



JUGGLING ACT

Actress Alia Bhatt dwells on the anxieties of doing justice to both motherhood and her acting career

LEISURE P2



US N-SUB IN KOREA

A US nuclear missile submarine will dock in Korea for the first time in 40 years as part of security measures

INTERNATIONAL P10



ROYALS HOST SUPER KINGS

Rajasthan Royals hope to bounce back with a win against Chennai Super Kings in their IPL match at home

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

MISCREANTS LOOT BANK IN BALASORE

Balasore: A group of miscreants allegedly looted approximately ₹40 lakh and gold ornaments Wednesday from a branch of the Union Bank of India at Chandaneswar locality in this district. Eye-witnesses said that 7-8 armed miscreants entered the bank posing as customers at around 1.00pm. They held the employees and customers at gunpoint and locked them inside a room before decamping with the cash and valuables. Police rushed to the spot and released the staff and customers. They are examining the CCTV footage of the bank in an effort to nab the burglars. Sources said that the robbers fled towards West Bengal.

CURFEW REVOKED IN 2 AREAS OF SAMBALPUR

Sambalpur: The Sambalpur district administration Wednesday revoked curfew from two of the six police station areas in the violence-hit western Odisha city. The curfew had been imposed April 14 night following large-scale violence in the city. Officials said curfew has been lifted from the Sambalpur Sadar police station and Bareipali police station jurisdictions. However, curfew will continue to remain in force in four other areas. They are Sambalpur town, Ainthapali, Dhanupali and Khetrajpur, officials added.

360 INDIANS RETURN HOME FROM SUDAN

New Delhi: The first batch of Indian evacuees from Sudan, 360 to be precise arrived here Wednesday evening, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said in a tweet. "India welcomes back its own. #OperationKaveri brings 360 Indian nationals to the homeland as first flight reaches New Delhi," Jaishankar tweeted. So far India has evacuated 534 of its nationals from strife-torn Sudan. A total of 278 Indians were evacuated Tuesday from Port Sudan in an Indian Navy ship. Then Wednesday two IAF aircraft brought to Jeddah 256 more Indians. India has set up a transit facility at Jeddah and Minister of State for External Affairs, V Muraleedharan is overseeing the evacuation mission.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I spent crores to renovate my bungalow... but believe me, I am an aam admi like you

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	60300.58 ↑ 169.87
NIFTY	17813.60 ↑ 44.35
DOLLAR	81.85 ↓ ₹0.18
EURO	90.35 ↑ ₹0.41
GOLD	₹60,113 ↓ ₹148
SILVER	₹74,400 ↑ ₹137

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	36.9°C	36.4°C
MIN	23.4°C	23.0°C
Humidity	70%	80%
Rainfall	1.1mm	Nil

Forecast: Light to moderate rain



LENDING SUPPORT: Former governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Satya Pal Malik joins Wednesday the protests by wrestlers at Jantar Mantar demanding action against WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh

When will PM hear our 'Mann ki Baat': Wrestlers

With Satya Pal Malik joining the stir, the wrestlers feel that their plight will be noticed by those who matter in the government

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 26: "Why are you not listening to our 'Mann Ki Baat'," the protesting wrestlers asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi here Wednesday and sought his time to discuss the sexual harassment allegations against his party's MP and WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh. The plea of the wrestlers came amid former J&K governor Satya Pal Malik joining the ongoing protests at Jantar Mantar here.

Malik said it was a 'matter of shame' that athletes who are honoured in the country for their success at the international level are now fighting for justice on the streets. He informed that he spoke Tuesday night to Olympic medallist Bajrang Punia and promised to visit them at the protest site.

"When our daughters win medals and unfurl the Tricolour, at that time

very shamelessly, we invite them for tea to honour them and to click pictures with them, and today they are on the road. We should drown in shame," Malik told mediapersons. "I appeal to all of you that you support them till their fight ends and this gathering should get bigger and bigger," he added.

The wheel-chair bound Malik said it was unfortunate that women wrestlers are being asked to provide evidence of sexual exploitation. "It is not just your fight, it is a battle for dignity of our daughters. We must accept and trust what they are saying," asserted the veteran politician.

The wrestlers meanwhile said they are surprised that PM Modi felicitates them and clicks pictures with them when they win medals but now he has turned a blind eye to their plight when they are on road, seeking justice.

"PM Modi sir justice about 'Beti Bachao' and 'Beti Padhao', and listens to everyone's 'Mann Ki Baat'. Can't he listen to our 'Mann ki Baat'?" He invites

us to his home when we win medals and gives us a lot of respect and calls us his daughters. Today, we appeal to him that he listens to our 'Mann Ki Baat', Rio Games bronze medalist Sakshi Malik.

Contd...P4

11 killed as Maoists blow up van

THE DEVASTATING ATTACK IN CHHATTISGARH'S DANTEWADA DISTRICT PROVES THAT DESPITE THE GOVERNMENT'S CLAIMS, NAXALITES CONTINUE TO BE A THREAT IN SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY

AGENCIES

Raipur, April 26: Ten policemen and the driver of the van they were travelling in, were killed Thursday when the vehicle was blown up by an improvised explosive device (IED) in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh, officials said. The policemen were returning from an anti-Maoist operation which was launched after intelligence inputs, they said.

Reinforcements have been rushed to the spot and the bodies of the deceased have been brought to Dantewada, Sundarraj P, IGP said. Security personnel have launched a search operation in the area, he added.

The deceased policemen belonged to the District Reserve Guard (DRG), a special force of the Chhattisgarh police that comprises mostly local tribals who have been trained to combat Maoists. The DRG has been instrumental in several successful operations against red rebels in Dantewada, a hotbed of left-wing extremism.

Sources said that the Maoist ambush was carried out with 50kg of explosives. It left a massive hole on the road and uprooted a large number of trees. They added that the commuter vehicle which offers no ballistic protection may have been flung at least 20 feet by the force of the explosion and informed that debris were found 150 metres away from the blast site.



Security personnel and an ambulance at the place where the explosion took place Wednesday

THREE DISTRICTS ON HIGH ALERT

Bhubaneswar: High alert was sounded Wednesday in the three districts of Malkangiri, Koraput and Nabarangpur in Odisha after 10 security personnel and a driver were killed in an IED blast by Maoists in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada, ADG (Intelligence) Sanjeeb Panda informed Wednesday. He said that instructions have been issued to intensify patrolling along the border, blocking and checking of vehicles in these three districts.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke with Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel following the attack and assured all possible help.

"The news of the martyrdom of our 10 jawans and a driver due to an IED blast targeting the DRG force which had arrived for anti-Naxal operation on the information of the presence of Maoist cadre under Aranpur police station area of Dantewada is very sad. We share the

grief of their families. May their soul rest in peace," Baghel tweeted.

It should be stated here that the Naxals, have waged an armed insurgency against the state government that has killed hundreds of people over six decades in Chhattisgarh. They say they are fighting on behalf of the poorest, who have been left out of the country's economic boom.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Dharmendra

Pradhan paid tributes to the fallen heroes.

"Strongly condemn the attack on the Chhattisgarh police in Dantewada. I pay my tributes to the brave personnel we lost in the attack," Modi said.

Pradhan also expressed deepest condolences to the family members of the police personnel who lost their lives. "Deepest condolences to the families of the brave police personnel who lost their lives in the cowardly attack in Dantewada, Chhattisgarh. Their sacrifice will not be forgotten," Pradhan tweeted.

Sources meanwhile said that the special security forces tasked with combating Maoists are looking for the attackers, who have disappeared in the jungle.

Odisha to get its 1st Vande Bharat train next month

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 26: Odisha is all set to get its first Vande Bharat Express train in May, sources said here Wednesday. As per information available, the new Vande Bharat train will originate from Howrah in the morning and travel to Puri via Bhubaneswar. Similarly it will begin its downward journey from Puri and reach Howrah late evening. The exact timings of the train are being worked out, sources added.

Since Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already inaugurated one Vande Bharat train from Howrah

(to New Jalpaiguri), he is keen to inaugurate the one in Odisha from Puri. Details of his availability are being worked out and accordingly the launch date will be finalised. The train will originate from Howrah simply because its maintenance will be carried out at the Santraganchi station yard. It will have 14 AC chair car coaches and two executive category cabins.

Empty rakes of the Vande Bharat train from Integral Coach Factory in Chennai passed Wednesday through the Bhubaneswar station en route to Howrah as a test run.



BLOODY TRAIL

- **APRIL 2021:** Twenty two security personnel killed in gunfight with Naxals in Terram jungle along the borders of Bijapur and Sukma districts
- **MARCH 2018:** Nine CRPF personnel killed in IED blast triggered by Maoists in Sukma district
- **FEBRUARY 2018:** Two Chhattisgarh police personnel killed in a gun-battle with Naxals at Bheji in Sukma
- **APRIL 2017:** 24 CRPF personnel killed in encounter with Maoists in Sukma district
- **MAY 2013:** 25 Congress leaders, including former minister Mahendra Karma, killed in Maoist attack in Darbha valley
- **APRIL 2010:** Maoists kill 75 CRPF personnel in ambush in Dantewada district

STATE HIKES EV SUBSIDY

Despite launching the EV Policy 2021, sales have not picked up and it prompted the Odisha government to offer more lucrative schemes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 26: To encourage people to buy more electric vehicles (EV), the Odisha government enhanced Wednesday the subsidy for buying such machines.

The State Commerce and Transport department has issued a notification in this regard. As per the notification, the government will provide subsidy of ₹5,000 per kWh for registration of EV in Odisha. The maximum subsidy of

₹20,000 will be provided on the purchase of electric-powered two-wheelers. Similarly, ₹30,000 subsidy will be provided for three-wheelers. The government will provide ₹10,000 per kWh for EV four-wheelers with a maximum subsidy amount of ₹1.5 lakh.

The Odisha government had brought the 'Odisha Electric Vehicle Policy, 2021' with a targeted adoption of 20% electric vehicles by the end of 2025 as a measure to reduce vehicular pollution. Contd...P4

UP's quinquagenarian ex-MLAs pass Class-XII

AGENCIES

Bareilly/Meerut, April 26: There is no age for learning and studying, say two former Uttar Pradesh lawmakers, both of who are in their 50s. Both have cleared the state Class-XII board exams and now aim to take up degree courses. Both also repent the fact that they did not pursue higher education in their search for political glory.

While former BJP MLA from Bareilly district's Bithri-Chainpur seat Rajesh Mishra secured 263



Rajesh Mishra & Prabhudayal Valmiki

marks out of 500, Prabhudayal Valmiki, a two-time Samajwadi

Party (SP) MLA from Hastinapur, got second division marks in the exams, the result of which was declared Tuesday.

"Two years ago, I cleared the Class-X board exams and now I have passed the Class-XII exams also. I want to pursue law so that I can help poor people get justice," 55-year-old Mishra, who was BJP MLA from 2017 to 2022, said Wednesday.

Mishra, however, is not satisfied with the marks he scored in three subjects. "I am not satisfied with the marks in Drawing Design,

Civics and Education. I will get the answer sheets scrutinised," informed the former MLA.

Mishra, who hails from Bharatpur village and is popularly known as 'Pappu Bharatpur', secured 57 in Hindi, 47 in Civics, 42 in Education, 36 in Drawing Design and 81 in Sociology.

A jubilant neighbour, Brajesh Kumar Singh, congratulated Mishra saying 'Pappu Pass ho Gaya', a popular line from an old advertisement featuring actor Amitabh Bachchan. Contd...P4

leisure



HOLLYWOOD DIRECTOR GUNN KEEN TO WORK WITH NTR JR

Guardians of the Galaxy director James Gunn has shared that he wants to work with RRR-fame NTR Jr, and said the actor was 'amazing' and 'cool' in the film. In a recent interview with a publication, Gunn stated that he wishes to work with the Indian actor.

KIM TO QUIT REALITY TV TO FOCUS ON LAW CAREER

Reality TV star Kim Kardashian wants to give up stardom to be a full-time lawyer and hopes that her law career becomes her most meaningful work. The 42-year-old is known for appearing in a series of shows but has been training as a lawyer since 2019 in memory of her dad.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
You've finally realised that diet and exercise are a must, and you especially need to take good care. Today, you may wish to eat something different. Tried Mongolian cuisine? Ganesh suggests that you go out with some friends who you've not been paying attention to.

TAURUS
You will spend your day in the company of near and dear ones, says Ganesh. Family and friends might gather at your place and you will leave no stone unturned in welcoming them to your nest. In all probability, home makers will be able to shine in cooking as well as hosting, foresees Ganesh.

GEMINI
Today, you may be busy purchasing food supplies or penning an inventory. In your spare time, which you are likely to have in plenty today, you will try to befriend strangers or tread into unfamiliar territories. Such activities will not bring you any harm. A stroll with your sweetheart will nicely conclude a fairly eventful day, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You are feeling lucky today. The problem is that your feelings have nothing to do with the ground reality. So, while you may get busy trying your luck at risky speculative markets, Ganesh may get increasingly worried about the losses you may incur because of your foolishness.

LEO
Today, the force is with you. Well, at least part of the force that deals with being a smooth talker, says Ganesh. It is your power of expression that comes to the fore and stands you in good stead. Having mastered the art of communication, you now are a wizard of words who conjures showers of pearls with a mere twist of the tongue.

VIRGO
Take a break today, says Ganesh. Replace the mundane with something exotic. Attend private dos and social meets and be gregariously gregarious.

LIBRA
No matter what you do, some days are just not happening. Considering the random mood swings that affect you today, it's in the best interest of others that you put up a 'Beware of me' sign. By being forewarned about it, you should be capable of handling your erratic behaviour. Just remember that nothing can affect your mental balance, and that this is just a phase.

SCORPIO
The day today is riddled with minor, nagging ailments. Adopt a two-pronged strategy, advises Ganesh. One - change your lifestyle, and two - visit your doctor for regular examinations. Ominous at his best, Ganesh counsels to take care of your health.

SAGITTARIUS
Be set to capture the flag and sing the victory song in whatever task you take up today. Your subordinates will be the ones needing your support and motivation. At the end of the day, the icing on the cake would be the smile you take to bed.

CAPRICORN
Your intuition will get the better of you today, bagging you respect and recognition, says Ganesh. But it's not every day that you get so lucky, so try and make the most of what's on the platter, for all you know, intuitions could have a mood swing too. Besides, if winning hearts is like a once-in-a-blue-moon thing, be on your best behaviour and wear your best suit - it's a blue moon day for you today.

AQUARIUS
Your mood will swing by the hour today! Naturally, you leave your friends stumped. But unpredictability does not mean that you take unnecessary risk. Ganesh suggests you complete all pending projects, and bear in mind that it is only fools who rush in where angels fear to tread.

PISCES
A hectic day of socialising awaits you. You will discover hidden talents and unnoticed traits about yourself. Either that, or whoever brought them to your notice was only lying to get some socialising action of their own.



Alia anxious about her 'balancing act'

Mumbai: Alia Bhatt has embraced motherhood beautifully after the birth of her daughter Raha Kapoor. She's also getting back to work slowly to handling professional commitments along with making public appearances at events. Clearly, it may seem like Alia is balancing work and her baby both very beautifully. However, she's quite anxious about it.

Alia said in a recent interview that it makes her anxious to think whether she's doing right with her baby and work because there's so much pressure on women to ace both.

The *Sadak 2* actress also confessed that she wonders if people actually think if she's managing well or are they

only saying it to placate her?

It's like this old-school dogma, she says, that once a woman has a baby, they have to martyr their career or they're not a model mom. Alia further added that it's very important for new mothers to get that time to gather their bearings and it's equally crucial for organisations and industries to grant them the time they need, instead of just writing them off.

Even if there's no judgement, the actress is very critical of herself. That's why she works hard on her mental health, goes for therapy every week where she can voice these fears.

AGENCIES

Nick makes my jaw drop all day: PeeCee

Mumbai: Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Nick Jonas got married in December 2018 and since then, they're serving couple goals. They indeed can't get enough of each other and are each other's biggest cheerleaders. Recently, when Priyanka was on a promotional campaign for *Citadel*, Nick was with her all through in different cities - from India to London to Rome.

In a recent interview when Priyanka was asked about the impact she has on Nick and there's a video where she literally made his jaw drop, she laughed and said she's Nick's biggest fan. She added that she's so glad to have a partner who is as supportive as him but even he makes her jaw drop all day and there's nothing wrong with that. "I'm his biggest fan," declared Priyanka.

While Nick supported PC for the promotions of *Citadel*, the actress also goes to cheer for him at his shows. Priyanka added that she's going for his show after her screening because that's what family does - they show up for each other. AGENCIES



Phalguna Chaitra to be premiered in Australia

The movie by young producer Sakti Jagdev is set to become the first Odia film to release in three major Australian cities - Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane

Bhubaneswar: The highly anticipated Odia film *Phalguna Chaitra* is all set to break new ground by becoming the first Odia film to be premiered in Australia. The movie will be released May 13 in three Australian theatres - Hoyts Docklands (Melbourne), Hoyts Blacktown (Sydney), and Event Cinemas (Brisbane). Talks too are on with distributors in England, the USA, Dubai, Malaysia and Singapore to provide NROs with the opportunity to

enjoy this Odia film, production house sources revealed.

The movie features Chowdhury Jayaprakash Das, Partha Sarathi Ray, Ananya Mishra, BM Baishali, Sukant Rath, Bhaswati Basu, Pranab Rath, and Chandan Biswal in the lead roles. Actor Babushan Mohanty is a co-producer of the movie directed by Peenakee Singh and Sisir Kumar Sahu.

Sulagna Mohanty has written the story while Pranab Prasanna Rath has penned the screenplay and dialogues. The music is scored by Abhishek-Eshan-Kaushik, Jerry, and Dichen Nayak, with lyrics by JP Wordsmith, Sthita Patnaik, and Sumit Panda.

The Odia cinephiles have already enjoyed the teaser, trailer, and four songs from the movie, showing great optimism about the film. PNN

'My name is not Khan'

Mumbai: Aishwarya Rai Bachchan is one of the versatile actresses who have carved a space on their own in the Hindi film industry. However, apart from her looks and acting skills, she is also known for being vocal about anything and everything. She is noted for saying things the way she likes, and she has never feared or shied away from the media.

Once she had graced Karan Johar's chat show, *Koffee With Karan*, along with her husband Abhishek Bachchan, and with her answers, she had left Karan in awe.

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan

is known for her wittiness. When Karan Johar had asked her to choose 'Khan of all seasons' among Aamir Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, Saif Ali Khan and Salman Khan. To that, Abhishek Bachchan can be heard protesting, "There are more actors in the industry", but Aishwarya answered it quite calmly with her wit.

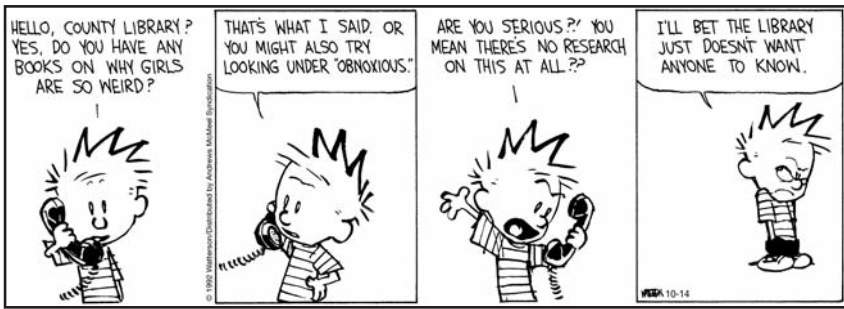
Aishwarya Rai Bachchan can be heard saying to that question, "We are Bachchans for all seasons, and My name is not Khan." This answer had left Karan Johar speechless. As soon as the video went viral from the Instagram page, netizens started to pour their reactions to it. AGENCIES

FUN post

PEANUTS



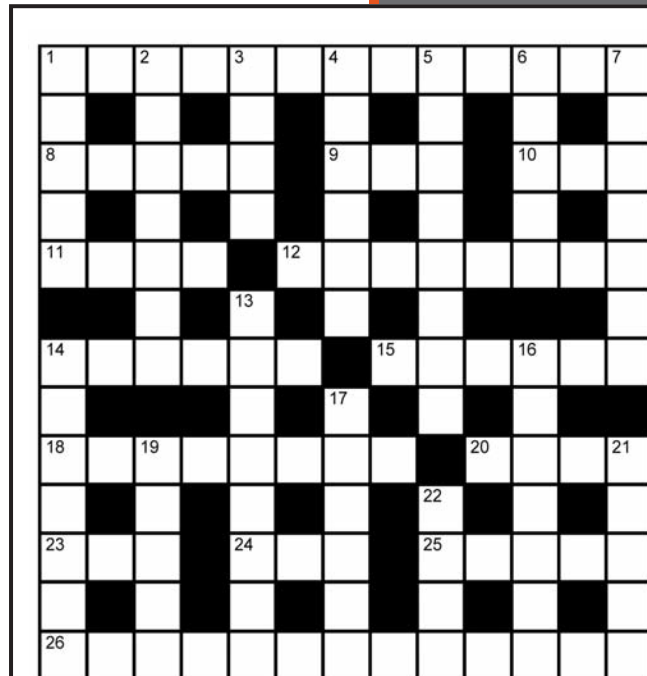
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



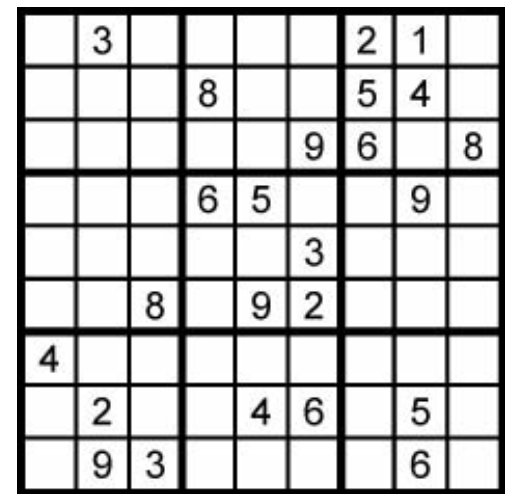
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Showing poise and certainty (4-9)
 - 8 Clergyman
 - 9 Liveliness
 - 10 Soap ingredient
 - 11 Defeat decisively
 - 12 Exhausts
 - 14 Shines brightly
 - 15 Beer mugs
 - 18 Wildfires
 - 20 Egyptian goddess
 - 23 Corn serving
 - 24 Allow
 - 25 Fancy tie
 - 26 Sleepwalkers
 - 4 Campania capital
 - 5 Discourteous
 - 6 Plaudits
 - 7 African disease carriers
 - 13 Rain gear
 - 14 Sailplanes
 - 16 Termites, e.g.
 - 17 Jacuzzi (3,3)
 - 19 Group meeting
 - 21 Positions
 - 22 Corridor
- Down**
- 1 Separate
 - 2 Reprimand
 - 3 Wine bottle item

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



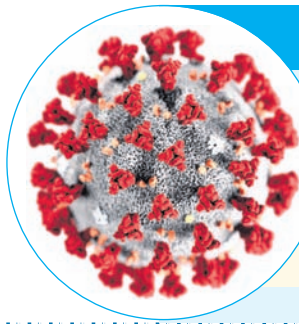
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



RICH TRIBUTE

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik pays tribute to Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati Narayan Dev on his birth anniversary in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

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

HYBRID VEHICLES FOR JUDGES, MINS, BABUS

Chief Minister gives in-principle approval to use of hybrid vehicles by ministers, Chief Secy, secretaries, district judges, Collectors and SPs



Chief Secretary and other officers in the rank of apex scale and equivalent are eligible to procure Toyota Innova, Tata Hexa and Mahindra XUV 500 with a calling price of ₹25 lakh

Committee of State Transport Authority (STA).

As per the Finance department's notification, ministers, Chief Secretary and other officers in the rank of apex scale and equivalent are eligible to procure Toyota Innova, Tata Hexa and Mahindra XUV 500 with a calling price of Rs 25 lakh per vehicle and a mileage of 9 km per litre.

Similarly, the district judges, officers of the rank of Principal Secretary or Commissioner-cum-Secretary, and equivalent rank are eligible to procure Maruti Ciaz and Honda City cars, whose maximum price will be Rs 15

lakh and showing mileage of 12 km per litre.

Collectors and SPs can use Mahindra Scorpio, Hyundai Creta and Mahindra Marazzo vehicles, whose cost would be within Rs 15 lakh and the minimum mileage of such vehicle would be at least 10 km per litre. However, the state government has exempted judges of the High Court from the purview of the notification. The officers before procuring the vehicle will have to obtain approval of the Finance department.

"No vehicle shall be purchased by any office, other than the above mentioned and hiring of vehicles shall be allowed in such cases by ad-

hering to the provision of Finance Department Office Memorandum issued on 06.09.2019," read the notification issued by Principal Secretary Finance, Vishal Dev.

Notably, the Centre and many other states have brought out policies which encourage and incentivise purchase of electric vehicles (EVs) and hybrid cars with an objective of significantly reducing the use of conventional fossil fuel-based vehicles and switching over to vehicles based on cleaner technologies.

Considering it, the state government is also taking steps to procure hybrid vehicles.

A hybrid vehicle is one that uses two or more distinct types of power (like submarines that use diesel/petrol when surfaced and batteries when submerged). Other means to store energy include pressurised fluid in hydraulic hybrids.

Hybrid power trains are designed to switch from one power source to another to maximise both fuel efficiency and energy efficiency.

A hybrid EV cannot be plugged in to charge the battery. Instead, the battery is charged through regenerative braking and by the internal combustion engine.

State rolls up sleeves to tackle possible cyclone

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 26: Learning a lesson from the devastation caused by tropical cyclone Fani in May 2019, the state government has started preparations to face possible cyclones during this season.

Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Pramila Mallik and Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu briefed the media about the steps taken to deal with possible cyclone in the state.

Mallik said 24x7 control rooms will start functioning in the Revenue and Disaster Management department and district headquarters from May 1. A Class I officer will be in-charge of the control room.

Like every year, tabletop exercise and mock drill will be held in all district headquarters, flood/cyclone centres and block levels June 18 and 19. As Rath Yatra will be conducted June 20, the mock drill in Puri will be held at a later stage, she said.

The minister further said that 317 fire stations have been equipped with necessary equipment and trained manpower to carry out search and rescue operations. These personnel will be deployed ahead of the cyclone at vulnerable places.

In addition to it, 342 regional fire service teams in the state are in combat preparedness to tackle any kind of emergency situation. Similarly, 17 teams of the National Disaster Response Force's (NDRF) 3rd Battalion are in preparedness to carry out search and rescue operations, she said, adding that 16 teams are stationed at Mundali and one is stationed at Balasore.

These NDRF teams are functioning in coordination with Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) and Special Relief Commissioner (SRC).

Collectors have been directed to instruct BDOs and tehsildars to provide fuel to the vehicles



used by NDRF teams in affected areas, she added.

As many as 879 multipurpose cyclone/flood shelters are being used to shelter evacuees ahead of potential cyclones. OSDMA has been directed to inspect the various emergency equipment and machinery and lights and generators in these shelters. Mallik informed mediapersons.

Further, she said, OSDMA has been directed to prepare a list of tower lights in the area after checking the functioning of the tower lights in the shelters. Similarly, the officials concerned have been asked to check on the functioning of power chain saws in the shelters.

Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department, Rural Development department, Health and Family Welfare department and Housing and Urban Development department have been asked to prepare emergency plans to take necessary action on cleanliness and sanitation, said Sahu.

These departments will make arrangements for advance deployment of necessary manpower and equipment before the cyclone. All necessary arrangements for relief line clearance/immediate restoration of damaged roads in potentially cyclone-affected areas shall be made within a short period of time after the cyclone.

In addition, these departments

have been instructed to prepare a list of emergency equipment in advance and keep it at the district headquarters.

Sufficient quantities of bleaching powder, chlorine tablets, lime powder and other items will be kept at the state and district level, he said.

There are 10 mobile treatment plants with Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department. It has been directed for early deployment of these plants in vulnerable areas, he said.

Instructions have also been given to supply drinking water to the affected areas through water tankers restore and operationalize damaged water supply projects immediately after the cyclone.

The H&FW department has been directed to keep stock of necessary medicines for flood-related diseases, water purifiers, and anti-snake venom injections available in the district headquarters hospitals, the ACS said.

FARD department has been asked to make necessary arrangements to ensure supply of cattle feed and fodder during the cyclone.

Energy department has been asked to review the disaster management plans of power distribution companies and give instructions for execution. Take necessary steps for speedy restoration of power supply in cyclone-affected areas.



INFRA BOOST: School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash and Puri Collector Samarth Verma among other dignitaries during the inauguration of 'transformed' Gangadhar Bidyapitha in the Holy City, Wednesday

Trees outside forests prog will be a huge success: PK Amat



Bhubaneswar, April 26: The ambitious 'Trees Outside Forests in India' (TOFI), a Central government initiative, was launched here Wednesday.

Inaugurating the programme, state Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Pradip Kumar Amat exuded confidence

that the programme would supplement and reinforce the existing efforts of the Odisha government under the able guidance of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik towards augmenting the green cover in the state beyond forest areas, thereby achieving substantial improvement in natural environment and making agriculture climate resilient.

TOFI programme is envisaged to catalyse the expansion of 2.8 million hectares of new land under trees outside forests

outside forests in the seven participating states — Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh — while enhancing livelihoods and ecosystem services.

In his address, Principal Secretary of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment department Arabinda Kumar Padhee emphasised on the need for large-scale agro forestry. The focus must be on preparation of more farmer-friendly regulations and policies to strengthen agro forestry, he added.

The forest cover in Odisha has been increased by 537 sq km. As per the Forest Survey of India report during 2021, the forest cover of Odisha is much higher than the national average. "With advanced technology and expertise, TOFI programme will be a huge success in Odisha," said Debidutta Biswal, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and Head of Forest Force, Odisha.

Jennifer Larson, Consul General, US Consulate, Hyderabad and Veena Reddy Mission Director, USA ID/India shared their valuable thoughts and suggestions towards accomplishing the aims and objective of the TOFI.

'Steps afoot to make youths future-ready'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 26: Union Minister of State (MoS) for Education Subhas Sarkar Wednesday said the Centre has been offering a host of initiatives to make youths future-ready through skill education.

Addressing a seminar on 'Building Capacities for Lifelong Learning in the Context of Future of Work' during the Third Education Working Group (EdWG) Meeting at CSIR-IMMT here, the Union minister said the Centre is revisiting measures to develop, assess and recognise skills through integration of academic and vocational education.

Attending the seminar as the guest of honour, Sarkar spoke on the role of education in shaping the nation's future.

Emphasising on the value of skill education, the MoS for Education said the Centre has been offering a host of initiatives to make youths future-ready.

Platforms like G20, which help exchange expertise, experiences, and best practices, will be useful in collaborative reforms in the education sector, Sarkar said.

"Guided by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the government is rethinking the ways in place to develop, assess, and recognise skills primarily through the integration of academic and vocational education," Sarkar pointed out.



Minister of State for Education Subhas Sarkar

National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) chairperson Nirmaljeet Singh Kalsi also presented inputs on education from G20 countries.

Ministry of Education Secretary K Sanjay Murthy and National Educational Technological Forum (NETF) Chairman Anil D Sahasrabudhe shared insights on building a digital ecosystem for lifelong learning.

The seminar included three panel discussions, with panellist participation from Brazil, Spain, UAE, Singapore, Russia, South Africa, Mauritius, OECD, Unicef, Australia, and the UK.

The delegates attended the G20 Future of Work exhibition, where they witnessed cutting-edge technology and innovative ideas that are changing the way people work and learn.

The exhibition features repre-

Unique ID for students soon to curb fake certs

Bhubaneswar: In a bid to curb the use of fake certificates, the Centre will roll out a unique identity system for students, said National Educational Technology Forum (NETF) chairman Anil Sahasrabudhe, Wednesday.

Speaking to media during the G20 Third Education Working Group (EdWG) Meeting here, Sahasrabudhe said, "There is an urgent need for Education Ecosystem Registry. Just like Aadhaar gives unique identity to a person, students need to be provided with Aadhaar-based unique identity."

It will help students save all information at one place. With this, they do not need to fill the admission forms while changing educational institutes. Moreover, the system will help know the authenticity of students' documents," Sahasrabudhe added. "We have shared the draft docu-

ments of the system on our portals, and sought people's feedback till May 5. The registration will begin in August and Unique ID will be linked with Aadhaar card. This digitalisation not only brings transparency but also

curb the use of fake certificates to secure a job," he explained. The announcement of the NETF chairman assumes significance in the wake of crackdowns on major fake educational certificate rackets in several parts of Odisha.

Notably, the Crime Branch which is probing the fake educational certificate racket case has reportedly found Uttar Pradesh Board officials' link in the scam. The fake educational certificate racket having pan-India links was busted in Bolangir and around 5,000 fake certificates were seized from a coaching centre.

sentation from industry, academia, government agencies, multilateral agencies, startups, and other or-

ganisations, as well as an experience zone on the 'Future of Work' and huge technology exhibits.

Min thrust on low-cost sports infra in districts

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, April 26: Development of low-cost infrastructure at district levels is imperative to promote sports culture, Sports and Youth Services Minister Tusharkanti Behera has said.

Behera was speaking at the two-day conference - 'Chintan Shivir' - of Sports ministers of states and UTs organised by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports at Imphal in Manipur. "While world-class infrastruc-

ture is important to bring international events to India, it is also vitally essential to develop low-cost infrastructure at the district level. This will particularly enable us to build a strong sports culture among the youth," he said highlighting the 22 hockey training centres built across Odisha.

Behera highlighted Odisha's "commitment to the overall development of the sports ecosystem in the state through its unique partnership model for sporting excellence that reflects in the High

SPORTS AND YOUTH SERVICES MINISTER TUSHARKANTI BEHERA HIGHLIGHTED ODISHA'S COMMITMENT TO OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS ECOSYSTEM IN THE STATE THROUGH ITS UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

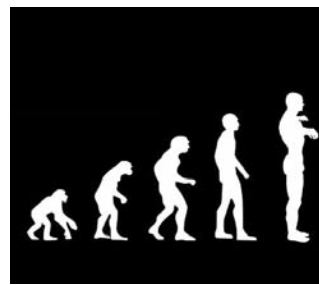
Performance Centres (HPCs) and partnership with national sports federations". He emphasised on the unique partnership model initiated by Odisha which brings together like-minded corporate houses and eminent sports persons and organisations to establish the HPCs

partnership for sporting excellence and development while also highlighting the marquee international and national events like FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup (2018, 2023), FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup, SAFF U20 Championship, among various others that has made Odisha a 'hub of sports'.

"It is great to see that our Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur Ji is taking this step to bring everyone together for betterment of sports infrastructure in our country and the need to work cohesively to make

India a sports superpower," he said. This conference will help shape a framework for all the state governments and stakeholders in mapping a trajectory for growth and development of sports in our country, the minister added.

A presentation was also made by Sports Secretary Vineel Krishna who led the group comprising Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Nagaland, Manipur, West Bengal, and Meghalaya that discussed action points on sports infrastructure and coach development.



MAHANADI DISPUTE

Ch'garh releases water ahead of tribunal visit



- The Tribunal reportedly saw presence of sufficient water, nearly 70 per cent of the full live capacity, in Chhattisgarh's projects at the end of the season
- Odisha argued that this illegally stored water in Chhattisgarh belongs to Odisha since this year the upper riparian state has ensured only 0.70 MAF at Hirakud against the provision of 2 MAF
- The Tribunal will have the second visit of the lower Mahanadi sub-basin in Chhattisgarh from April 29 to May 3, during which it will visit projects like Hasdeo Bango Dam, Sheonarain Barrage and Kalma barrage

since this year the upper riparian state has ensured only 0.70 MAF at Hirakud against 2 MAF, sources said.

Significantly, the tribunal will have the second visit of the lower Mahanadi sub-basin in Chhattisgarh from April 29 to May 3, during which it will visit to various projects in Chhattisgarh namely Hasdeo Bango Dam, Sheonarain Barrage and Kalma barrage, etc.

The tribunal will inspect projects which have been opposed by the Odisha government in its petition. April 30, the tribunal will visit Junk and upper Mahanadi main basin, Ballar reservoir, Kashdal and Sheonarain barrage, Arpa Bhainsajhar, Hasdeo Bango and Dari barrage will be covered on the next day. May 2, Hasdeo and upper Mahanadi main basin,

Basantpur barrage, Mironi barrage, Kalama barrage and Surajgarh bridge will be covered. On the last day of the second phase the Tribunal will visit Kelo barrage.

Earlier, a three-member committee of the tribunal comprising Justices AM Khanwilkar, Ravi Ranjan and Indermeet Kaur Kochhar, the assessors and the registrar of the tribunal along with the teams of Odisha and Chhattisgarh visited Farsiya village, origin point of Mahanadi, and nearby areas in Sihawa. The tribunal also visited Sondur, Murumsili dam, Ravi Shankar Sagar reservoir among others, sources said.



UP IN ARMS: Members of Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh stage a protest outside Cuttack Collector's office as part of their nationwide protests demanding fulfilment of their four-point charter of demands, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

State logs 542 new Covid cases; 1 death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 26: Odisha Wednesday reported 542 new Covid cases, the highest single-day spike since August last year, pushing the tally to 13,43,202, a health department official informed.

One more death due to the virus took the toll to 9,209, the official said. The surge in new cases is considered as significant as it has breached the 500 mark in a single day. Of the total of 7,571 samples tested in the state, 542 tested positive taking the test positivity rate to 7.1 per cent.

The state now has 3,270 active cases, according to data shared by the state health department.

"Odisha had reported 393 and 392 new Covid cases Tuesday and Monday respectively. With fresh recovery of 257 patients, the total number of people getting cured rose to 13,30,488," the health official said.

The state has recorded about 3,000 new cases in the last one week while four people have so far died of the infection this year.

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DAY

State's first Startup20X held to educate students

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 26: To create awareness about and to educate students about intellectual property rights and their significance in research and innovation, Atal Incubation Centre, Nalanda Institute of Technology Foundation, celebrated World Intellectual Property Day Wednesday in collaboration with Internal Quality Assurance Cell and Intellectual Property Rights Cell of Ramadevi Women's University, Bhubaneswar.

On the occasion, state's first Startup20X Event, an initiative under Startup20 Engagement Group of G20, conceptualized to promote multilateral dialogues and deliberations, was co-organized by AIC-Nalanda and Ramadevi Women's University.



Chandi Charan Rath, CPGC, RWU, Sasmita Mohanty, director, IQAC, RWU and Devyoti Mohanty, CEO, AIC-NITF inaugurated the event and deliberated upon the significance of the occasion.

In line with the global theme of 'Women & IP: Accelerating Innovation & Creativity', Jayashree Mohanty, President, Luminous Infoways, discussed the role of

women in industrial research and innovation and Abha Mishra, state head, UNDP (Odisha) elaborated on role of women in the grassroots level innovation.

The technical sessions held during this programme have immensely benefited the audience. The first session was led by Renu Bala, associate partner, SS Rana & Associates, New Delhi, who helped the gathering understand intellectual property rights with fundamental approach while the second session was led by T Pavan Kumar, senior scientist, CSIR-IMMT who spoke on the significance of IP in research and innovation.

The event witnessed participation of 300 students from various schools and colleges from across the city who were made aware of intellectual property rights.

CONTINUED FROM P1

When will PM ...

Interestingly, Sakshi drew analogy with prime minister's popular radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat' which is completing 100 editions and to mark the milestone, several programmes are being organised by the government. "I want to ask Smriti Irani (Union Minister) why is she silent now? It's been four days that we are sleeping on road, enduring mosquito bites. We are not being allowed (by Delhi Police) to prepare food and train, why are you silent? I just want to say that you come here, listen to us and support us," Sakshi stated.

Sakshi feels she may be her point is not reaching the prime minister. "Maybe our truth is not reaching him, so we want to meet him and let him know our issues," said Sakshi.

UP's quinquagenarians...

Fifty-nine-year-old Valmiki, a two-time MLA from Meerut's Hastinapur, said he appeared for the examination from the Adarsh Inter College in Baghpat, and passed with second division marks. He represented Hastinapur from 2002 to 2007 and 2012 to 2017. During his second term in assembly, he was the Minister of State for Silk Industry.

Valmiki said his inspiration has been Babasaheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar and he will now pursue a degree course. There is no age

for studies, he asserted. He also said that he will go for higher studies and pursue a career in law.

The former legislator also asserted that there was no copying in the board examinations and invigilation was strict. Valmiki said studies had taken a back seat for him in the past as he had got into politics at a very early age. "I wish, I had pursued education along with my political ambitions, it would have certainly helped," he said.

State hikes...

However, it was found that only 4.48% of electric vehicles have been registered by the end of 2022 which officials said is not satisfactory in comparison to the policy objective. Therefore, the government has enhanced the subsidy amount.

In the EV Policy 2021, the state government is providing a subsidy of 15 per cent of the cost, up to a maximum of Rs 5,000, for two-wheelers. The cap on subsidy for three-wheelers is Rs 10,000 and for four-wheelers, it is Rs 50,000.

The vehicles purchased on or after September 1, 2021 would be eligible for the subsidy. As per the policy, the provision of subsidy would continue till December 2025.

G20 TOURISM EXPO

Swosti CMD bats for rural tourism



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 26: Swosti Group CMD and FICCI National Tourism Committee co-chairman JK Mohanty recently attended the G20 Tourism Expo organised by the Union Ministry of Tourism at Rambagh Palace in Jaipur.

The expo was a conference of experts where five key priority areas for tourism development were discussed including: green tourism, digitization, skill development, nurturing tourism MSME's and destination management.

Mohanty, who attended as a distinguished speaker, highlighted how India can develop the tourism economy at new rural destinations. Rural tourism can help an entire village, Mohanty argued, listing the benefits of rural tourism as employment generation, woman empowerment, and preservation of local tradition. Mohanty also advocated for creation of more eco-retreats in Odisha.

ECoR GM reviews traffic, infra works

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 26: East Coast Railway (ECoR) general manager (GM) Manoj Sharma inspected the Bhubaneswar-Bhadrak Railway Section Wednesday, reviewing train traffic facilities and taking stock of further traffic improvement in the railway section.

Principal heads of departments of ECoR, divisional railway manager of Khurda Road Railway Division and senior officials from ECoR head quarters and Khurda road division were present during the inspection.

Sharma reviewed the traffic fa-



The general manager reviewed the traffic facilities and passenger amenities at stations between Bhubaneswar and Bhadrak

ility works along with infrastructure and passenger amenities at the stations between Bhubaneswar and Bhadrak, advising officials to take necessary steps to ensure smooth train operations and early completion of in-

rastructure related issues and passenger amenities works.

Earlier, Railway Board member Rop Narayan Sunkar Monday had reviewed the performance of East Coast Railway in infrastructure development in this region.

To improve both the freight and passenger traffic movement, Sunkar had stressed upon joint cooperation and mutual understanding between various agencies of the central and state governments and between stakeholders like industries, ports & corporate agencies.

He had advised officials to provide facilities at these stations targeting the comfort of passengers, especially tourists and pilgrims apart from facilities for common public. Sunkar further advised officials to focus for the speedy completion of project especially, passenger centric amenities.

New materials hold promise of preventing internal bleeding

These materials, which mimic the way that the body naturally forms clots, could offer a way to keep people with severe internal injuries alive until they can reach a hospital



When internal injuries occur, platelets are attracted to the site and initiate the blood clotting cascade, which eventually forms a sticky plug of platelets and clotting proteins, including fibrinogen

However, if patients are losing a lot of blood, they don't have enough platelets or fibrinogen to form clots

Unlike previously developed hemostatic systems, the new technology mimics the actions of both platelets—the cells that initiate blood clotting—and fibrinogen, a protein that helps forms clots

mostatic systems, the new technology mimics the actions of both platelets—the cells that initiate blood clotting—and fibrinogen, a protein that helps forms clots.

"The idea of using two components allows selective gelation of the hemostatic system as the concen-

tration is enhanced in the wound, mimicking the end effect of the natural clotting cascade," said Bradley Olsen, a professor at MIT and a senior author of the study.

When internal injuries occur, platelets are attracted to the site and initiate the blood clotting cas-

the researchers said. The MIT team wanted to create an artificial system that could help save people's lives by replacing both of those clotting components, they said.

To achieve that, the researchers created a system with two types of materials: a nanoparticle that recruits platelets and a polymer that mimics fibrinogen. For the platelet-recruiting particles, the researchers used particles similar to those they reported in a 2022 study.

These particles are made of a biocompatible polymer called PEG-PLGA, which are functionalised with a peptide called GRGDs that allows them to bind to activated platelets, the researchers said.

Because platelets are drawn to the site of an injury, these particles also tend to accumulate at injury sites, they said.

PTI

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I, Sarmistha Sahoo, W/o Srikanta Kumar Routray of Plot No.862, Flat No.-102, Unit-4, Sindhupurna Enclave, Back Side of Unit-4 Girls' High School, Madhusudan Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Dist.-Khurda, Pin- 751001 declare by this Affidavit No.-385 dated 25.04.2023 that now onwards I shall be known as Sarmistha Routray for all future purposes.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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

Curfew revoked from 2 PS areas in Sambalpur



Sambalpur, April 26: The Sambalpur district administration Wednesday revoked curfew from two of the six police station areas in the violence hit western Odisha town.

The curfew which was imposed April 14 night following large-scale violence in the city during Hanuman Jayanti celebration has been lifted from the Sambalpur Sadar police station and Bareipali police station jurisdictions, an order issued by the district administration said.

However, curfew will continue to remain in force in four other police station areas - Sambalpur Town, Ainthapali, Dhanupali and Khetrajpur, an official said.

The administration which had suspended internet service in Sambalpur city April 13 has restored the facility April 23.

This western Odisha city witnessed large-scale violence on two separate dates April 12 when there was a bike rally by the organisers of the Hanuman Jayanti and later April 14 the day on which the main procession was held.

A number of people including 10 police personnel were injured in the April 12 violence and a large number of shops and business establishments were set on fire by mischief mongers during the violence. The police have so far arrested nearly 100 people.

A senior police officer said that additional armed forces would remain deployed in the city with patrolling being done as per the provision in both curfew and non-curfew areas of Sambalpur.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, April 26: The Kolkata bench of National Green Tribunal (NGT) quashed the ₹25 lakh bribery complaint against Nayagarh Collector Rabindra Nath Sahu and directed the state government to initiate criminal proceedings cases against two leaseholders within two months under Section 51 of Odisha Minor Mineral Concession (OMMC) Rules 2016, a report said Wednesday.

The matter came to the fore after NGT passed its final order on the illegal sandstone and murrum quarry at Mayurjhalia mouza under Ranpur tehsil in the district, April 18. The green body quashed the ₹25 lakh bribery complaint levelled by the leaseholders against four persons including the Collector.

NGT accepted the affidavit filed by the district Collector Rabindranath Sahu, December 6, 2022 and directed the state government to initiate criminal proceedings against two leaseholders Susant Kumar Barad, lessee of Mayurjhalia laterite quarry and Shasank Agarwal, director of M/s Agarwal Infrabuild Pvt Ltd under Section-51 of

OMMC Rules-2016. FIRs for illegal extraction of ordinary earth, soil and murrum beyond the lease area should be lodged against them within a period of two months, said the directive. The green body has also issued direction to the State-level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), Odisha to compute environmental compensation against Barad and Agarwal for excess mining of laterite stone/murrum/ordinary earth, and proceed to

Vedanta's all-women firefighting team 'Agnivahini' is now 100 member-strong



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, April 26: In the lead up to 'World Day for Safety and Health at Work', Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, announces its Agnivahini firefighting team, a unique squad of women employees trained extensively in the complex yet crucial skill of firefighting, is now 100 members strong.

Working with the fire safety team, the squad will reinforce fire incident prevention and mitigation measures at the company's operations in Jharsuguda, home to one of the largest aluminium smelters in the world.

With this, the company has also established a new, tangi-

ble marker of its belief that all professional roles, technical or non-technical, need to be ability-based rather than gender-based. Commenced in 2018, the Agnivahini training programme has now inducted its seventh batch of trained firefighters. Women employees from across functions are invited to volunteer for the programme, where they undergo rigorous training over a period of 3 months.

Highlighting the impact of the initiative, Sunil Gupta, CEO, Vedanta Limited, Jharsuguda, said, "At Vedanta Aluminium, safety and health at work remain among our top priorities, and we are committed to continually recalibrating our approach and

Kuldiha deathtrap for jumbos as 8 die in a year

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, April 26: With the death of as many as eight elephants within a year, Kuldiha wildlife sanctuary here in northern Odisha has turned into a deathtrap for the pachyderms.

Kuldiha wildlife sanctuary under Balasure forest division is spread over 272.75 sq km of area extending from Nilagiri to Oupada block in this district. Wild animals of various species live in this reserve forest which is also termed as a paradise for the elephants.

Earlier deemed as a safe and secure zone, Kuldiha has proved to be a deathtrap for the pachyderms. While 20 elephants have died in the sanctuary in the last five years, eight elephants perished within a year from April 2022 to April 2023.

The wildlife sanctuary has become extremely unsafe for the animals making them exposed to a host of threats. They often face problems due to food scarcity in the jungle while the rise in temperatures due to frequent forest fires threatens their existence.

Feeling threatened, wild animals often run for their lives and stray into human habitats. The jumbo deaths have sparked con-

cern among the environmentalists, nature lovers and wildlife enthusiasts while the Forest department is claiming that elephant population in the sanctuary is on the rise.

According to reports from the Forest department, the 2017 elephant census estimated 97 elephants living in Kuldiha wildlife sanctuary. Among them, 19 were tuskers, 51 female elephants and 27 calves. On the other hand, 20 elephants have died under Balasure forest division between 2018 and 2023.

One elephant died in 2018, five in 2019, two in 2020, four in 2021 and six in 2022 while two have died so far in 2023. The last elephant census was conducted in 2017 while no enumeration of the pachyderms has been carried out during last six years. The Forest department is now clueless about the exact number of elephants living in the reserve forest.

An environmentalist Prasant Padhi said acute shortage of water as well as food is leading to dehydration among the mammals which is the major cause behind their death. Moreover rise in atmospheric temperature due to frequent forest fires is disturbing the



NEW BORN JUMBO FOUND DEAD

BERHAMPUR: A newborn elephant calf was found dead in Sorada forest range in Ganjam district Wednesday, Forest department officials said. A herd of 14 elephants, including the mother, was camping about half a km from the spot near Gajaladi, divisional forest officer of South Ghumura division Sudarshan Behera said. The female baby elephant may have died just after her birth, he said. The mother elephant stayed there for some time after her delivery and is likely to have tried to take away the baby but could not. It then moved some distance away along with other elephants of the herd, Behera said.

environment following which the animals fail to cope up and succumb to the heat. The threat posed by poachers is another reason behind their dwindling numbers.

He said that the forest officials should remain cautious about these threats and create a favourable condition for the animals to survive and grow. They should also control the rampant poaching and take stringent

action against the poachers.

When contacted, Balasure DFO Khuswant Singh said that the elephants have died a natural death. He said most of the elephants are dying owing to infighting in the herds, deterioration in jumbos' health conditions, failure to cope with the changing environment and old-age related problems.

He said that various steps are being taken to create a natural and favourable habitats for the elephants and arrangement are being made for their food inside the sanctuary. Similarly steps are being taken for their protection and safety by involving the panchayat representatives and local residents while posters and banners highlighting the importance of elephants are being installed in the nearby villages, he added.

PUBLIC NOTICE Tata steel Long Products Ltd. Registered Office Address:- P.O. - Joda, Keonjhar, Orissa, Pin. No:- 758034. Notice is hereby given that the certificate(s) for the undermentioned securities of the Company has/have been lodged/aid and holder(s) of the said securities / applicant(s) has/have applied to the Company to issue duplicate certificate(s).

NOTIFICATION

This is for the information of all concerned that M/s. Shree Ram Constructions has accorded Environmental Clearance from State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), Odisha for construction of Proposed Commercial Building & MIG Residential Apartment (B+S+12) Building with built up area 33,841.83 Sqm. at Mouza: Padmalava Nagar, Tehsil: Barang, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha.

SUNDARAM HOME Regd Office: No. 21, Pattulos Road, Chennai - 600 002. Corporate Office: Sundaram Towers, No. 46, Whites Road, Chennai-600014. Ph: 044-2851 5267.

SALE NOTICE

Whereas the Authorised Officer of Sundaram Home Finance Limited, formerly known as Sundaram BNP Paribas Home Finance Limited, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Section 13(2), issued a demand notice calling upon the Borrower to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of notice.

Table with 4 columns: Name and Address of the Borrower & Co-Borrower, Secured Debt (Rs.), Reserve Price fixed for the Property, Place for Title Verification. It lists details for Mr. Kumar Harshabardhan Sahu and Mr. Lalatendu Sahu.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/23-24/E-Tender/13, Dt. 19.04.2023

(1) Tender No. etender-HQ-KUR-33-2023, Dtd.: 14.04.2023. DESCRIPTION: PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT OF PLATFORM SURFACE ALONG WITH RAISING OF PLATFORMS AT SAKHIGOPAL STATION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

(2) Tender No. etender-HQ-KUR-34-2023, Dtd.: 14.04.2023. DESCRIPTION: PROVISION OF PLATFORM SHELTER AT SAKHIGOPAL STATION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION UNDER AMRIT BHARAT SCHEME.

Bank of India POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of India under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice calling upon the borrowers/co-borrowers/guarantors in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

Table with 3 columns: HARIPUR BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s), Liabilities due as per Notice, Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession.

Table with 2 columns: Description of Immovable Property/ies, Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession. It details property information for Smt. Manjulata Samantaray and Mr. Bijay Kumar Rautray.

CUTTACK MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

"e" Procurement Notice Tender Id:2023_ORULB_8842 Tender Call Notice No.1972 (PW) Date:26.04.2023 Name & No. of Works : Electrical Works No. of Works : 02 Nos.

Table with 3 columns: Start, End, Opening. It provides the schedule for the procurement notice: 1.00 PM on dt. 27.04.2023, 5.00 PM on dt. 06.05.2023, 11.00 AM on dt. 10.05.2023.





You must abstain from thinking about someone when you cannot think well of him.

THE MOTHER



Clean Tech Cooperation

The collapse of Silicon Valley Bank last month seemed to bode ill for the global clean-energy race. Just as recently enacted US investment packages and the rest of President Joe Biden's climate dreams were about to take off, the high-tech start-up sector's bank of choice went bust, and commentators are warning of a looming slowdown in "the transition to clean energy."

Yet, rather than hampering the clean-energy race, this episode should be a teachable moment. Yes, the initial handwringing over the banking fallout and its implications for climate policy were justified. SVB occupied an important place in the startup sector, and it was especially tapped in to clean-tech firms (its website still boasts "over 1,550 prominent clients" among clean-tech and sustainability startups). But if we learn the right lesson here, SVB's bust may become a godsend.

First and foremost, SVB's fate ought to bury the silly idea, peddled by some of the tech sector's loudest voices, that technology alone will save us from society's ills. It helps that SVB has "Silicon Valley" in its name. Recall how the Valley's self-styled "libertarians" snickered at the bank bailouts of 2008 and the automaker bailouts of 2008-09, regarding it as obvious that big staid Wall Street and boring old Detroit would need taxpayer cash. If only tech CEOs had been in charge, innovative and independent-minded thinking would have prevented the whole mess. We now know how fanciful such arguments were.

In fact, those earlier bank and automotive industry bailouts also offered important lessons. One is that ever-present moral hazard will make future bailouts both more likely and more costly. But while deposit insurance and more implicit state-backed guarantees against systemic risk bear some of the blame, that doesn't mean bailouts aren't sometimes justified. As Jeffrey Frankel of Harvard University famously quipped in 2008, "They say there are no atheists in foxholes. Perhaps, then, there are also no libertarians in financial crises." Silicon Valley needs Washington as much as Washington needs the Valley.

That brings us to another, subtler lesson of the SVB episode. While the size of an institution obviously matters for financial stability, it must not be the only criterion. After 2018, SVB was not subjected to regular bank stress tests, because the Trump administration had reclassified banks with assets under \$250 billion as systemically unimportant. (SVB's CEO, Greg Becker, was a strong supporter of that regulatory rollback.)

There are, of course, good reasons why smaller institutions should not be subject to all the same rules as big ones. A solo entrepreneur cannot and need not face the same regulations as large multinationals. But a balance must be struck. Just as banks with assets under \$250 billion should not have been excluded from stress tests, the world cannot afford to ignore small polluters by exempting them from rules merely requiring disclosures of greenhouse-gas emissions.

As matters stand, the US Environmental Protection Agency sets a minimum reporting threshold of 25,000 tonne of carbon dioxide per year. This benchmark raises obvious problems. Suppose you are on the board of a company with emissions just above the threshold, or perhaps one that's twice as large. What should you do? One option is simply to split into two (or more) corporate entities.

The number 25,000 shows up elsewhere, too, perhaps with more bite. New York City now requires buildings larger than 25,000 square feet (roughly 2,300 square meters) to meet strict decarbonisation targets. With fines potentially reaching millions of dollars per building as soon as next year, building managers might now think twice about approving that penthouse expansion.

Globally, most countries that are not among the largest dozen polluters can and often do hide behind the claim that they are "too small to matter." But, together, these economies account for around 25% of annual CO2 emissions. Being small does not mean your actions are irrelevant. To keep emissions and global warming in check, we will need to maintain a nuanced understanding of individual contributions and obligations.

Fortunately, supporting clean, lean, and green ventures is no longer the narrow purview of a scrappy community bank that is going out on a limb. Every major financial institution now wants in on the action, and SVB's failure may well mean that they can step in with more vigor (and financing) than they otherwise would have done.

HSBC, for example, gained a foothold in a growing multibillion-dollar tech sector overnight when it bought SVB's UK arm for £1 (\$1.25). Moreover, those 1,500-plus clean-tech clients mentioned on SVB's website are now looking for new bankers. Most will opt for larger institutions with deeper pockets. Wherever they take their business, they will teach one another new tricks in the process.

Equally important, these other banks and financial institutions presumably will not follow SVB in touting as a core competency their expertise at overcoming "regulatory hurdles." The goal now will be to take advantage of the new regulatory and investment environment at a time when the US federal government alone is spending hundreds of billions of dollars on decarbonisation. Rather than fighting the good fight against Big Government, clean-tech startups are vying for the state's largess. These market changes all call for an unprecedented level of cooperation between risk-takers and regulators.

Will we see a congenial, well-executed public-private minuet, or will there be more faceplants for big stars? Most likely, there will be plenty of both. When it comes to an economic transformation on the scale of the transition to net-zero emissions, it could hardly be otherwise.

The writer is a climate economist at Columbia Business School.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

- Prejudice is a burden that confuses the past, threatens the future and renders the present inaccessible. MAYA ANGELOU
- We have enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another. JONATHAN SWIFT
- It is through gratitude for the present moment that the spiritual dimension of life opens up. ECKHART TOLLE

WORDSWORTH

Heterography

"H is orthography, or rather heterography, has been a subject of animadversion; and he has been charged with misspelling his own name." A writer in Blackwoods Magazine in 1831 was referring to the painter William Hogarth (whose name, the writer alleged, should be spelled Hogart, to suit the family's Westmorland origins). In this period heterography referred to an individual's idiosyncratic way of spelling that didn't fit the conventions. (It's a combination of Greek heteros, other, plus graphia, writing, the opposite of orthography, the correct or conventional spelling system of a language, from Greek orthos, correct.) In that sense, the word is long defunct. That's a pity, you may feel, since there's a lot of heterography about and it would be good to be able to describe a bad speller as a heterographer and be understood. However, heterography is still with us. Linguists associate it with those languages in which the written form doesn't properly reflect the way in which it's spoken. Robert Trask explained in his Dictionary of Phonetics and Phonology that it's a system of writing that "lacks a one-to-one correspondence between sounds and written symbols."



Bhaskar Basu

LET US STRIVE TO MAKE TECHNOLOGY THE SOLUTION AND NOT THE PROBLEM!



Gernot Wagner

Globally, most countries that are not among the largest dozen polluters can and often do hide behind the claim that they are 'too small to matter'

FOCUS TECHNOLOGY

TAMING NATURE



We have not only taken back land from oceans but also carved hills worldwide through blasting or tunneling for various purposes like residential, tourism, communication, power generation

Mankind has been fighting against nature since its evolution. But the motive has changed over time. Initially, the fight was to fulfill basic requirements like food, shelter, and clothes; now, the same has changed to taming it primarily with technology to establish authority by today's powerful nations. A few examples are cited here.

Land reclamation in the emirate of Dubai has made it one of the most famous areas in the world through its augmentation of Palm Islands, World Islands, Dubai Marina, and Burj Al Arab. Countries like South Korea, the USA, and Japan have also reclaimed significant land from nature. We have not only taken back land from oceans and seas but also carved hills worldwide through blasting or tunneling for various purposes like residential, tourism, communication, or power generation.

Underground cities have been built to combat extreme weather because they allow activities comfortably throughout the year irrespective of the weather. Australia (Sydney), Canada (Montreal, Toronto), China (Beijing, Guangzhou) are some such examples.

In the recently concluded FIFA World Cup 2022, Qatar maintained temperatures at about 68°F inside the stadium, irrespective of conditions outside. The technology, developed by Qatar University, cools air and distributes it via grills in the stands and through pitch-side nozzles. Using the air circulation technique, warm air is drawn back, re-cooled, purified, and pushed out where needed.

Cloud seeding is a type of weather modification that aims to change the amount or type of precipitation that falls from clouds by dispersing substances into the air. The usual objective is to increase or prevent precipitation

(rain or snow) depending on the situation. Since 2021, the UAE has used drones with sensors and a payload of electric-charge emission instruments that fly at low altitudes and deliver the electric charge to air molecules. This new technology produced a significant rainstorm in July 2021.

China became the first nation to host the Winter Olympics 2022 using artificial snow. China used 'snow cannons' that spray ice particles and a thin mist of water vapor sixty meters above the ground, where these particles combine to become snow and then fall. On 13 October, 2022, the US announced a five-year research plan to artificially modify the Earth's climate. This will use geoengineering to manage solar radiation by spraying fine aerosols into the atmosphere to reflect sunlight away from the Earth. It is contemplated that the Earth will have less heat once sunrays are reflected.

Back home, Joshimath, Uttarakhand has been hit by a

geological phenomenon known as land subsidence. Joshimath is in a tectonically active seismic zone and the landslide debris on which the city was established has a low bearing capacity. Increased construction, hydro-electric projects, and widening the National Highway have made the slopes highly unstable in the last couple of decades.

Mankind had not stopped its aggressive stance on land; aquatic pollution has already started affecting the flora and fauna. According to the United Nations, over 800 species worldwide are affected by marine debris, 80% of which is plastic. It is estimated that up to 13 million tonnes of plastic get added to the ocean each year. Fish, seabirds, sea turtles, and marine mammals get entangled in or ingest plastic debris, causing suffocation, starvation, and drowning. As humans, we are not immune too. Plastics may take up to hundreds of years to fully decompose; but some break down much quicker

into tiny particles, ending up in the seafood we eat.

After polluting the 'jal' and 'sthal', the latest casualty seems to be the 'antariksh' (space). Topping the list is the competition between developed countries to send satellites, rockets without caring a bit for the accumulation of debris or taking the onus of clearing the same. As the fallout of all the rockets we've launched over the years, orbiting our planet are 2000 active satellites, 3000 dead ones, along with 34000 pieces of space junk bigger than 10 cm in size and millions of smaller pieces that can cause disasters if they hit something else. Although most debris burns up in the atmosphere causing atmospheric pollution, larger debris can reach the ground intact. According to NASA, on average, one piece of debris has fallen back to Earth daily for the past 50 years. Despite their size, luckily, there has been no significant damage from such debris. However, when and how the same will hit us is completely unknown.

But, do we really believe we can colonise Mars? To tame Mars, are we not alienating Mother Earth?

At the COP26 in Glasgow some time back, several businesses, apart from governments, pledged to go carbon-free, setting ambitious deadlines for themselves. Essentially, it meant that these establishments would reduce emissions or balance new emissions by using natural carbon sinks like forests and oceans to absorb them. Indian firms are increasingly embracing environmentally conscious practices to pursue sustainable growth and net-zero carbon emissions.

Let us strive to make technology the solution and not the problem!

The writer is a Professor at XIMB. Views are personal.

SPECTRUM POLITICS

Is BJP going the Congress way?

Karnataka, the only southern state where the BJP has been able to come to power, will go to elections on May 10. While it is trying to expand its foothold in the south in the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the BJP can't afford to lose Karnataka. However, not everything is well within the party in the state. Its former CM Jagadish Shettar has left the party as he was denied a ticket and joined the Congress, which has nominated him from his old Habbali-Dharwad seat. This comes just days after former Deputy CM Laxman Savadi quit and joined the Congress for the same reason.

The desertion of two senior party leaders indicates that the BJP may not be as confident as it appears to be. What makes their desertion critical is that both are from the Lingayat community, which accounts for around 17% of the state's population. Out of the 224 seats, the community influences around 100-odd constituencies and has been the BJP's backbone.

The BJP's tallest leader is BS Yediyurappa, who comes from the Lingayat community. It was his magic that made the BJP the single-largest party in 2008 Assembly polls. Later, Yediyurappa left BJP and formed his own party and as

a result, the saffron party lost badly the 2013 Assembly polls. But Yediyurappa was back after Narendra Modi managed to convince him to return before the 2014 Lok Sabha polls. In the 2018 Assembly polls, the BJP emerged as the single largest party.

Ageing Yediyurappa in his fourth stint leaned heavily on his second son BY Vijayendra and this didn't go well with many within the party. Vijayendra was dubbed the 'super CM'. With allegations of nepotism and age not on his side, in July 2021, the party's central leadership removed him from the post and made Basavaraj Bommai, another Lingayat leader, the CM. To placate Yediyurappa, last year he was inducted into the party's parliamentary board, the highest decision-making body.

The BJP, facing anti-incumbency along with a rejuvenated Congress, has fielded 82 new faces. This means that more than one-third of its candidates are new ones — a strategy that worked well in Gujarat. However, in Karnataka, so far it doesn't seem to have clicked in the way the party had expected.

With the rise of Modi along with his right-hand man Amit Shah in the BJP, the party has gone through a change. It has been alleged that the party command has become

more centralised and is preventing the party from having more dialogue within itself. There is a belief that the decisions of Modi-Shah should be accepted by everyone. The BJP, which has always attacked Congress for its centralisation of power around the Gandhi family, is ironically now doing the same.

Who made Bommai the CM? It was the central leadership. Then why blame only Bommai for anti-incumbency? Isn't the central leadership also responsible for the current situation in Karnataka? This was seen in Tripura too. It was BJP's central leadership which selected Biplab Deb after the party came to power for first time in 2018. Allegations after allegations by party leaders were made against Deb for not taking them into confidence but the central leadership stood by him. It was only when the party came to know the ground reality it replaced Deb with Manik Saha.

The fact is that under the new BJP, the central leadership largely escapes the blame, and it's laid on leaders at state level. The reality is that there has been erosion of the internal democracy within the party. Last year, Nitin Gadkari, one of the most popular ministers in Modi's Cabinet, and MP CM

Shivraj Chauhan, were removed from the party's parliamentary board. It is also said that the Modi-Shah team doesn't let strong leaders emerge at state levels, although this doesn't seem to be entirely true as there are examples of Yogi Adityanath in UP and Himanta Biswa Sarma in Assam.

But there is a tendency to fight every election, including state polls, in Modi's name — this was done by the party recently in Tripura to battle anti-incumbency. In Karnataka too, the party is banking on the Modi card. However, the question the party needs to ask is — for how long will it depend on Modi to win even a state election? Isn't this a failure of the central leadership to create a new credible leadership in Karnataka? BJP always mocks Congress, which once upon a time won elections repeatedly despite anti-incumbency. But look at the present status of the party across the country. Barring a few states like Karnataka, it is in shambles — and one of the reasons is too much centralisation of power. The BJP has always proudly claimed that it is a party with a difference but today it is following the same path of Congress. Will changes emerge?

INFA



Sagarneel Sinha

THE BJP, WHICH HAS ALWAYS ATTACKED CONGRESS FOR ITS CENTRALISATION OF POWER AROUND THE GANDHI FAMILY, IS IRONICALLY NOW DOING THE SAME

Comprehensive app

Sir, AIS for Taxpayers is a mobile application developed by the Income-Tax department that simplifies tax-related tasks for taxpayers. To register on the app, the user needs to provide their PAN number and date of birth. Once the user is authenticated through an OTP sent to their registered mobile number and email ID, they can set a 4-digit PIN for accessing the mobile application. The app provides taxpayers with an extensive range of tax-related information, including the Annual Information Statement (AIS) and Taxpayer Information Summary (TIS) of the user. It displays data related to TDS/TCS, dividends, interest, share transactions, tax payments, income tax refunds, GST, and foreign remittances. Users can report discrepancies and track the resolution status of their grievances with the values displayed in the application. The app also offers a feedback mechanism that enables users to report any inconsistencies and track their complaints' status. Under the head of Specified Financial Transaction, information received from reporting entities regarding high-value transactions is displayed. The SFT code, information description, and information value are also made available. Tax payments that have been debited from the user's account are displayed, along with any tax refund demands and refunds received. The AIS for Taxpayers benefits taxpayers by providing easy access to comprehensive tax-related information from different sources, facilitating pre-filing of tax returns, reconciling tax-related information, and providing the AIS in PDF format as a useful offline reference document. By using this app, taxpayers can conveniently view and keep track of their tax-related information. Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

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

Orissa POST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

'Battle for democracy'

Sir, US President Joe Biden's intention to seek a second term has raised eyebrows. On Tuesday, Biden and his deputy Kamala Harris started their campaign for the 2024 presidential election with the line "Let's conclude the job." Biden, who has reached the age of eighty, is the oldest serving US President. The American public, both allies and adversaries, regard his reelection bid as hazardous and wish him not to stand for another term. Ex-president Donald Trump, enmeshed in many legal predicaments, has also thrown his hat into the political arena, and experts predict a probable Biden vs Trump match-up again. Setting aside apprehensions over age, Biden has envisioned his reelection as a "battle for democracy." NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

national



This (Naxal attack in Chhattisgarh) inhuman and barbaric act should be condemned by one and all in the strongest words BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

CABINET APPROVES 157 GOVT NURSING COLLEGES

The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved the establishment of 157 nursing colleges at a cost of ₹1,570 crore in co-location with existing medical colleges, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said.



of the day quote

India has the power to innovate even in the toughest of circumstances, the shared history of Saurashtra and Tamil Nadu assures us of this NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

We have to get votes on the developmental works that have been carried out. It is not correct to play with people's emotions BASAVARAJ BOMMAI | KARNATAKA CM

For water conservation, public participation is to be ensured in the campaign to save water as it cannot be successful without their participation MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | HARYANA CM

Electioneering in full swing in K'taka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangaluru, April 26: With less than a fortnight left for the May 10 Assembly polls in Karnataka, electioneering is in full swing as political leaders intensify their campaigning across the state to woo voters.

While the ruling BJP fielded a battery of its leaders including chief ministers from other states and union ministers, along with state leaders, to campaign in various parts of the state by addressing public meetings, holding road shows and interactive meets, the Congress had its general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra touring for the second day.

JD(S) patriarch and former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, 89, and his son and former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy have been leading their party's campaign.

The BJP seems to have thrown its entire might into campaigning today, with its leaders like Uttar



Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and party general secretary in-charge of Karnataka Arun Singh touring visiting various parts of the state.

While Adityanath was in Mandya and Vijayapura taking part in road shows and public meetings, Chouhan was in Belagavi district. Nirmala Sitharaman held a press conference, interacted with representatives of the chamber of industry and commerce and held

women's conferences in Kalaburagi; Rajnath Singh visited parts of Belagavi district.

State BJP strongman and former chief minister BS Yediyurappa was in Belagavi and Hubballi, while Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai too was in Belagavi and Gadag district. Kannada film actor Sudeep added star power to BJP's campaign today, as he campaigned in support of party candidates in Chitradurga, Molakalmuru and surrounding areas.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to interact with about 50 lakh workers of BJP in

Karnataka through virtual mode Thursday. Congress's Priyanka Gandhi on the second day of her trip to the state visited the Sharada temple in Sringeri, addressed a public meeting in Balehonur and held a road show in Hiriyur.

State Congress leaders Siddaramaiah and D K Shivakumar were in Vijayanagara and Mysuru districts, respectively.

Congress leader and former AICC Chief Rahul Gandhi is scheduled to hold interactions with fishermen at Kapu (Kaup) in Udipi district, and address a public meeting at Mangaluru Thursday.

HC judge recuses from hearing Rahul's appeal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, April 26: A Gujarat High Court judge Wednesday recused herself from hearing Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's appeal challenging the order of the Surat sessions court that declined to stay his conviction in a criminal defamation case over his "Modi surname" remark.

Rahul Gandhi's lawyer P S Champaneri mentioned the case before the court of Justice Gita Gopi, seeking an urgent hearing. But after a brief hearing, the court said, "Not before me."

The development comes a day after Gandhi filed the appeal in the high court.

Champaneri said the court earlier granted him permission to circulate the matter for Wednesday, but when it came up for hearing, it recused itself from hearing the case. Now, a note will be sent to the



Acting Chief Justice to place the matter before any other court, he said. The case was requested to be taken up in the court of Justice Gita Gopi because her court deals with the subject of criminal revision, Champaneri added.

A metropolitan magistrate's court in Surat March 23 sentenced the former Congress president to two years in jail after convicting him under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections 499 and 500 (dealing with criminal defamation) in the 2019 case filed by Gujarat Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Purnesh Modi.

SHORT TAKES

Ghatkopar-Versova corridor disrupted

Mumbai: Mumbai Metro services on the Ghatkopar-Andheri-Versova corridor were disrupted for around 45 minutes on Wednesday evening due to a technical glitch in a train, said the operator of the rapid transit system. Commuters faced inconvenience as the disruption of services during evening rush hours led to chaos and overcrowding at several metro stations. This was the second such disruption on the Ghatkopar-Andheri-Versova corridor in less than 10 days. Earlier April 18, metro services were affected due to a technical issue.

ED arrests Anubrata Mondal's daughter

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Wednesday arrested Trinamool Congress strongman Anubrata Mondal's daughter Sukanya Mondal in connection with the West Bengal cattle smuggling scam case. The ED had summoned Sukanya Mondal to its headquarters here several times to question her in connection with the scam. However, she has avoided the summons. Anubrata Mondal has already been arrested and is currently in judicial custody. She was arrested by the ED eight months after her father, Anubrata Mondal, was arrested in August last year.

Man gets death rap

Jaipur: A SC-ST court in Dholpur, Rajasthan, has sentenced a man to death for the murder of four NREGA workers, besides slapping a fine of ₹10 lakh on him. According to information, 4 NREGA workers were killed in Dhauandha ka Pura village in Bari Sadar police station area of Dholpur district in 2008. Twelve armed men had assaulted the NREGA workers while opening fire. Justice Narendra Meena of the SC-ST court convicted Kirti Ram (82) in the murder case and sentenced him to death and also imposed a fine of ₹10 lakh.

AAP's Shelly Oberoi becomes Delhi Mayor after BJP nominee backs out



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 26: Aam Aadmi Party's Shelly Oberoi was Wednesday re-elected Delhi mayor without contest after her rival Shikha Rai withdrew her nomination, with the AAP claiming that the BJP city unit brought "humiliation" to the entire party by surrendering in the poll.

The Delhi BJP, however, said it had decided to withdraw the nominations as "despite our best efforts, the AAP is not ready to make MCD functional by

allowing the formation of the standing committee and the ward committees".

Incumbent Deputy Mayor Aaleq Mohammad Iqbal also got another term at the post as BJP candidate Soni Pal withdrew her nomination. The AAP, the ruling party in the MCD, claimed that BJP candidates - Rai and Pal - withdrew their nominations "minutes before voting, fearing defeat".

The mayoral election in Delhi was supposed to be a direct contest between Oberoi and Rai, but the withdrawal of nomination

by the BJP candidate resulted in the House proceedings ending after a short duration.

The proceedings began around 11 am with senior AAP leader Mukesh Goyal as the pro tem presiding officer. Soon after, Rai told the House that she took the step of withdrawing her nomination because the election to the standing committee - the apex decision-making body of the MCD - has not been conducted.

As soon as Oberoi became the mayor, a few members of the House raised 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' and 'Kejriwal Zindabad' slogans.

AAP national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Kejriwal tweeted, "Congratulations Shelly and Aaleq on again becoming mayor and deputy mayor; this time unopposed. Best wishes to both. People have huge expectations from us. Work hard to meet their expectations."

SUDAN CRISIS 534 Indians evacuated

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 26: India has evacuated at least 534 Indian nationals from Sudan and is looking to rescue more of its citizens from the strife-torn African nation before the end of a tenuous ceasefire between the regular army and a paramilitary force.

Two C-130J military transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force brought to Jeddah 256 Indians from Port Sudan on Wednesday, a day after an Indian Navy ship rescued 278 citizens from that country.

The total number of Indians evacuated so far from Sudan stands at 534, according to official data. Under its evacuation mission 'Operation Kaveri', India is taking the evacuees to the Saudi Arabian city of Jeddah from where they are returning home. India has set up a transit facility at Jeddah and Minister of State for External

Affairs V Muraleedharan is overseeing the evacuation mission from the Saudi Arabian city. The first batch of 278 Indians were evacuated from Port Sudan by the Indian Navy's frontline ship INS Sumedha Tuesday. According to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, the first C-130J aircraft brought to Jeddah 121 passengers while the second plane evacuated 135.

"A second C-130 flight reaches Jeddah bringing 135 passengers from Sudan. #OperationKaveri moving steadily forward," he tweeted. India stepped up its efforts to evacuate the Indians from Sudan as a 72-hour truce was agreed to between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) following intense negotiations. Sudan has been witnessing deadly fighting between the country's army and a paramilitary group that has reportedly left around 400 people dead.



148 students in four KGBVs test Cov +ve

Jamshedpur: One-hundred and forty-eight students in four girls' residential schools in Jharkhand's East Singhbhum district have tested positive for COVID-19, an official said Wednesday. Deputy Commissioner Vijaya Jadhav Tuesday directed to carry out COVID-19 test in all Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) schools in the district after 69 students tested positive for the virus Monday, the official said. All the students were isolated as per Coronavirus protocol and the school premises were completely sanitised.

NTPC Limited (A Govt. of India Enterprise) Special Recruitment Drive for SC/OBC Candidates. NTPC Limited is India's largest integrated power company with installed capacity of 71,644 MW and has presence in the entire value chain of the power generation business. Commensurate with our country's growth challenges, NTPC has embarked upon an ambitious plan to attain a total installed capacity of 130 GW by 2032. NTPC is launching Special Recruitment Drive for SC/OBC candidates as per details given below:

Union Bank of India REGIONAL OFFICE : BALASORE. Manikhamba, OT Road, Police Line, Bhaskarganj, Dist.: Balasore, PIN-756001. Email ID: cb8832recovery@unionbankofindia.com. Mob.: 8249176744. SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE/MOVABLE PROPERTIES. (E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the security (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

TROUBLE LOOMS FOR POKKALI RICE

AGENCIES

Kochi, April 26: On a tiny sliver of land in southern India, the future of an ancient grain that helps combat climate change is in doubt.

An ongoing tussle in Chellanam village, a suburb of the bustling city of Kochi, which has the Arabian Sea on one side and estuaries on the other, could decide the fate of the cultivation of pokkali rice.

In many wetlands in the area, farmers have traditionally dedicated half the year to pokkali rice and the other six months to prawns. In 2022, the Fisheries Department of Kerala issued an order that farmers no longer needed to dedicate part of the year to pokkali, exacerbating a trend away from pokkali already under way.

While prawns fetch more money than pokkali, a focus on them is upending a delicate ecosystem, making it difficult for farmers who want to continue with pokkali, environmental experts say.

MM Chandu, a 78-year-old farmer with a little over two acres, said that increasing salinity in the land from year-round prawn cultivation was degrading soil and making it more difficult for him to grow pokkali.

Everything was ruined when farmers were pushed away from pokkali and toward aquaculture, he said.

Pokkali is the oldest variety of rice in Kerala, which is at least 3,000 years old. It is also among the oldest known crops cultivated by organic farming methodologies in the world, said Francis Kalathunkal, from the Pokkali Samrakshana Samithi, a group formed in 2011 to encourage farmers to cultivate pokkali.

Kalathunkal said in the 1990s, pokkali was grown on 1,200 acres in Chellanam compared to just 5 to 10 acres today. Across Kerala, it's a similar story two decades ago, pokkali was cultivated on more than 25,000 hectares in Ernakulam, Alappuzha and Thrissur districts compared to about 1,000 hectares today, according to Shan AC, president of Palliyakkal Service Cooperative Bank, which works with pokkali farmers in the production, procurement and distribution of the grains.

Pokkali is also being cultivated



Women wade through waist-deep water to harvest paddy cultivated as part of Pokkali farming system at Kadamakudy wetlands on the Arabian Sea coast in Kochi. Traditionally, Pokkali has been cultivated for half of the year, with farmers dedicating the other six months to prawns

on experimental basis in the Sundarbans region of West Bengal, after vast tracts of paddy lands were filled with brackish water during a large cyclone in May 2021. A long grain version of pokkali is cultivated along the southwestern coastal belt of Sri Lanka.

Rice is the staple of southern and eastern parts of India, and is highly water intensive. About 3.35 cubic metres of water is needed to grow 1 kilogram of rice, according to India's Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices. Pokkali, by contrast, doesn't require groundwater for irrigation, as it is cultivated in low lying wetlands that are inundated with rain water.

To make pokkali enticing both for consumers and farmers, the Rice Research Station at Kerala Agricultural University is working to develop new kinds. So far, they have come up with 11 high-yielding varieties.

Just developing more pokkali options alone will not solve the larger issues, said Dr AK Sreelatha, head of the Rice Research Station.

"The biggest problem is the unavailability of skilled labourers," Sreelatha said. "The soil is so soft that the various prototypes of machines developed to harvest it failed."

Mahesh S, joint director at the Fisheries Department of Kerala, said a 2010 law allows the department to issue licenses for aqua farming on land that has been left fallow. "If a farmer claims the land is not being used for paddy culti-

FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE

Rice is the staple of southern and eastern parts of India, and is highly water intensive. About 3.35 cubic metres of water is needed to grow 1kg rice

Pokkali, by contrast, doesn't require groundwater for irrigation, as it is cultivated in low lying wetlands that are inundated with rain water

When pokkali is grown, salt water is pushed out and farmers use rain water to irrigate their crops. Stalks from the pokkali later become food for prawns

That arrangement produces two kinds of crops and maintains natural barriers to rising seas and sequesters carbon in the soil, combating climate change



COMPARED TO WHITE RICE, POKKALI, RICH IN ANTIOXIDANTS, REQUIRES A LONGER TIME TO COOK. IT HAS A MORE PRONOUNCED FLAVOR AND TEXTURE, MAKING IT AN ACQUIRED TASTE FOR MANY. SOME VARIETIES HAVE THICK OR LONG GRAINS, AND COLOURS RANGE FROM DARK BROWN TO WHITE

vation, we will make a field visit and if we find the claim to be true, we issue a license," he said.

Because the crop floats in water, mechanised paddy cutters cannot be used. Instead, pokkali requires labourers, today mostly women, who stand in the water and cut the matured stalks manually, bundle them and bring them to the bund.

Chathamma, another suburb of Kochi, is surrounded by a salt water lake, making it perfect for pokkali-prawn farming. Yet, Nandakumar VM is forced to leave 50 acres of his 70-acre holding fallow during paddy season, as he could not find enough people to help harvest.

It is really difficult to get people to come and work these days, he

said. They don't want to stand in knee-deep water - sometimes even chest-deep - to harvest the stalks.

The lack of a market is yet another barrier to making money with pokkali. This rice is known only in this region. "If you go to the north of Kerala or to its hills, people do not know the benefits of pokkali," said Sreelatha.

A father-son duo, Joseph and Tom PV, who own seven acres in Chathamma, manage better; thanks to Tom's marketing efforts.

When he could not convince his father to get into year-round prawn cultivation, Tom reached a deal with him: "Grow pokkali, but leave marketing to me".

The hacks that the software engineer has come up with add value

Ajit leads the race in 'Future CM' banners as uncle Pawar frowns

The latest round of soothsaying comes days after the mercurial Ajit Pawar publicly expressed a pet desire to ascend to the top post, triggering a furious political debate



A banner projecting NCP leader Ajit Pawar as the next Chief Minister of Maharashtra installed on a street in Nagpur, Wednesday

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, April 26: Amid a jumpy political situation in Maharashtra since the past few weeks, Nationalist Congress Party's Leader of Opposition Ajit Pawar has emerged as the front-runner in banners proclaiming him as the 'Future Chief Minister', here Wednesday.

It started Tuesday in his 'sasural', Ter town in Osmanabad district, where his in-laws reside, some supporters erected huge banners and posters with the message: 'Ajit Pawar, Son-in-Law of Ter, Our Leader, The Future Chief Minister'.

On Wednesday, Ajit Pawar's banners-posters as 'Future CM' popped up in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Nashik and all the way in Nagpur - the last where a similar poster had come up with the name of Bharatiya Janata Party's Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis.

However, NCP president and his uncle Sharad Pawar was not exactly enthused at the banner-poster proclamations concerning his nephew and has pulled up the party activists to refrain from such blatant propaganda.

An obviously unapproving Congress state President Nana Patole merely commented that "whichever party has the maxi-

mum number of MLAs will get the CM's post".

In a swipe, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut said that even Union Home Minister Amit Shah has come to Nagpur this day to view whose banner is more impressive -- an obvious hint at Fadnavis' posters in his hometown.

Earlier, in January-February, besides Ajit Pawar, even other NCP bigwigs like state President Jayant Patil and MP Supriya Sule-Pawar had shot to prominence as 'Future CM', but the issue died down soon after.

The latest round of soothsaying comes days after the mercurial Ajit Pawar, 64, publicly expressed a pet desire to ascend to the top post, triggering a furious political debate.

After all, he has been a former four-time Deputy CM, including in the 80-hour-long two-man government headed by ex-DM Devendra Fadnavis in November 2019, and considered sufficiently experienced for a 'promotion'.

The state has been agog with speculation over Ajit Pawar's next political move, like hopping over to the BJP in return for the CM's post, though he himself has repeatedly and vehemently denied any such intentions, often in his humorous and wise-cracking style.

Kerala likely to teach NCERT's deleted portions in its schools

The NCERT recently had, in the name of rationalisation of the syllabus, dropped certain portions from its class 12 history textbook triggering a row



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, April 26: Students in Kerala are likely to be taught the portions that the NCERT had deleted from its class 11 and 12 textbooks, including those pertaining to the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi and the ban on RSS.

The NCERT recently had, in the name of rationalisation of the syllabus, dropped from its class 12 history textbook certain portions on Mahatma Gandhi and how his pursuit of Hindu-Muslim unity provoked Hindu extremists. It also left out the portion where the government placed a ban on the RSS after Gandhi's assassination. The revision of textbooks by obfuscating facts has triggered a row.

The State Council of Education Research and Training (SCERT), an autonomous body of the General Education Department, is considering a decision by its curriculum steering committee to include these deleted portions in the state syllabus.

The committee, which met Tuesday, has entrusted General Education Minister V Sivankutty with taking a final decision on the matter after consulting with the

government and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Confirming the development, Sivankutty told reporters here that the SCERT and the Curriculum Committee take decisions on the academic affairs of the general education department of the state.

As per an MoU entered with the NCERT, Kerala has been using their 44 textbooks, and of them, there has been a significant change in the content of subjects including history, political science, economics, and sociology at the higher-secondary level, the minister explained.

"The curriculum committee unanimously decided to include all those portions omitted from these text books in the syllabus and teach the students in the state. I have been entrusted to inform the government and the CM about the decision and take a necessary decision in this regard," he said.

He said a final decision would be taken after consulting with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

The minister said several important portions, including the assassination of Gandhiji, the ban on RSS, Mughal history, the industrial revolution, and the history of post-independent India,

including five-year plans, have been excluded from the NCERT textbooks.

"Gandhiji was assassinated...But in their textbook, it was mentioned that Gandhi had died...Like (they are saying) he died of a heart attack," the minister said taking a dig at the NCERT.

The minister indicated that the deleted portions would be included and taught to the students during this academic year itself.

A decision was also taken to inform the Centre about the development and petition Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Union Education Ministry about the omission of the portions from the NCERT textbooks.

An SCERT source here said if a final nod was received from the government, they would bring out supplementary textbooks comprising those deleted portions for Class 11 and 12, and it would be taught in state schools.

Chief Minister Vijayan had strongly condemned the dropping of certain chapters and portions from NCERT Class 12 textbooks and alleged that complete saffronisation of academic books was the objective behind the move.

Among portions deleted from the textbook are 'Gandhiji's death had a magical effect on the communal situation in the country', 'Gandhi's pursuit of Hindu-Muslim unity provoked Hindu extremists', and 'organisations like the RSS were banned for some time'.

Portions referring to the Gujarat riots were also dropped from the class 11 sociology textbook, months after NCERT removed the reference to the 2002 communal violence in two class 12 textbooks.

The Congress has accused the Centre of whitewashing and distorting history.

NCERT Chief Dinesh Saklani said the syllabus was rationalised in June last year itself, and there has been no trimming of the curriculum this year.

Defying heat, police notice, Maharashtra farmers start 52-km 'long march'

The agitation has come exactly a month after the Nashik-Mumbai 'long march'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ahmednagar, April 26: Defying a police notice and soaring temperatures, hundreds of Maharashtra farmers started their 3-day 'long march' from Akole to Loni, in support of their demands from the state government, the organisers said here Wednesday.

The agitation, coming exactly a month after the Nashik-Mumbai 'long march', has been organised by the All India Kisan Sabha and other organisations, and will reach the office of Dairy Development & Revenue Minister Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil in Loni Friday.

The Ahmednagar police had issued notice to the organisers refusing permission for the long march in view of the scorching summer temperatures - up to 39 degrees Celsius in the district, ostensibly to avert a Navi Mumbai type tragedy.

Nevertheless, the farmers carrying red flags, banners and posters,



shouting slogans for their demands started their march towards Loni, 52 km away through a winding route.

The 15,000-plus marchers were flagged off by journalist-activist P Saimath and comprised top AIKS leaders like Dr Ashok Dhavale, Dr Ajit Nawale, CPI-M state Secretary Uday Narkar and others this afternoon.

AIKS General Secretary Nawale said the tillers demand the vesting of forest lands in the names of the farmers and agricultural workers, remunerative prices for cotton, milk, soya bean, tur, gram and other products.

He said that owing to the recent natural calamities "plus the corrupt and immoral politics" witnessed in the state, the basic problems of farmers, workers, agricultural labourers and all workers have been neglected and issues of development are side-lined.

Keeping in mind the concerns arising out of the high temperatures, the organisers have made suitable arrangements for drinking water, shade, walking only in the morning and evening hours, etc, Narkar said.

The AIKS said that since the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party leaders are offering all kinds of bribes

and sops, or attempting to break political parties with the fear of jail, it has now become imperative for the people to again take to the streets to resolve their burning problems.

Nawale asserted that if the farmers' demands were not met, then they would stage an indefinite sit-in protest in Loni, near Minister Vikhe-Patil's office, as the police went on the alert.

On March 28, the AIKS farmers' long march had been stopped just short of Mumbai after the state government announced that their demands had been accepted and issued written orders to the effect.

Keralites to be flown back free of cost from Sudan

Around 500 Keralites are waiting for evacuation from Sudan, including the family of a Keralite who died in cross firing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, April 26: The Kerala cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Wednesday decided to fly all the people evicted from Sudan to any of the four airports in the state free of cost.

For this, the cabinet has decided to authorise the Norka department, the agency looking after the interests of the Kerala diaspora.

Operation Kaveri -- launched to evacuate the stranded people - started April 23. Apart from INS Sumedha, two Indian Air Force air-



craft were sent to bring back Indian citizens stuck in Sudan's capital Khartoum, where a civil war broke

out April 15 after its Army and paramilitary forces clashed with each other, leading to large scale

violence, which has led to the death of over 400 people.

The evacuees will be flown to India from Saudi Arabia after they reach there on Indian ships.

According to sources, there are around 500 Keralites waiting for evacuation from Sudan, including the family of a Keralite Albert Augustine, who died in a cross firing while speaking over phone.

Last week, Vijayan had sought the urgent intervention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ensure that stranded Indians are brought home.

of the day quote

The news about Badal's demise is very unfortunate. He was a tall leader in India. In fact, I will say that there was no leader like him. No one can forget the sacrifices he made for the country

FAROOQ ABDULLAH | NC PRESIDENT

We are taking a review of infrastructure and planning to host the national games. Sports associations of Goa are being taken into confidence to create a sports environment here

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CHIEF MINISTER

With great power comes great responsibility. As the voice of the global south, we have the responsibility of creating a better future, a future where healthcare will be service not commerce

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Man hacked to death by his sons

Guwahati: In a shocking incident, an elderly man was hacked to death by his three sons in Assam's Dhubri district, officials said Wednesday. The incident happened in Saslapura village Tuesday evening. A senior police officer said that after a brief chase around the village, the sons attacked their father, identified as Sopyal Ali, with a machete. Police said that a family dispute was the cause of the escalation and that the accused trio fled the scene after carrying out the horrific murder.

MP: Woman shot dead on busy street

Bhopal: A woman was shot dead by two unidentified bike-borne criminals on a busy street in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district Wednesday. The accused escaped after killing the woman. The incident occurred around 11 a.m. when the victim, who is a resident of Basant Vihar locality, along with her friend arrived at a temple. As per the information, the victim was parking her scooter when two bike-borne criminals approached her and shot her in the head.

Stalin to meet Prez

Chennai: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin will meet President Draupadi Murmu Thursday in the national capital. During the meeting, the Chief Minister is likely to take up the issue of the NEET exemption bill passed by the state Assembly and forwarded to the President. Stalin will also, according to the Chief Minister's Office, speak about the Governor being given a specific time frame to take decisions on the Bills passed by the Assembly. He will also invite the President to inaugurate the multi-specialty hospital built at a cost of Rs 230 crore in Guindy. Stalin would return to Chennai Friday night.

Tragedy averted

Hyderabad: A major tragedy was averted in Hussain Sagar lake here when a boat carrying about 30 tourists got trapped in a massive thunderstorm. The incident occurred Tuesday night but the video of the boat becoming inoperable and drifting aimlessly surfaced Wednesday. 'Bhagmati', the boat operated by the tourism department, was trapped in the middle of the lake with 30 tourists onboard when a massive thunderstorm hit parts of the city.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Centre says leave it to Parliament

On the fifth day of hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, submitted before a five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud that the court is dealing with a "very complex subject", which has a "profound social impact"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 26: The Centre Wednesday requested the Supreme Court to consider leaving questions raised in the pleas seeking legal sanction for same sex marriages to Parliament.

Appearing for the Centre, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told a five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud that the apex court is dealing with a "very complex subject", which has a "profound social impact".

"The real question is who would take a call on what constitutes marriage and between whom," Mehta said on the fifth day of hearing.

He told the bench, also comprising justices S K Kaul, S R Bhat, Hima Kohli and P S Narasimha, that there would be ramifications on several other statutes which would need a debate in the society and also in various state legislatures.

Hearing in the matter is underway. On the first day of hearing in the matter April 18, the Centre had told the apex court that its preliminary objection on whether the court can at all go into this question or it would be essentially for the parliament to go into it be heard first.

The bench had told Mehta that the nature and tenability of preliminary objection will depend on the canvas the petitioners open up



The apex court April 19 noted the government does not have any data to show that same-sex marriage is an "urban elitist concept"

and the court wanted to have a view of their argument.

Mehta had said the subject with which the top court is dealing is virtually the creation of a socio-legal relationship of marriage which would be the domain of the competent legislature.

"When the subject is in the Concurrent List, we cannot rule out the possibility of one state agreeing to it, another state legislating in favour of it, another state legislating against it. Therefore, in absence of the states being not joined, the petitions

would not be maintainable, that is one of my preliminary objections," he had said.

Mehta had said the preliminary objection was whether the court can at all go into this question or it would be essentially for the parliament to go into it.

On April 18, the bench had made it clear that it will not go into personal laws governing marriages while deciding these pleas and said the very notion of a man and a woman, as referred to in the Special Marriage Act, is not "an absolute based on genitals".

ANOTHER COACHING STUDENT IN KOTA DIES BY SUICIDE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, April 26: A 19-year-old student preparing for NEET exam died by suicide in her hostel room in Rajasthan's Kota.

Rashi Jain, a resident of Sagar (MP), was staying in Kota for the past one year, for her coaching. According to her friends, Rashi was stressed as she was not keeping well.

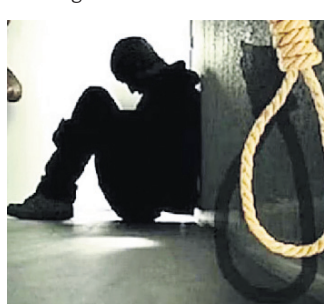
The incident took place Tuesday around 3 p.m. Her post-mortem was conducted at MBS Hospital on Wednesday. The police have informed the relatives, said officials.

Rashi used to live in a UK hostel in the Talwandi area. She had stopped attending her coaching classes but was to appear in the NEET UG exam May 7. On not seeing Rashi since Tuesday morning, the other students informed the hostel operator and police.

When the police arrived, they found her body hanging from a noose. She was the youngest in the family. Her father is into farming.

Police officials said that the girl took the extreme step Tuesday afternoon and that the exact reason was yet to be ascertained.

Notably, there have been series of suicides in Kota by students availing coaching facilities here to prepare for medical and engineering exams.



1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award, being presented to Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama by members of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation at his residence in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh

Police avert hostage crisis in Bengal school

AGENCIES

Malda (WB), April 26: A gun-wielding man barged into a packed classroom at a high school in West Bengal's Malda district Wednesday afternoon, but was overpowered by police and arrested, officials said.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee who was holding an administrative meeting in Kolkata at the time, came out to compliment the police for averting what is being seen as a potential school hostage crisis which could have turned ugly, akin to incidents of hostage shoot-outs in US educational campuses.

Panic gripped the students of Muchia Anchal Chandra Mohan High School at Old Malda, as the unidentified man brandished the gun and started yelling inside a



classroom with nearly 35-40 students including girls, a senior police officer said.

The gun-man was however overpowered by bystanders and police personnel who had also rushed to the school on being informed that a hostage drama was unfolding, the officer said, adding, a pistol, two bottles containing some liquid and a knife were seized from his possession.

The bespectacled man claimed he acted in this way, as his son and wife have been missing since a year, and he wanted to exert pressure on the administration to take note of it.

Brandishing a piece of paper, he was heard complaining that his repeated letters and missing complaints about a missing wife and child to various officials including to the state secretariat had been ignored.

However, according to his neighbours the man in his mid-40s, is separated from his wife and his child lives with her.

Anxious guardians rushed to the school which has about 1,000 students and made a beeline outside

AYURVEDA, HOMOEOPATHY OPDS TO OPEN IN AIIMS SOON

The Union Ministry of Ayush has started making preparations to open OPD and IPD of ayurveda and homoeopathy in all the All India Institute of Medical Sciences being run in the country as well in those which are to be opened in the future



WRESTLERS' SEXUAL HARASSMENT CASE

Preliminary probe needed before FIR: Delhi Police to SC



Wrestlers Bajrang Punia, Vinesh Phogat, Sangita Phogat and others during a training session near Jantar Mantar amid their protest

PFI PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 26: The Delhi Police Wednesday told the Supreme Court that some kind of preliminary probe was needed before it can proceed with the registration of an FIR over sexual harassment allegations levelled by seven women wrestlers against WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice P S Narasimha was told by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Delhi Police, that if the top court felt that an FIR was to be lodged straightaway then it may be done. "However, the police felt there are some issues which needed preliminary inquiry before the registration of the FIR," the top law officer said.

"You know Solicitor we also don't do something without hearing the other side and unless we have some material. Please furnish the material which you have Friday.. We took it up as this involves a minor etc," the CJI said.

The law officer said let an impression be not created that the FIR has not been registered despite the court asking for it.

The bench took note of the submissions of Mehta, and said Delhi Police may put forth their views on registration of the FIR April 28 when the plea of wrestlers will be heard.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the wrestlers, said he would be filing some additional material on the matter. The top court Tuesday issued notices to

Top wrestlers such as Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik staged a sit-in protest at Jantar Mantar in January and accused the WFI boss of sexual exploitation and intimidation

the Delhi Police and others on a plea by the seven women wrestlers, saying the matter is "serious" and requires its consideration.

Several national award winning wrestlers have been protesting at Jantar Mantar here demanding the government make public the findings of an oversight panel that investigated the sexual harassment allegations against Singh, also a BJP MP.

The wrestlers Tuesday asserted that they won't leave the protest site until Singh is arrested. They had resumed their sit-in protest Sunday and demanded that the findings of the oversight panel that investigated the allegations be made public. The committee was set up by the Sports ministry in January after the wrestlers held a three-day sit-in.

The top court Tuesday was initially of the view that the plea may be listed for hearing Friday. However, after hearing some arguments from Sibal, who mentioned the matter, it decided to take up the case straightaway.

Top Delhi school gets bomb threat

New Delhi: No suspicious object was found during an intensive search on the premises of the Delhi Public School in Mathura Road here after the school administration received a bomb threat via email Wednesday morning, officials said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southeast) Rajesh Deo, after reviewing the situation, said the bomb threat was received on the official email-id of the school administration and the police were informed around 8 am.

the educational institution, even as classes were suspended following the incident, police said.

Bihar govt 'releases' prisoner who died in November last yr

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, April 26: While the Bihar government had decided to release 27 prisoners including Anand Mohan, it has also 'released' an inmate who died in November last year.

Patiram Rai, the 93-year-old prisoner died November 10, 2022 in Buxar jail. Still, the law ministry of Bihar included his name in the list of 27 persons to be released after serving 14 years of their jail term with good conduct.

The state government issued a notification where the name of Anand Mohan was at the 11th position while Patiram Rai was at the 15th position.

"Patiram Rai who was undergoing life imprisonment died on November 10, 2022 due to illness. He was a native of Simri village in the district. Besides him, we have released 4 more inmates from the list we have received from the Bihar government. One Ramadhar Ram was not released as the fine imposed on him was not deposited in the court. His family is likely to pay the fine in the Arrah district court and he will then be released," said Rajiv Kumar, Superintendent of Buxar open jail.

You can now use WhatsApp on multiple phones

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi/ San Francisco, April 26: Meta-owned WhatsApp has announced that users will now be able to use the same WhatsApp account on more than one phone via its multi-device login feature.

Users can now link their phone as one of up to four additional devices. This update has started rolling out to users globally and will be available to everyone in the coming weeks, the company said.

"A feature highly requested by users, now you can link your phone as one of up to four additional devices, the same as when you link with WhatsApp on web browsers,



tablets and desktops. Each linked phone connects to WhatsApp independently, ensuring that your personal messages, media, and calls are end-to-end encrypted," WhatsApp said in a blogpost

Users can now link their phone as one of up to four additional devices. This update has started rolling out to users globally and will be available to everyone in the coming weeks, the company said

Tuesday. Moreover, users can now switch between phones without signing out and pick up their chats where they left off.

In addition, if you are a small business owner, additional em-

ployees will now be able to respond to customers directly from their phones under the same WhatsApp Business account, the company mentioned.

Further, the company said that in the coming weeks, it will roll out an alternative and more accessible way to link to companion devices.

"Now you can enter your phone number on WhatsApp Web to receive a one-time code, which you can use on your phone to enable device linking, rather than having to scan a QR code. We look forward to introducing this feature to more companion devices in the future," said WhatsApp.



international



They have made absurd accusations, according to which I face 30 years in prison
ALEXEI NAVALNY | OPPOSITION LEADER, RUSSIA

AFGHANS RETURNING HOME

A total of 35,999 Afghan refugees have returned to Afghanistan from neighbouring Iran over one month as the process of returning the refugees to their country continues. There are 2.6 million registered Afghan refugees in the world, of whom 2.2 million are registered in Iran and Pakistan alone. Afghans make up one of the largest refugee populations worldwide



of the day quote

We resolutely oppose the US having any form of official or military contact with China's Taiwan region
ZHU FENGLIAN | SPOKESWOMAN, CHINA'S TAIWAN AFFAIRS OFFICE

Considering the enemy that is right next to us and its scale, we definitely need to develop the military tech so that we can defend ourselves
MYKHAILO FEDOROV | MINISTER OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, UKRAINE

I am incredibly humbled to be joining Harvard University as a fellow - not only will it give me the opportunity to share my experience with others, it will give me a chance to learn
JACINDA ARDERN | FORMER PM, NEW ZEALAND

US to dock N-sub in SKorea amid rising threat from NKorea

1ST TIME IN 40 YEARS THE ARRANGEMENT -- RESPONDING TO EVER GROWING TENSION OVER COMMUNIST NORTH KOREA'S MISSILES TESTS AND NUCLEAR ARSENAL -- ECHOES MOVES LAST SEEN WHEN THE WASHINGTON OVERSAW THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE OF EUROPE AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION

Washington, April 26: A US nuclear missile submarine will visit South Korea for the first time in more than 40 years as part of a reinforced nuclear shield set to be announced at the White House by presidents Joe Biden and Yoon Suk Yeol, an official said. The senior US official said measures being announced Wednesday have not been seen since the height of the Cold War and are meant to boost deterrence in the face of North Korea's aggressive nuclear activities. Biden and Yoon, at the White House for a state visit, will issue a document called the Washington Declaration outlining how in addition to a beefed-up US military umbrella, the United States will increase information sharing with Seoul.

"The United States has not taken these steps, really, since the height of the Cold War with our very closest handful of allies in Europe. And we are seeking to ensure that by undertaking these new procedures, these new steps, that our commitment to extended deterrence is unquestionable," a senior official said ahead of the Biden-Yoon meeting. Officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, stressed that there are no plans to station US nuclear weapons in South Korea -- a difference from the Cold War, when US strategic weapons were deployed to Europe. In addition, Seoul will reiterate its pledge in the declaration not to seek its own nuclear arsenal.



"We'll announce that we intend to take steps to make our deterrence more visible through the regular deployment of strategic assets, including a US nuclear ballistic submarine visit to South Korea, which has not happened since the early 1980s," a senior official said. "We'll strengthen our training, our exercises and simulation activities to improve the US-ROK alliances approach to deterring and defending against DPRK threats, including by better integrating ROK conventional assets into our strategic planning," the official said, referring to South and North Korea by their official acronyms.

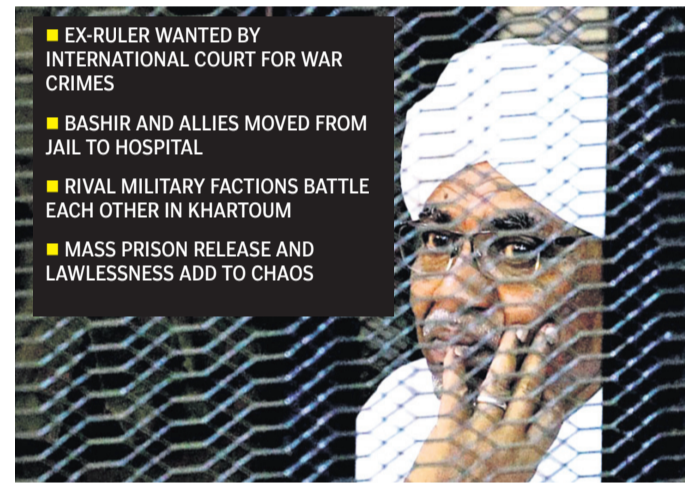
In addition to submarines, there will be a "regular cadence" of other major platforms, "including bombers or aircraft carriers," the official said. But there will be "no basing of those assets and certainly not nuclear weapons." Despite more shared information and planning, a US official stressed that use of American nuclear weapons remains under sole authority of the US president. An official said that steps are being taken in advance to defuse any potential tensions with Beijing over the tougher military posture.

"We are briefing the Chinese in advance and laying out very clearly our rationale for why we are taking these steps," the official, adding that the Biden administration is "disappointed that China has been unprepared to use its influence" on North Korea. Yoon is only the second foreign leader invited for a state visit by Biden and he and his wife were set to be greeted with full military honors at the White House. The two presidents were holding talks in the Oval Office before giving a press conference in the Rose Garden. On Tuesday, Yoon and Biden visited the Korean War Memorial, depicting life-sized steel statues of US soldiers marching during the 1950-53 war against the communist north.

STRUGGLE FOR SUDAN

Bashir, allies out of jail

Bashir came to power in a 1989 military coup and was ousted in a popular uprising in 2019. Two years later, the army led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, with support from the RSF, took over in a coup



- EX-RULER WANTED BY INTERNATIONAL COURT FOR WAR CRIMES
- BASHIR AND ALLIES MOVED FROM JAIL TO HOSPITAL
- RIVAL MILITARY FACTIONS BATTLE EACH OTHER IN KHARTOUM
- MASS PRISON RELEASE AND LAWLESSNESS ADD TO CHAOS

Neither party showed readiness to seriously negotiate, suggesting that both think that securing a military victory over the other is possible
VOLKER PERTHES | UN SPECIAL ENVOY ON SUDAN

transfer to civilian rule derailed by the eruption of fighting. The present conflict between the army and RSF leader General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo broke out in part over disagreements about how quickly to integrate the RSF into the army under the planned transition to civilian rule. The ICC in The Hague has accused Bashir of genocide, and Haroun of organising militias to attack civilians in Darfur in 2003 and 2004. The ICC declined to comment of the transfer from prison of Bashir, Haroun and Hussein. TRUCE REINFORCEMENTS The renewed battles were in Omdurman, one of Khartoum's twin cities, where the army was fighting reinforcements to the RSF brought in from other regions of Sudan, a Reuters reporter said.

Air strikes and artillery have killed at least 459 people, wounded more than 4,000

Thousands of convicted criminals, including some sentenced to death, were held in the vast prison, along with senior and lower-ranking officials from the Bashir regime, which was toppled four years ago. Sudanese authorities and the RSF traded accusations over the release of inmates, with the police saying paramilitary gunmen had stormed into five prisons over the weekend, killing several guards and opening the gates. The RSF blamed authorities for letting Haroun and others out. The release of convicted criminals added to a growing sense of lawlessness in Khartoum, where residents have reported worsening insecurity, with widespread looting and gangs roaming the streets. "This war, which is ignited by the ousted regime, will lead the country to collapse," said Sudan's Forces of Freedom and Change, a political grouping leading an internationally backed plan to

Dubai, April 26: Sudan's capital resounded with gunfire and explosions on the western outskirts Wednesday, eroding a truce amid collapsing basic services, dwindling food supplies and the opening of a prison that let out allies of a jailed former autocrat. With the conflict between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) showing no sign of easing, the army said former president Omar al-Bashir had been transferred to a military hospital before hostilities started April 15. It said Bashir was moved from prison with 30 former members of his regime, including Abdel Rahim Mohamed Hussein, who along with the former president is wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes for atrocities during an earlier conflict in the Darfur region. The whereabouts of Bashir came into question after a former minister in his government, Ali Haroun, announced Tuesday he had left Kober prison in Khartoum with other former officials. Haroun is also wanted by the ICC on dozens of war crimes charges.



A person with the flag of Israel photographs a fly-past that is part of an aerial show organized for Israel's 75th Independence Day celebrations, in Tel Aviv

SHORT TAKES

Xi, Zelensky talk

Beijing: Chinese leader Xi Jinping appealed for negotiations between Russia and Ukraine in a phone call Wednesday with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, warning "there is no winner in a nuclear war," state media said, in a long-anticipated conversation after Beijing said it wanted to act as peace mediator. Xi's government will send a "special representative" to Ukraine for talks about a possible "political settlement," said a government statement reported by state TV. China has tried to appear neutral in the war but refused to criticise Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Xi and Russian President Vladimir Putin issued a joint statement before the February 2020 invasion saying their governments had a "no limits friendship."

Third Quad summit

Washington: The third in-person Quad summit will be held in Sydney next month to deepen cooperation on critical and emerging technologies, high-quality infrastructure, global health, climate change and other pressing issues pertaining to the strategic Indo-Pacific region, it was announced Wednesday. The Quad or Quadrilateral Security Dialogue comprises India, the US, Japan and Australia. The May 24 meeting, scheduled to be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will be the first that Australia will be hosting. The meeting came against the backdrop of growing global concerns over increasing Chinese assertiveness in the strategically-vital region.

Pakistan reports 1st mpox case

Islamabad: The Pakistan Health Ministry announced that the country has recorded its first ever case of mpox, formerly known as monkeypox. Following the detection of the case, all airports across Pakistan are now implementing the health regulatory guidelines issued by the authorities, the ministry said, adding that the Border Health Services Pakistan is monitoring the whole situation. Mpox cases have been on the rise across the world since last year, with 87,113 confirmed cases reported to the WHO between January 1, 2022 and April 24, 2023.

Bernie Sanders endorses Biden

New York: Sen Bernie Sanders of Vermont said Tuesday that he would forgo another presidential bid of his own and instead endorse President Joe Biden's reelection. The leading progressive was Biden's chief rival in the 2020 Democratic presidential primary.

S'pore hangs Indian-origin drug trafficker over 1Kg of cannabis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Singapore, April 26: Singapore Wednesday executed a 46-year-old Indian-origin drug trafficker, a day after his 11th-hour appeal was rejected by a court here. Tangaraju Suppiah was convicted in October 2018 by a High Court judge of a capital charge of abetting an accomplice by conspiring to traffic cannabis. This was by delivering about 1kg of cannabis to himself, an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act. The Singaporean was detained in 2014 for drug consumption and failure to report for a drug test. A statement by the Singapore Prison Service Wednesday said that Tangaraju "had his capital sentence carried out today at Changi Prison Complex", Channel News Asia reported. A court in Singapore dismissed an application by Tangaraju Tuesday to have his case reviewed and for his execution to be stayed, according to the report. In a 15-page judgment, Justice Chong explained that Tangaraju had failed to show a legitimate basis for the court to review his case. Tangaraju's case had drawn support from British billionaire Richard Branson and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.



The spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ravina Shamdasani, Tuesday, urged the Singapore government to "urgently reconsider this (Tangaraju's) execution and to take steps to fully respect the most fundamental of human rights - the right to life." Branson had claimed in a blog post that Tangaraju's conviction did not meet standards and that "Singapore may be about to kill an innocent man". Singapore's Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said Tuesday that Branson's views regarding a Singaporean on death row showed "disrespect" for the country's judges and criminal justice system.

Terror attacks in Pakistan kill 293 people this year

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Rawalpindi, April 26: A total of 293 people have been killed and 521 others injured in 436 terrorist attacks in Pakistan since January this year, the military's media wing ISPR said. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, 192 people were killed and 330 injured in 219 incidents, whereas Balochistan reported 80 fatalities and 170 wounded persons in 206 attacks, said Director General (DG) of the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry at a press briefing. A total of 21 people were killed and 21 others injured in 11 incidents in Punjab and Sindh provinces, he told reporters here.



The DG added that this year, the security forces conducted 8,269 major and minor intelligence-based operations in which 1,535 terrorists were either killed or arrested. An average of over 70 operations are being conducted by police, security forces, and other law enforcement agencies on a daily basis across the country, the official said. "Due to untiring efforts of the public and army, there is no no-go area in Pakistan. However, in some areas, several groups of terrorists are active which are being eliminated on a daily basis. During these operations huge cache of arms and ammunition has been recovered from terrorists and their handlers," he said. The fatalities in the operations included 137 army personnel while there were 117 injured persons, he said, adding that "the war against terrorism will continue till elimination of the last terrorist". Talking about the internally displaced people, following operations in tribal areas, he said that 95 per cent of them returned home after the restoration of peace.

IN A FIRST Pope allows women to vote at bishops' meeting

For decades, women have demanded the right to vote at synods. The move aims to boost women in decision-making roles

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Vatican City, April 26: Pope Francis has decided to give women the right to vote at an upcoming meeting of bishops, an unprecedented change that reflects his hopes to give women greater decision-making responsibilities and laypeople more say in the life of the Catholic Church. Francis approved changes to the norms governing the Synod of Bishops, a Vatican body that gathers the world's bishops together for periodic meetings.

Under his vision for the lay faithful taking on a greater role in church affairs that have long been left to clerics, bishops and cardinals. For decades, women have demanded the right to vote at synods, the next of which is scheduled for October. Ever since the Second Vatican Council, the 1960s meetings that



modernised the church, popes have summoned the world's bishops to Rome for a few weeks at a time to debate particular topics. At the end of the meetings, the bishops vote on specific proposals and put them to the pope, who then produces a document taking their views into account. Until now, the only people who could vote were men. But under the new changes, five religious sisters will join five priests as voting representatives for religious orders. In addition, Francis has decided to appoint 70 non-bishop members of the synod and has asked that half of them be women. They too will have a vote.

business

of the day quote

With Reserve, riders can pre-book their rides ensuring peace of mind, certainty and added control over their trip. Reserve also opens up even more options for drivers to choose from between on-demand and pre-booked trips

PRAHJEEET SINGH | PRESIDENT, UBER INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA

Established for over six decades, Brakes India is known in the automotive industry for safety components from TVS Girling, TVS Apache and TVS Sprinter (brands). We are very excited to launch the engine oil Revia

S SUJIT NAYAK | VP AND HEAD (AFTERMARKET BUSINESS), BRAKES INDIA

We have a positive outlook to the market, there can be slight challenges on the way but, overall, the way India is growing...the GDP growth...that shows we have an opportunity. Even in the calendar year 2023, we have a positive outlook

INDRAJIT BELGUNDI | SENIOR DIRECTOR, DELL TECHNOLOGIES INDIA

SHORT TAKES

₹2,874cr sent to PLI beneficiaries

New Delhi: The government has released ₹2,874.71 crore to the beneficiaries of the production-linked incentive scheme till March, with a majority of companies from eight sectors like electronics, telecom, pharma and food processing, a senior official said Wednesday. Additional Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Rajeev Singh Thakur said these eight sectors are doing well, while few need to increase their pace. The scheme was announced in 2020 for 14 sectors with an outlay of ₹1.97 lakh crore to enhance domestic manufacturing capabilities and boost exports.

Maruti Suzuki Q4 profit surges 42%

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki India Wednesday reported a 42 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to ₹2,671 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2023, driven by higher sales, improved realisation and favourable forex movement. The country's largest car maker logged a net profit of ₹1,876 crore in the January-March of 2021-22. Net sales during the fourth quarter rose to ₹32,060 crore compared to 26,749 crore in the year-ago period.

L&T Tech reports 20% FY24 growth

Bangalore: Indian engineering firm L&T Technology Services Ltd said Wednesday it expects revenue to grow over 20% for the current fiscal year after reporting a bigger-than-expected fourth-quarter profit on a strong deal pipeline. The company's consolidated net profit rose to ₹3.10 billion (₹37.93 million) for the three months ended March 31, beating analyst expectations of ₹3.04 billion.

Microsoft logs \$53bn in sales

San Francisco: Riding on its Cloud and the new AI business, Microsoft has reported \$52.9 billion in sales, up 7 per cent with net income at \$18.3 billion, which increased 9 per cent (year-on-year) in its quarter ended March 31. Microsoft-backed OpenAI's ChatGPT has become a rage worldwide, which has the capabilities to transform many industries.



Failure by Congress to raise the government's debt ceiling and the resulting default would trigger an economic catastrophe sending interest rates higher for years to come

JANET YELLEN | TREASURY SECRETARY, US

HINDUJA HIGHEST BIDDER FOR RCAP

A Hinduja Group firm Wednesday emerged as the highest bidder with an offer of ₹9,650 crore to take over debt-ridden Reliance Capital in the second round of auction, sources said. The bid by IndusInd International Holdings Ltd (IIHL) is higher than ₹8,640 crore offer made by Torrent Investments in the first round of auction held in December last year



Centre okays National Medical Devices Policy

Cabinet approves medical devices policy to help sector grow to \$50 billion in next 5 years



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 26: The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved National Medical Devices Policy 2023 to promote domestic manufacturing and help the sunrise sector grow from the present \$11 billion to \$50 billion in the next five years and reduce import dependence.

Briefing media after the Cabinet meeting, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said there has been a rising demand for medical devices in India, and so, there is a need to promote domestic manufacturing. The minister also said that in the globalised world there would also be imports, but the aim of the National Medical Devices Policy 2023 is to meet the maximum requirements from locally manufactured products.

The medical devices sector in India is an essential and integral constituent of the Indian healthcare sector. The policy focuses on six strategies to tap the potential of the sector with the 'implementation of action plan'. The six strategies planned

The market size of the medical devices sector in India is estimated to be \$11 billion (about ₹90,000 crore) in 2020 and its share in the global medical device market is projected to be 1.5%

under the policy are Regulatory Streamlining; Enabling Infrastructure; Facilitating R&D and Innovation; Attracting Investments in the Sector; Human Resources Development; and Brand Positioning and Awareness Creation.

The Indian medical devices sector's contribution has become even more prominent as India supported the domestic and global battle against the Covid-19 pandemic through the large-scale production of medical devices and diagnostic kits like ventilators, rapid antigen test kits, RT-PCR kits, PPE Kits and N-95 masks, an official release said.

The policy is expected to provide the required support and directions to strengthen the medical devices industry into a competitive, self-reliant, resilient and innovative industry that caters to the healthcare needs of India and the world. The policy aims to place the medical devices sector on an accelerated path of growth with a patient-centric approach to meet the evolving healthcare needs of patients.

Last year, the government had floated an approach paper on the draft national medical devices policy 2022 for consultation.

The government is implementing a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for medical devices and extended support for setting up 4 medical device parks in Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, Mandaviya said.

Under the PLI scheme for medical devices, till now, a total of 26 projects have been approved, with a committed investment of ₹1,206 crore and out of this, so far, an investment of ₹714 crore has been achieved, the release said.

Under the scheme, a total of 14 projects producing 37 products have been commissioned.

Domestic manufacturing of high-end medical devices, which have started, include Linear Accelerator, MRI Scan, CT-Scan, Mammogram, C-Arm, MRI Coils, and high-end X-ray tubes. On the policy, the release further said that while various government departments have undertaken programmatic interventions to encourage the sector, the current policy aims to put in place a comprehensive set of focus areas for the growth of the sector in a coordinated manner.

Making steel with use of hydrogen energy is the future, says JSP MD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 26: Bimlendra Jha, Managing Director of Jindal Steel & Power while addressing the symposium on Future of Steel Making in India, said that the process of making steel with the use of hydrogen energy is the future of steel industry. The event was organised by the Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ltd April 25.

Attending the programme as Chief Speaker he informed that with development of newer technology steel industries will soon shed their dependency on imported coal.

Jha also highlighted the importance of steel in overall progress of the nation. "Steel industry has the capability of solving multiple problems of the society. It creates a new eco system and creates facilities to improve the quality of life," he added.

Appreciating Odisha governments progressive Industrial Policy, he said, "Odisha is the only state that gives capital incentive for usage of steel in industry. The state will be able to produce the total amount of steel that India is producing now." This will be greener and cleaner steel bringing prosperity for the state, he added.

Mentioning about the eco-friendly production of steel by Jindal Steel & Power (JSP), he said that coal gasification - CGP route which was introduced by JSP a



decade before, is now a sought after technology around the world. The CGP also produces various value-added by-products like gasification oil, tar, ammonia, phenol and naphtha.

Jha further mentioned that though steel is an energy intensive industry, now there are ways and means to induct energy efficiency and control emission with the application of new technologies. The emerging technologies have the potential to completely minimise emissions of carbon dioxide and turning the output to only steel and water. This will enable the country to attain net zero by steel industries.

Arvind Pande, Former Chairman of SAIL attended the programme as Chief Guest. Arun Rath, Former Union Secretary and UN Behera, Former OERC Chairman also addressed the gathering. Brahma Mishra presided in the programme, which was participated by more than 150 businessmen and senior professionals from industries.

MG Motor brings cheapest EV in India

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 26: British car manufacturer MG Motor India Wednesday unveiled its smart electric vehicle - Comet EV, at a starting price of ₹7,98,000, which offers a certified battery range of around 230 km on a single charge.

According to the company, the new Comet EV has been evaluated to provide an encouraging and economical charging cost of ₹519 per month.

The Comet EV is the second electric vehicle in MG Motor India's



portfolio and comes with futuristic and user-friendly Smart technologies.

"The Comet EV is built on the pure electric GSEV platform, the fastest to hit the 1 million EV sales mark globally. The car seamlessly blends style, technology, and sustainability, offering a versatile and

spacious ride with unparalleled safety features. At MG, we understand that the future of mobility is electric and connected," Rajeev Chaba, President & Managing Director, MG Motor India, said in a statement.

The MG Comet EV is designed on the concept of BICO - Big Inside, Compact Outside', offering comfortably spacious and enhanced legroom as well as headroom.

It also features a comfortable and roomy cabin with a 4-seater configuration with 50:50 settings on the second row of seats.

STOCK MARKETS RISE FOR 3RD SESSION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 26: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty extended their rally for the third straight session Wednesday amid buying in index majors IndusInd Bank, Nestle India and HCL Tech.

However, continuous foreign fund outflows and a weak trend in global equities restricted gains in the market, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 169.87 points or 0.28 per cent to settle at 60,300.58. During the day, it jumped 232.08 points or 0.38 per cent to 60,362.79. The broader NSE Nifty advanced 44.35 points or 0.25 per cent to end at 17,813.60.

"The domestic bourses mirrored the mood on Wall Street as soft eco-



nomics data and underwhelming earnings dragged US equities to a weak close yesterday. However, the market gradually recovered after an uptick in US futures, with the

earnings of tech companies providing support. Adding to investors' concerns about a possible recession, the US consumer confidence data for April hit a nine-month low

IN A FIRST Yuan overtakes \$ to become most-used currency in China's cross-border deals

REUTERS

Shanghai, April 26: The yuan became the most widely-used currency for cross-border transactions in China in March, overtaking the dollar for the first time, official data showed, reflecting efforts by Beijing to internationalise use of the yuan.

Cross-border payments and receipts in yuan rose to a record \$549.9 billion in March from \$434.5 billion a month earlier, according to Reuters calculation based on data from the State Administration of Foreign Exchange.

The yuan was used in 48.4% of all cross-border transactions, Reuters calculated, while the dollar's share declined to 46.7% from 48.6% a month earlier. The volume of cross-border transactions covers both the current and capital accounts.

China has long been promoting the use of yuan to settle cross-border trades as part of an effort to internationalise the use of its currency. The yuan's use in global trade finance remains low, though it has shown steady increases.

Data from SWIFT showed that the yuan's share of global currency transactions for trade finance rose to 4.5% in March, while the dollar accounted for 83.71%.

First Republic dips below \$1bn m-cap

REUTERS

Washington, April 26: First Republic Bank's market value plunged below \$1 billion for the first time ever Wednesday after a report said the US government was unwilling to intervene in the rescue process, hammering the lender's stock.

After a brutal selloff, the bank's market capitalization was about \$886 million at its lowest Wednesday, a far cry from its peak of more than \$40 billion in November 2021.

US government officials are currently unwilling to intervene in the First Republic rescue process, CNBC reported, citing sources.

The bank has been looking at several options, such as selling assets or the creation of a "bad bank", a source familiar with the matter told Reuters Tuesday.

Trading in First Republic's shares were halted multiple times. The stock was last down nearly 30% at \$5.66.

ahead of the upcoming Fed policy meeting," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

PowerGrid was the biggest gainer among the Sensex components, spurring 2.59 per cent, followed by IndusInd Bank, Larsen & Toubro, Nestle, HCL Tech, Axis Bank, Tata Motors, HDFC Bank, Tata Consultancy Services and HDFC were the major winners.

The rupee appreciated 21 paise to close at 81.74 against the US dollar. Meanwhile, global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.17 per cent to \$80.91 per barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital market Wednesday as they bought shares worth ₹1,257.48 crore, according to exchange data.

Honda sets target to become emissions-free by 2040

The big question arises whether Japanese manufacturers, like Honda and Toyota Motor Corp, will be able to dominate the market as they have historically with gas-guzzlers



with a new platform in 2025, a year earlier than initially announced.

"We believe that the value society places on being kind to the en-

vironment will only build in momentum," President Toshihiro Mibe said Wednesday in announcing a sprawling set of ini-

tatives intended to put Honda on the global EV map.

Mibe told reporters Tokyo-based Honda will forge ahead on investments and partnerships to realise such goals.

Honda has set a goal to have all its models around the world electric or fuel cell, which runs on hydrogen and is emissions-free, by 2040. It aims to make more than 2 million EVs a year by 2030.

In Japan, where EV demand is picking up gradually, an EV based on the tiny N-ONE model goes on sale in 2025. Two more EV models are planned for the following year.

In China, the world's biggest EV market, Honda Motor Co has three EV models going on sale next year,

eNS2, eNP2 and a concept unveiled at the recent Shanghai auto show.

By 2027, Honda will introduce seven more EV models in China. By 2035, Honda aims for 100 per cent electric for its China sales, ahead of other regions.

All the world's automakers are getting serious about electric vehicles, now dominated by Tesla and China's BYD. With governments moving to curb emissions and climate change, even previously skeptical consumers are starting to buy EVs, especially in the US and China, but also in parts of Europe and in Australia.

Some analysts say a car is still a car, and the wealth of know-how that comes with auto manufac-

turing still holds with the new electric era. Others claim it's a totally new ballgame, with opportunities galore for new players.

Toyota President Koji Sato, who took office this month, has acknowledged Toyota fell behind in selling EVs around the world.

The main drawback for the proliferation of EVs is the battery, which is heavy, a challenge in auto development. The components needed to make batteries, such as rare earths, are expensive.

Honda plans to leverage its strategic partnership with Hanwa Co, a Japanese trading company, to ensure stable procurement of nickel, cobalt and lithium for the batteries, according to Mibe.

Batters, spinners seal KKR win

RR have task cut out versus rampaging CSK



Varun Chakravathy was pumped up after dismissing Glenn Maxwell during their match, Wednesday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, April 26: Kolkata Knight Riders conjured up a spin magic after Jason Roy's sterling fifty (56, 29b, 4x4, 5x6) as they snapped their four-match losing streak with a 21-win over Royal Challengers Bangalore in the IPL, here Wednesday.

The English opener led the show as KKR batters fired in unison to notch up a fighting 200/5 after RCB captain Virat Kohli opted to bowl at their home den.

But the spin duo of Varun Chakravathy (3/24) and rookie Suyash Sharma (2/30) created a top order mayhem, before Andre Russell (2/29) broke Kohli's resistance to restrict RCB to 179/8.

Leading the side in absence of Faf du Plessis, Kohli struck a 34-ball 54 (6x4) and kept their hopes up in the 201-run chase after Du Plessis (17) Glenn Maxwell (5) fell cheaply. But all hell broke loose when Venkatesh Iyer took a game-changing catch at deep midwicket boundary to dismiss Kohli, off Russell.

With 86 needed from 48 balls,

it was left for Dinesh Karthik (22) to keep up their chase but Chakravathy had the last laugh when he had the veteran RCB keeper-batter en route to his three-for, and it seemed all over for RCB.

KKR thus did a double on RCB, having beaten them in their season-opener by 81 runs. The loss again proved RCB's over-reliance on their 'Big 3' - Kohli, Du Plessis and Maxwell.

Cruising at 30 for loss, RCB's flying start was halted by the spin duo of Sharma and Chakravathy who gave KKR a perfect start, sharing three wickets in between them inside the powerplay (58/3).

RCB's regular skipper Du Plessis, who sat out only to be subbed as an impact player, looked at his ominous best when he smashed Umesh Yadav on both the sides of the wicket. Kohli too was looking in full flow as the RCB opening duo feasted on the KKR pacers to start with.

With their trump card spinner Sunil Narine going wicketless in four matches, Rana banked fell back on their latest spin package

Suyash. It was a move that did the trick as the leggie grabbed the prized scalp of du Plessis with a wrong one and in his next over he trapped Shahbaz Ahmed (2).

Maxwell then got out to Chakravathy for a second time in as many matches this season which left the RCB's top-order in a disarray.

But there was no letting up from RCB as Mahipal Lomror showed his intent, giving Kohli a perfect support as the duo went about their way.

KKR finally got into the act with Roy setting tempo up front when he smashed five sixes and four boundaries as he and Narayan Jagadeesan (27) gave KKR their best ever start - 83 runs from 56 balls.

KKR's batting came on either side of Sri Lankan legspin sensation Hasaranga's two terrific bowling spells (2/24) that caused enough flutter. First, his miserly spell after the powerplay gave the impetus for Vysakh's double blow when he dismissed Jagadeesan and Roy.

But Rana then ensured that they don't lose the momentum as he made full use of his two reprieves



Jason Roy drives through the off side en route to his half century as he set the tone for a big total for Kolkata Knight Riders

- on five and 19 - to race to his 21-ball 48 (3x4, 4x6).

KKR's new-found hero Rinku Singh (18 n o) then took charge as he smashed two fours and one six to ensure that they reach the 200-mark. David Wiese smacked two sixes to make an unbeaten 12.

Roy showed KKR how it's done in the powerplay, blazing his way to a 22-ball fifty, his second in a row to hand KKR their best ever start this season.

The Englishman showed his intent against the likes of RCB new

ball bowlers and Mohammed Siraj and David Willey and unleashed his fury when leftarm spinner Ahmed was introduced in the last over of the powerplay.

BRIEF SCORES
KKR 200/5 (Jason Roy 56, Nitish Rana 48, Venkatesh Iyer 31; Wanindu Hasaranga 2/24, Vijaykumar Vyshak 2/41) beat RCB 179/8 (Virat Kohli 54, Mahipal Lomror 34; Varun Chakravathy 3/27, Andre Russell 2/29, Suyash Sharma 2/30) by 21 runs.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Jaipur, April 26: Smarting from back-to-back defeats, Rajasthan Royals would hope to bounce back with a win against Chennai Super Kings in their IPL match at home Thursday, but it will be easier said than done as the MS Dhoni-led team has been on a rampage with three victories on the trot.

With their top-order comprising Rituraj Gaikwad, Devon Conway, Ajinkya Rahane and Shivam Dube firing together most of the time, CSK have notched up three easy wins while the Royals have lost their last two matches.

Thursday's match could turn out to be a battle between CSK's top-order batters and the world class spinners of the Royals.

Conway is the second most prolific batter so far this season with 314 runs from seven matches while a 'transformed' Rahane, who hit a 71 not out off just 29 balls against Kolkata Knight Riders on Sunday, has been in devastating form with 209 runs from five games, at a stupendous strike rate of 199.04, the highest among the batters.

The Royals can take a bit of solace from the fact they emerged victorious in their first meeting of this season against CSK. However, even then CSK nearly pulled off a win as their talisman Dhoni turned the clock back with his batting, before going down by three runs in front of their home crowd.

However, things are different at the moment with Chennai registering their fifth win of the season,

against Kolkata Knight Riders at the Eden Gardens Sunday, to grab the top position in the standings with 10 points.

A win for CSK, at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium Thursday, will brighten their playoffs prospects further. The Super Kings, a four-time champions, have the personnel to humble the Royals in their own backyard.

Having suffered two consecutive losses, the Royals will be desperate to get their campaign back on track with a clinical performance against the visitors from Chennai.

For the Royals to do well, it is imperative that the likes of Jos Buttler, Yashasvi Jaiswal and skipper Sanju Samson deliver with the bat and then, on a pitch that has help for the slower bowlers, hope that the seasoned spin duo of Ravichandran Ashwin and Yuzvendra Chahal fire.

They may be playing at their base, but the Royals can expect plenty of home team fans at the stands rooting for CSK skipper Dhoni, who is probably appearing in his last IPL season, just like it happened in Kolkata a few days back.



Sindhu, Srikanth in pre-quarters

PRANNOY AND TREESA-GAYATRI ALSO ENTER ROUND OF 32 STAGE, WHILE SEN BOWS OUT OF ASIA BADMINTON CHAMPIONSHIP



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, April 26: On a day star shutter Lakshya Sen made a first-round exit, double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu and veteran Kidambi Srikanth began with easy wins to advance into the pre-quarterfinals of the Asia Badminton Championship, here Wednesday.

World No.9 HS Prannoy prevailed over Phone Pyae Naing of Myanmar 21-14, 21-9 in 32 minutes to set up a pre-quarters clash against Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo.

Commonwealth Games bronze medal-winning women's doubles pair Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand also kept the Indian flag high by making the last-16.

Fresh from finishing runner-up at the Madrid Spain Masters, the former World Champion, Sindhu defeated Wen Chi Hsu 21-15, 22-20 in a 46-minute affair in the women's singles. Trailing 11-14 in the first game, the world No.11 Indian, who is on a comeback trail after a long injury lay-off, reeled off nine points in a row to take a lead.

In the second game, the Taipei shuttler gave some fight but Sindhu led 11-7 at the break before sealing the issue. Sindhu will face World No.9 Han Yue of China in the pre-quarters.

Kidambi Srikanth took 25 minutes to see off his first-round opponent Adnan Ebrahim 21-13, 21-8. He will face World No.5 Kodai Naraoka in the men's singles last-16.

Treesa and Gayatri duo roared back from behind to defeat Indonesia's Lanny Tria Mayasari and Ribka Sugiarto 17-21, 21-17, 21-18 in a battle lasting more than an hour.

After losing the first game tamely, the Indian duo put up a dominant display in the second and began with a 5-0 lead. They maintained their lead through out to force a decider.

The third game turned out to be an intense battle with Treesa and Gayatri trailing 15-16 against the Indonesian pair. They were then locked at 18-all when an aggressive Treesa came up with a powerful cross-court smash before the Indian duo sealed the issue in 64 minutes.

Sen, who took a short break to focus on his mental and physical health, was eliminated by World No.7 Loh Kean Yew in a 7-21, 21-23 loss. Having plummeted to 24th spot in the BWF rankings, Sen got a tough draw as he was pitted against former World Champion and World No.7.

Up against World No.1 Akane Yamaguchi, promising Malavika

Bansod stretched the star player before going down 23-25, 19-21 in a 46-minute battle.

AT A GLANCE
Men's singles: Kidambi Srikanth beat Adnan Ebrahim 21-13, 21-8; HS Prannoy beat Phone Pyae Naing 21-14, 21-9; Lakshya Sen lost to Loh Kean Yew 7-21, 21-23.
Men's doubles: Krishna Prasad Garaga & Vishnuvardhan Goud Panjala lost to Takuro Hoki & Yoo Kobayashi 15-21, 17-21; PS Ravikrishna & Sankar Prasad Udayakumar lost to Man Wei Chong & Kai Wun Tee 12-21, 17-21.
Women singles: PV Sindhu beat Wen Chi Hsu 21-15, 22-20; Malvika Bansod lost to Akane Yamaguchi 23-25, 19-21; Akarshi Kashyap lost to Komang Ayu Cahya Dewi 6-21, 12-21.
Women doubles: Treesa Jolly & Gayatri Gopichand beat Lanny Tria Mayasari & Ribka Sugiarto 17-21, 21-17, 21-18; Ashwini Bhat & Shikha Gautam lost to Meilysa Trias Puspitasari & Rachel Allesya Rose 20-22, 12-21, 18-21; Haritha Manazhiyil & Ashna Roy lost to Jongkolphan Kititharakul & Rawinda Prajongjai 11-21, 2-21.
Mixed Doubles: Rohan Kapoor & Sikki Reddy beat Chan Peng Soon & Cheah Yee See 21-12, 21-16.

Sports Odisha edge past HOPS FC, Delhi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 26: Sports Odisha kicked off their Indian Women's League (IWL) campaign Wednesday with a thrilling 3-2 victory over HOPS FC, Delhi in their Group A match at the Shahibaug Police Stadium in Ahmedabad.

After a goalless first half, the match came to life when Odisha struck twice in a span of eight minutes through Rekha Poudel (51st) and substitute Manisha Naik (58th).

HOPS FC, however, came back strongly to level scores with goals from Shailija (71st) and Rajni Bala (81st). Finally, Odisha had the last laugh as substitute Anju struck well into the added-on time to clinch the win.

Archer undergoes minor elbow surgery

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, April 26: England pace spearhead Jofra Archer underwent a minor elbow surgery during his 19-day break earlier this month after an old injury resurfaced after playing one IPL game for the Mumbai Indians.

According to British newspaper 'Daily Telegraph', "Jofra Archer travelled to Belgium for minor surgery on the troublesome right elbow during a short recent spell on the sidelines at the IPL."

He is now expected to play against Rajasthan Royals Sunday. The surgery was performed by renowned Antwerp-based surgeon Roger van Riet, who is an elbow specialist.



Archer played MI's opening game against RCB where he went wicketless for 33 runs in four overs and then had a 19-day break after which he was smashed for 42 in four overs with a solitary

wicket in the game against Punjab Kings. Mumbai Indians lost both games.

Archer, who was bought for Rs 8 crore by MI hasn't yet been able to delivery because of his elbow issue for which he missed the entire last season having undergone a major surgery.

The 'Telegraph Sport' claimed in its report that England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) had confirmed that "Archer visited a specialist in Belgium." "It is understood that, after assessment by the specialist, Archer underwent what sources describes as a "minor procedure", before returning to India." The surgery in Belgium is Archer's fifth in 25 months.

TATY CASTELLANOS SINKS REAL

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, April 26: Two weeks ago, Taty Castellanos had a miss so bad in a one-on-one situation against Barcelona that it forced him to delete his social media accounts because of the insults he received from Girona fans.

The former Major League Soccer scoring leader more than made up for it against Real Madrid Tuesday. In a turnaround he said he didn't think was possible, Castellanos scored four times in Girona's 4-2 win against Madrid in the Spanish league.

"It's a dream to be able to score against Madrid, one of the best teams in the world, but to score four times, I could never have imagined," the 24-year-old Argentine said. "It was a dream night."

Castellanos, playing on a one-season loan from New York City FC, scored twice in each half to help the Catalan club stun the defending league champions.

He had also scored four times with New York in an MLS match against Real Salt Lake last year. But he had attracted headlines in Spain recently after wasting a clear chance to score in Girona's 0-0 draw against Barcelona at Camp Nou Stadium April 10, prompting a wave of insults against him online.

Castellanos got his four goals in just over an hour of play and from only five attempts. He scored in



A NIGHT TO REMEMBER: Taty Castellanos (No.9) reacts after scoring one of his goals against Real Madrid as his teammates join him for celebration, Tuesday

the 12th, 24th, 46th and 62nd minutes and received a standing ova-

tion from the Girona fans at Montilivi Stadium when he was

substituted in the 72nd.

Spanish media said no one had scored four goals against Madrid in the league since Oviedo player Esteban Echevarria in 1947. Robert Lewandowski, who now plays for Barcelona, did it with Borussia Dortmund in a Champions League game in 2013.

Girona moved to ninth place with the victory, their second in three matches, and practically guaranteed their place in the first division next season. The Catalan club are back in the top flight after a three-year absence.

The loss further damaged Madrid's hopes of catching Barcelona at the top of the standings. Barcelona can increase their lead to 14 points with seven matches remaining with a win at mid-table Rayo Vallecano.

The result may also allow third-place Atletico Madrid to cut their gap to Madrid to three points when they host Mallorca.

Madrid's focus has been on the Champions League semifinal against Manchester City and the Copa del Rey final against Osasuna. Ancelotti did use some of his regular starters, though, including Vinicius Junior, who several times exchanged provocations with Girona fans in the stands and players on the field. The Brazilian scored Madrid's first goal with a header in the 34th minute and set up Lucas Vazquez's goal in the 85th.