



**NO COMPLACENCY**  
Actor Rakul Preet Singh thinks as an actor she is yet to achieve a lot and wants to work harder  
**LEISURE P2**



**RAJAPAKSA'S TROUBLE INCREASES**  
Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa gets a jolt once more as 3 more MPs withdraw support to the government  
**INTERNATIONAL P10**



**SALAH LIFTS LIVERPOOL**  
Mohamed Salah scores twice and sets up another goal to help Liverpool rout Man United 4-0 in their EPL game Tuesday  
**SPORTS P12**

## Odisha govt trying to solve coal crisis in Nalco: Mallick

**PNN & AGENCIES**  
**Bhubaneswar, April 20:** As aluminium major Nalco is facing acute shortage of coal, the Odisha government Wednesday said it would hold a discussion with Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) to resolve the dry fuel crisis. "I will hold discussions with the authorities of Nalco and also MCL and ensure that production is not affected due to shortage of coal, state Steel and Mines Minister Prafulla Kumar Mallick said.  
Nalco authorities have been tight-lipped over the crisis. However, several workers unions of Nalco have raised concern over the coal crisis in its smelter plant at Angul.  
Former Nalco CMD, TK Chand said: "MCL was supposed to provide 5.6 million tonne coal per annum to Nalco. However, the MCL has not been able to supply the agreed amount. Shortage of coal will affect the productivity of Nalco and also its profitability."  
The unions pointed out that there is only 1.55 lakh metric tonne of coal in Nalco's stock against the normal reserve of five lakh metric tonne.

## 'Cocaine peddlers have international links'

**Bhubaneswar:** The Crime Branch of Odisha Police said Wednesday that the two drug peddlers nabbed here last week with 202 gm of cocaine have international links. Cocaine was seized in Odisha for the first time from the two men April 13. The two, hailing from Churu and Jhunjhunu districts of Rajasthan, were planning to sell drugs to foreigners including sports persons who would be visiting the state capital and Rourkela during the men's Hockey World Cup next year, Crime Branch ADG Sanjeeb Panda said. "The duo has links with drug peddlers in China, France, America, Switzerland, Thailand and South Africa," Panda added. **MORE P4**

## Bihar migrant worker, family charred to death

**Ludhiana:** Seven members of a family of migrants (a couple and their five children) from Bihar were burnt alive in a fire that broke out in their hut here early Wednesday morning, police said. The dead included a two-year-old boy. A top police official said that the tragedy struck when the deceased were asleep. The cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained, he informed. The deceased family belonged to Bogopur village of Samastipur district of Bihar and had been staying in this city for 25 years, informed a neighbour. Police said that both the husband and wife worked as daily labourers.

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

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



It looks and sounds like Ukraine war but it is an anti-encroachment drive in India

## FIREPOWER IN THE SEAS



The Defence Ministry launched Wednesday, in Mumbai, 'INS Vagsheer', the last of the Scorpene six submarines under 'Project 75'. The submarine has been named after sandfish which is a deadly deep sea predator **(REPORT ON P9)**

## Odisha prepares for Covid-19 resurgence

**The rising number of cases in Delhi and in states like Kerala has become a matter of concern, according to state health officials**  
**POST NEWS NETWORK**  
**Bhubaneswar, April 20:** The Odisha government has directed all district collectors to keep the contingency action plans ready to deal with any upsurge in Covid-19 cases. "The Covid-19 situation in Odisha is not at a worrying stage. However, we all knew that the virus has the tendency of rapid infection. So, we have asked the district officials to maintain surveillance activities to know whether there is any outbreak in any cluster or not. We have to remain cautious," said Niranjan Mishra, director, Public Health department here Wednesday. Mishra informed that all district administrations have been asked to continuously monitor the situation and immediately report if there is a surge in Covid cases in any cluster or pocket of the state. In a letter to all municipal commissioners, collectors and chief district medical officers, Mishra has asked to maintain Covid-19 surveillance and related activities. The collectors have been asked to keep a close vigil on people coming from high burden countries and states. There should be constant review regarding emergence of new cases/clusters, case positivity, population affected, geographical spread of cases and hospital infrastructure preparedness, Mishra wrote in the letter to the collectors. Stating testing - tracking - treatment - vaccination and Covid-19 appropriate behaviour are the main strategy for management of the virus, Mishra asked to strengthen this procedure. Moreover, the director instructed the district official to ensure vaccination coverage to all beneficiaries as per guideline issued from time to time. **MORE P4**

## SC 'bulldozes' NDMC's demolition programme

**Apex court peeved at the way buildings were pulled down even after orders were issued to halt**  
**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**

**New Delhi, April 20:** In a significant development, the Supreme Court stalled Wednesday the anti-encroachment drive by authorities in the violence-hit Jahangirpuri area of the national capital after taking note of a plea of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind that buildings of Muslim riots accused are being razed. A bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana, which ordered maintaining of status quo concerning the demolition of buildings in the forenoon, intervened again during the day after it was apprised that the authorities were not stopping on the ground that no official communication has been received by them.



Bulldozers demolishing parts of a building in Jahangirpuri locality of New Delhi, Wednesday **PTI PHOTO**

Taking note of the submissions of senior advocate Dushyant Dave, appearing for the Muslim body, the apex court bench, also comprising Justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli, directed the Secretary-General to convey its morning order to stop demolition to the NDMC (North Delhi Municipal Corporation) mayor, commissioner and the Delhi police commissioner immediately. **Contd. P4**

## Forest official found dead without clothes

**Rayagada, April 20:** A Deputy Forest Range Officer was found dead without clothes at his residence at Kalyansinghpur in this district, Wednesday. The deceased, Brajamohan Bhoi, 58, was a native of Bhalupia village under Karlamunda village in Kalahandi district. He was found in senseless, when police officials entered his official quarters on the first floor of the Kalyansinghpur block forest office. The matter came to the fore after guard Subhash Sabar called on the deputy ranger at his residence. Seeing no response from Bhoi he informed Range Officer Chandan Kumar Gamang. Later Sabar accompanied by some para-guards again tried to call up Bhoi, but in vain. They peeped through the window and found him lying unconscious on the floor without clothes and alerted the range officer who informed DFO Bijay Kumar Parida and the two rushed to the spot. The local tehsildar and police reached the spot, and rushed Bhoi to Dr Soumya Ranjan Jena who pronounced him brought dead. A case was registered in this connection and the body was sent for post-mortem. On being informed, Bhoi's brothers arrived at Kalyansinghpur and received the body for cremation. They ruled out any foul play stating that he was suffering from heart problems and had recently undergone treatment at Bhubaneswar.

**OHRC SEEKS REPORT**  
**Bhubaneswar:** Taking suo motu cognisance of the death of a 46-year-old man, who was arrested on the charges of theft, in Badagada police custody here, the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) asked Wednesday, twin city Commissionerate Police to submit a detailed report in connection with the incident. While the victim's wife alleged that he was tortured inside Badagada police station leading to his death, police claimed that he was injured while trying to escape and later died April 17 night at the Capital Hospital here. **MORE P4**

## Odia employee of defunct Assam mill dies sans treatment

**Nagaon, April 20:** An employee of a defunct paper mill earlier owned by Hindustan Paper Corporation (HPC), in Assam's Cachar district died due to illness after failing to pay for his treatment, the union said Wednesday. The Joint Action Committee of Recognised Union (JACRU) of Nagaon and Cachar Paper Mills said Wednesday that Rajendra Kumar Dalei, a native of Cuttack, died Monday at the age of 58. The JACRU informed that with Dalei's death, so far, 103 employees of HPC have died after its two mills in Cachar and Nagaon became non-operational. Dalei was suffering from kidney-related ailments but could not afford treatment due to financial crisis owing to non-payment of salary, the body claimed. This is the 18th death since the Himanta Biswa Sarma government came into power last year, the JACRU said. It added that though the Assam government has agreed to a relief package for the workers, funds are yet to be released.

## New start-up wants 'shame' out of sex

Indian couple who started the company feels that discussion of sex is still a taboo in India and they want it to change

**AGENCIES**

**Mumbai, April 20:** Despite its heritage as the land of the Kama Sutra, open discussions around sexuality and intimacy are often regarded as obscene in India. An Indian couple now wants to take the 'shame' associated with sex. They have opened a new start-up dealing with adult toys and is branding it in a cheeky manner to challenge the long-held taboos over sex. "MyMuse", founded by Anushka and Sahil Gupta, are tackling this issue with tongue-in-cheek marketing and creative euphemisms. They say these make the products seem less intimidating and encourage first-time buyers. "There's this shame, guilt and fear associated with buying something that should be used in your intimate areas, and that's the



first thing we wanted to turn around," Anushka was quoted as saying by the 'NDTV' website. "MyMuse" is one of a growing number of businesses riding a wave of sexual liberation amongst urban young professionals. Investors too are betting on this untapped market in the vast country of 1.4 billion. India's nascent sex toys sector was valued

at \$91 million by 'TechSci Research' in 2020, and predicted to grow 16 per cent annually. **NO SLEAZE INVOLVED** The Guptas began shipping out discreetly packaged vibrators, scented candles and lubricants from a spare bedroom in their home during last year's Covid-19 lockdown. The firm received seed funding from venture capitalist firms. They have now more than a dozen people working for their company and ship products to 200 cities in India. "(We want to) remove all of that misogyny, sexism from this idea and just make it something that's beautiful, that's natural, universal," Anushka, who left her job at 'WeWork' to become an entrepreneur, said. However, they still face obstacles in various forms. Among them are the frequent attacks made by political parties and police on people expressing PDA. Then there are 'Vigilante' groups that attack couples they believe are not behaving in line with 'Indian values'. Anushka said she realised things needed to change when she returned from working abroad and struggled to find even basic sexual health products such as contraceptives and lubricants. "Indian women often face a culture of enforced silence around sex. It's the most typically Indian conundrum where they will not talk to a woman about sex at all until she's married, and the moment she's married they'll be like, 'So when's the baby coming?'" Anushka pointed out. "We just want to take away shame and guilt associated with sex. It is normal and beautiful. That is what we are working on," Sahil informed.

**Amul Chocobar**  
₹15\* / 60 mL  
Amul ICE CREAM



## KISSING KEY TO A HAPPY MARRIAGE: JULIA ROBERTS

Hollywood star Julia Roberts says kissing is the key to a marriage while appearing on a show. The secret behind her more than two decades of marriage to cinematographer Daniel Moder is not forgetting to have a smooch and show each other affection, said the *Pretty Woman* star.

## JOHNNY DEPP SAYS AMBER GROSSLY EMBELLISHED DRUG USE BY HIM

Hollywood star Johnny Depp accused Amber Heard of giving grossly embellished accounts of his substance abuse while giving evidence. The 58-year-old actor is suing his ex-wife for defamation over a *Washington Post* op-ed she wrote, in which she referred to herself as a victim of domestic violence



### FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com  
accuracy • reliability • trust  
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL \$5181\*

**ARIES**  
Today, you will turn an attentive ear to your inner voice. As a result, you will be able to execute all your plans with precision. Besides being cheerful, you will even take disappointments with a pinch of salt. Why just today, says Ganesh, you can have this rare quality for keeps.

**TAURUS**  
As a manager, you may be able to outclass your colleagues by a great margin, predicts Ganesh. You will soften your approach with time and move towards a more democratic style of decision-making rather than the arbitrary protocol that you are used to. With this, you will taste success and prove your mettle in adverse situations, feels Ganesh.

**GEMINI**  
A day of conflicting emotions awaits you. Your personal and professional life will both be important. Hence you will experience anxious moments as you try to balance the demands made by both. However, the good news is you will succeed in your attempts and will do justice to all your duties, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
You will love to stroll in a world of fantasy. Religious impact will prevail over you. You will charter your fantasy to a mysterious level. You will have communion with God at a temple, mosque or church. you will try to draw lessons from your experience.

**LEO**  
You will exercise your will today and will be in the mood to soar like a free bird today. You will not be in the mood to listen to anyone. Work related travel will be beneficial. Guard against ego clashes in personal relationships, says Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
You will pen down the things to be done today. However, Ganesh suggests that just making a note of them is not enough; you need to set practical goals according to priority. Moreover, Ganesh warns that items you mark on the top of the list will demand immediate action.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says that your day today will be extremely busy and as a result you will be agitated today. Your happy nature will have to bear the brunt of the sad circumstances and situations that life will shower on you but you will be able to face the situation with your inner strength. You will have to be careful about your health today and will need to watch your diet.

**SCORPIO**  
Negative thoughts are likely to surround you today, try to avoid it. You may feel lonely and left-out when the day begins. However, a long list of activities and responsibilities will keep you occupied throughout the day. There are possibilities that you may land up in tricky situations, but you have the knack of handling things gracefully.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Your ways to deal with your team mates and colleagues will be strict and disciplined. However, your perfect ways at work will leave them awestruck. Your personal equations will be least affected by your stern ways, says Ganesh. Do not let success go to your head.

**CAPRICORN**  
A penny saved is a penny earned. Your strong belief in this will make you scrutinise your requirements and rearrange the priority list, so that you know where and how to utilise the resources. Your choice of friends will represent your approach and outlook towards life. Ganesh advises you to choose your friends wisely.

**AQUARIUS**  
There is nothing like having a good time with your brothers and sisters. Generally, you plan out your routine and activities by yourself, but it is a different day today. Your siblings will make plans for you and you will just go along with the flow, predicts Ganesh. Spontaneity is something new to you, and you will enjoy the change.

**PISCES**  
Some unknown fear could haunt you today. You will direct your energies to discovering the source of your worries and eliminate them. Lovers will find some precious time to cozy up with their partners. You will find yourself going out to the movies or to a concert. On the whole it will be a productive day for you, says Ganesh.



## RAKUL CALLS HERSELF A VERY GREEDY ACTOR

**NEW DELHI:** Rakul Preet Singh, who currently awaits the release of her upcoming film *Runway 34*, has talked about her journey in acting in films. She said that being an actor has still not settled in her head and that she thinks she has not achieved a lot yet. Talking about her 11 year acting journey, Rakul said: "I don't look back to begin with because I don't think there is a point in looking back. I am not a person who evaluates 'oh I have come so far' because I still don't think I have achieved a lot. I have still a lot more to do."

"Me being an actor has still not settled in my head and I don't want it to settle because I want myself to keep craving for more."

Rakul calls herself a very greedy actor, who wants to do more.

"I want to do more films, different roles, do the commercial 'naach gana' films, do films like *Runway*, strike a balance for every audience. So I am a very greedy actor and I just look in the future," said the *De De Pyar De* actress.

Directed by Ajay Devgn, *Runway 34* is produced by Ajay Devgn Films and is co-produced by Kumar Mangat Pathak, Vikrant Sharma, Sandeep Harish Kewlani, Tarlok Singh Jethi, Hasnain Husaini and Jay Kanujia. **IANS**

## 'TV stint helped me grow in movies'

**MUMBAI:** Actress Mrunal Thakur has credited her stint on the small screen for her now growing career in Hindi cinema.

Talking about living several lives in one courtesy her profession, she said, "Lucky because of attention and eyeballs and we get to live so many lives. I had to create those opportunities to be lucky. To be able to be where I am today. Full credit goes to where I started from - television," she said.

The 29-year-old actress stepped into the world of acting in 2012 with *Mujhse Kuchh Kehti... Yeh Khamoshiyaan*. She gained the spotlight with the show *Kumkum Bhagya*. Later, she made her debut in Hindi cinema with *Love Sonia*. After which, she was seen in films including *Super 30*, *Batla House* and *Dhamaka*.

Discussing about how difficult or easy it is for her to attach and detach from an intense role, Mrunal said: "It is very difficult because acting is not just from the outside, it is very internal and imagine when you're body is like you yourself are going through so many emotions above that you have to play so many emotions on screen and then come back home."

Mrunal is gearing up for the release of her upcoming film *Jersey*, a sports drama film written and directed by Gowtam Tinnanuri. **IANS**



## RK girl Mandakini to make a come back

**MUMBAI:** Former actress Mandakini, who shot to fame with this Raj Kapoor classic, *Ram Teri Ganga Maili*, is returning to the screen albeit with a music video, *Maa O Maa*, which will also mark the debut of her son Rabbil Thakur.

The actress will start shooting by the end of April. The music video will see playback singer Rishabh Giri going behind the mic. The lyrics to the song have been penned by Sajjan Agarwal with music composed by Babli Haque & Meera. Talking about the music video,

Mandakini said: "I'm very happy to associate with director Sajjan Agarwal ji. I have known him for a long time but finally we're working together. *Maa O Maa* is a very beautiful song and I instantly fell in love with it. The best part of this song is that my son is playing the lead. At the end of this month, we will start with the shooting of this song."

The music video will be directed by Sajjan Agarwal.

Talking about working with Mandakini, the director said, "I'm very happy Mandakini ji is making her Bollywood comeback through my video *Maa O Maa*. Working with her is like a dream come true. She is a legendary actress and I'm sure this will be a great association with her and Rabbil Thakur." **IANS**



## K-Pop band 'Seventeen' releases movie in India



**NEW DELHI:** Popular K-Pop boy band *Seventeen* have released their movie *Seventeen Power of Love: The Movie* in India April 20.

*Seventeen Power of Love: The Movie* charts the exciting adventures of the band, documenting their concerts as well as some exclusive behind the scenes action.

The group consists of thirteen members -- S.Coups, Jeonghan, Joshua, Jun, Hoshi, Wonwoo, Woozi, DK, Mingyu, The8, Seungkwan, Vernon, and Dino.

Fans get a chance to see all their musical idols in an up, close, and personal avatar. The documentary also

features in depth interviews of all thirteen artists, as well as personal revelations about their past, present and future.

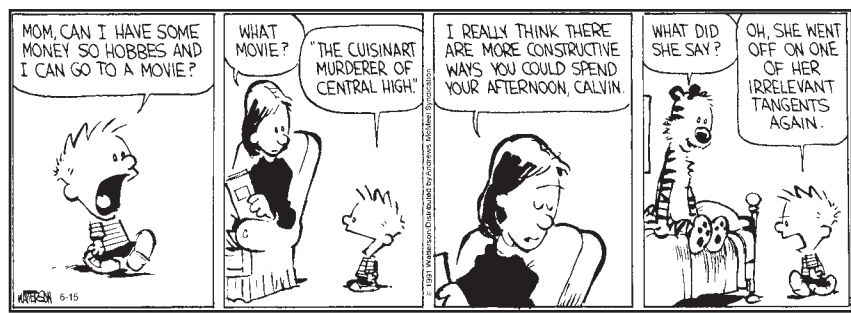
With five platinum albums in Korea, a spot on the US Billboard 200 for two consecutive weeks, and number one place on the Japanese Oricon chart, it is evident that the *Seventeen* mania is raging all over.

PVR Pictures release, *Seventeen Power of Love: The Movie*, directed by OH Yoon-Dong, in cinemas from April 20. **IANS**

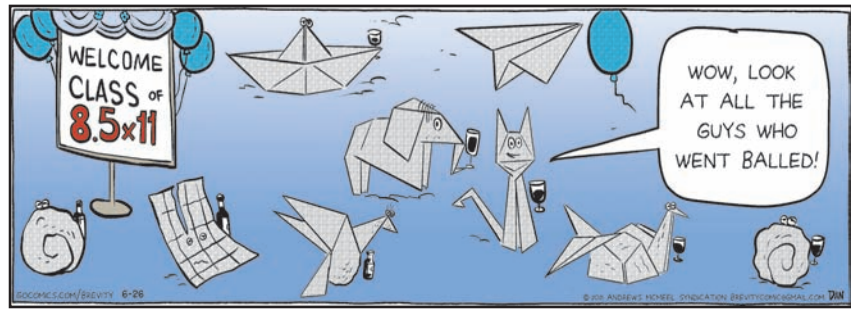
### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

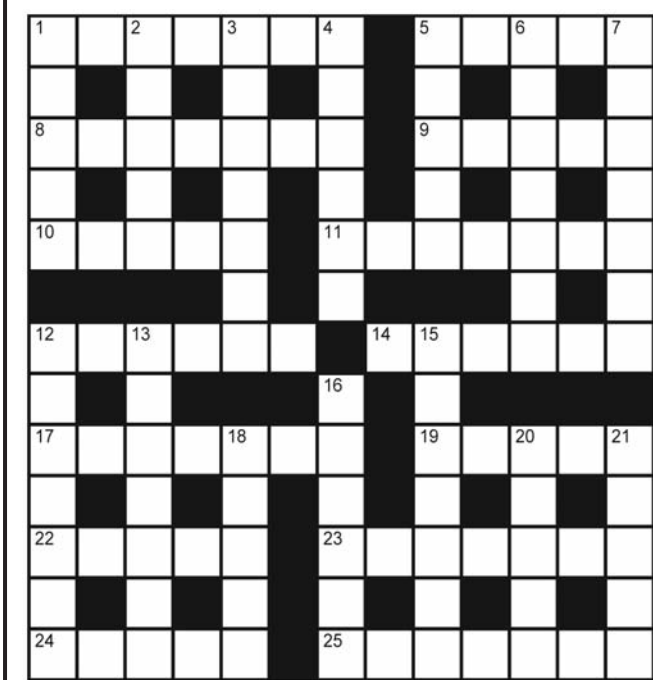


### BREVITY



### FUN post

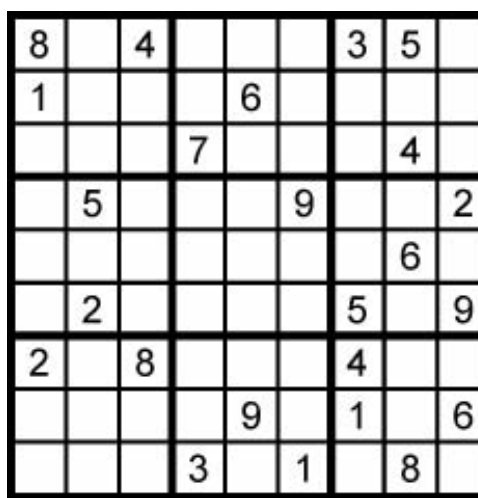
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Enticed
  - 5 Practical joker (3-2)
  - 8 Perennial herb with aromatic leaves
  - 9 Bury
  - 10 Mass meeting
  - 11 Dress material
  - 12 Giant cane
  - 14 Throwing competition
  - 17 Sainly glow
  - 19 Strangely
  - 22 Riches
  - 23 An impressive country house
  - 24 Firewood measure
  - 25 Moving carefully
  - Down**
  - 1 Three-toed animal
  - 2 Story line
  - 3 Hunt cry (5-2)
  - 4 Plant disease (3-3)
  - 5 Adhere
  - 6 Immense
  - 7 Maybe
  - 12 Rock group
  - 13 Supernatural act
  - 15 Sequester
  - 16 Trips the light fantastic
  - 18 Rotund
  - 20 Inhabit
  - 21 Spring chicken

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS

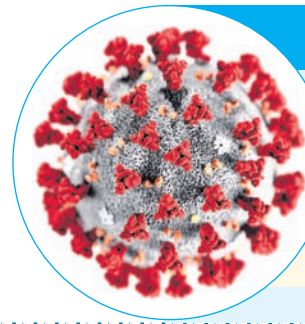


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



**SERVICE TO LORD**  
Darjee servants of Srimandir begin work to stitch decorative pieces for the upcoming Chandan Yatra of Lord Jagannath in Puri, Wednesday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	50,64,29,481	45,85,87,135	62,29,906
India	4,30,47,594	4,25,13,248	5,22,006
Odisha	12,87,959	12,78,687	9,124

# SAIL allowed to resume mining ops in state

**POST NEWS NETWORK**  
**New Delhi, April 20:** The Supreme Court Wednesday allowed the Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) to resume mining operations in Odisha. A three-judge bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana gave the permission to SAIL after the Advocate General of Odisha submitted that the state has no objection in this regard. During the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who appeared for SAIL, submitted that

the Steel Authority of India has made the payments and also obtained the necessary clearances. Advocate General of Odisha, Ashok Parija, told the court that the state has no objection with regard to the resumption of mining activities by SAIL in the state. Parija made it clear that the court may permit SAIL to resume mining operations. The apex court also permitted Avin Jain to resume mining operations. Mining companies Narayani Sons and Dinesh Chandra Das also pleaded before the court to allow



them to lift mined materials. The Odisha government submitted that the apex court may allow them to lift the mined materials subject to all necessary clearances and payment of penalties. The

apex court allowed the companies to lift mined materials. At the beginning of the Wednesday's hearing, the Chief Justice expressed unhappiness over the stand of the state government during the last hearing April 12. "We were very unhappy on the last occasion," the bench said. During the April 12 hearing, the Supreme Court had come down heavily on the Odisha government after the state counsels took different stands on the applications of mining companies seeking dis-

posal of mined materials and sought appearance of the state Advocate General. "Let the Advocate General come and explain the stand of the state. We can't monitor these processes. We have other important matters", the bench had said. The apex court was hearing a batch of petitions filed by mining companies seeking to dispose of the mined materials and to resume mining operations subject to receipt of all requisite statutory clearances.

# Panigrahi case adjourned till July

**POST NEWS NETWORK**  
**New Delhi, April 20:** The Supreme Court Wednesday adjourned the hearing in a special leave petition (SLP) filed by the Odisha Lokayukta against the order of Orissa High Court in MLA Pradeep Panigrahi corruption case and observed that the investigating agency should first submit a report in the matter. A two-judge bench of the SC headed by Justice Ajay Rastogi, during the hearing, did not pay heed on the argument of Pradeep Panigrahi that the Lokayukta can-

not order preliminary enquiry against him by the Vigilance department as the latter is the complainant in the matter. The bench observed that let the investigating agency complete the inquiry and submit its report in the matter. The bench adjourned the matter for hearing in July. Significantly, Odisha Lokayukta has filed a special leave petition in the Supreme Court challenging the orders of the Orissa High Court which ruled that the Lokayukta cannot order preliminary enquiry against Panigrahi by the Vigilance department.

## CHINTA 'O' CHETANA'S 43RD BAISHAKHI FEST CONCLUDES

# Nat'l Neelachakra Samman conferred upon Satpathy



Governor Ganeshi Lal confers Chinta 'O' Chetana National Neelachakra Samman on Orissa POST and Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy in the presence of dignitaries including the outfit's National president Shashi Bhusan Behera and general secretary Surendra Das, Kandhamal MP Achyuta Samanta, Odia Language Literature and Culture department secretary Madhusudan Padhi and former bureaucrat Sahadev Sahoo at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

**POST NEWS NETWORK**  
**Bhubaneswar, April 20:** The 43rd edition of Baishakhi Festival, a six-day cultural event on classical dance and music, organised by Chinta 'O' Chetana, a socio-cultural outfit of the City, concluded at Soochana Bhawan here Wednesday. On the concluding day, Odissi danseuses of Srjan led by Ratikanta Mohapatra captivated the audience with their scintillating performance of 'Madhaba Bhajan'. The concluding ceremony started with a performance on holy Pahandi procession of Lord Jagannath. On the occasion, Governor Ganeshi Lal conferred the Chinta 'O' Chetana National Neelachakra Samman on Orissa POST

**People, who don't respect their own language, history and culture, can never become part of any community. We need to promote and love Odia language, culture and spirit**  
TATHAGATA SATPATHY | EDITOR, ORISSA POST

and Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy for his work in the field of mass media. Altogether 14 personalities were felicitated with Chinta 'O' Chetana National

Awards while 11 were given Baishakhi awards for their remarkable works in various fields. Speaking on the occasion, Satpathy said outfits like Chinta 'O' Chetana are working for promotion of Odia culture which is laudable. "We are in such a situation where local people face difficulty in understanding and speaking Odia language. This is very sad. People, who don't respect their own language, history and culture, can never become part of any community. We need to promote and love Odia language, culture and spirit," said Satpathy. Governor Ganeshi Lal said Odisha is a state of multiple festivals and Baishakhi festival is one of them. "Festivals are the way of giving happiness to the people and overcome the sorrow and crises in life. All such festivals give the sense of oneness among people as people celebrate them irrespective of their caste or creed," Lal stated. National president of Chinta 'O' Chetana Shashi Bhusan Behera said the outfit has been celebrating Baisakhi Festival for the last 43 years. "This organisation has been led by several former chief ministers of Odisha including Harekrushna Mahatab, Biju Patnaik and Nandini Satpathy. I feel honoured to follow the footsteps of these legendary leaders," he added.



Artists perform Odissi at the concluding ceremony of Baishakhi Festival

**ଏକାଦଶହ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାଞ୍ଜଳି**

**ଫନାନସ ରଞ୍ଜନ ଦାସ**  
ଆବିର୍ଭାବ : ୨୫.୦୩.୧୯୬୭  
ନିରୋଧାତନ : ୧୧.୦୪.୨୦୨୨

ଆପଣଙ୍କ ବିରୋଧ ଆମ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ବ୍ୟସ୍ତ କରିଛି। ଆପଣଙ୍କ ପରୋପକାର, ସମାଜଦୂରକାରୀ, ଚ୍ୟାନ୍, ନିଷ୍ଠା ଓ ଆଦର୍ଶ ଆମମାନଙ୍କ କାନ୍ଦନରେ ପାଥେୟ ହେବ। ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଅମର ଆତ୍ମାର ଶାନ୍ତି ଓ ସ୍ୱର୍ଗଗତି ନିମନ୍ତେ ମହାପ୍ରଭୁ ଶ୍ରୀକୃଷ୍ଣଙ୍କୁ ପଦାରବିଧରେ ବିନମ୍ର ନିବେଦନ।

ଶୋକସମ୍ପ୍ରଦାୟ : ବନ୍ଧୁ, ପରିବାରବର୍ଗ ଓ ଆତ୍ମୀୟସମ୍ପର୍କ  
ଶିଳ୍ପକା, ପିପିଲି, ପୁରୀ

**Enrolment campaign in slum pockets**  
**Bhubaneswar:** With the aim to identify school dropouts, child labourers, domestic child labourers and rag picking children from urban slum pockets of the Capital city and enroll them in government school, the ActionAid in collaboration with Centre for Child & Women Development (CCWD) conducted an enrolment campaign (nama lekha abhiyan) in slum pockets like Nilachakra Nagar, Tarini Nagar, Nayagada Sahi, Sikharchandi Nagar and Gadakana Kalyani Sahi Wednesday. In this campaign, the child club members, SHG members, ASHA and Anganwadi workers saying slogans marched in slum pockets to sensitise the slum dwellers to enroll their children in school.

**www.ohpcld.com** | [/ohpc.odisha](#) | [/ohpc\\_odisha](#)

“With the infusion of more and more renewable power, the role of hydro generation has become more and more crucial. We are redefining it to ensure uninterrupted operation and enhance the quality of power supply.”

**(Naveen Patnaik)**  
Chief Minister, Odisha

21st April 2022  
**CELEBRATING 27th FOUNDATION DAY**

**OHPC, a gold-rated state PSU of Odisha, has been enabling a future of sustainability by operating, maintaining and modernizing hydroelectric power and other non-conventional energy sources by supplying 25%-40% power demand of its people, single-handedly.**

**OUR PROJECTS AT A GLANCE**  
TOTAL INSTALLED CAPACITY: **2099.80 MW**  
**BURLA-287.80 MW | CHIPLIMA-72 MW | BALIMELA-510 MW | RENGALI-250 MW**  
**UPPER KOLAB-320 MW | UPPER INDRAVATI-600 MW**  
**MACHKUND-60 MW (ODISHA SHARE)**

**ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LTD.**  
Odisha State Police Housing & Welfare Corporation Building  
Vanivihar Chowk, Janpath, Bhubaneswar - 751022, Tel: 0674-2542983, 2542802, 2542826, Fax: 0674-2542102

**NARAYANI MOTORS PVT. LTD.**  
56 & 57, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010 | Ph.: 0674-2588473/74/75

Branches in Odisha  
**BHUBANESWAR: Maruti Arena - Rasulgarh, Nexa - Rajbhawan Square, True Value: Pandra Square, PURI, NIMAPARA, JAGATSINGHPUR & PARADEEP**

MARUTI SUZUKI ARENA | NEXA | TRUE VALUE

# Cocaine peddlers held in City have int'l links: CB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA/PNN

Bhubaneswar, April 20: The Crime Branch of state police Wednesday said that the two drug peddlers nabbed in Bhubaneswar last week with 202gm of cocaine have international links.

Cocaine, an expensive drug, was seized in Odisha for the first time from the two men April 13, they said. The duo, hailing from Churu and Jhunjhunu districts of Rajasthan, were planning to sell drugs to foreigners including sports persons who would be visiting Bhubaneswar and Rourkela during Men's Hockey World Cup next year, Crime Branch ADG Sanjeeb Panda said.

They had also visited pilgrim **The duo has links with drug peddlers in China, France, America, Switzerland, Thailand, and South Africa. The accused were in contact with them** SANJEEB PANDA | CRIME BRANCH ADG



File photos of the accused duo

and tourist destinations such as Puri which is frequented by many foreigners, he said.

"The duo has links with drug peddlers in China, France, America, Switzerland, Thailand, and South Africa. The accused were in contact with them," he said.

They were jointly interrogated by the Special Task Force of the Crime Branch and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).

The prime accused used to sell cocaine in Delhi. He contacted the co-accused, who frequently travelled to Bhubaneswar, to spread

the drug business in Odisha. The duo was nabbed from a rented house here.

A case under NDPS Act has been registered and further investigation is underway.

Unlike cannabis or heroin and brown sugar (made from opium), cocaine is not produced in India as it comes from the coca plant native to South America. It is mainly produced in countries like Colombia, Peru and Bolivia and consumed in United States and Europe, a statement issued by the Crime Branch after the arrests had said.

## MEMORIAL LECTURE



Dignitaries, including Odisha Sahitya Akademi president Hrushikesh Mallick, unveil a book at the 31st Gopinath Mohanty Memorial Lecture organised at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

## STA ISSUES 235 CHALLANS ON DAY-1 OF SPECIAL DRIVE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: The State Transport Authority (STA) Wednesday issued a total of 235 challans on the first day of the week-long special drive to check buses and other light vehicles engaged in transporting school students in the State.

As per sources, about 105 buses, 85 light vehicles, vans and 44 auto-rickshaws were inspected. Meanwhile, 173 vehicles were found to be operating without valid fitness certificate, 85 of them did not have permit, 98 did not have insurance and 51 were detected without PUC certificate. Moreover, 25 had not paid taxes and as many as 59 drivers did not have Driving License with them. Two buses were also seized in Rourkela, sources said.

## OHRC SEEKS REPORT ON CUSTODIAL DEATH

PNN & PTI

Bhubaneswar, April 20: Taking suo motu cognisance of the death of a 46-year-old man, who was arrested on the charges of theft, allegedly in Badagada police custody here, the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) Wednesday asked the twin city Commissionerate Police to submit a detailed report in connection with the incident.

While the victim's wife alleged that he was tortured inside Badagada police station leading to his death, police claimed that he was injured while trying to escape and later died in Capital Hospital April 17 night.

Taking suo motu cognisance of the incident, the OHRC in a statement said, "In the present incident,

OHRC asks the CP to submit a report on the death of a man allegedly in custody of Badagada police in the City April 17

prima facie, allegations of custodial violence cannot be ruled out."

The state's apex rights body asked the twin city police commissioner to submit a detailed report on the matter with copies of the post-mortem report and other related documents by the next hearing - May 20, 2022. The report should also take into account the allegation of impersonation, the OHRC told the police.

Sources said there was confu-

sion about the identity of the deceased as the police record said his name was Pradip Sahoo, while his family claimed that it was Debendra Choudhury. His wife produced his Aadhaar card to support her claim. The vegetables seller and father of four children was picked up by the police Sunday for allegedly stealing a bicycle. His wife had 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 had alleged. The police said that the man had suffered injuries while trying to escape police custody. He was caught and taken to Badagada police station where he complained of uneasiness. Soon after, he was taken to Capital Hospital where he died during treatment.

## FROM PAGE 1 Odisha prepares for Covid-19 resurgence

SARI surveillance should be continued as before and an early warning system of detecting the increase in cases should be monitored. Periodic surveillance of high-risk and vulnerable populations like healthcare providers, educational institutions and residential hostels should be carried out.

"There should be in-house strengthening of testing, surveillance and treatment mechanisms to face any upsurge of cases and to integrate it into a comprehensive health care system," Mishra said.

Wearing face mask is compulsory in public places, in work places and during transport. Individuals must maintain an adequate distance in public places, workplaces and avoid overcrowding, the Director said in his letter.

Mishra further advised that spitting in public places should be discouraged. Provision of hand wash or sanitizers should be made mandatory at work places. Proper ventilation to be ensured, particularly in closed spaces, he added.

The state Wednesday logged 8 more Covid-19 cases, which took the active caseload to 110. With the confirmation of death of another person due to Covid-19, the death toll surged to 9,124.

## Now, OUAT studies climate-resilient crops

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: At a time when climate change is affecting crop production around the world, the Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) has launched a project to study crops like ramdana, quinoa and chia, which can withstand adverse conditions.

These crops are more nutritious than other crops. They are rich in protein, iron, calcium, phosphorus, potassium and mineral salts. In addition, these crops can withstand the adverse conditions caused by the climate change, sources said.

"Climate change has a minimal impact on the production of ramdana, quinoa and chia," said a source in the OUAT.

For the first time, a hybridization programme to innovate new varieties of ramdana crop has been launched at OUAT. As per the hybridization programme, researchers at OUAT had experimented with F3, the progeny, in the Rabi season of 2021-22. There are plans to develop new varieties of Ramdana through the hybridization programme,



sources added.

Dr. Hanumanlal Raigarh, project coordinator of the Potential Crop Project of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi, conducted the field-level survey while Dr. Simanchal Sahu, research chairman, Directorate of OUAT Research, and Dr. Dayanidhi Mishra, project chief were present on the occasion.

Raigarh emphasised the need to innovate and use new technologies to increase crop production and utilise the same for the benefit of farmers. The aim of this project is to develop the new varieties of ramdana and other crops and deliver them to farmers, sources said.

## 19 places record over 40°C

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 20: Odisha clocked the highest temperature of the season for the second consecutive day as the sweltering heat drove the mercury to 40 degrees Celsius or above in at least 19 places Wednesday, the MeT office said.

However, scattered rainfall may bring some respite to people during the next couple of days, following which hot weather conditions will again continue to prevail.

The maximum temperature shot up to 43 degrees Celsius or more in six weather stations, including Subarnapur town in western Odisha where it was 44.5 degrees Celsius, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said.

Bolangir boiled in the scorching sun as the temperature climbed to 44 degrees Celsius in the dis-



Subarnapur town in western Odisha recorded the highest of 44.5 degrees Celsius

trict headquarters and 43 in Titlagarh. Bhubaneswar and Cuttack registered maximum temperatures of 37.1 and 37 degrees Celsius respectively, a bulletin said.

Hot weather conditions are likely to prevail for the next 24 hours as

the mercury will soar above 40 degrees Celsius at many places in the interior parts and above normal by three-four notches in some areas of the state, it said.

The weatherman advised people to take precautionary measures while going outside between 11am and 3pm.

The MeT centre also forecast thunderstorms with gusty wind speed of 40-50 kmph at some places Thursday.

There can be thunderstorms and scattered rain in many districts till Friday due to strong south-westerly winds from Bay of Bengal to the northeastern states, it said.

The maximum temperature will fall by 2-3 degrees Celsius over the subsequent couple of days, following which it will gradually rise again from Sunday, according to the department.

## FROM PAGE 1 SC 'bulldozes' NMDC's demolition programme



"I am sorry to mention it again...In the morning, I had mentioned the matter. Despite communicating the (stay) order, they (authorities) are not stopping the demolition. They are saying that they have not officially received any communication. I request to ask the secretary-general to communicate the order to the police commissioner and the mayor and the commissioner of the North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC)," Dave said. "It will be too late otherwise," the senior lawyer said urging urgent remedial action on the part of the top court.

"Ok. Communicate it through the secretary-general (of the apex court) immediately," the CJ said.

However, by that time a number of buildings and its portions cited as 'illegal encroachment' had already been broken. In the forenoon, Dave mentioned the petition of Jamiat against the special joint encroachment removal action of the civic bodies including the NDMC and the PWD and said "a completely unauthorised and unconstitutional demolition" has been ordered.

Jahangirpuri in north Delhi had witnessed violent clashes, including stone-pelting, arson, and firing, between two communities during a Hanuman Jayanti procession Saturday. Eight police personnel and a local resident had sustained injuries.

A civic official, requesting anonymity, said the drive continued because of the absence of a written order from the Supreme Court. It was stopped as soon as the order was received, the official added.

## CLASSIFIED LOST

I, Bibhuti Podh, S/o-Tejaraj Podh, R/o-Tulsinagar, PO/PS/Dist.-Balangir have lost somewhere my ID Card No. 210303800300030 on 01.04.2022 while I was going to Tikrapara collection office from my home. ID card issued by HDFC Bank Ltd. I could not be able to trace my ID card. If anybody found please contact Mob.-7008500525.

## AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit I Prashant Singh, C/o. Late Lingaraj Singh, Vill: Maitratri Lochanpur, P.O.-Lendo, P.S.: Brahmagiri, Dist.-Puri, that I do hereby declare that Prashant Singh & Prasana Kumar Singh both the names are related to one and same person. Myself Prashant Singh for all purposes.

## Odia writer Rabindranath Das no more

BHUBANESWAR: Noted writer, playwright and former Odisha Sahitya Akademi Secretary Rabindranath Das passed away at a private hospital here Wednesday. He was 80. Das, who was an OAS officer and served the government in different capacities, was admitted in hospital due to certain ailments. He had won the Odisha Sahitya Academy Award for his book 'Bistirna Pruthibi'.

## Advika app to upskill adolescent girls, boys

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 20: Women and Child Development (W&CD) Minister Tukuni Sahu Wednesday launched 'Advika' mobile app, an initiative of the state government for the development and empowerment of adolescent girls and boys, at Lok Seva Bhawan here.

Developed by UNICEF and YuWaah with technical assistance from Microsoft, the application aims at imparting life skill education to the young mass thereby enabling them to play a proactive role at the community level, besides capacitating them to deal with various issues and challenges of life confidently.

"As many as 12 lakh adolescents have so far joined the Advika programme. Odisha is on its way to becoming a child marriage-free state by 2030," Sahu said while launching the app.

Sources said the application contains awareness and learning materials about the monthly themes



of the Advika calendar. It has specially-curated content on digital skills, employability skills, financial literacy as well as bonus materials on career guidance.

"The app also carries in-built assessments to record the progress made by the users in terms of increased awareness and skills on the thematic issues. Based on the assessments, learners will also be certified," said W&CD department commissioner-cum-secretary Bhaskar Jyoti Sarma.

Dhuwarakha Sriram, chief, YuWaah, UNICEF India said the objective of Advika aligns perfectly with that of UNICEF and YuWaah—

socio-economic empowerment of adolescents through a comprehensive approach combining health, wellbeing and child rights along with 21st century skills.

Manju Dasmana, Director, Microsoft Philanthropies said the fast-widening digital divide has had an adverse impact on populations, particularly on girls and women. The Microsoft technology-powered Advika app, which sports must-have skills for adolescents, will help Odisha's young people realise their dreams.

In a bid to reach out to millions of young girls and boys, the state government, in collaboration with UNICEF and UNFPA, launched 'Advika-Every Girl is Unique' campaign October 11, 2020 on the occasion of International Day of Girl Child.

Over 260 project-level and district-level WhatsApp groups of adolescents have been formed and 600 master trainers have been trained through State ToT on Life Skill Education and use Advika packages.

## Union Minister visits e-NAM laboratory in Nabarangpur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 20: Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shobha Karandlaje Wednesday inspected a drinking water treatment plant and visited the e-NAM laboratory in Mazi Mandi in tribal dominated Nabarangpur district.

The Union Minister, who is on a two-day visit to the state, started her tour with inspection of a drinking water treatment plant at Umerkote, built under the Aspirational Districts programme. Once completed, the water treatment plant will provide clean potable water to about 40,000 people at Umerkote township in Nabarangpur district.

Later, the minister visited e-NAM laboratory at Mazi Mandi in Umerkote and interacted with farmers who bring their produce to the laboratory for a quality check. "e-NAM creates a unified mar-

ket to help farmers sell agri-products, get right price and access real time info, etc. #Aspirational District," the minister said in a Twitter post.

National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC (Agricultural Produce Market Committee) Mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.

**FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS**

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

# No MSP for mahua flower; Ch'garh traders fill pockets

## ₹4L fine on school bus sans papers

# Plan to raze greenery for water project resented

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sunabeda/Semiliguda, April 20:** The Transport department Wednesday imposed a fine of over ₹4 lakh on a school bus for evading tax and not having fitness permits in Semiliguda area of Koraput while conducting a check on vehicles.

Following an order from the local regional transport officer, officials conducted checks on vehicles. A team of officials led by traffic inspector Rabinarayan Swain intercepted the bus (OR 02 BJ 6200) belonging to a private English medium school at Gopabandhunagar Chhak.

On examination, officials found that the bus did not have a proper fitness certificate. It was also found that tax and insurance premium have not been paid since April 2018.

The officials imposed a penalty of ₹3.81 lakh for tax evasion and ₹22,000 for not having fitness certificate. Following a directive from the Odisha government, the Transport department has intensified checking of buses and vehicles carrying school and college students. The drive will continue till April 27. The state transport authority (STA) has issued letter in this regard to all RTOs.

POST NEWS NETWORK

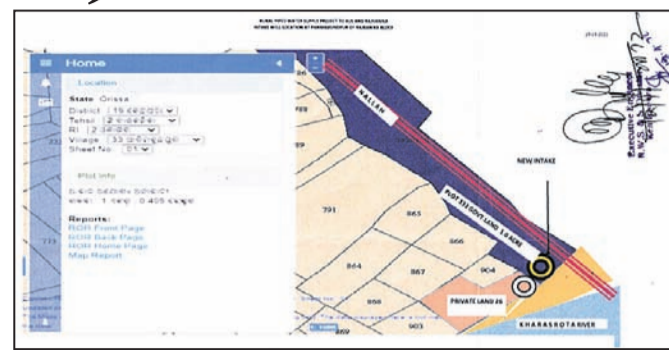
**Kendrapara, April 20:** Parimukundapur village under Rajkanika block in Kendrapara district will soon lose its green cover owing to a poorly planned water project.

Hundreds of trees in the village are to be felled to make way for the water project. Though the news of a water project in the village is welcomed by the villagers, they are miffed at the cutting down of trees that are standing tall since generations.

The trees attract several species of birds and animals from the forest areas. Now, environmentalists fear these trees will be lost forever as there is no immediate plan to relocate them elsewhere. On the other hand, no efforts are also being made for compensatory afforestation.

Work on the project, which is expected to begin soon will see the destruction of many valuable and medicinal trees. Villagers say they want the water project but not at the cost of the trees.

"This will only destroy the nat-



ural cover," a local said.

According to reports, the administration plans to provide water through water pipelines from Kharasrota river. So, a water project is being planned to be set up at Parimukundapur in an acre of land. However, villagers alleged that there is at least 28 decimel of forest land in the area which will be destroyed for the project. This has become a matter for concern for villagers who drew the attention of environmentalists and forest lovers.

When contacted, Rural Water Supply and Sanitation department executive engineer Basant Nayak

said, "We have directed the tehsildar to identify proper land for the water project. Final decision is yet to be taken. If by any chance, the trees are to be cut down, steps will be taken to relocate some trees and plant more trees at a later stage."

"We will try for compensatory afforestation and replace the trees that are cut at a later date," he added. A few villagers and environmentalists, however, are far from convinced.

"Very little effort is being made by the administration to undertake development work in a manner that allows nature and trees to be preserved," a local said.

### DISTRESS SALE



duce and authorised the Panchayati Raj department to fix its price, but to no avail. In such a situation, Chhattisgarh traders have camped in several villages and are commanding the price of mahua flower. As a result, flower collectors end up selling their produce at the prices fixed by the traders from the neighbouring state. It is alleged that the price the traders provide is not sufficient enough to cover the labour costs involved in collecting the flowers and drying them.

It was learnt that only 10 people have been issued licence to procure and store mahua flowers in this block this year. Several others who

have applied for licence are yet to receive it.

A licensed trader is supposed to buy 2,000 quintal flower, but in many cases they collect 10,000 to 15,000 quintal.

The Panchayati Raj department allows a person to transport a maximum of 50 quintal mahua flowers outside, but in most cases 500 quintal of the forest produce is being smuggled outside. The traders pay 13.5 per cent sales tax and 18 per cent excise duty per quintal of the flower, apart from paying ₹138 towards permit. In reality, traders transport flowers over and above the permissible limits in collusion with officials and evade taxes on the excess amount, it was alleged. The state government also loses revenue worth crores of rupees on this count.

Deputy excise inspector Hemkant Suna said that officials are keeping a tight vigil on smuggling of mahua flowers. "A special team of excise officials has been conducting raids on various godowns," he added.

# Kendrapara in grip of drinking water crisis; 'Har Ghar Jal' fails



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, April 20:** Despite seven distributaries of Mahanadi, Brahmani and Baitarani flowing in Kendrapara district, the coastal area is reeling from severe drinking water crisis, a report said.

As per official data of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) department, the coastal district has at least 17,238 tubewells, 331 drinking water projects and 181 overhead tanks to cater to the water requirements of the residents. The district also has riverine waterway which is the second largest in Odisha.

Earlier, the Union government, under its 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan', had identified Kendrapara as the lone district in Odisha facing acute drinking water crisis. Accordingly, provision was made to recharge the groundwater in the district. However, resolution of water crisis remains a far cry.

The situation is so worse that the Centre's plan to provide piped water to every house-

hold by 2024 under its ambitious scheme 'Har Ghar Jal' seems to be a daydream.

Social activists Sunil Gantayat, Bibhuti Bhusan Rout, Pratap Ranjan Tripathy, Debasish Samal and Prakash Chandra Das alleged that drinking water is a major crisis in Kendrapara. Being a coastal district, its groundwater has salinity. Moreover, the water tanks constructed in the district mostly remain dry.

Construction of a tubewell costs around ₹3 lakh. Even if a tubewell is dug, its water tastes salty. Water from Mahanadi, Brahmani and Baitarani river systems are used by local industries and farmlands. Groundwater has substantially depleted and a possibility of its recharge is very thin. Previous reports of the Water Resource departments of the Centre and the state have revealed that the groundwater in Garadpur block is unfit for drinking purposes. Due to lack of recharge of groundwater, the drinking water crisis has been looming large like that of Mahakalpara block.

## Hotel heist: ₹32 lakh unearthed

**Sambalpur:** In a significant breakthrough in April 15 hotel heist case, police Tuesday night unearthed ₹32 lakh cash stashed in a sack under the ground in Deogarh district. Police also arrested four persons including a hotel staffer in this connection. The accused were identified as Manas Pradhan, Jogeswar Behera, Gobinda Mallick (all hotel staff) and Dileswar Behera (a former hotel staffer). Sambalpur SP Battula Gangadhar said, the accused had allegedly stolen ₹39 lakh from the cash counter of Hotel Sheela Tower at VSS Marg in Sambalpur, April 15. The robbers had later buried the cash inside the earth near the house of Dileswar in Deogarh. Sambalpur police investigated the case and identified the accused on the basis of footage captured by CCTVs installed at the hotel before nabbing them.

## Youth arrested for raping minor

**Naktideula:** Naktideula police Wednesday arrested a youth on charges of trespassing into the house of a 17-year-old girl and raping her in the absence of her family members at a village under this police limits in Sambalpur district. The accused was identified as Bauri Deep, 22, alias Ashish of the village. A case was registered in this connection and a medical examination was conducted on the accused and the survivor, IIC Bibhuti Bhusan Dalai said. The incident occurred around 10am April 14, when the accused was passing by the house of the survivor. As the family members were away to witness Meru festival on the occasion of Pana Sankranti, Ashish went inside her house and outraged her modesty. The girl narrated her ordeal before her parents after they returned home in evening.

## 'Sampurna' to empower women farmers

**Bargarh:** The state government has initiated a programme called 'Sampurna' to financially empower small and marginal women farmers in Bhatli and Ambabhona blocks of Bargarh district. Under the programme, about 4,000 women farmers will be encouraged to take up chilli and ragi (millets) farming. Training programmes for women farmers will be organised in various units under which they will be imparted technical knowledge about farming, skill development and marketing linkage. The programme was recently launched in the presence of district chief agriculture officer Santosh Kumar Maharana.



“Our endeavour is that our youth should be flexible and can adopt the fast-changing nature of job. Skilling, Reskilling and Upskilling is the greatest need of the hour.”

- Narendra Modi

KAUSHAL BHARAT

SASHAKT BHARAT

Participate in the National Apprenticeship Mela and shape your future with Apprenticeship Training

NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP MELA

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2022 | Timing: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm  
Registration Link: [www.dgt.gov.in/appmelaapril22](http://www.dgt.gov.in/appmelaapril22)

On-the-spot interview, assessment, and apprenticeship training offers (designated and optional trades)

Eligibility: 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Pass, Skill Training Certificate Holders, ITI Diploma Holders, and Graduates

### Benefits for Establishments

- Government's contribution of 25% from the prescribed stipend
- Cost effective way to increase workforce, productivity and profitability
- Apprenticeship training can be given across sectors (manufacturing, services, trade, and others)
- Impart on-the-job skilling to candidates who can further be hired as permanent employees

### Benefits for Apprentices

- 4000+ participating companies from over 30 sectors: Power, Retail, Telecom, IT, Electronics, Automotive, and more
- Organised in over 700+ venues across the country
- Apprenticeship opportunities in 500+ trades (Fitter, Electrician, Welder, Electronics Mechanic, COPA, Housekeeper, Beautician, Hairdresser, General Painter, Stenographer, etc.)

### Required Documents

- 3 copies of resume
- 3 copies of mark sheets {5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Pass, Skill Training Certificate, ITI Diploma, Under Graduate and Graduate (BA, B.Com, B.S.C, etc.)}
- Photo ID (Aadhaar Card/ Driving License, etc.)
- 3 passport size photographs

Register Now



For more details and registration, scan QR code

To participate in Apprenticeship Mela, visit your nearest ITI centre

@MSDESkillIndia  
@SkillIndiaOfficial



War is a dangerous teacher and physical victory leads often to a moral defeat.

SRI AUROBINDO



## CBDCs for People

Central banks around the world are considering whether to issue their own digital currencies. While financial inclusion is often cited as a key motivation, this outcome is not automatic. Precisely how can central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) be designed and implemented to ensure that “unbanked” people have access to essential financial services?

According to the World Bank, 1.7 billion adults worldwide are unbanked. With no access to services from the formal financial sector, they are forced to resort to alternatives, often at significant cost or risk. Such financial exclusion entrenches poverty, limits opportunity, and prevents people from protecting themselves against hardship. It stifles hope for a better future.

Financial inclusion starts, but does not end, with the ability to make and receive payments. People need a fast, secure, and cheap way to transfer money. To date, central banks have largely met this need by providing the most inclusive form of money we currently have: cash. But using cash exclusively leaves the unbanked outside the formal financial system and without the data and transaction trail needed to readily access financial services. This can make it much more difficult for small businesses to build savings and gain access to credit.

But the payments landscape is changing, owing to the widespread adoption of digital and mobile technologies. Cash transactions are declining amid a shift toward digital payments – a trend accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, when online transactions surged. Given these broad developments, it is imperative that we work to close the widening digital divide. Central banks and policymakers now have an opportunity to explore reforms, including the issuance of digital central bank money for all.

CBDCs could offer an opportunity to overcome some barriers facing the unbanked. Traditional services have potentially prohibitive costs and requirements such as transaction fees, minimum account balances, or formal proof of identification. Additional obstacles include the low level of trust in digital payments and the lack of smartphones among some groups.

While CBDCs are not the only way to overcome these barriers, they could be part of the inclusion toolkit. Central banks are already coordinating further improvements to retail payments by adopting fast payment systems, and CBDCs represent a natural extension of this continuum. Both fast payment systems and CBDCs can spur competing providers to offer new services, lower costs, and, ultimately, broaden access. A further benefit of CBDCs is that, by their very nature, they will incorporate the unique advantages of central-bank money – safety, finality, liquidity, and integrity.

CBDCs could bypass many of the vested commercial interests that have cropped up around payment systems and contributed to inefficiencies and costs for users. They could also lower costs by removing the credit and liquidity risks inherent in other forms of digital money. A CBDC has the potential to upgrade and connect payment systems – both domestically and across borders. It could spur countries with limited financial infrastructure to leapfrog directly to a CBDC arrangement, creating an opportunity to connect to an inclusive, safe, and efficient payment system.

There are also benefits for social policies. For example, governments could use CBDCs to channel financial support to low-income households, which would deepen longer-term inclusion and act as another gateway to other financial services.

To realise these benefits, any CBDC rollout must be accompanied by policy reforms and safeguards to address potential difficulties and risks, such as low levels of financial and digital literacy, and operational challenges, including cybersecurity. Policy reforms also should prevent disintermediation: the danger that money will be held in large amounts in CBDC wallets, rather than as deposits in commercial banks, making it unavailable for lending (such as mortgages) and other productive purposes.

Central banks also should consider designing CBDCs to level the playing field by giving people control over their transaction data and the ability to share it with a wider set of financial-service providers. Growing concerns about data privacy could be addressed by hardwiring personal data protections into the structure of a CBDC.

Central banks exploring CBDCs will have many design choices to make to balance privacy protection and transparency, and to ensure both financial inclusion and financial integrity. They will need to consider whether to grant direct access to consumers or to use a purely intermediated model that offers CBDC digital wallets through banks or nonbank financial-service providers. More dialogue, research, and trials will be needed to show how CBDCs can best become engines of financial inclusion.

Central bankers and other public-sector representatives have a duty to ensure the financial system is inclusive, open, competitive, and responsive to the needs and interests of all groups. If designed properly, CBDCs hold great promise to help support a digital financial system that works for everyone.

*Agustin Carstens is General Manager of the Bank for International Settlements. H.M. Queen Máxima of the Netherlands is the UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development.*

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

### WISDOM CORNER

Generosity is giving more than you can, and pride is taking less than you need. **KAHLIL GIBRAN**

Kindness in words creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love. **LAO TZU**

Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go. **TS ELIOT**

### WORDSWORTH

#### Spade

Every now and then, some dispute flares up in the United States that reminds us that sensitivities over language in that country run especially deep. The specific occasion was a meeting of the Sacramento City Council, reported in the Sacramento Bee, in which one speaker, to emphasise his point, said “I think we should call a spade a spade”. A Councilwoman, African-American, objected to this vigorously, saying it was an “ethnically and racially derogatory remark”. Most people know that to call a spade a spade means that we should avoid euphemism, be straightforward, use blunt or plain language. Most Americans also know that spade is a rather outmoded derogatory slang term for an African-American. Putting the two ideas together, though, requires a person whose sensitivity to possibly offensive language is greater than their knowledge of word history. First of all, the spade in the expression isn't the same spade as in the slang term. The first is undoubtedly the digging implement. The second is the suit of cards. In the latter case, the allusion was to the colour of the suit, and originally appeared in the fuller form as black as the ace of spades. The abbreviated form spade seems to have grown up sometime in the early part of last century. Though they're the same word historically – both derive from Greek spathe for a blade or paddle – the one you dig with came into Old English from an intermediate Germanic source, while the card sense arrived via Italian spade, the plural of spada, a sword.

# PERILS OF UNIFORMITY

### FOCUS NATION



Minorities, the underprivileged, and the poorest segments of society are passing through the most crucial phase in Independent India

A pall of uncertainty is seemingly descending over the Indian horizon in the wake of unleashing of all sorts of fundamentalism – from food to culture, language to religious chauvinism – against minorities, especially Muslims, and these developments do not bode well with India's declared and cherished centuries-old ideals of Sarva Dharma Sambhava (equal respect for all religions) and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family). On the one hand, PM Modi never tires of emphasising these cherished ideals in international forums, while on the other hand, fundamentalism of all sorts is let loose to target minorities, particularly in BJP-ruled states, from Karnataka to Madhya Pradesh and from UP to Gujarat. Such communal incidents get galvanised in states that are likely to go to polls by the year-end.

Eruption of violence on the JNU campus April 10, the day Ram Navami was being celebrated, over the serving of non-vegetarian food did not seem to be an isolated incident but came in the wake of curbs imposed on sale of meat in parts of Delhi, UP and Karnataka during the just-concluded Navratras.

The ongoing campaign against display of halal certification on food products pioneered by groups affiliated to BJP or Sangh Parivar seemingly indicates a well-concerted strategy to target a specific minority community on the pretext of what it eats, and astonishingly, the forceful imposition of one community's food choices on others is being deliberately ignored or sometimes even legitimised by the powers that be. In the backdrop of such a sordid state of affairs, one critic has opined that the reluctance of many political and religious leaders to voice against such blatant highhandedness “is making otherisation par for the course.”

The recent expression of sentiment by Union Home Minister Amit Shah that Hindi ought to be made India's only national language is not new. He has articulated such sentiments time and again stating that it was high time to elevate Hindi to the status of na-

tional language so that it can replace English as the link language for the country. Some experts point out that the notion of making Hindi the national language is neither limited to BJP nor the RSS or their progenies, rather RV Dhulekar, a Congressman, had said in the Constituent Assembly: “People who do not know Hindustani have no right to stay in India.” Emphasis on Hindustani entailed a version of Hindi mixed with Urdu for which even Mahatma Gandhi had strongly espoused as the national language of India, and, in fact, he had started a Hindustani Prachar Sabha in Wardha in 1942. Nevertheless, the Constitution made Hindi the sole ‘official language’ of India with English also being accorded approval for use by all governments for 15 years. The promotion of regional languages in their respective regions was also encouraged. In 1965, when the 15-year period for the usage of English was about to expire, the powerful Tamil agitation claimed a fast-rising death toll along with apprehensions of secession looming large, and the situation could be brought under control by amending the Official Languages Act permitting the continuance of the use of English in perpetuity unless all states adopted Hindi and passed a resolution supporting its adoption. One expert has opined that the amendment to the Official Languages Act epitomised a ‘hard-won’ recognition of the country's multilingualism and an assurance

that Hindi would never be unilaterally imposed on the country without the consent of all states.

However, critics are on the horns of a dilemma, like many leaders of Opposition parties, to decipher the underlying motive of Shah's raking up the language issue at a time when the nation is seized with more burning issues that need urgent solutions. Is it ignorance of history of Independent India on the part of Shah or a deliberate move to implement the RSS' hidden agenda of ‘One Nation-One Language’ to pave way for the expansion of the BJP in southern states where it has been cutting a sorry figure in electoral terms? India's unity in diversity does not simply lie in one language or one religion, rather it has its own raison d'être that has been nurtured over centuries and deeply ingrained in the Indian psyche.

The BJP under the Shah-Modi duo has prospered and thrived by playing the Hindu majoritarian card and pitting one community against the other: Minorities, Dalits, and the under-privileged have been taken for a ride under the guise of slogans like sab ka saath, sab ka vikas, whereas the real progress in political, monetary, and power-sharing terms has been made by BJP and its leaders. The atmosphere has been charged with hatred, false and vituperative blitzkrieg propaganda via the official-controlled electronic and print media that transmits information that is devoid of reality.

Even social media is exploited to spread misinformation and dissemination of distorted facts of history to malign the image of particular leaders.

Religious chauvinism may have temporarily helped the ruling dispensation to expand its sphere of influence and fetch electoral gains but surely it is not an everlasting solution but rather can evaporate with changing public mood. Minorities, the under-privileged, and the poorest segments of society are passing through the most crucial phase in Independent India. Targeting one minority community through official machinery sends wrong signals to other minorities. According to one expert, the recent eruption of violence in different parts of the country coinciding with Ram Navami and Hanuman Jayanti and the studied silence of the dispensation at the helm over these incidents explicitly demonstrates that anti-minority mobilisation is now organically embedded in the grassroots and is de-linked from the electoral cycle.

Failure of the ruling dispensation to deliver on issues of price hike, unemployment, economic mess, law and order, tackling health-related and environment-related issues for the past many years is considered by many experts as the prime reason behind invoking religion-related, food-related, culture-related, and language-related controversies to divert public attention from governance failure. But for temporary electoral gains, this strategy is doing more harm in economic, social, and strategic terms.

At a time when the entire world is in the grip of multiple crises, a strong and prosperous India is the need of the hour. The eruption of violent incidents in the name of religion, culture, or language does not bode well for India's pluralistic society. The dispensation at the helm ought not only to avoid meddling in culinary matters but also sternly deter self-styled custodians of moral and religious values from invading or encroaching upon others' religion and faith.

*The writer is Executive Editor, India Ahead. Views are personal.*



Anil Singh

INDIA'S UNITY IN DIVERSITY HAS ITS OWN RAISON D'ÊTRE THAT HAS BEEN NURTURED OVER CENTURIES AND DEEPLY INGRAINED IN THE INDIAN PSYCHE



Agustin Carstens & Queen Máxima of the Netherlands

CBDCs could bypass many of the vested commercial interests that have cropped up around payment systems and contributed to inefficiencies and costs for users

### SPECTRUM RECOVERY

## Storm clouds over global economy

This was supposed to be the year of post-COVID normalisation, labour-market healing, and a revival of economic growth. Yet it is turning out to be a fraught period of geopolitical realignments, persistent supply disruptions, and financial-market volatility, all of which are playing out in a context of surging inflationary pressures and limited policymaking space.

Owing to these developments, the latest update to the Brookings-Financial Times Tracking Indexes for the Global Economic Recovery shows an overall loss of growth momentum, with considerable unevenness across countries in their vulnerability to adverse domestic and international developments. The war in Ukraine, COVID's resurgence in China, and the lack of macroeconomic policy options available to most governments will make 2022 a tough year for global growth. And although COVID's disruptive effects seem contained in most parts of the world, the potential for new variants to emerge means that it will remain a wildcard.

The spike in geopolitical tensions has exacerbated global supply-chain disruptions. With prices already surging and demand holding up well in most major economies

until recently, conditions are ripe for an escalation of inflationary pressures around the world. Worse, most governments and central banks will find it difficult to bolster demand if it shows signs of flagging in the face of mounting economic uncertainty and financial volatility. Consumer and business confidence have already taken a hit, and that bodes ill for consumer demand and especially for business investment.

The US economy continues to power along: headline employment and unemployment numbers have returned to their pre-pandemic levels; industrial output has been robust; and overall domestic demand remains strong, serving as a major engine of global growth. But the US Federal Reserve is at risk of losing control of the inflation narrative, which means that it could be forced to tighten monetary policy even more aggressively than it has signalled, raising the risk of a marked growth slowdown in 2023. High oil prices, a yield-curve inversion, and a flailing stock market all point to – and feed – a widespread sense of impending difficulties.

For their part, eurozone economies are engaged in the difficult task of weaning themselves off Russian natural gas as quickly as possible. That could be immensely

disruptive to some industries, though with a modest and short-lived overall hit to growth. If diminished energy supplies begin to exact a toll, the German economy's strong recovery will become much shakier.

Similarly, Japan's consumption-driven rebound has already been derailed by the disruptive effects of Omicron, clouding the prospects for a sustained recovery. And after bouncing back from the pandemic, the UK economy is heading into a difficult period, with rising inflation, higher taxes, and supply-chain disruptions accompanying a formidable set of global headwinds.

The vise is also tightening on many emerging-market and developing economies that were already suffering from surging global inflation, a rising dollar, and unfavourable financial conditions. That said, major emerging-market currencies have generally held up well, reflecting modest requirements for financing current-account deficits and healthy stocks of foreign-exchange reserves. And the spike in commodity prices has been good news for some developing economies. While India is enjoying a sharp economic rebound, high inflation and rising oil prices could crimp growth if they prove persistent. Brazil, too, is experiencing a modest growth re-

vival, but, with a presidential election in October, it remains beset by political instability. And the Russian economy, of course, has been hammered by a combination of trade and financial sanctions. This will not directly affect global growth, as Russia accounts for barely 2% of global GDP; but given the country's importance as a commodity exporter, its war in Ukraine will add to price pressures, which in turn will limit other central banks' room for manoeuvre. In most economies, monetary policy is constrained by inflationary pressures and fiscal policy is limited by high levels of public debt. Keeping the global economy on a reasonable growth track will require concerted action to fix the underlying problems. In addition to limiting pandemic-induced disruptions and managing geopolitical tensions, policymakers will need to consider more targeted measures – such as infrastructure investment – to boost long-term productivity rather than simply fortifying short-term demand. This will require domestic political will and concerted international cooperation, both of which remain in depressingly short supply.

*The writer is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution.*

©PROJECT SYNDICATE



Eswar Prasad

WHILE INDIA IS ENJOYING A SHARP ECONOMIC REBOUND, HIGH INFLATION AND RISING OIL PRICES COULD CRIMP GROWTH IF THEY PROVE PERSISTENT

#### End of an era

Sir, The passing away of music legend Prafulla Kar marked the end of an era. As a music composer, singer, and lyricist he has created many milestones and had a special place in the hearts of the people of Odisha. He was popularly known as Kamala Deshara Rajakumar for his immortal and unsurpassable lyrics. He enthralled thousands of Odias for over six decades with his immortal compositions. As patron of Odisha's rich culture and tradition, he has not only composed and sung film songs but soaked Odia people in devotion with hundreds of bhajans, Odissi ballets and Champu and Chhanda. He has recorded Odia Bhagabat, Chhanda, Krunthanjali (an album featuring visually impaired singers of Odisha), a collection of Gita Govinda of Jaydev rendered by Vani Jairam, and folk and light songs. A staunch devotee of Lord Jagannath he has composed hundreds of devotional songs. He was extremely fearless and did several experiments with music. He had the unique skill of turning literature into music and did it in films like ‘Mamata’, ‘Balidaan’, ‘Rama Balam’. For his astounding achievement he was conferred with Jaydev Samman, the highest film award of the state in 2004, Padma Shri award in 2015, Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanj Samman, the highest award of Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi and won state film awards six times. He also won best playback singer award for ‘Balidaan’ in 1978. Kar's pioneering contribution to Odia culture and music is highly praiseworthy. He was blessed with a multifaceted personality and his creativity was reflected in his works. Some of the movies in which Kar composed music are ‘Mamata’, ‘Batighara’, ‘Shesha Shrabana’, ‘Sindura Bindu’, ‘Bandhu Mahanti’, ‘Sati Anasuya’, ‘Balidaan’ and ‘Rama Balam’. He scored music for over 60 Odia and four Bengali movies.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, PANIKOILI

#### Expensive EMIs

Sir, The State Bank of India (SBI) raising the marginal cost of funds based lending rate (MCLR) could signal a period of rising lending rates and expensive loans. SBI revised its MCLR by 0.1 per cent across tenors, and other lenders like the Bank of Baroda, Axis Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank picked up the cue from India's biggest lender and hiked their MCLR by 0.05 per cent. The latest lending rate hike comes after a three-year gap, and more banks could follow suit.

NJ Ravi Chander, 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

**OrissaPOST**

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

national

of the day quote

Loudspeakers disturb hospitals and cause inconvenience to students, sick people and senior citizens

Now there is no land available for construction of the canal (SYL). Thinking of taking water from the canal to Haryana amounts to day dreaming

We decided to form district-level committees in both the states (Assam-Arunachal) to resolve the issue in a time-bound manner

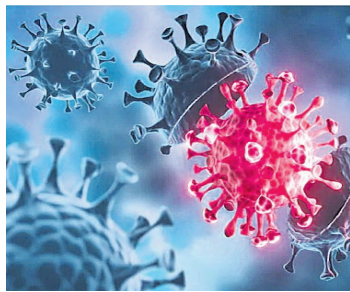
G-23 ignored as Cong discusses Kishor's proposals

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 20: The group of dissidents in the Congress - G-23 - seems to be upset after not being consulted for the ongoing discussions on the proposals given by political strategist Prashant Kishor as roadmap for the 2024 general elections.

'India's R-value crosses 1 for first time in 3 months'

An R-value of over 1 indicates that the number of active cases has increased. R should be contained below 1 to control the pandemic. An R number lower than 1 indicates that the disease will stop spreading as there aren't enough people being infected to sustain the outbreak



Uttar Pradesh, 1.04 for Karnataka, 1.70 for Haryana, 1.13 for Mumbai, 1.18 for Chennai and 1.04 for Bengaluru. Among the major states, Kerala and Maharashtra have an R-value less than 1, with values of 0.72 and 0.88 respectively.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: India's effective reproduction number (R) for Covid, an indicator of how quickly the infection is spreading, has increased to over one for the first time since January, estimates a researcher from Chennai's Institute of Mathematical Sciences.

'Massive solar flare may impact satellite communications, GPS'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: The Sun unleashed a massive solar flare Wednesday, with the potential to impact satellite communications and global positioning systems, the Centre of Excellence in Space Sciences India (CESSI) said.

Invitations for Bids Through e-Procurement. Office of the Superintending Engineer, Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No.IV, Nirman Soudha, Unit-V, Bhubaneswar. Includes details for building works and electrical contracts.

Pb Police books Kumar Vishwas, Alka Lamba

Chandigarh: The Punjab Police Wednesday visited homes of former AAP leader Kumar Vishwas and Alka Lamba of the Congress in connection with a case registered over "inflammatory statements" against Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal.

Soldier among 3 killed in accidents

Banihal/Jammu: Three people, including an army personnel, were killed and two others injured in separate road accidents in Samba, Ramban and Rajouri districts of Jammu and Kashmir Wednesday, officials said.

Delhi BJP leaders meet Amit Shah

New Delhi: A group of leaders from the BJP's Delhi unit Wednesday met Union Home Minister Amit Shah, on a day the North Delhi Municipal Corporation carried out an anti-encroachment drive in violence-hit Jahangirpuri which was stopped on a Supreme Court order.

Look at yourself (Congress), you are in a coma stage. You could not make your stand clear on the 'hijab' issue. I know your hidden agenda, which is soft Hindutva

H D KUMARASWAMY | FORMER CHIEF MINISTER OF KARNATAKA

TRAGIC ACT

An Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) has been booked for driving his car drunk and ramming it into an auto injuring three auto passengers, police here said Wednesday. ASI Surrender was booked at Pataudi Police Station and was later let out on bail, police said



JAHANGIRPURI DEMOLITION

Opposition says poor, minorities targeted

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: Bulldozers razing several structures in violence-hit Jahangirpuri during an anti-encroachment drive triggered political sparring on Wednesday with the Opposition alleging it was a demolition of India's constitutional values which targeted the poor and minorities and the BJP asserting it was a legal exercise which had nothing to do with religion.



Several concrete and temporary structures close to a mosque were brought down this morning as part of an anti-encroachment drive by the BJP-ruled civic body, days after the northwest Delhi neighbourhood was rocked by communal violence. The Supreme Court had to intervene twice to stop the drive after it took cognizance of a petition filed by Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind against the demolition.

was a legal exercise which had nothing to do with religion. CPI(M) Politburo member Brinda Karat visited the demolition site earlier with a physical copy of the Supreme Court order and urged the civic staff to stop the demolition instantly. She stood in front of a bulldozer blocking its way. Karat, who received a lot of accolades on social media for trying to physically stop the bulldozer, also met Delhi Police officials present at the site.

THE KARUR VYSYA BANK LTD., Asset Recovery Branch (ARB) - Kolkata. Includes details for various property auctions and bank services.

Capital Region Urban Transport Plot No. 548/1452, Patia, Kalarahanga, Bhubaneswar - 751024, Odisha. Invitations for Bids (IFB) for construction and electrical works.

PANCHAYAT SAMITI OFFICE, LATHIKATA, DIST.- SUNDARGARH No. 1379/Dev. Date: 16.04.2022. Invitations for Bids for construction and electrical works.

EAST COAST RAILWAY File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/22-23/E-Tender/05 Dt. 18.04.2022. Includes details for platform renewal, raising of platform, and new works.

# 'Strong Centre-state relations needed to attract investments'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, April 20:** Even the inaugural session of the Bengal Global Business Summit (BGBS)-2022, here Wednesday, could not totally overcome the shadow of the different issue-based spats between the Union and state governments.

Delivering his address at the inaugural session of BGBS-2022, the annual event to showcase the state as an ideal investment destination, the state Governor reminded of the need for a joint initiative by the Union and state government to work for the economic development of the state by attracting new investments.

Stressing on the need for development bonhomie, the Governor reminded that what industrialists are looking for before investment is political stability and rule of law in a state government. He said this while the Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was sitting on the same dais.

Political observers feel that these comments by the Governor were subtle reminders of the recent incidents of violence and law & order issues in the state. BGBS started in

2015 and this is the sixth edition of the annual event, which is happening again after a gap of two years. In 2019 and 2020, the event was not conducted because of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown situation.

Speaking on the occasion, the Governor also said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Lok East, Act East policy has opened tremendous growth potential for the eastern states of the country especially for West Bengal.

"The Prime Minister wants security and development for all. West Bengal has tremendous advantages like geographical location, ample availability of raw materials and skilled manpower. What we need is accommodating opposite views since opposite views often prove to be right," he said.

According to a statement issued by West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation (WBIDC), a total of 250 business representatives from 19 countries are present on the occasion. The popular names from the Indian industries present include, Gautam Adani, Niranjan Hiranandani, Sajjan Jindal and Sanjiv Goenka among others.



Preparations for Bengal Global Business Summit (BGBS) 2022 at Biswa Bangla Convention Centre, in Kolkata P11 PHOTO

# Mamata's 'central agency' jibe creates political ripples



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, April 20:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee urging Governor Jagdeep Dhankar to ensure that industrialists are not disturbed by central agencies created political ripples in the state Wednesday.

Addressing the inaugural session of the Bengal Global Business Summit (BGBS) 2022 here, Banerjee said, "I want to tell the honourable Governor that we are all ready to cooperate with the Union government to ensure economic development of the state and the country."

"But I would also like to request the honourable Governor to take the matter with the Union government so that we receive central assistance. At the same time, the

industrialists should not be disturbed through any central agency."

Soon after Banerjee made the remarks, political reactions started pouring in from the opposition leaders, with most slamming the Chief Minister for her comments made at a business summit.

State BJP chief and Lok Sabha MP Sukanta Majumdar said that the business summit was not the ideal platform for the Chief Minister to make such a political comment. Such comments send wrong signals to the business fraternity. She publicly referred to the industrialists being disturbed. Did she actually refer to her party colleagues and family members who are under the lens of the central probe agencies, he added.

The Union government is al-

ways ready to cooperate with the state government on the issue of economic development. But the Chief Minister must first ensure an atmosphere of peace sans law and order issues in the state. If not, no industrialist would invest in the state, Majumdar said.

CPI(M) central committee member Sujan Chakraborty accused the Chief Minister of using all platforms to convey her political views.

Here she indirectly referred to the industrialists to hint at the ongoing central agency inquiries in the state, he said.

State Congress President and senior party MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury slammed both the Governor and the Chief Minister for allegedly using the business summit dais for airing their own political views.

Such comments by the executive and constitutional heads of the state do not send the right signal about the image of the state, Chowdhury said.

Defending Banerjee for her remarks, Trinamool General Secretary and spokesman Kunal Ghosh said that the Chief Minister has rightly pointed out that whenever any industrialist shows eagerness to invest in the state, he/she is harassed by different central agencies.

So she rightly requested the Governor to look into the matter, Ghosh said.

# Now, Ansar Sheikh's political affiliations start a row in Bengal

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, April 20:** Even as in Delhi, the AAP and BJP spar over the political affiliations of Ansar Sheikh, a prime accused in the violence in the capital's Jahangirpuri area, a similar debate has kicked off in West Bengal, as state BJP leaders allege that Sheikh is a close associate of the ruling Trinamool Congress.

The Trinamool, however, denies that Sheikh was involved with the party in any way.

Leader of Opposition in Assembly, Suwendu Adhikari claims that Sheikh was not only a close associate of Trinamool leadership in East Midnapore district, but also associated in an attack on his vehicle May 2, 2021 immediately after the 2021 West Bengal Assembly elections.

"After I got elected from Nandigram assembly constituency, where I defeated the Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee, there was an attack on my vehicle in Haldia, where Sheikh has his own residence. Sheikh was part of the Trinamool Congress gang who were behind that attack," he claimed.

Adhikari's statement came on a day when a team of the Delhi Police is already in Haldia and adjacent Mashishadal to collect more information about Sheikh and Sheikh Aslam, the two accused behind the Jahangirpuri violence.

While a luxurious mansion

owned by Sheikh is located at Haldia, the prime industrial township in East Midnapore, Aslam is a resident of Kanchanpur village under the Mahishadal police station.

However, the local Trinamool leadership has denied any association of either Ansar Sheikh or Aslam with the party's district unit.

Adhikari also alleged that Trinamool has made West Bengal a supply hub of terrorists throughout the country and also demanded that the Union government should immediately step to cut off the supply line.

In Haldia, people knew Sheikh as a successful trader dealing in the scrap iron business. His longest stay in Haldia at a time was between the middle of 2020 and the beginning of 2021, or during the Covid-19 pandemic period. However, even after that he used to frequent Haldia.

On the other hand, Aslam was known in the locality as a carpenter who went to Delhi five to six months back to earn his livelihood. Sheikh had been the key person behind Aslam's move.

On April 16, communal clashes broke out between two groups of people during a Shobha Yatra procession on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanti in Delhi's Jahangirpuri area. As many as eight police personnel and a civilian sustained injuries in the violence. Delhi Police Sunday arrested 35-year-old Sheikh, for alleged conspiracy behind the communal clashes, an official said.



# CPI-M welcomes newfound Mamata-Dhankar bonhomie

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, April 20:** CPI-M central committee member Sujan Chakraborty Wednesday welcomed the newfound bonhomie between Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Governor Jagdeep Dhankar at the inauguration of the Bengal Global Business Summit (BGBS) here and said they should not resort to theatrics of confrontation.

Chakraborty alleged that the law and order in the state has deteriorated severely and demanded that the police minister should resign immediately. Banerjee holds the home (police) portfolio.

"The chief minister in her address (at BGBS) was full of praise for the governor and vice versa. We want the newfound bonhomie

to continue. Why do they resort to theatrics of confrontation and mislead people," the CPI(M) leader said at a press conference here. Banerjee and Dhankar have been at loggerheads over various issues since he took over as the state's governor in July 2019.

She means to tell the industrialists that if they invest in Bengal then the central agencies may harass them. It is a political statement, not a statement meant for the industry. It is like inviting someone to dinner and then telling the person to see to it that the food is not poisoned, he said. Claiming that this edition of BGBS will not bring in the much needed investments to the state as was the case in the previous five (editions), Chakraborty said the chief minister is making such statements only to hide these facts.

# SP leader quits party, says Akhilesh ignoring Muslims

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Saharanpur (UP), April 20:** The Samajwadi Party, Wednesday, suffered yet another jolt when senior leader Sikandar Ali resigned from the party and all posts, accusing party chief Akhilesh Yadav of turning a blind eye towards Muslims.

Ali told reporters, "Atrocities are being heaped on Muslim leaders in SP, but the party president is maintaining a studied silence. The situation within the party has become stifling."

He said that the SP had won 111 seats on the strength of Muslim votes, but Akhilesh had refused to utter a word on action being taken against leaders like Nahid Hasan



and Shazil Islam.

"If Akhilesh Yadav cannot stand up for a senior leader and MLA, how can he be expected to stand up for ordinary members of our community," he asked.

He further alleged that Akhilesh was surrounded by a coterie and is completely disconnected with party workers at the ground level.

Sikandar Ali is not the first Muslim leader in the Samajwadi

Party who has raised a voice against Akhilesh.

Earlier, SP MP Shafiqur Rehman Barq had claimed that Akhilesh Yadav had stopped working for Muslims.

Samajwadi Party leader, Salman Javed Raean then tendered his resignation from the party in protest against the alleged apathy of the party leadership towards the Muslim community.

The SP leader from Sultanpur further added that if a coward leader could not raise the voice in support of his party men, how he could be expected to raise people's issues.

The SP leader from Rampur, Naveen Sharma, has also quit the SP in support of Azam Khan.

# Special puja to bring down lemon prices



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Varanasi, April 20:** A special puja was organised at the Maa Adishakti temple in Varanasi to control the rising prices of lemon. The puja was held at the temple which is also known as a centre of 'black magic', and 11 lemons were 'sacrificed' to appease the Goddess. Harish Mishra, who organised the puja, said that the 'tantra puja' has the power to fulfil wishes and he was confident that the prices of lemon would come down within days. He denied that indulging in black magic was wrong if it was not designed to harm anyone. "In fact, this puja was for the welfare of all consumers of lemon," he said.

# UP gears up to check Cov resurgence

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, April 20:** Amid the rising cases of Covid across India once again, the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh is making renewed efforts to expand the healthcare facilities across the state.

Adopting a proactive and multifaceted approach to nullify the spread of deadly infection, the state government has urged people

to stay cautious and adhere to the Covid protocols.

The state government, according to the government spokesman, has set up as many as 6,700 Paediatric ICUs. While addressing a high-level meeting Wednesday, the chief minister said, "In 2016-17, there were only 150 PICU beds in the state, and today as many as 6,700 PICUs have been established. Uttar Pradesh has become self-reliant as it has established 206 labs and

multiple oxygen production units. There has been a 2.5-fold increase in Liquid Medical Oxygen and an eight-fold increase in PSA (Pressure Swing Adsorption)."

He has also directed the officials to make a strategy for setting up an e-hospital in Uttar Pradesh and it should be made functional within two years.

Uttar Pradesh will also be the first state in India to have a live emergency monitoring system. In this regard, the chief minister has asked his officials to make preparations for a mobile app-based digital platform and command call centre to make its execution smooth.

An action plan should be made to add five new courses - OT Technician, Radiotherapy Technician, Anesthesia Technician, Dialysis Technician, and MRI Technician for the skill development of paramedical staff.



# Yogi govt to expand range, quality of Khadi

State government will take the help of eminent fashion designers of the country and NIFT to turn Khadi into a fashion statement



of Khadi by making shoes, bags and fancy purses.

According to the government spokesman, the state government will take the help of eminent fashion designers of the country and its related organisations (NIFT) to turn Khadi into a fashion statement.

For this, Khadi will modernise the technology of production centres to improve the quality of yarn.

Solar Charkhas will also be distributed on a large scale.

Those who will be given these charkhas will also be given the training to operate them. Overall, the department has set a target of distributing 5,000 solar charkhas in the next five years. This will not only improve the quality of the threads but also increase production.

At present, there are 14 government centres of Khadi in differ-

ent districts of the state. The old looms of these centres will soon be replaced by new solar looms. The government has also prepared a complete action plan in this regard for the next five years.

According to the new action plan, under Pandit Deendayal Khadi Marketing Development Assistance Scheme (MDA), 25,000 farmers and weavers will be benefited in the next five years. It is expected that

these efforts of the government will increase the demand for Khadi.

In order to increase the demand, the government will also emphasise marketing along with making Khadi in line with fashion by increasing the range. For this, the products of Khadi and Village Industries will be linked to the e-commerce platform.

Navneet Sehgal, additional chief secretary, Khadi and Village Industries said, "Khadi and village industries are an area of potential. With it being eco-friendly, the industry associated with it can be set up with minimum structure, with less capital and less risk. It is the most employable sector at the local level in terms of capital. Most of the women do the work of making yarn. Therefore, by making them self-sufficient, this mission is also helpful in empowering them."

# Ayodhya to be a climate smart city

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, April 20:** Ayodhya will now be developed as a 'climate smart city' with focus on renewable energy.

The Uttar Pradesh urban development department is all set to commence work on a Greenfield township based on Vedic theme within a few weeks.

A presentation on immediate, short-term and long-term action plans was made before Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and a group of ministers Tuesday night.

According to the government spokesman, a 1200-acre wide Greenfield township based on Vedic theme has been proposed to meet the demand of people looking forward to staying in a self-sustainable township.

A detailed project report in this regard has been prepared.

The state government expects

a massive surge in tourist footfall once the Ram temple is completed.

The chief minister asked officials to speed up development of the holy city so that it can be ready even before the Ram temple is completed.

Urban development Minister AK Sharma asked officials to ensure that the township in Ayodhya was based on renewable energy so as to turn it into a 'climate smart city'.

Besides, the urban development department is also planning to re-plant the Kukrail reserve forest in Lucknow and make it more attractive for tourists.

The chief minister, during the presentation, asked officials to ensure housing for all, including the homeless, nomads, extremely poor families and marginalised segments, as it was one of the key points in the BJP's manifesto.





Modi ji, stagflation is looming. Power cuts will crush small industries, leading to more job losses. Switch off the bulldozers of hate and switch on the power plants RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

WHO CHIEF GETS GUJARATI NAME

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday gave a new name - 'Tulsi-bhai' -- to Director General of the World Health Organization Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus at his request. The Tulsi plant ('holy basil' or Ocimum tenuiflorum) has been an integral part of India's spiritual heritage, the prime minister said, speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the three-day Global Ayush Investment and Innovation Summit



of the day quote

There is a need to take some legal course with regard to the forest related issues. Hence, I am convening a special meeting on this in the first week of May. It is not only related to Shivamogga but also Chikkagaluru, Hassan, Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Uttara Kannada and Kodagu BASAVARAJU BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CM

People in power should stop attempts to foment violence and condemn it. But just the opposite is happening. I have heard that the PM is calling MPs from Rajasthan and asking them what they were doing. The Prime Minister or home minister should take decisions in national interest while taking my criticism in a positive way ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

BJP has declared war against the poorest. In the name of encroachment it's going to destroy homes in Delhi like UP & MP. No notice, no opportunity to go to court, simply punishing poor Muslims for daring to stay alive ASADUDDIN OWAISSI | AIMIM PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Mutilated body of teenager found

Patna: The mutilated body of a teenager was found in Bihar's Bhagalpur district Wednesday. The deceased, Jitendra Mandal(17), a native of Lalu Chak under Nathnagar police station in the district, had gone missing April 16. In a complaint to police, the deceased's father Gauri Mandal stated that a person named Sunil Kumar had come to their house and Jitendra left with him.

Gurugram: Fake call centre busted

Gurugram: Gurugram police busted a fake call centre on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday and arrested 11 employees of the alleged call centre. According to the police, acting on a tip-off, a joint team of Sector-40 and cybercrime police stations raided a call centre running in South City Phase-1 and arrested 11 persons, who used to allegedly cheat residents of the US and Canada.

Sasikala to be grilled

Chennai: A special team of the Tamil Nadu Police will be questioning AIADMK's former interim General Secretary, VK Sasikala in the Kodanad murder and heist case Thursday, officials said. The 906-acre estate was jointly owned by late Chief Minister and AIADMK chief J. Jayalalitha and her aide Sasikala, and the murder and heist case took place April 24, 2017, four months after the passing away of J Jayalalitha and the arrest of Sasikala. According to the charge sheet, C Kanagaraj, who was once the driver of Jayalalitha, hatched a conspiracy to break open the Kodanad estate as he believed that huge money was stashed in the estate bungalow. On April 23, 2017, a gang of ten people, led by him, broke into the estate and killed guard, Om Bahadur while another guard Krishna Thapa was beaten and tied.

Naidu turns 72

Amaravati: As he turned 72 Wednesday, former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu is gearing up for another electoral battle in his long chequered career. Nearly three years after suffering his worst-ever electoral defeat, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) chief appears to be down but not out as he looks to infuse new energy into the party for the 2024 poll battle.

Delhi brings face masks back

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 20: In view of a spike in coronavirus cases in the national capital, the Delhi government Wednesday decided to make the wearing of masks mandatory again in public places and impose a fine of ₹500 in case of a violation.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), which also decided not to shut schools and come up with separate Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in consultation with experts for them.

Lt Governor Anil Bajjal in a series of tweets shared details of the DDMA meeting and said, "it was decided to make the wearing of masks mandatory in public places." The government is expected to issue an official order regarding the mandatory use of masks soon.

The DDMA meeting emphasised strict enforcement of the SOPs for schools by the school management concerned.

"In the larger interest of students, in case of non-compliance or violation of SOPs, a penalty as deemed appropriate should be imposed for creating a deterrent effect," Bajjal tweeted.

Officials said authorities have been asked to keep a close watch on social gatherings and ramp up testing in the national capital.

They said Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is closely monitoring the situation and instructions have been issued to officials to ensure the implementation of steps to check the spread of the virus and preparations for the treatment of Covid patients. In the DDMA meeting, emphasis was also laid on early vaccination of eligible groups as it will help keep in check the impact of the pandemic, officials said. Several participants asserted



FOURTH WAVE FEARS

- The Delhi Disaster Management Authority also reintroduced a fine of ₹500 for violation of the mask rule
Fine on not wearing a mask was lifted by the Delhi government April 2 after the decline in Covid cases in the city
Schools will continue in offline mode but they will have to ensure that Covid protocols are strictly followed failing which a penalty may be imposed for creating a deterrent effect, DDMA said
India has been witnessing a surge in the virus graph over the past few days, with experts attributing the uptick to dilution of the mask rule, reopening of schools and increased social and economic activities

that there was no need to panic since the number of hospitalisations was low despite a rise in Covid cases, they said. It was highlighted that the trends of hospitalisation needed to be closely monitored for the next fortnight as well as conducting genome sequencing of all positive samples, put through the RTPCR test.

It was also decided to increase the number of tests being done with the focus on people with symptoms, they said. The DDMA meeting, chaired by Bajjal, was also attended by Kejriwal, Deputy CM Manish Sisodia, and other top officials and experts. The LG advised all the

agencies to remain vigilant and work in coordination to tackle the situation as it emerges. According to official figures, there are 9,735 beds for Covid patients in Delhi hospitals and just 80 (0.82 per cent) of them were occupied.

The health department said 632 fresh cases were reported on Tuesday and the positivity rate was 4.42 per cent. The number of daily Covid-19 cases in Delhi had touched the record high of 28,867 January 13 this year during the third wave of the pandemic. The positivity rate had soared to 30.6 per cent on January 14, the highest during the third wave.

India may miss '30 renewable energy targets as UP, Pb, Haryana lag: Experts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: India is falling behind on delivering the targets of increasing its non-fossil energy capacity to 175 gigawatts by 2022 and 500 GW by 2030 as many states, including Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana are lagging on this front, climate and energy experts said Wednesday.

The comments were made during a webinar held by Climate Trends, a Delhi-based climate communications initiative, on how the northern power grid can accelerate the transition and help India meet its 2030 Glasgow commitments while contributing to limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The webinar was held close on the heels of the release of the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC)'s Working Group III report on Mitigation recently.

"We are falling behind on delivering the targets of 175GW by 2022 and 500 GW by 2030 because while some states are on track others are lagging," said Aditya Lolla, Senior Electricity Policy Analyst for Asia at energy think tank Ember.

He said in the southern region, Telangana has achieved its renewable energy target and in the north, only Rajasthan is ahead and has achieved its 2022 target.

"But there are states like Uttar Pradesh which have not even achieved 30 per cent of their target. If I compare these two states, both have a 14 GW target for 2022. While Rajasthan has achieved 17GW currently, Uttar Pradesh is lagging at 4GW," Lolla said. The story is similar in Uttarakhand (1 GW), Punjab (2GW) and Haryana (1GW).

'Hubballi violence was pre-planned'



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hubballi (Karnataka), April 20: The preliminary investigation into the Hubballi violence has revealed that it was pre-planned, police sources said Wednesday.

A violent mob outside the police station sought the beheading of a youth, who had put up an objectionable post in social media. The mob shouted slogans that called for violence, like "What is the punishment for the guilty" and "Beheading is the only punishment for the guilty."

The mob allegedly raised pro-Pakistan and ISI slogans during the protest, according to police sources. The police said that the gathering of more than 2,000 people in a span of 20 minutes, and the loads of stones found at the scene of crime provide enough evidence to prove that the violence was organised.

Meanwhile, a special team has been sent to Hyderabad to nab accused Moulvi Wasim Pathan and eight others, who climbed on police vehicles and instigated the mob to indulge in violence. The police have arrested 10 more accused persons in connection with the violence taking the total number to 103.

The police have collected videos which reveal the planning for the violence that happened April 16 in the commercial hub of north Karnataka

have been handed over to judicial custody and all of them have been shifted to Kalaburagi prison. A total of 12 cases have been registered by the police regarding the violence.

After the surfacing of an objectionable post, the police had taken the youth into their custody. Within 20 minutes, about 2,000 gathered near the police station demanding the police to hand over the youth to them. After the police foiled their attempts to barge inside the police station, the mob indulged in violence and resorted to stone pelting on Saturday night.

Including a sub-inspector, 12 persons were injured in the incident. Police vehicles, buses, and temples were targeted. The arrested persons were found to be residents of the local area. The police suspected that the message was given to them to gather outside the police station. Presently, prohibitory orders are clamped in Hubballi city.

NO RESPITE



A woman covers herself and a child on a hot summer day in Mathura PTI PHOTO

ANDHRA PRADESH SHOCKER

Over 70 arrested for rape of minor girl pushed into flesh trade

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati, April 20: Andhra Pradesh Police have arrested over 70 persons in connection with the rape of a minor girl during the last eight months.

According to police, the 74 persons arrested include kingpins of a prostitution racket, pimps and customers. Guntur police are on the lookout for six other accused and one of them is stated to be in London.

As many as 35 prostitution organisers were among those arrested. Additional Superintendent of Police K. Supraja said the girl was purchased by several gangs who took her to various districts in Andhra Pradesh and neighbouring Telangana where she was forced



into prostitution. The victim was sent to different brothels in the two Telugu states.

The main accused in the case is Swarna Kumari, who had befriended the girl at a hospital where the latter's mother was undergoing treatment for Covid-19 in June 2021. After the girl's mother died, Swarna Kumari took her away to

The 13-year-old victim from Guntur district was pushed into prostitution by a woman, who had adopted her after she lost her mother to Covid last year

look after her without her father's permission. The woman later forced the victim into prostitution.

The girl's father lodged a missing complaint with the police in August. The first arrest was made in January and since then the police intensified the investigation and during the last few days, the maximum number of accused were arrested.

India-Vietnam flights to resume April 29

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: Four new flight routes between India and Vietnam were inaugurated Wednesday by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, who is on a three-day visit to the Southeast Asian country.

Birla and Vietnam's National Assembly Chairman Vuong Dinh Hue not only restored the direct air

services between the two countries that were suspended in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, but also inaugurated air services on new routes, the Lok Sabha Secretary said in a statement.

Before the outbreak of the pandemic, Vietnamese airlines VietJet was operating regular flights from Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City to New Delhi.

However, these services were suspended after the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. These flights have now been resumed during Birla's visit to Vietnam, the statement said.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, Vietjet said it will now operate six flights between India and Vietnam in a phased manner starting April 29.

India gets its 6th Scorpene-class submarine 'INS Vagsheer'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 20: The Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders here on Wednesday launched INS Vagsheer, the last of the six submarines under Project 75.

The submarine was launched by Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar. Post-launch, the submarine will undergo a comprehensive and rigorous set of tests and trials for more than a year to ensure that it is fully combat-worthy, Kumar said.

Interacting with reporters, Kumar said the submarine was launched before its scheduled unveiling. "The submarine also increases the country's marine se-

curity, but it is also an example of self-reliance," Kumar said.

An MDL official said with every submarine the indigenisation component has seen an increase. In the case of Vagsheer, it is 40 per cent, it added.

Kumar said the government has taken an important decision of building a diesel engine with the help of the defence industry through the Make-1 process.

He was referring to Project-75 (I) which envisages indigenous construction of six modern conventional submarines (including associated shore support, engineering support package, training and spares package) with contempo-



Even after a ship/submarine is decommissioned, a new ship/submarine replaces the old one with the same name

rary equipment, weapons and sensors including Fuel-Cell based AIP (Air Independent Propulsion Plant), advanced torpedoes, modern mis-

siles and state of the art counter-measure systems.

This would provide a major boost to the indigenous design and con-

BOOST TO NAVY

Named after sandfish, a deadly deep water sea predator of the Indian Ocean, the first submarine 'Vagsheer' was commissioned in December 1974

It was decommissioned in April 1997

The new submarine is the incarnation of its earlier version, as according to naval parlance a ship never ceases to exist

struction capability of submarines in India, in addition to bringing in the latest submarine design and technologies as part of the proj-

ect. "For the first time, a marine diesel engine will be made in India. The industry partner will get a grant of up to 70 per cent," Kumar said.

In November 2020, the Navy commissioned the fourth submarine under Project-75.

In February, the sea trials for the fifth submarine, INS Vagir, commenced.

Speaking at the function, Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, Flag Officer CnC, Western Naval Command, said so far four submarines have been commissioned under the Project-75 -- INS Kalvari, INS Khanderao and INS Karang, and INS Vela- have already been commissioned.

# international



In Borodianka. Like Bucha and too many other towns in Ukraine. History will not forget the war crimes that have been committed here. There can be no peace without justice

CHARLES MICHEL | EU CHIEF

## WALL OF FLAMES

Heavy winds kicked up a towering wall of flames outside a northern Arizona tourist town Tuesday, ripping through two-dozen structures and sending residents of more than 700 homes scrambling to flee. Coconino County officials said that 766 homes and 1,000 animals had been evacuated



## of the day quote

The country is drowning in debt but we have to take its boat to the shore. We have to struggle with challenges like poverty, unemployment and inflation as the previous government failed miserably in its fight against hardships

SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PM, PAKISTAN

Taiwan is a part of China and no one can change that. If the Taiwan issue were not handled properly, it would have a damaging impact on Sino-US relations

WEI FENGHE | DEFENSE MINISTER, CHINA

I emphasised the need for international support for returning calm to Jerusalem. Israel will not tolerate calls in support of violence

YAIR LAPID | FOREIGN MINISTER, ISRAEL

## TOWN UNDER CURFEW

# Anti-govt stirs turn violent in SL

Sri Lanka's economic meltdown began after the coronavirus pandemic torpedoed vital revenue from tourism and remittances. The country is short of dollars to finance even the most important essentials, including food, fuel and medicines

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Rambukkana, April 20: Police enforced a curfew Wednesday in a Sri Lankan town where an anti-government demonstrator was killed, a death that triggered international condemnation just as the crisis-hit country seeks an IMF bailout.

Huge protests have demanded the government's resignation, including



I was hit with a baton on my leg and hand. I begged the cops not to beat me, but they didn't listen. People are angry. We are all poor people fighting for basics

VASANTHA KUMARA | LOCAL CHEF

the Tuesday blockade of a key highway and railway line on the day Sri Lanka's main petrol retailer announced another sudden price

rise. Police dispersed the crowd in the town of Rambukkana with tear gas and a volley of live rounds that left a 42-year-old father of two dead, with nearly 30 others wounded in the confrontation.

Authorities extended the curfew in Rambukkana, around 95 kilometres (60 miles) east of the capital Colombo, into Wednesday with shops closed through the morning.

Spent bullet cartridges littered the road hours after the previous evening's protest, which saw thousands of people blocking rail tracks and the highway to the central city of Kandy.

President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said he was "deeply saddened" by the police shooting and promised the public's right to peacefully protest against his government would not be hindered.

Tuesday's incident was the first fatal clash since widespread anti-government protests began this month. At least 29 people, including 11 police officers, were wounded in Rambukkana, according to official figures.

IMF TALKS Sri Lanka opened talks with the International Monetary Fund in Washington this week after announcing an unprecedented de-

## Blow to Rajapaksa as 3 MPs quit

Colombo: Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who is under pressure to resign, was dealt a further blow Wednesday when three more parliamentarians withdrew their support to the government.

Earlier this month, 39 lawmakers out of 156 MPs pulled their support to Rajapaksa in the 225-member Parliament. The break-away group, which sits independently, has declared not to align with any other coalition, including the Opposition.

The independent group demands the formation of an all-party interim government with the resignation of the Rajapaksa family from power.

Sri Lanka Muslim Council (SLMC) MP Paizal Cassim informed Parliament that he along with MPs Ishak Rahuman and M S Thowfeek will withdraw their support to the government.

The three MPs were part of the opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) coalition, including from the SLMC.

They had been Rajapaksa's allies



since 2020 and voted for the controversial 20A which conferred absolute power on the President.

A heated exchange erupted Wednesday morning when Parliament Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardana denied a claim by main Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa that the Speaker told the party leaders that Rajapaksa was ready to resign if all party leaders requested him to do so.

Abeywardana, a member of the ruling coalition, said it was a misinterpretation by Premadasa. However, the main Opposition leader stood by his statement calling Abeywardana a liar.

# JOHNSON TO OFFER INDIA A RUSSIAN ALTERNATIVE

REUTERS

London, April 20: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will offer to help India cut reliance on Russian oil and defence equipment when he begins a two-day visit this week that will test his diplomatic skills and provide brief respite from a row raging at home.

On his first trip to India as prime minister, starting Thursday, Johnson will discuss strengthening security co-operation in meetings with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a spokesperson for the British leader said.

In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Western allies have called for India to speak out against the war. India, which is



the world's biggest buyer of Russia's weapons and imports its oil, abstained in a United Nations vote condemning the invasion and has not imposed sanctions on Moscow.

US President Joe Biden told Modi earlier this month that buying more oil from Russia was not in India's interest. Johnson will not lecture Modi on the matter, his

spokesperson said.

Uday Bhaskar, a director at the Society For Policy Studies in New Delhi, said the Indian government would listen carefully to Johnson's message if it was made respectfully, but there was little Britain could do in practice to replace Russia as a strategic ally.

"The problem is Britain can't solve India's dependence on Russia. It doesn't have enough oil or the right type of military equipment to sell," Bhaskar said.

Even though India has grown closer to the West in recent years, the country still depends on Russia for more than half its supply of weapons amid a Himalayan border standoff with China and perennial tensions with Pakistan.

# Pak women's varsity bans smartphone

It has been observed that students use extensive social media applications during university timings which affects their education, behaviour, and performance. Therefore, it is directed that students should not use mobile phones during university timings, the notification read

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, April 20: Women University Swabi, located in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan has imposed a ban on the use of smartphones for all students, Samaa TV reported.



According to a notification issued by the provost of the university Smart phones/touch screen mobile or tablets will not be allowed in the premises of Women University Swabi with effect from April 20, 2022 (Wednesday).

It has been observed that students use extensive social media applications during university timings which affects their education,

behaviour, and performance. Therefore, it is directed that students should not use mobile phones during university timings, the notification read.

In case of any violation, however, the university will take strict action against students and a fine of Rs 5,000 would be imposed.

Universities across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa often impose strict

restrictions on female students, including dress codes and hair styles.

Last year in May, Peshawar University instructed the students to follow the new dress code and wear their chest cards at all times.

According to university officials, the dress code will ensure that students wear similar-looking clothes when they come to the campus.

On January 9, 2021 the Hazara University in Mansehra told women to wear 'shalwar kameez', along with a 'dupatta', 'chador', or 'abaya'. Heavy make-up, jewellery, and expensive handbags were banned under the new rules.

Men were told to wear either formal eastern or western attire. Students cannot wear cut, torn, or skin-fitted jeans, shorts, slippers, and accessories like earrings and chains.

The varsity made simple, formal hair and beard styles mandatory, Samaa TV reported.

# New deadline for Ukrainian army to surrender Mariupol



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

Russia's nearly eight-week-long invasion has taken longer than many expected while still failing to capture any of the biggest cities, forcing Moscow to refocus in and around separatist regions

REUTERS

Kyiv, April 20: Russia told Ukrainian fighters still holding out in Mariupol to give up Wednesday as it pushed for a decisive victory in its new eastern offensive, prompting Western governments to pledge more military help to Kyiv.

Thousands of Russian troops backed by artillery and rocket barrages were advancing in what Ukrainian officials called the Battle of the Donbas. Earlier, they seized the city of Kremenna.

Russia was hitting the Azovstal steel plant, the main remaining stronghold in Mariupol, with bunker-buster bombs, a Ukrainian presidential adviser said late Tuesday.

"The world watches the murder of children online and remains silent," adviser Mykhailo Podolyak wrote on Twitter.

After an earlier ultimatum to surrender lapsed and as midnight approached, Russia's defence ministry said not a single Ukrainian soldier had laid down their weapons and it renewed the pro-

## Refugees top 5mn

Prague: The number of people fleeing Ukraine to escape Russia's invasion has passed 5 million in Europe's worst refugee crisis since the end of World War Two, UN refugee agency said Wednesday. Russia's invasion has triggered a massive displacement of people in the nearly eight weeks since it began, including more than 7 million Ukrainians within the country. UN data showed that 5.03 million had fled Ukraine as of Wednesday. Most have crossed to the European Union through border points in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania where volunteers and governments have scrambled to help the mostly women and children refugees find jobs, accommodation and to provide them support.

posal. Ukrainian commanders have vowed not to surrender.

"Russia's armed forces, based purely on humanitarian principles, again propose that the fighters of national battalions and foreign mercenaries cease their military operations from 1400 Moscow time on 20th April and lay down arms," the Russian Defence Ministry said.

The United States, Canada and Britain said they would send more artillery weaponry.

"We will continue to provide them more ammunition, as we will provide them more military assistance," White House spokesperson Jen Psaki said, adding that new sanctions were being prepared.

## SURREAL SPRING



A child poses under petals falling from a cherry blossom tree in Greenwich Park in London, Britain

REUTERS

# Shanghai allows 4mn out of homes as virus curbs ease

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, April 20: Shanghai allowed 4 million more people out of their homes Wednesday as anti-virus controls that shut down China's biggest city eased.

A total of almost 12 million people in the city of 25 million are allowed to go outdoors following the first round of easing last week, health official Wu Ganyu said at a news conference. Wu said the virus was "under effective control" for the first time in some parts of the city.



Under the latest changes, more than 4 million people are included in areas where the status shifted from closed to controlled, said Wu. He said some are not allowed to leave their neighborhoods and large gatherings are prohibited.

China's case numbers in its latest infection surge are relatively low, but the ruling party is enforcing a "zero-COVID" strategy that has shut down major cities to isolate every case.

Wednesday, the government reported 19,927 new cases in China's mainland, all but 2,761 of which had no symptoms. Shanghai accounted for 95% of the total, or 18,902 cases, of which 2,495 had symptoms.

The Shanghai city health agency reported seven people who had Covid-19 died Tuesday but said the deaths were due to cancer, heart disease and other ailments. All but two were over 60.

# business



Our per capita income is approximately \$2,000. India is a lower middle income country. Our aspiration should be to become a high-income country by 2047 and this would need sustained growth year after year  
AMITABH KANT | CEO, NITI AAYOG

## NISSAN PULLS THE PLUG ON DATSUN

Japanese auto major Nissan Wednesday said it is discontinuing Datsun brand in India, nine years after the company kicked off the marque's global relaunch in the country. Having failed in its ambitious global relaunch of Datsun, Nissan had in 2020 discontinued the brand in Russia and Indonesia



## of the day quote

I can assure you from my own experience and my engagements with large sections of industry across the board confirms that rupee devaluation or weakening our currency is actually detrimental to our nation's interest, to our growth story and to our ability to be competitive in the long run  
PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

I think there are many opportunities and growth (in India is coming back). There's a recovery. There's a lot of excitement around new growth opportunities, new developments  
TOBIAS ADRIAN | FINANCIAL COUNSELOR AND DIRECTOR, IMF

We are thrilled to have added e-vehicles as a step towards our journey of achieving 50 per cent electric fleet in the last-mile by 2025  
TA KRISHNAN | CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, ECOM EXPRESS

# Jio becomes 2nd largest fixed-line service provider

Reliance Jio is now behind only BSNL which has over 75.76 lakh wireline customers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: Telecom operator Reliance Jio has taken a lead over Bharti Airtel to become the country's second largest fixed-line service provider in February 2022, according to data published by the sector regulator Trai. Reliance Jio wireline subscriber base reached over 58.85 lakh while Bharti Airtel recorded a customer



base of more than 57.66 lakh in February, according to subscriber report of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India released Tuesday. Reliance Jio led the wireline telephony growth by adding 2.44 lakh customers in February. Bharti Airtel came second in the segment by adding 91,243 new users. Vodafone Idea added 24,948 cus-

tomers, Quadrant 18,622 and Tata Teleservices 3,772. The government-owned BSNL and MTNL, which jointly have a 49.5 per cent share in the segment, lost 49,074 and 21,900 fixed-line customers, respectively. The growth trend in wireline

subscriber base, which picked up after the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, is gaining momentum with private telecom operators driving the growth in the segment. Since January 2021, BSNL's market share has come down from 34.64 per cent to 30.9 per cent in February. Share of MTNL dropped to 11.05 per cent in February 2022 from 14.65 per cent in January 2021. On the other hand, private players Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel have continuously gained market share. Reliance Jio has been aggressive in the segment and its share increased to 24 per cent from 14.7 per cent between January 2021 to February 2022.

Fixed-line or wireline telecommunication refers to telephone and broadband internet services provided through a network of cables

tomers, Quadrant 18,622 and Tata Teleservices 3,772. The government-owned BSNL and MTNL, which jointly have a 49.5 per cent share in the segment, lost 49,074 and 21,900 fixed-line customers, respectively. The growth trend in wireline

## World requires \$1.3tn energy investment by 2030, says JP Morgan

REUTERS

London, April 20: The world needs to find \$1.3 trillion of incremental investment by 2030 to boost all types of energy output and infrastructure from renewables to oil and gas to avoid an energy crunch, US bank JP Morgan said in its first annual energy outlook. "Our main finding is that by 2030, energy demand growth will exceed supply growth by circa 20 per cent based on current trends, primarily driven by emerging economies and their efforts to develop and lift their citizens out of poverty," strategists Marko Kolanovic and Christyan Malek said.

Investment will need to be inclusive of all fuels, including oil and gas, renewables and nuclear, with oil demand alone expected to grow by around 10 per cent by 2030 and gas by 18 per cent. "Not all fuels are made equal, and for the most part (and within this time horizon), different sources of energy are not fully fungible - solar panels cannot replace oil, needed for example in the industrial production of petrochemicals," said the outlook, to which 30 JP Morgan analysts contributed.

The research contrasts with the message from the International Energy Agency (IEA), which last year said no new investment was needed in fossil fuels. The IEA has since then clarified that its outlook was only one of the suggested scenarios and called on OPEC to pump more oil.

"On a very long scale, all of the current sources of energy will be viewed as transitional to a safer, cleaner, and cheaper source of energy. Long term, this might only be provided by nuclear fusion," the JP Morgan outlook said. "Until scalable, reliable, clean and affordable technologies are available, the world will need to work with all of the current sources of energy - fossil and non-fossil - and their respective drawbacks," it said.

It said global end-use spending on energy was set to rise to 9.5 per cent of GDP in 2022 from a 2015-2019 average of 8.4 per cent.

# Oil production dips 2.6% in FY22

The primary reason for the decline is the aging fields where natural production decline has set in. The output is being maintained by investing in technologies to boost the recovery rate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 20: India's crude oil production fell 2.67 per cent in the fiscal year ending March 31, as state-owned ONGC produced less than the target, but natural gas output rose helped by KG production by Reliance-BP.

Crude oil production at 29.69 million tonne in 2021-22 (April 2021 to March 2022) was 2.63 per cent lower than the 30.5 million tonne output a year back and 11.67 per cent below the target of 33.61 million tonne, according to official data released by the oil ministry.

India's crude oil production has been on a decline during the past few years. From 35.7 million tonne in 2017-18, it fell to 34.2 million tonne in the following year and 32.2 in 2019-20 and 30.5 million tonne in 2020-21.

The primary reason for the decline is the aging fields where natural production decline has set in. The output is being maintained by investing in technologies to boost the recovery rate.

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation



CRUDE OIL PRODUCTION HAS BEEN ON A DECLINE DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS

ONGC PRODUCED 19.45 MILLION TONNE OF CRUDE OIL IN THE FISCAL FY22

NATURAL GAS OUTPUT ROSE 18.66 PER CENT TO 34 BILLION CUBIC METERS IN FY22

(ONGC) produced 19.45 million tonne of crude oil in the fiscal FY22, which was 13.82 per cent lower than the target and 3.62 per cent less than the output in the previous fiscal year.

This was due to less-than-anticipated production from the WO-16 cluster in the western offshore due to delay in mobilisation of a production unit and less oil in the NBP field due to an inspection-re-

lated shutdown, it said. Natural gas output, however, rose 18.66 per cent to 34 billion cubic meters in FY22. This is after Reliance Industries Ltd and its partner BP Plc started output from newer fields in the eastern offshore KG-D6 block.

Five-times higher output from eastern offshore at 1.34 bcm offset a 5.7 per cent decline in production by ONGC. With demand returning with a rebound in economic activity, refineries processed 9 per cent more crude oil at 241.7 million tonne in the 2021-22 fiscal.

They produced 254.3 million tonne of petroleum products, up from 233.5 million tonne a year back and the target of 249.8 million tonne for the fiscal. Refinery run was 89 per cent of the capacity in the fiscal, the data showed.

## SHORT TAKES

### Tata Steel stops biz with Russia

New Delhi: Tata Steel Wednesday said it will stop doing business with Russia amid the ongoing conflict with Ukraine. In a statement, a company spokesperson said: "Tata Steel does not have any operations or employees in Russia. We have taken a conscious decision to stop doing business with Russia". To ensure business continuity, the company's all steel manufacturing sites in India, the UK and the Netherlands have sourced alternative supplies of raw materials to end its dependence on Russia, the company said.

### EPFO adds 14.12L subscribers in Feb

New Delhi: Retirement fund body EPFO Wednesday said it added 14.12 lakh subscribers in February 2022, 14 per cent more than 12.37 lakh enrolled in the same month a year ago. "The provisional payroll data of EPFO released today highlights that EPFO has added 14.12 lakh net subscribers in the month of February, 2022," a labour ministry statement said. The EPFO data showed that net enrolments between April 2021 and February 2022 were 1.11 crore.

### HDFC sells stake in HDFC Capital

New Delhi: Mortgage firm HDFC Ltd Wednesday announced sale of a 10 per cent stake in its private equity arm HDFC Capital Advisors to a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) for about Rs 184 crore. ADIA is also the primary investor in the alternative investment funds managed by \$3 billion-HDFC Capital. The funds managed by HDFC Capital provide long-term, flexible funding across the life cycle of affordable and mid-income housing projects, including early-stage funding, it said.

### RIL profit drops 65% in 4th qtr

New Delhi: Reliance Group firm RIL Wednesday reported a 65 per cent decline in consolidated profit at ₹1.06 crore for the quarter ended March 31, 2022. The company had posted a consolidated profit of Rs 3 crore in the year-ago period, Reliance Industrial Infrastructure Ltd (RIIL) said in a filing to BSE. However, total income of the company during the January-March quarter increased to Rs 19.65 crore over Rs 18.88 crore in the same period a year ago.

# Musk to boost personal investment in Twitter

Twitter shares were down 1.6% at \$47.69 in afternoon trade Wednesday, well below Musk's offer of \$54.20

AGENCIES

Washington, April 20: Elon Musk is willing to invest between \$10 billion and \$15 billion of his own money to take Twitter Inc private, the New York Post reported on Tuesday, citing two sources familiar with the matter.

The billionaire, who is Twitter's second-biggest shareholder with a 9.1% stake, is planning to launch a tender offer in about 10 days and has tapped Morgan Stanley to raise another \$10 billion in debt, according to the report.

Musk, who is also Tesla Inc's

chief executive, may also be willing to borrow against his current stake if necessary, a move that could possibly raise several billion additional dollars, the New York Post reported.

The social media company adopted a "poison pill" last week to protect itself from Musk's \$43 billion buyout offer.

More private-equity firms have expressed interest in participating in a deal for Twitter, people familiar with the matter told Reuters Monday without naming the firm.

The interest emerged after Thoma Bravo, a technology-focused PE firm, contacted the social media platform last week to explore a buyout that would challenge Musk's offer.

Apollo Global Management Inc is considering ways it can provide financing to any deal and is open to working with Musk or any other bidder, the sources told Reuters.

## Markets bounce back after five-day rout

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 20: Benchmark indices bounced back Wednesday after falling for five straight sessions, with investors snapping up the recently-mauled IT, finance and consumption stocks amid a supportive trend overseas.

A rebounding rupee further bolstered sentiment, traders said. Halting its five-session slide, the BSE Sensex jumped 574.35 points or 1.02 per cent to finish at 57,037.50. Similarly, the NSE Nifty surged 177.90 points or 1.05 per cent to 17,136.55.

The market breadth was in favour of the bulls, with 20 of the 30 Sensex stocks closing in the green. UltraTech Cement topped the Sensex gainers' chart with a jump of 3.52 per cent, followed by Asian Paints, Maruti, Reliance Industries, TCS, Bharti Airtel, HUL and HDFC.

In value terms, index heavyweight Reliance Industries accounted for almost half of the benchmark's gains.

## Renault launches new variant of KWID MY22

Bhubaneswar: French automaker, Renault, unveiled its new variant of KWID MY22 with advanced features at base price of Rs 4.94 lakh here at Reno Bhubaneswar, Nayapalli, Wednesday. Available in both 0.8L and 1.0 Smart Control efficiency (SCe) power trains with manual and automatic transmission options, the KWID MY22 features a striking new interior and exterior colour harmony with sporty white accents in the Climber range. Accentuating the attractiveness of the car, the KWID MY22 Climber range will offer customers an array of new colour options- Metal Mustard and Ice cool white with black roof in dual tone along with new dual tone flex wheels. The value proposition of KWID is further enhanced with the introduction of new RXL(O) variant on both 0.8 L and 1.0L MT powertrains. Renault KWID is compliant with all the current safety requirements for the Indian market and even goes beyond to protect both passengers and pedestrians. It includes several active and passive safety features like dual front airbags, ABS, seat belt reminder, overspeed alert among others. Elevating safety quotient of the vehicle, the new MY22 range comes equipped with seat belt pyrotech and load limiter as a standard feature. Meanwhile in terms of performance, the KWID 0.8L promises a fuel efficiency of 22.25 km/l as per the ARAI testing certification. Renault KWID has a cost of maintenance as low as 35 paise/km. It comes with a comprehensive manufacturing warranty for two years/50,000 km whichever is earlier.



Malabar Gold & Diamonds clocks ₹30,000cr turnover in 2021-22

## Malabar Gold & Diamonds clocks ₹30,000cr turnover in 2021-22

Kozhikode: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one of the frontline jewellery retail chains in the world, has reported a turnover of Rs 30,000 crore for the fiscal year 2021-22, a growth of approximately 35% compared to the previous year's business. Malabar Gold & Diamonds is eyeing a turnover of Rs 45,000 crore during the current fiscal. Products that suit the tastes of consumers, opening of the new showrooms worldwide, "One India, One Gold Rate" program and "Fair Price Policy" together helped the company to achieve this remarkable goal. The company disclosed these details during the annual general meeting of its stakeholders held here recently. Ensuring cent percent transparency in all transactions also helped the jewellery retailer to achieve this coveted goal. The company opened 31 new showrooms last year alone, helping it reach more customers in the global marketplace. It created history by opening 22 showrooms across the world in January to welcome the New Year 2022. Currently, it has 276 showrooms spread over 10 countries besides 14 ornament making factories in five countries. The company follows a cent per cent tax compliance in all the countries it operates. In 2021-22, the company paid a gross tax of Rs 520 crore in India alone.



## SPOOKED BY SUBSCRIBERS DIP

# Netflix aims to curtail password sharing, considers ads

ASSOCIATED PRESS

San Francisco, April 20: An unexpectedly sharp drop in subscribers has Netflix considering changes it has long resisted: Minimizing password sharing and creating a low-cost subscription supported by advertising.

Looming changes announced late Tuesday are designed to help Netflix regain momentum lost over the past year. Pandemic-driven lockdowns that drove binge-watching have lifted, while deep-pocketed rivals such as Apple and Walt Disney have begun to chip away at its vast audience with their own

streaming services.

Netflix's customer base fell by 200,000 subscribers during the January-March quarter, the first contraction the streaming service has seen since it became available throughout most of the world other than China six years ago. The drop stemmed in part from Netflix's decision to withdraw from Russia to protest the war against Ukraine, resulting in a loss of 700,000 subscribers. Netflix projected a loss of another 2 million subscribers in the current April-June quarter.

The Los Gatos, California, company estimated that about 100 million households worldwide are



watching its service for free by using the account of a friend or another family member, including

30 million in the US and Canada. "Those are over 100 million households already are choosing to

NETFLIX SUFFERED ITS FIRST SUBSCRIBER LOSS IN MORE THAN A DECADE, CAUSING ITS SHARES TO PLUNGE 25% IN EXTENDED TRADING AMID CONCERNS THAT THE PIONEERING STREAMING SERVICE MAY HAVE ALREADY SEEN ITS BEST DAYS

THE DROP THIS YEAR STEMMED IN PART FROM NETFLIX'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM RUSSIA TO PROTEST THE WAR AGAINST UKRAINE, RESULTING IN A LOSS OF 700,000 SUBSCRIBERS

view Netflix," Netflix CEO Reed Hastings said. "We've just got to get

paid to some degree for them." While Netflix clearly believes these changes will help it build upon its current 221.6 million worldwide subscribers, the moves also risk alienating customers to the point they cancel.

Tuesday's announcement was a sobering comedown for a company that was buoyed two years ago when millions of consumers corralled at home were desperately seeking diversions — a void Netflix was happy to fill. Netflix added 36 million subscribers during 2020, by far the largest annual growth since its video streaming service's debut in 2007.

# Capitals demolish Kings

# MI, CSK battle to save elimination



cut for a boundary. He then launched into Shardul Thakur, striking three fours in the third over that fetched 14 runs.

But off-spinner Lalit removed Dhawan (9) cheaply, after the left-handed batter's attempted paddle resulted in a nick to Rishabh Pant.

Punjab were soon reeling at 46/3, as Axar struck in his first over removing the in-form Liam Livingstone (2), who was stumped by Pant. Livingstone came down the wicket to have a go at Axar, but the left-arm spinner turned the ball away from him to get Pant into action.

Wickets kept on tumbling for Punjab as Jonny Bairstow (9) gifted a sitter to Mustafizur at fine-leg in the seventh over off Khaleel Ahmed (2/21).

Jitesh Sharma (32), who struck five boundaries and Shahrukh Khan (12) tried to resurrect the innings, but managed to add only 31 runs before Axar trapped the former in front of the wickets, as Punjab lost half their side for 85.

From 85/5, it became 92/8, as Punjab lost wickets in quick succession with chinaman Kuldeep castling Kagiso Rabada (2) and Nathan Ellis (0) in the 14th over.

Khaleel got his second wicket dismissing Shahrukh in next over with a cross-seam slower while Rahul Chahar (12) became Lalit's second scalp. Pacers Khaleel and Mustafizur shared three wickets and ably supported the spinners.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Punjab Kings 115 (Jitesh Sharma 32; Axar Patel 2/10, Lalita Yadav 2/11, Khaleel Ahmed 2/21, Kuldeep Yadav 2/24) lost to Delhi Capitals 119/1 (David Warner 60 n o, Prithvi Shaw 41; Rahul Chahar 1/21) by 9 wickets.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Navi Mumbai, April 20:** On the verge of elimination after six losses on the trot, a horribly out of form Mumbai Indians would need to notch up their first win of this IPL to remain afloat when they face Chennai Super Kings here Thursday.

Five-time champions Mumbai have not won a single match this season and a loss Thursday would send them packing from the tournament.

Defending champions CSK, who are just a rung above bottom-placed MI, have also faltered as a team though there has been a few instances of individual brilliance. With five losses from six games, a defeat Thursday would also send them on the brink of elimination.

For Mumbai, the biggest concern is the form of skipper Rohit Sharma, who has gathered only 114 runs from six innings. If Mumbai have to chase or set up a big total, he will have to do the bulk of scoring.

Young batter Ishan Kishan has also not justified his heavy price tag of Rs 15.25 crore. He needs to do more than the 191 runs from six

matches with the help two half centuries.

The likes of Dewald Brevis, Tilak Varma and Suryakumar Yadav have played some scintillating knocks individually but together need to take responsibility in the middle-order.

Another disappointment so far has been all-rounder Kieron Pollard, whose ability to win matches has been on the wane as questions have cropped up over his retention.

If batting is a worry, bowling is a far bigger concern for Mumbai. Save for Jasprit Bumrah, Mumbai bowlers have had a torrid time, be it Tymal Mills, Jaydev Unadkat, Basil Thampi or lead spinner Murugan Ashwin.

For Chennai, the biggest positive is Rituraj Gaikwad finding his mojo back. Robin Uthappa and Shivam Dube did shine in the team's solitary win against Royal Challengers Bangalore with their brutal hitting but the duo faltered against Gujarat.

Dube will have to shed his one match wonder tag and shoulder more responsibility along with Ambati Rayudu and Moeen Ali, the pinch hitter, who has looked out of sorts.

Captain Ravindra Jadeja and MS Dhoni can play the finisher's role. Jadeja hasn't really looked threatening with the ball and needs to put up a better show if his team is to stop MI hitters.

CSK bowlers, save for Dwayne Bravo and spinner Maheesh Theekshana, have been far from being up-to the mark. Mukesh Choudhary has been leaking runs and so does Chris Jordan. South African all-rounder Dwayne Pretorius might get a chance to replace Jordan against MI.

**TODAY'S MATCH**

MI vs CSK

Time: 07:30 pm

TELECAST

Star Sports channels & Hotstar

## ODISHA POLICE SCRIPT 1-0 WIN AGAINST MRFC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, April 20:** Odisha Police eked out a narrow 1-0 win over Mata Rukmani in their second match of the Indian Women's League 2022 here Wednesday.

Odisha Police earned an early free-kick in the fifth minute as Sarojini Tirkey drew a foul in a dangerous area. However, the local club couldn't capitalise on the free-kick.

Odisha Police looked quite composed in the second half and found some good breakthroughs. In the 72nd minute, they almost took the lead when Jharana Mallik attempted a cross from the right flank.

To everyone's surprise, the ball looked certain to end up in the net, but was halted in its tracks by the crossbar. Mata Rukmani defenders were quick to react and cleared the ball as soon as it dropped to the ground.

Finally, Odisha Police's efforts paid off in the 84th minute when substitute Jasmani Samad found the target from inside the box to give her side the lead.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 20:** Delhi Capitals showed remarkable resilience to overcome a COVID crisis in their camp and hand Punjab Kings a nine-wicket thrashing in the IPL here Wednesday.

Delhi, who had a chaotic build up to the game with a sixth COVID positive case being reported on the morning of the game, dished out a clinical bowling display to bowl out Punjab Kings for a below-par 115.

On a track where the deliveries were holding up a bit, even Lalit Yadav (2/11) became unplayable leave alone Axar Patel (2/10) and Kuldeep Yadav (2/24).

Delhi seemed in real hurry to close the game with Prithvi Shaw (41, 20b, 7x4, 1x6) and David Warner (60 n o, 30b, 10x4, 1x6) getting them off to a flying start. Their 83-run partnership off 39 balls ensured Delhi canted to victory in 10.3 overs, giving a big boost to their net run rate.

The match, which was shifted to the Brabourne Stadium from Pune, was given a go ahead barely an hour before the start of play after Delhi keeper-batter Tim Seifert tested positive Wednesday morning.

Shaw and Warner looked in devastating touch dispatching a deflated looking Punjab bowling attack to all corners of the grounds. However, Punjab bowlers could not be blamed on the night with batters letting the team down on a good pitch.

With Delhi racing to 81 for no loss

in the powerplay, the game was as good as over: It was Delhi's third win in six games while Punjab, who had a game to forget, suffered their fourth loss in seven games.

Earlier, the Delhi spin trio of Lalit (2/11), Kuldeep (2/24) and Axar (2/10) did the bulk of the damage. Punjab were tottering at 35/2 after losing openers Mayank Agarwal (24) and Shikhar Dhawan (9) early.

Mayank, who recovered from his toe injury that forced him to miss the previous game, started with a

# Reds leave Red Devils red-faced



STAR OF THE SHOW: Mohamed Salah celebrates one of his goals against Manchester United, Tuesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Liverpool, April 20:** Liverpool are back where Manchester United is far from reaching: Top of the Premier League. To know why there is such a deficit in quality now between English football's most successful clubs, just look at how Liverpool's forwards tormented United in a 4-0 rout Tuesday.

It wasn't just Mohamed Salah scoring twice at Anfield, following a hat-trick in the 5-0 humiliation in the reverse fixture. Salah also assisted Luiz Diaz's opener. Salah's first was set up by Sadio Mané. And Mané's goal was provided by Diaz's pass.

All before Salah compounded another night of misery for United with a chipped finish for his second provided by Diaz's replacement — Diogo Jota.

A glorious night for Liverpool ended with four fist-pumps by manager Jurgen Klopp in front of the Kop. The League Cup has already been collected and there's an FA Cup final meeting with Chelsea next month. Before then there's a Champions League semifinal clash with Villarreal.

And there is the hope Manchester City do not regain first spot in the Premier League, although the two-point lead could be wiped out by the champions beating Brighton Wednesday.

Regaining the Premier League trophy from City in the remaining six games would see Liverpool match United on a record 20 English titles.

United's five-man defense — featuring Phil Jones making his second league appearance of the season — was unpicked by a sweeping

break launched from inside Liverpool's penalty area.

By the time the ball reached the halfway line, Mané had Salah running forward to release a pass to. Then Diaz arrived unmarked centrally to strike beyond goalkeeper David de Gea.

All the animosity that exists between these rivals was put aside when the clock hit seven minutes and solidarity was shown with Cristiano Ronaldo following the death of his new-born son.

A chant of "Viva Ronaldo" was started by the United fans. Their Liverpool counterparts launched a rendition of their anthem — "You'll Never Walk Alone" — and applause to back United's No.7 who missed the game to grieve with his family and surviving new-born twin.

Ronaldo's absence was not the reason for United's struggles. It was another passing move that led to Liverpool's second. Receiving a pass from Joel Matip, Mané lofted the ball to Salah, who had time to take it past Diego Dalot before slotting low into the net in the 22nd minute.

Any home anxiety was eased once Mané netted in the 68th. Andrew Robertson gained possession and ran with the ball unchallenged before feeding Diaz to cut-back to Mané to finish.

It would get worse for United. Hannibal Mejbri replaced Anthony Elanga and within a minute he was giving the ball away Robertson pounced and fed Jota whose pass to Salah allowed the Egypt forward to make it nine goals in six games against United, via a deflection off visiting defender Aaron Wan-Bissaka.

# Overcooked Virat needs break: Shastri

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 20:** Batting stalwart Virat Kohli is mentally "overcooked" and needs to take a break from cricket in order to serve the country for at least another six-seven years, feels ex-India coach Ravi Shastri.

Kohli has been going through a lean patch with just two 40-plus scores to show in last seven innings for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the current IPL season.

The 33-year-old from Delhi, who hasn't scored a century in the last 100 matches across formats, had stepped down from T20 captaincy

both for India and RCB and also quit Test leadership, while he was removed from ODI skipper's role.

Shastri feels the likes of Kohli need to be handled with care and empathy amid the COVID-19 restrictions which has confined players inside bio-bubbles.

"I am going straight to the main guy here. Virat Kohli is overcooked. If anyone needs a break, it's him," Shastri told Star Sports. "Whether it's 2 months or a month-and-a-half, whether it's after England or before England. He needs a break because he has got 6-7 years of cricket left in him and you don't want to lose that with a fried brain."

Kohli was out for a duck on

Tuesday night as RCB rode on Faf du Plessis' 96 to claim a 18-run win over Lucknow Super Giants.

"When I was coach at the time when this first started, the first thing I said is 'you have to show empathy to the guys'. If you're going to be forceful, there is a very thin line there, from a guy losing the plot as opposed to him hanging in there and giving his best. So you have to be extremely careful."

Shastri said there might be one or two players in world cricket going through the same problem which needs to be addressed upfront. Echoing the same sentiment, former England captain Kevin Pietersen said Kohli should take

time away from the game as well as social media to rejuvenate himself.

"The guy has had so much to deal with, from marriage to baby to media scrutiny and all on his personal life. He is the biggest star on show," he said. "Virat Kohli needs to say 'cricket boots, for six months, I will see you later'. Turn off social media, go and get re-energised."

"When the stadiums are full again, you guarantee him a spot in that side for the next 12, 24 or 36 months. Tell him 'you're our guy, we know you'll deliver for us'." Pietersen said Kohli "is going to find it very hard to continue delivering now as his brain is completely fried".

## Harpreet, Sachin add two bronze to India's medal tally

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia), April 20:** Sachin Sahrawat and Harpreet Singh grabbed bronze medals Wednesday as India's Greco-Roman contingent cherished its second best show at the Asian Championship with five medals.

Competing in the 67kg category, Sachin dominated the bronze play-off, winning by fall against Uzbekistan's Mahmud Bakhsilloev. This was after he lost his quarter-final in a similar manner to Meirizhan Shermakhanbet from Kazakhstan.

Harpreet (82kg) did not have to move a sinew in his medal bout as his rival from Qatar, Jafar Khan M Khan, did not take the mat due to an injury.

The medal-winning show from Sachin and Harpreet meant that India ended up with five medals in Greco Roman event of the championship. In the 2020 edition, India had won one gold (won by Sunil Kumar) and four bronze medals in Delhi.

On the opening day of the championships on Tuesday, Sunil Kumar (87kg), Arjun Halakurki (55kg) and Neeraj (63kg) had won bronze medals.

# Inter sail past AC Milan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Milan, April 20:** Lautaro Martinez scored twice to send Inter Milan into the Italian Cup final with a 3-0 second-leg win over city rival AC Milan.

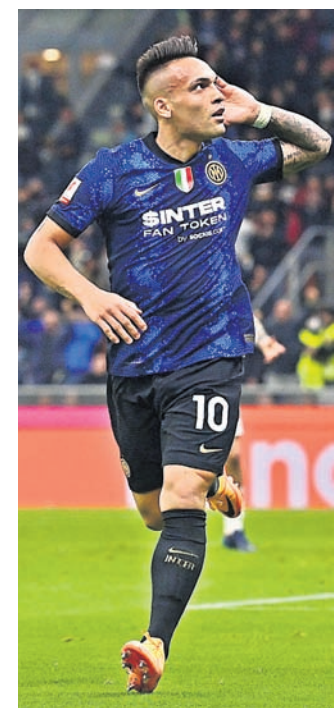
Both of Martinez's goals came in the first half in a clinical performance that also gave Inter a 3-0 aggregate victory Tuesday.

Robin Gosens made sure of the team's place in the final late on, with his first goal since his move from Atalanta in January. Milan had a goal somewhat controversially ruled out for offside. The first-leg match between the two finished 0-0.

The Nerazzurri next face holder Juventus or Fiorentina, who meet Wednesday with the Bianconeri leading 1-0 from the first leg. The final is scheduled for May 11.

There was a passionate atmosphere at San Siro, in the first Milan derby for more than two years with a capacity crowd. More than 76,000 fans were allowed into the stadium following the recent relaxation of some coronavirus measures in Italy.

Adding to the intensity was the fact the two teams were also involved in a tight battle for the Serie A title, with league leader Milan two points ahead of defending cham-



Lautaro Martinez celebrates one of his goals against AC Milan

coach Simone Inzaghi had a full squad to choose from.

It took Inter less than four minutes to break the deadlock when Martinez volleyed in a low cross from Matteo Darmian. However, the Rossoneri didn't let the early goal unsettle them and had several chances to level in an enthralling first half.

Samir Handanovic stuck out a leg in the 28th minute to stop an effort from Rafael Leão and the Inter goalkeeper also did well to parry a fierce volley from Alexis Saelemaekers two minutes later.

Milan upped the pressure after the break but struggled to carve out real goalscoring opportunities, especially with Inter content to sit back and defend its lead.

The Rossoneri thought they had pulled one back in the 67th but, after reviewing it on the pitchside monitor, the referee adjudged that Milan defender Pierre Kalulu, who was in an offside position, had been interfering with play when Ismaël Bennacer's shot went in.

Inter sealed the win eight minutes from time. Marcelo Brozovic ran onto a through ball from Arturo Vidal and rolled it across for Gosens to tap in. Gosens had only been on the field for two minutes.

# Olympians to feature in Khelo India University Games

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 20:** Olympian shooter Manu Bhaker, sprinter Dutee Chand and swimmer Srihari Nataraj are some of the big names to feature in the Khelo India University Games to be held in Bangalore from April 24 to May 3.

Besides, the shooting duo of Divyansh Singh Panwar and Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar will also be seen in action in the event, where two indigenous sports —



Yogasana and Mallakhamb — will make their debut.

A total of 3,878 athletes from 189 universities from across the coun-



try will participate in the Games, where 20 disciplines will feature and a total of 275 gold medals will be up for grabs.

"The large number of participants and the high level of technical conduct of the Games in state-of-the-art venues makes the Khelo India University Games one of the biggest University-level Games in the country," Sports Minister Anurag Thakur said in a press briefing. "I am confident that these Games will throw up many more champions this year."

The minister further said that during the Games NADA will run an awareness campaign on dop-

ing for the athletes. "NADA is going completely digital in terms of all its Information, Education, Communication (IEC) and also testing the Games app for paperless protocols by WADA. The athletes will be given awareness on doping through NADA to ensure that the Games are clean and fair."

Thakur also informed that his ministry has sanctioned Rs 34.97 crore for the conduct of the Games. The first edition of KIUG was held in Bhubaneswar in February, 2020.