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**BOOK LAUNCH ON RN SINGH DEO**

A book on Maharaja Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo, the last ruler of the princely state of Patna in Odisha before Indian independence in 1947, titled *A Man Among Princes* written by Pabitra Mohan Nayak and VR Singh and published by Rupa publication was released at Jayadev Bhawan, Friday. Pavan K Varma, an Indian diplomat, politician, and author who served as an ambassador to Bhutan and Cyprus was the chief guest. Former ministers KP Singh Deo, AU Singh Deo, Prafulla Samal and author VR Singh were also present on the occasion.



**FORTUNE FORECAST**

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
You may pick up the hammer and chisel today. No, you're not taking up sculpture; you're finally giving in to your spouse's demands to take some home improvement measures. It's in your interest to be speedy and focused, as you are the guilty party, says Ganesh.

**TAURUS**  
There is a strong possibility of receptivity and sensitivity in your love life. On the down side, your negativity may lead to mediocre results. You are a firefighter when it comes to others' problems, but can forget digging a well for your own home, says Ganesh.

**GEMINI**  
Emotional and material security will hold equal importance today. You want to be in love, but you know that love can't buy you dough. In academics, you will be able to solve whatever problems you set your mind on. Your spare time will be spent on devising methods of making the best use of your knowledge.

**CANCER**  
In all likelihood, this is going to be a fairly easy day for you, says Ganesh. The only tough part of the day would be how to spend it. There will be hardly anything to do, anyone to talk to. Ideally, this is what you would call a perfect day.

**LEO**  
Call it an epiphany of sorts, but today promises to be a day of revelations for you. Finally, things fall into place as your Odyssey nears its end, and you come to terms with your hidden talents, says Ganesh. Follow your heart and dive into the bottomless pool of your imagination.

**VIRGO**  
Ganesh predicts that your writing skills will possibly help you vent your feelings without offending others. You will successfully complete your pending assignments. Great success will knock at your door in anything and everything you undertake today, predicts Ganesh.

**LIBRA**  
Health is always a key issue, and today, you may have to pay some special attention to the same. It may be some elderly person in the family, or even you. Take the time to give it your full attention in order to avoid any further complications.

**SCORPIO**  
The target is locked in and the arrow is shot. It is only a matter of time before Cupid celebrates and hits the bull's eye and you find yourself in the mush of things. Sentiments and romance will be the order of the day. There is a good chance that marriage proposals or new relationships will find their footing today, says Ganesh.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Appreciation for all that excellent work you have put in is a no-go for you! Yet, you stand to gain nothing by losing heart. While the acknowledgement you look for has been delayed, Ganesh says it has not been denied and is in the offing already.

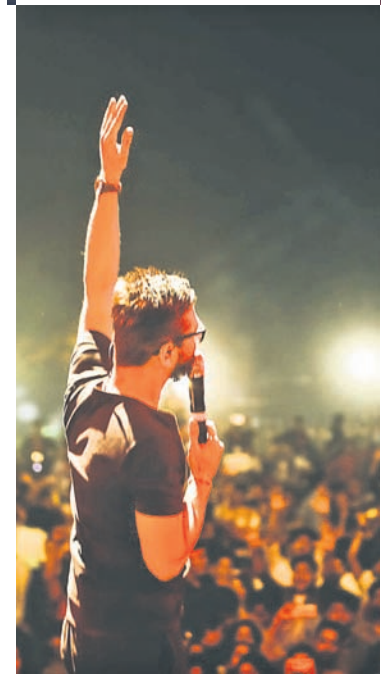
**CAPRICORN**  
New projects and partnership will keep you busy today, says Ganesh. If a meeting is scheduled, you may be praised vociferously for your ability to make the right decision at the right time.

**AQUARIUS**  
If Elvis Presley is who you dreamed of being, today may be your day! You seem to impress one and all, and even money flows in! You play smart today and everything seems to work in your favour. Take care, says Ganesh, things may not be as they seem.

**PISCES**  
You can probably count your chickens before they hatch today, for it is likely that every nest-egg you expect to mint money will. A good day to trade in the stock markets as well, as long as you keep in mind that the horns of a rampaging Bull market can be every bit as deadly as the paws of a lumbering Bear market, says Ganesh.



# Odisha, country's new music hub



*Thanks to the various events and fests that have been organised in the state over the past few years, the music and film industries now consider Odisha as a place where most of the live events take place*

Odisha, a state located on the eastern coast of India, has always been known for its rich cultural heritage and ancient temples. However, in recent times, it has also emerged as a music destination that has caught the attention of music lovers across the country. The state has witnessed a transformation in the perception of people towards it. On the occasion of auspicious Utkal Diwas, Orissa POST takes a close look at the factors that makes the state one of the most happening centres of music at the moment. The credit for shift in people's

perception goes to the various events and fests that have been organised in the state over the past few years. The Hockey World Cups that were held in Odisha, in particular, played a significant role. The mainstream music and film industry now consider Odisha as a place where most of the live events take place. Gone are the days when typical love songs with cringe lyrics dominated the music scene in Odisha. Films like Daman and Pratiksha are changing the game for film music and drawing viewership from across the country. Daman, the first Odia film to have a pan-India release, saw its songs sung

by singers from the Mumbai film industry. This has only helped in spreading the popularity of Odia music beyond the state's borders. When it comes to non-film music, Odisha has emerged as a significant contributor in the country after the Punjabi indus-



The emergence of songwriters like Gaurav Anand, Bunny Mohanty, Somesh Satpathy, Ashish Pradhan and many others has been a significant factor in creating a new sound in the state. Creating a unique noise is crucial for any artiste or industry. Odisha also has a rich legacy when it comes to devotional music, with a significant consumption of this genre of music among family and senior audiences. Artistes like Namita Agarwal are doing well on YouTube, indicating that the youths are also taking a keen interest in such music. This proves that there is an audience for all kinds of music in the state. Moreover, Odisha is blessed with a rich tradition of folk music. If the state can realise the potential of its folk music and work diligently towards it, then it has the potential to become the Folk Capital of the country. Odisha's folk music is diverse, and each region has its unique sound. The state needs to promote and preserve its folk music to ensure that it continues to thrive in the future. In conclusion, Odisha's emergence as a massive music hub is a testament to the state's cultural richness and diversity. The events and fests that have been organised in the state have helped showcase its musical talent to the rest of the country. If the state can continue to promote and preserve its musical traditions, it has the potential to become one of the most significant music hubs in the country. SAUGATO ROY CHOUDHURY

**KAUNRIKALA RANG-AAKHAADAA**

## Theatre training for tribal school dropouts amid forest



Workshop director Dinesh Das with participants during a mask-making training

*Along with intricate lessons in dramatic arts, participants also took training in other disciplines such as dance, music, art and mask-making at the programme co-organised by Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi*

Keonjhar: According to Natyashastra, the oldest Indian guideline on dramatic art by Bharat Muni, theatre was a game that helped educate people in ancient times. In the present day also it is believed that theatre is the ultimate immersive art form that helps in the growth of multiple senses of a human. In a bid to educate the school dropout tribal children of Keonjhar district, a month-long residential theater workshop Kaunrikala Rang Aakhaada was organised by Sangeet Natak Akademi,

Government of India in collaboration with local cultural outfit Aadim Sanskriti. The programme was held amid a dense forest near Kaunrikala village of Sadar block. Dinesh Dash, a nationally and internationally acclaimed dramatist from Odisha was the workshop director while noted Raibenshi trainer Abu Saleh from West Bengal and eminent choreographer Vikram Mohan from Delhi joined the programme as faculties. Chief of Aadim Sanskriti Rudramani Patra was the coordinator. Attending the closing ceremony

Akademi's Deputy Secretary (Drama) Suman Kumar Thursday said, "The ancient dramatic practice on this earth was started by the Adivasi community. Therefore, at the moment, they are the ones who need to learn this wonderful art which will empower them to document, share and take forward the traditional knowledge and the contemporary understanding of the world."

Special arrangements were made for the adolescents belonging to marginal and economically backward sections of the society. Along with training in dramatic arts, participants also took training in other disciplines such as Raibenshe, dance, music, art and mask-making.

The main objective of the workshop was to make the participants self-reliant with the skills they acquired at the programme, said workshop director Das.

Abu Saleh, an expert in Raibenshe, a martial dance of West Bengal said the tribal children from Munda community were very punctual and hard-working.

"No wonder they not only learnt the skills very fast, they thoroughly enjoyed it also. Now they are ready for a 30-minute performance on the national stage," added Saleh.

"At the beginning the kids from the tribal community found it difficult to understand the learning process but later on picked up space. It was a great experience to understand them and their culture, shared Vikram Mohan. PNN



Tribal children practised dramatic arts during the workshop

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Best wishes to the people of Odisha on Happy Utkal Diwas

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## BSKY goes awry; 2 held

Probe reveals that JM Care, a BSKY non-empanelled hospital in Cuttack, treated patients under the state's flagship scheme by forging documents

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, March 31: Twin city Commissionerate Police has stumbled upon a Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) fraud while investigating a case alleging death of a woman due to medical negligence in the Silver City, officials said Friday.

According to Madhupatna police inspector in-charge Tusharkanta Sethi, the fraud came to the fore when they were probing the death of Kuni Patra, a resident of BDA Colony under Badagada police limits in Bhubaneswar, due to alleged negligence of a private hospital here in the wee hours of March 7, 2023.

Kuni was operated upon for kidney stone at JM Care, a private healthcare centre at Gosala Road in Nayabazar area of Cuttack, by surgeon Chainmaya Kumar Sahoo



Sova Nursing Home's owner Ashok Kumar Pati and its manager Santanu Kumar Pati were arrested for forging the doctor's signature

February 21, 2023 and was discharged February 24, police said, adding that she availed the benefits under BSKY.

"Kuni was again admitted to JM Care March 6, 2023 evening as she complained of severe body ache. However, she was not attended to by any of the doctors, including Sahoo, at the facility.

She died in the wee hours of March 7 due to medical negligence," police said quoting Kuni's husband Prasanna Kumar Patra.

Prasanna approached Madhupatna police that registered a case (83/2023) under Sections 304A, 420, 465, 467, 468, 471, 409 and 120B of the IPC and began a probe.

During the probe, police claimed to have found that despite its non-empanelment under BSKY, JM Care treated patients under the state's ambitious scheme in brazen violation of norms.

Sahu collected the BSKY card from Kuni for her surgery at JM Care. However, in the records it was shown that the woman was admitted to Sova Nursing Home, a BSKY empanelled facility, in Paga area of Cuttack and operated upon by Amiya Kumar Paul there February 22, police said.

Contd...P2

## BJD picks Dipali for Jharsuguda bypoll

POST NEWS NETWORK



Bhubaneswar, March 31: A little over two months after former Health Minister Naba Kishore Das was gunned down by now sacked ASI Gopal Das at Brajarajnagar Gandhi Chowk, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Friday nominated her daughter Dipali Das for the May 10 byelection to Jharsuguda Assembly seat.

BJD President Naveen Patnaik has issued an order in this regard Friday. Dipali has already begun campaigning in the Assembly segment following her father's demise.

Thanking the CM for choosing her, Dipali said, "Our Chief Minister has reimposed faith on me. With the blessing of my father, I will work for the development of Jharsuguda."

BJD has always stood strong with the women and this was again proved today, she said.

"Dipali is a highly educated girl and she had actively participated in different bypolls held recently in the state. We hope she will win the bypoll with a margin of over 50,000 votes," claimed BJD leader and minister Pramila Mallick.

Meanwhile, sources said BJP is likely to nominate its youth leader Tankadhar Tripathy, who has started campaigning in the constituency.

"We will prepare a different strategy for Jharsuguda bypoll. The Odisha government is trying to divert the attention of the people from Naba Das murder case," said state BJP president Manmohan Samal.

Contd...P2



COLOURFUL START: Actress Rashmika Mandanna performs during IPL 2023 opening ceremony at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, Friday

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We are in complete control. We don't need to wait till April 1st to fool people

## Twin road mishaps claim 10 lives

PNN & AGENCIES

Sambalpur/ Nayagarh, March 31: At least 10 people, including seven of a marriage party, were killed in separate road mishaps in Sambalpur and Nayagarh districts.

According to sources, seven persons of the marriage party who were returning home in Badadhara in Jharsuguda district after attending a wedding in Paramanpur Thursday killed as their vehicle plunged into a canal in Sambalpur district in early hours of Friday, police said.

The vehicle, a Bolero, skidded off

the road, overturned and fell into Gham canal near Paramanpur in Sasan police station area around 2am after the driver lost control of it, they said.

Sambalpur Collector Ananya Das said six people died on the spot, while another died after being taken to a hospital.

Four people were also injured in the accident, and two of them were stated to be critical, police said.

The deceased were identified as Subrata Bhoi, Sumanta Bhoi, Saroj Seth, Dibya Luha, Ajit Khamari, Ramakanta Bhuyan and Bhiku Bhoi, they said.

Contd...P2

## Trump faces hush money indictment

■ Donald Trump, 76, becomes the first former US president to face a criminal charge for his role in paying hush money to porn star Stormy Daniels



making him the first former US president to face a criminal charge and upending his bid to retake the White House in 2024.

The grand jury Thursday voted to indict 76-year-old Trump, a Republican, for his role in paying money to porn star Stormy Daniels in an attempt to buy her silence over

an alleged affair. The indictment remains under seal and it is not clear what crimes and how many criminal counts Trump has been charged with. CNN reported that the former president has been charged with more than 30 counts.

The office of Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, who has been pursuing the investigation for years, confirmed that it had contacted Trump's lawyers Thursday evening to "coordinate his surrender" on unspecified charges.

Contd...P2

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No new liquor shops in rural areas for 2023-24

There will be no increase in the number of foreign liquor OFF, premium FL-OFF & CL (country liquor) shops for the year 2023-24. The license of existing FL-OFF & CL holders would be renewed for a period of one-year



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, March 31: Following protests by women in different parts of rural Odisha, the state government has decided not to grant new liquor shop licences in these areas during the year 2023-24.

In its new excise policy for the year 2023-24, the state government said no new application for 'ON' shop license will be accepted for the rural areas in 2023-24.

Similarly, there will be no increase in the number of foreign liquor OFF, premium FL-OFF & CL (country liquor) shops for the year 2023-24. The license of existing FL-OFF & CL holders would be renewed for a period of one-year, i.e., up to the end of March, 2024.

However, in the urban areas, a new 'ON' shop license can be granted for only star hotels and other hotels having such a mini-

imum number of rooms to be decided by the excise department, it said.

For new 'ON' licenses to be renewed in the urban or rural areas, shops must adhere to basic infrastructure and hygiene requirements from a consumer point of view.

'ON' license may be granted to Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) and India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) hotels at half the applicable license fee, based on where the said hotels are located. No such concession is allowed for OTDC or ITDC hotels leased to private individuals, says the policy.

Like last year, the state government has decided to provide temporary licenses for liquor sale to OTDC at the eco-retreat venues at a promotional rate.

For the purpose of tourism promotion, serving of liquor in beach shacks is allowed in Odisha. The license for location and the num-

ber of beach shacks allowed for serving liquor will be based on the approval given by the tourism department.

As per the policy, the beach shacks will be allowed to operate throughout the year or for a period as decided by the tourism department, depending on climatic conditions. The operations of the beach shacks will be either through OTDC directly or through operators engaged by OTDC.

OTDC would also be responsible for ensuring that only Odisha registered duty paid liquor is served in such beach shacks, it said.

Common infrastructure for the beach shacks such as power connection, water supply, sewerage connections, solid waste management, etc., will be provided by OTDC or the relevant agency.

OTDC as a licensee will be responsible for ensuring compliance to all the licensing conditions as per the statute.



IN CITY: A rally by Bharat Scouts and Guides near Ram Mandir in Bhubaneswar, Friday

OP PHOTO

OMC contributes ₹100cr to CMRF

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) contributed Rs. 100 crore to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) Friday for the state's noble initiatives "Harischandra Sahayata" and "Mahaprayan" Yojana.

Steel & Mines Minister Prafulla Kumar Mallik handed over the cheque of the said amount to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at Naveen Niwas Friday in presence of Additional Chief Secretary, Steel & Mines Department and Chairman, OMC Deoranjana Kumar Singh.

Under the Harischandra Sahayata Yojana, the poor and destitute get financial assistance to perform last rites of their family members while Mahaprayan Yojana has been implemented in order to help the people to carry the dead body of their near and dear ones from the place of death to residence.

Also present on the occasion were V K Pandian, Secretary to CM-Transformational Initiatives (5T), Balwant Singh, Managing Director, OMC and senior officials of the Corporation.

Table with Market Watch, Index, Variation, Bourses, Currency, Bullion data.

Table with Weather, Bhub, Ctk, Max, Min, Humidity, Rainfall data.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn - in before the Court of Executive Magistrate, Bhubaneswar on 31.03.2023, I Santosh Kumar Giri have changed my minor daughter's name from Saini Giri to Sai Tanvi Giri. Henceforth my daughter will be known as Sai Tanvi Giri instead of Saini Giri for all purposes. Sd./- Santosh Kumar Giri

CM: Branding Odisha as diverse tourism hub

POST NEWS NETWORK



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: Hotel & Restaurant Association of Odisha in association with Tourism Department, government of Odisha and World Trade Center Bhubaneswar organized 5th Odisha Tourism Conclave 2023 recently held at Chanakya Hall of Hotel Swosti Premium, Bhubaneswar.

The conclave was inaugurated by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik virtually in the presence of other dignitaries. "Odisha is a land of nature's bounty and responsible tourism is imbedded both in our culture & also the development vision of our state. To enable more development friendly strategies, the Odisha Tourism Policy 2023 was released during MIO (Make in Odisha) with continuously working on integrated tourism development based on 15 destination master plan to develop diverse

tourism platforms in the state, the Chief Minister said.

Apart from sustainable infrastructure development, we are branding Odisha as a diverse tourism hub. The government of Odisha is committed towards sustainable tourism sector with much focus on augmentation of livelihood of the local communities," he added.

The full day conclave was aimed at promoting tourism sector of Odisha and showcasing Odisha as a major destination hub. The programme witnessed technical sessions on crucial subject matters to address the challenges in the sector and also to accelerate tourism in the state. Discussions were held during the brainstorming sessions by four operators, decision makers, industry members, hoteliers, travel agents, civil aviation authorities and government officials.

Red Cross holds JRC training camp

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: Red Cross Society of Odisha organised a five-day JRC study-cum-training camp at Nilachal Polytechnic in City from March 26-30. The camp was held under the guidance of Indian Red Cross' state branch secretary Bibhuti Bhussan Patnaik.

Treasurer Bhabani Prasad Nanda presided over the valedictory programme and advised the students to come forward to take care of nature for a healthy society. Former Secretary IRCS OSB Maj Kalpana Das, Additional secretary H&FW Department Ashok Kumar Rath, Youth Red cross Officer Ramesh Chandra Behera joined as guest and motivated the volunteers.

During the camp, different technical sessions like History of Red Cross, school safety, substance abuse, first aid, climate change, fire safety, disaster management and WASH, importance of medicinal plants and road safety. The fire department joined and demonstrated different skills on search and rescue during fire hazards. Additional Transport Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Biswal joined and took an interactive session for the volunteers and made a quiz competition and winners of the quiz were given helmets. The main motto of this session was to make the volunteers aware on wearing of helmet by the pillion rider.

'Spring Fiesta' at DPS Kalinga concludes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The five-day festivity "Spring Fiesta-2023" organised at Delhi Public School (DPS) Kalinga concluded Friday. The gala event filled with fun and frolic started March 24 wherein 400 participants enjoyed a host of activities.



The chief guest of the closing ceremony was Sushree Singh Deo (MBA Finance, LLB), a social ac-

tivist. Addressing the gathering, Principal, Anuradha Rakshit said that the Fiesta was a 'learning experience' for all. The highlight of the event was horse-riding, skating, puppetry, magic show & fireless cooking. The participants also gained knowledge in climate change, robotics and radio jockeying.

Continued from P1

Twin road mishaps...

Similarly, three men were killed as their motorcycle dashed into a roadside tree in Nayagarh district, police said Friday.

The accident happened in Komanda Pathara under Odagaon model police station area Thursday night, they said.

The deceased were identified as Madhab Pradhan, 20, Suryakant Pradhan, 19, and Rakesh Nayak, 19, of Maheswarpur. They were returning home from a Ram Navami fair at a nearby village when the accident happened.

Locals rescued them from the spot in a critical condition and rushed them to Odagaon Community Health Centre. While Suryakant was declared brought dead, two others succumbed to the injuries.

Trump faces hush money indictment

"This evening we contacted Mr. Trump's attorney to coordinate his surrender to the Manhattan DA's office for arraignment on a Supreme Court indictment, which remains under seal. Guidance will be provided when the arraignment date is selected," a spokesperson for District Attorney Bragg said.

The New York Times termed Trump's indictment "a historic development that will shake up the 2024 presidential race and forever mark him as the nation's first former president to face criminal charges."

Trump, the 45th US President from 2017 to 2021, is expected to fly from his home in Florida to New York Monday and be arraigned in court Tuesday.

The proceeding is expected to be brief. The charges in the in-

dictment will be read to him at the hearing, which is set to last about 10-15 minutes.

Trump has denied all wrongdoing in connection with the payments made ahead of the election.

In a statement responding to news of his indictment, the former president called it "Political persecution and election interference at the highest level in history," and accused Democrats of "weaponising our justice system to punish a political opponent, who just so happens to be a President of the United States."

"The Democrats have lied, cheated and stolen in their obsession with trying to 'Get Trump,' but now they've done the unthinkable - indicting a completely innocent person in an act of blatant Election Interference," Trump said.

BJD picks Dipali for Jharsuguda bypoll

He lashed out at Bragg, the Manhattan district attorney, calling the prosecutor a "disgrace", and accused him of "doing Joe Biden's dirty work".

"This is third-world prosecutorial misconduct. It is the opportunistic targeting of a political opponent in a campaign year," Trump's son Eric tweeted.

President Biden, a Democrat, repeatedly declined to comment on the indictment of former President Donald Trump as he departed the White House Friday morning, CNN reported.

Trump's attorneys Susan Necheles and Joseph Tacopina issued a statement, saying that the former president "did not commit any crime" and vowed to "vigorously fight this political prosecution in Court."

On the other hand, Congress has formed a committee led by senior leader and MLA Santosh Singh Saluja to select a suitable candidate for the byelection. "We will file the best candidate for the bypoll. As Jharsuguda is a stronghold of Congress, our party will perform well in this election," said Congress leader Tara Prasad Bahinipati. The bypoll will be held May 10 while the result will be declared May 13. As many as 2,21,070 voters are

there in the Assembly segment, of which, 1,10,687 are female and 2,526 are persons with disabilities. There are a total of 253 polling stations in the constituency. Notably, Naba Das was killed by police ASI Gopal Das (now sacked) on January 29. The cop had fired a bullet on the chest of the minister from a very close range. Though the police arrested the accused from the spot, it is yet to find out the motive behind the high-profile murder.

BSKY goes awry; 2 held

"It was evident from the records that Paul's signature was forged by Sova Nursing Home's owner Ashok Kumar Pati, manager Santanu Kumar Pati, Sahoo and Bharati Swain for the fraud," the IIC said.

It was also found that several other patients, who are being treated at JM Care, were in records admitted to Sova Nursing Home, he said, adding that Ashok, 55, and Santanu, 39, residents of Jahangirabad under Salipur police limits in Cuttack, were arrested.

Companies need to engage in CSR activities: Amat

Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Pradip Kumar Amat inaugurated the event organised by training cum consultancy firm Institute of Quality and Environmental Management Service (IQEMS), in association with Institutes of Public Enterprises, Hyderabad and Odisha State Productivity Council, Bhubaneswar.

Amat in his address lauded the efforts of IQEMS in encouraging corporate to contribute to the well-being of communities. "There is need for companies to constantly engage in CSR activities amongst surrounding communities to win their confidence," he said. The minister released a souvenir and presented the "Kalinga CSR Award" to eleven organisations for their contribution in the field of CSR for the year 2022.

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Local artists and students with their Midas touch have transformed the City's aesthetics with murals depicting the state's culture, eminent personalities from different arenas and funky paintings making Bhubaneswar a colour palette



# OF ART & AESTHETICS

DEEPAK KUMAR DEHURY, OP

John Keats began Endymion with the line, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," a musing resultant of the reminiscence of the enthralling experiences one has flow through. For visitors and locals alike, keeping aside the natural landscapes, architectural marvels, and cultural conglomerations, there is hardly a view that could be memorable while wandering through cities often referred to as concrete jungles. But then, artists take the matter to their own hands and wave their paintbrush to create memories.

their work. Residents of Bhubaneswar too couldn't help but turn tourists in their own City with a makeover hitherto unseen. The newfound beauty of the City prompted young masses to flock the places for selfies and Instagram reels. In a world infested by social media acceptance, the Temple City had just unlocked a new filter.



Kailash Raju, Jeypore, Koraput

I am a fourth year student in BK College of Art and Craft and doing freelancing jobs from my first year across the City and Cuttack to be financially independent. Art supplies for the college are bit on the dear side so when I heard about the Hockey World Cup initiative I grabbed onto it. I worked for 43 days and was paid a thousand bucks everyday for 6 hours of work. It gives me a sense of pride that my art is being appreciated by so many people. A message to all my friends on this less trodden path that our work will one day shine and mesmerise all onlookers.



Jyotiranjana Jena, Delang, Puri



Art always had a special place in my heart and my initial approach to the world of art was via television shows run on POGO. My father is a farmer so a career in art is a costly dream for me but my focus was clear which carved the path of financially sustainability. I have done a lot of work in the City especially in Master Canteen (rally road) and Delta Square. Hockey World Cup was a game changer for my side hustle as I worked for 45 days and was paid in the range of ₹1200-1500 on a daily basis. My biggest flex will be transforming a place in shambles into a piece of attraction where people now click photographs and can make a lots of heads turn.

My introduction to art as a career was inadvertent as I have a graduation degree in physics. But I changed my direction as I was always intrigued by the thought that how a piece of art can speak a volume. To create art requires creativity and guidance so I joined BK College of Art and Craft to pursue my dream of becoming a successful artist. My father was a weaver and had always supported my dream. During the Hockey World Cup, I did mural paintings for over 30 days and earned enough to get me going



Shashanka Shekhar Meher, Binka, Subarnapur



for a couple of months. I believe art has its own culture of connecting people with different thinking dimensions and background.

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**niir INDIA RANKINGS 2022**  
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27<sup>th</sup> Best in Engineering Category  
18<sup>th</sup> Best in Medical Category  
10<sup>th</sup> Best in Dental Category  
09<sup>th</sup> Best in Law Category

**THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2023**  
301-400 in Engineering And Technology  
301-400 in Computer Science  
801+ in Health Sciences  
1001-1200 in THE World University Ranking

**QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS**  
451-500 in QS Asia University Ranking 2023  
1001-1200 in QS World University Ranking 2023  
110 in QS Southern Asia University Ranking 2023

**TIMES ENGINEERING RANKING-2022** 1<sup>st</sup> in Odisha

**QS I-GAUGE DIAMOND** DIAMOND UNIVERSITY RATING

<b>ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY</b> B.Tech   BCA   M.Tech   MCA   M.Sc. (Physics)   M.Sc. (Math)   M.Sc. (Chemistry)   Ph.D.   Post. Doc.	<b>AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES</b> B.Sc. (Ag.) (Hons)   M.Sc. (Ag.)   Ph.D.   Post. Doc.
<b>MANAGEMENT SCIENCES</b> MBA   MBA (Hospital Administration)   Integrated MBA   BBA (Hons)   Ph.D.   Post. Doc.	<b>PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES AND BIOTECHNOLOGY</b> B.Pharm   M.Pharm   M.Sc (Biotechnology)   Integrated M.Sc (Biotechnology)   Ph.D   Post. Doc.
<b>HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT</b> BHMCT   MBA (Hospitality Management)   Ph.D.   Post. Doc.	<b>NURSING</b> B.Sc. Nursing   P.B. B.Sc. Nursing   M.Sc. Nursing   Ph.D.   Post. Doc.
<b>VETERINARY SCIENCES</b> B.V.Sc. & A.H.   Ph.D.   Post. Doc.	<b>LEGAL STUDIES</b> BBA LLB (H)   BA LLB (H)   LLB (H)   LLM   Ph.D.   Post. Doc.

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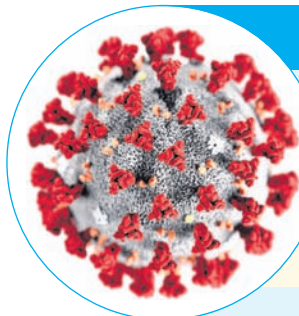


# downtown



## SAFER TOMORROW

Suvarnaprashan drops being given to a child at Government Ayurvedic Hospital in Bhubaneswar, Friday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,38,73,850	65,67,77,897	68,30,881
India	4,47,15,786	4,41,69,711	5,30,867
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204



DECKED UP: Wooden chariots on Assembly premises decked up with colourful lights Friday as state celebrates Utkal Divas, Saturday

OP PHOTO

# Nod to ₹854.17cr industrial projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The State Level Single Window Clearance Authority (SLSWCA), chaired by Chief Secretary PK Jena, Friday approved six industrial projects from diverse sectors worth Rs 854.17 crore that is aimed at generating at least 2,167 employment opportunities.

Projects spread across diverse sectors received approvals. The approved projects will be set up across various parts of the state like Bolangir, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur and Khurda districts.

The SLSWCA approved the proposal of Transtek Coal Minerals Private Limited, entailing an investment of Rs 380.25 crore. It proposes to set up a multi modal logistics park in Khurda. It is expected to provide employment opportunities to about 360 people.

It also approved the proposal of Nirmal Wires Private Limited at Jajpur, which promises an investment of Rs 200 crore and is expected to generate 400 jobs.

This apart, two other projects in

**The six projects from diverse sectors would generate at least 2,167 employment opportunities in state**

the infrastructure sector – Aegis Logistics Limited and Bhubaneswar Logixpress Warehousing – were approved. They would provide employment to over 350 people.

Secureyes Techno Services Private Limited which proposes to set up a global cyber security delivery centre with an investment of Rs 75 crore and provide employment opportunities to over 1,000 people, got a nod from SLSWCA.

The panel also approved the project of OVO Farm Private Limited which includes the setting up manufacturing unit for whole egg powder in the Food Park at Sadeipali in Bolangir with an investment of Rs 50.5 crore. 50 persons will be employed by it.

# Fake cert, Kotia issues rock House

Govt withdraws 3 Bills, including Odisha Apartment (Ownership and Management) Bill, 2023

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The state Assembly Friday witnessed uproarious scenes as the Opposition BJP and Congress faced off with the BJD members over the fake academic certificate racket and Kotia border dispute issues.

The issues were raised by Leader of Opposition (LoP) Jayanarayan Mishra of the BJP and Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Narasingha Mishra during the Zero Hour.

Jayanarayan Mishra attacked the state government over the Kotia issue and alleged that Odisha is sitting silently while the Andhra Pradesh administration has been luring the people of Kotia gram panchayat to their side.

The dispute over the ownership of 21 of the 28 villages under Kotia gram panchayat reached the Supreme Court in 1968. In 2006, the apex court held that interstate boundaries did not fall within its jurisdiction and only the Parliament could resolve them, as it imposed a permanent injunction on the disputed area.

The senior BJP leader also slammed the BJD government over the fake certificate issue.

Fake academic certificates of various boards and universities in and outside the state were found recently when some government job aspirants submitted them to the authorities.

The members of both the Opposition trooped into the well of

## Budget Session adjourned sine die 6 days ahead of schedule

The Budget Session of the state Assembly was adjourned sine die Friday six days ahead of its schedule amid walkout by Opposition BJP members. The session was scheduled to continue till April 6. On the last day, the House passed the Appropriation Bill, 2023, allowing the state government to spend Rs 2.30 lakh crore from its consolidated fund during the financial year 2023-24. Since beginning day (February 21), the House witnessed pandemonium several times as opposition legislators created noisy scenes raising different issues including minister Naba Das murder case, Mahanadi water dispute, inter-state border dispute, fake certificate racket, Rahul Gandhi's disqualification, CM read out speech, alleged matric question paper leak, 'officers' raj' and drivers' strike.

the House and raised slogans against the BJD government and sought a ruling from the Chair.

As Congress whip Tara Prasad Bahinipati climbed the Speaker's podium after being pushed by other agitating opposition members, Speaker BK Arukha adjourned the proceedings till 4pm. All his requests to agitating members to return to their seats did not pay any result.

Mishra claimed that the Andhra Pradesh deputy chief minister and officials of Parvatipuram district are regularly visiting the 21 villages under Kotia gram panchayat and carrying out welfare activities to woo the local people.

"I want to know the fate of the special package announced by Odisha chief minister," the BJP leader said adding that the CM has not visited Kotia area but he roams

around the world in name of seeking investment.

The BJP leader also claimed that not only Kotia in Koraput district, but other states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and West Bengal also have their eyes on Odisha villages.

Mishra also slammed the state government over the fake certificate issue which has been reported from Bolangir, Kandhamal, Kendrapara and other districts.

The CLP leader also supported the LoP and attacked the CM over the two issues.

The veteran Congress leader alleged that photos of a minister and a former minister along with the main accused in the fake certificate racket have gone viral.

He wanted to know what steps the government is taking in this regard.

Countering the Opposition attack, senior BJD leader Arun Sahoo accused the BJP and Congress of enacting drama over the Kotia issue.

He said there are three members from Odisha in the Union Cabinet and eight BJP MPs but none of them has put any effort to resolve the dispute with Andhra Pradesh.

Sahoo also displayed a photograph of the CLP leader with the fake certificate racket kingpin in Bolangir.

The CLP leader then offered to become part of the investigation if he has any link with the prime accused. "Will the minister, an examiner and two former BJD MPs also be ready to be part of the investigation?" he asked.

Amid the din, Speaker allowed finance minister Niranjan Pujari and government chief whip Prasanta Kumar Muduli to lay some reports.

The government also withdrew three Bills earlier introduced in the sessions— Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Odisha Amendment) Bill 2023, Odisha Apartment (Ownership and Management) Bill, 2023 and the Odisha State Commission For Backward Classes (Amendment) Bill, 2023.

The government is likely to bring these Bills through ordinance route as there is no time to discuss the Bills in the House, sources said.

# Sahu: Odisha committed to protecting people's interest

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The state government has been taking all necessary steps on the Mahanadi water issue to protect the interest of people of Odisha, Water Resources Minister Tukuni Sahu told the Assembly Friday.

Making a statement in the House, Sahu said the government is committed to protecting the interest of the people of the state in future also.

She said since the Mahanadi water dispute is at present under the consideration of the tribunal it would not be possible to submit a detailed report on the issue now.

The minister requested all members irrespective of their party affiliation, to support the government on the issue.

Sahu said Mahanadi is the lifeline of Odisha. People of 23 districts depend upon Mahanadi for their livelihood.

The prime reason over the dispute over Mahanadi river arose after Chhattisgarh constructed several barrages on the upstream of the river unilaterally and illegally ignoring the interest of Odisha and planned to use 27.48 million acre foot of water. She said Chhattisgarh government has constructed six mega industrial based barrages and obstructed the flow of water to Hirakud reservoir during the non-monsoon period.

Due to continuous reduction in



## MAHANADI WATER DISPUTE

flow of water to Hirakud reservoir during non-monsoon period, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had requested the Union Water Resources Minister in 2000 to ensure flow of minimum 2million acre foot to Hirakud reservoir during non-monsoon period.

Later in 2016, the CM demanded the Union Water Resources Minister at a meeting to maintain the status quo and also apprised the Prime Minister about it.

Since it yielded no results, the state government demanded the Union government to constitute a tribunal to resolve the issue, the minister said.

Sahu further said that Odisha government moved the Supreme Court as the Centre did not respond to the demand of the state.

The Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal was constituted March 12, 2018 on the direction of the SC

with a term of three years, which was later extended by the Centre by two more years and now it has been extended up to December 12, 2024, the minister said.

The Odisha government has appointed eminent technical experts as witnesses and has been presenting its argument through eminent legal experts before the tribunal and the case is now under the consideration of the tribunal.

The tribunal has fixed dates for field visits to the basins of Mahanadi in Chhattisgarh in two phases— in the first phase from April 18, 2023 to April 22, 2023 and in the second phase from

April 29 to May 3, 2023.

The date for field visit of the basin of Mahanadi in Odisha would be fixed after the visit of Chhattisgarh, the minister said and appealed to the members to cooperate with the government.

# 'Zero Fatality Week' begins today



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The state will observe 'Zero Fatality Week' from April 1 to 7 as part of an intensified awareness campaign and enforcement drive to prevent road accidents and casualties, an official said Friday.

The Commerce and Transport (C&T) department has issued a standard operating procedure (SOP) to all the stakeholder departments, district Collectors and superintendents of police (SPs) or deputy commissioners of police (DCPs) for smooth observance of the drive.

Odisha witnessed 11,663 road mishaps and 5,467 fatalities in 2022, a 7.60 per cent rise in fatalities as com-

pared with 2021, official sources said.

Many lives could have been saved if these accident victims could have reached the nearest healthcare facility in the Golden Hour.

Calling road mishaps a big challenge for the state, C&T department Principal Secretary Usha Padhee said that road safety is a high priority area for the government, which is taking a lot of initiatives for reduction of road accidents in the state.

The government, she said, has adopted a four-fold strategy – Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Emergency care – to ensure zero death during the week.

The department has specified the responsibilities in SOP for all

the stakeholder departments and urged them to take all possible measures to achieve zero casualty during the week, she said.

The Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department has been requested to sensitise the groups about 'Zero Fatality Week' who would support with blood arrangements to accident victims regularly.

The Trauma Care Centres have been instructed to remain prepared for round-the-clock service.

While the H&FW department and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will ensure deployment of ambulances in accident prone areas and highways, Works department and road owning agencies have been requested to install adequate signages, repair potholes and roads where required.

They have also been requested to ensure proper traffic calming measures, 500 mtrs before the junction points where rural/urban approach roads meet the highways.

Enforcement wing of RTOs along with police personnel will conduct stringent enforcement throughout the week.

NGOs and first responder groups (Rakshaks) have been requested to stay alert and help in the 'zero fatality' mission.



RAIN PAIN: Road users negotiate a waterlogged road in front of Iskcon temple in Jayadev Vihar area of Bhubaneswar after rain lashed the City, Friday OP PHOTO

# Mystery surrounds death of Balasore MBBS student



The deceased Hiteshnu, the only son of his parents, was admitted to the medical college three years ago

**Balasore, March 31:** A third-year MBBS student of the government-owned Fakir Mohan Medical College and Hospital in Balasore died under mysterious circumstances after reportedly falling from the academic building near his hostel, late Thursday night. The deceased was identified as Hiteshnu Das, 22, son of Chandrakant Das of Bhipura village under Rasalpur panchayat and Sadar police limits in Balasore district. His father was working as a head clerk in the district police office (DPO) in Balasore and had recently retired from his service. The family members were residing at quarter no-E/25 at Police Colony, OT Road in Balasore. The matter came to the fore after some students spotted his body in a pool of blood under the academic building of the medical college

A pall of gloom and grief descended in his family, native village and among his friends after news of his death spread. It was said that he had no enmity with his college friends. The incident occurred after he returned to the college hostel after watching the night show of a movie. The deceased and his friends entered the medical campus and all of them went inside their respective rooms but later his body was found lying under the academic building in a pool of blood. The medical college authorities and his friends are tightlipped. His family members are also yet to lodge any complaint in the police station. While mystery continues to shroud his death, all eyes are now on the post-mortem report that can establish the exact cause behind his death. When contacted, his classmates and the medical college authorities demanded a thorough probe into the unfortunate death. When contacted, Silpanchal police station IIC Salkhan Murmu said that the body was first spotted under the five-storied academic building by three students who were on their way to the Balasore railway station at 3.30am, Friday. Later, they informed the college authorities and police. He said that police is probing the case from all angles whether he was pushed to death or committed suicide. If he committed suicide then why he chose the five-storied academic building instead of jumping off his own hostel building which is also five-storied, the IIC added.



MYTHOLOGICAL PLAY: Artistes enacting a scene from Rameela at Bargaon in Sundargarh district, Friday

## 10-year jail for minor's rape

**Phulbani:** A fast track POCSE court here in Kandhamal district Friday sentenced a man to 10 years of imprisonment after convicting him in the rape case of a minor. The convict was identified as Durga Prasad Pradhan, a resident of Narayan Sahi in Phulbani. Judge Bhaskar Chandra Sahoo also slapped a penalty of Rs 1 lakh on the convict, apart from the punishment. In default, he has to undergo additional six months of imprisonment, the judge observed while delivering the order. This was stated here by special public prosecutor Banamali Behera, Friday. The judge passed the order after examining the statements recorded by 17 witnesses, medical examination report and scientific report in the case, the special public prosecutor said. According to the case diary, Durga Prasad lured the girl to his house frequently on the pretext of marriage and raped her repeatedly. As a result, the minor became pregnant. The minor informed him about his pregnancy and requested him to marry her repeatedly and save her from social humiliation. However, each time, Durga Prasad rejected her demand. Left with no option, the minor who was seven months pregnant lodged a complaint at the Phulbani Town police station. Police registered a case and arrested Durga Prasad on the charge and produced him in court.

## GST officer held by Vig accepting bribe

**Paradip:** Vigilance officials Friday arrested the CT & GST Officer, Enforcement Unit, Paradip for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 80,000 from a complainant to furnish closure report in a CT & GST case. Based on a complaint, a trap was laid and the accused Chittaranjan Mohanty, CT & GST Officer, was caught by the Vigilance team in his office chamber while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 80,000. Following the trap, simultaneous searches have been launched on his residential houses at Cuttack and native village besides his office chamber at Paradip. Vigilance sources said Rs1 lakh was recovered from his office almirah, the source of which is being verified. A case U/S 7 PC Act, 1988 as amended by PC (Amendment) Act, 2018 has been registered and Mohanty will be forwarded to the court, Vigilance sources said.

## Mob pushes man off moving train

**Koraput, March 31:** A mob allegedly pushed a man from a moving train running from Kirandul to Visakhapatnam. The victim has been identified as Javed Mohammad of Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh, who lost one of his legs in the accident and sustained critical injuries. He was rescued by some locals and later admitted to Saheed Laxman Naik Medical College and Hospital, Koraput. The Government Railway Police (GRP) has launched a probe into the incident.



According to reports, Kirandul-Visakhapatnam Express was travelling from Jagdalpur to Vishakhapatnam. Before Padua station, the victim reportedly came into a verbal altercation with some of the co-passengers. Later he moved and sat near the door of that compartment. During that moment, the involved co-passengers pushed him off the moving train. The locals admitted him to the Nandapur Community Health Center and later he was shifted to Saheed Laxman Naik Medical College and Hospital.

## Man sentenced to 3-year rigorous imprisonment for rape

**Kendrapara:** Adhoc Additional Session Judge (Fast Track court) of Kendrapara Tribikram Keshari Chinnar Friday sentenced a man to 3 years of Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) and slapped a fine of Rs 5,000 for outraging the modesty of a fellow village woman. The judge ordered in default of the fine amount, the convict would further undergo six more months of rigorous imprisonment. The convict identified as Gulia alias Gurucharan Sethy had outraged the modesty of the woman at Resho village under Pattamundai police station in August 2014. The victim woman had lodged an FIR with Pattamundai police station alleging that on the night of August 26, 2014 Gulia forcibly entered her house while she was sleeping with her one-year-old son and raped her.

## 5 cops injured in assault by attempt-to-murder accused

**Nilagiri, March 31:** In a shocking incident, the accused in an attempt-to-murder case allegedly chased and hacked five members of a police team with a sharp-edged weapon in Jamudihi village under Nilagiri police station limits of Balasore, Friday.



The incident occurred when the officials visited the house of the accused after a court summoned him in connection with an attempt to murder case of 2021

The injured were identified as sub-inspector Biranchi Sahu, assistant sub-inspectors Prabodh Mallick, Ananta Murmu, constables Arjun Madinga and Deepak Pradhan of Nilagiri police station. The accused attacked a village guard (gramrakhi) as well. All the injured personnel were admitted to the Nilagiri hospital for treatment. The accused has been identified as Padmalochan Patra, 53, a native of Jamudihi village under Jadi panchayat of Nilagiri police station limits. The incident occurred when the

village guard visited the house of the accused to serve him a summons received from the court in connection with an attempt to murder case of 2021. Patra flew into rage after seeing the village guard and had a heated brawl with him. The village guard informed Nilagiri police officials who reached the spot with force to assist him. However, the accused lost his

cool after watching the police team at his house. Seething in anger, he picked up a billhook, chased and attacked the police team injuring five of them. Eventually, the police team managed to overpower Patra after a scuffle. He has been detained at Nilagiri police station and is being interrogated in this connection. Further investigations are on.

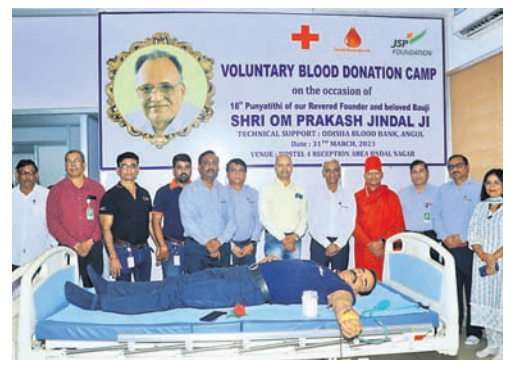
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## JSP observes OP Jindal's 18th death anniversary



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Angul, March 31:** Jindal Steel and Power (JSP) observed the 18th death anniversary of its founder Om Prakash Jindal (Bauji) with a special prayer, a voluntary blood donation camp and a series of philanthropic initiatives. Led by Angul head of JSP and Executive Director (i/c) Hridayeshwar Jha, all the department heads, employees with their family members, the workforce of the company and villagers from the periphery paid their homage to the visionary change-maker OP Jindal and remembered him for his path-breaking steps to usher socio-economic prosperity in the lives of millions of underprivileged. On this occasion, Hridayeshwar Jha inaugurated a voluntary blood donation camp at Jindal Nagar township and encouraged the employees to donate blood generously to save precious lives needing blood and blood products. A total of 149 units of blood was collected from this camp. Jindal Mahila Samiti joined the charitable drive of JSP Foundation and visited various old age homes and rehabilitation centres of Angul and distributed dry food items and other requirements. DAV Savitri Jindal High School situated at Badamahita (R&R) Colony also remembered Bauji and as a mark of respect, the students of the school made beautiful pictures of Bauji. Akahand Ramayan Patha, puja and hawan were performed at the Devbhoomi Temple situated at Jindal Nagar township. With indomitable will and perseverance, OP Jindal who belonged to a farmer's family achieved stellar success both in business and social life. With a vision for self-reliant India and as a pioneering Indian entrepreneur, he had laid the foundation for OP Jindal Group, which is now a leading Industrial group in the Country. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry honoured him with the prestigious 'Life Time Achievement Award' for his outstanding contribution to the Indian Steel Industry.

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**“** The flame of the aspiration must be so straight and so ardent that no obstacle can dissolve it.

THE MOTHER



## Combating Corruption

The Department of Personnel and Training's (DoPT) decision to invite retired IAS officers to investigate allegations against serving IAS officers comes at a time when corruption charges and other violations of service rules have been on the rise among the country's babus. With its eyes on the 2024 general elections, the Centre is hoping this will restore public confidence and ensure that corruption and violation of service rules are addressed promptly.

The fact that the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) have arrested several IAS officers in connection with corruption cases in the past six months also underscores the need for the Centre to take swift action. Between 2011 and 2021, the CBI filed 662 chargesheets against 805 senior babus under the Centre's jurisdiction. Additionally, 96 officers, including 55 still in service, faced chargesheets in 84 cases between January 2018 and June 2021. In the past six months alone, the CBI or ED have arrested at least seven IAS officers in connection with various corruption cases from such states as Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Punjab, Jharkhand and Haryana.

S Radha Chauhan, Secretary, DoPT, has said that the retired officers serving on these inquiry committees are experienced professionals who will ensure that due process is followed in each case. What are the odds this move will succeed? Do you expect the ex-babus to do a fair job of investigating serious charges against their own tribespeople?

### Race for Maharashtra CS heats up

The race for the coveted post of Maharashtra Chief Secretary is heating up, with an IAS couple from the 1987 batch, Manoj Saunik and Sujata Saunik, vying for the position. Current Chief Secretary Manukumar Srivastava is set to step down on April 30, with his likely successor being one of the two Sauniks, or Additional Chief Secretary (revenue) Nitin N Kareer.

If appointed, Sujata Saunik would become the first woman to hold the position, breaking the glass ceiling in a male-dominated field. Manoj, sources have informed DKB, is favoured by both Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, for his quick thinking and sound decision-making.

The appointment is yet to be announced, and a lot can happen in the interim, including the emergence of other qualified candidates. It's worth noting the potential significance of having a woman Chief Secretary of Maharashtra. Meanwhile, it is believed that the present Chief Secretary will most likely be vying to become the next Chief Information Officer (CIC). What makes the wait interesting is that the winning candidate will have to be one who can work with both Shinde as well as Fadnavis, the two power centres in the state.



**BABUDOM BYTES**  
 Dilip Cherian

### MHA moves to strengthen IB

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has inducted 10 IPS officers into the "hard-core" of the Intelligence Bureau (IB), the country's internal security and counter-intelligence agency. If the term "hard-core" seems ominous, as if this is some separate elite wing within the IB, it most likely means that these officers will serve in the IB until retirement.

The move has raised questions about the ministry's intentions. While the reasons behind it are not entirely clear, there are a couple of possible explanations. One likely possibility is that the Centre is looking to strengthen the internal security apparatus in the face of increasing threats from both domestic and foreign actors. The recent Kiran Patel escapade in Kashmir and the Amritpal Singh incident in Punjab, which give the perception of intelligence goof-ups, likely made Home Minister Amit Shah and Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla decide to bring in fresh talent and expertise to help the agency stay ahead of evolving security challenges.

Another possibility is that the government is looking to fill key vacancies within the IB. The agency has reportedly been facing a shortage of staff in recent years, which has affected its ability to carry out its mandate effectively. By bringing in a new cohort of IPS officers, the ministry may be hoping to address this staff crunch and ensure that the IB is able to operate at full capacity.

But this may not be the only change in the IB. The buzz is that the agency may see a major reshuffle and postings in the days ahead. So, watch this space!

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

## WISDOM CORNER

- Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards. **SOREN KIERKEGAARD**
- Talent hits a target no one else can hit; Genius hits a target no one else can see. **ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER**
- The only means of strengthening one's intellect is to make up one's mind about nothing, to let the mind be a thoroughfare for all thoughts. **JOHN KEATS**

## WORDSWORTH

### Guinea pig

There are many puzzles about this inoffensive little animal, not least that it isn't a pig and it doesn't come from Guinea. It's actually a rodent from central South America, though the variety that children have as pets doesn't occur in the wild. Why it should have that name is a mystery; the Oxford English Dictionary hazards a guess that it might have been confused with the Guinea hog, a hardy species of pig which did come from the Guinea coast of Africa, was taken to the US as part of the slave trade, and was at one time a common homestead pig in rural America. The problem with this, as the OED's editors surely knew, is that guinea pig is actually about a century older as a term in English than guinea hog, which is known from 1664. The guinea pig was early on also called the Spanish coney (coney being the old name for a rabbit, which was applied by sailors and explorers to any small, furry, vaguely rabbit-like animal they encountered; Spanish because it came from the Spanish colonies in South America); it has been suggested that coney became corrupted to guinea. Yet a third story suggests that it was first brought to Britain in Guineaamen, vessels that did the triangular voyage to Guinea and the New World as part of the slave trade, but similar problems about dating crop up here. Either way, it seems to have ended up being called a pig because it does squeal a bit like one. The animal became quite widely known in Europe and America from the eighteenth century on. The guinea pig was certainly used for medical experimentation in the nineteenth century — there are many examples mentioned in the literature going back at least as far as the 1850s. Its advantages may have been those that also recommended it as a pet — it doesn't bite much, it's not a fussy eater, and it's long-lived. Very usefully, in some respects the guinea pig is rather like us, for example in its immune reactions and its need for vitamin C in its diet. In the early 1880s, the German scientist Robert Koch used guinea pigs, which suffer from tuberculosis in the same way as humans, to determine what caused the disease. In Paris, Louis Pasteur used the animals for his work on rabies in the 1880s and 1890s. The first known use of guinea pig to refer to a human who was being experimented upon is by George Bernard Shaw in 1913. But it has proved impossible to make any direct link to experiments that used the animals or why that particular experimental subject should have so caught the imagination that it should have been taken up as a metaphor (except that guinea pig sounds more exotic than lab rat).

## FOCUS LAW

# IN THE DOCK

The New York grand jury's indictment of former US President Donald Trump for bookkeeping crimes relating to hush money paid to the adult film actress Stormy Daniels follows upon the International Criminal Court's arrest warrant, two weeks ago, for Russian President Vladimir Putin for the war crime of deporting children from Ukraine. These cases highlight the law's growing, and potentially dangerous, dominion in politics — domestic and international.

Both events are groundbreaking. Trump's indictment is the first for any president, current or former, in United States history. Similarly, international courts have issued only a handful of arrest warrants for heads of state, and never for the leader of a major power. These legal actions will set important precedents and could have enormous consequences, even if neither one results in a criminal conviction. The question is whether the precedents will be happy ones, and whether the consequences will be positive on balance.

Since the Nuremberg Trials after World War II, the goal of international criminal law has been to institutionalise legal accountability for wartime activities. Most international criminal tribunals have been under the thumb of the United Nations Security Council, which meant that they could not be used against that body's five permanent veto-wielding members (China, France, Britain, Russia, and the United States). But the ICC, by design, is not beholden to the UN. Although Russia never consented to the ICC's jurisdiction, Ukraine has, and the ICC is proceeding on that basis.

According to ICC prosecutor Karim AA Khan, the arrest warrant holds out the hope that Putin will be "held accountable" for his crimes against Ukrainian chil-



The recent indictments of Russian President Vladimir Putin and former US President Donald Trump highlight the law's growing, and potentially dangerous, dominion in politics. Either case could well result in far-reaching negative unintended consequences that would compound the injustices they seek to correct

dren, and perhaps for the many other crimes he has directed in Ukraine. Moreover, even if Putin never ends up in the dock in The Hague, the arrest warrant could, the ICC notes, "contribute to the prevention of the further commission of crimes" in Ukraine. Harold Koh, a professor at Yale Law School and a former State Department legal adviser, contends that it might also delegitimise, isolate, and weaken Putin, thereby reducing his bargaining power.

And yet, as Koh's former State Department colleague Stephen Pomper argues, the arrest warrant could have serious "negative effects." Now the policy chief at the International Crisis Group, Pomper worries that the move could make Putin even more dangerous and destructive, impede any future peace process, and prevent multilateral cooperation with Russia on collateral issues like humanitarian assistance in Syria and Afghanistan. It could also harm the legitimacy of the ICC itself, especially if the warrant splits international support for the Court, or if countries

refuse to meet their legal obligation to arrest and transfer Putin to The Hague if given the chance.

Analogous tradeoffs bedevil the Trump prosecution. Trump deserves to go to jail if he violated New York criminal law. The fact that he is a former president is irrelevant. And the conviction of such a powerful figure would be a special vindication of the rule of law. The indictment might also, as Alexander Burns argues, harm Trump politically by driving home to the marginal voter Trump's sleaziness and unfitness for office.

But it could also have the opposite effect. New York County District Attorney Alvin L. Bragg's case is widely regarded as weak, including by a respected lawyer who previously worked on it himself. Because of this weakness, and in light of Bragg's connections to Democratic Party politics, Republicans will largely view the indictment as politically motivated, and have already managed to pick a political fight with Bragg.

The short-term politics of Bragg's indictment, and of Trump's

angry responses, are hard to assess. But the episode seems likely to negatively impact federal Special Counsel Jack Smith's more serious and credible investigations into Trump. Smith has a powerful case, especially when it comes to Trump's possession of US government documents — including many highly classified ones — at his Mar-a-Lago home.

But the expected indictment in the federal case will invariably be controversial, because it will be coming from the Biden administration's Justice Department after Trump has already announced his presidential candidacy for 2024. Following the New York indictment, Smith's efforts will face the additional challenge of looking like a prosecutorial pile-on.

One might think that concerns about the practical consequences of prosecuting Putin and Trump are irrelevant. Both men have committed very bad acts, after all, and the rule of law demands that they be punished. Fiat justitia, ruat caelum — let justice be done, though the heavens fall.

But this is an unrealistic view of criminal law operation in high-stakes domestic and international politics. If the ICC arrest warrant leads to more death and suffering than would otherwise occur, the court and the broader project of international criminal law will be discredited. Likewise, if the New York indictment empowers Trump — and especially if it is seen as setting off a chain of events that leads to his re-election, or to destabilising tit-for-tat retaliations down the road — it will come to be seen by many Americans as a tragic error.

We cannot know now if these things will happen, or will be seen in this way. But if so, justice obviously will not have been done.

The writer is Professor of Law at Harvard Law School and a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

## SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

# How to better manage food waste

With reports of an impending El Nino effect impacting agricultural production and resultant higher food prices, populous countries like India would be affected. Therefore, it is all the more imperative that possible food wastage be checked. Judged from the standpoint of natural justice, such wastage clearly reveals not just neglect and lack of concern of the affluent sections for the poor and the impoverished but also poor governance on the part of the government.

It is estimated that 40% food waste in India takes place often because most small-scale farmers do not have storage or cold chain facilities. As per records, India's households discard 50 kg food per capita annually. Food waste is also caused by pestilence and rotting. Households in India throw much less edible food than many countries in the West, specially the US, where over 40% of food is wasted by consumers.

One may refer here to the Food Waste Index Report 2021 of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and partner organisation WRAP, which stated that around 931 million tonnes of food waste was generated in 2019, 61% of which came from households, 26% from food service and

13% from retail. "This suggests that 17% of total global food production may be wasted," it said.

It needs to be stated that food waste is a biodegradable waste that is discharged from food processing industries, households, and the hospitality sector. Food waste contains fresh vegetables, fruits, meat, baked goods, dairy products, kitchen scrapes. This food waste when dumped in open landfills causes severe health and environmental issues. Decomposition of food waste in the absence of oxygen releases methane which further leads to many environmental problems. Also, decomposition of food waste on landfills hinders recovery of nutrients in the soil.

At a time when there is worldwide concern about greenhouse gas emissions, it needs to be pointed out that food waste has substantial environmental, social and economic impacts. There can be no denying that with poverty, on the one hand, and climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss, on the other, reducing food waste is an urgent necessity. But efforts by the Central and state governments are far from encouraging. There is no regulation to stop food waste. Lack of municipal governance and unsustainable life styles by the rich and the upper middle class has re-

sulted in food going waste.

For an efficient food waste management in India, there are various viable solutions prepared at hand. The first and foremost is the need to recycle by composting. Doing this not merely eliminates waste, it saves cash as there is no need to outsource compost production. The other aspect could be to turn wasted food into animal feed. Also wasted food could be used to for making biofuels to liquid fertilizer and the likes. Another measure would be to start food banks by charitable organisations that dispense food to those who have difficulty purchasing enough food to avoid hunger. Finally, source reduction and food donation is very vital and the most important aspect of controlling waste.

Food wastage is a global problem and India stands a chance to convert this into an opportunity. This food wastage is not limited to one level alone but can be seen with each step ahead. Food needs to go ahead with many processes before consumed from harvesting, processing, packaging, and transporting to the end stage of consumption. Most of the time food wastage occurs because of gaps in logistics and supply chain, which if organised and managed properly, can minimise the wastage. The whole management of food

waste is based on - reduce, reuse, and compost. These aspects should be taken care of by every family out there. Food donation, animal feeding, rendering are basic measures that can be taken up to reduce wastage. Hotel industry, banquets, and the ones that deal with bulk should take the measure of food control or food security and not forget to supply excessive food to NGOs and needy people. This should be made mandatory and, if necessary, a tax should be levied on the quantum of food waste generated every day or every week by hotels and restaurants, especially in metros and towns all over the country.

In a country like India, where hunger along with under nutrition and malnutrition is a problem, the government has to come out with a policy framework to control food waste. Also, the question of recycling such waste should be seriously considered and a strategy evolved in consultation with experts in the field.

It goes without saying that India being the world's second-most populous country; it is imperative to reduce food wastage to feed the 194 million Indians who sleep hungry every night.

The writer is a maxillofacial surgeon



Dr Oishee Mukherjee

IT IS IMPERATIVE TO REDUCE FOOD WASTAGE TO FEED THE 194 MILLION INDIANS WHO SLEEP HUNGRY EVERY NIGHT

## 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, Ransagarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

### No lessons learnt

Sir, This refers to "14 dead as temple well caves in on Ram Navami," Orissa POST, March 31. The tragedy of the stepwell collapse inside a temple in Indore, Madhya Pradesh during the Ram Navami celebrations, which reportedly consumed 35 precious lives, is heart-breaking indeed. It is said that the disaster could have been averted had the Indore Municipal Corporation acted upon the illegal constructions in January this year. It has also been reported that the Indore Municipal Corporation had marked the walls cover of the well for demolition as it was found dangerous during an earlier inspection. But the temple authorities seem to have paid little attention or ignored such caveats. It is important to ensure that all public places, including temples, are regularly inspected and maintained. Only through consistent efforts and vigilance can we ensure the safety of the people in public places. It is all the more sad that the Indore temple tragedy has occurred just months after a century-old cable suspension bridge collapsed into a river in Morbi town of Gujarat, killing over 100 people.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

### Chinese Spy ships

Sir, China has been regularly sending its navy ships to the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Sea in order to capitalise on these waters in the future. A Chinese "spy ship," Hai Yang Shi You, was spotted close to the Indian coast - nearly 150 nautical miles off the coast of Paradip in Odisha last week which clearly appears to be a highly suspicious one. The ship was found roughly northeast of the port of Paradip and is now in the Bay of Bengal. Even though the "research vessel" was tasked with gathering surface-level information such as depth and salinity in parts of the Bay of Bengal, one can easily say that it is closely monitoring the Indian Navy and other activities. Therefore, the Defence Ministry and the Centre have to swiftly take necessary actions.

Vijaykumar HK, RAICHUR

### Don't get fooled

Sir, The first day of the month of April is called 'All Fools' Day' or 'April Fool's Day'. On this day, people take delight in playing practical jokes on each other. The custom started in Rome when king Leopold of Belgium, who was married in Rome, was made a fool of by his sister-in-law when he went to his father-in-law's palace on the first of April by mistake as he had been invited there on first of May. Today, several centuries later, 'April fool' is played on people on a large scale. It is played in schools, colleges, offices and at homes. So be alert.

Jubel D'Cruz, MUMBAI





# national



**The haste with which Rahul Gandhi was disqualified, despite the trial court giving one month to file an appeal against his conviction and sentence, indicates the brutal vindictiveness of the Modi government**  
MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

## NEW LEASE OF LIFE

A man has got a new lease of life with liver donated by his wife. The couple Rakesh Singh, 46, and Mamta Singh, 38, hailing from Deoria, underwent a living donor liver transplant at King George's Medical University Thursday



## of the day quote

Today, Rajasthan is becoming a model state and is among the fastest growing states in the country. Rajasthan is discussed in the country for having the best roads, best medical care, maximum number of universities and the most progressive Rajasthan

The Tamil Nadu government would organise year (2023-24) long events to commemorate the Vaikom struggle and disseminate the legendary movement's history, objective and its victory

Where on planet you'll get a Supreme Court which can act with lightning speed and grant relief when someone is accused of defamation? Where will you get a Supreme Court which will sit overtime... The chief justice has impeccable credentials with global image

## 21 ARRESTED OVER STONE PELTING

Mumbai, March 31: As many as 21 persons have been arrested so far in connection with the stone pelting at a Ram Navami procession in suburban Malad (West), police said Friday. The tensions on Thursday night began following disputes over the loud DJ music being played in the procession as it was passing through the vicinity of mosques in Malvani area, a police official said. A First Information Report (FIR) has been registered against nearly 300 identified and unidentified persons at the Malvani police station, he said. As per the FIR, more than 6,000 persons had participated in the Ram Navami procession organised by the Bajrang Dal, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and other Hindu organizations. The procession began from Ram Janki temple late in the afternoon. Around 7.25 pm, as it was moving towards Jama Masjid, around 100 to 150 people objected to the high volume of music as namaz was going on in the mosque, said a local police official. As the volume of music was not lowered, there was some slogan-shouting and one of the men who had objected to loud music allegedly hurled a stone at the procession and it hit a participant, he added.

## Fresh unrest in Howrah; Shah talks to Governor

Howrah/New Delhi, March 31: After fresh unrest was reported in Howrah's Kazipara area which witnessed violence over the Ram Navami procession Thursday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose over the issue. Bose and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also reviewed the situation on Friday, a Raj Bhavan statement said. The Governor also said those who resort to violence under the illusion that they can hoodwink the people will soon realise they are in a fool's paradise. "There will be effective and concerted action to book the culprits and bring them before the law. Setting fire to public property, that too on the sacred Ram Navami day, is a highly provocative act and will be viewed seriously," he said. Raj Bhavan will keep its eyes and ears open to ensure protection to the life, property and dignity of the common man, Bose said. During the telephonic conversation with Bose, the Union Home Minister sought to know the prevailing situation in the state, particularly in the violence-hit areas of Howrah. The Governor is believed to have provided the Home Minister details about Thursday's violence and the present situation, sources said in



New Delhi. As unidentified people on police personnel on Friday afternoon, the police used batons to disperse a group of people who had gathered there. At least three policemen were injured in the brick batting. Prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPC were imposed in Kazipara area, a senior IPS officer said. Altogether 45 people were arrested in connection with the violence since Thursday. "The situation was calm and peaceful until this afternoon. After that, police personnel were pelted with stones which sparked tension in the area. Some people were arrested as our officers reacted instantly," he said. A huge team of Rapid Action Force (RAF) from Kolkata Police was brought into the area on Friday afternoon. The personnel started a route march following the stone-throwing incidents. Earlier in the day, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee alleged that the BJP along with other right-wing organisations was responsible for Thursday's violence in Howrah. She appealed to people to maintain peace in the area. "The Howrah incident is very unfortunate. Neither Hindus nor Muslims were behind the violence in Howrah. The BJP along with

Bajrang Dal and other such organisations were involved in the violence with arms," Banerjee said. The state government will help all whose properties were vandalised in the clashes, she said. Violence broke out on Thursday evening between two groups when a Ram Navami procession was taken out in the twin city of Howrah. Several vehicles, including some belonging to the police, were torched and shops and auto-rickshaws ransacked during the violence. Claiming that there was laxity in a section of the administration, she said strict action would be taken against those involved in the clash. A large police contingent was deployed to restore peace in the locality.

## 'Mann's daughter threatened in US'

New Delhi: Expressing concerns over Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's daughter reportedly receiving death threats in the US, Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) Chief Swati Maliwal on Friday appealed to the Indian embassy in the US to ensure her safety. CM Mann's daughter has reportedly received threat calls from pro-Khalistan elements. "Read the reports of Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's daughter receiving death threats in the US. It is an act of extreme cowardice. I appeal to the @IndianEmbassyUS to ensure her safety," Maliwal said in her tweet. Mann's ex-wife Inderpreet Kaur Grewal, who lives in the US with daughter Seerat Kaur, 21, and son Dilshan, 18, confirmed the incident through social media. She wrote on Facebook that Khalistan supporters threatened to kill her daughter on the phone and also abused her.



Police personnel attempt to maintain law and order after clashes broke out between two groups during a procession a day after 'Ram Navami' in Nalanda district

## SIDHU TO BE FREED TODAY, SAYS FAMILY

Chandigarh, March 31: After spending about 10 months in Patiala's central jail, Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu is set to walk free on Saturday, according to his family and lawyer. However, there is no official confirmation that the 59-year-old maverick politician is being released - an event that is bound to stir the Punjab unit of the Congress which was trounced by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the February 2022 state elections. The former state Congress chief was jailed on May 20 last year, sentenced to one-year rigorous imprisonment by the Supreme Court over the death of 65-year-old Gurnam Singh in a road rage case in 1988. According to his lawyer, the release is happening earlier due to Navjot Sidhu's good conduct during imprisonment, as allowed under the rules. A tweet from Navjot Sidhu's account, being managed by his team in his absence, on Friday said, "This is to inform everyone that Sardar Navjot Singh Sidhu will be released from Patiala Jail tomorrow...As informed by the concerned authorities." Navjot Sidhu's family has got intimation from authorities regarding his release from the Patiala jail, his lawyer HPS Varma said on Friday. The Congress leader's son Karan Sidhu told reporters in Patiala that information regarding his release had been received from officials concerned. He said his father is expected to come out of prison on Saturday afternoon. When contacted Patiala Central Jail Superintendent MS Tiwana said, "When the orders for his release are out, we shall inform." Several Congress leaders and Navjot Sidhu's supporters are making preparations for giving him a grand welcome.



## Mango crops damaged due to rain: ICAR

New Delhi, March 31: The mango crop in the country has been damaged up to 20 per cent because of untimely rains, hailstorm and strong wind, according to senior ICAR officials. Many mango growers said the damage has been huge in North India due to hailstorm and thunderstorm. Mango is an important fruit crop in India and popularly called the 'King of Fruits'. India is a major mango growing country, contributing nearly 42 per cent of the world's production. Since last few days, unseasonal rains, hailstorm and gusty wind due to the western disturbance have impacted both foodgrain and horticultural crops in some parts of the country. "First untimely rains did not cause dam-



loss in North India alone is about 30 per cent, while in South India the damage is less than 8 per cent, he said. However, the fresh data is awaited from states, he added. Lucknow-based mango grower Upendra Singh, who owns a 5-hectare mango orchard, said, "There has been up to 75 per cent damage due to hailstorm in Maal-Malihabad mango hub area. In places where there was only untimely rains and no hailstorm, the damage has been less." "The mango crop condition till March 19 was best in last 30 years. From March 20, unseasonal rains and hail have brought huge damage," he said and added that high moisture during flowering stage has led to black fungus.

## Man praised for rescuing Dutch woman

Panaji, March 31: The 42-year-old man who came to the rescue of a woman tourist from Netherlands attacked by a hotel staffer in Goa has drawn praise from all quarters for his brave act. State Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte hailed Eurica Dias for his selfless action and said it indicated that locals in the coastal state are basically helpful. The minister said he will meet the injured Dutch tourist and her rescuer, who are both undergoing treatment at a hospital, following the attack that took place at Pernem in North Goa. Dias had rushed to help the tourist who was attacked by a hotel staffer with a knife in the intervening night of March 29 and 30. Khaunte also praised the quick re-

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# national



**Bhutan and India have enjoyed the closest of relations since 1949 but the unshakeable relationship is now facing a challenge from an aggressive China**  
JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

## NEW MENU SOON

The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation is planning to introduce nutritious additions in its menu which will include millet-based dishes



## of the day quote

The acquittal of the four men who were given capital punishment by a lower court for the 2008 Jaipur serial blasts was a serious issue and the Rajasthan government should appeal against it  
SACHIN PILOT | CONGRESS LEADER

14 lawmakers, including Lulu Prasad, have been disqualified after their conviction in criminal cases, but the Gandhi family considers itself above the law and is shedding tears over Rahul Gandhi's suspension from the Lok Sabha  
ANURAG THAKUR | UNION MINISTER

People are feeling the change in Jammu and Kashmir post August 2019 and despite hindrances by some, we are nearing our goal to ensure the Union Territory is part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of a developed India by 2047  
MANOJ SINHA | J&K LT GOVERNOR

## TEMPLE TRAGEDY: TOLL RISES TO 36

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Indore, March 31:** The death toll in Indore temple stepwell roof collapse incident rose to 36 on Friday with the recovery of one more victim's body in the afternoon, an official said.

In the morning, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan visited the Beleshwar Mahadev Jhulelal temple in the city, where the tragedy occurred Thursday. Near the temple, a group of locals shouted "Murdaab" slogans in protest when Chouhan was on way to console the victims' families.

The slab constructed on top of an ancient 'bawdi' or stepwell collapsed during a 'havan' programme held on the occasion of Ram Navami at the temple located in Patel Nagar area of the city, plunging several devotees into the water reservoir below.

The temple had been constructed after covering the square-shaped stepwell about four decades ago. Indore Divisional Commissioner (Revenue) Pawan Kumar Sharma said, "The body of one person who had gone missing after the incident has been recovered from the 'bawdi'. With this, the bodies of 36 people have been recovered from the water body so far."

- The temple had been constructed after covering the square-shaped stepwell about four decades ago
- Sixteen people, who were injured in the accident, have been admitted to a hospital, while two other persons have been sent home after first aid

Sixteen people, who were injured in the accident, have been admitted to a hospital, while two other persons have been sent home after first aid, he said. According to Sharma, the bodies of all those who were reported missing by the family members have been recovered. "But we are not calling off the search operation right away. We will remove the entire silt from the stepwell so that there is no doubt left," he added.

Eyewitnesses said that after 11.30 pm on Thursday, the process of recovering bodies from the well and sending them to a hospital for post-mortem intensified. Personnel of the Army, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) were involved in the search and rescue operation. A joint team of the Army and the NDRF descended into the well with the help of a crane and a trolley to recover the bodies, officials said.



**FEARLESS ACT:** NSG commandos display their counter-terrorism operations at the closing ceremony of the 13th All India Police Commando Competition, at NSG Manesar Campus, in Gurugram  
PTI PHOTO

## SHORT TAKES

### Terrorists held

**Srinagar:** Two hybrid terrorists involved in a terror attack on a YouTuber journalist have been arrested in Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian district on Friday, police said. As per a police official, an SIT was set up to probe the attack and during the course of investigation, on the basis of oral, circumstantial and technical evidences, a number of suspects were rounded up. During questioning, two suspects identified as Suhaib Reyaz and Anayat Ullah Iqbal, both residents of Saidapora Payeen, admitted their involvement in the terror attack.

### Four killed in UP

**Bulandshahr:** Four people were killed Friday in an explosion in Bulandshahr district in Uttar Pradesh. The incident took place in a house, where the factory was running, on Dhikoli road in the Nagar Kotwall area. The house where the explosion took place has collapsed, more persons are suspected to be buried under the debris. Cylinder pieces have also been recovered from the spot.

### Pistols recovered

**New Delhi:** An illegal weapon supplier, who also runs an unauthorised firearms repairing factory in Bihar's Siwan, was arrested by police, an official said on Friday, adding that the accused has been also summoned by central probe agencies for his alleged links with many inter-state criminal groups. Police said that they have also recovered eight pistols along with 11 bullets from the possession of the accused identified as Bablu Sharma.

## Gujarat HC quashes order on PM's degree, fines Kejriwal



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, March 31:** Does not the country have the right to know the academic qualification of the Prime Minister, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal asked Friday after the Gujarat High Court set aside an order of the Central Information Commission for providing information on Narendra Modi's degree to him.

Allowing the Gujarat University appeal against the seven-year-old order of the Central Information Commission (CIC), Justice Biren Vaishnav also imposed a cost of Rs 25,000 on Kejriwal and asked him to deposit the amount within four weeks to the Gujarat State Legal Services Authority (GSLSA).

Reacting to the high court verdict, Kejriwal tweeted in Hindi, "Doesn't the country even have the right to know how much the PM has studied? He vehemently opposed showing the degree in the court. Why? And those who demand to see the degree will be

**BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said, "what Kejriwal is doing reflects his frustration. He is naturally frustrated as his ministers are in jail on charges of corruption and being involved in a liquor scam. His comments are a consequence of this"**

finned? What's happening?" "Illiterate or less educated PM is very dangerous for the country," the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief alleged in the tweet. AAP Rajya Sabha MP and national spokesperson Sanjay Singh termed the high court verdict "surprising". "CIC passed an order and asked Gujarat University to provide in-

formation on Narendra Modi's degree. Then, the university files an appeal against the CIC order but fine has been slapped on Arvind Kejriwal. What kind of decision is this?" Singh said at a press conference here.

"This proves that the prime minister is actually not educated and he doesn't want the people of the country to know about his educational qualification," he charged, asking "will the country continue to pay the price for having an illiterate Prime Minister?"

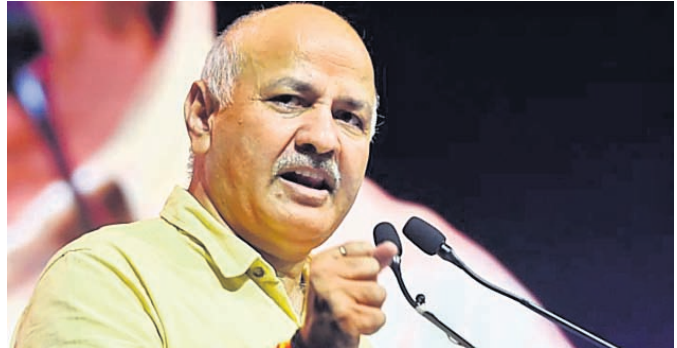
### CONGRESS HITS OUT

**New Delhi:** The Congress Friday took a swipe at the government, saying there is a limit to even transparency in 'New India', after the Gujarat High Court set aside an order of the Central Information Commission asking the Gujarat University to provide information on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's degree. The high court set aside the seven-year-old order of the commission, asking the varsity to provide information on Prime Minister's degree to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. Reacting to the verdict, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh in a tweet in Hindi said, "There is a limit to even transparency in New India. This is what the 'Entire Political Science' teaches." Asked about the issue at a press conference, Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera said, "See, why this matter went to the court. Courts have lot of pressure... PM's educational qualification, whether his degree is genuine or not, this matter going to a court is astonishing."

### EXCISE POLICY CASE

## Sisodia's bail plea rejected

The court said his release may adversely impact the ongoing investigation and 'seriously hamper' its progress



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 31:** A court here Friday dismissed a bail plea of incarcerated former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia in the excise policy case lodged by the CBI, saying prima facie the AAP leader is the architect of the criminal conspiracy in the matter.

The court said his release may adversely impact the ongoing investigation and "seriously hamper" its progress. Special Judge M K Nagpal, who had reserved order on the AAP leader's bail plea on March 24, said he was not inclined to release him at this stage.

"Thus, it is clear from the above discussion that the applicant had played the most important and vital role in the criminal conspiracy and he had been deeply involved in the formulation as well as the implementation of the said policy to ensure the achievement of objectives of the said conspiracy.. Thus, as per allegations made by the prosecution and the evidence collected in support thereof so far, the applicant can prima facie be held to be the architect of the said criminal conspiracy," the judge said.

"... This court is not inclined to release the applicant on bail at this stage of investigation of the case as his release may adversely affect the ongoing investigation and will also seriously hamper the progress thereof. Therefore, this bail application filed on behalf of the applicant is being dismissed," the judge said in his 34-page order. Sisodia had earlier sought bail saying he was neither a flight risk nor the CBI found anything incriminating against him in its probe into the alleged irregularities relating to the excise policy. His lawyer had said the policy was formulated "purely in the normal course".

Opposing the bail plea, the CBI had said though Sisodia was not a flight risk, he was "definitely" in a position to influence witnesses and destroy evidence. The agency on February 26 had arrested Sisodia in connection with alleged corruption in the formulation and implementation of the now-scrapped Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22. On March 9, the ED arrested Sisodia at Tihar jail, where he was lodged in connection with a separate case being probed by the CBI.

## SIX DIE IN FIRE AT DELHI HOME

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 31:** In a freak accident, six people, including a toddler, suffocated to death after a lit mosquito coil tipped over on a mattress and sparked a fire at a house in northeast Delhi's Shastrri Park, police said Friday.

They lost consciousness after inhaling toxic fume released by the fire and eventually died, they said. Eyewitnesses said four bodies were found on the stairs and the toddler was found inside the room on the first floor. Two persons who suffered burn injuries were under treatment and three have been discharged.

The residents had gone to sleep after Sehri, which is consumed before day-break during Ramzan, and the fire broke out after that, police said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Northeast) Joy Tirkey said they received information about the incident at Mazar Wala Road in Machhi Market around 9 am. After reaching there, police found that nine people were taken to Jag Praveesh Chandra Hospital, the DCP said.

The fire department said three water tenders were rushed to douse the fire. The deceased have been identified as Hamza (3), Pashirul alias Dipai (36), Zahiuddin alias Milu, Dinesh (26), his wife Nisha (25) and Fazlu Choudhary (40).

Zahirul (50) and Soni (15) received burn injuries and were being treated at a hospital, while Matu-ur-Rehman (40), Taju Das (38) and Ajmat Ali (38) have been discharged, police said.

## Woman gangraped in moving car in K'taka

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bangalore, March 31:** A young woman, who was sitting in a park with her male friend, was forcibly dragged into a car and gangraped, police said Friday.

The case has been reported in the Koramangala police station limits. The police have arrested a gang of four persons in connection with the case. The arrested accused have been identified as Satish, Vijay, Sridhar and Kiran.

According to police, the incident took place late night of March 25. The young woman was sitting with her male friend at the National Games Village Park. The accused persons threatened her male friend and dragged her into the car.

The victim told police that she was gangraped in the moving car. The police said that the accused drove the car to Domlur, Indiranagar, Anekal and Nice Road and committed the crime throughout the night. The accused later left her near her residence in the early hours of March 26. After reaching home at 4 a.m, the victim was taken to a hospital, and later lodged a complaint with the police.

## Lingayats hold key to electoral outcome in Karnataka

LINGAYATS ARE SAID TO CONSTITUTE ABOUT 17 PER CENT OF KARNATAKA'S POPULATION, AND THE COMMUNITY HAS DOMINANCE IN AS MANY AS 100 OUT OF TOTAL 224 CONSTITUENCIES, MAJORITY OF THESE SEATS BEING IN NORTH KARNATAKA REGION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, March 31:** In poll-bound Karnataka, where caste is one of the crucial factors in deciding the outcome of elections, it is key to understand the importance of the influential Lingayat or Veerashaiva-Lingayat community, to analyse the polity of the state.

Emerging in the 12th century, out of a distinct thought process that questioned the existing traditions, with Basavanna and other 'Vachanakaras' revolting against the caste system, that found support from all those who were discriminated, especially the working class, the sect that came to be known as Lingayats, has a significant place in the social history of Karnataka. Lingayats are said to constitute

about 17 per cent of Karnataka's population, and the community has dominance in as many as 100 out of total 224 constituencies, majority of these seats being in north Karnataka region.

Vokkaligas constitute 15 per cent, OBCs 35 per cent, SC/STs 18 per cent, Muslims about 12.92 per cent, and Brahmmins about three per cent. However, a caste census conducted between 2013 and 2018, which has not been made public yet, pegs the population of Lingayats and Vokkaligas much lower at nine and eight per cent respectively.

In the present Assembly, there are 54 Lingayat MLAs from across parties including 37 from the ruling BJP. Also, out of the 23 Chief Ministers that Karnataka has had since 1952, as many as 10 have been Lingayats,



followed by six Vokkaligas, five from Backward Classes, and two Brahmmins. Well aware, as to how crucial it

is, to get the support of the Lingayats to win the May 10 polls, political parties are trying to woo the influential community. Until 1989, the Lingayats were in the Congress' fold and had formed the strong support base of the party, but the sacking of the then Chief Minister Veerendra Patil, a Lingayat, who was recouping from a stroke in 1990, by Rajiv Gandhi, turned the community against the party.

The Congress, which had won 178 of the total 224 seats in the 1989 elections under the leadership of Veerendra Patil, was reduced to 34 seats in the next election.

With the disintegration of Janata Parivar and the emergence of B S Yediyurappa in the BJP, the larger part of the community's vote base shifted towards the saffron party,

making Karnataka its southern citadel. It got further strengthened when former Chief Minister and JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy declined to transfer power to Yediyurappa in 2007, violating the power sharing agreement of BJP-JD(S) coalition, resulting in government collapsing and the latter riding on the sympathy wave in the next Assembly polls.

After the 2008 Assembly elections, BJP formed its first government to the south of Vindhyas, under Yediyurappa's leadership by winning 110 seats, but five years later in 2013 polls, the saffron party's tally plunged to just 40 seats, as Yediyurappa by then had parted ways with the BJP and had formed a new political outfit- the Karnataka Janata Paksha.

# international

## of the day quote

**Cash-strapped Pakistan** has received a rollover loan of USD 2 billion that matured last week from its all-weather ally China

ISHAQ DAR | PAK FINANCE MINISTER

Unlocking the full potential of our region will be a game changer

CONSTANTINOS KOMBOIS | CYPRIOT FOREIGN MINISTER

In terms of Ukraine, nothing is changing, the special military operation is continuing because today that is the only means in front of us to achieve our goals

DMITRY PESKOV | KREMLIN SPOKESMAN

## SHORT TAKES

### Prachanda expands cabinet for 7th time

**Kathmandu:** Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' Friday expanded the cabinet for the seventh time in three months, inducting ministers from five new parties including the Nepali Congress. The newly-appointed ministers took an oath of office and secrecy from President Ram Chandra Paudel at Sheetal Niwas, the President's Office. Nepali Congress (NC), the major partner in the ruling coalition, has got eight ministries.

### 11 killed in stampede

**Karachi:** At least 11 people, including women and children, were killed and several others injured in a deadly stampede at a Ramzan food distribution centre in Pakistan's port city of Karachi Friday, officials said. The stampede took place after some people unknowingly stepped on a live wire where food was being distributed, leading to the tragedy. Soon, people started pushing each other, due to which some even fell into a nearby drain, police said. At least 11 people, including women and children, died in the stampede and several others were injured. At least 11 other people, including women, have died while trying to get free flour from government distribution outlets in Pakistan's Punjab province in recent days. The free food distribution initiative was launched by Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif last week at a time when the country is in the midst of a severe economic crisis.

### 14 dead in gold mine collapse

**Khartoum (Sudan):** At least 14 workers are dead after a gold mine collapsed in northern Sudan, mining authorities said Friday. The fatal collapse happened after one of the hillsides that surround the Jebel Al-Ahmar gold mine - situated near the Egyptian border - gave way Thursday afternoon, the Sudanese Mineral Resources Company said in a short statement. Some twenty other minors were injured in the collapse and transferred to a nearby hospital, it said. According to a report published Thursday by Sudan's state-run news agency SUNA, a search operation was launched to find those trapped beneath the rubble.

### Protesters rally in Nashville

**Nashville:** Protesters gathered in Nashville to demand for gun reform, in the wake of a deadly shooting at a private elementary school in the Tennessee state capital earlier this week that led to the deaths of three children and three staff members. "Shame on you," a group of protesters chanted inside the Tennessee State Capitol Thursday, aiming at inaction from politicians, reports Xinhua news agency.

# Macron heads to China, leaving burning Paris behind

**Paris, March 31:** French President Emmanuel Macron will head to China next week for a rare visit to the rising superpower, in an awkward balancing act between his global statesman ambitions and his struggle to contain embarrassing pension protests at home. The French leader, whose decision to ram much-disputed pension legislation through parliament earlier this month sparked clashes and violence in French cities, is trying to keep his busy

diplomatic schedule on track. But the chaotic scenes of burning piles of rubbish in Paris, which were broadcast around the world, have already forced Macron to cancel a state visit to Britain's King Charles, an embarrassment which did not go unnoticed in diplomatic circles. "It's a very prestigious thing to host the first visit abroad of the King of England, it doesn't happen every day. If you can't pull it off, it's a problem," the ambassador of a European country told Reuters. "It's clear it is weakening him,"

another EU diplomat said. "It's hard to measure the impact, but there is one." The protests, which will see unions stage an 11th nationwide strike during Macron's time in Beijing, come as the French presi-

dent is trying to regain the initiative on the war in Ukraine and play a leadership role in Europe. That hasn't escaped Chinese observers. "The protests bring a large amount of risk and France needs a diplomatic high-light, especially since it wants to play the role of Europe's leader," said Wang Yiwei, director of the Centre for

European Studies at Renmin University in China. Macron will also need to keep in mind China's tactic of playing divide and rule, said a non-Western diplomat who suggested China may try to use the trip to place a wedge in the Western camp and lure France away from the United States.



**The United States should take practical actions to help developing countries, instead of pointing fingers at other countries and making irresponsible remarks**  
MAO NING | CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

## GALLANT CAUGHT IN LIMBO

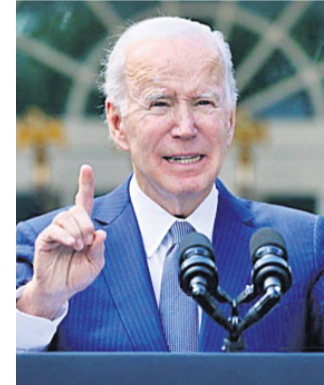
Yoav Gallant, Israel's defense minister, was fired Sunday, setting off unrest, but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu never formally confirmed his dismissal



## Biden to Russia on detained US scribe: 'Let him go'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Washington, March 31:** President Joe Biden Friday urged Russia to release Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich after the country's security service arrested him on espionage charges — allegations that the newspaper denies. "Let him go," Biden told reporters at the White House on Friday morning when asked about his message to Russia on the arrest of Gershkovich. Russia's Federal Security Service has accused Gershkovich, a U.S. citizen, of trying to obtain classified information. It is the first time an American journalist has been detained on accusations of spying since the Cold War. The Journal has said it "vehemently denies" the charges.



Speaking at a news conference in Lusaka, Zambia, Vice President Kamala Harris added that the administration was "deeply concerned" about Gershkovich's arrest. "We will not tolerate — and condemn, in fact — repression of journalists," Harris said during her weeklong visit to Africa. The Biden administration said Thursday that it was working to secure consular access to Gershkovich. Asked Friday morning whether he would expel Russian diplomats or journalists in the U.S., Biden responded: "That's not the plan right now." Karine Jean-Pierre, the White House press secretary, called the targeting of U.S. citizens in Russia "unacceptable" and that the administration condemns the detention of Gershkovich "in the strongest terms." The Biden administration has also warned U.S. citizens not to travel to Russia, and for Americans in the country now to depart immediately.

## Indians among six migrants found dead near Canada border

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Toronto, March 31:**Members of an Indian family were among six people who drowned in the St Lawrence River while attempting to cross into the US from Canada illegally, authorities said Friday.

Six bodies were recovered by police Thursday afternoon in a marshy area of Quebec near an overturned boat during an aerial search with the Canadian Coast Guard, according to Canadian news outlets CBC and CTV.

A search of the area is ongoing to find the missing infant. "The six individuals are believed to be from two families, one of Romanian descent and the other believed to be citizens of India,"

Lee-Ann O'Brien, deputy chief of Akwesasne Mohawk Police Service, told reporters in a news conference Friday. "Police believe one infant from the Romanian family has not been located and we'll continue searching," she added. "All are believed to have been attempting illegal entry into the US from Canada." Police said one of the bodies found was that of a child under three.

The child was found with a Canadian passport and was a member of a Romanian family. The bodies, which haven't been officially identified, were found in Tsi Snaihne (Snye) in Akwesasne, a Mohawk territory that straddles Quebec, Ontario and New York state. They were discovered after the search for another missing person that also started Thursday. In January 2022, the bodies of four Indians, including a baby, were found frozen in Manitoba near the Canada-US border.

## BUCHA ANNIVERSARY

AGENCIES

**Bucha (Ukraine), March 31:** Russia used its long-range arsenal to bombard anew several areas of Ukraine Friday, killing at least two civilians and damaging homes as Ukrainians commemorated the anniversary of the liberation of Bucha.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Bucha, a town near Kyiv, stands as a symbol of the atrocities the Russian military has committed since its full-scale invasion began in February 2022. "We will never forgive," Zelenskyy said in a post on his Telegram channel. "We will punish every perpetrator."

Zelenskyy attended an official ceremony in Bucha, where he was joined by the president of the Republic of Moldova and the prime ministers of Croatia, Slovakia and Slovenia. The Kremlin's forces occupied Bucha weeks after they invaded Ukraine and stayed for about a month. When Ukrainian troops retook the town, they encountered horrific scenes: bodies of women, young and old men, in civilian clothing, lying in the street where they had fallen or in yards and homes.

Other bodies were found in a mass grave. Over weeks and months, hundreds of bodies were uncovered, including some of children. Russian soldiers on intercepted phone conversations called it "zachistka" — cleansing, according to an investigation by The Associated Press and the PBS series "Frontline".

Such organised cruelty — used by Russian troops in past conflicts as well, notably in Chechnya — was later repeated in Russia-occupied territories across Ukraine. More

# Ukraine vows never to forget or forgive



- RUSSIAN FORCES OCCUPIED TOWN OF BUCHA FOR 33 DAYS
- MASS GRAVES WERE FOUND AFTER ITS RECAPTURE BY UKRAINE
- UKRAINE ACCUSES RUSSIAN TROOPS OF CARRYING OUT ATROCITIES
- RUSSIA DENIES THE ALLEGATIONS

than 1,400 civilian deaths, including 37 children, were documented by Ukrainian authorities, Zelenskyy said.

More than 175 people were found in mass graves and alleged torture chambers, Zelenskyy said. Ukraine and other countries, including the US, have demanded that Russia answer for war crimes.

Prosecutor General Andriy Kostin alleged on Friday that many of the dead civilians were tortured. Almost 100 Russian soldiers are suspected of war crimes, he said on his Telegram channel, and indictments have been issued for 35 of them. Two Russian servicemen have already been sentenced by a Ukrainian court to 12 years in prison for illegal deprivation of liberty of civilians and looting.

"I am convinced that all these crimes are not a coincidence. This

is part of Russia's planned strategy aimed at destroying Ukraine as a state and Ukrainians as a nation," Kostin said. Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, an ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin, unexpectedly called for a cease-fire in Ukraine.

A truce, he said in his state-of-the-nation address in Minsk on Friday, must be announced without any preconditions and all movement of troops and weapons must be halted. "It's necessary to stop now until an escalation begins," Lukashenko said, adding that an anticipated Ukrainian counteroffensive using Western-supplied weapons would bring "an irreversible escalation of the conflict". But Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov responded that Russia has to keep fighting, claiming Ukraine has rejected any talks under pres-

**Russian evil will collapse right here in Ukraine, and will never be able to rise again. Humanity will prevail. We will never forget the victims of this war, and we will certainly bring all Russian murderers to justice**  
VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYY | UKRAINE PRESIDENT

sure from its Western allies. Peskov also dismissed Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban's remarks about the European Union mulling the deployment of sending peace-keeping troops to Ukraine as "extremely dangerous". Russia has maintained its bombardment of Ukraine with the war already into its second year. As well as killing at least two civilians in Ukraine, 14 other civilians were wounded early Friday as Russia launched missiles, shells, exploding drones and gliding bombs, the Ukraine presidential office said.

Two Russian missiles hit the city of Kramatorsk in the eastern Donetsk region, damaging eight residential buildings. Throughout the Donetsk region, one civilian was killed and five others wounded by the strikes, the office said. Nine Russian missiles struck Kharkiv, damaging residential buildings, roads, gas stations and a prison. The Russians also used exploding drones to attack the Kharkiv region. Russian forces also shelled the southern city of Kherson, killing one resident and wounding two others.

The village of Lviv in the Kherson region was struck by gliding bombs that damaged about 10 houses. The barrage also hit the city of Zaporizhzhia, and its outskirts, causing major fires.

## China, Japan set up military hotline

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Beijing, March 31:**China and Japan Friday set up a military hotline to strengthen their capability of managing and controlling maritime and air incidents arising due to their aggressive patrolling of the disputed waters in the East China Sea.

The hotline mechanism was announced ahead of the visit by Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi to Beijing this weekend for talks with his Chinese counterpart Qing Gang on improving bilateral relations amid Beijing's vocal criticism against Japan's active role in the US-Indo-Pacific strategy.

China is also sharply critical of the Quad alliance comprising the US, India, Japan and Australia saying that it is aimed at containing its rise. This will be the first visit by the Japanese Foreign Minister



**China and Japan have a long-festering dispute over uninhabited East China Sea islands controlled by Japan but claimed by China**

**The islands are referred to as the Senkakus by Japan, while China named them Diaoyu**

to China since 2019 when Hayashi's predecessor Toshiyuki Motegi went to Beijing after which China shut down its borders to combat Covid-19.

China reopened the country for international travel early this year. Announcing the hotline, the

Chinese Defence Ministry said as agreed upon by the defence departments of China and Japan, the two sides have recently completed the construction of a direct telephone line for the sea and air liaison mechanism and will maintain communication on the arrangement for the launch.

The establishment of the direct telephone line will effectively enrich the communication channels between the defence departments of China and Japan, strengthen the capabilities of the two sides to manage and control maritime and air crises, and help further maintain regional peace and stability, the ministry said.

Taiwan, a self-ruled island claimed by China as a rebel province, also claims the islands but has forged agreements with Japan to avoid any conflict as Japan maintains close defence ties with Taipei.

## China's moves along India border provocative, says US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Washington, March 31:** Some of the steps being taken by Beijing along the India-China border has been "provocative", a top White House official has said while reaffirming that the United States is "destined" to work more closely with India.

Kurt Campbell, the Deputy Assistant to the US President and Coordinator for the Indo-Pacific, told a Washington-based think-tank Thursday that India is not an ally of the United States and will never be so. "But it does not mean that we will not be close partners and share many things. That's how we need to understand the role that India will play as a great nation on the global stage." "We



want to encourage that and support that and deepen this relationship, which is already very strong, probably the strongest people-to-people relationship of any country that the United States has on the global stage," he said. Campbell said that the India-US relationship "is the most important bilateral relationship for the United States in the 21st century". "I believe we are destined to work more closely together. I believe that our people-to-

people ties are strong, animate in a relationship that is becoming deeper, richer and more strategically important," he said. The think tank - Centre for a New American Security (CNAS) - in a report said that the India-China border intrusions and clashes have become more frequent and threaten to lead to all-out conflict. The increased prospect of India-China border hostility has implications for the United States and its Indo-Pacific strategy between the two Asian giants, it said. In its annual report for 2022, the MEA said the External Affairs Minister conveyed to his Chinese counterpart that the restoration of normalcy in ties will require the restoration of peace and tranquility along the frontier.

# Deep ocean currents around Antarctica headed for collapse: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 31:** Deep ocean currents forming around Antarctica, that impact climate, sea level and marine ecosystems around the world, are headed for a collapse, according to scientists.

Such a decline would stagnate the bottom of the oceans and affect climate and marine ecosystems for centuries to come, they said.

"Our modelling shows that if global carbon emissions continue at the current rate, then the Antarctic overturning will slow by more than 40 per cent in the next 30 years - and on a trajectory that looks headed towards collapse," said Matthew England, University

of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney, Australia, who coordinated the international study.

The work is published in the journal Nature. About 250 trillion tonnes of cold, salty, oxygen-rich water sinks near Antarctica each year and drives the deepest flow of the overturning circulation - a network of currents spanning the world's oceans.

The Antarctic overturning carrying heat, carbon, oxygen and nutrients, spread northwards into the deep Indian, Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, influencing global climate, sea level and the productivity of marine ecosystems.

"If the oceans had lungs, this would be one of them," said England. The modelling of



Antarctic deep water until 2050, produced under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) high emissions scenario, captured unprecedented detail of ocean processes, including the impact of predictions for meltwater from

**The Antarctic overturning carrying heat, carbon, oxygen and nutrients, spread northwards into the deep Indian, Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, influencing global climate, sea level and the productivity of marine ecosystems**

the possible long-term extinction of an iconic water mass," said England. Significant slowdown of the

Antarctic overturning is expected over the next few decades, owing to increasing greenhouse gas emissions, even as the overturning has remained largely stable for thousands of years.

"Such profound changes to the ocean's overturning of heat, freshwater, oxygen, carbon and nutrients will have a significant adverse impact on the oceans for centuries to come," said England. With a collapse of this deep ocean current, the oceans below 4000 metres would stagnate, the scientists said.

"This would trap nutrients in the deep ocean, reducing the nutrients available to support marine life near the ocean surface," said England.



TWEET SPOT >>

**Uorfi Javed | I apologise for hurting everyone's sentiments by wearing what I wear. From now on you guys will see a changed Uorfi . Changed clothes. Maafi(Sorry)**



**Anushka Sharma | 'You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give'. 'For in truth it is life that gives unto life- while you, who deem yourself a giver, are but a witness.'**



**Sidharth Malhotra | Can say it was one of my best experiences being on the sets of #IndianPoliceForce. Thank you to the entire cast and crew for this wonderful journey. Really excited to bring you guys INDIAN POLICE FORCE soon.**



## STORIES TOP

### Gwyneth Paltrow wins Ski Crash Trial, rewarded \$1

**Los Angeles:** Gwyneth Paltrow was on trial this month after being sued by an elderly man following a 2016 ski collision in Utah. The 50-year-old has been vindicated of guilt and was awarded the \$1 she requested in her countersuit on March 30. The 76-year-old man, retired optometrist



Terry Sanderson, sued Gwyneth in January 2019 for \$300,000, and the televised trial had been heavily covered once it commenced on March 21.

### Derulo shows zeal to work with Indian artistes

**Los Angeles:** The American singer Jason Derulo talks about his recent India visit and why he loves the country and its culture. The 33-year-old songwriter performed at an Indian Premier League event in Bangalore recently and he cannot wait to



have more work-related engagements here. The actor says, "My collaboration with Teshar (Indian-Canadian rapper) started it all. And now, I really hope to have some cool collaborations with more Indian artistes."

### Sheeran wouldn't mind showing up in TV show

**Los Angeles:** *Shape of You* hitmaker Ed Sheeran revealed he wouldn't mind showing up in a reality TV show as it looks fun, reports *Mirror.co.uk*.



The 32-year-old talked about the idea of showing up in the hit series *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here!* during an appearance on the Jonathan Ross Show. He shared his personal life, including how he developed an eating disorder after comparing himself to Justin Bieber.

### Alden calls himself a big fan of Satyajit Ray

**Los Angeles:** Alden Ehrenreich opened up about how late Indian filmmaker Satyajit Ray influences and inspires him. *The Beautiful Creatures* actor said he grew up



watching the *Apu Trilogy*, with *Pather Panchali* deeply impacting him. "I just love Satyajit Ray. I love the movies he made. I have never been to India, but it is a place where I always wanted to go, and I hope to make this dream come true soon," says Ehrenreich.

### Tomdaya arrive at Mumbai for NMACC opening

**Mumbai:** Hollywood's star couple Tom Holland and Zendaya arrived in Mumbai for the first time. Several pictures of the duo emerged



online soon after they exited the Kalina Airport, which exclusively serves people with private jets. Zendaya smiled as she exited the airport while Tom was seen focused on walking towards his car. Reportedly the two are in India to attend the launch of the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) in Mumbai.

## Kriti thinks she's humbler today

**Mumbai:** As she's short of a year before she marks her decade long run in Hindi film industry, Kriti Sanon is happy with the way her career has shaped. In her repertoire of nine years, the actress has had some really successful films to her credit including *Bareilly Ki Barfi*, *Panipat*, *Mimi* and *Bhediya*.

As she looks back at her journey, the actress says that there were times where she felt she deserved more. "There used to be times where I used to get restless, but I would feel like I deserved more than what I am getting. I wished I had some more opportunities. I wished I had certain filmmakers, who would give me that chance. I felt like I had a lot more to offer than what I was able to."

Though she craved for more, Kriti feels that her steady growth helped her to stay grounded. She explains, "If I would have progressed really fast, then I don't know if I would have been the way I am today. So, I am glad that it has all happened slowly and steadily."

The actress now looks forward to her upcoming films like *Adipurush*, *Ganapath* and *The Crew*.

AGENCIES



## Kajal recalls being body-shamed

**Mumbai:** Actress Kajal Aggarwal has opened up on how she was being body-shamed by people when she was pregnant.

The actress said that balancing her career and motherhood was very difficult for her. It was emotional draining for her more than the physical part saying that mom guilt is real. "It breaks my heart every morning when I have to leave my little baby and go to work but of course, I love what I do and I am sure my baby will grow up understanding the importance of work," she told news portal.

Kajal said that she had to back out of one movie when she found out that she was pregnant.

Talking about how people used to tell her that she won't be able to manage all these things after giving birth to a child, Kajal said, "People called me fat when I was pregnant. I mean obviously, I had a full fledged baby within me. But that's how they (trolls) are. So the best thing to do is ignore it."

On the work front, she is currently filming for Kamal Haasan's *Indian 2* where she will reportedly be seen playing an elderly woman.

AGENCIES

## 'I can direct soon, if I get a great script'

**Mumbai:** Pratik Gandhi, who kept the Indian audience hooked in the biographical financial thriller *Scam 1992*, has expressed his interest in directing a project while continuing to act in multiple films and series.

Expressing his enthusiasm, the actor says, "I am looking forward to directing a project. It's surely on my mind. I have done directing in the theatre. I direct

my play, *Saat Teri Ekvees*. I act in the play *Mohan No Masalo*, and now, I will be acting in a series on Mahatma Gandhi so it (direction) can be done."

He was asked about how to manage direction with multiple acting projects on board. He replied, "It depends! It could be done simultaneously. If some good script or story comes my way, then it can happen very soon. Also, writing, editing, direction and acting are all very closely linked to each other. The more you know about it and learn about it, the more it complements the others."

On the work front, the actor will be next seen in *Woh Ladki Hai Kahan*, where he stars along with Tapsee Pannu.

AGENCIES

## CINE BITS

### Priyanka arrives in Mumbai carrying Malti with Nick



**Mumbai:** Citadel star Priyanka Chopra brought her baby girl home to India. The actress was photographed arriving in Mumbai March 31 with her little girl, Malti Jonas, and husband, Nick Jonas, in tow. The family of three was inundated with fans at the airport, and stopped to pose for some photos before getting in their car. Priyanka had Malti in her arms, while Nick held up her hand to help her wave to the crowd.

### Mrunal: I didn't work on television for TRPs

**Mumbai:** Mrunal Thakur recently shared a picture where she could be seen crying. She says that being an actor is not easy and there's a lot

which comes with it, be it the pressure of being judged, success or failure. Mrunal says, "It feels bad when something doesn't work because we give our best to every project. In fact, when I started television, we wouldn't work for TRPs."



### Suniel: Bollywood keeps Indians connected with their roots

**Mumbai:** Actor Suniel Shetty, who has been garnering audience appreciation ever since his streaming debut, has shared that Hindi film industry helps the Indian diaspora, in different parts of the world, stay rooted to their homeland.

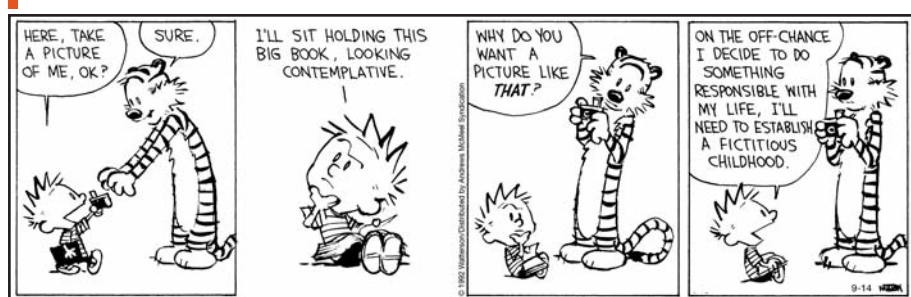
The actor says, "Long before musicals, our cinema was pioneering the concept of telling a story through song and dance. We did it first."



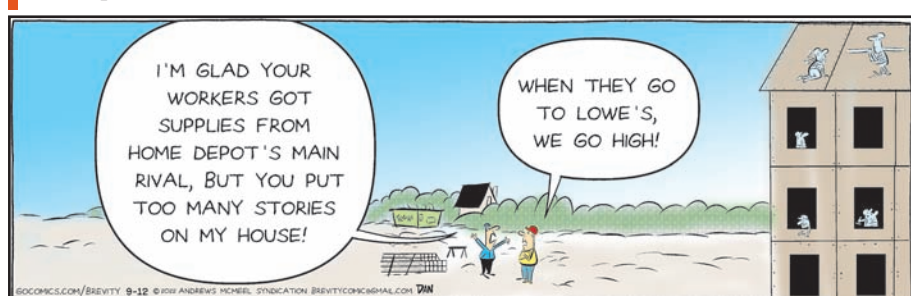
### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



## FUN POST

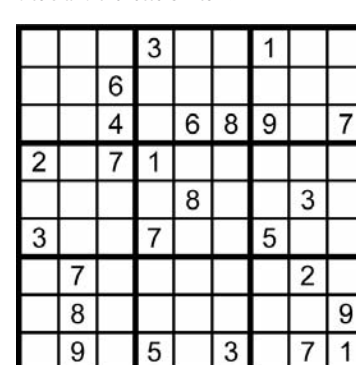
### CROSSWORD



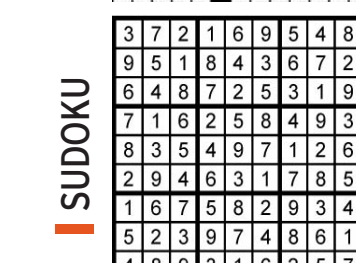
- Across
- 1 Swiss metropolis
  - 4 Arctic native
  - 9 Circus performer
  - 10 Crow gleefully
  - 11 Fossil fuel
  - 12 Computer user's problem
  - 14 Cheroot
  - 16 Sea duck
  - 20 Cattle, e.g.
  - 21 Close-fitting hat
  - 22 Wedding wear for brides
  - 24 Draw in
  - 25 Macaque
  - 26 Avaricious
- Down
- 1 Fanatic
  - 2 Rustic area
  - 3 Mountain transport, at times (5,4)
  - 5 Droop
  - 6 Set apart
  - 7 Pleasure trip or short jaunt
  - 8 Spirited horse
  - 13 Practical joker
  - 15 Doctor's bill
  - 17 Cunning
  - 18 Type of reef
  - 19 Absence of emotion
  - 21 Packing case
  - 23 Old French coin

### SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

**FIRST TIME IN 17 YRS COAL INDIA SURPASSES ANNUAL OUTPUT TARGET**

Coal India Ltd said Friday it had breached its annual production target of 700 million tonne, the first time it had surpassed its goal since the fiscal year that ended in March 2006. The world's largest coal mining company will likely end the fiscal year ending Friday with an output of 703.4 million tonne, it said, 13% higher than the 622.6 million tonne it produced the previous fiscal year. "The volume increase of a whopping 81 million tonne in a single year, by fiscal year 2023 end, would be a historic high since the company's inception," the company said Friday. Coal India last achieved its annual production target in 2006, when it produced 343.4 million tonne against a plan to produce 343 million tonne.



**NEW FOREIGN TRADE POLICY**

**India eyes \$2trn exports by '30**

The foreign trade policy 2023 aims at internationalisation of trade in Indian Rupee



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 31:** India Friday came out with a 'dynamic and responsive' foreign trade policy with the objective of raising the country's outward shipments to \$2 trillion by 2030, making Indian Rupee a global currency and incentivising e-commerce exports. The approach of Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023 is to move from 'incentive to remission' based regime; encourage collaboration between exporters, states, districts and Indian Missions; reduce transaction cost; and develop more export hubs. India is likely to cross \$765 billion merchandise and services exports in financial year 2022-23 which ends Friday. The total exports were \$676 billion in previous fiscal year. Unlike the practice of 5-year FTPs, this time the government has come out with a dynamic and responsive trade policy without any end date, and will be updated as per the emerging global scenario. "We have ensured there is no

end date to this policy; it will be updated from time to time," said Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) Santosh Sarangi while briefing media on the salient features of FTP 2023 unveiled by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. Goyal said Department of Commerce will be making a massive focused outreach to the world, either sectorally or country-wise, over the next 4-5 months. Ministry of External Affairs and Indian Missions abroad will work with the department. "We have to meet our exports targets going forward. We will achieve \$2 trillion in exports by 2030, but it should not be that merchandise exports are outperformed by services exports," the minister said. The DGFT said India is likely to cross \$765 billion merchandise and services exports in financial year 2022-23 which ends Friday. In 2021-22, the total exports were \$676 billion. The FTP aims at internationalisation of trade in Indian Rupee.

It allows international trade settlement in INR and required changes have been introduced for grant of export benefits and fulfilment of Export Obligation (EO) for export realisations in the domestic currency as per RBI. "If there are countries where there is currency failure or dollar shortage we are willing to trade in the rupee with them," said Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal. He also stressed that Indian exporters will have to become globally competitive and need not depend on subsidies. In the interest of trade and industry and to motivate exporters, the FTP provides relief to exporters who are unable to fulfill their EO against the Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) scheme and Advance Authorisations. It introduces an amnesty scheme for one-time settlement of default in export obligation by Advance Authorisation and EPCG authorisation holders. As per the scheme, all pending cases of the default in meeting EO can be regularised on payment of customs duties that were exempted and interest at the rate of 100 per cent of the duties exempted. The FTP 2023 focuses on engaging with states and districts through the Districts as Export Hubs initiative by identification of products and services in each district; institutional mechanism; and preparation of district export action plans, among others.

**Govt raises interest rates on most small saving schemes**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 31:** The government Friday raised interest rates on most post office saving schemes by up to 0.7 per cent for the April-June 2023 quarter in line with the firming of interest rates in the economy. While the interest rates for popular PPF and savings deposits have been retained at 7.1 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively, there has been an increase between 0.1 per cent and 0.7 per cent in other saving schemes, a finance ministry statement said. The highest increase was in the interest rate of the National Savings Certificate (NSC), which will now attract 7.7 per cent, up from 7 per cent, for the April 1 to June 30, 2023 period. The new rate for the girl child savings scheme Sukanya Samridhi has been increased to 8 per cent from 7.6 per cent. The interest rate on the senior citizen savings scheme and Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) is 8.2 per cent (up from 8 per cent) and 7.5 per cent (up from 7.2 per cent), respectively. KVP will now mature in 115 months as against 120 months earlier. Interest rates were increased in the last quarter as well. Interest rates for small savings schemes are notified on a quarterly basis. With the revision, a one-year term deposit with post offices would earn 6.8 per cent (up from 6.6 per cent), for two years - 6.9 per cent (up from 6.8 per cent), three years - 7 per cent (up from 6.9 per cent) and five years - 7.5 per cent (7 per cent).

**CAD narrows to 2.2% of GDP in Q3**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 31:** India's current account deficit, a key indicator of the country's external sector, declined to \$18.2 billion or 2.2 per cent of the GDP in the December quarter of the current fiscal. The decline was mainly due to narrowing of merchandise trade deficit, according to data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Friday. The Current Account Deficit (CAD) was \$30.9 billion or 3.7 per cent of the GDP in the second quarter of 2022-23 and at \$22.2 billion or 2.7 per cent of the GDP in the December quarter of 2021-22. Underlying the lower current account deficit in Q3 2022-23 was a narrowing of merchandise trade deficit to \$72.7 billion from \$78.3 billion in Q2 2022-23, coupled with robust services and private transfer receipts, RBI said. Services exports reported a growth of 24.5 per cent on a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis on the back of ris-



ing exports of software, business and travel services. Net services receipts increased both sequentially and on a year-on-year basis. In the December quarter, net foreign direct investment decreased to \$2.1 billion from \$4.6 billion in the year-ago period. Net foreign portfolio investment recorded inflows of \$4.6 billion in the December quarter as against

an outflow of \$5.8 billion in the third quarter of 2021-22. RBI said net outflow from the primary income account, mainly reflecting investment income payments, increased to \$12.7 billion from \$11.5 billion in the year-ago period. Private transfer receipts, mainly representing remittances by Indians employed overseas, amounted to \$30.8 billion in the December quarter, an increase of 31.7 per cent from their level a year ago. Non-resident deposits recorded net inflows of \$2.6 billion in the third quarter of the current fiscal as compared to net inflows of \$1.3 billion in the year-ago period.

**Fiscal deficit touches 82.8% of full-year target**

The central government's fiscal deficit touched 82.8 per cent of the full-year target at the end of February, according to data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) Friday. In actual terms, the fiscal deficit or gap between the expenditure and revenue collection during April-February period stood at Rs 14.53 lakh crore.

**Indian Bank, IIT-Bhubaneswar sign MoU**

**BIZ BUZZ**

**Bhubaneswar:** A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Indian Bank and IIT - Bhubaneswar at one of the IIT office in Jatni. The collaboration plans to provide financial assistance up to 50 crore through start-ups and MSMEs and up to 2 crore through CGTMSE to graduate students of IIT-Bhubaneswar. Manoj Kumar Das, General Manager, Field General Manager Office, Indian Bank Bhubaneswar, expressed his appreciation for Indian Bank's partnership with IIT Bhubaneswar including IIT Bombay, IIT Kanpur, IIT Madras, IIT Guwahati and IIM Kozhikode, IIM Bangalore, IISc Bangalore, VIT Vellore etc. VS Raju- Zonal Manager, Indian Bank, Bhubaneswar, described the genesis of the project and said Odisha has a start up-friendly ecosystem to nurture innovations. On this occasion, Debi Prasad Dogra, Director, IIT BBSR; Sujit Roy, Director, IIT BBSR; Yogesh Bhumkar, Director, IIT BBSR; Purabee Purnasha Mishra, CEO, IIT BBSR; Naveen Pattanaik, Deputy Zonal Manager; Rupesh Agarwal, AGM, MAPC, Bhubaneswar; Manoj Mathan, Chief Manager, FGM and Sasanka Sekhar Sahoo, Chief Manager, ZO were also present.



DSPL-527



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Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha



Commerce & Transport Department, Government of Odisha

OIPR-380001/13/0040/2223

# The 'Yama-Dharma'

With Odisha being home to over 200 Buddhist sites scattered across its length and breadth, there are a few such rich and elegant discoveries like the one at Kuruma in Puri district which need further research and attention of the government to be developed into beautiful tourism hubs

PRASANJEET MOHANTY, OP

Just 8 km to the southeast of Konark Sun Temple in Puri live remnants of Odisha's lesser-known tryst with Buddhism.

Historians say a Buddhist monastery flourished at the present day Kuruma village in the coastal district between 8th and 9th century AD.

Santosh Kumar Rath, a History lecturer in Balugaon College of Khurda, says the monastery has 12 blocks, three in each cardinal direction, and an open large courtyard at the centre.

"Upon reaching the site, one can find a recently built temple, where four sculptures of Lord Buddha are installed. While one of the images is 'Yama' (God of death), another is 'Dharma' (the Sun God). The four are being worshipped as 'Yama-Dharma'," the avid researcher says.

About the rich findings, Rath says it all began in early 60s when a sculpture of Dhyani Buddha was discovered from the 'Dharma Pokhari', a tank on the outskirts of Kuruma.

"Soon after, the tank was spruced up by the state government. And now the sculpture is on display at Odisha State Museum in



Four sculptures of Lord Buddha at the temple

Bhubaneswar," he adds.

Later, it was in 70s when the four sculptures of the Lord, which are now being worshipped at the village temple, were found in a dilapidated shape near 'Dharma Pokhari', the Puri resident adds.

The discovery prompted state archaeology to undertake massive excavation of the site nearby in mid 70s.

Rath says, "Excavation was carried up to an average depth of 3 metre. Brick structures of average 4.25 metre in length and 1.85 metre in height were recovered from two trenches."

An ancient 29-metre long wall having seven layers of bricks with

average size of 22x17x7 centimetre could be seen, the researcher adds.

One could see three rectangular ovens which were discovered after digging up to the depth of around 2.5 metre. "The discovery of ovens in one place hints at the possible habitation area of the period," Rath says.

The antiquities recovered from the site comprised pottery of red ware, coins, beads, seals and palm leaf manuscripts, he points out.

Locals say the state government has been working on developing Odisha into a tourism hub. However, the Buddhist site at Kuruma, which has the potential to be a perfect tourism destination in Puri for its

proximity to Srimandir and Konark Sun Temple, is yet unknown to many.

"The site is a victim of neglect. The structures are under a layer of wild growth and vegetation in absence of proper upkeep by authorities. Except during the Magha Purnima, the site hardly witnesses any footfall," they say.

Scholars say Odisha is home to over 200 Buddhist sites scattered across its length and breadth. Buddhism flourished in the coastal state between 6th century BC and 16th century AD. After Buddha's death, his followers were divided into two sects Hinayana and Mahayana. The latest Buddhist phase is Vajrayana, which is believed to have been originated from Odisha.



Dharma Pokhari



Remnants of the monastery

# Let's go CYCLING

In a world full of stress, one has to remain fit; 45-60 minutes of cycling daily can be beneficial for both mental and physical health

SHASHIREKHA MAHAJUL, OP

Cycling as a culture has gained remarkable momentum in India. It is not just cool, it is also a great way to keep in shape and remain healthy. In short, it is the best form of workout for people of all ages. Cycling not only helps one physically, but also contributes to mental health and alertness. To keep the popularity of 'cycling' growing, June 3 every year is celebrated as the 'World Bicycle Day'.

The best thing about bicycles is that they are non-pollutant. They protect the environment, while keeping people healthy and happy. In such a situation, bicycle has an important place in our life. It is the all-encompassing vehicle which has all the nuances to become an integral part of our lives.

Cycles are for people of all ages. Students use it to go to schools and colleges while many go pedalling to office.

Even Odisha lawmakers and ministers have used cycles to achieve their goals. Former Union Minister Pratap Chandra Sarangi campaigned entirely on a bicycle during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. At times various Odisha lawmakers have used the cycle to protest against the rise in fuel prices by pedalling to the Assembly. One must remember that the cycle is one of the best means to protect the environment as it does not emit poisonous fumes.

In recent times, craze for cycling is on the rise in metros across India. The utility of cycles lies in the fact that it is a multi-utility mode of transport. It can be used for various purposes and also as a means of adventure sports to give you that adrenaline rush. Today in many countries, people are using cycles to go to work. It is about time, Indians fol-

low suit. Some have already done it, the more the merrier.

But probably Indians need some form of motivation to use cycles on a regular basis. One will be thrilled to know that in Belgium, people get paid for going to office using bicycles. The government has announced a new policy which will be implemented from May 1, 2023. All employees who cycle to work will be entitled a compensation of .27 euros per kilometre. The Netherlands, Japan and Germany are three countries where maximum number of people use cycles.

As per records, the Netherlands has 2.3 per cent of one billion bicycles in the world, with an average of 1.3 bicycles per person. It is followed by Denmark (0.8), Japan (.6), Belgium (.5), China (.4) and the United States (.3) bicycles per person. We all know about Dutch PM Mark Rutte, who pedals to work and prefers to buy bicycles rather than cars. During the coronavirus-induced lockdown many celebrities and politicians were seen using cycles in India.

Yes, efforts are being made to popularise cycling in metros of India. In rural India, cycles are one of the most popular modes of transport. In metros now, 'cyclothons' are now being organised on a regular basis to popularise cycles as a mode of transport. Various other initiatives like the 'India

Cycle4change' challenge is being organised to popularise the fuel-less two-wheeler. The 'India Cycle4change challenge' initiative aims to inspire citizens and experts to implement permanent cycling-friendly infrastructure and build momentum for cycling.

Another such programme is known as the 'RAAHGIRI DAY'. Raahgiri is a car-free citizen initiative that advocates for safe, accessible and inclusive public streets. 'RAAHGIRI DAY' was launched in 2013. Every Sunday, streets are closed to all motorised vehicles till noon and people walk, cycle, exercise and engage.

Cities like Mysore, Bhopal and Kochi have implemented Public Bicycle Sharing (PBS) system. However, many Indian cities struggle due to lack of funds for cycling projects or the absence of cycling culture. In Odisha to motivate people towards cycling, the state government implemented the 'MO Cycle' scheme. However, now most of the cycles bought for the system are lying dysfunctional due to lack of use. One has to realise that in this stress-filled world which takes a toll both physically and mentally, the onus is on the individual to remain fit and increase the body's immunity. Weight gain and obesity are two of the major killers in the world today.

A daily cycling habit increases stamina, and helps keep the immune system young and strong. People have to understand the benefits of cycling on a daily basis. Most importantly, the government, both at the Centre and state-level should initiate nationwide awareness campaigns to highlight the benefits of cycling. The focus should be to highlight the economic, social, health and environmental benefits of cycling.

So let the motto be 'LET'S GO CYCLING'.



SUMAN MOHANTY, OP

The tradition of worshipping Sun God is quite old in Odisha and is as old as the civilisation. However, very few people know about the presence of two other Sun temples apart from the one at Konark in Puri district. Biranchinarayan temple at Buguda in Ganjam district and the one at Paliabindha under Tihidi block in Bhadrak district are dedicated to the Sun God.

While the temple at Konark is known as the first Arka Khetra, the temple at Buguda is known as the second Arka Khetra in the state. The idols of Sun God at Konark and Buguda are made of stones. But what makes the Sun temple at Buguda different from others is its intricate design made of wood for

which it got its name as Wooden Konark.

The temple at Buguda town is about 29 km to the west of Berhampur, the main commercial hub of southern Odisha. In this temple, Sun God is worshipped in the name of Lord Biranchinarayan.

The temple was built by the then royal of Bhanja dynasty of South Odisha. The then royal Srikar Bhanjajadeva of Ghumusar was a dynamic king who contributed a lot and renovated the temple in Buguda in 1790 where the intricate designs of wood were built inside the temple on the basis of the designs of Konark Sun temple. The temple is different from other temples as it is completely built in timber for which it is widely known as Wooden Konark.

The idol of the Sun God is in-



Intricate wood work in the temple

stalled in the sanctum sanctorum like that of the Black Pagoda. The temple art and designs reminiscent of ancient art and architecture of erstwhile Utkal. The wooden carvings which seen in the temple are rare.

There is copper plaque on the temple roof which is constructed with 46 pillars having intricate wood designs. Unlike Konark temple, which faces east, the Biranchinarayan temple at Buguda is west facing.

While rays of the rising sun

shine on the installed Sun idol at Konark, the rays of the setting sun fall on the feet of the idol at Biranchinarayan temple. The sculpture also features a chariot driven by seven horses with one wheel on its left side and 'Aruna' as the charioteer.

There is a beautiful legend on the establishment of temple and the worship of the Sun idol. As per the desire of the king, the main God icon of the temple is made of wood.

Legends have it that once the cowherds were sharpening a weapon on a stone on Malati hill which is near Kesharapalli when



The idol of Lord Biranchinarayan

rituals are now conducted in austerity due to lack of funds. The frontage of the temple is built with sal and palm wood, the designs of which is quite attractive.

The wooden idols of the dancers adorning the walls of the temple mesmerize the visitors and devotees. The walls of the temple also adorn intricate wood carvings depicting the births of Lord Srikrishna and Lord Sriram to the killing of King Kansa and Ravana.

Moreover, the idols of nine planets (Nabagraha), 10 great cosmic powers called Dasa Mahavidya like Kali, Tara, Bhairavi and Chhinamasta are quite attractive.

There are also wooden carvings of Ashtabasu, Ramayan, Gopa Leela and Pattachitra of Puri. The idol is first given a bath in the morning and is applied sandalwood paste.

Devotees through this temple on Magha Saptami, Dola Purnima and Kartik Purnima in large numbers. It is believed that people get cured of the diseases like leprosy and other skin ailments with the blessings of Sun God.

It is also said that the then royal Srikar Bhanja after constructing the temple renounced the worldly life and became a monk. He constructed a mutt inside the temple and began living in it which came

to be known as Bihangi mutt.

Currently, Bhaktaram Das is the head of the mutt. The temple once had acres of land as its property. Most of the lands in Adipur, Biranchipur, B Berhampur and Pankalsahi are the landed properties of Lord Biranchinarayan.

However, due to lack of proper maintenance, the temple is in a crumbling state. The temple and its adjoining areas can be transformed into a great tourist spot if the government pays attention to it. Although the endowment and archeology departments have been entrusted with the task of looking after the temple, these departments have done precious little.

As a result, the intricate designs on wood and the wooden pattachitras on the temple walls have been decaying. With no funds coming from other sources, the temple rituals are being conducted with contributions from residents in Buguda and devotees, though the temple has acres of landed properties.

"The temple is receiving around Rs 1 lakh per annum but it is difficult to maintain and conduct the rituals of the temple with such meagre amount said," mutt head Bhaktaram Das said.

Many farmers have occupied several acres of temple land. They earlier used to pay royalty to the temple but the payment is irregular for which it has become difficult to manage the day-to-day affairs of the temple, the Das added.

A local intelligentsia Chittaranjan Das demanded the Centre to intervene and renovate the ancient temple.

# RYBAKINA SAILS INTO MIAMI OPEN FINAL AFTER BATTLING PAST PEGULA ALCARAZ REPELS FRITZ

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Miami Gardens (US), March 31:** The hopes of American men's tennis rest largely on the talented rackets of Taylor Fritz and Tommy Paul. But a Spanish roadblock named Carlos Alcaraz is in the way — never more illustrated by the last few days at the Miami Open.

Two days after routing the Australian Open semifinalist Paul, the top-ranked Alcaraz took his spectacular arsenal to the highest-ranked American man in No.10 Fritz and blasted into the semifinals with a 6-4, 6-2 victory at Hard Rock Stadium.

In the women's draw, Elena Rybakina advanced to Saturday's finals with a 7-6(7-3), 6-4 victory over Jessica Pegula in a match delayed twice by rain.

Rybakina, the Wimbledon champion, won her 13th straight match and is seeking to become the fifth woman to achieve the "sunshine double" — back-to-back titles in the hard-court tournaments at Indian Wells and Miami.

Before a packed crowd that included John McEnroe and was split in support, Alcaraz broke Fritz's serve in the first game. He used that one break to squeak out the first set and finished the match in tidy 1 hour, 18 minutes. Alcaraz faced just two break points and turned away both chances as he improved his match record to 18-1 in 2023.

"I took the opportunity of every break point I had," the Spaniard said. "I was solid and aggressive at the same time."

This was the first meeting between the two and an opportunity for Fritz to assess how close he is to a breakthrough. The match was postponed Wednesday night, only delaying the inevitable.

"Obviously playing the best player in the world, you can't just drop your serve to start both sets," Fritz said. "He doesn't give you much for free. All the important points in the match, he won."

The 19-year-old Alcaraz proved too tough in Miami against two Americans who reside in South Florida. Fritz moved recently to Miami and Paul has lived in the Delray Beach/Boca Raton area for years.

Alcaraz will play Jannik Sinner in Friday's semifinals, a rematch of their semifinal at Indian Wells, where Alcaraz went on to win the title.

The reigning US Open champion and defending Miami Open champion boasts a glo-



ELENA RYBAKINA

rious drop shot, beautifully controlled groundstrokes and a sneaky net game. Alcaraz's graceful court coverage is reminiscent of his countryman Rafael Nadal. There are no clear weaknesses, as Fritz found out.

Fritz had one moment to seize, gaining a break point against Alcaraz trailing 2-3, trying to get back on serve.

Alcaraz saved the break point in fantastic fashion. Fritz initially made a lovely pop-up retrieve of a would-be winner, but Alcaraz boldly took a chance moments later, rushing to the net to convert a difficult low volley winner.

In an earlier men's quarterfinal of extreme height, No.5 Daniil Medvedev ended

the career-best run of 6-foot-7 American qualifier Chris Eubanks with a 6-3, 7-5 victory.

For all his accomplishments, the 6-6 Medvedev, who has won 22 of his last 23 matches, had never made the Miami Open

semifinals. It sets up an all-Russian semifinal Friday as he faces Karen Khachanov, who beat Francisco Cerundolo 6-3, 6-2.

Medvedev holds a 3-1 career advantage against his longtime friend.

Medvedev, who lost to Alcaraz in the final at Indian Wells, has garnered three ATP titles this year (Rotterdam, Doha and

Dubai).

Eubanks, a 26-year-old former Georgia Tech star ranked 102nd, had never advanced to a quarterfinal of an ATP event of this level and had actor Jamie Foxx in the stands cheering him on. "It's



## Russians to play as neutrals after Wimbledon lifts ban

**LONDON:** Russian and Belarusian players will be able to compete at Wimbledon as neutral athletes after the All England Club Friday reversed its ban from last year. The players must comply with "appropriate conditions," including not expressing support for Russia's invasion of Ukraine. They also must not receive funding "from the Russian and/or Belarusian states (including sponsorship from companies operated or controlled by the states) in relation to their participation in The Championships," the All England Club said in a statement. Other tennis tournaments have allowed Russian and Belarusian players to compete as neutral athletes. "We also consider alignment between the Grand Slams to be increasingly important in the current tennis environment," the club said. "There was a strong and very disappointing reaction from some governing bodies in tennis to the position taken by the All England Club and the LTA last year with consequences which, if continued, would be damaging to the interests of players, fans, The Championships and British tennis." This year's Wimbledon tournament will start July 3. The women's final is scheduled for July 15 and the men's final July 16.

been a dream week for me," Eubanks said, noting Foxx has followed his career for "the past couple of years."

Eubanks was on serve with Medvedev early, leading 3-2 before a brief rain delay. Medvedev came back roaring to win the next four games to close out the set. Eubanks said Medvedev made a "tactical change" after the delay, moving in on his second serve.

The other women's semifinal was finally set with 15th seed Petra Kvitova advancing to face unseeded, 74th-ranked Sorana Cirstea, who beat Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka Wednesday.

In a quarterfinal postponed by Wednesday night's rain, Kvitova defeated No.18 seed Ekaterina Alexandrova 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

Shaking off a rash of double faults in the second, Kvitova prevailed in the third, but she could be at a competitive disadvantage without a day of rest facing Cirstea. Neither Kvitova nor Cirstea will have an extra day to prepare for Saturday's final against Rybakina.

## 39-member men's core group announced for national camp

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 31:** Hockey India has named a 39-member men's core group for the national coaching camp, starting at the SAI Bangalore centre Saturday. The camp will conclude May 21 ahead of the team's trip to Europe, where it will take on Belgium, Great Britain, Netherlands and Argentina in the remaining matches of FIH Hockey Pro League 2022-2023 season.

The core group includes Krishan Bahadur Pathak, PR Sreejesh, Suraj Karkera, Pawan Malik, Prashant Kumar, Jarmanpreet Singh, Surender Kumar,

Harmanpreet Singh, Varun Kumar, Amit Rohidas, Gurinder Singh, Jugraj Singh, Mandeep Mor, Nilam Sanjeep Xess, Sanjay, Yashdeep Siwach and Dipsan Tirkey.

Besides, Manpreet Singh, Hardik Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Moirangthem Rabichandra Singh, Shamsher Singh, Nilakanta Sharma, Rajkumar Pal, Sumit, Akashdeep Singh, Gurjant Singh, Mohd. Raheel Mauseen, Maninder Singh, S Karthi, Mandeep Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Abhishek, Dilpreet Singh, Sukhjeet Singh, Simranjeet Singh, Shilanand Lakra, Manjeet, Pawan Rajbhar have also been named in the group.

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# TIGER DRAWS BIG ROARS WITH A TOUCH OF NOSTALGIA



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**August, March 31:** Tiger Woods hit a 7-iron that was ordinary by his standards, some 30 feet from the hole. No one could have guessed where it landed judging by the massive roar at Riviera from the crowd next to him and 175 yards away around the 13th green.

It's like that whenever he plays, which is not often. And it prompted Colt Knost, calling the shots from the ground that day for CBS to say, "I wish I could have been here in 2000." But this is a different cheer than it was then. It's a different Woods.

The similarity is that it's still loud. Fans fight for every inch of grass behind the ropes to get a clear view. One ambitious man at Riviera climbed into a vacant TV tower and watched from behind a stationary TV camera as if he were working. He was caught from talking too much, and the beer can he was holding didn't help.

Back then, Woods was trying to win all four majors. Now he is trying to play all four majors. What hasn't changed is he is must-see golf. The difference? There is a palpable sense that fans flock to see Woods knowing time is running out, for him and for them.

"He's a much bigger star now — much, much bigger," Padraig Harrington said. "Where I saw it is when he came back to the Valspar (in 2018). Back in the day, everybody came out. There was a buzz. He hit phenomenal shots. But the people

crowd goes wild," Mackay said. "He goes to the back of the green and it was somebody else's turn to play — and they wouldn't stop cheering. I'm looking at Tiger and looking at the crowd and I'm like, I'm not sure I've ever seen this." It went on and on and on and on.

"As easy as it was to take Tiger and his greatness for granted, people are realizing he's not going to be here forever," he said. "People are like, Dammit, I'm going out there to see Tiger do his thing."

What was it like in 2000? There was more applause to go with the wild cheers because cellphones weren't allowed on the course, and the majority of cellphones didn't have cameras.

Social media meant a group of writers at the bar Facebook came along in 2004, Twitter two years later, Instagram in 2010. That was the year Rory McIlroy first played with Woods, in an exhibition at the Memorial and the Chevron World Challenge late in the year.

"I feel there's more of a connection between fans and those sort of celebrities, now more than ever," McIlroy said. "I think there was still a mystique around Tiger and that type of celebrity, and social media has broken down that barrier. People feel a little closer. There's more of a connection there. I think that's why the response to him is the way it is."

There was awe during the peak Woods years, along with an anticipation because he almost always delivered. During one stretch toward the end of 1999 and into 2000, he either won or was runner-up in 10 out of the 11 tournaments he played on the PGA Tour.

And then came the knee surgeries, the scandal in his personal life, and a two-year revival when he returned to No.1 in the world in 2013, followed by four back surgeries. And right when it looked like it was over, Woods won the Tour Championship in 2018, topping that with his Masters victory in 2019.

There was a feeling he could do anything, that he could never be counted out. "There's still the same expectation of winning, even though he's on half a leg and half a back," Jordan Spieth said.

"I don't know what it was like from 1997 to 2008. It will never get bigger than him coming back at East Lake and then the Masters. People have realized it's like you get an opportunity to still watch Michael Jordan play in the NBA, you get to watch Ali fight. You have all those memories. And now all of a sudden it's like, I still get to go watch this guy play."

And there's another element that made McIlroy chuckle. "It's hard not to root for the underdog," McIlroy said. "But that underdog is Tiger Woods."

coming now, you're getting grandkids all the way up to the grandparents.

"The grandparents have seen him in the past, and they want to see the magic," he said. "Back in the day, it felt like it would go on forever. There's a feeling now this maybe is the last dance."

It was a wonder Woods even made it to Augusta National's dance floor last year: He was only 14 months removed from his SUV speeding off a suburban Los Angeles road, a crash that crushed bones in his right leg and ankle. He says amputation was contemplated.

And then there he was, making the cut at the Masters and hobbling his way through 72 holes. Since then, he made it through three rounds at Southern Hills in the PGA Championship and two rounds at St. Andrews in the British Open.

"I've got to be able to pick and choose my events and how many events I'm going to play," Woods said at Riviera, his only start this year. "It's going to be probably the majors and maybe a couple more. Would I like to play more? Yes. Will it allow me to? I don't know. I have to be realistic about that."


He made the cut at Riviera, running off three straight birdies at the end of the opening round for a 69, one of them a 25-foot putt on the 17th hole. The crowd erupted, as always. That's not what got the attention of Justin Thomas' caddie, Jim "Bones" Mackay. It's how long it lasted.

"He gets the ball out of the hole and the

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# Gill, bowlers help GT off to winning start



**SUBLIME TOUCH:** Shubman Gill plays a lofted shot on the off-side during his innings against CSK, Friday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ahmedabad, March 31:** Shubman Gill (63, 36b, 6x4, 3x6) was excellent with the willow helping Gujarat Titans beat Chennai Super Kings by five wickets in the season opener and get off to a winning start to their Indian Premier League (IPL) title defence here, Friday.

It was after the Titans bowlers restricted CSK to 178/7 despite a splendid knock by Ruturaj Gaikwad (92, 50b, 4x4, 9x6). Rashid Khan (2/26), Mohammed Shami (2/29) and Alzarri Joseph (2/33) bagged two wickets apiece for the home team.

Chasing a target of 179 runs, Titans were off to an impressive start with seasoned Wriddhiman Saha (25, 16b, 2x4, 2x6) playing the aggressor. Gill took his time to settle down before raising his game.

Saha's dismissal, off debutant Rajvardhan Hangargekar (3/36), in the fourth over brought Sai Sudharsan (22) into the crease. The left-hander replaced injured Kane Williamson as the 'impact player'. Sudharsan and Gill added 53 runs for the second wicket before Hangargekar broke the stand in the 10th over.

Hardik Pandya (8) joined Gill at the middle, but the former's stay was cut short by Ravindra Jadeja (1/28) a couple overs later. Gill too perished off Tushar Deshpande (1/51), who replaced Ambati Rayudu as impact player.

Vijay Shankar's (27) departure in the final ball of the 18th over brought the equation to 23 off final two overs. However, Rahul Tewatia (15 n o) and Rashid Khan (10 n o) showed their power-game to take GT home with four balls to spare.

Earlier, Gaikwad regaled the near capacity crowd here with his sublime strokeplay. It was a display of effortless hitting from Gaikwad, who relied on his lofted drives over extra cover and crisp pull shots to collect as many as eight sixes.

Apart from Gaikwad, the only other batter who put the Titans under pressure was Moeen Ali who came up with a 17-ball 23. Gaikwad pulled IPL debutant Josh Little on his very first ball to set the tone of his innings giving CSK the momentum they were looking for.

Rashid was introduced in the powerplay and as he often does, he got the wicket that his team was looking for by getting the dan-

gerous looking Ali. Rashid's second over saw him getting rid of Ben Stokes, leaving CSK at 70/3.

However, the fall of wickets did not make Gaikwad change his game as he kept getting the boundaries. Titans did well to stem the flow of runs in the middle overs and got the wicket of Ambati Rayudu. Shivam Dube struggled to find the big hits and that put pressure on Gaikwad who was caught in the deep in the 17th over and missed out on a deserving hundred.

Skipper MS Dhoni came out to bat at No.8 but still managed to make an impact as he pulled Little for a six before flicking him for a four in the final over, sending the crowd into a frenzy. Williamson injured his knee while fielding at the boundary and limped off the field. The last five overs yielded 45 runs for CSK.

**BRIEF SCORES**  
 Chennai Super Kings 178/7 (Ruturaj Gaikwad 92, Moeen Ali 23; Rashid Khan 2/26, Mohammed Shami 2/29, Alzarri Joseph 2/33) lost to Gujarat Titans 182/5 (Shubman Gill 63, Vijay Shankar 27; Rajvardhan Hangargekar 3/36) by 5 wickets.

# Capitals look to corner Super Giants

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, March 31:** Mitchell Marsh's brute power with the willow will be Delhi Capitals' lethal weapon as they brace up for life without Rishabh Pant while starting their IPL campaign against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG), here Saturday.

LSG, who will be playing at home for the first time, is an equally beleaguered outfit if not more, with skipper KL Rahul going through the toughest phase of his career and has been on a downward spiral for quite some time now.

By the look of it, neither DC nor LSG look like outfits that give you the vibe of a champion side like Chennai Super Kings, Mumbai Indians or for that matter Gujarat Titans.

However in the shortest format, equations could change at the drop of hat as the margin that separates a master-stroke from a harakiri is as thin as a thread.

So when DC begin their journey Saturday evening at the Ekana Stadium, it will be an Australian, who will hold the key to the kind of start that the franchise expects.

And that Australian isn't stocky New South Wales man David Warner, who is leading the side but the giant from Western Australia, who has provided some sort of a trailer during the ODI series against India with 12 sixes in three games - 11 of which came in the first two encounters.

It seems that Marsh has got a hang of Indian tracks and that can only augur well for DC. Marsh, who hasn't bowled his medium pacers for some time, will be a vital cog in Powerplay overs if Warner and his flamboyant opening partner Prithvi



Shaw, fail to get going.

DC head coach Ricky Ponting expects a lot from Shaw and on his day, he can butcher any attack. Warner has been a different beast in IPL and one of the league's most influential players but his blazing blade is missing for sometimes and he is also coming back post elbow injury. He hasn't exactly looked in great rhythm but once the match starts, he could make everyone look and feel like a fool.

Axar Patel's batting has gone to a different level in red ball cricket but there are no guarantees that the format will be replicated in shortest

format too.

On top of that, Anrich Nortje, Lungi Ngidi and Mustafizur Rahman's absence from the first game due to national duty makes the bowling attack thin. The eight overs between spinners Axar and Kuldeep Yadav will be very crucial for DC in context of most games.

But the bigger point is whether Rahul, in his current form and mental frame of mind, be able to seize the night against a weak bowling attack? How much will Kyle Mayers be able to compensate for Quinton de Kock, who is also not available due to national com-

mitments?

How LSG's tournament pans out will depend on how the Indian trio of Krunal Pandya, Ayush Badoni and Deepak Hooda perform as Rs 16 crore investment Nicholas Pooran is known to blow hot and cold on numerous occasions.

For Rahul, it will not just be about volume of runs scored but also about the kind of intent he is showing along with the consistency in strike-rate, where it is not just about making up for lost deliveries towards business end of the innings.

# Injury-hit Knight Riders up against Kings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mohali, March 31:** Plagued by injuries and unavailability of a few foreign players, both Punjab Kings and Kolkata Knight Riders would still look to put their best foot forward as they lock horns in their opening IPL encounter here Saturday.

These are the two franchises, which over the years have flattered to deceive. Inconsistency in team selections seemed to have also affected them badly.

While PBKS finished sixth, two-time champions KKR ended a rung below in the seventh spot in the 10-team competition last year.

Both teams will be led by new skippers this season. While veteran

Shikhar Dhawan will be at the helm of Punjab, domestic star Nitish Rana has replaced injured Shreyas Iyer as KKR captain.

On paper, though, PBKS look a tad more stronger than KKR. But Englishman Jonny Bairstow's absence will certainly leave a big void in Punjab's team composition. Bairstow has been ruled out of the entire IPL as he continues to recover from a leg injury he had sustained while playing golf last September.

In Bairstow's place, PBKS has roped in BBL's player-of-the-tournament this season, Matthew Short who is expected to open the batting alongside Dhawan.

Other key PBKS players, who will miss Saturday's game are hard-



hitting all-rounder Liam Livingstone, who is yet to get clearance from the ECB, following a knee injury, and South African Kagiso Rabada who is on national duty.

PBKS squad is stacked with all-rounders, the most lethal among them being USD 2 million plus buy Sam Curran, who is more than

handy with the bat and is a very fine death bowler. Zimbabwe's Sikandar Raza is another utility all-rounder PBKS could bank upon.

The Mohali-based outfit would also rely on coach Trevor Bayliss' tactical nous to shed their tag of perennial underachievers during the season. PBKS have never won the IPL title in the last 15 years. The closest they came was a final appearance in 2014 and semifinal defeat in the inaugural season.

For two-time champions KKR, new coach Chandrakant Pandit will be the key man as it is now an open secret that he along with Mumbai stalwart Abhishek Nayar are going to take all decisions from the dug-out and Rana's only job would be to implement them.



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# Sindhu cruises into semis, Srikanth out

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Madrid, March 31:** Double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu cruised to the semifinals even as compatriot Kidambi Srikanth crashed out of the Madrid Spain Masters here Friday.

Sindhu got the better of World No.19 Mia Blichfeldt of Denmark 21-14, 21-17 to reach her first semifinal of the year. Srikanth, on the other hand, lost to top seed Japanese shuttler Kenta Nishimoto 18-21, 15-21 in the men's singles quarterfinals.

Sindhu, who is seeded second, has been struggling to find her feet since returning from a long injury lay off. The 27-year-old has slipped out of the top 10 in the world rankings and until now hadn't been able to cross the second round in the last few tournaments in 2023.

After a sedate start to the match, the former world champion completely dominated the second half of the play to take first game comfortably.

Sindhu was, however, trailing for most part of the second game. But she made an impressive comeback fighting from 6-12 to registering a straight game win. The lone Indian left in the Super 300 tournament, Sindhu will clash with the unseeded Yeo Jia Min of Singapore for a place in the final.

Earlier the fifth seeded Srikanth, a former world number one, showed flashes of brilliance but the inconsistency, that has plagued him all season, once again marked the end of him. It was Srikanth's third loss to the Japanese shuttler.

# Mane, Narwal make cut for shooting World Cup in Baku

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, March 31:** Shahu Tushar Mane and Shiva Narwal's good show at the Bhopal World Cup has earned them a place in the Indian team for the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol, to be held in Baku May 8-15.

The National Rifle Association of India (NRAD) announced a 22-member Indian squad for the upcoming tournament, which would be the year's fifth ISSF World Cup stage after the third was successfully concluded recently in Bhopal. The fourth stage will be held from April 11 in Lima, Peru, where India has chosen not to participate.

In another slight change, Esha Singh replaced Manu Bhaker in the women's 10m Air Pistol, also doubling up in women's 25m pistol. Bhopal bronze medallist Manu will only shoot the 25m event in Baku.

All Rifle and Pistol shooters are now preparing for the National Selection Trials in Bhopal next month.

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