



'NEVER EVER GET TATTOOED'
Actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu in a Q&A session on Instagram advised her fans not to get tattooed ever

LEISURE P2



UKRAINE BOMBARDED
Russia says it has hit hundreds of military targets in Ukraine, destroying command posts

INTERNATIONAL P10



BENZEMA LIFTS REAL
Karim Benzema again scores a late goal to help Real Madrid come from two goals down to beat Sevilla 3-2 in La Liga

SPORTS P12



Lt Gen Manoj Pande next Army chief
New Delhi: Lt Gen Manoj Pande will be the next Army chief succeeding Gen MM Naravane whose tenure ends by the end of this month, officials said Monday. At present, Lt Gen Pande is serving as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff. Before taking charge as the Vice Chief of the Army Staff, he was heading the Eastern Army Command tasked with guarding the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh sectors. Gen Naravane's tenure will come to an end April 30. Lt Gen Pande was commissioned into the Bombay Sappers in December 1982. In his distinguished career, he has held several prestigious command and staff assignments in conventional as well as counter-insurgency operations in all types of terrain.

WPI inflation hits 4-month high of 14.5% in March
New Delhi: The wholesale price-based inflation spiked to a four-month high of 14.55 per cent in March on rising prices of crude oil and other commodities due to disruption in global supply chain in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war, a development that may prompt the RBI to raise interest rates to contain price rise. In February, WPI Inflation was at 13.11 per cent, while in March last year, it was 7.89 per cent. WPI inflation has remained in double digits for the 12th consecutive month since April 2021. In November 2021, it had touched a high of 14.87 per cent. **MORE P11**

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HC RESPITE FOR KEONJHAR DM
POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 18: It was a sigh of relief for the Keonjhar Collector Ashish Thakare as Orissa High Court Monday issued an interim stay order on the arrest warrant issued by the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), New Delhi for his failure to depose before it. The High Court issued the order while hearing a writ petition (case no-WPC-0009609/2022) challenging the arrest warrant issued by the NCST, Monday. The stay order will remain in force till the next date of hearing. The NCST had earlier issued an arrest warrant against the Collector



taking strong exceptions to his failure to appear before it despite repeated summons. In a letter, the national tribunal panel had asked the DGP, Odisha to arrest and produce Keonjhar District Collector before the commission in New Delhi by 12 noon of April 19. The commission had also asked the DGP to apprise it about steps being taken in this regard by 11 am, April 13. On the basis of the arrest warrant, IG, Amitendra Nath Sinha, Cuttack issued a letter to the Keonjhar SP asking him to execute the arrest warrant, April 16. The bureaucrat was summoned in eight cases of non-payment of compensations and employment benefits to tribal people in the district. He, however, reportedly did not appear before the commission despite being summoned eight times in connection with the complaints related to tribal affairs. As a result, the commission issued warrant.



IRREGULAR by MANJUL
What should we do? Suppress numbers? Clap or beat utensils? Or make ourselves unavailable? Covid is on rise again!

Drivers drive police away



DRIVERS' DISSENT: Thousands of members of Odisha Drivers' Association stage a demonstration at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Monday, seeking immediate implementation of their demands, including fixed salary and pension

Bhubaneswar, April 18: The twin city Commissionerate Police was rendered helpless as around 50,000 khaki-clad members of Odisha Drivers' Association took control of the City roads calling for fulfilment of their demands including fixed salary and pension Monday. Traffic came to a grinding halt in some areas when drivers from all the districts held massive rallies that converged at the Master Canteen Square. "At a time when road users were struggling to navigate, police officials turned mute spectators," said a source. The demands include a law for the protection of drivers, fixed salary, Rs 20 lakh compensation to their family in case of death, insurance coverage for injuries, pension and restrooms every 100 km on national and state highways. With flags, banners and lathis on their hands and slogans on their lips, the drivers alleged that the

government was dilly-dallying on the issue even after the union held a rally in the Capital last year and submitted a memorandum to it. Sources said some unruly agitators misbehaved with the commuters. "A commuter was attacked by an inebriated protester near Indira Park area. The agitating drivers also damaged an auto-rickshaw near Congress Bhawan," said a source, claiming the rally to be second such incident in recent times wherein protestors succeeded in staging a demonstration in the highly sensitive state Assembly area. DCP (Traffic) S Sushree was literally forced to beg the protesters to clear the road connecting Vani Vihar Square as hundreds of vehicles remained stranded, said the source. Meanwhile, intellectuals claimed that the police failed to gather prior intelligence about the huge gathering as they failed to deploy more force in order to avoid the unprecedented situation. The massive rally exposed the tall claims

of the city police over controlled law and order situation in the city. Earlier in the day, a delegation held a meeting with the government at the Lok Seva Bhavan, following which state Transport Minister Padmanabha Behera announced that a committee would be formed to look into their demands. The team will visit various states to review steps taken for the

drivers there and submit a report, based on which necessary steps will be taken within three months, he said. "Appropriate steps couldn't be taken till now due to the rural and civic polls," Behera told reporters. A union leader said the agitation would be withdrawn, hoping that the government would fulfil their demands in time.

Bus fares hiked as diesel costs rise
BHUBANESWAR: State's Commerce and Transport department Monday issued an order notifying an increase in bus fares, an official said, attributing the rise to hike in fuel prices. Due to increase in diesel price from ₹98.40 March 31, 2022 to ₹102.22 April 18, 2022, the fare for stage carriages other than town buses plying within the state shall be fixed at increased rate, the department said. As per the latest notification, the fares for ordinary and express buses have been increased to 92 paise and 96 paise per kilometre respectively. Similarly, for deluxe buses, the fare has been increased to 135 paise per kilometre. For AC deluxe, the fare has been increased to 163 paise per kilometre and for super premium, the fare has been increased to 253 paise per kilometre, the department said. Meanwhile, the private bus owners' association stated that the fares were revised as per the automatic mechanism.

Tearful adieu to Prafulla
POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, April 18: The mortal remains of eminent singer Prafulla Kar were consigned to flames with full state honours at Swargadwar here Monday. People from various walks of life, including Law Minister Pratap Jena, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash, State Planning Board Deputy Chairman Sanjay Das Burma, Puri MLA Jayanta Sarangi, Collector Samarth Verma, SP Kanwar Vishal Singh and Sub-Collector Bhabataram Sahu were present at the funeral ceremony to pay their last respect to the legend. Kar's elder son Mahadeep, who lit the funeral pyre, said, "Dad fulfilled all his dreams. His contributions to the realm of music will keep inspiring generations to come. I'll carry forward his legacy." The Law Minister said Kar has immensely contributed to Odia music, language, literature and culture. "His death is an irreparable



Kar being given gun salute before his last rites in Puri, Monday

loss to Odisha," Jena said. For the Puri Collector, Kar's death is an irreparable loss not only to Odisha but also to the country. "May Lord Jagannath give strength to the bereaved family," Verma said. A prominent voice in the Odia music industry, Kar passed away at the age of 83 at his Satya Nagar residence here following a cardiac arrest late Sunday night. As the news of Kar's demise broke, people from various walks of life thronged his residence to pay their last respects to the legend.

SC denies Ashish bail

New Delhi, April 18: The Supreme Court Monday cancelled the bail granted to Ashish Mishra, son of Union Minister Ajay Mishra in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence case and asked him to surrender in a week, observing the Allahabad High Court had shown "tearing hurry" in giving relief and adopted a "myopic view of the evidence". The top court also said the 'victims' were denied "a fair and effective hearing" in the high court, noting that a 'victim' has unbridled participatory rights from the stage of investigation till the culmination of the proceedings in an appeal or revision. Holding that the high court order cannot be sustained and deserved to be set aside, the top court termed the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, if true as per allegations, as "an awakening call" to the state authorities to reinforce adequate protection for the life, liberty, and properties of the eye/injured witnesses, as well as for the



families of the deceased. While the Congress attacked the government after the verdict and asked when will Prime Minister Narendra Modi sack Ajay Mishra, the Union Minister of State for Home, the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait said the court decision has given hope of justice to farmers. On October 3 last year, eight people were killed in Lakhimpur Kheri during the violence that erupted when farmers were protesting against Uttar Pradesh Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya's visit to the area. Four farmers were mowed down by an SUV, in which Ashish Mishra was seated, according to the UP Police FIR. Following the incident, the driver and two BJP workers were allegedly lynched by angry farmers.

STRENGTHEN SAFETY FEATURES: J&K POLICE TELLS UIDAI

Pak terrorists misusing Aadhaar to hide identity

Srinagar, April 18: With terror groups misusing Aadhaar to camouflage the identity of their Pakistani cadres, the Jammu and Kashmir Police will request the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to strengthen safety features of the biometric ID, officials have said. The police force will also pitch for devising a mechanism for getting real-time information on an Aadhaar card being misused by terrorists. The misuse of the biometric ID came to light following the recent killing of two Pakistani terrorists in Bishembhar Nagar, adjacent to the Dal Lake in Srinagar. The terrorists, who had been involved in the killing of CRPF jawans earlier this month, were identified as Mohammed Bhai alias Abu Qasim, who had been active in Kashmir Valley since 2019, and Abu Arsalan alias Khalid, who was present since 2021. Subsequently, the police carried



The misuse of the biometric ID came to light following the recovery of Aadhaar cards from the encounter site of two Pak terrorists recently killed in Srinagar

out a thorough search and found that the Aadhaar numbers were genuine but the cards had their passport-sized pictures superimposed on them, an official said. A genuine Aadhaar card contains picture clicked on webcam, he added. Such camouflaging attempts by the Pakistan-based terror groups and their masters in the ISI are aimed at painting the terrorism in Kashmir Valley as an indigenous movement, the officials said. Alarmed by the blatant misuse of Aadhaar cards, the Jammu and Kashmir Police have decided to write to UIDAI requesting it to include more safety features, the officials said. Privacy guidelines of Aadhaar are very stringent, thereby preventing the law enforcement agencies from verifying any particular card. A basic check can only provide the age bracket of the card holder without revealing the exact identity. The police will also cite the case of Mohammed Ismal Alvi alias Lambu, one of the masterminds of the 2019 attack on the CRPF convoy that left 40 personnel dead. A forged Aadhaar card was also recovered from the site of the encounter in which he was killed. Several forged Aadhaar cards have also been found from various hideouts of terror groups in the past few months, the officials said.

JeM COMMANDER DECLARED TERRORIST
New Delhi: Ashiq Ahmed Nengroo, a commander of banned outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), was designated as a terrorist by the Centre Monday for his involvement in various terror incidents in Jammu and Kashmir. Nengroo is the fifth individual to have been designated as a terrorist by the Centre in the last fortnight. In a notification, the Union home ministry said Nengroo has been involved in the infiltration of terrorists into Jammu and Kashmir and has also been responsible for perpetrating various terror incidents in the Union Territory. Nengroo (34) is running a terror syndicate in Kashmir and is now "engaged in a perilous campaign to orchestrate terror in Jammu and Kashmir, remote-controlled from Pakistan," the ministry said.

ED freezes ₹757 crore Amway India assets

New Delhi, April 18: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has attached assets worth over ₹757 crore of one of the country's most known multi-level marketing (MLM) and direct-selling companies, Amway India, as part of a money-laundering investigation. The federal agency issued a statement Monday, alleging that the company was perpetrating a "scam" by running a pyramid "fraud" in the guise of direct-selling MLM network. "The entire focus of the company is about propagating how members can become rich by becoming members. There is no focus on the products. Products are used to masquerade this MLM pyramid fraud as a direct-selling company," the ED alleged. An Amway spokesperson said they are cooperating with the authorities "towards a fair legal, and logical conclusion of the outstanding issues". The ED issued a provisional order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	57166.74 ↓ 1172.19
NIFTY	17173.65 ↓ 302.00
DOLLAR	76.25 ↑ ₹0.08
EURO	82.23 ↓ ₹0.22
GOLD	₹ 53,481 ↑ ₹489
SILVER	₹70,323 ↑ ₹1291

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	40.2°C	40.5°C
TEMP MIN	25.2°C	25.1°C
Humidity	73%	73%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky	

leisure



REBEL WILSON ON HER DIET THAT HELPED HER SHED 34.9 KGS

Actress and comedienne Rebel Wilson has shared the secret behind her remarkable weight loss transformation. Since embarking on her self-titled 'year of health' in 2020, she has lost more than 34.9 kgs and has also managed to keep the weight off since reaching her goal, reports *mirror.co.uk*.

CARA MEETS QUEER COMMUNITY AT LGBT PUB FOR HER NEW SHOW

Model Cara Delevingne recorded a show called *Planet Sex* at one of London's oldest and most treasured LGBT venues - the Royal Vauxhall Tavern.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You are keenly interested in supernatural and occult phenomena, and today you will indulge in this hobby. You may buy a glossy hard-bound book on tantra or other paranormal things. However, Ganesh warns you to use the knowledge that you gain only for peaceful purposes.

TAURUS
You are likely to get extra passionate and fervent today, predicts Ganesh. If your logic prevails over your heart, things will probably change for better during the course of the day. It is high time that you set into motion the poignant side of your character, suggests Ganesh.

GEMINI
Your sensitive and emotional nature will prove to be a problem for you. Hence you need to control your emotions. Tread carefully when it comes to personal relationships. You need to wait for a better time before you think of proposing to that special someone, says Ganesh.

CANCER
New positive turn in life of lovers. It may lead to marriage. You will play role in bonding all members of the joint family and will meet with success. You will respect tradition and custom. Adopt a careful approach, counsels Ganesh.

LEO
You will be extremely serious about your work today and will work diligently to finish your tasks. You will be focused and disciplined about your projects. You will feel the need to improve your style of functioning. Traders can expect good financial gains today, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Your ambitions and desire to undertake more work will be very prominent today. After working hard all day, try to get yourself some recreation and relaxation, perhaps at a private party, a social gathering or maybe even at a marriage reception, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
You will be drawn towards those of the opposite sex today says Ganesh. You will meet people who share the same wavelength that you do in the afternoon, and this will lead to a lot of interesting discussions. You will want to expand upon your knowledge of the world today and will be successful in your efforts.

SCORPIO
Expressing your feelings becomes important at some point of time. Today, you are in a mood to express emotions for your near and dear ones. And why not? After all, they need to be appreciated. Though your heart is full of emotions today, do not express in a way that you become vulnerable in eyes of general public.

SAGITTARIUS
Your business is likely to grow with leaps and bounds, foresees Ganesh. Increase in financial returns will keep you happy for the entire day. Work in progress gives out positive signals. Your expert advice will be valued at work. In short, a day full of activities.

CAPRICORN
The day calls for making amends and undoing the damage done to relationships, so you will most likely focus on improving rapport with relatives and peers, says Ganesh. But despite your affable approach, family feud may occur. Keeping obnoxious neighbours at bay will save you some trouble.

AQUARIUS
Be it about solving financial issues or concerns about income, money matters will keep your mind occupied through out the day. You will have a gala time with your friends later on the day, predicts Ganesh. Not that you don't value your friends, but today, you will realise how important you are for one another.

PISCES
You are fond of traveling and are always looking for an excuse to set off. Hence it comes as no surprise if you pack your bags and decide to embark upon a journey on a whim today. It is a much needed break too, from the daily stresses of earning a livelihood.

Samantha: Never ever get tattooed

Hyderabad: Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu recently had a question-and-answer session on Instagram. One of her fans had asked the *Majili* actress to reveal what kind of a tattoo Samantha wants to see herself inked with.



The *Rangasthalam* actress bluntly replied saying that she now dislikes getting inked. "My advice

to my younger self would be not to get a tattoo. Ever!! Never ever get tattooed", the actress stressed.

Samantha is known to have three tattoos, all of which are related to her ex-husband Naga Chaitanya. Samantha's first tattoo reads 'YMC', which is an abbreviation for Sam and Naga's first film together, *Ye Maaya Chesave*.

The second tattoo, which reads 'Chay', is inked on her right rib, while the third tattoo is more unique, as both Chaitu and Samantha inked the same tattoo of two arrows on their forearms.

On the work front, Samantha will be seen in *Shakuntalam* and *Yashoda* next.



Kartik and Kriti spark dating rumours again

Mumbai: Years after starring in the romantic flick *Luka Chuppi*, Kartik Aaryan and Kriti Sanon are set to team up again for their next movie *Shehzada*.

The stars were recently in Mauritius for a schedule of the action-entertainer and fans now have reason to believe that the sparks didn't just fly on-screen.

"Met this Kute gal in Mauritius," Kartik teased as he shared a bunch of selfies with his leading lady.

After wrapping up their schedule shoot, the stars returned to Mumbai and going by their latest post, hit the road again this morning.

Taking to their Instagram handles, Kartik and Kriti shared a video from their car ride to an undisclosed location. Their goofy clip had hipsters rooting for them as B-town's hot new couple. "Start dating each other we won't mind at all," said a fan in the comments section.

Another added, "You guys perfect for each other... New B town couple alert?"

Since their on-screen pair up in 2019, Kartik and Kriti have won over quite a few fans who have lovingly dubbed them as 'Kariti'. The chemistry between the two seemed to be a tad more than fans could handle as they flooded the comments section with cheeky replies to the post saying, "Slow down guys!! I'm trying to process all of the #Kariti content." Another said, "I love your bonding @kartikaaryan @kritisanon #kariti"

Mom-to-be Sonam Kapoor living her best kaftan life

Mumbai: Actor Sonam Kapoor is taking maternity fashion a notch up ever since she announced her pregnancy news. The actress is expecting her first child with hubby Anand Ahuja.

The mom-to-be took to her Instagram handle Monday and treated fans to a glimpse of her blooming baby bump as she posed in a sheer black kaftan in new pictures from a photoshoot. She tagged hubby Anand Ahuja, mom Sunita Kapoor, and sister Rhea Kapoor:

She captioned the image: "Kaftan life with my (baby emoji) #everydayphenomenal."

The pictures have grabbed the attention of fans and celebs, including Bhumi Pednekar, Samantha Ruth Prabhu, Athiya Shetty, Anand Ahuja and Nargis Fakhri.

It was last month, when she and her husband Anand announced that they are expecting their first baby.

Sonam made the announcement on Instagram as she wrote: "Four hands. To raise you the very best we can. Two hearts. That will beat in unison with yours, every step of the way. One family. Who will shower you with love and support. We can't wait to welcome you."

Sonam added the hashtags #everydayphenomenal #com-

ingthisfall2022 with her post.

On the work front, Sonam was last seen in the 2019 release *The Zoya Factor*. She starred alongside Dulquer Salmaan. The actress then had a cameo in Anil Kapoor and Anurag Kashyap's *AK vs AK*.



'It took 3,000 hours to make Alia's lehenga for mehendi'

Mumbai: Celebrated fashion designer Manish Malhotra has revealed on social media that the fuchsia pink lehenga for actress Alia Bhatt's mehendi ceremony took 3,000 hours to make and that it featured 180 textile patches.

Reminiscing about the work that went into creating this masterpiece, Manish wrote: "A treasure of traceability and trust. The very beautiful #ManishMalhotraBride @aliaabhatt chose to personalise her Mehendi ensemble with a sustainable approach, where approximately 180 textile patches come together to mark her momentous occasion, the most special one indeed."

Malhotra said that the "custom touches reminisce about her journey and depict symbolic elements of her memories. Inscribed through Kashmiri and Chikankari threads, the passionate 3,000-hour intricate handwork of #Mijwan women features a fuchsia pink Lehenga and a blouse embellished in real gold and silver nakshi and kora flowers, and vintage gold metal sequins from kutch."

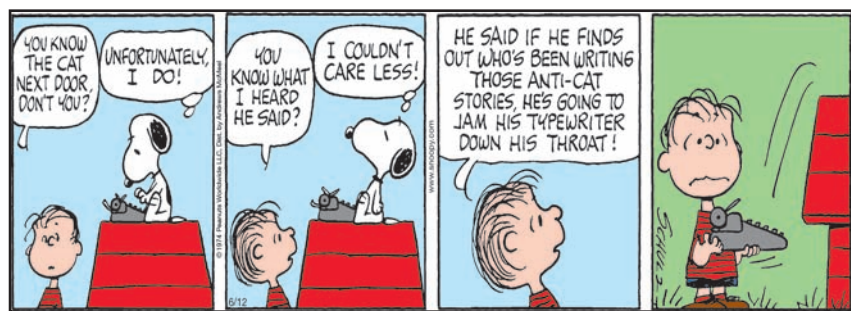
Talking about the technique, the designer shared: "The patches are woven together using a couture technique of

cross-stitches with three tar and six tar anchors. Edged in real gold zari and appliques, this handwoven silk ensemble also carries Banarasi brocades, jacquard, bandhani, Kachha Resham knots, and some scraps from brides' earlier outfits and detailing from #ManishMalhotraArchives."

"Every love story is unique, and @manishmalhotra05 beautifully narrates her beginning tale of a joyous forever," added Manish.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

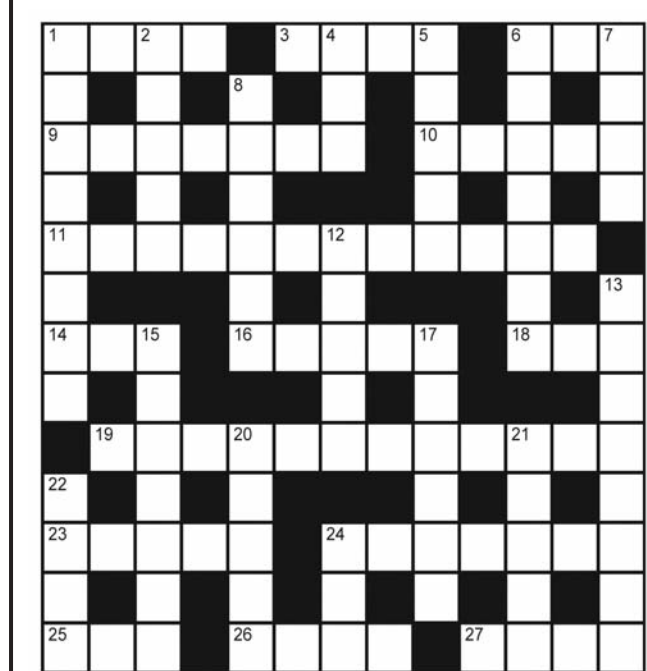


BREVITY



FUN post

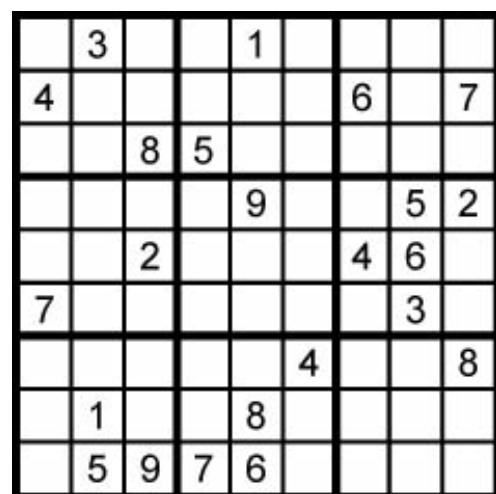
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Plummet
 - 3 Keats, for one
 - 6 Honey maker
 - 9 Captivate
 - 10 Euripides drama
 - 11 Go on a voyage (4,3,2,3)
 - 14 Missile's path
 - 16 Geneva's river
 - 18 Golf ball prop
 - 19 Now and then (4,2,1,5)
 - 23 Latin dance
 - 24 Breakfast breads
 - 25 German spa
 - 26 Whirlpool
 - 27 Matures
 - 6 Doctor's order (3,4)
 - 7 "Holy moly!"
 - 8 Relish
 - 12 Sticker
 - 13 Alcoves, e.g.
 - 15 Movie houses
 - 17 Former partner (2-4)
 - 20 Sidestep
 - 21 Cupcake topper
 - 22 Castaway's place
 - 24 Harebrained

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



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



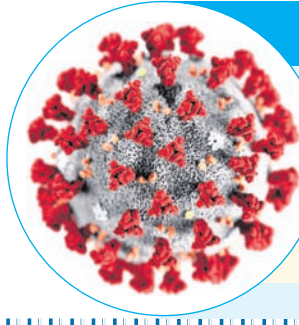
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



UP FOR SALE

A vendor puts up ceramic items for sale near Barabati Stadium in Cuttack, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	50,48,74,623	45,61,09,097	62,23,802
India	4,30,44,280	4,25,10,773	5,21,965
Odisha	12,87,935	12,78,664	9,123

Solar power in hosps soon

In the first phase, solar power panels will be installed at all government medical colleges and district headquarters hospitals



Green move

ODISHA GETS AROUND 300 SUNNY DAYS A YEAR, AND THE AVERAGE SOLAR RADIATION WAS QUITE CONDUCTIVE FOR ROOFTOP SOLAR PROJECTS

GENERATION OF SOLAR POWER THROUGH ROOFTOP SOLAR WOULD REDUCE THE ENERGY BILL OF THE HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL COLLEGES

1KW of solar power requires around 100 sq-ft of rooftop, and yields around 4 units per day. As such, a rooftop of around 1000 sq-ft would yield 40 units per day at a lesser cost than that of the current fossil-power tariff supplied through grid

ASHOK CHOUDHURY | OREDA ADDITIONAL DIRECTOR

Bhubaneswar, April 18: The state government has initiated steps for supplementing power supply to health service institutions through rooftop solar projects in a bid to ensure that hospitals do not face electricity problems across the state. This was decided at a high-level meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra. Emphasising on green energy and reduction of carbon footprint, the Chief Secretary accorded in-principle approval to the proposal of setting up solar power panels in

health institutions. He also directed to make the system foolproof for ensuring quality power supply to the health service institutions. Health and Family Welfare department Additional Chief Secretary RK Sharma expected

that generation of solar power through rooftop solar would reduce the energy bill of the hospitals and medical colleges. Principal Secretary Energy NB Dhal said Odisha gets around 300 sunny days a year, and the average solar radiation was quite conducive

for rooftop solar projects. Discussions in the meeting revealed that it would be an on-grid solar system, and would be managed through remote monitoring system with real time energy data analytics. It would also help in tracking the energy load and consumption pattern in health institutions. It was decided to start the project in all government medical colleges and district headquarters hospitals in the first phase. The Chief Secretary said that Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) would be the nodal agency for implementation and oversight of the project in health institutions. "1KW of solar power requires around 100 sq-ft of rooftop, and yields around 4 units per day. As such, a rooftop of around 1000 sq-ft would yield 40 units per day at a lesser cost than that of the current fossil-power tariff supplied through grid," said Additional Director OREDA Ashok Choudhury.

Mercury breaches 40°C in twin cities

POST NEWS NETWORK



Bhubaneswar, April 18: The mercury crossed 40 degrees Celsius in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack on Monday for the first time this year and at least 21 places in Odisha recorded maximum temperatures above 40 degrees, the Met office said.

Angul town registered 43.7 degrees Celsius, the highest in the state. The mercury settled at 43.2 degrees in Bolangir and 42 each in Dhenkanal, Baripada and Boudh, a bulletin stated.

The maximum was three notches above normal in the twin cities to settle at 40.2 degrees in the capital and 40.5 in Cuttack, it said.

The hot weather condition is likely to continue as there will be no large change in maximum temperatures in the next four-five days, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said.

The mercury is expected to be more than 40 degrees Celsius at many places and above normal by two-three notches at some areas in the interior parts of Odisha during the period, the Met said.

It advised people to take precautionary measures for the hot weather condition while going outside during midday between noon to 3 pm.

People may get some respite from the searing heat and intense humidity as there is a possibility of thunderstorms in several districts over the next 24 hours.

Meanwhile, manual surface observatories have been installed in all the 30 districts of the state.

The Met centre and the Disaster Management Department took the initiative for the installation at the district headquarters.

Seven observatories were installed in as many places, including Chhatrapur in Ganjam and Paralakhemundi in Gajapati districts, during 2020-21.

The hot weather condition is likely to continue as there will be no large change in maximum temperatures in the next four-five days

The new surface observatories have been set up in April in Dhenkanal, Deogarh, Bargarh, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Nuapada, Khurda and Nabarangpur.

With the inclusion, Odisha has 38 manual observatories, out of which 10 are fully operated by the Met office and the rest are operationalised in coordination with the Odisha government.

In addition to these, the Met has two doppler weather radar stations at Paradeep and Gopalpur, and six high wind speed recorders at Gopalpur, Puri, Bhubaneswar, Paradeep, Chandbali and Balasore.

This network of observatories boosts weather information and forecasting for the entire state, the Met office added.

Ravenshaw, GM told to join SAMS



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 18: The Higher Education (HE) department Monday directed the Ravenshaw University and Gangadhar Meher (GM) University to participate in the UG admission process in the Student Academic Management Systems (SAMS) platform for the session 2022-23.

In a letter to the registrars of the universities, HE department Deputy Director Rajesh Kumar Sahoo wrote, "Currently, 10 universities comprising of 1,025 higher

education institutions are participating in SAMS e-admission process for UG courses in different subjects having total strength of 2,50,139 except your institutions. For the convenience of students aspiring to get enrolled in UG courses, a single admission process (SAMS e-admission) has been introduced in Odisha from the academic session 2009-10."

"This common e-admission process not only saves time and extra man power but also facilitates students across the state for taking UG admission in a centralised SAMS platform. Hence students will get opportunities to study in your institution through a common admission procedure," the letter read.

"In this context, it is requested to convey your willingness for participating in SAMS admission process so as to start the procedure for inclusion of your institution in SAMS application," the letter concluded.



TAKING STOCK

Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar, along with officials, takes stock of construction of judicial complex office in Bhubaneswar, Monday

BJP for rise in WODC fund spending limit

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 18: BJP legislators from western Odisha demanded the state government to increase the spending limit of each MLA from the Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) fund to ₹5 crore per year.

BJP legislators from the western region including Jayanarayan Mishra, Bhabani Shankar Bhoi, Kusum Tete, Mukesh Mahaling, Nauri Nayak, Subash Chandra Panigrahi and Shankar Oram wrote to CM Naveen Patnaik on this.

Seeking the CM's attention to the funding from WODC, the MLAs said they were allowed to submit project proposals amounting to ₹1 crore each per year; when the budget of WODC was ₹100 crore per annum. The government has doubled it to ₹200 crore.

"It is therefore requested that each MLA of WODC area may be allowed to submit project proposals of ₹5 crore per year so that we can give sustainable proposals for the benefit of people of our area," the lawmakers demanded.

Man dies in custody, wife cries foul

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 18: A man who was picked up by the police here in connection with a case of theft died allegedly in police custody and his wife has alleged that he was tortured in custody.

The middle-aged man, a vegetable vendor and father of four children, died Sunday night.

The man's wife said though he limped, he was healthy. "My husband died due to torture in the police station. He had no involvement in any theft case," she alleged.

She said that her husband was picked up by the police when he was returning home from his in-law's house at Rasulgah here Sunday night and taken to the Badagada police station in connection with an allegation of stealing of a bicycle.

There was confusion about the man's identity as the police record said his name was Pradip Sahu, while his family claimed that it was Debendra Choudhury. His



The middle-aged man, a vegetable vendor and father of four children, died Sunday night

wife produced his Aadhaar card to support her claim.

Police said that the man had sustained injuries while trying to escape from the police custody. He was caught and taken to Badagada police station where he complained of feeling ill and was taken to Capital Hospital. He died during treatment.

Bhubaneswar deputy commissioner of police US Dash said "The deceased after being taken to the police station had confirmed that his name was Pradip Sahu. Pradip had a record of theft cases. As the incident took place in police custody, the inquest of the body is being done in the presence of a magistrate as per NHRC guidelines."

The man's wife said the police had come to their residence at around 1.30 am and asked her to reach the police outpost at the Capital Hospital. When she did, the police informed her about the death of her husband. "But they did not allow me to see his body," she said.

There was controversy when another woman appeared at the hospital and claimed that the dead person was her husband and she was handed over the body. This woman, a mother of four children, also said that she does not know the woman who is his wife. The matter is yet to be resolved.

Vacation trimmed for colleges, varsities too

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 18: Following the footsteps of the School and Mass Education (S&ME) department, the Higher Education (HE) department too has decided to curtail the annual summer vacation to 16 days for this year, in a bid to help the students catch up with their studies that have been disrupted due to pandemic.

The S&ME department had curtailed the annual summer vacation for schools to 11 days for this year.

In a letter to the vice chancellors of state public universities and principals of colleges, HE department Principal Secretary Saswat Mishra wrote, "In order to compensate for the academic days lost on account of Covid-19 related dislocation, the state government has decided to curtail the ensuing summer vacation for all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), including all State Public Universities,



coming under the Higher Education department."

He added, "The summer vacation will now be allowed for a brief period from June 1 to June 16. With such curtailment of summer vacation, HEIs are expected to complete all academic activities in time. If need be, extra classes should

be held on holidays and working days by suitably extending teaching hours."

"Teachers and other employees will be entitled for additional proportionate earned leave in lieu of such curtailment of the summer vacation, which will be communicated in due course of time. The cor-

respondences made by this department in the past pertaining to summer vacation for the 2022-23 Academic Session stand modified to this extent," he concluded.

The S&ME department Principal Secretary Bishnupada Sethi had Saturday informed all district Collectors that summer vacation would be curtailed and allowed for a brief period from June 6 to June 16. Learning Recovery Plan (LRP) as envisaged by the Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA) will be implemented with the existing teachers during morning classes, he had 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, Sethi had said.

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

Surface observatories placed in all districts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 18: Aiming to get proper data on weather, the state Revenue and Disaster Management Department, in coordination with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) installed manual surface observatories in all 30 districts.

The manual observatories have been installed at district headquarters across the state. Eight new manual observatories at Dhenkanal, Deogarh, Bargarh, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Nuapada, Khurda and Nabarangpur have been set up in April, officials said.

Earlier, seven observatories



Odisha now has a total of 38 manual observatories covering all 30 districts

Out of these, 10 are fully operated by IMD while the rest 28 are being operationalised in coordination with the state government

In addition to the above, the IMD has two Doppler Weather Radar stations at Paradeep and Gopalpur and six High Wind Speed Recorders (HWSRs) at Gopalpur, Puri, Bhubaneswar, Paradeep, Chandbali and Balasore

were installed at Nayagarh, Boudh, Chhatrapur, Paralakhemundi, Rayagada, Bhadrak and Jajpur

during the year 2020-21. With the inclusion of these eight new observatories, the state

has now a total of 38 manual observatories covering all 30 districts.

Out of these, 10 are fully operated by IMD while the remaining 28 are being operationalised in coordination with the state government.

In addition to the above, the IMD has two Doppler Weather Radar stations at Paradeep and Gopalpur and six High Wind Speed Recorders (HWSRs) at Gopalpur, Puri, Bhubaneswar, Paradeep, Chandbali and Balasore.

The network of observatories will give a boost for weather information as well as weather forecasting for the entire State, the officials stated.

'Odisha produced minerals worth ₹27,997cr in 2020-21'

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 18: Odisha produced minerals worth Rs 27,997 crore during 2020-2021 and had the highest share in Bauxite and Iron ore production of the country.

The number of reporting mines in Odisha was 149 in 2020-21, the Union Ministry of Mines said. The state's share in the Bauxite and Iron Ore productions were 76 per cent and 51 per cent respectively.

"The Production of Bauxite at 20,379 thousand tonne during 2020-21 registered a decrease of 6.67 per cent as compared to the previous



year. Odisha with 76.3 per cent contribution was the leading producer of Bauxite," the Union Ministry of Mines said.

According to the annual report of the Union ministry, Odisha also

had the highest share of 47.2 per cent in terms of estimated value of mineral production in the country during 2021-22.

"During 2021-22, mineral production was reported from 21 states/Union Territories, of which the bulk of value of mineral production (excluding fuel and atomic minerals, and minor minerals) of about 88.7 per cent was confined to four states. Odisha is in leading position, in terms of estimated value of mineral production in the country and had the share of 47.2 per cent in the national output," the ministry said.

SFC streamlining order withdrawn

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 18: The Higher Education (HE) department Monday withdrew its directive that restricted the self-financing courses (SFCs) in state universities from 2022-23.

HE department Additional Secretary Birendra Korkora wrote in a letter, "The Higher Education Department letter No15631/HE, dated 16.04.2022, in regard to streamlining of self-finance courses in the state public universities, is hereby withdrawn."

Earlier, Chancellor of Universities and Governor Ganeshi Lal had directed all state public universities not to allow any new SFCs on public-private partnership (PPP) mode.

Tuesday, Principal Secretary to the Chancellor Saswat Mishra had written to universities registrars, "The Chancellor has expressed serious concerns regarding the manner in which self-financing courses are currently being run in state public universities; especially the way self finance courses tend to over-shadow the 'regular courses' of the universities concerned."

3 crushed to death as lorry overturns

Baripada: Three people were crushed to death and another seriously injured when a cement-laden lorry toppled and fell on them on a thoroughfare in Mayurbhanj district late Sunday night, police said Monday. All four of them were walking on one side of NH-49 in Bisoil police station area when the truck lost control and overturned, the officer said. The driver and his helper fled the spot, he said.

Jail hosps in Niramaya

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMCL) included 32 state jail Head Quarter Hospitals (HQs) in Niramaya, the free medicines distribution scheme of state Health & Family Welfare department. The jail HQs will contact their concerned district OSMCL warehouses quarterly and as per the availability of drugs and consumables. Jail hospitals can now procure required drugs and consumables from the OSMCL warehouses. The OSMCL also created user credentials of 32 jail HQs in the e-Niramaya software. Similarly, the state home department Monday raised the cost of daily dietary charges per prisoner from ₹64 to ₹80 keeping in view the current sanctioned calorie intake (2,816.74 Kcal).

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AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit before the Executive Magistrate, Kanika on the 29th March 2022, Subhransu Bhusan Sutar, aged 46 year, At-Kalikapur, PO-RajKanika, Dist-Kendrapara, Odisha have changed the name of My minor son from Bharat Ratna Sankalpa Keshari Sutar to Sankalpa Keshari Sutar for all purposes. Subhransu Bhusan Sutar

I, Smt. Madhu Saralia @ Madhuri Saralia, W/o: Late Mahesh Kumar Saralia, residing At: Gandhi Marg, PO/Dist.: Angul has changed my name as Madhu Saralia vide Affidavit No.: 4578/dt:24-03-2022 at Notary, Angul. Henceforth, I will be known as Madhu Saralia for all purposes.

I, Sri. Gourav Agarwalla @ Gourav Kumar Agarwalla, S/o: Govind Agarwalla, residing At: Bazzar Chhak, PO/PS/Dist.: Angul has deleted my middle name "Kumar" vide Affidavit No.: 0490/dt:08-04-2022 at Notary, Angul. Henceforth, I will be known as Gourav Agarwalla for all purposes.

Lokayukta asks EOW to probe Aruha hill mining

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, April 18: The Odisha Lokayukta has directed the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of state Crime Branch to conduct a probe into the alleged plunder of black stone in Aruha hill under Dharmasala tehsil of this district, a report said Monday.

The matter came to the fore after Lokayukta chairman Ajit Singh April 8, 2022 has issued an order directing the DIG to initiate a probe into the irregularities and loot of black stone from Aruha hill by senior and experienced officers. The Lokayukta while issuing the order also asked the EOW to submit its probe report within six months from the date of issuance of the order.

The Lokayukta also directed to handover the complainant's letter, preliminary investigation report and other papers to the director of EOW to help them in the investigation. The next date of hearing has been scheduled for July 22, 2022. The Lokayukta has ordered an EOW probe on the basis of preliminary investigation re-



port and the replies filed by the opposite parties.

According to the case diary, leaseholder Trinath Jena had allegedly extracted several tonnes of costly black stones from Aruha hill beyond the permitted area. This has resulted in huge loss of revenue to the state government. He is accused of

committing the fraud in connivance with local police, Dharmasala tehsildar and tehsil officials.

Complainant Sarbeswar Behura, who is also a social activist, lodged complaints about the illegalities but they were never addressed. Peeved at the development, Behura filed a petition (1355/2020) before the

'PLUNDER' OF BLACK STONE

Leaseholder Trinath Jena had allegedly extracted several tonnes of precious black stones from Aruha hill beyond the leasehold area, resulting in huge revenue loss to the state govt

Jena is accused of committing the fraud in connivance with local police, Dharmasala tehsildar and other tehsil officials

Odisha Lokayukta seeking justice.

The matter was probed in various phases and the investigation director of Lokayukta also submitted a report to this effect.

Over 10 officers who are party to this case also submitted their replies in the case. Anup Kumar Rout, the former joint director, department of Geology, Dhenkanal zonal office, also submitted his report March 31, 2022 while Jajpur Collector submitted his reply January 12, 2022.

In his report, the Collector has

mentioned that the lease area is of 3 acre according to development and environmental management plans. The additional areas mentioned in the plan are used for dumping, storage and movement of vehicles. The case has become all the more intriguing with the opposite parties speaking in different voices.

The Collector in his report has stated that the tehsildar has submitted to the ADM that the sketch map of Aruha hill has been prepared wrongly while over 31,548 cubic metre of black stones have been extracted from quarry no-2 without permission January 1, 2022.

Former revenue inspector (RI) of Aruha circle Basudev Sahu has denied preparing any sketch map of Aruha hill. He has only signed on a sketch map presented to him on the direction of the tehsildar. Former Dharmasala tehsildars, Saroj Kumar Panda, Prabhas Kumar Behura, Sital Agarwal, Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Khirabdi Tanaya Panda and leaseholder Trinath Jena have rubbished the charges of their involvement in loot of black stones from the hill.

Young ISRO scientist drowns in village pond

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, April 18: A young scientist working with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) drowned while bathing in a pond at his native village Jharapalli under Ambabhona block in this district, Monday.

The deceased was identified as Nihar Ranjan Pradhan, 25, the youngest son of Pankajini and Rajkumar Pradhan in the village. He had been selected as a scientist in ISRO in the last week of December, 2020. A pall of gloom descended in the village and the Ambabhona block after reports of his death broke out in the area.

Pradhan had reached his village Jharapalli Saturday on a 15-days leave. Accompanied by two kids, he went to the water body to take bath, but somehow slipped into deep water. The two kids cried for help. Alerted, locals nearby jumped into the water and rescued Pradhan in an unconscious state.

He was rushed to the Bhukta Community Health Centre where doctors pronounced him dead. A local termed this as an irreparable loss not only to the block, district or the state, but also the country.

Mahanadi hearing deferred to May 14

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 18: The Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal has deferred the hearing of an application filed by Odisha against Chhattisgarh that alleges construction of barrages on the Mahanadi River and seeks directions to the upper riparian state to maintain a specific flow of water.

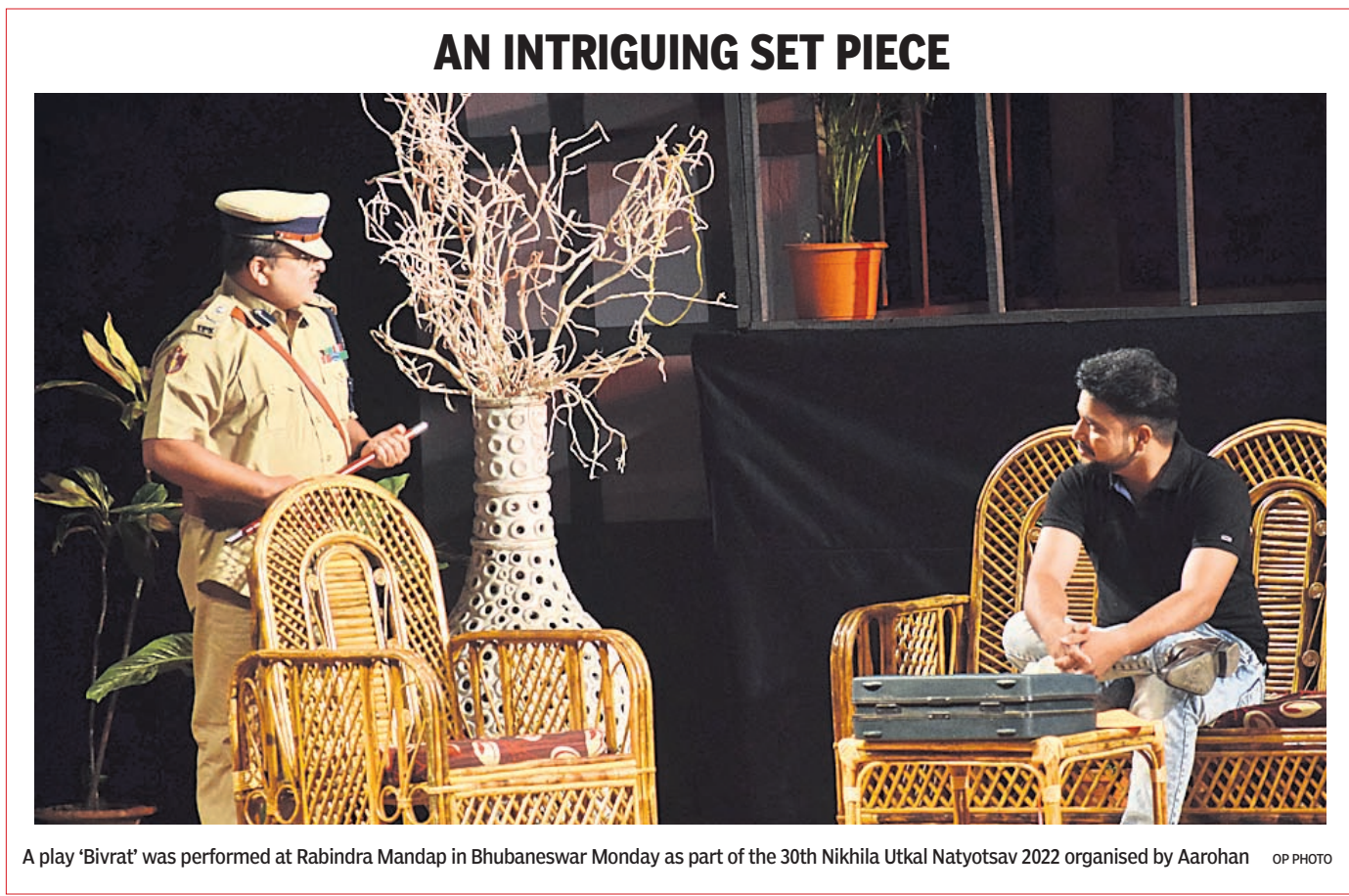
The tribunal will take up the matter for hearing May 14. "The matter listed for hearing April 30 stands adjourned and shall be taken up for hearing May 14," the registrar of the tribunal said.

The tribunal had March 12 asked Odisha and Chhattisgarh to submit affidavits of witnesses in order to depose their studies in connection with Mahanadi.

Significantly, Odisha proposed nine witnesses to examine in the tribunal during the hearing of the matter. Meanwhile, Chhattisgarh has proposed around eight witnesses to examine.

Among the witnesses proposed by Odisha are - former Member of Central Water Commission ME Haque to depose for assessment of water availability in Mahanadi Basin; former CWC Chairman Rajesh Kumar to depose for planning and regulation in Chhattisgarh for ensuring water at the interstate border; Former chief engineer of Odisha water resources department Harmohan Pradhan to depose for development and operation of Hirakud Reservoir; Mahanadi Delta; former engineer-in-charge DoWR RC Tripathy; former scientist at Central Ground Water Board Gulab Prasad; former Dean of College of Agriculture Dibakar Naik; former Director of GRIDCO Prashant Kumar Pradhan; former Director of Institute of Economic Growth Manoj Kumar Panda; and former member of National Green Tribunal PC Mishra.

The witnesses proposed by both states would depose their studies on Mahanadi river in the tribunal.



A play 'Bivrat' was performed at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar Monday as part of the 30th Nikhila Utkal Natyotsav 2022 organised by Aarohan OP PHOTO

Boatman recalls unforgettable moments with Biju Babu



POST NEWS NETWORK

Mahakalpara, April 18: Legendary Odia pride Biju Patnaik continues to inspire millions with his ideologies and legacy that he has left behind. He will always be remembered for his selfless service for Odisha and the nation. Among his millions of admirers is Bidhan Adhikary, a boatman from Kendrapara district.

Recalling the unforgettable moments he had spent with the true statesman, freedom fighter and architect of modern Odisha, the boatman said, "It was back in 1984-85. I was lucky enough to spend a few hours with Biju Babu. He was then contesting for Kendrapara Lok Sabha seat and had arrived at Mahakalpara for electioneering. He proceeded from Jambu ghat in

Had he been alive today, my living condition would have not been like this. He was very compassionate to his fellowmen

BIDHAN ADHIKARY

a motor boat (launch) along with former minister late Nalinikanta Mohanty."

"In order to appeal to the local voters, Biju Babu covered Jambu island and the light-house area through waterway. Later, his launch reached Galia river of Kharinasi in Kendrapara. As water level of the river was low at Kharinasi, the launch could not move further. There was no road connectivity and hence, Biju Babu had to depend on my country boat to reach Ramnagar

and its nearby panchayats for campaigning," Bidhan added.

"Traveling in the crocodile-infested river was a big challenge for me. Along with my assistant Tapu Biswas, we started the journey in a fishing boat from Kharinasi-Tubi ghat," the boatman said.

"During the voyage and before reaching Ramnagar-Puruna Hata ghat, Biju Babu was curious about the occupation and living conditions of the boatmen. He also asked me whether he would win the election and my reply was 'Yes Sir, with a big vote margin'. During the journey, he enjoyed the natural beauty of the vast mangrove forests," Bidhan stated.

"Biju Babu also expressed his desire to know about Jagar fish (Pohala in local parlance) that were jumping into our boat. I still cannot forget those moments. It will forever be etched in my heart," Bidhan added.

"Had he been alive today, my living condition would have not been like this. He was very compassionate to his fellowmen," an emotional Bidhan, who has now changed his occupation, said while bursting into tears. Bidhan presently runs a tiffin centre in a partly-damaged thatched house in his village under Mahakalpara block of Kendrapara.

"Biju Babu's ideology continues to inspire me," the boatman said. It is pertinent to mention here that the state observed Biju Babu's death anniversary Sunday (April 17).

Cov under control in state: Health Dir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 18: The coronavirus situation is under complete control in Odisha and there is no need to panic, a Health department official said Monday, allaying fears of a fresh spike in the state as infections rise in the National Capital Region.

Public Health Director Niranjan Mishra said except for seven-eight districts in the state, others were reporting zero cases.

The official did not state whether there could be any wave, asserting that if the infections do rise, the disease would be less severe like the third wave.

"The symptoms will be less as the vaccination has been good in the state. Therefore, there is no need to panic," he told reporters.

India recorded 2,183 new coronavirus cases Monday, 1,033 more than the previous day, mainly due to the surge in infections in Delhi and adjoining cities.

"No new variant has been detected in the state," Mishra said, adding that the situation is under "full control" and the state has been maintaining surveillance.

Odisha recorded 13 coronavirus cases Monday, while there was no fatality for the third consecutive day, the Health department said in a bulletin.

There are 107 active Covid-19 cases in the state and 13 districts have no coronavirus patients at present. Eleven more people have

KIIT, WLA hold seminar on edu development

POST NEWS NETWORK



The symptoms will be less as the vaccination has been good in the state. Therefore, there is no need to panic. No new variant has been detected in the state. The situation is under full control and the state has been maintaining surveillance

NIRANJAN MISHRA | PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR, ODISHA

recuperated from the highly infectious disease, the Health bulletin stated.

The coastal state's daily test positivity rate (TPR) was 0.07 per cent and the infections were detected out of 18,886 sample tests. Two children were among those who were afflicted with the disease, it added.

The toll remained at 9,123 and these have been confirmed as Covid deaths after an audit. Fifty-three other coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities so far, according to data.

Bhubaneswar, April 18: A seminar on "The Relevance of Education in Building a Sustainable Society" was organised by the World Leadership Academy (WLA) in association with KIIT-Deemed to be University, Sunday.

Presiding over the seminar, KIIT & KISS Founder Achyuta Samanta said discipline is essential for education and social development. "KIIT has been providing necessary support to more than a hundred colleges in state in increasing the standard of education and enable them to get NAAC accreditation. In addition, free e-libraries, e-labs etc are being provided by KIIT for improving research," Samanta gave a four-point mantra for the development of education to the educationists present on the occasion.

KIIT VC Sasmita Samanta said, "A lot of aspirations have been created in the field of education during the last two years. A strong educational system has the capacity to change the world. Two things very important in today's education system are human resources and intellectual resources."

The event was attended by more than 500 principals and professors from various colleges and universities in state, including VCs of various universities. The inaugural session was followed by day-long panel discussion on the theme. More than 20 MoUs were signed between KIIT and participating colleges.

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LIFE IN MOMENTS



Prafulla Kar receiving Sikandar Alam Memorial Award from Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik



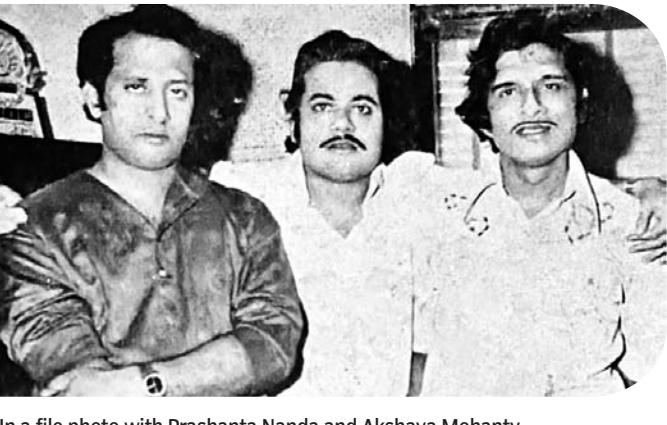
Anuradha Paudwal being felicitated with Profulla Kar Samman



Sharing a light moment with singer Kavita Krishnamurthy



Participating in a rally for Odia language



In a file photo with Prashanta Nanda and Akshaya Mohanty

UNMATCHED PRAFULLA

Whether it is Odissi, light classical, folk, popular cinema or devotional songs, not many musicians have made a seamless transition from one genre to another like legendary Profulla Kar did. He was not only the singer and creator of hundreds of captivating Odia songs and soul stirring music, he has also shaped the careers of several artistes, singers and musicians of the state. **Orissa POST** pays rich tributes to the 'crownless emperor' of Odissi music recounting his journey spanning six decades

JOURNEY AT A GLANCE

For more sixty years, Profulla Kar has regaled audiences and fans in Odisha and abroad with his distinctive singing, compositions and lyrics. Born in 1939 into a family of musicians, he showed early promise as a singer at home in Puri, the abode of Lord Jagannath. His father's elder brother Khetra Mohan Kar was a renowned tabla player, who exposed him to artists of national repute like Hirabai Barodekar, Pt. Omkar Nath Thakur, Pannalal Bose, Prasun Banarjee, Radhika Mohan Maitra, A Kanan, Malabika Kanan and many others as family friends at their home. This adorable child of Baidyanath Kar and Susila Kar had the opportunity to listen to such veterans from his childhood and little wonder then that music started flowing in his blood at a tender age. After having his BA and LLB degrees from Utkal University, he received his Sangeet Visharad from Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, Maharashtra under the guidance of Pt. Markandeya Mohapatra, Pt. K Adinarayana and Pt. JVS Rao. His professional Career in music took off in 1960 and he rapidly established himself as an acclaimed (A-Grade) vocalist, composer and lyricist for All India Radio, Doordarshan and major concerts.



Receiving Padma Shri from former President Pranab Mukherjee



FEBRUARY 16, 1939 - APRIL 17, 2022

Major honours and felicitations

Year	Awards
2004	Jayadev Award
2008	Swarna Sanjibani Award
2009	Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja Award
2010	Balakrushna Das Award
2011	FitFat Biscope Award
2012	Kadambini Award Parampara Award
2013	Sahadev Padhi Award
2015	Padma Shri
2016	D. Lit. (Utkal University)
2017	Choklate Legend Award

TIMELESS CREATIONS

BHUBANESWAR: Profulla Kar has been a part of around 70 Odia films and given some all time hits to the Odia music industry both as a music director and singer. Here are some of his memorable creations.

Nei Jaa Re Megha Mote...
Movie: Balidan Singer: S. Janaki

Maajhi Re...
Movie: Sessa Shrabana
Singer: Pranab Patnaik

Rupa Hoithiba Labanyabati...
Movie: Puja Phoola
Singer: Chitta Jena

Mo Priya Tharu...
Movie: Sindura Bindu
Singer: Chittaranjan Jena

Megha Barasila Tupuru Tupuru...
Movie: Sessa Shrabana
Singer: Vani Jairam

A Phula Kaha Thare...
Movie: Puja Phula
Singer: Anuradha Paudwal

Manika, Alo Alo Manika...
Movie: Sessa Shrabana
Singers: Chitta Jena, Mohd. Habib



LITERARY WORKS

Till the last breath of his life, he was engaged in research on Odissi music in an attempt to establish it as a recognised classical music form. Recent publication of his selected devotional lyrics, *Aangya Mala*, is a humble dedication to Odia literature. His weekly short story column *Saunta Kahani* in the Odia daily *Dharitri* was widely read and acclaimed. These short stories have been compiled into two popular books.

WON HEARTS ABROAD

Apart from his extensive tours in India, the legendary musician has also represented the country on several occasions and performed abroad to promote Indian, especially Odissi music. He has held the audience of the United States spellbound on six occasions - 1986, 1988, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2008 and also toured Australia in 1977, Fiji Island in 1977, the UK in 1997 and Brazil in 2007.

ENVIALE SOBRIQUET

The legend had sung *Kamala Desha Rajakumar Mun, Hathare Pushpa Dhanu* at the start of his musical career. The song went on to become very popular for which he earned the sobriquet of *Kamala Deshara Rajakumara*. His other popular numbers like *Milanta Ki Mate Udanta Thalia, Mun Ta Niraha Kerandi Machha, Haire Phulagachha* and *Kali Kapali Naramunda Bali* were also equally accepted by the fans.



Sudarsan Pattnaik's tribute through his sand art at Puri, Monday

PM leads condolences on Kar's demise

of Shri Profulla Kar Ji. He will be remembered for his pioneering contribution to Odia culture and music. He was blessed with a multifaceted personality and his creativity was reflected in his works. Condolences to his family and admirers. Om Shanti," PM Modi tweeted.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik expressed grief on the demise of the noted musician. Kar's passing away has marked the end of an era in Odia music, Naveen said.

"I am saddened to learn of the death of famous musician Profulla Kar. His demise marked the end of an era in the world of Odia music. His unique musical style will forever immortalise him in



Orissa POST and Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy and Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy pay their last respect to the legendary musician

the hearts of the people. I extend my deepest condolences to the bereaved family," Naveen tweeted in Odia.

FRATERNITY MOURNS

I lost my great friend today. Profulla was truly a distinguished personality. May Lord give his family enough strength to bear this irreparable loss! He was a master of singing and composition. He was a good cook and we used to enjoy each other's company. **PRANAB PATNAIK** | Legendary Singer

His voice will be remembered forever and his evergreen songs would continue to win millions of hearts. His musical composition sung by Chitta Jena *Mo Priya Tharu Kie Adhika Sundara* is my all time favourite. **PREM ANAND** | Music Director

His songs had overwhelmed me during my childhood. He has showcased his versatility in his work. He has sung and composed every genre of music. He made his mark not only as a singer but as a composer. **LAXMIKANTA PALIT** | Singer & Musician

He encouraged me a lot during my singing career. I made my debut in playback singing through his composition in *Bhuli Huyena*. His songs have the flavour of Odissi music. He always tried to infuse Odia culture and tradition in his music. **LOPITA HOTA** | Singer

It's an end of an era. He had always inspired me and many other singers. I'm fortunate enough to have worked with him. My last interaction with him was during his birthday celebrations, when I chatted with him on a video call. **ANTARA CHAKRABORTY** | Singer

Profulla Kar's knowledge about music was incomparable. He made Odissi music popular across the nation and world. We lost him too early... **ABHIJIT MAJUMDAR** | Singer & Musician



Governor Ganeshi Lal paying floral tributes to the departed soul

POST NEWS NETWORK/ AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 18: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Governor Ganeshi Lal and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik were among the many who condoled the demise of

noted lyricist, singer and music director Profulla Kar. Condoling the legendary singer's death, Modi said Kar will be remembered for his pioneering contribution to Odia culture and music. "Anguished by the passing away



Prashanta Nanda, Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi, former MP and actor Siddhanta Mohapatra and actor-politican Akash Das Nayak paying homage



OP PHOTOS



Mortal remains reached Sanskruti Bhawan

FOCUS CRISIS IN LANKA, PAK

SOBERING LESSONS



Populism and large welfare spending is rising. We can't ignore what happens to economic resilience when fiscal caution is thrown to winds

In a perceptive piece, journalist Marvi Sirmed warns that it would be foolish to conclude that democracy has prevailed in Pakistan and Imran Khan's ouster is proof of that. She asserts that it is mostly the army's doing and it will take quite some time for political parties to become truly independent of the army's influence. The fact remains that unlike neighbouring India or also Bangladesh, Pakistan has suffered economic mismanagement and the high inflation is but one manifestation of that. Excessive dependence on debt whether from IMF or China is also a factor.

Four brothers became the president, the prime minister, ministers for finance and agriculture, and a fifth minister for sports was a nephew. How can one expect sound democratic governance in an atmosphere of nepotism like this? Dissent and disagreement are essential elements of democratic discourse, and when that is suppressed one can be sure of a decline.

While Sri Lanka is in dire straits, with food and forex shortages, country-wide unrest, with the entire cabinet resigning, and now dependence on aid from donors like India, the situation in Pakistan is equally instructive. The historic ouster of Imran Khan's government was mainly the culmination of spendthrift policies, economic mismanagement, high inflation of 15 per cent and unsustainable debt accumulation. The charges and counter-charges of an international conspiracy are additional smoke and mirrors. The popular mandate of Khan unfortunately led to populist policies. An opposition party member of parliament Nafisa Shah accused Khan of having "destroyed political culture, weakened parliament and institutions."

Populism and fiscal recklessness have no happy ending. India's 1991 crisis itself was the culmination of profligate fiscal policies tipped over by the gulf war of 1990, high oil prices leading to a full-fledged currency crisis. Thankfully since then, despite many external macro shocks such as the East Asian crisis of 1997, the dot com bust and 9/11, the Lehman crash, or presently the pandemic and Ukraine, India's macro has been resilient and hence crises have been avoided. But that should be no reason for complacency. Some of the debt and deficit policies pursued by individual state governments are becoming unsustainable if not outright crisis prone. Punjab's debt to state GDP ratio is already at 53 per cent as against the 20 recommended by fiscal responsibility norms. The Centre's debt to GDP ratio declined steadily from 63.9 per cent in 2006 to 47 per cent just before the pandemic i.e. in 2019. Since then it has risen steeply and is now at 61.7 per cent. Interest payments are 45 per cent of revenue receipts in 2021. Some states want to discard the national pension scheme in favour of fiscally irresponsible "defined benefits" schemes. Populism and large welfare spending is rising. We can't ignore what happens to economic resilience when fiscal caution is thrown to the winds.

The writer is a noted economist.
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The economic crisis in Sri Lanka has been in the making for several years. Hence all of it cannot be blamed purely on the pandemic or on the war in Ukraine. These two factors were external to the Sri Lankan economy and certainly had an impact. But they are only a convenient political alibi. While it is true that the pandemic caused tourism revenue to drop to nearly zero. Even the inward remittances declined sharply, as Sri Lankan non-resident workers from elsewhere lost their jobs and incomes and were unable to maintain the pace of an annual inflow of nearly 8 billion dollars. With a double whammy from tourism and remittances the economy was badly hit. The spike in oil prices on an economy totally dependent on imported oil has been more than the proverbial last straw. But the devastation and chaos that we see now was in the making for several years. These external macro shocks were able to derail the economy because of the inherent steady decline in the resilience of the economy over many years. If the economy has not developed resilience in terms of a low and manageable fiscal deficit, or comfortable forex reserves, or low inflation and moderate taxation, then the slightest of shocks, whether external or internal can lead to an economic crisis.

The decline in economic resilience has been caused mainly by populist economic policies and complacency by one and all of ignoring the worsening macroeconomic parameters. For instance, a wider fiscal deficit during normal growth times is ignored by justifying it as a growth inducing necessity. Such a fiscal deficit can be caused by either an increase in expenditure or by reducing taxes. And this is what the Rajapaksa government did in 2019. The newly elected government in 2019 announced a series of populist tax cuts, reducing value added tax by half and eliminating capital gains tax. The governance at the top was very unusual to say the least.



Ajit Ranade

SRI LANKA IS NOT THE FIRST COUNTRY TO EXPERIENCE BEING LEFT IN THE LURCH BY FOREIGN BOND INVESTORS

COVID Again

In the midst of what appears to be misplaced complacency prevailing in the country about COVID-19 being fairly under control, on April 17, Delhi reported a fresh outbreak with 517 positive cases. This is four times the caseload in the capital at the beginning of the month. Bad news is coming from Haryana too where the count has increased by four times on the same day, though the total number is less than that of Delhi. It may be noted that these figures are culled from amongst those people who feel unwell and decide to get tested. There may be many more who do not or cannot avail the test facility.

It is a matter of concern that for the first time since the third week of January, active cases in the country have begun to rise again. Over 10 states and Union territories are currently reporting cases in single digits. Many may draw solace from the fact that till date, spike in cases has been restricted to Delhi and Haryana only and there are no worrisome reports from other parts of the country. Other major cities, including Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata or Pune have not yet reported very high numbers. This may also be dependent on how thoroughly and efficiently testing is being done at those places.

Delhi has, for some time, been reporting over 100 cases per day on an average. But, in the last few days there is a clear surge. The cases have been rising daily since April 12 and the number has crossed 450 on April 16, the highest in six weeks. Similarly, Haryana's tally of 202 cases that day is said to be the highest in five weeks. It is not yet clear why the cases are rising in Delhi and Haryana, but experts point out the most plausible explanation could be withdrawal of the mask mandate and removal of all restrictions. However, these moves have been taken all over the country where schools and offices have reopened and public transport is being filled to the capacity. This might suggest Delhi and Haryana situation could be replicated in other parts of the country sooner or later. The reasons attributed to lower cases in the rest of the country are wide coverage of vaccines and the absence of any new variant other than the Omicron variety. Some experts also opine that the latest variant may have given immunity to those affected, though there is no definite scientific data to support this assumption.

In such a situation, disconcerting reports are emanating from China which has locked down its financial centre, Shanghai, for the past two weeks. Many of the 26 million residents of Shanghai, who are confined to their homes, have complained that they are facing acute food and other essential items' shortages. The government is finding it challenging to supply every household with daily necessities since the supply chain has been crippled by China's stringent measures. In China, every COVID-19 case, including the asymptomatic ones, is quarantined in government-run facilities. The political establishment in China has not allowed relaxation of measures and a way back to normal social and economic life the way it has been done in the rest of the world taking advantage of the benefits of vaccination. Singapore has aggressively vaccinated its population and offered incentives to do so. China's argument is that its strategy of restrictions has enabled it to avoid a major second wave and it wants to continue with that policy. China is the only country still out of reach from the rest of the world. A Chinese news agency report insists "a dynamic zero-COVID approach remains crucial" and that lowering of guard would spell disaster for its 1.4 billion people, including 267 million aged 60 or above.

With the possibility of a fourth wave, India needs to take note and stay prepared. Since schools have reopened and all establishments have bounced back to business as usual, India could be staring at yet another grueling COVID wave in near future.

WISDOM CORNER

- One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well. VIRGINIA WOOLF
- One never notices what has been done; one can only see what remains to be done. MARIE CURIE
- There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you. MAYA ANGELOU

WORDSWORTH

Somniloquent

We are with sleep-talkers, a less-often encountered term than sleepwalkers, even though the former are more common. Medical terminology has dignified words for them both: somnambulants and somniloquents. Some sufferers have been known to do both at once: you might call this the Lady Macbeth syndrome. Both words begin with a derivative of the Latin somnus, sleep. The second parts are respectively from ambulare, to walk, and loqui, to speak. The former verb appears in perambulate, to walk about in a leisurely way, and in ambulant, a patient who is not confined to bed but is able to walk about. The rather rare noctambulant, somebody who walks at night, is from the same source; he or she might be somnambulant but could equally be insomniac. As to the second, if you talk a lot while awake, you are better described by its relative loquacious. The nouns belonging to them are somnambulism and somniloquy. Somniloquacious is a pleasant adjectival expansion which trips off the tongue. Nathan Bailey included it in his dictionary in 1731 with the same sense as somniloquent.

Sophrosyne

The Greeks had a word for it, at least classical Greeks like Plato did. Translating the idea into English, however, has always posed a difficulty, since we don't have one word that summarises his ideal of excellence of character and soundness of mind combined in one well-balanced individual. He defined it as "the agreement of the passions that Reason should rule". Sophrosyne is usually translated as temperance, moderation, prudence, self-control, or self-restraint. The idea of this harmonious balance is the basis of two famous Greek sayings: "nothing in excess" and "know thyself" - it's the exact opposite of arrogant self-assertion or hubris. The word has only appeared in English within the past sixty years (W H Auden used it in 1944) but it has resonated with some moderns because the idea is quite close to that of wholeness. Note the word has four syllables, not three. It derives from Greek sophron, of sound mind, prudent. Your field of battle will be constricted, and the ranks of spectators will confuse and disorient you. Ignore all of that. Remember the one rule: do not die. Keep your focus. Know thy way, warrior; know thy balance and strength. Sophrosyne. That is how you will prevail. -- The Mongoliad, by Neal Stephenson, 2012.

LOL

Where is my goat?

There were these two guys out hiking when they came upon an old, abandoned mine shaft. Curious about its depth they threw in a pebble and waited for the sound of it striking the bottom, but they heard nothing. They went and got a bigger rock, threw it in and waited. Still nothing. They searched the area for something larger and came upon a railroad tie. With great difficulty, the two men carried it to the opening and threw it in.



While waiting for it to hit bottom, a goat suddenly darted between them and leapt into the hole! The guys were still standing there with astonished looks upon their faces from the actions of the goat when a man walked up to them. He asked them if they had seen a goat anywhere in the area and they said that one had just jumped into the mine shaft in front of them! The man replied, "Oh no. That couldn't be my goat, mine was tied to a railroad tie."

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

The infrastructure of recovery



Riccardo Puliti

DISRUPTIONS CAUSED BY UNRELIABLE INFRASTRUCTURE COST INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES HUNDREDS OF BILLIONS OF DOLLARS ANNUALLY

Physical infrastructure has a critical role to play in supporting the post-pandemic recovery and in laying the longer-term foundations for green, resilient, and inclusive development. A growing body of evidence highlights its contribution to a wide range of development indicators, including employment, productivity, income, inequality, trade, and human-capital formation.

Yet, across much of the developing world, infrastructure remains woefully inadequate. Some one billion people live more than a mile from an all-season road, 760 million lack access to electricity at home, and 450 million live beyond range of a broadband signal. Even where these services are available, they are frequently erratic and unaffordable. The disruptions caused by unreliable infrastructure cost individuals and businesses hundreds of billions of dollars annually, and the world's poorest and most fragile countries have the most expensive broadband, electricity, and transportation services.

Even before the pandemic, investment in infrastructure was well below the levels needed to achieve global development goals. And since the pandemic, spending has been squeezed further. While many developed economies have implemented stimulus packages to support economic recovery -

often with infrastructure components - the world's poorest states lack the fiscal space for such measures. The last G7 summit highlighted this issue, as leaders called for enhanced efforts to fund infrastructure development in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). To maximise infrastructure's contribution to the global economic recovery and support green, resilient, and inclusive growth, additional investment must be channelled into effective programmes. Four imperatives stand out.

For starters, meeting global climate targets requires an unprecedented wave of investment in green infrastructure. Energy and transportation systems together account for around two-thirds of global CO2 emissions, and LMICs will account for much of the projected increase in emissions in the coming years. Investments in renewable electricity, energy efficiency, charging infrastructure for electric vehicles, climate-smart urban transport systems, and emerging green hydrogen supply chains are cost-effective options that simultaneously abate CO2 emissions and create jobs.

Second, new projects must be designed to promote economic and social resilience to extreme weather and other external shocks. Climate change is already causing severe damage to existing infrastructure. For example, in January, Tropical

Storm Ana took out around half of Malawi's meagre power-generation capacity. The following month, a volcanic eruption and tsunami disconnected Tonga's submarine internet cable. Such direct infrastructure damage is already valued at around \$18 billion annually. Enhancing infrastructure resilience would add only a few percentage points to existing investment needs, but the anticipated benefits exceed the costs by a factor of four to one.

Despite Tonga's experience, digital infrastructure is key to making whole societies more resilient to crisis. During the pandemic, the number of internet users globally jumped by 800 million, and data traffic in emerging economies increased by 25-50% as more and more activities moved online.

The third imperative is to invest in sustainable infrastructure that promotes social inclusion and addresses different dimensions of inequality. Despite the surge in digital connectivity during the pandemic, as of 2021, 2.9 billion people remain offline, including more than 50% of the population in LMICs and as much as 81% in the least-developed countries. Substantial disparities between urban and rural areas, and between men and women in some parts of the world, also remain.

This digital divide has led to serious inequities in development outcomes. According to UNICEF,

lack of access to relevant technologies prevented at least 463 million, or 31%, of schoolchildren worldwide from participating in digital and broadcast remote learning during the pandemic.

Lastly, the overall effect of physical infrastructure on development depends on how investments are coordinated with each other and complemented by supportive policy measures. Across Africa, regional road corridors are critical for intra-continental trade. Different types of infrastructure can boost the benefits of others. Across fragile regions of rural Africa, investments in rural roads have accelerated the movement of workers out of subsistence agriculture into higher-wage jobs in manufacturing and services. But the economic impact of roads can be several times larger in communities where electricity also is available.

Infrastructure has much to contribute to the post-pandemic recovery as well as to longer-term green, resilient, and inclusive development, especially in LMICs, where the need for investment is especially urgent. Meeting that need will be a daunting challenge, but also one that can be turned into an opportunity for all.

The writer is Vice President for Infrastructure at the World Bank.
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United we stand

Sir, A clash between two religious communities took place in North Delhi during a Hanuman Jayanti procession. A few videos of the incident are doing rounds over social media where it can be seen people pelting stones and raising swords in the air. It is not the first violence that broke out during a religious procession in recent times. A number of such incidents have been reported in various states during the Ram Navami procession as well. We are in the 21st century and still fighting over religious lines. This hampers our progress and splits the unity among the citizens. As one of the oldest and largest democracies in the world, we should ensure peace among different communities. India's diversity is its main attraction. We as citizens should not allow a few to erase India's core principles and values.
Deba Prasad Nayak, CUTTACK

Cautious optimism

Sir, This refers to "Shehbaz writes to Modi, seeks meaningful talks", Orissa POST, April 18. The call for "constructive engagement" with Pakistan by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and the response by his just-appointed counterpart in Islamabad - seeking "peaceful and cooperative ties" with India through "meaningful dialogue" appear to provide an opening to expand cooperation between the two countries. The Pakistan army appears keen to improve ties as well as also ground for cautious optimism. On the face of it, Islamabad's insistence on placing the Kashmir issue front and centre in its ties with India can scupper any attempts at diplomatic and commercial outreach. The rhetoric around Kashmir in the country's domestic politics also means that more often than not, bilateral ties end up taking two steps back for every step forward. For example, last year, then Prime Minister Imran Khan decided to roll back a decision that would have allowed the import of Indian cotton yarn and sugar over the Wagah border just days after he had signed off on the proposal. There is, however, a template to gradually expand ties between the two countries. The ceasefire agreement - the peace has largely held since February 2021 - made room for continuing discussion on "core concerns" while allowing cooperation wherever possible. And, Pakistan allowed the over-land transport of Indian wheat to Afghanistan during the humanitarian crisis in the wake of the US' withdrawal. That spirit can be used, in the short term, to pick the low-hanging fruit for the bilateral table.
N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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national

of the day quote

The High command has to give directions on my visit and it will be decided in New Delhi itself whether there would be cabinet reshuffle or just cabinet expansion in the state

Majority of Delhi's population are vaccinated now. The cases are rising but it is not an alarming situation. We are constantly monitoring the situation

The Rajasthan government is moving fast in the direction of 'Right to Health'

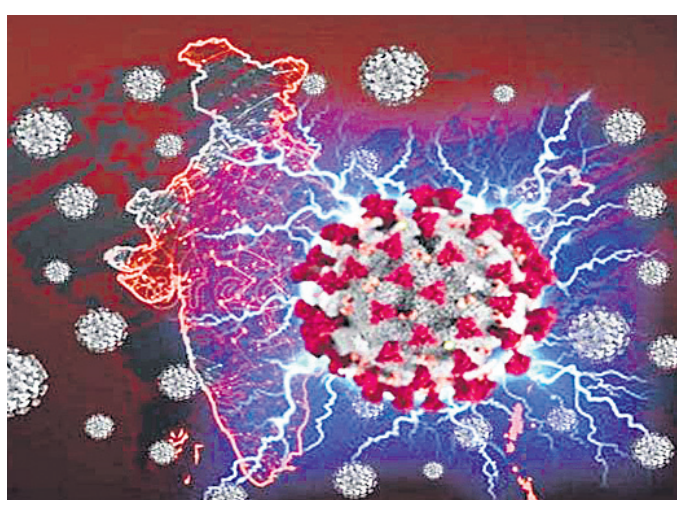
Covid cases nearly double in 24 hrs

The capital, Delhi, last week tightened Covid precautions for schools and neighbouring Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state, again made masks compulsory in public places in some districts

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 18: In a span of 24 hours, India's new Covid cases have risen to 2,183 cases Monday, which is nearly double from 1,150 reported the previous day. In the same period, a surge in the Covid related deaths was also recorded. A total of 214 patients died taking the death toll to 5,21,965. However, the fresh Covid deaths also include a backlog of 62 deaths from Kerala. India had reported only 4 deaths on Sunday, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Affairs said on Monday. The active caseload has also risen to 11,542, which is 0.03 per cent of the country's total positive cases.

A total of 1,985 patients recovered in the last 24 hours and the cumulative tally of recovered patients since the beginning of the pandemic is now at 4,25,10,773. Consequently, India's recovery rate stands at 98.76 per cent. Also in the same period, a total of 2,61,440 tests were conducted across the country. India has so far conducted over 83.21 crore cumulative tests. The weekly positivity rate in



India was at the centre of the global Covid-19 crisis this time last year but the situation has improved since then and most precautions including the wearing of masks have recently been dropped

the country currently stands at 0.32 per cent. Meanwhile, the daily positivity rate has reported a considerable rise at 0.83 per cent. On the vaccination front, India's Covid-19 vaccination coverage has exceeded 186.54 crore as per the provisional reports till 7 a.m. on Monday morning. This has been achieved through 2,27,52,392 sessions. Over 2.43 crore adolescents have been administered with the first dose of Covid vaccine since the beginning of the inoculation drive for this age bracket. More than 20.53 crore balance and unutilised Covid vaccine doses are still available with the states and union territories to be administered, according to the health ministry as of Monday morning.

Any threat in the cyberspace directly impacts the country's social, economic and national security and therefore India must safeguard its cyberspace



TRAGIC INCIDENT

A middle-aged woman suspected of having an extramarital relationship has been allegedly beaten up and forced to marry her "lover" in Tripura's Khowai district, police said. The alleged incident took place at Madhya Krishnapur in Teliamura police station area Saturday night, following which the woman has been hospitalised, an officer said



First death reported in Khargone violence

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, April 18: Eight days after communal clashes broke out in Madhya Pradesh's Khargone, the first death was reported Monday.

The body of a person identified as Ibarish Khan, who was reported missing since April 10, was found in Indore's MY hospital morgue. The family claimed that the deceased had been missing since the day violence erupted in Khargone. A missing complaint was also lodged at the police station, family claimed. According to the local police, Ibarish Khan was murdered by seven-eight men on the night of the clashes. "An unidentified body was found a day after communal violence in the Anand Nagar area of Khargone had occurred," senior Khargone police officer Rohit Kashwani told reporters on Monday.

He added that Khan died of a head injury and his body was identified by his family on Sunday night. Khan's body was kept in a freezer at Indore's MY Hospital. His family was taken to the hospital on Sunday night and that was when the body was identified as that of the missing man.

The body was handed over to the family and brought to Khargone early Monday, police said. Ibarish Khan was a local municipality employee in Khargone and leaves behind a wife and a young son. Deceased's family alleged that he

THE FAMILY OF THE DECEASED IDENTIFIED THE BODY AT THE MORGUE, WHICH IS AROUND 120 KM FROM KHARGONE

THE FAMILY ALLEGED THAT THE POLICE TRIED TO HIDE THE DEATH

was killed by the police and local residents when he had gone to a mosque to arrange food for iftar. The family also claimed that Ibarish Khan was last seen in police custody at Khargone police station on April 10 evening.

On April 10, communal violence erupted in Madhya Pradesh's Khargone during the Ram Navami celebrations. Stones were hurled at the procession, triggering incidents of arson wherein some vehicles were set on fire, prompting authorities to clamp curfew in three areas and section 144 of CrPC in the entire city. Police fired tear gas shells to control the situation.

NOTICE
I Debesh Prasad Jena, would like to inform the General Public, Banks, NBFC etc. that I owned Land at Khata-252, Plot No.684, area-0.340dec., Mouza-Pubasan, Tahasil/SRO: Pipili, PS: Pipili, Dist: Puri, Odisha. That Original old ROR and original Gift deed of that Property bearing no.: 1148/1001275, Dt.26.02.2010 is misplaced by me, which information is given to Kausalyaganga Outpost, Pipili on 04.04.2022. If anyone find it, kindly contact me at below Contact No. within 7days from date of issue of this. Mob: 7205991339.

SHORT TAKES

Six dead in road mishap

Amethi: Six people returning from a wedding ceremony died while four others got grievously injured after their jeep collided head-on with a truck in Gauriganj area of this district in Uttar Pradesh, police said Monday. Superintendent of Police Dinesh Singh said the accident took place near Babuganj Sagra Ashram late Sunday night (around 12.15 am). He said the Bolero jeep was returning from Nasirabad area of Rae Bareilly with people from different villages in Amethi.

Acid attack on girl in Rohtas

Patna: A girl suffered burn injuries after two unidentified men attacked her with acid in Bihar's Rohtas district Monday. The victim, Shilpi Kumari is a resident of Dhangai village under Vikramganj subdivision. The incident took place when the girl was going with her brother to visit a relative in Bikramganj. When they reached S College turning, two bikers wearing helmets overtook them and the pillion rider threw a bottle of acid on the girl's face. Shilpi was immediately rushed to a nearby hospital. A doctor at the hospital said that she suffered burn injuries on half the face. The acid damaged the skin badly and the treatment is currently underway.

5 die, 2 missing after car falls into canal

Rupnagar (Pb): Five people died while two were feared washed away after the car in which they were travelling was hit from behind by a bus and fell into the Bhakra canal near Ahmedpur village here Monday, police said. Police have recovered bodies of two men, two women and a child while two children were feared to have been washed away in strong current of water.

Man kills family, commits suicide

Ghazipur (UP): A 35-year-old man allegedly committed suicide after killing his wife and two children in Sadat Bazar area under Jakhania Police Station area here, police said Monday. Shivdas Sonekar, who was preparing for competitive examinations, allegedly killed his wife Reena (30), son Aarav (5) and daughter Sejal (3) by smothering them with a pillow Sunday night, police sub-inspector Mahendra Yadav said. Sonekar later committed suicide by hanging himself from the ceiling of his room, Yadav said.

CAPITAL SHUTS DOWN



Autos stand parked during a strike by auto and taxi unions, in New Delhi. Various auto-rickshaw, cab and taxi unions in the national capital went on a strike demanding a CNG subsidy and a fare revision in the wake of rising fuel prices

HUBBALLI VIOLENCE

Situation still tense, over 100 detained

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hubballi (Karnataka), April 18: More than 100 persons have been detained in connection with the large-scale violence following a controversial social media post in the city. The accused would be produced before the court Monday. Meanwhile, the situation continues to be tense and tight security arrangements have been made throughout the city. Prohibitory orders are clamped in the city till April 20.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai Monday said that all the accused have been arrested and investigation is being taken up. The investigation will reveal who is behind this incident and which leader has a role in it. Whoever is found guilty, strict action will be initiated against them, he said.



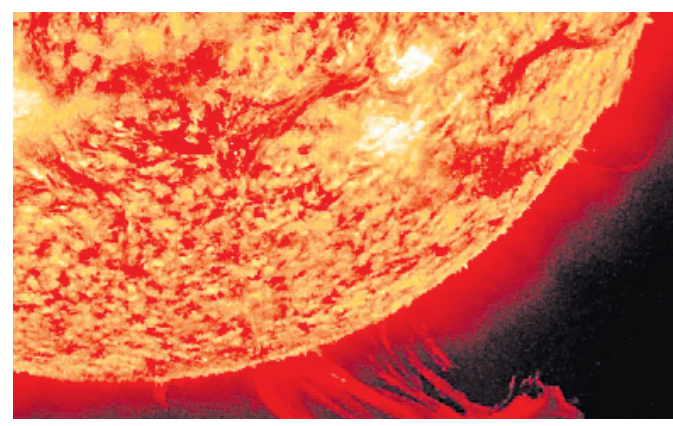
However, police sources explain that as many as eight special teams formed to nab criminal elements who indulged in violence have launched a hunt for them. The police have arrested 88 persons so far in connection with the violence and lodged ten cases. One team is exclusively looking into the CCTV footage and identifying the rioters. The cybercrime team is looking into social media posts and messages in WhatsApp, facebook and Instagram accounts that led to the violence.

Sun spews intense solar flare, sparks radio blackout in Asia, Oz

CORONAGRAPH IMAGES FROM THE SOLAR AND HELIOSPHERIC OBSERVATORY (SOHO) CONFIRM THAT THE EXPLOSION HURLED A CME (CORONAL MASS EJECTION) INTO SPACE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 18: The Sun has unleashed an intense solar flare, sparking radio blackouts in several parts of Asia and Australia. According to the US Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC), the solar flare peaked late April 17 at 3.34 GMT (9.04 IST) and was followed minutes later by a massive sun eruption known as a coronal mass ejection, Space.com reported. The flare registered as an X1.1-class sun storm and lasted about 34 minutes, SWPC officials said. The flare originated from Regions 2994 and 2993, a cluster of active sunspots that has seen "significant flaring" since it appeared on the eastern limb of the Sun, according to the SWPC. "Solar activity is expected to be active over the next week as these sunspots migrate across the visible disk," the agency said



in an update. The SWPC stated that the solar flare spawned a brief radio blackout and was classified as a Type II solar radio burst, the report said. "A pulse of X-rays from the flare produced a strong shortwave radio blackout over southeast Asia and Australia," said NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory, which recorded the X1-class solar flare. "Mariners, aviators, and ham radio operators may have noticed unusual propagation effects at frequencies below 30 MHz," it added. Analysts at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which oversees the SWPC, modelled the CME's trajectory and determined that it will miss Earth, passing behind our planet in its orbit around the sun, Spaceweather.com reported. "Such bursts are produced by shock waves in the leading edges of CMEs," astronomer Tony Phillips was quoted as saying. Because the eruption occurred at the very eastern limb of the sun, the coronal mass ejection it spawned is likely not directed at Earth, Phillips said. X-class solar flares are the strongest types of storms on the sun. The weakest sun flares are A-class, B- and C-class storms are also relatively moderate. More powerful M-class storms and above can supercharge the Earth's northern lights displays while the strongest X-class storms can pose a risk to satellites and astronauts in orbit when aimed directly at Earth. The latest solar flares come on the heels of an X1.3-class solar storm on March 30 and several C-class and M-class flares from different sunspot regions in recent weeks, the report said. The sun is currently in an increasingly active phase of its 11-year solar weather cycle and the current cycle is known as Solar Cycle 25 which began in 2019.

VERDICT IN ACTOR DILEEP'S PLEA IN ASSAULT CASE TODAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, April 18: The Kerala High Court is likely to pronounce Tuesday its verdict on actor Dileep's plea to quash the FIR accusing him and others of conspiring to threaten and kill the officials probing the 2017 actress assault or to transfer the conspiracy case to the CBI for investigation.

According to the cause list for Tuesday uploaded on the Kerala High Court website, Justice Ziyad Rahman A A will pronounce the verdict at 1.45 PM.

While reserving judgement in the matter on March 31, the court had asked the Crime Branch not to file its final report in the case before the verdict is pronounced. Dileep, in his plea filed through advocate Philip T Varghese, has alleged that the murder conspiracy FIR was an outcome of a personal animosity against the actor as all the male members of his family have been implicated in it.

OFFICE OF THE REGULATED MARKET COMMITTEE, DIGAPAHANDI

At Cotton Market Yard, P.O.: Digapahandi, Dist.: Ganjam, PIN: 761012

NOTICE No.: 97 Date: 16.04.2022

INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR CONSULTANCY OF SOLAR COLD STORAGE
RMC, Digapahandi intends to invite bids (techno-financial bid) from interested and technically qualified agencies under its solar cold storage initiative with required civil work. The purpose is to hire a consultancy for conducting technical study & tender management in close association / consultation with RMC as per the description of work stated.

The scheduled bid documents and detailed terms and condition can be downloaded from Ganjam District website i.e. <https://ganjam.nic.in> for participation in the tender process.

Sd./- Sub-collector, Berhampur-cum-Chairman, R.M.C., Digapahandi

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER BALANGIR (R&B) DIVISION: BALANGIR

Email: eepwd.bgr@gmail.com, eepwd.bgr@gmail.com, Ph. No. 06852-232374

g - Procurement Notice

BID IDENTIFICATION No: BGR R&B/ 02/ 2022-23 No.1299, Dtd.08.04.22

No.B-53:1.The Superintending Engineer, Balangir (R&B) Division, Balangir on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in Double cover system in ONLINE MODE for the construction of works detailed in the table below from B / A Class Contractors registered with the State Governments and contractors of equivalent Grade/ Class registered with Central Government/ MES/ Railways for execution of Road/Building / Bridge works. The proof of registration from the appropriate authority shall be enclosed along with the bid.

- Nature of work : Building Work
- No. of tender : Building Work: 02 Nos.
- Tender cost : Rs. 10,000/-
- Class of Contractor : "B" Class & "A" Class (Registered With CDMS)
- Date & Time of sale : From Dt.19.04.2022, 10.00 A.M & Receipt of Bids : To Dt. 09.05.2022 upto 5.00 P.M
- Date of opening bid : Dt. 10.05.2022 at 11.00 A.M
- The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>. All future corrigendums will be available on ONLINE MODE only.

Sd./- Executive Engineer, Balangir (R&B) Division OIPR-34028/11/0002/2223

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (AGRI.), AGRICULTURE ENGINEERING DIVISION, KENDRAPARA

Phone No. - 977797206, E-mail ID - eeaagri.kendrapara@gmail.com

Govt. of Odisha "e" procurement Notice

Bid Identification No.: E.E. (A), Kendrapara Division-02/2022-23

No.L-18:The Executive Engineer (Agril.), Agriculture Engineering Division, Kendrapara on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites percentage rate bids in single cover system in ONLINE MODE for "1. AEE office-cum-Implement Godown at Jajpur, Block-Jajpur, District-Jajpur. 2.Construction of first floor of FIAC Building, Rajnagar, District-Kendrapara

- Name of the works :-
- AEE office-cum-Implement Godown at Jajpur, Block- Jajpur, District- Jajpur. Kendrapara
- Estimated Cost- Ranging from Rs. 16,28,012.00 to Rs. 43,90,557.00
- Period of completion/Calendar Months Mentioned in Column - 06
- No. of works (Tender): 02 nos.
- Class of Contractor: As Mentioned in Column - 05
- Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal:19.04.2022 at 10.00 A.M.To 02.05.2022 up to 5.00 P.M
- Last date / Time for receipt of bids in the portal: 02.05.2022 up to 5.00 PM
- Date of submission of documents: 19.04.2022 10.00 A.M. to 04. 05.2022 up to 5.00 P.M. (Except Holidays)
- Date & time of opening of online bids:05.05.2022 10.00 AM & onwards
- Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid : Executive Engineer (Agril.), Agriculture Engineering Division, Kendrapara Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>
- All the volumes / documents shall be uploaded in the portal by the Procurement Officer Administrator and published by Procurement Officer Publisher (Officer Inviting tender)
- The Tender documents published by the Tender Inviting Officer (Procurement Officer Publisher) in the website "http://tendersodisha.gov.in" will appear in the Latest.
- The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website "http://tendersodisha.gov.in". Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

Executive Engineer (Agril.) Agriculture Engineering Division, Kendrapara OIPR-01471/11/0001/2223

NEET Bill: Stalin upset with Governor

MASK COMPULSORY IN NCR, LUCKNOW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, April 18: The Uttar Pradesh government Monday made it compulsory for people to wear a face mask in public places in capital Lucknow and six NCR districts amid a rise in Covid cases in some adjoining states, an official said.

The increase in Covid cases has had an impact on the districts falling under the national capital region (NCR). Keeping this in mind, the government has made use of masks mandatory in public places in Gautam Buddha Nagar, Ghaziabad, Hapur, Meerut, Bulandshahr, Bagpat as well as capital Lucknow, an official spokesperson said here.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who issued the directive on Monday, has asked officials to identify people in these districts who have not been fully vaccinated yet and administer the jab to them on priority while getting those with Covid symptoms tested, he said.

In the last 24 hours, 65 new Covid cases have been confirmed in



In view of the improving Covid-19 situation, the Uttar Pradesh government had given relaxation in wearing face mask earlier this month

More than 86.34 per cent of the state's adult population has received both doses of anti-Covid vaccine

Gautam Buddha Nagar, 20 in Ghaziabad and 10 in Lucknow, the official said, adding that the chief minister has ordered "close monitoring" of the situation. In view of the improving COVID-19 situation, the Uttar Pradesh government had given relaxation in wearing face mask earlier this month.

In the genome sequencing of samples of Covid positive patients in NCR, only the Omicron variant of Covid has been confirmed, the official said. According to experts, it is possible that the number of Covid cases may rise in the coming days but the chances of patients needing hospitalisation or becoming very serious are slim. However, people should follow Covid-appropriate behaviour, the official said.

At present, the total number of active Covid cases in the state is 695. In the last 24 hours, over 83,000 tests were done of which 115 new corona cases were confirmed, he said.

The official pointed out that the progress of the Covid vaccination campaign in the state is "satisfactory", but there is a need to accelerate the vaccination of children. More than 86.34 per cent of the state's adult population has received both doses of anti-Covid vaccine while over 94 per cent of adolescents in the 15 to 17 age group have received their first dose, he said.



THE NATIONAL ELIGIBILITY-CUM-ENTRANCE TEST IS THE COMMON ENTRANCE TEST FOR ADMISSIONS TO MEDICAL COLLEGES. THE TAMIL NADU ASSEMBLY SEEKING EXEMPTION FOR THE STATE FROM THE NEET HAD PASSED A BILL TO THAT EFFECT

ACCORDING TO STALIN, THE GOVERNOR SHOULD FORWARD THE NEET EXEMPTION BILL TO THE PRESIDENT AND NOT FORWARDING IT IS INAPPROPRIATE AND AGAINST THE HONOUR OF THE HOUSE

Ravi and the relationship between them is cordial. "He is a nice person to be with. He gives us immense respect. And as a Governor we are also giving the necessary respect to that position," Stalin remarked.

According to Stalin, the Governor should forward the NEET exemption Bill to the President and not forwarding it is inappropriate and against the honour of the House. "It is also disrespecting the people of Tamil Nadu," Stalin added.

consideration. The Assembly in turn approved the Bill again and sent it to Ravi in February.

On boycotting the tea party hosted by Ravi, the Chief Minister said participating in the tea party would be an insult to the about 7.5 crore people of the state as the NEET exemption Bill is the re-

flection of people's views.

Stalin said the Bill is lying in the Governor's office without any attention. "I have written a letter to the Governor and necessary clarifications have been given," Stalin added.

Stalin also said personally he does not have any enmity with

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 18: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin Monday said Governor RN Ravi not forwarding the NEET exemption Bill to the President is an act of insulting the people.

He also said if need be, an all-party meeting will be called later after looking at the steps taken by the Governor in forwarding the NEET exemption Bill to President Ram Nath Kovind.

Speaking in the Assembly, Stalin said it is 70 days since the Assembly resent the Bill to Ravi after he had earlier sent it back to the House for reconsideration. Stalin said as per media reports, the Governor will be forwarding the Bill to the President.

The National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) is the common entrance test for admissions to medical colleges. The Tamil Nadu Assembly seeking exemption for the state from the NEET had passed a Bill to that effect.

The Bill was sent to Ravi for forwarding to the President for his assent. However, Ravi sent back the Bill to the Assembly for re-

AMU faculty patents smart e-rickshaw

Along with the CNG run autos, these battery fuelled rickshaws have come as a huge relief in Agra. The recently acquired electric buses are expected to contribute to reducing air pollution



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Aligarh, April 18: Most Uttar Pradesh cities now have battery operated cycle rickshaws. In the Taj city the ubiquitous e-rickshaws have contributed significantly to lower air pollution.

Along with the CNG run autos, these battery fuelled rickshaws have come as a huge relief in Agra. The recently acquired electric buses are expected to contribute to reducing air pollution.

Meanwhile, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) faculty member from the Department of Electrical Engineering, Dr Mohd Tariq is trying to make sure that the crowded streets of the mass transit hubs have smart e-rickshaws for the first and the last mile connectivity.

To provide affordable and clean mode of mobility vehicles to the citizens, he has already patented a new invention, registered as 'Smart E-Rickshaw Powered by Solar PV with MPPT Technique and Controlled by Intelligent Positioning System' at the Patent Office,

"The presence of smart e-rickshaws will eventually phase out many highly polluting public transport vehicles," Dr Tariq hoped

Commonwealth of Australia. "This smart e-rickshaw will be equipped with the Internet of Things (IoT)-based 'Traffic Congestion Area Alert' and Intelligent positioning monitoring system using IoT-based sensors," said Dr Mohd Tariq.

He added: "It is also a solar PV powered, climate-friendly vehicle - harnessing clean energy with power extraction technique. This vehicle will usher in a new sustainable transport ecosystem as an appealing prospect to address several problems at the same time - air pollution first and foremost."

"The presence of smart e-rickshaws will eventually phase out many highly polluting public transport vehicles," Dr Tariq hoped.

Green activists seek World Heritage City status for Agra

HOME TO THREE GRAND WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTIES, AND TWO OTHERS IN THE PIPELINE, THE CITY OF MONUMENTS HARDLY LOOKS LIKE INDIA'S PREMIER HERITAGE DESTINATION

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Agra, April 18: Other than a ritualistic exhibition of photographs and free entry to monuments, the Agra office of the Archaeological Survey of India has done nothing tangible to instil in the local citizenry a sense of respect and pride in the heritage of the country.

The reckless spate for encroaching and dwarfing historical monuments continues unabated in the city. Though periodic notices are issued, no concrete follow up action has ever been initiated.

Encroachments are an eyesore in the Delhi Gate area and the mohallas of Tajganj as also Sikandra and Etmauddaula. The story is the same in Fatehpur Sikri, Mughal emperor Akbar's deserted capital, now a world heritage site.

Home to three grand world heritage properties, and two others in the pipeline, the city of monuments hardly looks like India's premier heritage destination. "This

is largely due to the negative perception of the locals that the monuments like the Taj Mahal are a hurdle in the city's growth and march to prosperity," says environmentalist Devashish Bhattacharya who wants the river Yamuna to be recognised as a heritage entity, to cherish culture and religion and also to provide a protective cover to the monuments along its banks.

The city is actually caught in a dilemma, to promote tourism which means increased footfalls, or to preserve heritage, to develop as a smart city or conserve its heritage status by stalling new urban projects, say local conservationists.

It is a fact that in the race for a Smart City tag, heritage structures in Agra are under threat. The haphazard growth of urban clusters encroaching on the free space around monuments and the alarming rise in pollution levels have compelled rethinking whether becoming a Smart City was the answer to Agra's problems.



Green activists and conservationists have now demanded that the Union government approach Unesco to secure the World Heritage City status for Agra.

The Supreme Court is already seized of the matter. A comprehensive heritage plan was submitted before the apex court three years ago, but no action has been initiated so far, though the Supreme Court has taken a tough stand on conservation of heritage monu-

ments, including the 17th century monument of love, the Taj Mahal, on the PIL of eco-lawyer M.C. Mehta who has been constantly monitoring developments in the Taj Trapezium Zone (TTZ), the eco-sensitive 10,040 sq km area around the monument.

In 2018, the apex court ordered the Uttar Pradesh government to present a vision document on the TTZ. Delhi's School of Planning and Architecture was asked to - and

draw up - a draft vision document to restore and conserve Agra's heritage. The Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department and the Agra Divisional Commissioner, who heads the TTZ, have supported the demand for declaring Agra a heritage city. But now everyone has forgotten about this, as the city is fast in Smart City mode.

Local conservation activists and NGOs say the heritage city tag will help conserve monuments and the essential character of Agra, which could get lost in a so called smart city. "If not Agra, with three World Heritage monuments and dozens of smaller historical buildings, then which other Indian city qualifies for this status? Agra is unique not just architecturally but for its culture, for its history, the cuisine and its lifestyle. Mandarins in the Agra Development Authority and a caucus of so-called builders want to destroy the past by snapping the umbilical chords that connect Agra to a glorious past," they say.

1,905 freedom fighters get pension in TN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 18: A total of 1,905 persons - freedom fighters and their descendants - are drawing pension in Tamil Nadu, the government said.

According to the Policy Note of the Revenue and Disaster Management Department, there are 1,905 persons - freedom fighters and their descendants - in Tamil Nadu who are drawing State Pension under various schemes.

The government said there are 89 freedom fighters who are drawing a pension of ₹18,000 per month and ₹500 as medical allowance in the state. The number of dependents of freedom fighters receiving a family pension of ₹9,000 per month and ₹500 medical allowance is 872. The others, who are getting the



freedom fighter's pension, are: 90 descendants of Sivagangai Marudhu Pandiar Brothers (Pension ₹9,000 per month); three descendants of Veerapandia Kattabomman (Pension ₹9,000 per month); 52 descendants of Former

Mannar Muthuramalinga Vijaya Raghunatha Sethupathy (Pension ₹9,000 per month); one descendant of Sekkizhutha Chemmaal V.O. Chidambaranar (Pension ₹8,500 per month); 278 Central Freedom Fighters receiving State pension (Pension ₹500 per month and Medical Allowance ₹500) and 520 Central Freedom Fighters Families receiving State pension (Pension ₹500 per month and Medical Allowance ₹500).

State Pension of ₹500 per month from the State funds is paid to those who receive Central Freedom Fighters Pension / Central Family Pension, the government said.

For the year 2022-2023, a total sum of ₹15.60 crore has been provided by the state government for the purpose of various freedom fighters pension schemes.

TN to increase e-vehicles for garbage collection



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 18: Tamil Nadu housing and urban development department has issued circulars to corporations and municipalities to increase the number of e-vehicles for garbage collection.

The department in the circular informed the corporations and municipalities to increase e-vehicles for garbage collection as this would improve eco-friendliness as well as increase the dignity of the garbage collectors.

Greater Chennai Corporation has presently more than 350 vehicles and sources in the corporation said that it was planning to increase the fleet to double the present numbers.

A corporation counselor said: "The presence of e-vehicles and uniforms has improved the dignity of the garbage collectors and this is also a major step towards eco-friendliness. So we think that by doubling the number of e-vehicles, the situation of the garbage collectors would improve drastically."

Officials of Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) said that an e-vehicle can travel up to 100 km or six hours continuously on a single

charge and periodical charging is required.

R. Mohankumar, an official with GCC said: "The e-vehicles are eco friendly and give dignity to the sanitation workers. Other than this, these vehicles can be traversed through narrow lanes and as it is battery operated the sanitation worker does not have to exert much to manage this. Our sanitation workers had to push the carts earlier to collect garbage and discard it but with the e-vehicles, they are at much ease. This induces self-respect and dignity to the concerned people for which we are happy."

Trichy corporation is also planning to buy 88 vehicles in the current fiscal to improve the garbage collection.

The corporation has bought 100 e-vehicles for garbage dumping during the last financial year and together this has become 188 vehicles.

Sources in the Tamil Nadu Urban and housing development department said that almost all the corporations are increasing their purchase orders of e-vehicles and the letter was sent to create awareness among the newly elected councilors, presidents, and Mayors for purchase of new e-vehicles.

TN COTTON PRODUCERS ON WARPATH

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 17: The cotton producers of Tamil Nadu are on a warpath as the central government has effected exemption for the Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess and Basic Customs Duty for the import of cotton.

This will in affect allow import of cotton bales at zero duty until September 30. While cotton farmers are upset with the decision of the central government, the textile industries of Tiruppur and other parts of Tamil Nadu have got a major relief for which they were actively pursuing for the past few months.

The industry has been facing an acute shortage of raw materials of cotton as the price of cotton was at an all time high and Tiruppur Exporters Association and other similar organisations had petitioned the Union government several times that the in-



dustry was losing out to competitors due to the high cotton prices.

The cotton farmers had said that this was a bolt from the blue for them as they were getting ₹10,000 per quintal and it was almost double the

amount which they were getting during earlier days.

Southern Dryland farmers association director, Navaneedhan said: "The prices of cotton lint had increased only due to the fact that



The prices of cotton lint had increased only due to the fact that the yield has come down drastically because of the heavy and excess rains during last monsoon and an acre of cotton has yielded only 9 to 10 quintals instead of the 20 quintals we used to get generally

NAVANEEDHAN | SOUTHERN DRYLAND FARMERS ASSOCIATION DIRECTOR

the yield has come down drastically because of the heavy and excess rains during last monsoon and an acre of Cotton has yielded only 9 to 10 quintals instead of the 20 quintals we used to get generally."

He said that the withdrawal of import duty to cotton has led to the crash down of its prices and

national

of the day quote

Riots in Delhi have happened in the past too. During the visit of then-US President Donald Trump and the results of the investigation were in front of you all. Now again such an incident has occurred

MEENAKSHI LEKHI | UNION MINISTER

The Governor (Jagdeep Dhankhar) should know his constitutional limits. He is at liberty to say anything from the Governor's house. But he cannot use the Assembly premises as a platform for expressing his grievances

BIMAN BANERJEE | WB ASSEMBLY SPEAKER

Work has started in almost all government-funded projects in the Smart City Mission (SCM) and projects under SCM will be completed by next year. A total of 80 of the 100 Smart Cities have Integrated Command and Control Centres, and the remaining 20 will be operational by August 15 this year

HARDEEP SINGH PURI | UNION HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Road mishap triggers communal clash

Vadodara: A minor road accident led to a communal clash in Gujarat's Vadodara city, with rioters throwing stones, vandalising a shrine and damaging some vehicles, police said Monday adding that three persons were injured. Police have so far arrested 22 people - 19 for rioting after the incident that occurred late Sunday night and three others in connection with the road accident involving two-wheelers, officials said. Three persons were injured in the clash, Additional Commissioner of Police Chirag Koradia told reporters.

Sec 144 imposed in Amravati

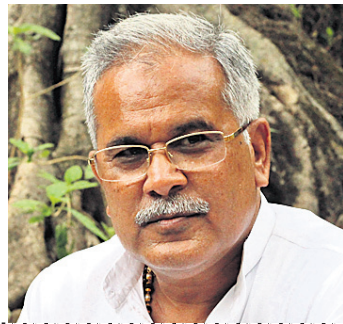
Nagpur: Tension prevailed in Maharashtra's Amravati district after an altercation between the two communities following which the authorities imposed Section 144, officials said Monday. The two groups clashed Sunday night over hoisting a saffron flag in Dulla Gate area of Achalpur city, and gradually, the atmosphere became heated. Stones were also pelted during the skirmish. However, the situation was brought under control when the police rushed to the spot, and dispersed the agitated crowd.

Mehbooba meets Sonia

New Delhi: PDP president and former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti met Congress chief Sonia Gandhi at the latter's residence here Monday. Mufti spent some time with Gandhi and is learnt to have discussed the current political situation in the country with the Congress president. The People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader has said it is the Congress that has kept the country safe so far, alleging that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) wants to create more Pakistans.

Rly policeman killed in J&K

Srinagar: A head constable of the Railway Protection Force (RPF) was killed Monday and an assistant sub-inspector (ASI) injured as militants opened fire at them in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The ultras shot Head Constable Surinder Singh and ASI Devraj near a tea stall in Kakapora in Pulwama, they said.



Doctors in government hospitals in Chhattisgarh will face stringent action if they prescribe branded medicines instead of generic drugs to patients

BHUPESH BAGHEL | CHHATTISGARH CM

DOCS' STIR AFFECTS HEALTH SERVICES

Health services in government hospitals of Nagaland were affected Monday as doctors started a three-day agitation demanding that their retirement age be increased by two years. Members of the Nagaland In-Service Doctors' Association (NIDA) have taken mass casual leaves to press their demand for increase in the superannuation age of government medical practitioners from 60 to 62 years



'NO LOUDSPEAKER AT RELIGIOUS PLACES WITHOUT POLICE NOD'

The MVA decision comes amid a raging controversy over the use of loudspeakers at mosques raked up last week by the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) President Raj Thackeray and endorsed by activists of the Bharatiya Janata Party



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, April 18: In a deft political move, Maharashtra's Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government Monday made police permission compulsory for using loudspeakers at all religious places in the state.

Any unauthorised use of loudspeakers at all religious places or religious functions would invite strict punitive action against the violators, Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil said, as the 'azaan' row threatened to become a vexed issue between the MVA and the Opposition.

Walse-Patil said that a detailed notification on the proposal with the guidelines would be issued in the next couple of days by the Home Department.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray and Walse-Patil discussed the issue in detail and now irector-General of Police Rajnish Sheth and Mumbai Police Commissioner Sanjay Pandey will work out the modalities to implement the policy.

"The notification shall be issued in the next couple of days. Clear instructions have been given to ensure that the loudspeakers are used within the legally permissible limits and violators would face strict legal action," warned Walse-Patil. The MVA decision comes amid

a raging controversy over the use of loudspeakers at mosques raked up last week by the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) President Raj Thackeray and endorsed by activists of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Among other things, Raj Thackeray had issued an "ultimatum" of May 3 to the state government to ensure all mosques' loudspeakers are "silenced or dismantled", failing which the MNS workers would glare out Hanuman Chalisa on loudspeakers outside mosques in retaliation, raising apprehensions of a law and order situation. Under fire from various quarters, Raj Thackeray on Sunday clarified that he was not against religious activities but only opposing the use of loudspeakers which had social and health implications for all people.

Nevertheless, Walse-Patil said the government is monitoring the situation closely and any efforts to "disturb peace and harmony" would attract strong action from the police. Meanwhile, state Congress President Nana Patole has demanded that the government should ban the Opposition parties' rallies and processions that have the potential to ignite communal tensions and are intended to divert public attention from bigger issues confronting the country.

ANOTHER BJP MLA'S CAR RUNS OVER TWO BIKERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lakhimpur Kheri (UP), April 18: Two men were killed when a BJP MLA hit their motorcycle in a head-on collision here, police said Monday.

The Scorpio SUV involved in the collision on the Pilibhit-Basti highway near Pangi Khurd village Sunday night had "vidhayak" (legislator) written on it, police said. Police said the car belonged to a family member of two-time Lakhimpur BJP MLA Yogesh Verma, who was not travelling in the vehicle. Car driver Munendra, who had fled after the accident but later arrested, was

produced in a court here on Monday, which granted him bail, sources said.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said the "BJP's double-engine powered vehicle" continues to crush people, in a possible reference to the mowing down of four farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri by a car allegedly carrying BJP workers.

On Monday, the Supreme Court cancelled the bail granted by the Allahabad High Court to Union minister Ajay Mishra's son Ashish, who was arrested after the death of four protesting farmers and a journalist October 3.

Police identified the victims in Sunday's accident as Ravi (22)

and his relative Sumit (25), both residents of Kiratpur village. They were returning home from neighbouring Ramapur village when the accident took place near a petrol pump Sunday night.

Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Arun Kumar Singh said, "Two men were killed in the collision between their bike and a Scorpio, reportedly owned by the MLA's family member." Sources said the vehicle is registered in the name of the MLA's wife. The MLA had given details of the car in his election affidavit.

Meanwhile, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav raised questions over the law and order situation in the state.

Haryana makes masks compulsory in four districts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, April 18: The Haryana government Monday made the wearing of a face mask mandatory in four districts falling in the National Capital region.

Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij said in view of the rise in Covid cases over the past few days in Gurugram, the wearing of a mask has been made compulsory there and three other districts of Faridabad, Sonapat and Jhajjar.

Of 234 cases reported in Haryana Monday, 198 surfaced in Gurugram alone while 21 were from Faridabad, he said. "But in more than half of the districts, cases are nil or very less," Vij told reporters here. Vij said a team led by Additional Chief



Secretary (Health) Rajeev Arora has been asked to study why cases are increasing in Gurugram. Its report is yet to come, he said. "However, as a precautionary measure in the districts which lie close to the national capital, we have made the wearing of a mask compulsory," he said. The wearing of masks will be mandatory with immediate effect. Those not wearing a mask will be fined, he said.

Drones keep a hawk eye in Jahangirpuri

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 18: The Delhi police registered an FIR Monday against the organisers of a Hanuman Jayanti procession that triggered communal riots in Jahangirpuri Saturday, while drones kept a hawk eye and police patrolled the streets in the troubled northwest locality of the national capital.

Under fire from political parties over the communal conflagration, Delhi police chief Rakesh Asthana addressed a press conference where he reassured people that nobody involved in the riots, irrespective of "caste, creed and religion", will go scot free.

Two days after the clashes, the Delhi Police admitted the third Hanuman Jayanti procession, organised by Hindu fringe outfits, had not been accorded administrative permission. It also arrested a Muslim man named Sonu who had allegedly fired at police during the mayhem that left nine people, including eight policemen and a



civilian, injured. Altogether 25 people, including two juveniles, have been apprehended so far in connection with the clashes. A local Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Prem Sharma, an accused in the case, was questioned by police but let off.

According to police, they are scanning more than 200 videos to identify those behind the violence that pushed the national capital on edge. Asthana said 14 teams have been formed to investigate the April 16 clashes. Addressing a press conference, Asthana refuted claims about alleged attempts to hoist saffron flags atop a mosque

during the Hanuman Jayanti procession. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Northwest) Usha Rangani said an FIR was registered against the organisers for carrying out a procession without permission. An accused has joined the investigation, she said, adding two such "Hanuman yatra" conducted earlier in the day had the required administrative permission.

Earlier, the DCP had said a case was registered against members of the Vishva Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal for taking out a religious procession without permission. A Delhi Police communication also stated that a local VHP leader Prem Sharma was arrested.

However, the statement was later withdrawn citing Section 188 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant of the IPC), which is a bailable offence. It said the person, apparently referring to Sharma, who had joined the investigation, was let off after questioning.

The revised statement issued by the police also did not name the

Shooter in 'blue kurta' lands in police net

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police have arrested a 28-year-old man, who allegedly fired shots during the communal clashes in north-west Delhi's Jahangirpuri April 16, an official said Monday. The accused has been identified as Sonu alias Imam alias Yunus, a resident of C Block in Jahangirpuri. DCP (north-west), Usha Rangani, said a video was being circulated on social media since Sunday, showing the same man (in blue kurta) opening fire during the clashes.

VHP and Bajrang Dal. Meanwhile, security personnel, including many in anti-riot gear, swarmed the streets of Jahangirpuri.

A senior police officer said over 500 personnel from Delhi police besides additional contingents from other forces were patrolling the area.

CBI now part of Interpol's anti-child abuse database

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 18: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has joined the international child sexual exploitation database of Interpol, a move which will bolster its fight against sex abuse of minors and help in identification of victims and abusers using sophisticated analytics software, officials said.

Sources in the agency said the CBI recently joined a select group of agencies of 67 countries that are connected to the database.

Interpol database on paedophiles and disseminators of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) on the internet relies on multi-media from various countries which are analysed based on a specialised "image comparison software" to identify the victim and the accused from photos and videos, they said.

Once the national central bureau of a country, the CBI in the case of India, gets that information they proceed against them according to local laws.

The Interpol mechanism helps help from financial institutions, internet service providers and software developers, besides cross-sector partners, in tracking CSAM and shutting down illegal distribution channels.

The database with over 2.7 million images and videos on an average helps in the identification of seven abuse victims across globe every day with over 27,000 victims and over 12,000 abusers identified so far, the Interpol website states.

The tool not only helps sharing of information among various investigation officers but also avoids "duplication of effort and saves precious time" as it tells the investigators if the images have already been identified in another country.

The CBI had last year cracked a major network of paedophiles and distributors of CSAM who were selling the illicit content on social media for just ₹10 for 60 videos with payments received through Paytm.

World needs India to pursue its green agenda: UN representative

According to climate advisor Rachel Kyte, besides pushing the cause of the International Solar Alliance, India is also serious about becoming a hub for manufacturing green hydrogen and green ammonia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Apr 18: India not only has the potential to become a net-zero carbon emission country by 2070 but can also support others in achieving their climate change goals, said Rachel Kyte, a member

of the UN Secretary General's high-level advisory group on climate action.

Kyte, who was on a visit to India recently to interact with policymakers, businesses and think tanks about efforts to tackle the climate crisis, says the world will need to make big bets on India as many of the solutions for climate change can originate here.

At the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow in November last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced that India will achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2070 and take its non-fossil energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030.

The Glasgow Climate Pact was adopted November 13 with United Nations secretary-general Antonio Guterres terming the outcome of the COP-26 "a compromise" and calling for action towards keeping global temperature rise within 1.5



degrees Celsius.

Under the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate, countries agreed to cut greenhouse gas emissions to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

According to Kyte, besides pushing the cause of the International Solar Alliance, India is also serious about becoming a hub for manufacturing green hydrogen and green ammonia.

Her conversations with the gov-

ernment's think tank NITI Aayog and other divisions of the government have underlined the country's commitment to green hydrogen, she said.

"Everybody I've encountered here is thinking about this (green hydrogen). India can become not only a provider of green energy to its own economy, but can also start exporting it," reiterated Kyte, also an advisor to the UK government for the UN climate negotiations.

However, according to her, this transition to green energy solutions - moving away from coal to

renewables, transforming the transportation industry and more - will not be possible without "adequate financing" from the developed world.

The promise of a \$100 billion package for the developing world "still remains a promise", she said. "That's a totemic promise that had been broken. We need to fulfil the promise," she underscored.

The developed countries have failed to meet its yearly \$100 billion support by 2020 that they had committed in 2009 for climate action by developing countries.

India not only has the potential to meet its own climate change goals -- becoming a net-zero carbon emission country by 2070 -- but also support other countries in achieving their target with adequate foreign investments

RACHEL KYTE



international



Israel will be targeted by armed forces if it makes "the tiniest move" against Iran
EBRAHIM RAISI | IRANIAN PRESIDENT

COVID SUMMIT

A second Global COVID-19 Summit will be held virtually next month for countries to discuss efforts to end the pandemic and prepare for future health threats, according to a joint statement on Monday



of the day quote

We established Operation Sovereign Borders and it has been one of the most successful border protection policies anywhere in the world. So successful, that other countries are taking their lead from Australia's successful approach, and why? It's the humane thing to do

SCOTT MORRISON | AUSTRALIA'S PM

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will take the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor forward with new vigour and vitality, and in a rejuvenated manner, ensuring multifaceted development of the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative

MUSHAHID HUSSAIN SAYED | PAKISTAN SENATOR

All available means will be harnessed, in coordination and consultation with authorities and regional committees to confront disasters in order to prevent the leakage of hydrocarbons into the sea

KAIS SAIED | TUNISIAN PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Man arrested

London: British police say a 29-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder after he confronted military police in central London with a knife. The Metropolitan Police force says no one was injured in the Monday morning incident, which is not being treated as terrorism. Police say a man armed with a knife confronted two Ministry of Defense Police officers at Horse Guards Parade, a military parade ground surrounded by government buildings that is close to Parliament and the prime minister's official residence.

Two wounded

Jerusalem: Two Palestinian men were critically injured by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank on Monday, the Palestinian Health Ministry said, the latest incident in a wave of Israeli-Palestinian violence during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. The Israeli military were conducting an arrest raid in the village of Yamun, west of Jenin in the northern West Bank, when dozens of Palestinians started throwing rocks and explosives at the troops, who returned fire.

Six sentenced to death for lynching

Lahore: An anti-terrorism court in Pakistan's Punjab province Monday sentenced six people to death and seven others to life imprisonment for their involvement in the lynching of a Sri Lankan national over alleged blasphemy. The Anti-Terrorism Court Lahore also handed down two-year sentence each to remaining 67 other suspects. Judge Natasha Nasim, who held the trial proceedings in-camera inside the high-security Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore, on a day-to-day basis, announced the verdict in the presence of the suspects.

Nepal cuts fuel allowance

Kathmandu: The Nepal government has cut fuel allowance of its ministries and state-owned enterprises by 20 per cent, as the country battles a foreign exchange crisis and the price of petroleum products sky-rockets globally, officials said Monday. The decision was taken at a meeting of the Council of Ministers held on April 13, the Ministry of Finance officials said. It was decided in the wake of an increasing trade deficit, decreasing rate of remittance inflow and growing pressure on the foreign currency reserve, they said.

ASSAULT CONTINUES

Russia hits targets across Ukraine

REUTERS

Lviv/Kyiv, April 18: Russia said Monday it had hit hundreds of military targets in Ukraine overnight, destroying command posts with air-launched missiles, while authorities in the western city of Lviv, which had escaped heavy bombardment, said a missile attack killed seven.

The Russian defence ministry said in a statement it had destroyed 16 Ukrainian military facilities in the Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Dnipropetrovsk regions and in the port of Mykolayiv, in the south and east of the country.

It added that the Russian air force had launched strikes against 108 areas where Ukrainian forces were concentrated and Russian artillery struck 315 Ukrainian military targets overnight. Driven back by Ukrainian resistance in the north, the Russian military has refocused its ground offensive in the two eastern provinces known as the Donbas, while launching long-distance strikes at other targets, including the capital, Kyiv.

It is now trying to take full control of the Ukrainian port city of Mariupol, which has been besieged for weeks and which would be a huge strategic prize, linking territory held by pro-Russian separatists in the east with the Crimea region Moscow annexed in 2014.

Ukrainian authorities said missiles struck military facilities and



A view of at least three rows of new graves for people killed during Russia's invasion of Ukraine, at a cemetery in Irpin

Lviv mayor Andriy Sadoviy said seven people were killed and 11 were wounded. The blast shattered windows of a hotel housing Ukrainians evacuated from elsewhere in the country, he added

DRIVEN BACK BY UKRAINIAN RESISTANCE IN THE NORTH, THE RUSSIAN MILITARY HAS REFOCUSSED ITS GROUND OFFENSIVE IN THE TWO EASTERN PROVINCES KNOWN AS THE DONBAS, WHILE LAUNCHING LONG-DISTANCE STRIKES AT OTHER TARGETS, INCLUDING KYIV

a car tyre service point in Lviv, which is just 60 km (40 miles) from the Polish border. Lviv mayor Andriy Sadoviy said seven people were killed and 11 were wounded. The blast shattered windows of a hotel housing Ukrainians evacuated from elsewhere in the country, he added.

"Seven peaceful people had plans for life, but today their life stopped," the mayor said. Russia denies targeting civilians and rejects what Ukraine says is evidence of atrocities, saying Ukraine has staged

them to undermine peace talks. Moscow calls its action, launched almost two months ago, a special military operation to demilitarise Ukraine and eradicate what it calls dangerous nationalists. Western capitals and Kyiv accuse Russian President Vladimir Putin of unprovoked aggression.

BATTLE FOR MARIUPOLE

Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said troops in the pulverised port of Mariupol were still fighting on Sunday, despite a

Russian demand to surrender. "The city still has not fallen," he told ABC's This Week programme, adding that Ukrainian soldiers continued to control some parts of the southeastern city.

Two captured British men who fought with Ukrainian forces in Mariupol appeared on Russian state TV on Monday and asked to be exchanged for pro-Russian politician Viktor Medvedchuk who is being held by Ukrainian authorities.

It was unclear how freely the two men - Shaun Pinner and Aiden Aslin - were able to talk. Medvedchuk, meanwhile, was shown in a video released by Ukraine's SBU intelligence service asking to be swapped for the defenders of Mariupol and citizens struggling to leave. It was unclear how freely Medvedchuk was speaking.

Russia said on Saturday it had control of urban areas, though some Ukrainian fighters remained in the Azovstal steelworks, one of Europe's biggest metallurgical plants, which cover more than 11 sq km (4.25 sq miles) and overlook the Sea of Azov.

On the streets of Mariupol, small groups of bodies were lined up under colourful blankets, surrounded by shredded trees and scorched buildings. Residents, some pushing bicycles, picked their way around destroyed tanks and civilian vehicles while Russian soldiers checked the documents of motorists.

Turkey launches military offensive in northern Iraq

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ankara, April 18: Turkey has launched a new ground and air cross-border offensive against Kurdish militants in northern Iraq, that has left at least 19 suspected Kurdish rebels dead and has wounded at least four Turkish soldiers, Turkey's defense minister said Monday.

Turkish jets and artillery struck suspected targets of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, and commando troops — supported by helicopters and drones — then crossed into the region by land or were airlifted by helicopters, Defense Minister Hulusi Akar said in a video posted on the ministry's website.

Akar said the jets successfully struck shelters, bunkers, caves, tunnels, ammunition depots and headquarters belonging to the PKK. The group maintains bases in northern Iraq and has used the territory for attacks on Turkey.

At least 19 militants were killed while four Turkish troops were wounded during the offensive, the ministry said. There was no immediate comment from the Kurdish militant group on the incursion and the defense ministry statement couldn't be verified independently.

Turkey has conducted numerous cross-border aerial and ground operations against the PKK over the past decades.

The latest offensive, named Operation Claw Lock, was centered in northern Iraq's Metina, Zap and Avashin-Basyan regions. There was no information on the number of troops and jets involved in the latest incursion.

THE POLE AND THE GOAL



Children participate in a greasy pole game during the traditional burning of Judas, as part of the Holy Week celebrations in Caracas, Venezuela

US, S Korea urge North's return to talks

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, April 18: The US special envoy for North Korea said Monday that Washington and Seoul agreed on the need for a strong response to Pyongyang's recent spate of missile tests, though they remain open to dialogue with the country.

Sung Kim flew to South Korea on for talks two days after North Korea conducted a new type of missile test in its 13th round of weapons firing this year. Experts say North Korea wants to advance its weapons arsenal and wrest concessions like sanctions relief from its rivals.

Weapons tested include nuclear-capable missiles targeting both the US mainland and its allies such

as South Korea and Japan. There are concerns that North Korea may conduct a nuclear test soon to intensify its pressure campaign.

"We agreed on the need for a strong response to the destabilizing behavior we have seen from" North Korea, Kim told reporters after a meeting with his South Korean counterpart. "(We) also agreed on the need to maintain the strongest possible joint deterrent capability on the peninsula."

South Korean nuclear envoy Noh Kyu-duk said he and Kim shared concerns that North Korea will likely continue to engage in acts that raise regional tensions. He urged North Korea to return to talks.

Boris facing new 'partygate' claims

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, April 18: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is facing new allegations Monday around "partygate", the scandal surrounding government officials breaching coronavirus rules with illegal lockdown gatherings, and will be hoping to escape some of the heat when he leaves for India Thursday.

Johnson has already been fined for one such party, for his birthday in June 2020, when his wife Carrie brought a cake to the Cabinet Room and has also been fined along with UK Chancellor Rishi Sunak.



However, according to UK media reports, Johnson is believed to have been linked with around six out of the 12 lockdown parties under police investigation. "The Sunday Times" quoted a source as saying that a leaving drinks gathering for Number 10 Downing Street's outgoing director of com-

munications, Lee Cain, in November 2020 was allegedly "instigated" by Johnson.

"He said he wanted to say a few words for Lee and started pouring drinks for people and drinking himself. He toasted him," the source was quoted as saying.

It has led to renewed Opposition calls for Johnson, 57, to step down. Labour Party Deputy Leader Angela Rayner said that "if the latest reports are true", it means "not only did the Prime Minister attend parties, but he had a hand in instigating at least one of them".

Rayner accused him of deliberately misleading the British people "at every turn".

China rules out easing curbs as Shanghai reports first deaths

SUNDAY, THREE COVID DEATHS WERE REPORTED IN SHANGHAI. THE DECEASED WERE TWO FEMALES AND ONE MALE, AGED BETWEEN 89 AND 91

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, April 18: Shanghai reported three deaths due to Covid-19, the first in the financial hub after it was hit by the Omicron variant last month, while a top official ruled out relaxing the curbs until the ruling Communist Party

Congress met later this year to elect Chinese President Xi Jinping for a record 3rd term in power.

Sunday, three Covid-19 deaths were reported in Shanghai. The deceased were two females and one male, aged between 89 and 91. They suffered from comorbidities including coronary heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure, the city's municipal health commission reported.

None of them was vaccinated against COVID-19 and was in severe condition after being admitted to the hospital and every effort was made to save their lives, it said. These are the first officially admitted fatalities after the city went into lockdown towards the end of last month.

According to China's National Health Commission, the Chinese



mainland Sunday reported 2,723 locally-transmitted confirmed Covid-19 cases, of which 2,417 were in Shanghai. Shanghai also reported 19,831 locally-transmitted asymptomatic infections of the novel coronavirus Sunday, out of a total of 20,639 local asymptomatic carriers newly identified on the main-

land, the Commission report said. By the end of Sunday, Shanghai had 16 Covid-19 patients in severe condition receiving treatment in designated hospitals. As the cases continued to spiral, health officials announced more Covid tests amid reports of growing anger and frustration of people about

the continued lockdown for the third week.

Shanghai has seen a continuous decline of newly-reported cases in some areas while those under closed-off management will undergo nucleic acid testing once every day from Monday to Thursday, the local health commission said.

Meanwhile, as the Omicron continued to spread, China's health minister Ma Xiaowei on Monday pledged the toughest measures yet to prevent a major outbreak of COVID-19, ruling out any relaxations ahead of this year's 20th Communist Party Congress.

The one-in-five-year Congress of the CPC which is due to be held later this year has assumed significance as Xi, 68, is expected to get its endorsement for a third five-year tenure as the head of the Party

the military and the presidency.

The 3rd term is unprecedented as all his predecessors retired following the two-term norm for leaders. However, Xi is expected to continue power for life as he is conferred the title of a "core leader" like the Party founder Mao Zedong.

Vowing to continue the much-criticised Zero Covid policy, Ma in a front-page article published on Monday in party journal Study Times, urged the country to stick to the dynamic zero policy and take a clear-cut stand against "erroneous" thoughts of "coexisting with the virus".

The bottom line is to prevent a large-scale rebound in cases and consolidate the hard-won results of pandemic control to welcome the opening of the CPC Congress, he said.

of the day quote

Our total production for the domestic market was restricted because of the semiconductors shortage. Fortunately, we could get more semiconductors for (units meant for) the export market



Demand for digital devices and electronics products is only going up. If you have seen our electronics vision document, we have announced a target of USD 300 billion in electronic manufacturing, with USD 120 billion in exports



The new A8 long wheelbase is our flagship car. It is a very significant car in our portfolio... For every manufacturer in the luxury space, we always tend to bring the best piece of our products in it (flagship models)



SHORT TAKES

Central Bank of India's new regional head

Bhubaneswar: Anadi Bishwas, DGM, joined as the new regional head of Central Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Region, Monday. Prior to this, he was heading the Regional Office of Jalgaon, Maharashtra.

RBI net purchaser of US dollar in February

Mumbai: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) turned net buyer of the US dollar in February 2022, after it bought USD 771 million on a net basis from the spot market.

Sugar exports at \$4.6bn in 2021-22

New Delhi: India's sugar exports increased to USD 4.6 billion (about ₹35,000 crore) in 2021-22 from USD 1.17 billion (about ₹9,000 crore) in 2013-14, the commerce ministry said Monday.



We are keen to invest in the renewable sector. The capacities will be both solar and wind

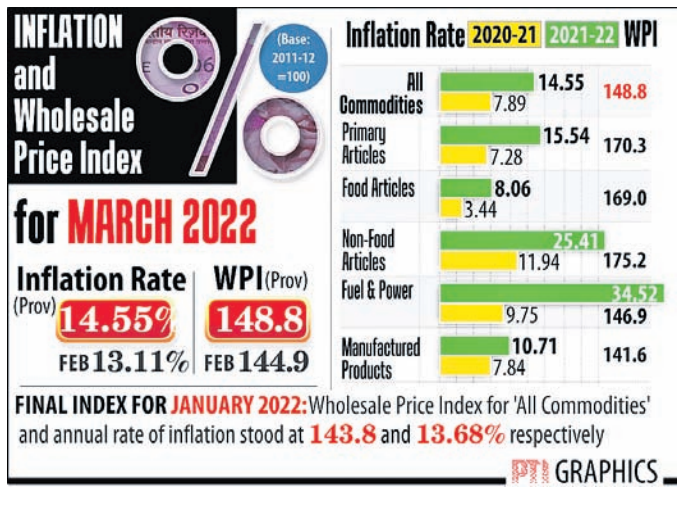
JEEP INDIA LAUNCHES COMPASS TRIM

Jeep India Monday said it has launched Night Eagle trim of Jeep Compass with price starting at ₹21.95 lakh (ex-showroom). The launch of the Compass Night Eagle variant comes as the company has been observing strong demand for the Jeep Compass portfolio, especially for the Trailhawk variant, whose waiting period has now increased to almost four months, the automaker said in a statement.



WPI inflation hits 4-month high of 14.55%

WPI INFLATION HAS REMAINED IN DOUBLE DIGITS FOR THE 12TH CONSECUTIVE MONTH SINCE APRIL 2021



New Delhi, April 18: The wholesale price-based inflation spiked to a four-month high of 14.55 per cent in March on rising prices of crude oil and other commodities due to disruption in global supply chain in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war...

The data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry Monday, showed that crude oil prices were the biggest contributor to the rise in WPI inflation in March 2022, relative to February...

Sensex sinks 1,172 pts as Infy, HDFC Bank tumble



Mumbai, April 18: The Sensex plunged 1,172 points while the Nifty crashed below the 17,200-level Monday, hammered by robust selling in market heavyweights Infosys and HDFC Bank following their below-estimate results.

Investors' wealth plunges by ₹2.58L cr

New Delhi: Investors' wealth tumbled over ₹2.58 lakh crore Monday as equity markets suffered a heavy sell-off, with the Sensex plunging 2 per cent. Tracking the weak trend in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms tumbled by ₹2,58,855.59 crore to stand at ₹2,69,44,207.98 crore.

BIZ BUZZ

Vedanta's fly-ash brick mfg scheme for local entrepreneurs

Lanjigarh: Vedanta Limited, Lanjigarh unit, India's premier producer of metallurgical grade alumina, launches fly-ash brick manufacturing scheme for local entrepreneurs, whereby it offers fly-ash free of cost to local brick manufacturing units...



GRIDCO to buy low-cost solar power from NTPC

Bhubaneswar: The GRIDCO and NTPC, Monday, signed a Power Sale Agreement (PSA) here for procurement of 200 Mega Watt low-cost solar power through Inter State Transmission System (ISTS).



Maruti hikes vehicle prices by up to 1.9 pc



New Delhi, April 18: The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) Monday said it has increased prices of its entire model range, between 0.9 per cent to 1.9 per cent, with immediate effect.

India faces global challenges, says RBI Bulletin article

Mumbai, April 18: Flagging risks of disruptive spillovers from geopolitical hostilities, an RBI article Monday said India faces these challenges from a position of strength built on broadened vaccine coverage, financial sector resilience and robust exports.



The article on 'State of the Economy', published in the April 2022 RBI Bulletin, said India enters Samvat 2079 having crested the third wave of the pandemic with economic activity returning to speed in several sectors.

Over 1.67 lakh companies incorporated last year: MCA

New Delhi, Apr 18: More than 1.67 lakh companies were incorporated in the country in the last financial year compared to 1.55 lakh new companies registered in the year-ago period, according to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA).

29 of top-50 firms have time-bound carbon neutrality targets

Mumbai, April 18: Only 29 of the top-50 private companies in the country have a time-bound target to become carbon-neutral as part of the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDG), a report said Monday.



The report said only 29 companies on the list of 50 have time-bound targets to achieve the goal. ITC and Infosys have already achieved the target in 2006 and 2020, respectively, it said in a statement.

to achieve carbon neutrality by 2025. Besides, Mahindra & Mahindra, Ultratech Cement, Hindustan Zinc and Tech Mahindra have implemented an internal carbon pricing policy to reduce emissions.

the agenda. Responsible consumption and production came second with 31 companies making efforts in those areas. Hindustan Unilever led the list of companies with the highest number of measurable time-bound targets focussing on eight SDG pillars.



