for his love and care during her pregnancy, but to also let him know what an amazing father he will make.

Taking to Instagram, the actress wrote, "Dear Husband, Thank you for being the greatest husband + to-be-dad a girl could ask for. Thank you for being so selfless, for waking up with me almost every night while I had morning sickness, for camping out on the couch with me for weeks because it was the most comfy place for me to sleep, for immediately texting the doctor and taking me to mom's house to put my legs up during the braxton hicks contractions and never hesitating or making me feel bad, for always making sure I'm well fed, well hydrated and comfortable, for taking care of me and lastly for loving me through it all.

"Before our sweet baby comes, I want you to know how wonderful you are and that you will be an amazing father as well!

"In the past eight months, I have watched you become the most loving dad. I know how in love with this baby you are and how much you care already - it makes me feel so lucky that our baby will have a father who loves unconditionally, be there no matter what and have an extraordinary role model to look up to.

She continued: "Our lives are going to change drastically, and I'm so grateful for that. We won't have all the alone time we have now — we won't be able to go to the movies every weekend, or lay around and sleep and binge watch shows, we probably won't go out impromptu partying for a while or have as many date nights BUT we will have a beautiful baby that will fill our hearts with so much joy."



Gal Gadot congratulates Alia on her wedding with Ranbir

Mumbai: Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor got good wishes on their wedding from almost the entire Hindi film industry and even a famous Hollywood star *Wonder Woman* star Gal Gadot commented on Alia's latest bunch of pictures from her mehendi ceremony. The two will soon work together on Alia's first Hollywood movie.

As Alia shared the first photos from her mehendi ceremony, Gal took to the comments section and wrote, "Congratulations." She also added a heart emoji.

Alia's fans wondered if Gal is also a Ranlia shipper. "Wow so sweet you are wishing her," wrote a fan. "Bestie commenting," wrote another. "Wonder women with 100% whole hearted," read another comment.

Gal and Alia will soon work together on multi-starrer spy thriller *Heart of Stone*. Netflix India announced Alia's casting on its official Twitter handle last month.

"Starting our day by announcing (and SCREAMING!!!) that @aliaabhatt is going to be starring in *Heart of Stone*, an International spy thriller along with @gal_gadot and @jamiedornan," the post read.

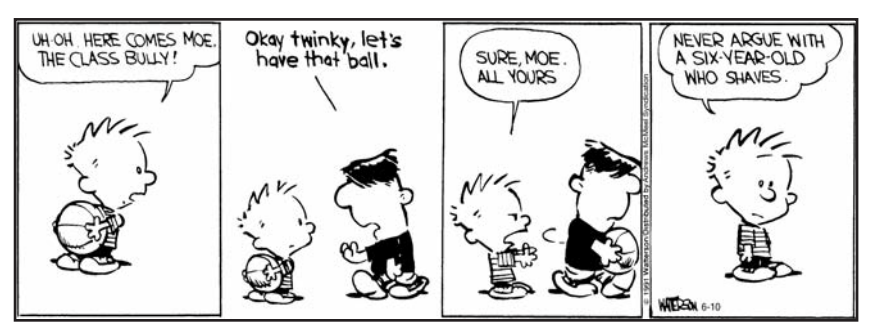
Tom Harper will be directing *Heart of Stone* from a script penned by Greg Rucka and Allison Schroeder. According to the official logline, the film revolves around Rachel Stone (Gal) an intelligence operative, the only woman who stands between her powerful, global, peace-keeping organization and the loss of its most valuable — and dangerous — asset. AGENCIES



PEANUTS



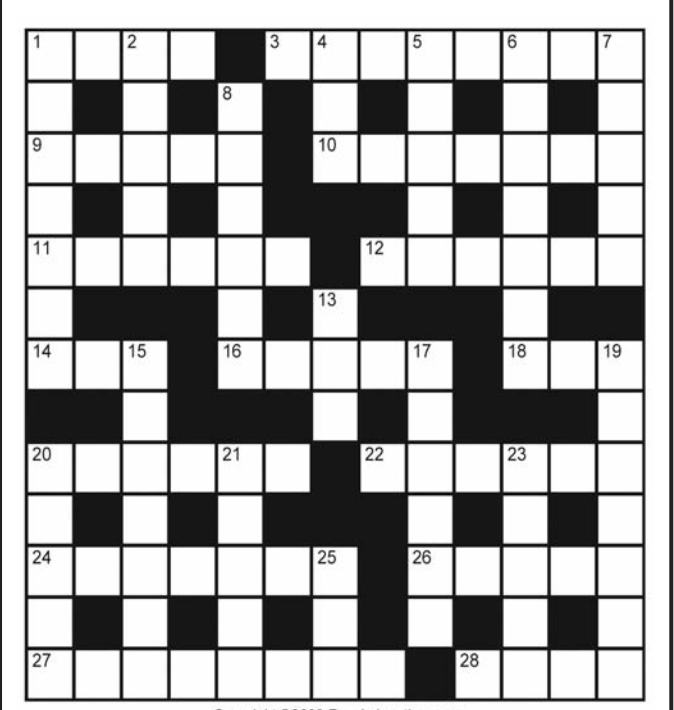
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



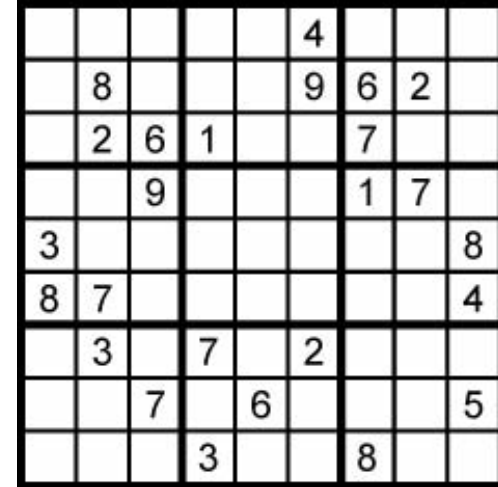
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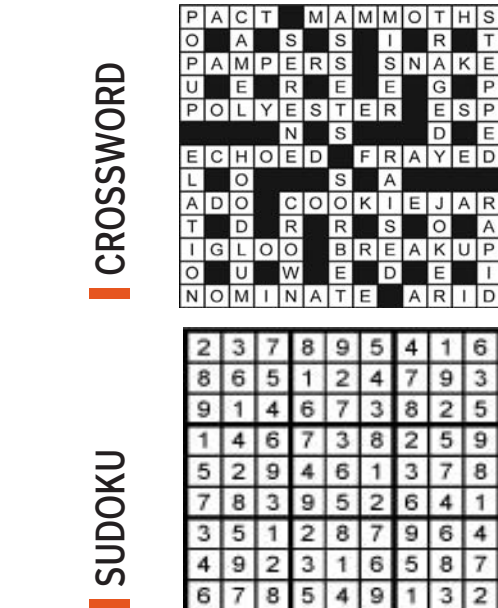
- Across**
- 1 After curfew
 - 3 Juvenile
 - 9 Unworldly
 - 10 Grind (3,4)
 - 11 Wiggle room
 - 12 Author's output
 - 14 Goose egg
 - 16 Call forth
 - 18 Soft shoe
 - 20 Pugilists
 - 22 Organ stop
 - 24 Buckle under
 - 26 Parlour piece
 - 27 Type of belt
 - 28 Depressed
- Down**
- 1 Ointment ingredient
 - 2 Variety meat
 - 4 Disfigure
 - 5 Storage room
 - 6 Radioactive metal
 - 7 Construct
 - 8 Mom's warning
 - 13 Decompose
 - 15 Knowledge of words
 - 17 Make secret
 - 19 Bathe
 - 20 No-frills
 - 21 Roulette bet
 - 23 Blacksmith's block
 - 25 Life story, in brief

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

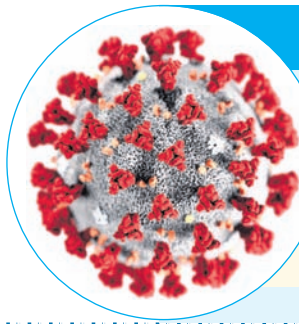


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



SUMMER RITUAL

The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration has initiated preparation for the upcoming Chandan Yatra of Lord Jagannath at Narendra pond in Puri



COVID-19 TRACKER

Table with 4 columns: Region, Infected, Recovered, Dead. Rows include World, India, and Odisha.

'MISSION IMPOSSIBLE' ACCOMPLISHED

Int'l ATM heist gang busted; 2 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 16: The Commissionerate Police Saturday claimed to have busted an international gang of looters that was involved in the theft of ₹20 lakh from a SBI ATM at Indira Housing Colony in Lingipuri area under Dhauli police limits here April 4.

A four-member team of the city police with the help of their Bangalore counterpart arrested two members of the looters' gang from the capital city of Karnataka.

The accused have been identified as Khokan Molla, 35, and Mijanur Rehman Molla, 39. Khokan is a resident of Bagerhat in Bangladesh while Rehman claims to be a resident of 24 Pargana district in West Bengal.

While addressing a presser here, Twin City police commissioner Saumendra Priyadarshi claimed that the arrest of the two members of the international gang was a major achievement for the city police.

"We had named the whole operation as 'Mission Impossible' by taking into account the involvement of criminals from Bangladesh, who used to escape to the neighbouring country after committing the crime. They used to enter India by road through Tripura and return via Devipur in West Bengal after committing the crimes," Priyadarshi said.

The looters rarely communicate among themselves and leave no clues behind them. That is why the policemen were facing difficulties to track them.

"Three members of this gang were earlier arrested by the New Delhi police on a tip-off from the



Police Commissioner Saumendra Priyadarshi addresses a presser in Bhubaneswar, (R) The two accused in custody OP PHOTOS



Goa police. They had also stolen lakhs from an ATM kiosk," Priyadarshi said.

According to sources, the accused duo along with four others had come to Bhubaneswar around 20 days prior to the ATM theft incident. They visited several ATM kiosks in the city to find out the vulnerable one. After stealing the cash, the accused had fled to Bangalore via Telangana.

The city police had managed to collect a 28-second duration CCTV footage on the ATM theft. They also collected the images of the three other accused who stole the TATA Ace vehicle used to transport the uprooted ATM machine from the kiosk to Daya river bank.

The police identified the accused through their unique attire after examining the CCTV footage and checking the visitors' records at hotels in city through the Sarai App. Subsequently, they contacted their counterparts in Goa and New Delhi and traced the accused duo to Bangalore.

We had named the whole operation as 'Mission Impossible' by taking into account the involvement of criminals from Bangladesh, who used to escape to the neighbouring country after committing the crime. They used to enter India by road through Tripura and return via Devipur in West Bengal after committing crimes

SAUMENDRA PRIYADARSHI | POLICE COMMISSIONER

After visiting 30 hotels in Bangalore, the city police team finally managed to get clues on the whereabouts of the accused. The team arrested two while five others managed to escape, sources said.

The accused have revealed that the mastermind of the gang resides in Bangalore and he draws the blueprint for ATM theft. The mastermind used to collect the booty

and divide the amount among the members of the gang. He sends the shares of the other members of the gang to Bangladesh through illegal channels.

"The same gang was also involved in loot incidents in several other states in India and also in neighbouring countries like Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar," claimed a senior police official.

The police have sought the permission of the court to take the accused duo on remand for further probe. They will seek the help of Interpol and the Bangladesh high commission's office to know more details about the accused. Meanwhile, DCP Umashankar Dash informed the media that at least seven members of the gang visited the capital city several times in the past and stayed in different hotels.

During investigation, the police also came to know that some hoteliers had not verified their identity proof properly. The hoteliers had not informed anything in this regard to the police, sources said.

Chief Secy visits Kotia, asks officials to speed up projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 16: Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra Saturday visited the Kotia group of villages in Koraput district and reviewed the progress of developmental projects undertaken in the area.

The Chief Secretary visited the Panchayat office in Kotia and interacted with the sarpanch and other elected representatives

He put emphasis on the proper implementation of various schemes of the state government for socio-economic development of the locals



Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra during his Koraput visit, Saturday OP PHOTO

He interacted with members of women Self Help Groups (SHGs) and watershed management groups. The Chief Secretary also visited the Panchayat office in Kotia and interacted with the sarpanch and other elected representatives. He put emphasis on the proper implementation of various schemes of the state government for socio-economic development of the locals.

Mahapatra directed the officials to expedite the implementation of the special package announced for the Kotia group of villages. Notably, Odisha and neighbouring Andhra Pradesh are at loggerhead over the ownership over the Kotia group of villages. The dispute is sub-judice in the Supreme Court.

Mahapatra also visited Deomali hills and interacted with people residing there. He emphasised on cleanliness and preservation of natural surroundings. During his two-day visit to Koraput, Mahapatra visited several places in the tribal dominated district including Jeypore, Koraput, Narayanpatna and Bandhugaon and took stock of various developmental projects.

A review meeting was also held in Koraput, wherein collector Abdaal M. Akhtar and other senior officials were present.

Deomali to be developed as a tourist hub, says CS

BHUBANESWAR: Deomali, the highest peak in Odisha and the tallest in the Eastern Ghat range, will be developed as an eco-tourism site.

This was revealed by Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra who visited Deomali, Saturday.

"Today, I visited Deomali hill-top. We had a detailed discussion on how eco-tourism can be developed in the locality with co-operation from the local people," Mahapatra said.

Site selection for the eco-

tourism project has also been done and the Forest department will soon start the work, he added.

"We will build cottages in the locality. A gate has been constructed near Deomali. I had discussions with the villagers to keep the place clean and provide better service to the tourists," the Chief Secretary said.

In the coming days, Deomali will be the most beautiful location in Odisha. People from the nearby village will get employment and earn their livelihood from this project, he added.

The meeting discussed details regarding the construction of medical college and hospital at Koraput, development of Jeypore airport, construction of roads and bridges and implementation of special package for Kotia group of villages.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the progress of work for lift irrigation projects, supply of piped drinking water, livelihood programmes and construction works of Bharatmala project.

The Chief Secretary asked the officials concerned to complete the

first phase work of Raipur-Vishakhapatnam Economic Corridor before the monsoon.

He reviewed progress made on the economic corridor, of which 240 km comes under Odisha. He also directed the officials to disburse the compensation amount to the land owners expeditiously and hand over the plots to the National Highway Authority of India (NHAD) immediately while expressing his satisfaction over the progress of work for the economic corridor project.

Guv's return fuels ministry reshuffle speculation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 16: With Governor Ganeshi Lal returning to the state capital Saturday after a weeklong vacation, speculation is rife about a possible reshuffle of the Naveen Patnaik government in the state.

While Lal is back in the Raj Bhawan, sources in the ruling BJD said some MLAs are told not to leave the capital city though they were not given any assurance by the party president.

The ruling BJD MLAs who have performed extremely well in the recently concluded panchayat and urban elections, are likely to be rewarded with ministerial berths while some ministers may lose their position for not being able to achieve the target in the twin polls held in February and March. A section of leaders in the coastal region have been optimistic and expect a reward from party president Naveen Patnaik.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has asked all ministers to submit performance reports of their departments which has added to the speculation of a possible ministry reshuffle. Patnaik is likely to judge the performance of the ministers from their actions towards fulfilling the promises made by the ruling BJD in its election manifesto.

The ministers who could not achieve target in the Panchayat and Urban polls and also failed to meet promises in the BJD manifesto may be shown the doors, an insider said. Patnaik himself has not opened his mouth on the possible ministry reshuffle.

A section of BJD MLAs argue that the ministry reshuffle is imminent as Patnaik has not gone for any changes in the council of ministers for last three years. Patnaik would complete three years in office of his fifth term May 29.

The BJD leaders opposed to the ministry reshuffle also argue that Patnaik would not go for any changes till completion of the Rajya Sabha elections and Presidential elections.

Weather forecast for Bhubaneswar (BHUB) and Cuttack (CTK) including temperature, humidity, and rainfall.

UPROAR OVER FAKE CERTIFICATES



NSUI activists tussle with police during their attempt to gherao the residence of Higher Education Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo in Bhubaneswar, Saturday, over an alleged scam in which a few students took admission in the BJB Autonomous College by submitting fake disability certificates

Don't deprive poor of rice for Aadhaar link: HC

Orissa High Court takes cognizance of a report published in Orissa POST and orders restoration of benefits under NFSA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, April 16: Orissa High Court has directed the state government to provide food grains to ration card holders under National Food Security Act (NFSA) even if the latter do not have their Aadhaar numbers linked with their bank accounts.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice Murahari Sri Raman taking cognizance of a report 'Aadhaar Seeding Snatches Poor's Rice' published in Orissa POST April 6, 2022 passed the order. The bench directed the commissioner-cum-secretary to the state Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare department to send a fact finding team to Rasulpur block in Jajpur district to ascertain the reason behind depriving the beneficiaries of food grains. It also ordered immediate restoration of

A copy of the High Court Order regarding the restoration of benefits under NFSA for those without linked Aadhaar numbers.

the benefits and sought a compliance report by April 25, 2022.

The report published in Orissa POST stated that over 2,000 bene-

ficiaries in Rasulpur block have been deprived of their quota of rice under NFSA as their Aadhaar numbers have not been linked with

their bank accounts. The report narrates how the PDS dealers have stopped supplying rice to the beneficiaries as per the government order which made it compulsory to see the Aadhaar number of the beneficiaries with their bank accounts. This is against the norms as the state government in its March 28, 2022 order has stated that no one would be deprived of rations due to non-linkage of Aadhaar.

The state government during hearing of the matter April 13 filed an affidavit before the HC while the petitioner stated that many people in the state have been deprived of their quota of rice as their Aadhaar numbers have not been linked with their bank accounts. Petitioner Prafulla Samantara in

State gears up to tackle disasters during monsoon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 16: The state government has started preparation to tackle any possible natural disaster like cyclone or flood during the upcoming monsoon season.

The Water Resources department of the state government has recently asked all district collectors to initiate measures for managing natural disasters during the monsoon.

In a letter to the district collectors, Water Resources department Additional Secretary Subrat Kumar Panda said, "The month of May and June are likely to witness cyclogenesis in the Bay of Bengal, which may have devastating effects on the life and property of the people of Odisha. It is needless to reiterate that preparedness is the key



PIC FOR REPRESENTATION

to mitigate the effects of the tropical cyclones associated with heavy rain-induced floods."

With a view to reduce the destructive effects of cyclones or floods, all preparedness measures are required to be undertaken well

in advance, Panda added.

The first pre-flood preparatory meeting was held under the chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary, Water Resources, Anu Garg April 8.

It has been decided at the meeting that all the field-level engineers to be instructed to identify weak and vulnerable points in river and canal embankments, and take preventive measures, in coordination with district administration, within April 16 and April 26 to counter the impact of possible cyclone or flood.

The collectors were requested to instruct the concerned Sub-Collectors and Tehsildars to coordinate with the field-level engineers of the Water Resources department during the physical verification of embankments, sources said.

Summary of the High Court order directing the state government to restore benefits under NFSA for those without linked Aadhaar numbers.

a public interest litigation (PIL) filed with the HC has stated that the state government has been providing free food grains to the families having ration cards under NFSA due to the unprecedented situation arising out of Covid-19 pandemic.

However, there are many such families who have failed to get a ration card despite their poor financial condition.

The bench hearing the matter directed all the Collectors to ensure that no beneficiary is deprived of the benefits of food security scheme for not having an Aadhaar card or non-linking of Aadhaar with bank account.

Saswata Patnaik, additional government advocate, pleaded on behalf of the state government while advocate Iswar Mohanty pleaded on behalf of the petitioner.

Odisha among states with better reservoir storage



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 16: Thanks to the sustained rainfall well into January this year, the overall water storage position of 140 large reservoirs across India, Friday, is better than the corresponding period of last year in the country as a whole and it is also better than the average storage of last 10 years during the corresponding period.

There are seven reservoirs out of total 140 that have storage at less than 50 per cent of average of last 10 years. These include three (out of 17) from Gujarat; one (out of 16) from Karnataka; three (out of 10) in Odisha and one (out of five) in Rajasthan. The 140 reservoirs are across northern, eastern, western, central and southern regions.

"Only in the western region, the storage during the current year is less than the storage of last year. However, it is better than the average storage of last 10 years during the corresponding period," CWC officials said, adding: "For northern, eastern, central and southern region, the storage position is better than the corresponding period of last year and also better than the average storage of last 10 years during the corresponding period."

There are nine reservoirs in the northern region comprising Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan that are monitored by the CWC. They have a total live storage capacity of 19.37 BCM.

The eastern region includes Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Tripura, Nagaland and Bihar with 21 reservoirs having total live stor-

The live storage available in these reservoirs is 72,902 billion cubic metres (BCM), which is 41 per cent of total live storage capacity of 175.957 BCM of these reservoirs, official data released by Central Water Commission revealed

The last year's live storage for the corresponding period was 66.481 BCM and the average of last 10 years' live storage was 55.717 BCM; which means, the live storage is 110 per cent of the corresponding period of last year and 131 per cent of storage of average of last 10 years

age capacity of 20.09 BCM.

The western region includes Gujarat and Maharashtra with maximum, 46, reservoirs under CWC monitoring having total live storage capacity of 36.41 BCM. The central region includes Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh with 25 reservoirs under CWC monitoring and total live storage capacity of 47.39 BCM.

The southern region comprises Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, two combined projects in both these states, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu with 39 reservoirs under CWC monitoring and total live storage capacity of 52.70 BCM.

The data also shows that states with better storage in terms of percentage than last year for corresponding period are Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, the two combined projects of Andhra Pradesh & Telangana and Tamil Nadu.

First Skill India Int'l Centre in City soon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 16: India's first Skill India International Centre will be set up in Bhubaneswar for training youths with an aim to enhance overseas opportunities for the skilled workforce.

A memorandum of understanding was exchanged between the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the Skill Development Institute (SDI) Saturday in the presence of Union Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

Under this collaboration, the Skill India International Centre will be set up for high-quality training of the youth, especially aspirants from Odisha aiming to work overseas.

The centre will host training facilities to provide skills as per the demand of the international employers in countries like Canada, Australia and the Gulf nations.



OP PHOTO

It will have services like mobilisation, counselling, skill training, pre-departure orientation, foreign language training, placement and immigration and post-placement support.

The Skill India International Centre will also have a wide network of partnering organisations and overseas recruiters to facilitate supply of skilled and certified workforce in other countries.

A National Academy for Skill Teachers will be set up at the SDI campus for skill training of teachers and assessors.

A memorandum of cooperation was signed between the NSDC and Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) to promote international workforce mobility for skilled and certified workers from Odisha to other countries.



An international training centre and two world-class national academies will augment India's ambition of developing a workforce that will not only meet the demand of the country, but also position India as a leading workforce provider to the world

DHARMENDRA PRADHAN | UNION SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP MINISTER

"An international training centre and two world-class national academies will augment India's ambition of developing a workforce that not only meets the demand of the country, but also positions India to be a leading provider of workforce to the world," Pradhan said.

Jharpada oustees to get permanent shops

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 16: Capital city Mayor Sulochana Das held a meeting Saturday with the vendors of Ganesh Bazar in Jharpada who were affected in the eviction drive carried out by the civic authorities earlier April 8.

Representatives of vendors of the area discussed their plight with the mayor in the BMC corporation hall.

The mass requested for compensation and permanent structure for their livelihood which was severely affected after a drive conducted by the Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA).

"Authority is planning to have a permanent structure for all the vendors being covered in the purview of survey. Till that time, you are requested to have patience. The entire system is with you," the mayor said. Vendors expressed their satisfaction over the assurance given by the mayor.

MACHINES OF MELODY



Visitors checking out antique radios and gramophones at the eighth International Radio Fair at Bhanjakala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

'Strengthen COTPA & tobacco control policies'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 16: Coalition for Tobacco Free Odisha, an alliance of civil society organisations & concerned citizens, organised a state level consultation program 'Improving public health by strengthening COTPA and Tobacco Control Policies' here where participating parliamentarians urged the Centre and state governments to take stricter action towards controlling tobacco consumption, Saturday.

The panel was chaired by dignitaries including Rajya Sabha MPs Prashanta Nanda, Munna Khan and Sujeet Kumar (through video conferencing); Khalikot University VC Prafulla Kumar Mohanty; Supreme Court Advocate Ranjit Kumar Singh; Oncologist at HCG Panda Cancer Hospital Krupasindhu Panda; educationist Minakshi Panda; and PECUC Secretary Ranjan Kumar Mohanty.

In an urge to focus on laws for tobacco display in films and OTT, Prashanta Nanda said, "With introduction of digital platforms, the exposure to display of tobacco has increased. There is no limit to the display of such harmful products, be it cigarette, tobacco or alcohol. The OTT platforms specifically are the major platforms to publicise tobacco as there is no censor to it. I urge the policy makers to come up with laws to prohibit the visualization of tobacco in these medi-

ums as there is no limit to the audience of these platforms."

Highlighting tobacco consumption among children, Munna Khan said, "Tobacco and cigarettes are very hazardous to health. Children these days are seen consuming tobacco as it is easily available. They are the future of our nation and protecting them from such hazard is protecting the future. We need to ensure that children are away from this. I have never consumed tobacco as I understand the consequences of it. For people of Odisha, I will definitely bring this issue in Parliament and do my best to strengthen tobacco control policies."

Highlighting the consequences of tobacco consumption, Krupasindhu Panda said, "Death is must but we should not die an unnatural death of our own hands. Currently, there are four Cs causing unnatural deaths i.e. cardiac arrest, casualty, corona and cancer. With tobacco consumption, oral cancer has now become the cancers most diagnosed among people. Health issues caused by tobacco are preterm births, intrauterine growth retardation, prenatal mortality, respiratory illness, neuro behavioral problem, childhood disorder, cancer, depression etc." He also suggested remedies on getting rid of tobacco consumption like awareness, ban of tobacco in workplace, tobacco policies for laborers, new strategies and development in existing policies.

'The Healing Touch' best short film at SOA contest



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 16: Suma Real Media Ltd (SRML), the media arm of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA), will be organising a short film festival and workshop on film making in the city shortly.

A total of 54 entries in Odia were received for a short film con-

test organised by SOA, of which 39 had been short listed in 13 categories. 'The Healing Touch' was chosen as the best short film while Braja Singh was picked as the best actor (male) for his role in 'Jaha Mu Karichhi Taha Mu Paichhi'. Gargi Mohanty was selected as the best actor (female) for her portrayal in 'The Healing Touch'.

A cash award of Rs 50,000 and a citation was presented to the best short film 'The Healing Touch' while other awardees were presented Rs 10,000 each and citation.

Actors Ashrumochan Mohanty, Prithviraj Nayak, Rudra Panigrahi and Jina Samal graced the occasion and gave away the awards.

How safe are City malls from fire?

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 16: The fire mishap in the Keshari Mall Friday night showed the vulnerability of shopping malls in the Capital city to similar eventualities in future.

Though a major hazard was averted, it exposed the lack of fire safety preparedness at such multi-storied buildings in City.

During the visit of the newly elected Mayor Sulochana Das, shop owners complained about lack of proper maintenance and fire extinguishers at the mall. Many shopkeepers alleged that extinguishers have run out of gas.

The incident raised eyebrows

over the maintenance and preparedness at other City malls. It is speculated that these malls, reopened after the lockdowns, could not have spent much time and money towards maintaining the fire equipment. Speaking to **Orissa POST**, staff at a mall said new people employed recently are yet to be trained to operate these equipment.

Regular mock drills by Fire Services personnel at the malls here have also stopped since the onset of the pandemic. During the celebration of fire services martyr's day recently, DG Fire Services Arun Kumar Ray urged the personnel to conduct evacuation drills in fire prone occupancies regularly.



15 places in state log above 40°C

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 16: People bore the brunt of soaring heat and intense humidity as Odisha broiled in the scorching sun Saturday, with at least 15 places recording maximum temperatures above 40°C, the Met office said.

Subarnapur town recorded 43.5°C, the highest in the state. The mercury settled at 43°C in Bolangir and 42.7°C in Angul, a bulletin stated.

The temperature was two notches above normal in Jharsuguda to settle at 42.6°C. Bhubaneswar recorded a maximum of 38.1°C, while it was 38°C in Cuttack, according to the bulletin.

There is some respite in sight due to the possibility of thunderstorms at many places over the next 24 hours, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said.

It added that there would be no large change in maximum temperatures in the next five days.

Fatty liver likely causing surge in serious liver diseases in India

Liver disease has become a lifestyle disease in India, with the incidence of non-alcoholic and alcoholic fatty liver diseases now much higher than Hepatitis B virus as the main cause of liver disorders, said experts here ahead of the World Liver Day.

World liver day is observed every April 19, to spread awareness about liver related disease.

The liver is the second largest and the most complex organ in the body, after the brain. It is a key player in our body's digestive system.

Fatty liver condition occurs when fat builds up in the liver that can cause liver inflammation, and damage your liver and create scarring. In severe cases, the scarring can lead to liver failure.

Among people who drink a lot of alcohol, the condition is known as alcoholic fatty liver disease (AFLD), while among those who don't drink

a lot, it's metabolic dysfunction-associated fatty liver disease (MAFLD), earlier known as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).

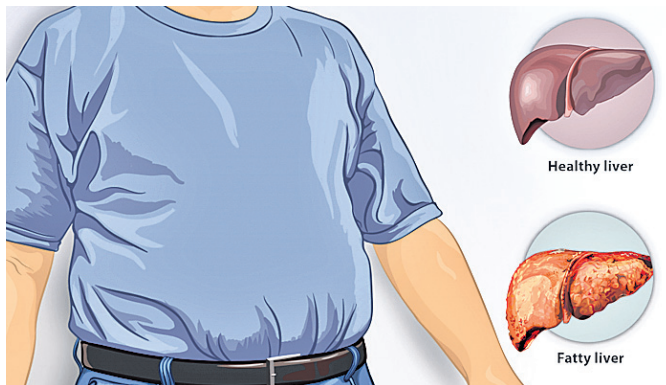
MAFLD is associated with increased all-cause and cardiovascular mortality.

Lifestyle changes involving obesity, sedentary lifestyle, food rich in sugar, calories and fat, and alcohol are the main reasons behind the poor liver health.

According to Dr Bhaskar Nandi, HOD - Liver & Digestive Sciences, Sarvodaya Hospital, Faridabad, till a few decades back, the most common cause of chronic liver disease in India was Hepatitis B that led to liver cirrhosis, liver cancer and liver failure.

"However, fatty liver, a metabolic disorder, now constitutes the largest burden of liver disease today due to changing lifestyle of people," he said.

Nandi added that as many as



"80 per cent of people coming for an ultrasound checkup today are found to have fatty liver disease".

While about one in three of these will progress to chronic liver disease, liver cancer, cirrhosis, or end-stage liver disease, it is difficult to predict which ones will fall in that one-third bracket.

"India is seeing a significant rise in liver problems due to lifestyle

changes. To fight liver disease, it is necessary to change our lifestyle - proper and healthy diet, exercise, avoid drinking alcohol or drink in moderation, increasing our screening," Pankaj Puri, from Fortis Escorts Liver and Digestive Diseases Institute, told IANS.

Often liver disease goes undiagnosed for years, as the initial stages generally have no symp-

India is seeing a significant rise in liver problems due to lifestyle changes. To fight liver disease, it is necessary to change our lifestyle - proper and healthy diet, exercise, avoid drinking alcohol or drink in moderation, increasing our screening

PANKAJ PURI | FORTIS ESCORTS LIVER AND DIGESTIVE DISEASES INSTITUTE

toms and people feel well, and routine blood tests may not show liver abnormalities.

Globally, liver condition is seen in about 25 per cent or one in four adults that often goes undiagnosed, raising the risk for heart disease, according to a new American Heart Association scientific statement.

Nandi said that liver disease is fast becoming a public health prob-

lem for India. In 2015, acute and chronic liver diseases accounted for 2 million deaths worldwide, 18 per cent of whom were from India. The burden of liver disease has consistently been increasing in the country since then.

While Hepatitis B vaccination is commonly given to children for immunisation, it is not popular among adults.

"Every year, more than 1,15,000 people die in India due to hepatitis B related complications. About 4 crore people in the country are carriers of this virus but remain asymptomatic and unaware of the risk they pose to others," Nandi said.

"Unlike in the West where main causes of transmission of Hepatitis B include infected needles and sexual contact, in India, the spread is due to horizontal transmission by staying in proximity with an infected individual, like a family member who is asymptomatic," he noted.

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SHORT TAKES

LENSMAN MURDER

SELF-DEFENCE DRILL

Youth dies of sunstroke

Attabira: A youth died from alleged sunstroke while visiting Bindhyabasini hill to attend the Bindhyabasini Yatra in Sankrida village under Bheden block in Bargarh district, Saturday. The deceased was identified as Kahna Mishra, 31 of Dalbi village. He had been to the hill with his elder sister and niece but fell sick while watching the fair. He was rushed to the Kadobahal govt hospital and later, shifted to VSS Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (VIMSAR) at Burla where he succumbed during treatment. Burla police registered a case and sent the body for post-mortem. Family members alleged that he died due to sunstroke.

CB quizzes two other accused in Bhadrak jail

A 3-member CB team reached Bhadrak sub-jail and started interrogating the two accused separately inside the prison



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, April 16: A team of the state Crime Branch (CB) officials Saturday reached the Bhadrak special sub-jail and started quizzing two other accused in the sensational abduction and murder of cameraman Manas Swain. The two accused identified as Bibek Nayak and Bhagyadhar Nayak will be grilled in connection with the murder and officials will try to garner more evidence from them.

It may be noted here that seven persons including the prime accused Sarmistha Rout have been arrested and lodged in the Bhadrak jail.

The CB had taken Sarmistha on remand twice, but was not able to get information about the alleged memory chip, which is said to be the main reason for the murder. Chandbali police had first arrested three accused, but had not interrogated them. Even the CB had not quizzed the three. On April 13, the CB moved the local court seeking to interrogate the accused. The court granted the CB permission to interrogate the two in jail April 16.

A three-member CB team comprising DSP Kalpana Sahu, Sarat Sahu and Narendra Behera reached the sub-jail at 11.25am and started interrogating the two accused separately inside the jail.

The CB started interrogating the two accused on different angles, trying to ferret out how the two were linked with the main accused and what was their role in the abduction and murder. Besides, the CB also wants to know if they were complicit with the torture to Manas and burying the body in Nayagarh.

On March 29, the CB had produced accused Sarmistha Sethi, Niranjana Sethi (Former Information & Public Relations (I&PR) Director; Technical), Ranjan Nayak and Jhuna Bhoi at Chandbali court and quizzed them about the murder after taking them on a five-day remand. The accused were again taken on remand for three days, April 7.

April 11, the accused were interrogated at Chandbali JMFC court through videoconferencing.

Besides, the statements of the caretaker of the Dayal Ashram were recorded at the Chandbali JMFC court.

Notably, Niranjana Sethi was arrested for his alleged involvement in the murder case. He was the co-conspirator and the mastermind behind the burial of Manas' body and subsequent attempt to shift it. Notably, the 28-year-old cameraman was brought to Bhubaneswar after being abducted from Palaspur village of Bhadrak February 7.

He was allegedly beaten to death at Dayal Ashram, an old age home run by Sarmistha Rout, the prime accused and owner of the web channel where Manas previously worked. His body was exhumed from Ranapur in Nayagarh March 12.

Manas was reportedly in possession of some controversial videos and photos in a memory chip having some sensitive content related to some high-profile people.



Girls learn the nuances of martial arts at an eight-day long self-defence training camp at Larambha College under Attabira block in Bargarh district which concluded Saturday

AIIMS-Bhub satellite centre launches OPD services in Balasore



POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, April 16: Finally, OPD services were started at the newly-constructed building of AIIMS-Bhubaneswar satellite centre at Bamapada in Balasore Saturday.

Doctors will be available at the centre from 8am to 1pm for consultation. The services will be available for two days a week on Saturdays and Sundays because of shortage of doctors.

It was learnt that weekly seven days of OPD services will be made available to patients after all posts of doctors are filled up here.

OPD services are available for only three departments. Currently, the centre is functioning with three departments—General Surgery, Endocrinology and Dermatology. The centre was earlier functioning at the DRDO campus here.

Considering the need and demand of people, super-specialty service will also be provided once in every month or two months. Notably, the OPD services were suspended in view of the Covid-19 situation.

Minor gangraped; three youths detained

Lahunipada: In a shocking incident, a minor girl was gangraped near a creek at Darjing panchayat under Lahunipada police limits in Sundargarh district Friday evening. Police have detained three youths in this connection. According to reports, the girl was going somewhere alone when some youths forcibly took her to a place and raped her taking turns. The family members of the victim filed a complaint at the Lahunipada police station in this regard. Acting on the complaint, police started an investigation into the matter and detained three of the accused. They are being interrogated, police said.

Elderly man held for raping minor

Karanja: Police Saturday arrested a 60-year-old man for allegedly raping a seven-year-old girl in a village under Karanja police limits in Mayurbhanj district. The identity of the accused has not been disclosed by the police. As per reports, the accused found the minor girl alone. Taking advantage of the situation he outraged her modesty. Later, the incident came to the fore when the girl narrated the ordeal before her parents. Her parents lodged a complaint at Karanja police station following which the police detained the accused. Further investigation into the matter is underway, said a police official.

Girl harassed at diagnostic lab

Khaira: A girl was allegedly subjected to sexual exploitation by the owner of a pathological laboratory in Soro of Balasore district, police said Saturday. The matter came to the fore after the survivor hailing from Khaira area lodged a complaint at the Khaira police station. Police Thursday detained the proprietor of the pathological laboratory and questioned him in this connection. When contacted, Khaira police refused to divulge details fearing impediment to the probe.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, KENDRAPARA
At: Ichhapur, Post: Shree Baladevjeew, Email: eerwsskendrapara@gmail.com
Identification No. RWS/108/2021-2022
Letter No.2952/Dated 12.04.22
2nd Corrigendum

No.O-84:- This corrigendum has been made for the NIT-108 invited online vide this office letter No.1750/ Dated.10.03.2022 with date for selling, closing, clarification and opening which was on dt.16.04.2022 (selling date), 29.04.2022 (closing date), 19.04.2022 (clarification date), 30.04.2022 (opening date) as per 1st corrigendum has been amended and to be read as 28.04.2022, 12.05.2022, 30.04.2022 and 13.05.2022 respectively as follows.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Approx.) Rs. In Lakhs	EMD to be deposited online	Class of Bidder	Cost of Tender Paper	Period of completion
1	Execution of 40 LPCD Retrofitting RPWS Scheme to Ramchandrapur under Marshaghai Block in the District of Kendrapara. (JJM Funds)	₹ 59.03	Nil	"B" and "A"	₹ 10000	180 days

OIPR-25004/11/0011/2223 Sd./- (E. B.K. Nayak), Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Kendrapara

यूनियन बैंक Union Bank of India
REGIONAL OFFICE: CUTTACK
M-14, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar- 751003
POSSESSION NOTICE
(For Immovable Property)

[RULE 8(1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES - 2002]

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India, Concerned Branches under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices calling upon the Borrowers/Guarantors in loan A/c mentioned below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest & expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The Borrowers/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Union Bank of India, Concerned Branches for an amount mentioned below with interest thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to the Borrower to redeem the secured assets.

BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrowers/Guarantors	Liabilities due as per Notice (in ₹)	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession	Description of Immovable Properties
BUXIBAZAR BRANCH / Borrowers: 1) Mr. Pradip Chandra Moharana, S/o: Sarat Chandra Moharana, 2) Mrs. Laxmi Priya Moharana, Both are At: Santi Vihar, Kanikara Road, Tulapur, Cuttack, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha-753008	₹15,04,989.15 as on 29.01.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses	04.02.2022 16.04.2022	All that part and parcel of Residential Land and Building situated at Mouza: Nuapada, Tahasil: Cuttack, Tahasil No.: 246, P.S.: Cuttack Sadar, P.S. No.: 99, Dist.: Cuttack, ROR Khatian No.: 614/2618, Plot No.: 2532/6091, Area: Ac.0.036Dec., Plot No.: 2531/6092, Area: Ac.0.056Dec.,
BAJRAKBATI ROAD BRANCH/ Borrowers/Guarantors: 1) M/s. Ayushi Pharmaceuticals, Prop.: Mr. Anil Kumar Das, Plot No.: 1080/1088, P.O.: Buxibazar, Cuttack, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha-753001, 2) Mr. Anil Kumar Das, S/o: Gouranga Charan Das (Prop. of M/s. Ayushi Pharmaceuticals), At: Teramanpur, Talapada, P.O.: Rahama, P.S.: Tirtol, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha-754140, 3) Mr. Batakushna Pradhan, S/o: Late Dhobai Pradhan, At: Chandini Chowk, Juma Masjid Lane, P.O.: Chandini Chowk, P.S.: Purihat, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha-753001	₹12,17,145.16 as on 31.10.2021 with further interest, cost & expenses	06.11.2021 16.04.2022	All that part and parcel of Residential Land and Building situated at Khata No.: 6011/628 of Plot No.: 1061, Mouza: Cuttack Town, Unit No.: 14, Nayasarak, DSRO: Cuttack, P.S.: Lalbag Cuttack, P.S.: Cuttack Sadar, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha, Area: Ac.0.022Dec., in the name of Mr. Batakushna Pradhan, Bounded by North: Bajranglal Sharma, South: Manoharlal Sharma, East: Shankar Bhuta, West: Road

Kissam: Gharabari, Total Area of Two Plots are Ac.0.092Dec., in the name of Laxmi Priya Moharana, Bounded by North: Sub Plot No.: 10 & 11, South: Road, East: Sub Plot No.: 29, West: Road

Place: Bhubaneswar
Date: 16.04.2022
Sd/- Authorised Officer
Union Bank of India

4.5-km stretch claims 60 lives in 5 years



POST NEWS NETWORK

Paradip, April 16: With more than 60 deaths and 100 accidents in the last five years, a 4.5-km stretch in Paradip town joining NH-53 and SH-12 has turned into a deathtrap for commuters.

Lying between Dochhaki (cross-road) and Atharabanki in the port town of Jagatsinghpur, the road faces frequent traffic snarls. A number of large industrial establishments like Paradeep Phosphates Limited (PPL),

Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative (IFFCO) Limited, Arcelormittal Nippon Steel Limited, Adani Wilmar Limited, Goa Carbon Limited, Paradeep Carbons Limited, Paradip Port Authority (PPA) and four major oil terminals including Indian Oil (IOCL)-owned refinery are directly connected to this particular stretch.

Hundreds of heavy vehicles ply through the road every day. However, Terminal square and IFFCO square are said to be the most accident-prone spots on this stretch of road. Despite

frequent accidents taking place almost every day, not a single traffic post has been constructed till now, residents alleged.

IFFCO had earlier applied in 2016 to develop the existing crossroad and also to erect a traffic post at the IFFCO Square. The industrial house had expressed its willingness to spend own fund to develop the crossroad into a world-class traffic post. It had also agreed to upkeep the post including permanently engaging personnel for effective traffic control, on its payroll.

However, it has not yet been accorded permission by the state government and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). When contacted, Paradip Sub-Collector Kanhucharan Dhir said, "We have previously written to the NHAI authorities, but to no avail. So far, they have not given clearance from their side."

IFFCO has been using the said stretch of road from its factory up to Rangiagada railway station for the transportation of fertilisers.

MAN GETS 20-YEAR JAIL FOR RAPE

Jajpur: The court of additional district and sessions judge Saturday sentenced a man to 20 years of imprisonment after convicting him of raping a woman here in the district. The court also imposed a fine of ₹50,000 on the convict. He would undergo an additional jail-term if he fails to pay the penalty amount of ₹50,000, Jajpur additional district judge issued an order in this connection in his final hearing. The accused has been identified as Sabyasachi Behera, a native of Sukinda area. According to the case diary, Sabyasachi kidnapped a woman shopkeeper of Patakura area April 21, 2019 and forced himself on her. Acting on a complaint by the victim, police registered a case and arrested him. Since then, he was under judicial custody. In the final hearing Saturday, Behera was convicted by the court and sentenced with the jail-term.

MAN FOUND HANGING FROM TREE

Bolangir: An elderly man was found hanging from a tree at Mahulapati village under Turekela police limits in Bolangir district Saturday. Police rushed to the spot and recovered the body. Subsequently, it was sent for post-mortem to a nearby hospital. The identity of the deceased is yet to be ascertained. There have been several rumours of murder in the case. It is being suspected that someone might have killed the man and later hanged his body to portray the whole incident as a case of suicide. The matter came to the fore after locals spotted the body hanging from a tree and alerted the police.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
Office of the Superintending Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar
Email Address: semechcircle104@gmail.com
e-Procurement Notice No.- SEM/MDB-01(A)/2022-23, SEM/MDB-01(B)/2022-23, SEM/MDB-01(C)/2022-23, SEM/MDB-01(D)/2022-23, SEM/MDB-01(E)/2022-23

No.A-59:-

1. Name of the Work	: Mechanical Gate Works
2. No. of Works	: 05 (Five)
3. Category of executors	: SSI Units registered under DIC/ NSIC/ MSME for Irrigation Shutters/ Hydro Mechanical Gates.
4. Bid Identification No.	: SEM/MDB-01(A)/2022-23, SEM/MDB-01(B)/2022-23, SEM/MDB-01(C)/2022-23, SEM/MDB-01(D)/2022-23, SEM/MDB-01(E)/2022-23
5. Estimated Cost	: Rs. 14,58,209.23/-, Rs. 17,63,636.00/-, Rs. 19,70,404.03/-, Rs. 11,59,732.97/-, Rs. 12,15,979.20/-
6. Period of completion	: 30 (Thirty) Calendar days
7. Date & time of availability of bid documents in the Portal	: From dt. 18.04.2022 (10.00 AM) to dt. 27.04.2022 (5.30 PM)
8. Last date/time for receipt of bid in the Portal	: Dt. 27.04.2022 (up to 5.30 PM)
9. Date and Place of opening of Bid	: Dt. 28.04.2022 (04.00 PM onwards in the O/o the undersigned)
10. Name of the Officer inviting Bid	: Superintending Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tenders.odisha.gov.in>
Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Mechanical Circle Bhubaneswar
OIPR-32405/11/0001/2223

यूनियन बैंक Union Bank of India
Regional Office: Cuttack
M-14, Baramunda Housing Board Colony, Bhubaneswar - 751003, Ph.: 0674-2537900
MEGA E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE / IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of movable /Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 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) and Guarantor (s) that the below described movable /immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/ symbolic/physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India (Secured Creditor) will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 20.05.2022 between 11.00 AM to 5.00 PM for recovery of outstanding dues to the Union Bank of India from the Borrowers and Guarantors mentioned below. The reserve price and the earnest money deposit is stated in the column respectively.

Sl. No.	BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrowers / Guarantors / Mortgagees / Co-Applicants / Co-Obligants / Outstanding Dues	Description of Properties to be Auctioned	Reserve Price/ EMD / Bid Increment	Account Details for EMD Submission
1.	TURANGA BRANCH, Mob.: 7327939418/ Borrowers: 1) Mr. Ramakanta Das, 2) Mr. Amulya Das, S/o.: Late Trinath Das, At.: Ambamunda Sahi, Rantalei, PO.: Rantalei, PS/Dist.: Angul, Odisha, PIN-759132 / Guarantor: Jagat Jyoti Rath, S/o.: Hrudananda Rath, At.: Hulurusingha, P.S./Dist.: Angul, PIN-759122 / Outstanding: ₹9,16,923/- as on 31.08.2021 with further interest, cost & Expenses	Land & Building over Plot No.: 2912/3896, Khata No.: 505/502, Mouza: Rantalei, TS/PS/Dist.: Angul	₹18,15,000/- ₹1,81,500/- ₹10,000/-	Account No.: 665101980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0566519
2.	TURANGA BRANCH, Mob.: 7327939418/ Borrower: Mr. Amulya Naik, S/o.: Late Rankasingha, PO.: Mouza: Rankasingha, TS: Banarpal, PS/Dist.: Angul, Odisha, PIN-759123 / Guarantor: Mr. Abinash Naik, S/o.: Amulya Naik, At.: Rankasingha, PO.: Kukudanga, PS/Dist.: Angul, Odisha, PIN-759123 / Outstanding: ₹10,58,565/- as on 01.09.2021 with further interest, cost & Expenses	All that piece and parcel of Land & Building over Plot No.: 574,575&578, Khata No.: 138/108 in Chaturbhuj Naik, At.: Rankasingha, PO.: Mouza: Rankasingha, TS: Banarpal, PS/Dist.: Angul, Odisha, PIN-759123 / Guarantor: Mr. Abinash Naik, S/o.: Amulya Naik, At.: Rankasingha, PO.: Kukudanga, PS/Dist.: Angul, Odisha, PIN-759123 / Outstanding: ₹10,58,565/- as on 01.09.2021 with further interest, cost & Expenses	₹8,05,000/- ₹80,500/- ₹10,000/-	Account No.: 665101980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0566519
3.	ARILO BRANCH, Mob.: 6303807345/ 1) Mrs. Minati Sarangi, W/o.: Shri Srikant Sathpathy, 2) Mr. Srikant Sathpathy, Address: Village: Madhapur, PO./Dist.: Jagatsinghpur / Madhapur, PO/PS/Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha / Outstanding: ₹14,84,204/- as on 31.03.2021 with further interest, cost & Expenses	Land and Building belonging to Mrs. Minati Sarangi, W/o.: Mr. Srikant Sathpathy over Khata No.: 258/60, Plot No.: 320/1016 of Mouza: Madhapur, PO/PS/Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha	₹71,90,000/- ₹7,19,000/- ₹10,000/-	Account No.: 347221980050000 IFSC Code: UBIN0934721

Date & Time of Inspection of Properties for intending purchasers: Before 19.05.2022 on any working day during banking hours
DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION: 20.05.2022 between 11.00 AM to 5.00 PM
Last date & Time of EMD submission: On or before the Commencement of E-Auction
Details of encumbrances if any : NIL
For registration and login and bidding rules visit <https://www.mscecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp>, www.unionbankofindia.co.in.
For further detailed any query please contact: Mr. Rishikant Prasad, Mob.: 9769987208

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6)/ RULE 9(1) OF STATUTORY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002
This May also be treated as notice u/r 8(6) / Rule 9(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to the borrower/s and guarantor/s of the said loan about the holding of E-Auction Sale on the above mentioned date.
Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 16.04.2022
Sd/- Authorized Officer, Union Bank of India

FOCUS INFLATION

PREVENTING DEBT DISASTERS



Skyrocketing food and energy prices, together with widening sovereign bond spreads, have placed balance sheets in emerging-market and developing economies under severe strain. To avoid disaster, the international community must urgently support bold debt restructuring

The world's breadbasket is being wrecked by war. Ukraine and Russia together account for 30 per cent of global wheat and barley exports, and they are leading exporters of other grains. The two countries also are the source of nearly 70 per cent of the world's sunflower oil exports, while Russia accounts for 13 per cent of all crude petroleum exports. As the conflict in Ukraine rages and sanctions on Russia escalate, food and energy prices – which were rising even before Russia invaded Ukraine – are spiking in countries far away from the front lines, with devastating implications for the world's poor.

The Ukraine war is having two distinct effects on food markets. First, it has caused prices to soar. Last month alone, world wheat prices surged by nearly 20 per cent. This trend will be exacerbated by the second effect: likely shortages of food supplies and agricultural inputs from Russia and Ukraine.

Since the conflict began, Ukrainian farmers have lacked access to crucial resources – from fertilizer to fuel – not to mention facing insecurity and violence. With the wheat planting season fast approaching, there is good reason to expect significantly reduced crop yields. And, given that Russia is a leading fertilizer exporter, other producers' yields might suffer as well.

Even the supply that is available will not necessarily make it to the countries that need it. Port closures and other transport barriers have impeded Ukrainian exports, while sanctions on Russia threaten to impede its trading activities. For countries that import directly from Russia and Ukraine, severe food-supply disruptions are likely, as it will be difficult to secure replacements from alternative suppliers quickly. Meanwhile, oil and gas prices have risen sharply.

Ultimately, it is the world's poor – 70 per cent of whom live in Africa – who will bear the brunt of these shocks. Refugees across Africa and the Middle East, and people in post-conflict or conflict-affected

countries, are particularly vulnerable. But in any low-income country, energy and food expenditures account for at least half of total expenditures for most households, meaning that the current crisis could well increase global poverty.

Moreover, while rural populations are typically less vulnerable to food-import shortages than their urban counterparts, a series of droughts, including in Madagascar and the Horn of Africa, have already left people in many food-producing areas hungry. The World Food Programme estimates that 13 million people are facing hunger in the Horn of Africa alone.

Governments are responding to this emerging crisis with a combination of policies. Countries with universal consumer subsidies or price controls are enforcing them. Others are implementing targeted subsidies, including cash transfers, in order to support their most vulnerable citizens. The effort to bolster food security at home has also led to limits on food exports. And countries with strategic reserves of food might deploy them, though many have already exhausted their stocks.

All of these schemes carry a price. Food-export bans threaten

to drive up international prices and weaken local producers' incentives. And cash transfers can prove costly, especially if private companies have oligopoly power; in the face of inelastic demand for food, these firms might decide to raise prices beyond international market rates.

There are better options. In the medium term, many African countries can develop better-functioning food systems and transform the agricultural sector to limit food dependency and bolster food security. The key will be to address longstanding issues relating to land, access to capital, and competition, including in the transport and distribution sectors.

But perhaps the single best way to protect people from poverty and food insecurity is to build a more inclusive and efficient social-protection system. The problem is that most developing and emerging-market economies lack the necessary fiscal space, especially after years of strain from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even countries that are benefiting from higher prices in one area are largely suffering from higher prices in another. Oil-exporting countries, such as those in the Middle East and North Africa, are heavily dependent on food im-

ports. Likewise, major food exporters tend to depend on energy imports, leaving them with few gains from rising food prices.

But countries that are net importers of both food and energy are in the most difficult position. Their external deficits are now set to widen, and their already-elevated debt levels will rise further – a trend that lower global GDP growth will exacerbate. The spread on sovereign borrowing has doubled for many developing and emerging-market economies. And unlike the advanced economies, these countries cannot typically borrow in their own currencies.

Making matters worse, the United States Federal Reserve is expected to accelerate its interest-rate hikes, thereby tightening global financial conditions. As a result, borrowing costs for developing and emerging-market economies are set to soar, potentially triggering balance-of-payment and debt crises.

To avoid disaster, the international development community should increase financial support to vulnerable countries. At the same time, the world must urgently support much bolder debt restructuring for emerging-market and developing economies. The G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatments has thus far not provided the impetus for debtors and creditors alike to embark in debt restructuring.

The invocation of force majeure – which the United Nations International Law Commission defines as an unforeseen or unforeseen-but-inevitable event, which makes it impossible for the debtor to meet its obligations – can help here, by precluding creditor holdouts. Otherwise, most of developing countries' resources – including any international financial support they receive – could end up in the pockets of foreign bondholders.

Rabah Arezki is a senior fellow at Harvard Kennedy School. Mahmoud Mohieldin is UN Special Envoy on Financing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

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Rabah Arezki & Mahmoud Mohieldin

EVEN COUNTRIES THAT ARE BENEFITING FROM HIGHER PRICES IN ONE AREA ARE LARGELY SUFFERING FROM HIGHER PRICES IN ANOTHER



Aakar Patel

The world is not blind to what is happening in India today and it is uncomfortable with it. India's outstanding reputation as a democracy and a friendly and well-meaning nation can no longer cover up daily events which tarnish it

“Pain is the hammer of the Gods to break a dead resistance in the mortal's heart.”

SRI AUROBINDO



At a Crossroads

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom or USCIRF is an independent and bipartisan US federal government agency. It monitors the right to freedom of religion abroad and makes policy recommendations to the US President, Secretary of State, and US Congress. And then it tracks the implementation of these recommendations. Independent means it is not part of the US federal government and bipartisan means that both the major parties, the Democrats and Republicans, have representation on the body.

In 2020, USCIRF put India on a short list of 13 nations which were “of particular concern.” The other nations are Pakistan, Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, Nigeria, North Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Vietnam. India landed on the list, the USCIRF report said, because of discrimination against Muslims through law (it cited the CAA and NRC), restrictions on propagation and violence on the issue of cow slaughter and the lynchings. The USCIRF recommended that the US government “impose targeted sanctions on Indian government agencies and officials responsible for severe violations of religious freedom by freezing those individuals' assets and/or barring their entry into the United States under human rights-related financial and visa authorities.” It may be remembered that after the 2002 pogrom in Gujarat, the state's chief minister was put on a US visa ban list, and that was because of the USCIRF recommendation. The decision to put India on the list came with some dissent. USCIRF commissioners Gary Bauer (a Republican) and Tenzin Dorjee (a Tibetan refugee) wrote that they were concerned by what was happening in India but the US should not sanction India but instead engage with it. The recommendation for sanctions was not taken up by the administration.

In 2021, USCIRF again retained India on the “countries of particular concern” list, saying that religious freedom in India continued down “negative territory.” It cited the pogrom in Delhi, the State violence against the CAA protests, the suspension of work by Amnesty International India (of which I am a part) under State attack and the acquittal of all in the Babri case among other things. Once again it recommended sanctions against Indian government officials and agencies. Once again, this recommendation was not taken up by the new Biden administration. This time nobody in USCIRF dissented. One commissioner, Johnnie Moore wrote: “I love India. I have floated early in the morning down the Ganges in Varanasi, walked every alley in Old Delhi, stood in awe of the architecture in Agra, sipped tea next to the Dalai Lama's temple in Dharamsala, circled the shrine in Ajmer, and looked in awe at the Golden Temple. All along the way, I have met Christian brothers and sisters who serve the poor selflessly, often in difficult circumstances. Of all the countries in the world, India should not be a “country of particular concern,” or CPC. “It is the world's largest democracy and it is governed by a pristine Constitution. It is diversity personified and its religious life has been its greatest historic blessing. Yet, India does seem to be at a crossroads. Its democracy – still young and freewheeling – is creating through the ballot box difficult challenges for itself. The answer, of course, is for India's institutions to draw upon their rich history to protect their values. India must always resist allowing political and inter-communal conflict to be exacerbated by religious tensions. India's government and people have everything to gain and absolutely nothing to lose from preserving social harmony and protecting the rights of everyone. India can. India must.”

Next month, the USCIRF will make its recommendations for 2022. It is in this background that we should examine the comments made by the US Secretary of State a few days ago at a press conference in which S Jaishankar and Rajnath Singh were present. Blinken said: “We regularly engage with our Indian partners on these shared values, and to that end we are monitoring some recent concerning developments in India, including a rise in human rights abuses by some government, police, and prison officials.”

Our government was upset enough by this for Jaishankar, after he returned to India, to say that India was also concerned by the human rights situation in the US. This was seen as a great comeback, and perhaps it was. But it does not address the issue that has been building up in the US. Given the events of the past few months, it is possible and perhaps even likely that India will remain on the list of nations that the US government will be asked to engage with and sanction on human rights.

For us as a sovereign nation, we can swallow what is said about us and ignore it or push back vocally as Jaishankar did. However we must be prepared for this to continue. The world is not blind to what is happening in India today and it is uncomfortable with it. India's outstanding reputation as a democracy and a friendly and well-meaning nation can no longer cover up the daily events which tarnish it. Naturally, we can assure the world that what is happening is an aberration and that the government is against it, but that is not what we have chosen to do. We have chosen this path we have taken. For this reason there will be many in Jaishankar's ministry who will be waiting to see what the USCIRF says next month, and what it recommends and whether, this time, the US administration chooses to again ignore or to act.

WISDOM CORNER

- “All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.” **ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER**
- “To be really great in little things, to be truly noble and heroic in the insipid details of everyday life, is a virtue so rare as to be worthy of canonization.” **HARRIET BEECHER STOWE**
- “Humanity has the stars in its future, and that future is too important to be lost under the burden of juvenile folly and ignorant superstition.” **ISAAC ASIMOV**

WORDSWORTH

■ Sockdolager

This is one of the more famous of the set of extraordinary words that were coined in America in the early years of the nineteenth century, along with such gems as absquatulate, hornsoggle and skeddadle. As well as its literal meaning of a heavy or knock-down blow, sockdolager also came to mean something that was exceptional in any respect, especially, the OED says, a particularly large fish. James Fenimore Cooper wrote in 1838 in Home as Found: “There is but one ‘sogdollager’ in the universe, and that is in Lake Oswego”. A related sense given in Bartlett's dictionary in 1848 was “a type of fish hook.” Lexicographers are reluctant to speculate about where it came from (as usual there's little evidence), but we may hazard a guess that it's a combination of sock, meaning to give somebody a blow, with doxology, the little hymn of praise sung towards the end of a church service. The particular claim to fame of sockdolager is that a close relative of it was supposedly almost the last word President Lincoln heard. In Tom Taylor's play Our American Cousin, there occurs the line “Well, I guess I know enough to turn you inside out, you sockdologising old man-trap”, and as the audience laughed, John Wilkes Booth fired the fatal shot.

SPECTRUM RESEARCH

It's time to upgrade our PhD curriculum

Research plays a pivotal role in development and economic growth of any country. In a developing country like India the importance of qualitative research becomes all the more essential. To accomplish the desired output, it is of utmost importance to enhance the quality of training being imparted on doctoral students as they are the hands behind the research. Now the question is does the contemporary Indian PhD curriculum provide enough technical training to understand and cope with the existing scientific problems? To answer this, it is crucial to know how a current doctoral study looks like. PhD in India generally takes 4-5 years for completion. First year is devoted to course work where the students have to study some compulsory and elective subjects. Unfortunately, these courses are not research specific rather general and subjective. In the upcoming years they have to do research, publish their results and present them in seminars and conferences. Finally, they need to prepare and submit a doctoral thesis.

The first year could be a game changer if utilised properly in preparing students more specifically on understanding critical scientific problems, developing techni-

cal, communicative and instrumental skills instead of any formal course work. If we decode the basis of actual scientific work that a research scholar carries out then these skills are essential - (a) understanding the working principles and functions of various scientific instruments/theories; (b) operational knowledge on relevant instruments/apparatus; (c) learning scientific and data processing software; (d) data analysis and interpretation knowledge; (e) presentation skill; (f) scientific paper writing skill; (g) theoretical knowledge on scientific progress in concerned field of research.

Unfortunately, students learn all these important skills either from their seniors or supervisors due to lack of specified curriculum for PhD. The current first year courses in PhD are teaching-based curriculum and it's high time to shift to training-based curriculum. Teaching only talks about the instruments or methods but training demonstrates. If the first year is completely devoted to training then experienced researchers can be produced who can devote their rest years to meaningful high impact research without lacking any technical skill which is one of the main reasons for low confidence

during research.

Supervisors and seniors are the experts in the concerned research area in every lab. Hence, they could prepare a curriculum for new students and train them the relevant scientific tools in the first year. Even professors of similar research areas can form groups and train newcomers. It could be in the form of workshop, not classroom teaching. The new student should be able to operate scientific instruments, process and analyse data using software, ready to write scientifically and able to present data at the end of the workshop. This small change could bring big difference by empowering research scholars with specified skills instead of wasting their time in formal courses.

We as academicians, researchers and policymakers are always talking about high impact research and comparing other countries' research outputs. One of the greatest scientists of India, Bharat Ratna Prof CNR Rao expressed concerns in his article: Reflections on our Science (Science Reporter, May, 2018) and talked about David King's article (Nature 430, 311-316, 2004) that both India and China started from 1% of scientific contribution to the world but now China is competing with the US (the highest contributor).

We cannot expect improvement without improving the existing system. If the conventional system is unable to breed desired results, then we can't be blind spectators and just wait for some miracle to happen. We have to implement changes and bring in new policies and advanced curriculums in order to see advancement in scientific research. There are several other issues like science policy and funding that need to be addressed but we can't ignore training the hands behind research. Expecting quality research without quality training and mere classroom-based course may not bring desired results. There might be a few exceptions but why to rely on exceptions when we can produce exceptional talents through proper training. It's high time to re-think and redesign the first year PhD courses in order to bring a paradigm shift in scientific research. Our intellectuals, the science ministry, the directors and the department heads of scientific institutions should contemplate on breaking the old course customs.

The writer is a research scholar, Department of Surface and Plasma Sciences, Charles University, Prague.
Email: pankajksamlofficial@gmail.com



Pankaj Kumar Samal

EXPECTING QUALITY RESEARCH WITHOUT QUALITY TRAINING AND MERE CLASSROOM-BASED COURSE MAY NOT BRING DESIRED RESULTS

Hostile Musk & Twitter

Sir, This refers to “Twitter mulls poison pill to thwart Musk”, Orissa POST, April 16. Maverick tycoon and the world's richest person Elon Musk has made a hostile bid for Twitter, claiming his aim is to “to help freedom in the world.” But, the board of directors of Twitter are leaving no stone unturned to block the hostile takeover of the microblogging social media platform. Musk's relationship with the Twitter is quite long. After holding numerous polls on it, the Tesla CEO had recently suggested a raft of changes for the platform. He was also going to join its board of directors but later abandoned the plan. Later, in a letter to Twitter Chairman Bret Taylor, Musk, said, “Since making my investment, I now realise the company will neither thrive nor serve this societal imperative in its current form. Twitter needs to be transformed as a private company. My offer is my best and final offer and if it is not accepted, I would need to reconsider my position as a shareholder.” The company seems to have been thinking about using ‘poison pill’ protocol to kill the attempt of hostile bid. The firm announced the plan to let shareholders purchase additional stock. When the plan gets activated, the shareholders get the right to buy additional shares at a discounted rate. The tactic helps to avoid hostile takeovers as it dilutes the stake of an acquirer by creating surplus shares in the market. It tends to create a ‘pill’, which makes a takeover too hard to go for financially, and it also turns the hostile takeover into an expensive and complex process.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Virus threat remains

Sir, The daily COVID cases have again surged in some parts including Delhi and some other states in north India. The positivity rate has jumped from 0.5 per cent to 2.7 per cent in Delhi. This surge is a warning of another wave in the country. As per the IIT Kanpur reports, the fourth wave in India could possibly come in the month of June. The government needs to intensify the number of tests per day and ramp up the drive for administering a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. According to experts laxity in wearing masks and following social distancing norms and being reluctant to vaccinate are contributing to the surge in cases. People need to follow all the COVID-appropriate behaviour so that the impact of the fourth wave could be minimised.

Deba Prasad Nayak, CUTTACK

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

national



Attention is being diverted from the problems that the country is facing today. Unemployment and the rate of inflation are increasing. The rupee is getting weaker. If you want to run a bulldozer, run it on inflation and unemployment and run it against social evils

RAHUL TO VISIT TELANGANA

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will visit Telangana on May 6-7. MP and in-charge of party affairs in Telangana, Manickam Tagore announced Saturday that Rahul Gandhi will address a public meeting at Warangal May 6. The next day he will hold a meeting with the party leaders in Hyderabad



of the day quote

I appeal to the honourable prime minister to give a message to the nation to reduce the rising communal tension in the country and to the state governments to take action against mischievous elements who are creating nuisance in the name of religion

All measures are being pursued by the government for "political resolution" of the conflict with the ULFA (I)

Whether it is Article 370 or The Kashmir Files, it is often said attempts are being made to create communal discord. I have made it clear who are responsible for creating communal discord. The pseudo-secular political parties create an atmosphere of division with their appeasement politics and I have spoken about them in my tweets

SHORT TAKES

Army personnel killed in encounter

Srinagar: An Army personnel was killed in an encounter between security forces and terrorists in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir Saturday, police said. Acting on a specific input about the presence of terrorists in Watnag area of Kokernag in the south Kashmir district, security forces launched a cordon and search operation there, a police official said. He said the search operation turned into an encounter after the hiding terrorists fired upon the forces, who retaliated. In the exchange of firing, one army man was killed, the official said. He said further details were awaited.

4 firefighters hurt

Hazaribag: Four firefighters were critically injured as they were dousing a massive fire that broke out in a forest in Jharkhand's Hazaribag district Saturday morning, officials said. The fire broke out at the Bigha Forest along the Hazaribag-Gaya Road in Chouparan police station area, they said. The fire ravaged trees spread over six hectares of land, causing huge loss to the department, said Divisional Forest Officer RN Mishra. A team of firefighters was working on dousing the flames which turned severe around 9 am. Four members of the team were injured during the operations, he said.

Hearing deferred

Srinagar: The hearing in application for reopening of trial against former militant Farooq Ahmad Dar alias Bitta Karate in the murder case of Kashmir Pandit Satish Tickoo was deferred Saturday as the judge was on leave. The hearing was deferred to May 10. Tickoo's family has moved to the court requesting a status report on all first information reports (FIRs) registered against Dar. The matter was earlier heard on March 30 when the court issued a notice to the J-K government.

Two arrested

New Delhi: Two professional chain snatchers were arrested on Saturday after an investigation that involved scouring of footage from 20 CCTV and analysis of over 300 vehicles, police here said. The two accused had on Saturday morning attempted to snatch the chain of a 62-year-old woman who was out on a walk with her husband in the outer Delhi's Mianwali Nagar area.

COMMUNAL TENSIONS

Shocked at PM's silence: Oppn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 16: Leaders of 13 Opposition parties Saturday expressed deep concern over the recent incidents of hate speech and communal violence in the country, and urged people to maintain peace and harmony.

In a joint statement, the leaders including Congress president Sonia Gandhi, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, and her Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand counterparts M K Stalin and Hemant Soren, also raised concern over the manner in which issues relating to food, dress, faith, festivals and language "are being deliberately used by the ruling establishment to polarise society".

They also demanded stringent punishment for the perpetrators of communal violence in the country. "We are shocked at the silence of the Prime Minister, who has failed to speak against the words and actions of those who propagate bigotry and those who, by their words and actions, incite and provoke our society," they said in the joint statement.

"This silence is an eloquent testimony to the fact that such private armed mobs enjoy the luxury of official patronage." Asserting their collective resolve to work together to strengthen the bonds of social harmony that "defined and enriched India for centuries", the Opposition leaders said, "We reiterate our commitment to combat and confront the poisonous ideologies which are attempting to entrench divisiveness in our society."

"We appeal to all sections of the people to maintain peace and foil the sinister objective of those who wish to sharpen communal polarisation. We call upon all our



party units across the country to independently and jointly work for maintaining peace and harmony," they said in the joint appeal.

Incidents of communal violence were reported from some parts of the country on the occasion of Ram Navami on April 10. There have also been sharp divisions over the Hijab row in Karnataka and some other parts of the country and violence on the JNU campus over serving of non-veg food in the hostel mess on Ram Navami.

"We are extremely anguished at the manner in which issues related to food, dress, faith, festivals and language are being deliberately used by sections of the ruling establishment to polarise our society," the statement said.

"We are extremely concerned with the growing incidents of hate speech in the country by people, who appear to have official patronage and against whom no meaningful and strong action is being taken," they said in their joint statement.

On the recent incidents of communal violence, they said, "We are deeply concerned, as reports indicate that there is a sinister pattern

in the areas where these incidents have occurred. Incendiary hate speeches preceded the aggressive armed religious processions unleashing communal violence."

They also expressed pain at the manner in which social media and the audio-visual platforms "are being misused with official patronage to spread hatred and prejudice". The Opposition leaders said they reiterate their firm conviction that the country will prosper only if it respects, accommodates and celebrates its many diversities in full measure.

Signatories to the joint statement also include: Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, National Conference president Farooq Abdullah, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, Communist Party of India general secretary D Raja, All India Forward Bloc general secretary Debabrata Biswas, Revolutionary Socialist Party general secretary Manoj Bhattacharya, IJML general secretary P K Kunhalikutty, and Communist Party of India(ML)-Liberation general secretary Dipanker Bhattacharya.

Baby dies as minister's procession delays auto

The procession was taken out to welcome Usha Sricharan, who was visiting her constituency for the first time after being inducted into the state Cabinet

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati, April 16: An eight-month-old baby died due to the delay in reaching hospital as the auto-rickshaw carrying her was stopped allegedly for a procession of Andhra Pradesh's newly appointed Women and Child Welfare Minister, Usha Sricharan.

The incident occurred near Kalyandurgam in Anantapur district Friday night. According to Ganesh and Eshwaramma, they were taking their sick child to the Rural Development Trust (RDT) hospital when their auto-rickshaw was stopped by the police for the minister's procession.

The couple alleged that a half-hour delay in taking the baby to the hospital resulted in her death. The procession was taken out to welcome Usha Sricharan, who was visiting her constituency for the first time after being inducted into the state Cabinet earlier this week.

The police had stopped traffic for the procession and as a result the auto carrying the child also got stuck. A Dalit group along with the baby's parents and the deceased's body staged a protest outside the hospital demanding action against the police officers responsible for the tragedy, while the district police denied that it had stopped the traffic.



The main opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP) called it a 'murder' by the minister and police. TDP President and former Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu questioned why a sick baby was not allowed to reach the hospital on time. "What is the answer you have for the grief-stricken parents of the infant," he asked the government.

TDP General Secretary and Chandrababu Naidu's son, Nara Lokesh, demanded action against the police officers who stopped the traffic and became the cause of the baby's death.

Modi to visit Gujarat from Monday

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be on a three-day visit to his home state of Gujarat from April 18, during which he is scheduled to attend a number of programmes. The Prime Minister's Office said Modi will visit the command and control centre for schools in Gandhinagar April 18 and, the next day, he will dedicate to the nation and lay the foundation stone of multiple development projects at Banas Dairy Sankul in Diyodar in Banaskantha. The same day, he will lay the foundation stone of WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine in Jamnagar.

Man, mother immolate selves over 'harassment'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, April 16: A man and his mother immolated themselves allegedly due to harassment by a public representative, his followers and a police officer in Telangana's Medak district.

The shocking incident occurred Saturday at a lodge in Kamareddy town. The lodge staff alerted the police after they found smoke emanating from the room in which they were staying.

The police found both the persons charred to death. They were identified as Ganganth Santosh (40) and his mother Padma (65), residents of Ramayampet in Medak district.

Santosh, who was into real estate business, and his mother recorded a selfie-video and wrote a suicide note before self-immolation. In the six-page suicide note and selfie-video posted by him on Facebook before setting themselves ablaze, they said the harassment by Ramayampet municipal chairman Jithendar Goud, his followers and police forcing them to take the extreme step.

In the selfie-video, Santosh showed pictures of seven persons, saying they were responsible for their death. He said though he complained to the police against these persons, no action was taken as they belonged to the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS).

- The shocking incident occurred Saturday at a lodge in Kamareddy town
- The police found both the persons charred to death
- In the selfie-video, Santosh showed pictures of seven persons, saying they were responsible for their death

He hoped that justice would be done at least after they were dead.

Santosh said he started business with a person named Basam Srinu and since the latter did not have money, Jithendar Goud gave him the money. He said Jithendar Goud wanted 50 per cent share in the business and when he refused, the municipal chairman started harassing him.

Santosh said he was called to the police station for a Facebook post of someone else and then Circle Inspector Nagarjuna Goud took away his phone and tried to implicate him in the case.

"The CI handed over my phone data to Jithendar Goud and his men started creating problems for me using the data. They have been harassing me for one year. They did not allow my business to run. I had to take loans. They harassed my family members. Unable to bear this harassment and betrayal by those we trusted, we are killing ourselves," he said.

WATER THERAPY



An elephant cools itself with water on a hot day in Jammu

PTI PHOTO

NIA chargesheets three ISIS recruiters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, April 16: The NIA Saturday filed a supplementary chargesheet before a special court here against three people for their alleged involvement in radicalising and recruiting gullible Muslim youth into the ISIS terrorist group.

They also raised and received funds to finance the visit of the radicalised youths to Syria, a spokesperson of the National Investigation Agency said. Muhammad Tauqir Mahmood and Zohaib Manna of Bengaluru, and Mohammed Shahab of Bhatkal in Karnataka have been charged under sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), the spokesperson said.

The case was registered by the NIA in September 2020 after ex-amination of Dr Abdur Rahman in a case of the Islamic State Khorasan Province which led to unravelling of an ISIS module, the official said. During this, names of various people responsible for radicalising and funding the visits of Muslim youth from Bengaluru and Karnataka to ISIS areas such as Syria, had emerged, the spokesperson said.

NIA in September 2020 after ex-amination of Dr Abdur Rahman in a case of the Islamic State Khorasan Province which led to unravelling of an ISIS module, the official said. During this, names of various people responsible for radicalising and funding the visits of Muslim youth from Bengaluru and Karnataka to ISIS areas such as Syria, had emerged, the spokesperson said.

Covid among kids: Experts say no need to panic

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 16: Amid concerns over children getting infected with coronavirus as schools reopened, health experts said there was no need to panic they mostly have mild illnesses and recover with just symptomatic treatment.

They, however, stressed that the children who are eligible to get vaccinated against Covid must get the job. The health experts said consistent and appropriate use of masks, implementation of a standard protocol for sanitisation and hand washing are the key pillars of Covid-appropriate behaviour.

"There is no need to panic as data from past waves have clearly shown that children, even if they

contract COVID-19, have mild illness and recover spontaneously with just symptomatic treatment," AIIMS Director Randeep Guleria said.

Therefore, eligible children should take the vaccine. But then even those who have not been vaccinated should not panic as chances of them getting a severe infection is very low, he said. Dr Chandrakant Lahariya, a physician-epidemiologist and public health specialist said, "We need to remember that the (news of) children contracting Covid is getting some attention because schools are open.

"However, even when schools were closed an estimated 70 to 90 per cent of children had already got the infection as we know through various seroprevalence surveys."



It is known that children are as susceptible to SARS-CoV-2 infection just like adults. But COVID infec-

tions among children are mild and mostly asymptomatic, he asserted. This situation has not altered

There is no need to panic as data from past waves have clearly shown that children, even if they contract COVID-19, have mild illness and recover spontaneously with just symptomatic treatment

RANDEEP GULERIA | AIIMS DIRECTOR

with the emergence of any subsequent variant. Even with new variants children continue to be at low risk. There is no reason to be concerned about some reports of a few children testing Covid positive in a few schools, the doctor said.

"At this stage of the pandemic, empowered with scientific and epidemiological knowledge and un-

derstanding, COVID-19 infection should not be a concern. The outcome of the infection should be criteria for decision making," Dr Lahariya said.

Additional Director General of ICMR Samiran Panda pointed out that global evidence suggests schools as "non-drivers" of Covid transmission in the community. Consistent and appropriate use of masks, implementation of a standard protocol for sanitization and hand washing must be practised by students and school staff alike, he said.

While masks are not recommended for children under five years, six to 11-year-olds may wear a mask depending on their ability to use them safely and appropriately.

ONE MONTH AT HELM

GOLDEN HARVEST



Labourers work on the wheat grain brought after harvesting at a wholesale grain market in Amritsar, Saturday. PTI PHOTO

300 units of free power for Punjab households

The state has already been providing free power to farmers, besides 200 free units to the Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and BPL families



Chandigarh, April 16: On completing 30 days of its helm in Punjab Saturday, the AAP government led by Bhagwant Mann announced 300 units of free electricity from July 1 for all categories of household consumers.

This was one of the first crucial pre-poll sops announced by AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal June 29, 2021. The state has already been providing free power to farmers, besides 200 free units to the Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and BPL families.

In front-page newspapers ad-

vertisements in almost all major dailies, the government announced to provide free power, besides highlighting its achievements that comprise the launch of anti-corruption helpline, which Mann launched March 23, the martyrdom day of freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru.

Opening the helpline - 9501-200-200 - Mann, whose party swept to power winning 92 of the 117 seats, said peo-

ple should not say 'no' if they are asked to pay bribe. Instead, they should make a video and send it to the given number, through WhatsApp.

The other prominent achievements include announcement to fill 25,000 new government jobs, regularisation of service of 35,000 contractual workers and the rollout of doorstep delivery of ration for the poor; the model the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Delhi

had tried to implement but had to stop following objections by the Centre. A day earlier, the government announced to transfer more than Rs 2,000 crore to the bank accounts of farmers towards minimum support price (MSP) payments. A government statement said Rs 828 crore had already been transferred to their accounts so far.

The timeline for another major pre-poll promise of providing a stipend of Rs 1,000 per month to all women above 18 years of age is yet to be made public by the government. This bonanza is likely to cost over Rs 15,000 crore annually to the government whose financial crisis is set to worsen with a debt likely to cross Rs 3,00,000 crore.

Banking largely on freebies to woo the electorates, the AAP had also promised to suitably compensate financially Anganwadi and ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activists) workers.

After staking claim to form the government, Mann promised AAP

would provide a good Cabinet and make historic decisions.

However, the ever increasing salary and pension burden and rising debt and interest leave scope for development, admit officials.

As per official figures, the total outstanding debt of Punjab as on March 31 was projected at Rs 2,52,880 crore, which is 42 per cent of the GSDP for 2020-21 and the outstanding debt is likely to be Rs 2,73,703 crore in 2021-22, which is 45 per cent of the GSDP.

Twenty per cent of the annual budget is being spent only to pay the interest on the loans.

As per the latest findings of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, the state's financial crisis is set to worsen with the debt likely to reach Rs 3.73 lakh crore by 2024-25.

The government officials told IANS that the state's debt has increased by Rs 1 lakh crore in the past five years under the previous Congress government, largely owing to populism.

1L farmers get free power connections in a year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, April 16: The Tamil Nadu government has set a record by providing one lakh free power connections to farmers in less than a year's time and ensured the participation of equal number of ryots in enhancing the state's prospects on the farm front, Chief Minister MK Stalin said Saturday.

Termining this as "a very big achievement" in a short span of time, he said this unique feat far surpassed the performance of the decade-long rule of the AIADMK.

"This has been possible due to the efforts of Electricity Minister V Senthil Balaji, the officials and staff of TANGEDCO (state-owned power utility) and farmers," the Chief Minister said in video conference interaction with them from here.

"Many were doubtful on whether one lakh free power connections could be provided to farmers in a year's time, when the electricity Minister V Senthil Balaji proposed



to achieve the target. Even I was skeptical. But, the Minister has proved that he is capable of achieving the target," the CM said.

After announcing to provide one lakh new connections to farmers, he had launched the initiative on September 23 last year and gave sanction orders to 10 farmers on the occasion. The government had achieved the target hardly within a year's time. "The move will not only benefit one lakh farmer families but also spur the state's agrar-

ian growth. When viewed in this aspect, the achievement is immeasurable," Stalin said. Till 1990, the farmers paid for the power they had consumed. And there were 12,09,543 connections then.

Former Chief Minister M Karunanidhi announced to provide free power connections to farmers to enhance agricultural productivity and improve farmers' well being, he said. During 2001 to 2006, the then government provided about 1,62,479 connections. But be-

tween 2006 and 2011 the then DMK government gave 2,09,910 connections and in 2010-11 fiscal alone, 77,158 connections were given to farmers, the Chief Minister said. But during its 10 years rule, the AIADMK regime had ensured only 2,21,579 connections from 2011-21.

"That is, on an average only 22,100 connections were provided per year. No new connections were provided to those who had applied," Stalin claimed. As on March 31, 2021, a total of 4,52,777 applications were received from farmers and following this, he had assured in September last year to take expeditious steps to provide one lakh connections in 2021-22 fiscal and accordingly launched the scheme. "Launching a scheme is not an achievement but ensuring the benefits fully reach the beneficiaries is real achievement. The connections were provided by March without any let up despite the pandemic and north east monsoon imposed hardships," he said.

Sasikala knocking on all doors for comeback

THE ESTRANGED AIADMK LEADER HAS BEEN MEETING SENIOR FUNCTIONARIES OF THE POWERFUL THEVAR COMMUNITY WHICH SHE BELONGS TO

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 16: The former interim general secretary of the AIADMK, VK Sasikala, who was expelled from the party, has been knocking on all doors for a comeback to the party fold. However, the stiff resistance from the faction led by former CM Edappadi K. Palaniswami seems to be a major obstacle in her entry to the party.

She has, according to sources close to her, met senior functionaries of the 'powerful' Thevar community which she belongs to. As per the sources, the meeting was held at her T Nagar residence and the community elders have promised to pull the strings for her re-entry into the party.

It may be noted that the Thevar community of Tamil Nadu is strong in southern parts of the state and has been voting for the AIADMK. However in the 2021 Assembly elections, the party lost miserably in its strongholds and political pundits have opined that the Thevar community had played soft peddle which had affected the party's



prospects in south Tamil Nadu.

The poster boy of the Thevar community in the state and former CM O. Panneerselvam also had to face the ire of the community with the party candidate losing in his home turf Bodinaikar in Theni district during the urban local body polls. Immediately after the urban polls, a meeting of AIADMK district office bearers was held at the farm house of Panneerselvam and a resolution was passed for the re-entry of Sasikala. This, according to AIADMK office bearers, was at the behest of the Thevar community. While Panneerselvam was present in the meeting, he

denied having any role in passing the resolution. His brother O. Raja who was the district level office bearer and the chairman of AIADMK controlled milk cooperative society of Theni was expelled from the party after he met Sasikala immediately after the Theni meeting.

Meanwhile, Sasikala's plea that expulsion from the AIADMK was not valid according to the party constitution was dismissed by a Chennai court. Following which, former minister D. Jayakumar who is closely associated with Palaniswami immediately called upon Sasikala to accept the court verdict and not to dream of a re-entry into the party. However, sources in the AIADMK told IANS that a strong pressure from the Thevar community cannot be overlooked by the party and the re-entry of Sasikala into the party fold will become a reality in the days to come. The estranged leader has the support of the powerful Kanchi Sankara Mutt and this has helped her garner support within the RSS, BJP combine in the state.

R. Padmanabhan, Director, Socio Economic Development Foundation, a think tank based out of Madurai, while speaking to IANS said, "AIADMK now need a leader with a presence and Sasikala has that. Being the aide of late Chief Minister J. Jayalalitha, she knows all the tricks of the trade and if someone is willing to join the party why should she be kept out. I think the ground is now suited for her to stage a grand comeback."

Health Melas to be held in Punjab from April 18



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Apr 16: Punjab Health Minister Vijay Singla Friday said 'Health Melas' will be organised in the state from April 18 and said many diseases can be prevented by early diagnosis and timely referral and management.

Singla said lack of awareness has been found to be one of the major underlying causes of many diseases.

Giving details, he further Health Melas would be held at the block level where information on various diseases and their preventive measures will be provided, along with other healthcare services.

These melas or fairs will prove important for creating awareness about different schemes and programmes of the government, he said, according to an official statement.

Besides Health and Family Welfare, departments of Food and Supplies, Youth Affairs and Sports, AYUSH, School Education, Women and Child Development, Information and Public Relations, Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Development will participate in these melas, Singla said.

The minister stressed on the need to increase health awareness among the people for prevention of various communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department, Raj Kamal Chaudhari said detailed instructions have been issued to all deputy commissioners of the state regarding successful organisation of these Health Melas.

The melas aim to attract a huge number of people desiring to avail quality healthcare services with free essential pathological tests and medicines, he said.

Harbhajan to spend his RS salary on education of farmers' daughters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, April 16: Rajya Sabha MP and former cricketer Harbhajan Singh Saturday said that he will contribute the salary he will get as a member of the Upper House towards the education of farmers' daughters.

Singh, who was elected to Rajya Sabha last month, said he will do everything he can for the betterment of the country.

"As a Rajya Sabha member, I



want to contribute my RS salary to the daughters of farmers for their education & welfare. I've joined to contribute to the betterment of our nation and will do everything

I can. Jai Hind," he tweeted.

Singh was among the five Aam Aadmi Party candidates who were elected unopposed to Rajya Sabha from Punjab. At the time of filing his nomination papers, he had said his focus would be on promoting sports and improving sports-related infrastructure.

Singh was a former spinner of the Indian cricket team. Hailing from Jalandhar, he also captained Mumbai Indians and Kings XI Punjab in the IPL.

ANTI-HINDI AGITATION IN TN: THE ACTION REPLAY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 16: The past few days saw an action replay from Tamil Nadu political parties against Union Home Minister Amit Shahs recent comments on having Hindi as the alternative to English.

Political parties such as the ruling DMK, opposition AIADMK, PMK, MDMK and others came out against Shah's statement. The DMK's daily, 'Murasoli', on its part, came out with an article against Shah's views. According to DMK MP Kanimozhi, the imposing link language will not unite the country, but instead break it.

The state BJP leaders themselves had said the party does not accept imposing Hindi on the people of Tamil Nadu. A couple of years ago, Shah had said "it is very essential that the entire country has one language which becomes its identity in the world" and that only Hindi could be such a uniting force.

Political parties in states like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka saw it as an attempt to impose Hindi on them and declared their intent to launch an agitation against it. The DMK and PMK said 'one nation, one language' would prove disastrous for the country.

As more and more leaders spoke out against his remarks, Shah clarified that he never sought imposition of Hindi on other regional languages and had 'only requested' that Hindi should be learnt as second language along with one's mother tongue. In a clear bid to pacify the regional parties, Shah said he himself comes from Gujarat, a non-Hindi state.

Earlier, a proposal in the draft New Education Policy (NEP) of the Central government for compulsory teaching of Hindi in schools under the three-language formula had also triggered a row. It was modified after states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and West Bengal expressed opposition.

According to DMK spokesperson and MP, TKS Elangovan, among Indian languages, Tamil has the qualification to be the language for global identity as it is the official language in Sri Lanka, Singapore and India. While a large number of Indians speak Hindi, it is equally true that a large number of citizens do not, he said.

Incidentally, to answer the issue of the large number of Hindi speakers, DMK founder CN Annadurai had said if that was the case, then crowd should have been the national bird and not the peacock.



Be that as it may, the anti-Hindi agitation had its roots in Tamil Nadu way back in 1930s - even before Independence. The erstwhile Madras Presidency had witnessed agitations when Hindi was sought to be introduced as a subject in schools when late C. Rajagopalachari was the CM of the Indian National Congress government.

The move was opposed by EV Ramasamy and the Justice Party and the agitation went on for three years. Two protesters lost their lives and over 1,000 people were arrested.

Within the government there were two views - one in support of teaching Hindi and the other making the subject optional.

However, in 1939, the Congress government resigned, protesting against Britain's decision to make India a party to the war against Germany. The next year, the British government withdrew the Hindi teaching order.

The second phase of the anti-Hindi agitation, again led by Ramasamy and DK, was during 1946-1950 whenever the government tried to bring back Hindi in

schools. In a compromise, the government decided to make Hindi an optional subject and the protesters stopped.

Later in 1953, the DMK protested the renaming of the Kallukudi town into Dalmiapuram (after industrialist Ramkrishna Dalmia) on the grounds that it signified the exploitation of South by the North.

In 1963, against the passage of the Official Languages Act, the DMK led by Annadurai launched a protest. A DMK member, Chinmasamy, immolated himself in Trichy district.

People were apprehensive about knowledge of Hindi being the major criteria for Central government jobs mobilising students in large numbers against Hindi. Aggravating the fears, Congress CM M. Bhaktavachalam brought in the three-language formula - English, Tamil and Hindi.

The major anti-Hindi protest erupted again in Tamil Nadu in 1965 against Hindi becoming the sole official language.

In Madurai, a clash erupted between protesting students and Congress cadres, resulting in riot and arson spreading throughout the state. Railway compartments, Hindi boards were burnt and there was looting of public property. The

Congress government treated the protest as a law and order problem and tried to quell it by police force, which in turn fuelled the protests. As per the state government figures, about 70 persons were killed during the protests.

The agitation had its effects on the Central government headed by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, as two Ministers - C. Subramaniam and O.V. Alagesan - resigned from their posts.

While Shastri accepted the resignations and forwarded them to President S. Radhakrishnan, the latter refused to accept them. Radhakrishnan also advised Shastri not to precipitate the issue further.

Later, Shastri announced Jawaharlal Nehru's assurance of continuing with English in interstate communication and the civil services exams. The protests slowly ebbed.

The agitation, spearheaded by the DMK and the students, was one of the major reasons for the Dravidian party coming to power in the state in 1967, displacing the Congress. Congress stalwart and former CM K. Kamaraj was defeated at Virudhunagar constituency by a DMK student leader, P. Sreenivasan. That election ended Congress rule in Tamil Nadu, till date.

of the day quote

Religious conversions are increasing in Goa and marginalised people are being targeted

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

The farmers should get MSP under Swaminathan commission's C2 formula, only then will farming become profitable for farmers

BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA | FORMER HARYANA CM

The present political situation in Maharashtra would not have arisen had a few BJP leaders been sent to jail for alleged wrongdoings

EKNATH KHADSE | NCP LEADER

SHORT TAKES

RSS leader hacked to death

Thiruvananthapuram: Nearly 24 hours after a Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) activist was murdered in Ellapully of Kerala's Palakkad district, a popular RSS activist was hacked to death by five bike-borne men on Saturday. Sreenivasan, 45 was attacked in his shop with swords and knives, police said. Hearing the cries of Sreenivasan, when people came rushing, they saw one person sitting on a bike waiting for his accomplices, who were inside the shop.

Interstate drug trafficker held

New Delhi: Delhi police has arrested an interstate drug supplier and confiscated 15 kg of cannabis from his possession, an official said Saturday. The accused was identified as Surjeet (28), a resident of Uttar Pradesh's Etah district. Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (South Delhi) Harsha Vardhan said that a tip-off regarding movement of an interstate drug peddler near MB Road, Saket was received on April 15 after which the police immediately swung into action and constituted a team to nab the accused.

Manipur CM expands Cabinet

Imphal: Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, here on Saturday, expanded his Cabinet by inducting six more ministers. Governor La Ganesan during a ceremony at the Raj Bhavan administered the oath of office and secrecy to the new ministers -- H. Dingo Singh, Letpaok Haokip, Dr. Sapam Ranjan Singh, Th Basanta Singh and L Susindro Meiteo, all from the BJP and Khasim Vashum from Naga People's Front, the saffron party's ally.

Six terror suspects nabbed

Barpeta (Assam): Six suspected terrorists having links with an Al-Qaeda network in Bangladesh were arrested in Barpeta district of Assam, police said Saturday. Superintendent of Police Amitava Sinha said the six suspects having links with the 'Al-Qaeda in Indian Sub continent' (AQIS) were nabbed from a madrasa at Howly on Friday.

Man shot dead

Kokrajhar (Assam): A 60-year-old man was shot dead and his son critically injured in Kokrajhar district of Assam, police said Saturday. The incident happened in Kachudola village in Kazigaon police station area around 10 pm on Friday, they said.



Central agencies are being used on a big scale in two states of the country. One is West Bengal and the other is Maharashtra. It is clear those who are ruling the country wanted power in these two states at any cost

SHARAD PAWAR | NCP CHIEF

IED DEFUSED

The security forces detected and defused an improvised explosive device (IED) Saturday in J&K's Rajouri district. The police had received intelligence inputs regarding a terror activity



Clashes at Delhi Hanuman Jayanti procession

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 16: Clashes broke out between two communities during a Hanuman Jayanti procession in northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri area Saturday, leaving several police personnel injured.

Police said there was stone-pelting and some vehicles were also torched in the violence that occurred at around 6 PM. Additional police forces have been rushed to Jahangirpuri and other communally sensitive areas.

Delhi Police PRO Anayesh Roy said that it was a traditional procession taken out on Hanuman Jayanti every year. "When the procession reached Kushal Cinema, a clash broke out between two communities. Stones were also pelted," Roy said.

"The police deployed with the procession intervened and brought the situation under control but because of the stone pelting, some po-



licemen were injured and were taken to hospital for treatment." The situation is under control. All senior officers are on the spot. Since it is a sensitive area, additional police forces have been made available," he said.

According to the information so far, around 5-6 police personnel and a couple of civilians have been injured, said an official. In a purported video of the incident, several people could be seen pelting stones during the procession. Some are seen brandishing swords on a

street while others were hurling abuses and a police siren could also be heard in the background. PTI could not independently check the authenticity of the video.

Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana said that strict action will be taken against rioters and requested citizens not to pay heed to rumours and fake news on social media.

"In today's incident in NW District, the situation is under control. Adequate additional force has been deployed in Jahangirpuri and other sensitive areas. Senior officers have been asked to remain in the field and closely supervise the law & order situation & undertake patrolling," Asthana tweeted.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also spoke to the Commissioner of Police and Special Commissioner (law and order) and directed them to take all necessary action following the violence, sources said. The Delhi Police has also ap-

prised the top functionaries of the Union Home Ministry about the situation. The home ministry is keeping a close watch on the situation and gave necessary directions to the Delhi Police, the sources said. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said that the incident is extremely condemnable and appealed to all to maintain peace.

He said the Lieutenant Governor has assured him that all steps are being taken to ensure peace and that guilty will not be spared. "The incident of stone-pelting on Shobha Yatra (procession) in Delhi's Jahangirpuri is extremely condemnable. Strict action should be taken against the guilty. Appeal to all - maintain peace and hold each other's other," Kejriwal tweeted in Hindi.

Some BJP leaders, including Kapil Mishra and Delhi's party unit spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor, alleged that it was the handiwork of illegal Bangladeshi migrants living in the area.

Delhi sees over two-fold rise in new infections



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 16: With the national capital reporting 366 fresh Covid cases at a positivity rate of 3.95 per cent Friday, Delhi has seen over two-fold rise in new infections in the last one week, as per the health bulletin released by the Delhi government.

On a positive note, for the third consecutive day, no Covid related death was reported from the city, with its overall Covid death toll remaining static at 26,158.

On Thursday, a total of 325 fresh Covid cases were reported at a positivity rate of 2.39 per cent.

From April 8, when the city reported 146 fresh Covid cases at a positivity rate of 1.39 per cent, cases more than doubled to 366 on Friday.

The daily caseload has been on the rise for the last few days with the positivity rate also jumping from 1.34 per cent on April 4 to 3.95 per cent on Friday.

On April 9, a total of 160 cases were recorded at a positivity rate of 1.55 per cent. The caseload

On Thursday, Delhi reported the highest number of fresh cases in 40 days at 325, with a positivity rate of 2.39 per cent

dipped slightly on April 10 to 141, before rising again from Monday. On April 12, the city reported 202 cases at a positivity rate 1.71 per cent, which went up to 299 cases at 2.49 per cent on April 13.

On Thursday, Delhi reported the highest number of fresh cases in 40 days at 325, with a positivity rate of 2.39 per cent. On the same pattern, the number of home isolation cases has shown an upward trend in the last one week.

As per the health bulletin, the number of home isolation cases rose to 685 on Friday from 574 on Thursday. The figures of home isolation cases stood at 574 on April 14, 504 on April 13, 474 on April 12 and 447 on April 11.

Five of family found dead in UP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Prayagraj/Lucknow, April 16: Five members of a family, including three children, were found dead at their home in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj district, police said Saturday.

The incident took place in Khagalpur village under Nawabganj police station area on Friday night, they said. Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav attacked the BJP-led Uttar Pradesh government over the incident, saying the state has "drowned in crime".

Replying to Yadav, a senior police official said a preliminary probe indicates that the head of the family killed the others before committing suicide. Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said the truth behind the incident will be known once the probe is completed.

Superintendent of Police Abhishek Agarwal said Rahul (42), his wife Priti (38) and their daughters Mahi (15), Pihu (13) and Kuhu (11) were found dead at their home. A forensic team and a dog squad are at the spot for investigation.

Senior Superintendent of Police (Prayagraj) Ajay Kumar said police received information about the incident around 7.30 am. "The body of the house owner, Rahul, was found hanging from the ceiling with a saree and it had no injury marks. Three chairs were stacked where his body was found, indicating that he committed suicide.

"The bodies of Rahul's wife and three daughters bore injury marks inflicted by a sharp-edged weapon, which suggests murder. Both these angles are being probed," Kumar said.

Seven teams have been formed to probe the case and the bodies have been sent for a post-mortem examination, he said. According to Rahul's sister and brother-in-law, he was embroiled in a dispute with his in-laws for a while, the police said. After the news broke, SP president Yadav targeted the BJP government over the law and order situation in the state.

SUMMER DELIGHT



A vendor shows a sliced watermelon at his roadside shop on a hot day in Karad

PTI PHOTO

Hindi row: Telangana leaders dare Shah

Some political leaders have slammed the BJP for what they call its double-standards on the language issue, and dared the party to start imposing Hindi from Gujarat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, April 16: Telangana is considered as mini-India because of its true cosmopolitan nature and the language sentiments here not being as strong as in Tamil Nadu or Karnataka. But Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent statement that Hindi should be the alternative to English for communication among Indians has drawn the ire of all.

Political parties and academicians see this as an attempt to impose a particular language on India though unity in diversity is the country's strength. They warn that this regional chauvinism will boomerang. Some political leaders have slammed the BJP for what



they call its double-standards on the language issue, and dared the party to start imposing Hindi from Gujarat.

The ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) has come down heavily on the BJP for doing politics over language, saying the saffron party wants to decide not only what one should eat and wear; but also the language one should communicate in. "Why don't we let people of our great nation decide what to eat, what to wear, who to pray to and what language to speak," said TRS working president K.T. Rama Rao, who warned that language chauvinism or hegemony will boomerang. He also believes that rejecting English will be a great dis-

service to the youngsters of this nation who have global aspirations.

"Already our students in different states are missing the English language to be competent. While it is the wish and will of citizens to practice what they want, imposition is not right. After Amit Shah spoke, we have seen on national channels many BJP MPs toting the line of the one nation one language theory. That's more dangerous than the agenda Amit Shah has brought. This questions the identity of states and different regional languages," TRS leader Manne Krishank said. He also believes that the BJP is adopting dual standards on the language issue. "In February, the Gujarat gov-

ernment took a decision that all sign boards should be in Gujarati. The government of India ruled by the BJP is pushing states that they should practice Hindi, whereas Gujarat is talking about Gujarati. Instead of preaching states down south, they should start from Gujarat if they really believe in practicing what they preach. Let them start from Gujarat," said Krishank, who is the convener of the social media wing of the TRS and also chairman of the Telangana State Mineral Development Corporation (TSMD).

"It's an absolutely uncalled for remark by Amit Shah against the very spirit of the Indian Constitution. Not just the federal concept of the Constitution, but the very spirit of unity in diversity. Enforcing a particular language upon the entire country, particularly in southern India, is an attempt of expansionist imperialism. I mean, they want to somehow take control of the region and therefore they are using language now. But I think India is mature enough to understand this dubious politics of region, religion and now again language. This is essentially to establish their dominance," said senior Congress leader Dasoju Sravan Kumar.

Angry over excess salt, man kills wife

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thane, April 16: A man allegedly killed his 40-year-old wife at their residence in Bhayandar township in Maharashtra's Thane district in a fit of rage as a food item made by her and served to him in breakfast was very salty, police said on Saturday.

The incident occurred on Friday morning in Phatak Road locality in Bhayandar East, following which the police have arrested the accused, they said.

"The man, identified as Nilesh Ghagh, 46, strangled his wife, Nirmala, to death around 9.30 am after having his breakfast. He was angry as the 'khichadi' (a food item made of rice and lentils) cooked by her and which she served to him in the breakfast contained too much of salt," an official of the Mira Bhayandar-Vasai Virar police commissionerate said.

He killed her using a long piece of cloth, he said. After being alerted, the police reached the spot and sent the woman's body for post-mortem to a local government hospital, the official said, adding that the police were ascertaining if there was any other provocation for the attack.

BUILDING LOVE FOR LEARNING

Parents prefer to read out to kids books they liked in childhood: Study

78% of parents surveyed in India said that reading to their child helps them to bond and connect

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 16: Many parents in India prefer to read their children books they enjoyed in their own childhood, rather than choosing newer titles, according to a new study by Oxford University Press (OUP).

The survey, which gathered the views of 4,000 parents across India, the UK, Australia, Hong Kong and China, formed part of OUP's second annual 'Gift of Words' campaign, which aims to encourage parents, family, and friends to celebrate and share the power of lan-

guage and reading, especially following a second year of disruption to education due to Covid.

In the global study, almost four in 10 (37 per cent) parents said that they did not know how to find out what the latest books are, and almost half (47 per cent) prefer to re-read books to their child, rather than look for something new.

It isn't just parents who favour familiar books: six in 10 (56 per cent) said their children preferred them to revisit the same books at story time, and half (48 per cent) of those whose children read independently said their children prefer to re-read books to themselves, according to the survey.

The parents surveyed in India reflected a similar sentiment. However, over 70 per cent of these parents preferred reading physical books to their children rather than



audio books or websites.

The research also revealed the power of reading in helping young people to make sense of the world around them. More than 75 per cent of parents surveyed in India, see

reading to their child as an opportunity to discuss difficult or sensitive topics with them and 85 per cent look for books that teach their child about wider society or have a meaningful message at their heart.

The top three reasons parents cited for reading to their child were building a love for learning and reading, improving literacy and vocabulary, and developing communication skills.

Seventy eight per cent of parents surveyed in India said that reading to their child helps them to bond and connect, and 83 per cent wished they had more time to read to their child, the survey found. Both these results were significantly higher than their global counterparts, highlighting the importance placed by Indian parents on building strong reading habits for their children, OUP said.

Similar to their global counterparts, parents surveyed in India cited the lack of sufficient support materials for reading at home (10 per cent) as a reason that they don't read to their child. While nearly 14

per cent stated that they didn't know how to find out about the latest books.

Fifty per cent of the parents surveyed in India stated that reading for school discourages their children from reading for pleasure. When asked what their favourite book or author was to read to their child, parents named classic stories from Enid Blyton and J K Rowling's Harry Potter series. The Panchatantra fable series also proved popular.

Nigel Portwood, CEO of OUP, said about the study: "It's clear that more must be done to support parents in accessing materials for reading at home - including helping them to identify new titles that they can read alongside family favourites - to ensure that all children experience the benefits that reading has to offer."

international



The sooner the democratic world recognizes that the oil embargo against Russia and the complete blockade of its banking sector are necessary steps towards peace, the sooner the war will end
VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

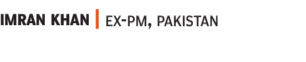
COACHELLA IS BACK

Revelers in thong bodysuits, sporting glitter eyeshadow and sheathed in neon parted late into the night Friday as the first Coachella since the pandemic's onset got underway in the California desert



of the day quote

This is an insult to the 22 crore Pakistani people. Let's thwart the foreign conspiracy for regime change and take the country towards elections. Let the people of Pakistan decide their government



We have gone through difficult times, two years of pandemic, and today we feel the repercussions of a war on the other side of the world, but we will overcome these obstacles



After President Trump left office, I thought the days of calling others "sithhole" countries were over. As an Indian-American immigrant, I'm disgusted to hear this UPenn Professor define Indian-American immigrants, and all non-white Americans, in such insulting terms



SL struggles to combat forex crisis; CSE shut

Sri Lanka is facing its worst economic crisis since gaining independence from the UK in 1948. The economic crisis also triggered a political turmoil in the island nation with citizens holding nationwide street protests for weeks over lengthy power cuts and shortage of fuel, food and other daily essentials and demanding ouster of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, April 16: The Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) will remain temporarily closed for a week from Monday to provide investors an opportunity to have more clarity and understanding of the current economic conditions in crisis-hit Sri Lanka that would help them to make informed investment decisions, it was announced Saturday.

The stock market will remain temporarily closed for a period of five business days from April 18, 2022, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Sri Lanka (SEC) said in a press release. The SEC said it carefully considered the grounds that have been adduced by them and has evaluated the impact the present situation in the country could have on the stock market, in particular the ability to conduct an orderly and fair market for trading in securities. The SEC is of the view that it would be in the best interests of investors as well as other market participants if they are afforded an opportunity to have more clarity and understanding of the economic conditions presently prevalent, in order for them to make informed investment decisions, the release said.

Therefore, acting in terms of



The Board of Directors of the CSE called upon the SEC to temporarily close the stock market citing the present situation in the country

SL is on the brink of bankruptcy, saddled with dwindling foreign reserves and \$25 billion in foreign debt due for repayment over the next five years. Nearly \$7 billion is due this year only

Govt had suspended repayments of foreign debt, including bonds and government-to-government borrowing, pending the completion of a loan restructuring programme with the IMF

the relevant provisions, the SEC decided to direct the CSE to temporarily close the stock market for a period of five business days commencing from April 18, it said. President Rajapaksa has defended his government's actions, saying the foreign exchange crisis was not his making and the economic downturn was largely pandemic driven by the island nation's tourism revenue and inward remittances waning.

Lankan Army vows to protect Constitution

Colombo: The Sri Lankan Army Saturday said they would thoroughly uphold the Constitution and not resort to violence amidst the anti-government protests across the island nation against the worst economic crisis.

Referring to the social media speculation that the military may be used by the government to launch a crackdown on the week-long protest near the presidential secretariat, the Sri Lankan Army, in a statement, said it would not resort to violence to quell the anti-government demonstrations.

"Troops, as everyone witnessed in the past few days, have not at all interfered with any of those peaceful protesters or organisations, nor have they acted against the interests of the State as disciplined members of an organisation which brought peace



to this country through immense and invaluable sacrifices," according to the statement.

The Army also denied that speculation that it was currently undergoing training to assault and combat the protesters. The statement comes after former Army Commander Sarath Fonseka commented that the troops must not obey illegal orders inferring a crackdown on the protesters.

NEW LOCKDOWNS IMPOSED

Shanghai sees record symptomatic cases

REUTERS

Shanghai, April 16: China's financial centre Shanghai reported a new record number of symptomatic Covid-19 cases Saturday as the country imposed new lockdowns, underscoring its "dynamic clearance" approach to Covid control.

The Zhengzhou Airport Economic Zone, an industrial area in the central province of Henan that houses manufacturing facilities of companies including Apple Inc supplier Foxconn, announced a 14-day lockdown Friday "to be adjusted according to the epidemic situation."

Shanghai reported a record 3,590 symptomatic cases and 19,923 asymptomatic cases for April 15. The asymptomatic case number was up slightly from 19,872 cases a day earlier

Foxconn is the trade name of Hon Hai Precision Industry Co Ltd. Only personnel with valid passes, health codes and proof of negative Covid tests will be able to leave the zone during the period, though "special vehicles" will be able to travel normally for work reasons, economic zone authorities said in a post on an official WeChat account.

SHORT TAKES

Ashraf elected Pak House speaker

Islamabad: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader and former Prime Minister Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has been elected as the new National Assembly Speaker Saturday, Samaa TV reported. The seat fell vacant April 3 after the resignation of Asad Qaiser who, hours before the Supreme Court's deadline for the vote of no-confidence motion was to expire, addressed the assembly to announce the decision, reported The Express Tribune. "I am liable to the Constitution and the most important demand of the oath is to protect the sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan," he said.

Biden raises crude oil royalty rate

Montana: The Biden administration is sharply raising rates for royalties companies pay on oil and natural gas extracted from federal lands as it moves forward under court order with sales of public fossil fuel reserves in nine states, Interior Department officials said Friday. The royalty rate for new leases will increase to 18.75%, from the current 12.5%. That's a 50% percent jump and marks the first increase to royalties for the government in decades.

11 dead in Iraq minibus crash

Hilla: Eleven people including nine schoolteachers died in a head-on road crash south of Baghdad as they returned from a Ramadan meal, Iraqi authorities said Saturday, blaming speed. The accident happened in Babylon province around midnight as the group was returning in a minibus from the Shiite holy city of Karbala, a police source said. Their vehicle collided with a 4x4 travelling in the opposite direction "due to high speed and the driver of the second vehicle's lack of attention", a statement from road traffic authorities said, adding two people were injured. The police source said the vehicles caught fire.

Fuel ship sinks off Tunisia

Tunis: Tunisian authorities intensified efforts Saturday to avoid an environmental disaster after a merchant fuel ship carrying one thousand tons of fuel sank off the coast of Gabes Friday, two security sources told Reuters. The Tunisian navy had rescued all seven crew members from the ship, which was heading from Equatorial Guinea to Malta, and sent a distress call seven miles away from southern city of Gabes, the sources added.

Russia bans UK PM, top ministers

The full list of 13 British politicians on the so-called "stop list" issued from Moscow includes UK PM Boris Johnson, Chancellor Rishi Sunak, Home Secy Priti Patel and Attorney Gen Suella Braverman - as well as Dy PM Dominic Raab, Foreign Secy Liz Truss and Defence Secy Ben Wallace

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, April 16: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and several top UK Cabinet ministers and politicians are banned from Russia for their "unprecedented hostile actions" of imposing sanctions over the Ukraine conflict, the Russian Foreign Minister said in a statement



Saturday. The Russian Foreign Ministry said the list will be expanded in the "near future" to include more British politicians and parliamentarians.

"In connection with the unprecedented hostile actions of the British government, expressed, in particular, in the imposition of sanctions against top officials of the Russian Federation, a decision was made to include key members of the British government and a number of political figures in the Russian 'stop list'," said the state-

ment from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. "This step was taken as a response to London's unbridled information and political campaign aimed at isolating Russia internationally, creating conditions for containing our country and strangling the domestic economy. In essence, the British leadership is deliberately aggravating the situation around Ukraine, pumping the Kyiv regime with lethal weapons and coordinating similar efforts on the part of NATO," reads the statement, translated from Russian. "The instigation of London is also unacceptable, which is strongly pushing not only its Western allies, but also other countries to introduce large-scale anti-Russian sanctions, which, however, are senseless and counterproductive," it adds.

WAR FAR FROM OVER

Russians strike 8 Ukrainian cities

REUTERS

Kyiv, April 16: Russian forces shelled an oil refinery in the Ukrainian city of Lyyschansk Saturday, and a large fire erupted, a regional governor reported.

Luhansk regional governor Serhiy Haidai said it wasn't the first time the refinery was targeted and accused the Russians of trying to "exhaust" local emergency services. He underlined there was no fuel at the refinery at the time of the attack and "the remains of oil sludge" were burning.

Ukraine's presidential office reported Saturday that missile strikes and shelling over the past 24 hours occurred in eight regions: Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv in the east, Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava and Kirovohrad in the central Ukraine and Mykolaiv and Kherson in the south. The strikes underlined that the whole country remained under threat despite Russia's pivot toward mounting a new offensive in the east.

In Kharkiv, nine civilians were killed and more than 50 were wounded on Friday, while in the wider region two were reported dead and three wounded, according to the report.

The southern Mykolaiv region was battered Friday and Saturday. According to the presidential office, airstrikes Friday killed five and



UKRAINE'S DEPUTY PM IRYNA VERESHCHUK SAID THAT 700 UKRAINIAN TROOPS AND MORE THAN 1,000 CIVILIANS -- MORE THAN HALF WOMEN -- ARE CURRENTLY BEING HELD CAPTIVE BY THE RUSSIANS

UKRAINE'S RICHEST MAN VOWS TO REBUILD BESIEGED UKRAINIAN PORT CITY MARIUPOL

ITALY IS BARRING ALL RUSSIAN SHIPS FROM ITS PORTS STARTING SUNDAY, AS PART OF EXPANDED EU SANCTIONS

wounded 15. The head of regional legislature, Hanna Zamazeyeva, said Saturday that 39 people have been wounded in the past 24 hours. Zamazeyeva said the targets included several residential blocks "where there are no military facilities". The besieged Ukrainian port city of Mariupol is still holding out, but the situation there is critical.

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, youth and students gather to celebrate the 110th birth anniversary of its late founder Kim Il Sung in Pyongyang, North Korea Friday

China's longest crewed space mission ends as astronauts land

THE SHENZHOU-13 SPACECRAFT IS THE LATEST MISSION IN BEIJING'S DRIVE TO BECOME A MAJOR SPACE POWER RIVALING THE UNITED STATES, AFTER LANDING A ROVER ON MARS AND SENDING PROBES TO THE MOON

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Beijing, April 16: Three Chinese astronauts landed in northern China Saturday after 183 days in space, state broadcaster CCTV said, ending the country's longest crewed space mission to date.

The two men and one woman - Zhai Zhigang, Ye Guangfu and Wang Yaping - landed safely in a small capsule shortly before 10 am Beijing time, after six months aboard the Tianhe core module of China's Tiangong space station.

"Shenzhou 13's re-entry capsule successfully landed," state broadcaster CCTV said.

Live footage from CCTV showed the capsule landing in a cloud of dust, with ground crew who had

kept clear of the landing site rushing in helicopters to reach the capsule. Ground crew applauded as the astronauts each took turns to report that they were "feeling good." The trio originally launched in the Shenzhou-13 from the Gobi Desert in northwestern China last October, as the second of four crewed missions during 2021-2022 sent to assemble the country's first permanent space station -- Tiangong, which means "heavenly palace."

Wang became the first Chinese woman to spacewalk last November, as she and her colleague Zhai installed space station equipment during a six-hour stint.

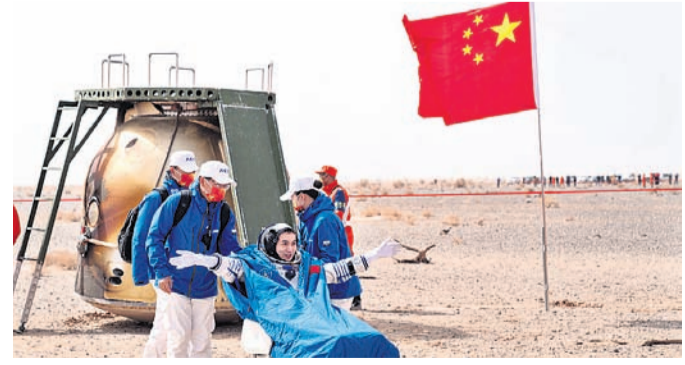
The trio have completed two spacewalks, carried out numer-

ous scientific experiments, set up equipment and tested technologies for future construction during their time in orbit.

The astronauts spent the past few weeks tidying up and preparing the cabin facilities and equipment for the crew of the incoming Shenzhou-14, expected to be launched in the coming months.

China's previous record spaceflight mission length was set by last year's Shenzhou-12 mission, which lasted 92 days. Six months will become the normal astronaut residence period aboard the Chinese space station, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

Space Race The world's second-largest economy has put billions into its mil-



itary-run space programme, with hopes of having a permanently crewed space station by 2022 and eventually sending humans to the Moon.

The country has come a long way in catching up with the United



States and Russia, whose astronauts and cosmonauts have decades of experience in space exploration.

But under Chinese President Xi Jinping the country's plans for its heavily-promoted "space dream" have been put into overdrive.

Besides a space station, Beijing is also planning to build a base on the Moon, and the country's National Space Administration said it aims to launch a crewed lunar mission by 2029.

China has been excluded from the International Space Station since 2011, when the US banned NASA from engaging with it.

While China does not plan to use its space station for global cooperation on the scale of the ISS, Beijing has said it is open to foreign collaboration although the scope of that cooperation is not yet clear.

The ISS is due for retirement after 2024, although NASA has said it could remain functional until 2030.

of the day quote

The company witnessed significant recovery in February and March 2022 with easing of lockdown restrictions post the Omicron wave in January 2022

PRAMOD RANJAN | MD AND CEO, ORIENTAL HOTELS LTD

We are going to make promises that we will keep, promises that are real and going to solve the problems that exist in your stores

HOWARD SCHULTZ | CEO, STARBUCKS CORP

Rupee is expected to weaken a bit further as the central bank (RBI) has chosen to support growth and kept rates unchanged

SAJAL GUPTA | HEAD FX & RATES, EDELWEISS

SHORT TAKES

Kaynes Technology files draft papers

New Delhi: Kaynes Technology India Limited (KTIL), an end-to-end and IoT solutions enabled integrated electronics manufacturing player, has filed preliminary papers with capital markets regulator Sebi to raise funds through an initial public offering (IPO). The IPO consists of a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating to Rs 650 crore, and an offer for sale (OFS) of up to 7.2 crore equity shares by a promoter and an existing shareholder, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). The OFS comprises sale of up to 37 lakh equity shares by promoter Ramesh Kunhikannan and up to 35 lakh equity shares by existing shareholder Freney Firoze Irani. The offer also includes reservation of up to Rs 1.5 crore for subscription by eligible employees.

ICICI Pru Life net zooms in Jan-Mar

New Delhi: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Saturday posted over two-fold jump in its net profit to Rs 185 crore for the January-March quarter on account of robust growth in new business. The company had posted a profit after tax of Rs 64 crore for January-March FY2021, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance said in a regulatory filing. For the full year 2021-22, the company's net profit declined to Rs 754 crore from Rs 960 crore for the year ended in March 2021, it said. Value of new business (VNB) for FY2022 was Rs 2,163 crore, a growth of 33.4 per cent over FY2021. This was led by a robust growth of 25 per cent in new business sum assured and 20 per cent in Annualised Premium Equivalent for the same period, the company said. VNB is used to measure profitability of the new business written in a period. It is present value of all future profits to shareholders at the time of writing of the new business contract.

M&M to sell entire stake in MSSSPL

New Delhi: Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) Saturday said it has agreed to sell over 34.75 lakh shares, constituting 22.81 per cent of the paid-up capital, in Mahindra Sanyo Special Steel Pvt Ltd (MSSSPL), to Japan-based Sanyo Special Steel Co Ltd in a Rs 212 crore deal. Following the sale, the company's holding in MSSSPL would become nil, M&M said in a regulatory filing. The Mumbai-based automaker will receive Rs 211.99 crore from the stake sale, it added. For the year ended March 31, 2021, the turnover of MSSSPL stood at Rs 834.43 crore constituting 1.12 per cent of the consolidated turnover of the company, M&M said.

India risks widespread blackouts

Exceptionally high loads have arrived far earlier this year, well before the most intense period of summer heat, implying the grid is in trouble. In a symptom of the struggle to meet demand, the grid's frequency has faltered since mid-March, dropping persistently below target, with longer and more severe excursions below the safe operating range

REUTERS

New Delhi, April 16: India faces a persistent shortage of electricity over the next four months as rapid demand growth from air conditioners and refrigeration loads overwhelms the available generation on the network.

India's grid reported a record load of 200,570 megawatts (MW) July 7, 2021, at the height of last summer, according to the National Load Despatch Centre of the Power System Operation Corporation (POSOCO).

Since the middle of March, the grid has routinely reported maximum loads above 195,000 MW, including a peak of 199,584 MW April 8 - less than 0.5% below the record.

Chronic under-frequency is a sign the grid cannot meet the full demand from customers and makes planned load-shedding or unplanned blackouts much more likely.

India has a frequency target of 50.00 cycles per second (Hertz), with grid controllers tasked with keeping it steady between 49.90 Hz and 50.05 Hz to maintain the network in a safe and reliable condition.

Grid controls begin to disconnect some loads automatically if the frequency slows to 49.2 Hz with further load shedding at 49.0 Hz, 48.8 Hz and 48.6 Hz ("Review of the Indian electricity grid code", 2020).

In addition, relays in the grid's northern and western regions are armed to disconnect load automatically if frequency falls too quickly and drops below 49.9 Hz, while relays in the south are armed

HDFC standalone net profit jumps 23% in Q4

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 16: HDFC Bank Saturday reported a 22.8 per cent jump in its standalone net profit at Rs 10,055.2 crore for the quarter ended March 2022.

The country's largest private sector lender had posted a net profit of Rs 8,186.50 crore in the corresponding fourth quarter of the previous fiscal.

"After providing Rs 2,989.5 crore for taxation, the bank earned a net profit of Rs 10,055.20 crore, an increase of 22.8 per cent over the quarter ended March 31, 2021," HDFC Bank said in a regulatory filing.

Total income (standalone) rose to Rs 41,085.78 crore during Q4 FY22 as against Rs 38,017.50 crore in the year-ago period.

Net revenues (net interest income plus other income) increased by 7.3 per cent to Rs 26,509.80 crore for the quarter ended March, from Rs 24,714.10 crore earlier, it said.

The net interest income (interest earned minus interest expended) for the reported quarter grew by 10.2 per cent from a year ago to Rs 18,872.70 crore.

On the asset quality front, the bank said the gross non-performing assets (NPAs) were at 1.17 per cent of the gross advances as on March 31, 2022, as against 1.26 per cent earlier. Net NPAs (or bad loans) stood at 0.32 per cent of the net advances, compared to 0.40 per cent.

Automakers face heat amid global constraints, price hikes

Indian automakers are responding to raw material price hikes by at least 2% price hike on average: Counterpoint Research

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 16: It is becoming increasingly difficult for Indian automakers to control input costs as they are dependent on China and Japan which are facing supply chain woes, resulting in price hikes across vehicle ranges, according to a new report.

Indian automakers are responding to raw material price hikes by at least 2 per cent price hike on average, according to Counterpoint Research.



The Indian mid-market enterprises (MMEs) are asking us for a comprehensive cloud and a digital strategy. There is a huge demand for digital growth, and the impact is so important for our country

KULMEET BAWA | PRESIDENT AND MD, SAP INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

ATF RATES AT RECORD HIGH

Jet fuel prices Saturday were hiked by a marginal 0.2 per cent -- the eighth straight increase this year -- to an all-time high, reflecting a surge in global energy prices. The price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) -- the fuel that helps aeroplanes fly -- was hiked by Rs 277.5 per kilolitre, or 0.2 per cent, to Rs 1,13,202.33 per kl (₹113.2 per litre) in the national capital



Fuel sales fall in first half of April



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 16: (PTI) India's fuel sales fell in the first half of April as a record rise in prices in a short 16-day period dented demand, preliminary industry data showed Saturday.

Petrol sales fell almost 10 per cent in the first half of April when compared with the same period in the preceding month, while diesel demand slid 15.6 per cent.

Even cooking gas LPG, which had consistently shown growth even during the pandemic period, saw a 1.7 per cent month-on-month fall in consumption during April 1-15.

State-owned oil firms March 22 ended a 137-day hiatus in rate revision and began passing on a \$30 per barrel increase in cost of raw material (crude oil) during that period when five states including Uttar Pradesh went to polls.

On March 22, cooking gas prices too were hiked by Rs 50 per cylinder to Rs 949.50 -- the highest-ever rate for the subsidised fuel. Jet fuel prices too climbed to the highest-ever Rs 1,13,202.33 per kilolitre, resulting in a 20.5 per cent fall in sales month-on-month.

In the first two weeks of March, dealers as well as the public topped up their tanks in anticipation of an increase in prices that had been on hold in the run-up to the elections in states like Uttar Pradesh. While daily price revisions restarted March 22, the increases were calibrated. The price increases moderated the consumption.

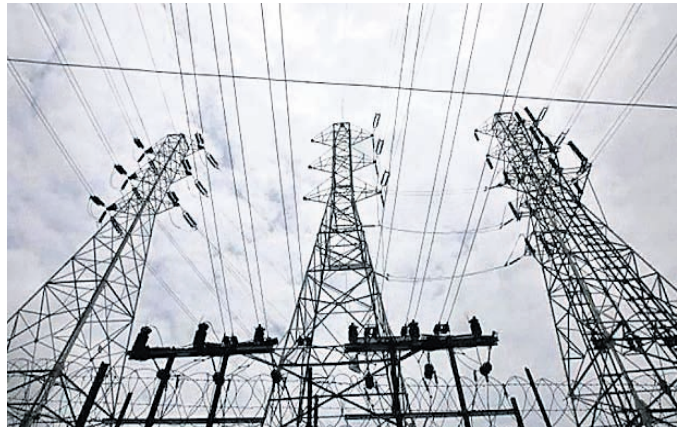
Petrol sales by state-owned fuel

Puri urges states to cut VAT on oil

Mahasamund: Amid outcry over high fuel prices, Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri Thursday said the Union government has been appealing to states to cut VAT on petrol and diesel for giving relief to consumers. Puri was on a day-long visit to Mahasamund, designated as 'aspirational district' under a Central scheme, in Chhattisgarh to take stock of various government schemes as part of the nationwide 'samajik nyay pakhwada' (social justice fortnight) celebrations called by PM Narendra Modi. Asked by reporters about the rising prices of petrol and diesel, the minister said, "Our effort is to keep the prices under control, therefore the Centre slashed excise duty on petrol and diesel last year and asked the state government to do the same." All BJP-ruled states have reduced VAT on petrol and diesel, Puri pointed out.

retailers, which control roughly 90 per cent of the market, at 1.12 million tonne during April 1-15 were nearly 12.1 per cent higher than the same period last year and 19.6 per cent higher than the period in 2019, preliminary industry data showed.

The consumption was, however, 9.7 per cent lower than the 1.24 million tonne sales in the same period in March 2022. Diesel, the most-used fuel in the country, saw sales jumping 7.4 per cent year-on-year to almost 3 million tonne.



DURING THE EVENING PEAK, WHEN THERE IS NO SOLAR GENERATION AVAILABLE AND SUPPLIES ARE EVEN MORE STRETCHED, LOADS HAVE HIT RECORD LEVELS IN RECENT WEEKS

INDIA'S RAIL MINISTRY ANNOUNCED APRIL 12 THAT COAL FROM DOMESTIC MINES AND IMPORT TERMINALS WILL BE PRIORITISED ON THE RAIL NETWORK THROUGH THE END OF JUNE TO TRY TO INCREASE STOCKS

TEMPERATURES IN NORTHERN INDIA HAVE BEEN UNUSUALLY HIGH FOR THE TIME OF YEAR SINCE MID-MARCH, RESULTING IN A RAPID RISE IN ELECTRICITY DEMAND

to start load shedding at 49.5 Hz. But frequency has been below target so often for so long in recent weeks it has sometimes appeared the system has been forced to operate according to a much lower informal target owing to inadequate generation.

Since the middle of March, frequency has averaged just 49.95 Hz and has been below the lower operating threshold of 49.90 Hz more than 23% of the time.

On April 7, average frequency fell as low as 49.84 Hz and was below the lower threshold for 63% of the

day, according to data from POSOCO.

LOW COAL STOCKS

Power producers' coal inventories remain very low, limiting their ability to run coal-fired units at full capacity to meet demand.

Grid-connected generators hold coal stocks equivalent to less than 9 days worth of consumption compared with 12 days at the end of April 2021 and 18 days in 2019.

Inventories have not really recovered since falling to a critical low of just 4 days at the end of

Twitter adopts 'poison pill' as challenger to Musk emerges

REUTERS

Washington, April 16: Twitter Inc adopted a 'poison pill' Friday to limit Elon Musk's ability to raise his stake in the social media platform, as a buyout firm emerged to challenge his \$43 billion bid for the company.

Thoma Bravo, a technology-focused private equity firm that had more than \$103 billion in assets under management as of the end of December, has informed Twitter that it is exploring the possibility of putting together a bid, people familiar with the matter said.

It is not clear how much Thoma Bravo would be prepared to offer and there is no certainty that such a rival bid will materialize, the sources cautioned, asking not to be identified because the matter is confidential.

Twitter said Friday it adopted a poison pill that would dilute anyone amassing a stake in the company of more than 15% by selling more shares to other shareholders at a discount. Known formally as a shareholder rights plan, the poison pill will be in place for 364 days.

The move would not bar Musk from taking his offer directly to Twitter shareholders by launching a tender offer. While the poison



It is a predictable defensive measure for the board to go down that will not be viewed positively by shareholders given the potential dilution and acquisition unfriendly move

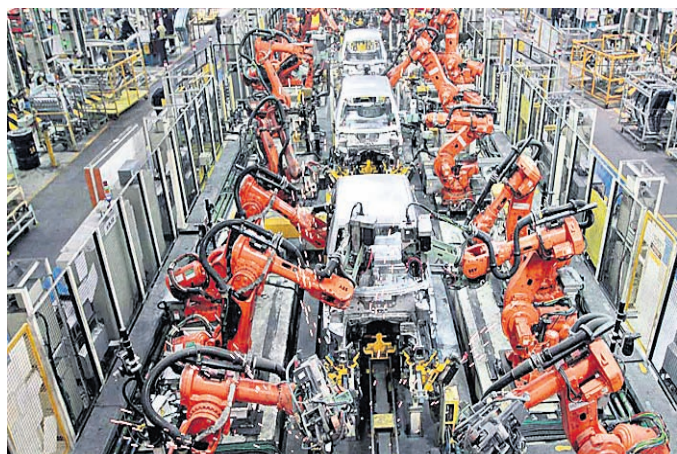
DAN IVES | ANALYST, WEDBUSH

pill would prevent most Twitter shareholders from selling their shares, the tender offer would allow them to register their support or disapproval of Musk's offer.

Thoma Bravo's interest raises the specter of more private equity firms vying for Twitter. The global private equity industry is sitting on about \$1.8 trillion in dry powder, according to data provider Preqin. Unlike major technology conglomerates, most buyout firms would not face an-

titrust restrictions in acquiring Twitter.

It remains possible that a private equity firm will boost Musk's bid by partnering with him rather than challenging him. Musk's criticism of Twitter's reliance on advertising for most of its revenue, however, has made some private equity firms apprehensive about teaming up with him, industry sources said. This is because a strong cash flow makes financing a leveraged buyout much easier.



KIA Motors has increased prices of all its vehicles. Maruti Suzuki, India's largest passenger vehicle (PV) maker, has also increased the average price of its cars by 8.8 per cent since January.

"Toyota, Tata Motors, Hyundai and MG Motors have also increased prices for their vehicles across ranges. Even premium vehicle brands such as BMW India, Mercedes-Benz India and Audi

Due to the low electric vehicle (EV) adoption, high prices of lithium and cobalt have not directly impacted the industry in India

India have announced at least a 3 per cent increase in their vehicle prices," said Soumen Mandal, senior research analyst.

Due to the low electric vehicle (EV) adoption, high prices of lithium and cobalt have not di-

rectly impacted the industry in India. "The price hikes in India are mostly due to the rise in the price of steel. Steel is used in manufacturing vehicle chassis and body. Nickel-containing stainless steel is used in some drivetrain components," Mandal added.

In addition to rising materials costs, fluctuating exchange rates and rising operational costs are other factors driving price increases in the country.

With the semiconductor shortage beginning to ease, 2022 was expected to be a better year, as indicated by increased sales during the initial months.

But Russia's invasion of Ukraine and fresh Covid waves in China have further delayed the industry's recovery.

"Restricted supplies of critical raw materials procured from Ukraine and Russia are causing new supply chain impacts, driving up raw material prices including that of lithium, cobalt and nickel -- the latter by 60 per cent -- as well as aluminium and, to some extent, steel," Mandal explained.

The recent cost increases have already affected the EV industry. 2021 saw EV sales rising by more than 200 per cent but price increases are likely to put the brakes on a continuation of this fast growth. "For 2022, we expect global passenger vehicle sales will be around 72 million, some 5 million units lower than our earlier projections," said the report.

The price hikes in India are mostly due to the rise in the price of steel. Steel is used in manufacturing vehicle chassis and body. Nickel-containing stainless steel is used in some drivetrain components

MANDAL | SENIOR RESEARCH ANALYST

Rahul lifts LSG RCB inflict 16-run defeat on DC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 16: Lucknow Super Giants skipper KL Rahul made batting look like a walk in the park with a 56-ball century (103 n o, 60b, 9x4, 5x6) in his 100th IPL game to put five-time champions Mumbai Indians all but out of the league with an 18-run win Saturday.

Rahul's unbeaten knock, his third three-figure mark across all editions of IPL, propelled Lucknow to a commanding score of 199/4 and then his bowlers joined the party to restrict MI to 181/9 in 20 overs.

With six consecutive defeats, the tournament is as good as over for the league's most popular team, even before it has reached the halfway stage.

Rohit Sharma's (6) nightmare of a tournament continued while Ishan Kishan (13) is certainly feeling the pressure of the Rs 15.25 crore price tag as he played on a Marcus Stoinis delivery and displayed his frustration by smashing the foam-based boundary rope.

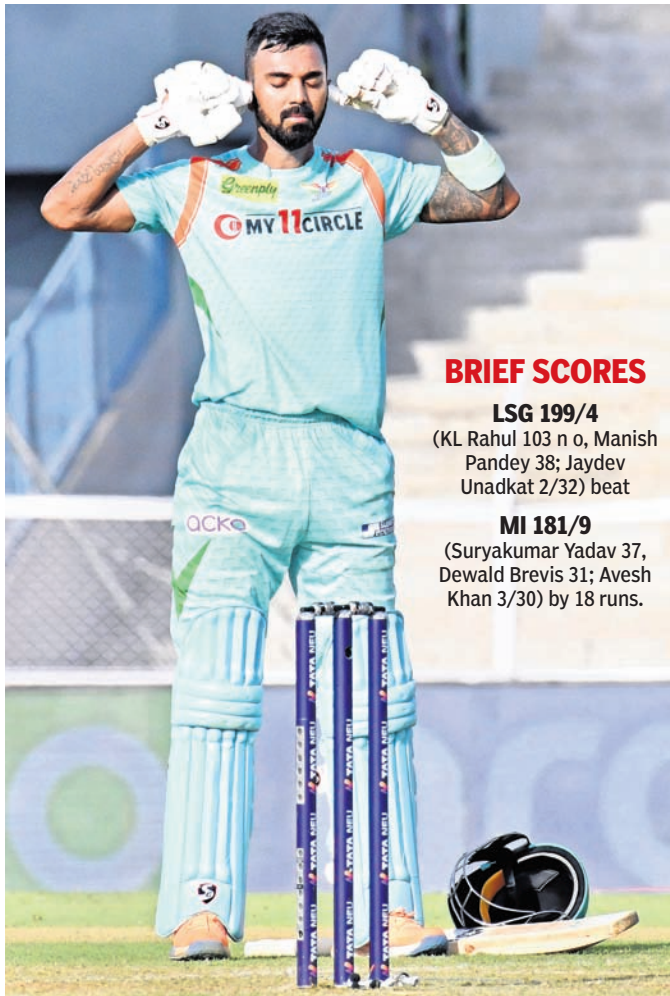
In between, Dewald Brevis (31) hit some breathtaking shots before another find of the season, NT Tilak Varma (26), and the ever dependable Suryakumar Yadav (37) added 64 runs to resurrect the innings.

Once Jason Holder yorked Tilak, the match as a contest was over with Surya not getting the required support from other batters, although Kieron Pollard (25) threw his bat around in a losing cause. Surya's dismissal, after he failed to dispatch a Ravi Bishnoi long-hop, was the final nail in the MI coffin.

Lucknow's fast bowlers Avesh Khan (3/30) and Dushmantha Chameera (1/48) got good support from medium pacers Holder (1/34) and Stoinis (1/13). Lucknow have four wins from six games while MI have lost a dozen games on the trot for the first time in 15 editions of IPL.

With the kind of team they have assembled, it will only get worse from here on as there is no plan B, and more importantly, the players to execute the plan.

For Rahul, both as a batter and



BRIEF SCORES

LSG 199/4
(KL Rahul 103 n o, Manish Pandey 38; Jaydev Unadkat 2/32) beat

MI 181/9
(Suryakumar Yadav 37, Dewald Brevis 31; Avesh Khan 3/30) by 18 runs.

skipper, the IPL is proving to be the platform which he desperately needed to enhance his captaincy credentials as far as the national team is concerned.

On way to his hundred, he added 52 for the opening stand with Quinton de Kock (24), 72 with Manish Pandey (38), and another brisk 43 runs with Deepak Hooda (15) for the fourth wicket.

Bereft of credible options in the dug-out, it was only natural that the tournament's most successful skipper, Rohit Sharma looked clearly out of ideas and his ploy of playing an extra spinner in left-arm orthodox Fabian Allen (1/46) didn't quite work out.

Jaasprit Bumrah (0/24) is manfully

carrying the burden but one man can't save the team from the disaster that this season has turned out to be. Otherwise why would the MI skipper start with part-time off-spinner Tilak Varma, knowing that the Lucknow captain is a master player of slow bowlers.

The six powerplay overs saw six different bowlers being used and De Kock should blame himself for wasting an opportunity to score a big one on a track that resembled a shirtfront.

Twenty fours and seven sixes were testimony to MI's plight and the likes of Tymal Mills (0/54), Jaydev Unadkat (2/32) and Murugan Ashwin (1/33) tried their best but could not succeed.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

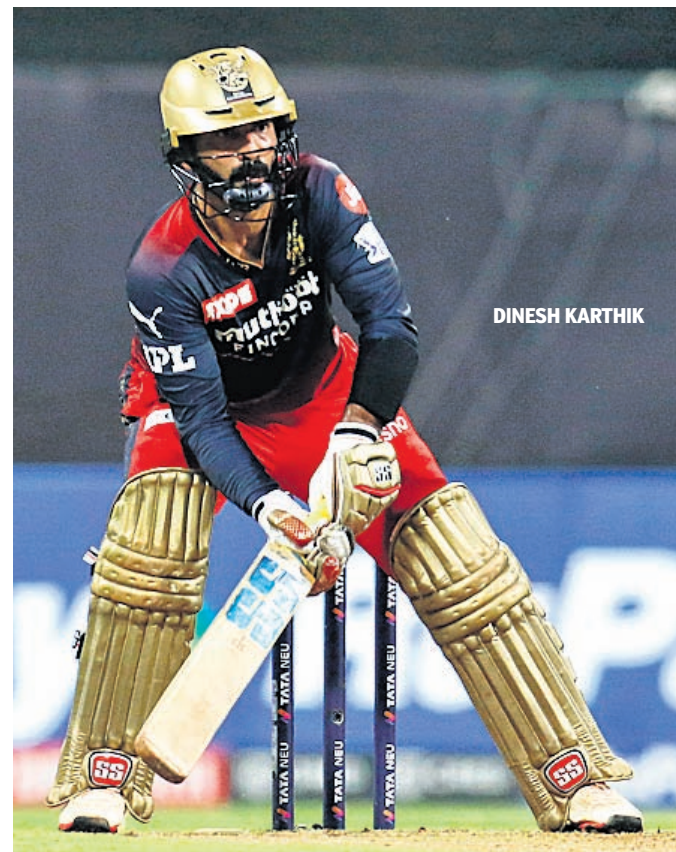
Mumbai, April 16: Dinesh Karthik batted with authority in his unbeaten 34-ball 66 (5x4, 5x6) before the bowlers staged a fine comeback as Royal Challengers Bangalore defeated Delhi Capitals by 16 runs in the IPL here Saturday.

Karthik blazed away after Glenn Maxwell's (55, 34b, 7x4, 2x6) masterclass to take RCB to 189 for five. In reply, the Capitals could only manage 173/7 despite David Warner's sensational 38-ball 66 (4x4, 5x6).

It was RCB's fourth win in six games and they are now third on the points table while Delhi slumped to their third loss in five outings. Chasing 190, DC were off to a flier with Warner and young Prithvi Shaw (16) pummelling the RCB bowlers into submission, the duo racing to 50 before Mohammed Siraj dismissed the Indian.

Warner continued to strike the ball with perfection as his family cheered him on from the stands. His stay was brought to an end by Wanindu Hasaranga.

RCB made a strong comeback with Delhi losing a flurry of wickets. Delhi's hopes were pinned on the



DINESH KARTHIK

big-hitting Pant (34), who did hit some lusty blows, but his whirlwind innings was brought to an end by a one-handed blinder from Virat Kohli.

Earlier, the Capitals' bowlers performed as a well-oiled unit initially with Shardul Thakur (1/27), Khaleel Ahmed (1/36), Axar Patel (1/29) and Kuldeep Yadav (1/46) doing well but bled runs in the slog overs as Karthik and Shahbaz Ahmed (32 n o) added 74 in the last five.

DC put pressure on RCB early on with tight fielding and good bowling. The bowlers managed to snare two wickets in the powerplay overs while giving away 40 runs.

Maxwell then took the onus upon himself as he pummelled Kuldeep Yadav for 23 runs in the ninth over. However, the wrist-spinner extracted his revenge as the ball caught the Australian's bat's toe and Lalit Yadav completed the regulation catch. With Maxwell gone, Karthik and Shahbaz joined forces.

Brief scores: RCB 189/5 (Dinesh Karthik 66 n o, Glenn Maxwell 55, Shahbaz Ahmed 32 n o; Shardul Thakur 1/27, Axar Patel 1/29) beat DC 173/7 (David Warner 66, Rishabh Pant 34; Josh Hazlewood 3/28, Mohammed Siraj 2/31) by 16 runs.

Test of wits between skippers Jaddu, Hardik

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, April 16: It will be a test of wits between two new captains in Ravindra Jadeja and Hardik Pandya when defending champions Chennai Super Kings clash with debutants Gujarat Titans in an IPL game here Sunday.

Known for their all-round skills, both Jadeja and Pandya have served Indian cricket well and the duo will be engaged in a battle of tactical supremacy with both teams looking to continue their momentum after wins in their previous matches.

While Jadeja was elevated to the captaincy role by CSK, Pandya was roped in as the leader of the Titans after Mumbai Indians didn't retain the gifted all-rounder as he struggled with his fitness.

Pandya has given the newcomers a rollicking start with four wins in five games. The Titans are headed into the match after bouncing back from their only loss to Sunrisers Hyderabad with a 37-run win over Rajasthan Royals Thursday. Jadeja, on the other hand, has endured a tough initial phase with the team losing their first four matches before opening account with a 23-run win over Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Bowling has been a major concern for CSK but the former champions produced a better show against RCB with the spin duo of Maheesh Theekshana and skipper Jadeja running riot with seven wickets between them in their last match.

But pacer Mukesh Choudhary has not been able to rise to the oc-

casian in the absence of CSK's main weapon Deepak Chahar. Chris Jordan and Dwayne Bravo have done well overall to keep things in check even though the latter was taken for runs in the last match.

The Titans, however, boast of a formidable bowling line-up with New Zealand speedster Lockie Ferguson (8 wickets), India quick Mohammed Shami (7) and Pandya (4) himself all capable of taking wickets and putting the opposition under the pump. With six wickets so far, Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan too has done the job of squeezing the run flow.

In the batting department, Pandya and opener Shubman Gill, with two fifties each, have been among the runs but Matthew Wade's form has been a concern.

Rookie Abhinav Manohar and South Africa's David Miller came good in their last match and the team will expect them to take more responsibility. Rahul Tewatia too shone in his role of a finisher as his sixes earned the Titans a win over Lucknow Super Giants.

For CSK, time is running out for young opener Ruturaj Gaikwad, who has been in horrible form this season. Moeen Ali too has lacked consistency at the top of the order. Ditto for Ambati Rayudu, who has failed to capitalise on his starts.

All-rounder Shivam Dube has been their star performer at No.4. Opener Robin Uthappa also turned back the clock. However, Jadeja and former skipper MS Dhoni will have to show more intent when the going gets tough in the middle.

WATSON SLAMS MI FOR BLOWING MONEY ON ISHAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 16: Former Australia all-rounder and current Delhi Capitals assistant coach Shane Watson has slammed Mumbai Indians for spending over Rs 15 crore on Ishan Kishan in the IPL auction, saying the talented opener was "not worth blowing nearly your whole salary on".

Watson also criticised MI for buying injured Jofra Archer for a huge sum. Winless so far in five matches, MI has been struggling to put together a winning combination after they spent Rs 15.25 crore to get Ishan and Rs 8 crore to buy Jofra Archer, who is still recovering from elbow surgery.

“Going for Jofra Archer, not knowing whether he is going to come back in. He hasn't played cricket for quite a while. They have got quite a few holes in the team”

SHANE WATSON

The five-time champions had retained Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah, Suryakumar Yadav and Kieron Pollard. "It hasn't surprised me that Mumbai Indians are at the bottom of the table because they had a shocking auction," Watson said during a conversation in "The Grade Cricketer" podcast.

"Spending so much money on Ishan Kishan...He is a very talented and skillful player, but he's not worth blowing nearly your whole salary on. And then, going for Jofra Archer, not knowing whether he is going to come back in. He hasn't played cricket for quite a while. They have got quite a few holes in the team."

Defending champions Chennai Super Kings too endured four losses before opening their account with a 23 run win over Royal Challengers Bangalore. "The biggest issue with CSK, now that I have seen their five games, is that they have got a hole, especially with their fast bowling," Watson, who has played for CSK in the IPL, said.

"In the previous years, they had Shardul Thakur, Deepak Chahar is injured. They paid a lot for him at the auction, but he is (likely to be) unavailable for a lot of the tournament, which is a big hole.

"They don't have a quality overseas quick like Josh Hazlewood. Earlier, they always had a world-class overseas quick bowler. That's why they are struggling."

Nightmarish debut for Odisha Police in IWL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 16: Gokulam Kerala FC began their title defence in the top-tier Indian Women's League on a ruthless note, slamming a dozen past a hapless Odisha Police here Saturday.

Indian attacking midfielder Manisha Kalyan wreaked havoc in opposition's defence with five goals (17th, 26th, 33rd, 48th, 73rd minutes) as the Aditi Chauhan-led side struck six goals in each half.

Substitute Elshaddai (61st, 86th) struck a double, while the other goalscorers for the Malabarians were Win Theingi Tun (25th), Dangmei Grace (37th), Ranjana Chamu (70th) and Karishma Shirvoikar (77th).

The Kerala outfit also benefited from an own goal by their rivals when Manisha's cross was missed by Grace but it turned into her own net by Madhusmita in the 47th minute.

The Punjab player gave Kerala the lead after a neatly worked one-two with Win Theingi Tun. Win



doubled the lead before Manisha added a third. An unmarked Manisha went on to complete her hat-trick when she tapped home a 40' lead after being set up by Soumya from the right.

Manisha turned the provider in the 37th minute when she deceived her opponent on the wing before crossing it in for Dangmei Grace to make it 5-0. Gokulam struck a sixth just before the whistle as Manisha slammed her fourth.

Just after the break, they raced to a 7-0 lead thanks to an own goal, and it was then substitute Elshaddai, who got into the business with a double. Kerala ran into double figures with two quickfire goals. Elshaddai set up fellow substitute Karishma Shirvoikar to tap into an empty net to make it 11-0, before the former completed the rout with her brace.

Odisha Sports came back from behind to register a 3-1 victory over ARA FC in their opening match. Forward Satyabati Khadia twice came close to scoring before the half-hour mark, but couldn't convert in the final third.

Brighton dent Spurs' top-four hopes

REUTERS

London, April 16: Tottenham Hotspur blew a chance to strengthen their grip on fourth place in the Premier League as they suffered a last-gasp 1-0 home defeat by Brighton & Hove Albion Saturday.

Antonio Conte's side produced a lacklustre display and looked set for a frustrating stalemate before Belgian Leandro Trossard made things even worse with a 90th-minute winner.

After four successive victories the pre-match mood in north London was one of optimism but Tottenham's performance was in stark contrast to the bright spring sunshine.

Sluggish and unimaginative in possession, Tottenham's feared attacking duo of Harry Kane and Son Heung-min were virtual spectators in a first half in which the home side managed only one attempt at the Brighton goal.

Spurs showed a little more urgency after the break with Son having a couple of shots blocked, but Brighton always carried the greater goal threat and deservedly took the points when Trossard

burst into the left side of the penalty area and beat Hugo Lloris with a low shot with the outside of his right foot.

Trossard is having a big impact in the top-four race having been on target in Brighton's 2-1 win at Arsenal last week.

Tottenham stayed in fourth place with 57 points but they are only three points ahead of local rivals Arsenal who have two games in hand and play later Saturday at Southampton. Brighton moved up to 10th with 40 points.

Tottenham's performance was all the more surprising considering the

goals that have flowed of late in big wins against West Ham United, Newcastle United and Aston Villa.

The surge in form had seen Spurs emerge as favourites for fourth spot and a return to the Champions League—a scenario that looked unlikely for most of the season.

But Graham Potter's well-organised side, just as they did when beating Arsenal, showed they can frustrate opponents and offered Tottenham a painful reality check.

Brighton smothered Spurs in the opening period with the hosts forced to pass the ball around harmlessly in their own half, much to the

frustration of the home faithful.

The visitors went close when Enock Mwepu's shot was deflected wide by Ben Davies. Tariq Lamptey then delivered a dangerous cross that evaded everyone in the box while Alexis Mac Allister missed the ball from point-blank range after a corner deflected to him.

Tottenham raised the tempo in the second half but apart from a brief flurry were unable to build any momentum and they could really have no complaints at a defeat which added another twist to a battle for fourth place no one seems capable of winning.



SRH eye fourth win on trot, face Kings



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Navi Mumbai, April 16: A resurgent Sunrisers Hyderabad would look to extend their three-match winning streak but have their task cut out against Punjab Kings, when the two sides square off in an IPL game here Sunday.

Among a bunch of teams on six points each, both SRH and PBKS will go all out to snap the two crucial points to nose ahead in the race for play-offs.

Sunrisers began their campaign with two defeats but bounced back with three successive wins—against Chennai Super Kings, Gujarat Titans and Kolkata Knight Riders—and look good for more, going by the trend of their improving performance. Punjab Kings had a morale-boosting 12-run win over Mumbai Indians in their last outing and the Sunrisers would certainly know that the Mayank Agarwal-led side, who are in the third spot, would be a tough team to beat.

All the three wins for the Sunrisers came while chasing and they have found a new hero each time. Openers Abhishek Sharma and skipper Kane Williamson, after playing match-winning knocks against CSK and Gujarat Titans respectively, had a failure against KKR.

But with a wide range of shots at his disposal, left-handed Sharma would be aiming to give an aggressive start. After getting the starts, Rahul Tripathi's moment of glory came against KKR and ditto for Aiden Markaram.

With the swashbuckling Nicholas Pooran, who can be brutal when in full flow, in their ranks, the Sunrisers can set or chase down a big total. Tripathi, Pooran and Markaram will have to once again shoulder responsibility in the mid-

dle-order.

But they are up against a strong and varied Punjab attack led by South African speedster Kagiso Rabada, who has been right on the money. Rabad would, however, need support from Vaibhav Arora and the fast improving Arshdeep Singh. The weakest link in the Punjab attack is probably spinner Rahul Chahar.

The Sunrisers pacers showed why they were among the best in the business in their previous match. Marco Jansen, T Natarajan, Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Umran Malik shared seven wickets among them against KKR and did the bulk of damage.

In the absence of Washington Sundar, left-arm Jagadeesha Suchith did pretty well against KKR and he may retain his place.

For Punjab, the biggest development is that the flamboyant opener Shikhar Dhawan is back among the runs. Dhawan and Mayank Agarwal will have to once again give the side a solid start.

The middle-order has hard-hitters in Johnny Bairstow, Liam Livingstone, Jitesh Sharma, Shahrulkh Khan and Odean Smith, and one of the batters will need to take responsibility if the top-order falters. Being an afternoon game, dew would not be a factor but an intriguing battle is in store.

TODAY'S MATCHES			
Time: 03:30 pm			
Time: 07:30 pm			
TELECAST			
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