



## KANGANA'S TWO CENTS

Actor Kangana Ranaut says it is unfair to evaluate people based on their gender or sexual orientation

LEISURE P2



## GRIM SITUATION

Russia fires more than 20 cruise missiles and two drones at Ukraine early Friday, killing at least 22 people

INTERNATIONAL P10



## GT TEST AWAITS KKR

A resurgent Gujarat Titans stand in way of Kolkata Knight Riders' revival hopes when the two teams cross swords today

SPORTS P12

## Siddhartha Mohanty first chief exec of LIC

**NEW DELHI:** The Centre Friday named Siddhartha Mohanty as the first chief executive of the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), the country's biggest insurer. Mohanty, a veteran of the company which listed in May last year in India's biggest initial public offering, will lead LIC as chairman until June 2024 and then become chief executive until at least June 2025, according to a government document seen by Reuters. Mohanty was previously one of four managing directors at LIC, initially taking on the additional role of chairman in March for three months. However, the chairman position will be phased out, bringing LIC into line with the country's other listed companies.

## BBC chairman resigns after Boris loan row

**London:** BBC Chairman Richard Sharp resigned Friday over a report into whether he failed to properly disclose his involvement in the facilitation of a loan to former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Barrister Adam Heppinstall was appointed by the Commissioner of Public Appointments to investigate the claims which had first appeared in the Sunday Times, says the BBC. Sharp said the report finds he did not play "any part whatsoever in the facilitation, arrangement, or financing of a loan for the former Prime Minister".

P10



**RICH TRIBUTE:** Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar and other dignitaries pay tribute to Utkal Gaurav Madhusudan Das, the architect of modern Odisha, on his birth anniversary in Cuttack, Friday

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT 2 FIRs registered against WFI chief

**Press Trust of India**  
**New Delhi, April 29:** Delhi Police Friday registered two FIRs in connection with sexual harassment allegations levelled by women wrestlers against Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh. On the complaints received from female wrestlers, two FIRs have been registered in Connaught Place police station, a senior police officer said. The first FIR pertains to allegations levelled by a minor. The case has been registered under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act along with relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code concerning outraging modesty, he said. The second FIR has been registered for carrying out comprehensive investigations into the complaints by adult complainants under relevant IPC sections pertaining to outraging of modesty, the officer said, adding that investigation into both the FIRs was being taken up in right earnest. P12

# Andhra's sticker jitters

■ Andhra Pradesh officials are working in an organised manner to make their developmental programmes reach every household in Kotia panchayat while Pottangi block officials are sitting silent

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Pottangi, April 28:** There is no end to incursions by neighbouring Andhra Pradesh into Kotia panchayat under this block of Koraput district with the latest move being the stickers carrying Andhra Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's photo pasted on the houses built under the state-sponsored Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana (BPGY). According to reports, Andhra officials Friday visited the area and pasted stickers carrying an image of their Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on the houses built under the state-sponsored Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana (BPGY). This has sparked a row among the residents and intelligentsia in Koraput district.

The officials also distributed stickers to the residents and asked them to paste it on front of their houses. The move came ahead of Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister P Rajanna Dora's visit to the panchayat, coming Monday. Dora is scheduled to visit the area and attend various programmes to be held in the panchayat.

To make his visit successful, the officials of Salur block in Andhra Pradesh have started touring



Salur officials distribute the stickers at Talaganjeipadar village in Kotia panchayat, Friday

OP PHOTO

- Pottangi block administration has handed over 677 houses built under Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana in 21 disputed villages of Kotia panchayat in financial year 2019-20 and 2022-23
- However, the officials from Andhra Pradesh are touring nearly two to three villages in the panchayat every day and pasting stickers on the houses
- Zilla Parishad zone no-1 member Tikai Gemel said it is quite unfortunate that the block officials are totally oblivious of these developments

Ganjeipadar: Uparsembi, Talasembi, Dhulipadar villages in the panchayat pasting the stickers with an image of Andhra Chief Minister on houses built under state-spon-

sored BPGY. Reports said that Pottangi block administration has handed over 677 houses built under state-sponsored housing scheme in 21 disputed villages of Kotia panchayat in financial year (FY) 2019-20 and 2022-23. However, the officials from Andhra Pradesh are touring nearly two to three villages in the panchayat every day and pasting stickers on the houses. Zilla Parishad zone no-1 member Tikai Gemel said it is quite unfortunate that the block officials are totally oblivious of these developments. Local intelligentsia pointed out that the Andhra Pradesh government is working in an organised manner to make its developmental works reach every household. However, it is quite unfortunate that the block officials are not taking any action, they observed.

## ANDHRA HEALTH CAMP IN KOTIA

Meanwhile, Andhra Pradesh health officials Friday conducted two health camps in Ganjeipadar and Dhulipadar villages under Kotia panchayat. The matter came to the fore after a medical team led by a doctor identified as Ajay of Tonam Primary health centre in Parbatipuram Manyam district reached the two villages and conducted health checkups of over 70 people and distributed free medicines to them, Friday. The medical team, after closing the health camp, did some social work to gain appreciation of the locals. The team members cleared the rainwater that had accumulated in the middle of the village and asked the villagers to keep their surroundings clean to remain disease-free.

# Book hatemongers even if no complaint: SC

The apex court asks all states and UTs to register cases against those making hate speeches and warns of contempt if the admin concerned delays action

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 28:** Extending the scope of its 2022 order beyond three states, the Supreme Court Friday directed all states and Union Territories (UTs) to register cases against those making hate speeches even if no complaint has been made. A Bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna termed hate speeches a "serious offence capable of affecting secular fabric of the country".

The Bench said its October 21, 2022 order shall be made applicable irrespective of religion and warned any delay in registering cases will be treated as contempt of the court.

"Where have we reached in the name of religion? What have we reduced religion to is really tragic," the apex court had then observed and directed Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Uttarakhand to crack down hard on those making hate speeches, calling them shocking for a country that is religion-neutral. Holding that the Constitution of India envisages a secular nation, the court had directed Uttar

Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Delhi to promptly register criminal cases against the offenders without waiting for a complaint to be filed.

On Friday, the Bench said, "The judges are apolitical and not concerned with Party A or Party B and the only thing they have in mind is the Constitution of India."

It said the court has been entertaining petitions against hate speeches in different parts of the country for "larger public good" and to ensure establishment of "rule of law".

The apex court warned any delay on the part of the administration in taking action on this "very serious issue" will invite the court's contempt.

The top court's order came on a plea filed by journalist Shaheen Abdullah, who had initially sought direction against Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand to register cases against those delivering hate speeches.

Abdullah had again moved an application seeking implementation of the apex court's October 21, 2022 order across states and union territories.



**WHERE HAVE WE REACHED IN THE NAME OF RELIGION? WHAT HAVE WE REDUCED RELIGION TO IS REALLY TRAGIC SC BENCH**

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Shhh! Do not shout or protest. It will tarnish the country's image

## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	61112.44	▲ 463.06
NIFTY	18065.00	▲ 149.95
DOLLAR	81.83	▼ ₹0.12
EURO	90.27	▲ ₹0.18
GOLD	₹59,980	▲ ₹79
SILVER	₹74,254	▲ ₹295

## WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	35.6°C	35.5°C
TEMP MIN	25.5°C	25.0°C
Humidity	87%	87%
Rainfall	0.6mm	1.0mm

Forecast: Light to moderate rain

# C-SECTION AUDIT IN PVT HOSPITALS FROM MAY 1

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** In view of sharp rise in Caesarean Section deliveries between National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-4 of 2015-16 and 2019-21, the state government has expanded the audit of such delivery cases to all private hospitals too that would come into effect from May 1. Earlier, the audit was being done in government hospitals.

The state government has directed all the chief district medical officers (CDMOs) and public health officers (PHOs) to ensure audit of Caesarean Section (C-Section) deliveries in all private health facilities from May 1, an

official said Friday.

The move from the Family Welfare director came Thursday after a sharp increase in C-Section deliveries between National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-4 of 2015-16 and NFHS-5 of 2019-21.

During the period, C-Section deliveries increased from 53.7 per cent to 70.7 per cent which was higher than the ideal C-Section rate recommended by WHO panel of reproductive child health.

The panel after re-examining the C-Section rate in 2015 also mentioned, "At population level, Caesarean section rates higher than 10 per cent are not associated with reductions in maternal and newborn mortality rates." **Contd...P4**

# Owner rejects tenant for 75% marks in Class XII

The bizarre situation has been brought to light by a Twitter user whose cousin was denied a house in the Karnataka capital

AGENCIES

**Bangalore, April 28:** Looking for an apartment in Bangalore? Be sure to remember every single detail of your life, and don't forget to brush up your exam-taking skills! Because now landlords in the city are demanding that tenants supply anything from autobiographies to Class X and XII marksheets, before letting them to move in.

This bizarre situation has been brought to light by a Twitter user whose cousin was denied a house in the Karnataka capital because the landlord only allowed tenants to move in if they scored above 90 per cent in their Standard XII examinations.

In fact, a Twitter user recently shared a story of a tenant who was rejected simply because he did not score at least 90 per cent in their Class XII exams, a new benchmark set by the flat owner in Silicon Valley of India.

In a viral Twitter post, user Shubb spilled the beans on how his cousin was denied a flat by an owner in Bangalore simply because he didn't score 90 per cent marks in Class XII exams. Screenshots shared online showed the tenant chatting with a broker who demanded not only his LinkedIn or Twitter profile but also his company joining certificate, Class X and XII marksheets, and some other documents like Aadhaar or PAN card. And if that



It is said that the process of renting in Bangalore is tougher than getting married or securing admission into a top-tier college

wasn't enough, the cherry on the cake was the owner's request for a 150-300 word write-up about the

tenant himself. However, he soon faced 'rejection' at the hands of the landlord as the broker replied,

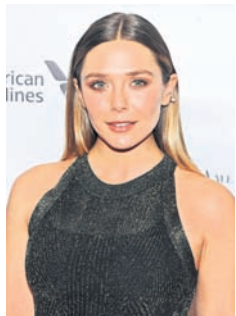
"Sorry, but he rejected your profile because you've got 75% in Class 12th and the owner is expecting at least 90%."

Truly, the post's caption couldn't be more accurate: "Marks don't decide your future, but they do decide whether you get a flat in Bengaluru or not".

Others said the process of renting in Bangalore is tougher than getting married or securing admission into a top-tier college.

The issue of getting a house on rent is currently in the spotlight after a series of posts showing how tough it has become to find a good rental in the city - thanks in part to the influx of young professionals as offices.

# leisure



## OLSEN FEELS DISCOMFORT BEING NICKNAMED 'INTERNET'S MOM'

The *WandaVision* actress Elizabeth Olsen feels old for being labelled the 'internet's mom', although her friends convince her that it's 'a good thing'. The 34-year-old actress made headlines when she co-presented an award at the Oscars ceremony alongside Pedro Pascal, who garnered the nickname of the 'internet's daddy'.

## KOURTNEY ACCUSES KIM OF PROFITING FROM HER WEDDING

A trailer for an upcoming episode of *The Kardashians* unveils a discussion where Kourtney Kardashian accuses Kim Kardashian of trying to turn her wedding into a 'business opportunity'. The accusation came around one year after the 44-year-old tied the knot with musician Travis Barker.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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

**ARIES**  
You will look for new opportunities to increase your competence, and for new ways to enjoy. If your relationship is under stress, it is about time you sorted out things. There is likelihood of making a short trip. If you are feeling under the weather, Ganesh says a long drive with your beloved may do you good.

**TAURUS**  
The day is likely to turn out to be a difficult one. But your maturity and experience in handling adverse situations will come to your aid. You will, as the day advances, be able to sort out the problems that have cropped up and end up on an optimistic note.

**GEMINI**  
You are likely to work extra hard to assert your authority at the workplace. On the work front, your seniors and colleagues will appreciate your devotion and dedication to work. Monetary gains may be expected in the evening, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
You will make a strong impact with whatever you do today. Ganesh says that you will feel joy in a romantic interlude. Ties with life partner will be stronger and you will enjoy domestic bliss. A situation might arise where you have to draw lines and take side with a circle of friends. That will be a time for caution.

**LEO**  
You need to balance your income and expenditure. It is a good time to invest and speculate in shares. Your debts will be settled, and pending dues will be realised. A work or project that has been delayed for some time, will now be completed. Your relations with your business partners will become stronger now, says Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
Today you will be in a very innovative and ingenious mood. Ganesh says a sight-seeing trip either to a museum or some historical monument is on the cards. Being lively and active will help you tone up your body. Entertaining yourself will be a good way to heal the wounds left in the wake of a broken relationship.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says you will think of restyling or renovating your home today. You shall be able to style your house with artifacts or beautiful paintings. You will invite your friends to your home in the evening and enjoy spending time with them. You may try your luck today in the share market and you can hope to make substantial gains.

**SCORPIO**  
You are on a mission to solve all the pending problems, by finding their solutions today itself. And very aptly, your optimistic attitude and creative outlook would come to rescue you in difficult moments. At this point of time, even your colleagues and superiors support you, says Ganesh.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
The day begins with lots of challenges, says Ganesh. Isolated or a one man army, you may have to resolve problems and cross hurdles on your own. Your skills and resourcefulness will go through a rigorous polishing today, may be in a not-so-happening style.

**CAPRICORN**  
You'll be over-emotional during the first half of the day. You've been quiet for a long period now, and it will be emotionally and physically exhausting for you to express your tensions, fears, dreams, regrets and sorrows, feels Ganesh.

**AQUARIUS**  
If you are tangled in some legal matters, Ganesh advises you go for an out of court settlement. You are strong, and with patience and perseverance you will sail smoothly through difficult times. People, however, may perceive you as a headstrong or inflexible person.

**PISCES**  
A mixed bag of goodies awaits you today. Your boss is likely to grant you a few unexpected concessions at work. For those pursuing studies, good results are in the offing. The evening is likely to be fun-filled and pleasant, says Ganesh.



## Sara channels her inner Marvel nerd

**Mumbai:** The third and final instalment from the Marvel Cinematic Universe *Guardians of the Galaxy* is almost here. But before the film finally lands in theatres May 5, fans can't keep calm as early reactions to the film, call it the most emotional and exciting movie of the franchise marking it the end journey of the band of misfits together.

And guess what, there is a hidden fan in actress Sara Ali Khan. The *Atrangi Re* actress takes on the Marvel fan challenge and has passed the test with flying colours. The knock-knock queen has beaten the Marvel fanatic Ashish Chanchlani at the best guess game in the history of Marvel in India!

A James Gunn directorial, *The Guardians of Galaxy Volume 3* has got the nation waiting with batting eyes. To add to the excitement, Indian audiences can book their tickets from Friday as advance booking of the film has opened across the country.

The film stars Chris Pratt, Zoe Saldana, Dave Bautista, Karen Gillan, and Pom Klementieff, featuring Vin Diesel as Groot and Bradley Cooper as Rocket, Sean Gunn, Chukwudi Iwuji, Will Poulter and Maria Bakalova. The movie will release in English, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.



## Salman: I've been unlucky in love

**Mumbai:** The industry veteran, Salman Khan, who has been ruling millions of hearts for over three decades, is now ready to take the hot seat at the special episode of *Aap Ki Adalat*. The actor, who last appeared on the show in 2014, will be engaging again in a conversation with host Rajat Sharma this weekend. In this candid session, packed with excitement and light-hearted moments, the actor will also speak about his love life.

In a promo, Rajat asked about Salman's 'move on' statement, implying that he had been moving from one person to another for several years. Salman laughed in response to the question and simply replied, "I've been unlucky in love, sir."

In the following part of the promo, the host asked, "Who is your Jaan these days? Who are you in a relationship with?" The actor replied, "Sir, I'm just a 'Bhai' (brother) these days." As the audience erupted in laughter, Salman continued, "The person I desired to call me 'Jaan' is now calling me 'Bhai'. What can I do?"

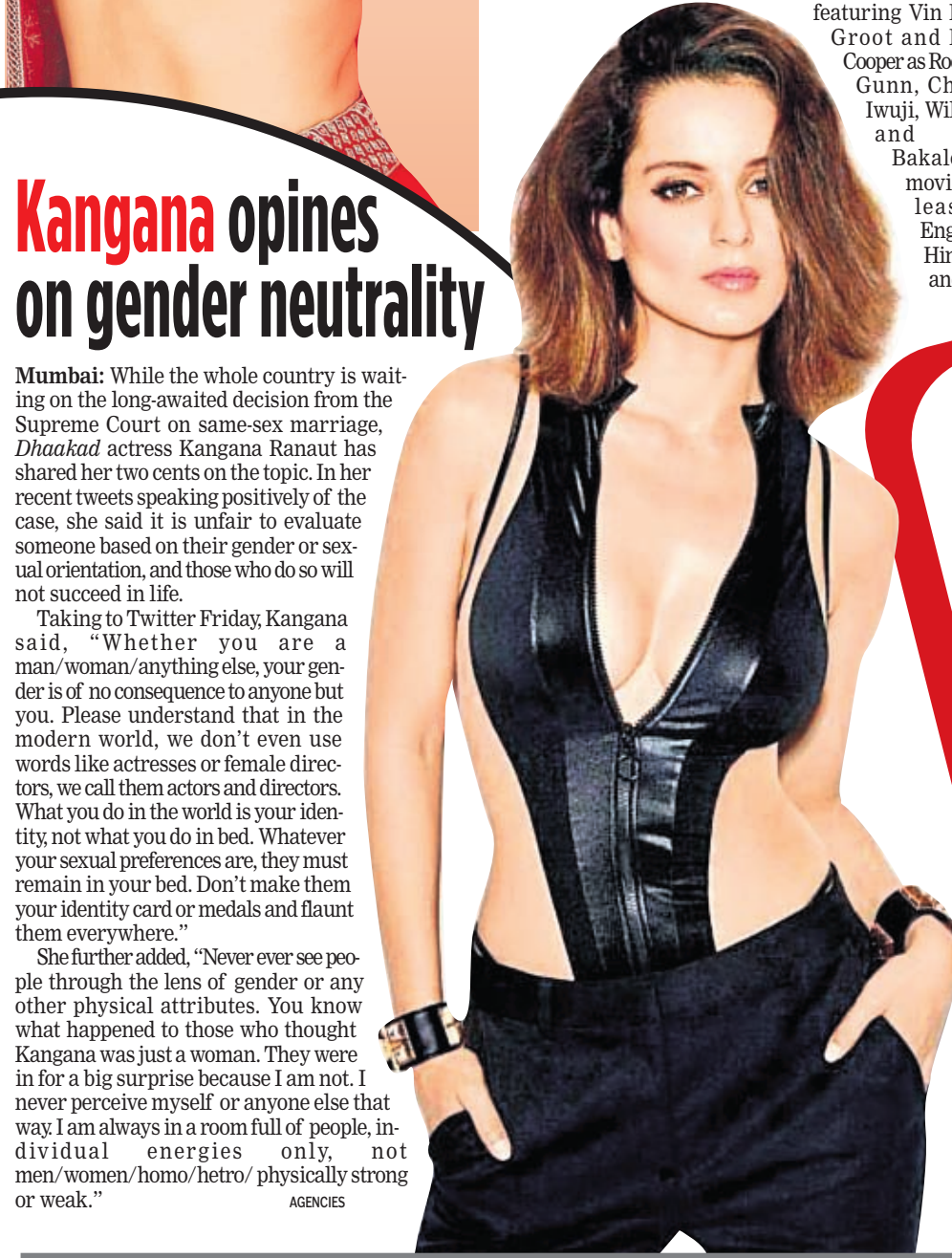
On the professional front, the 57-year-old was last seen in *Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan*, which was released recently on the occasion of Eid.

## Kangana opines on gender neutrality

**Mumbai:** While the whole country is waiting on the long-awaited decision from the Supreme Court on same-sex marriage, *Dhaakad* actress Kangana Ranaut has shared her two cents on the topic. In her recent tweets speaking positively of the case, she said it is unfair to evaluate someone based on their gender or sexual orientation, and those who do so will not succeed in life.

Taking to Twitter Friday, Kangana said, "Whether you are a man/woman/anything else, your gender is of no consequence to anyone but you. Please understand that in the modern world, we don't even use words like actresses or female directors, we call them actors and directors. What you do in the world is your identity, not what you do in bed. Whatever your sexual preferences are, they must remain in your bed. Don't make them your identity card or medals and flaunt them everywhere."

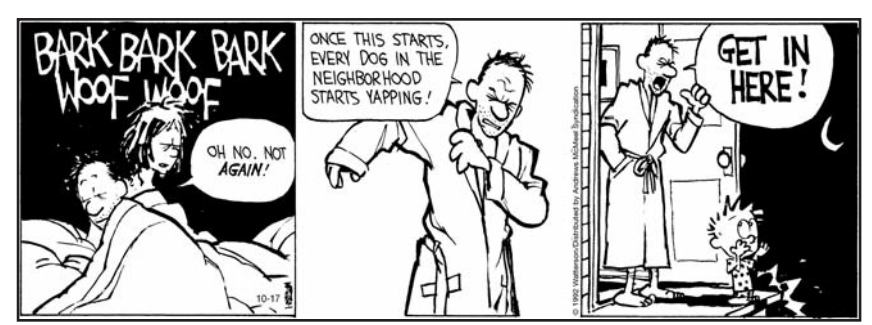
She further added, "Never ever see people through the lens of gender or any other physical attributes. You know what happened to those who thought Kangana was just a woman. They were in for a big surprise because I am not. I never perceive myself or anyone else that way. I am always in a room full of people, individual energies only, not men/women/homo/hetro/physically strong or weak."



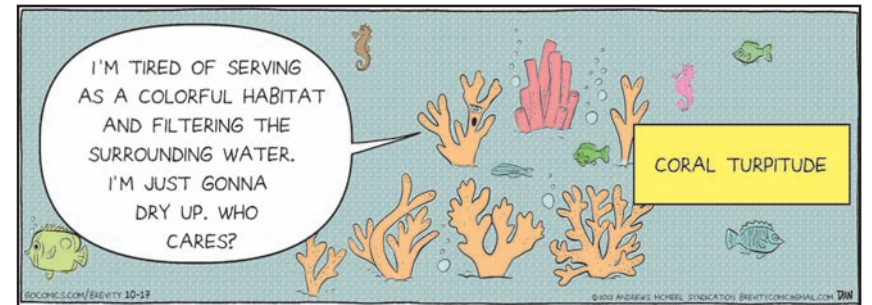
### PEANUTS



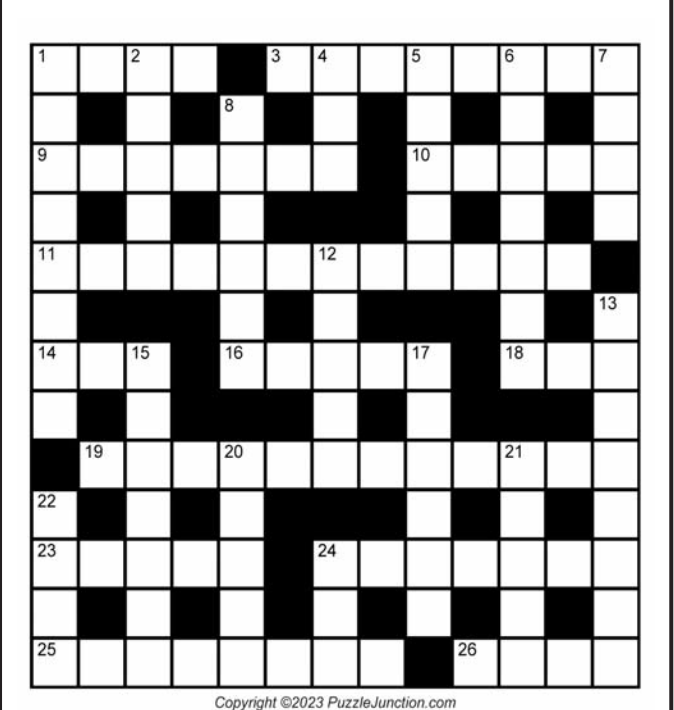
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



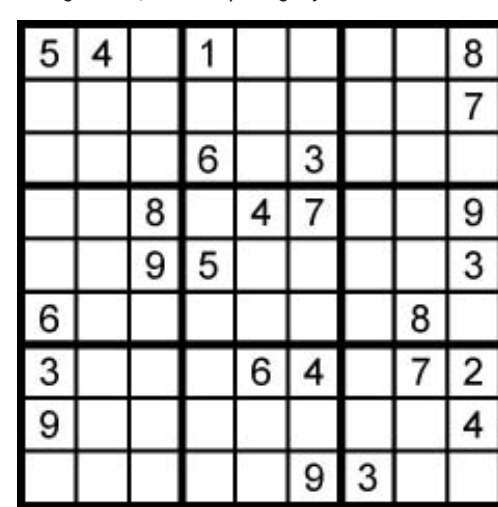
### FUN post CROSSWORD



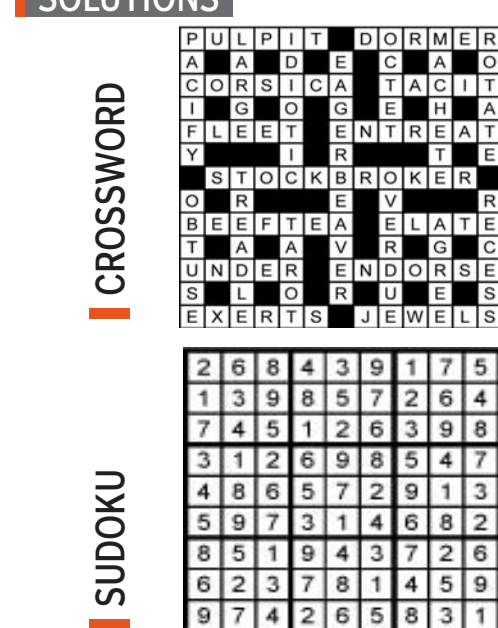
- Across**
- 1 Lackluster
  - 3 Movable
  - 9 Marsh
  - 10 Gin's partner
  - 11 River horse
  - 14 Guided
  - 16 Slipknot
  - 18 Connect
  - 19 Professor's words (3,9)
  - 23 Brazilian dance
  - 24 Coarse lace
  - 25 Words of apology (6-2)
  - 26 After dinner or church
  - Down**
  - 1 Winter Olympic event
  - 2 Ease off
  - 4 Antediluvian
  - 5 Aquarium fish
  - 6 Feast
  - 7 Carve in stone
  - 8 Dog-faced monkey
  - 12 Kind of layer
  - 13 Beach find
  - 15 High-powered and forceful
  - 17 Inveigle
  - 20 Wharfage
  - 21 Pontificate
  - 22 Cuba's \_\_\_ of Youth
  - 24 Ornamental flower, briefly

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



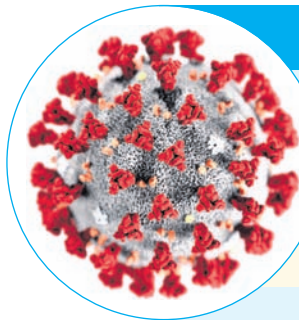
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## GOING GREEN

Women prepare hand-made decorative items at a stall at Baliyatra Ground in Cuttack, Friday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,69,09,057	65,94,00,404	68,62,705
India	4,49,32,344	4,43,47,024	5,31,468
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

## Full-time Srimandir chief appointment soon, SC told

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, April 28:** The Odisha government has informed the Supreme Court that it will appoint a full-time chief administrator for Srimandir at the earliest, an official said Friday.

The Supreme Court had March 28 asked the state government to submit an action-taken report (ATR) mentioning what measures have been taken following the apex court's order with respect to better management of the affairs of the 12th century shrine in Puri.

Taking note, the state government filed the ATR and informed the SC that steps are being taken for the appointment of a full-time chief administrator for the shrine at the earliest. Earlier, the Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee had filed a status report in the SC regarding the steps it has taken in compliance with the 2019 order of the SC.



**CAR FEST IN MIND:** Construction of chariot hubs in full swing at Rath Yard in Puri, Friday

PIC: SJTA

# Mudslinging over Mahanadi dispute

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** Odisha's three major political rivals, the ruling BJD and opposition BJP and Congress Friday engaged in a slugfest over the Mahanadi water dispute.

The trading of charges was witnessed as Chhattisgarh released water ahead of the Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal's proposed visit to the central Indian state soon to gauge the situation.

The Odisha government alleges that the coastal state does not receive sufficient water during non-monsoon months as Chhattisgarh obstructs the flow of the water by constructing barrages upstream.

The ruling BJD alleged that the barrages were built by the previous Raman Singh government of the BJP and now the Congress government of Bhupesh Baghel was 'choking the water flow'.

BJD spokesperson Shreemayee Mishra, addressing a press conference, alleged that both 'the Congress and the BJP were two sides of the same coin' and did not resolve the Mahanadi water issue despite their governments being in power in Chhattisgarh and the Centre respectively.

She accused both parties of being 'anti-Odisha' and of 'shedding crocodile tears'.

"It is the BJP's duty to persuade the Centre to intervene in the matter, while the Congress must exert pressure on the Chhattisgarh government to abide by the law," she said.



**While the BJD is fighting for Mahanadi water, the Congress and the BJP remained silent on the issue**

SHREEMAYEE MISHRA | BJD SPOKESPERSON

**What was the state government doing for the last 23 years? Writing letters and issuing statements through party leaders did not help**

DILIP MALLICK | BJP LEADER

Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahanipati said senior party leader Narasingha Mishra had requested Patnaik to convene an all-party meeting when the issue was first raised in the Assembly

Mishra said 'illegal' barrages constructed by the Chhattisgarh government in the upstream of the river have blocked the free flow of Mahanadi water, on which 14 of the 30 districts of Odisha depend.

"While the BJD is fighting for Mahanadi water, the Congress and the BJP remained silent on the issue," she claimed.

The BJP countered the allegations by stating that Mahanadi cannot be saved by mere sloganeering.

"What was the state government doing for the last 23 years? Writing letters and issuing state-

ments through party leaders did not help. What was Odisha government doing when Chhattisgarh was building those barrages? The CM was at the helm of the water resources department," BJP leader Dilip Mallick said.

He questioned whether Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has ever met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and expressed concern over the issue.

Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahanipati said senior party leader Narasingha Mishra had requested Patnaik to convene an all-party meeting when the issue was first raised in the Assembly.

# Run Vande Bharat on 3 routes: State to Centre

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** The state government has demanded introduction of Vande Bharat Express trains on three routes - Bhubaneswar-Hyderabad, Puri-Raipur and Puri-Howrah.

In a letter to Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Commerce and Transport Minister Tukuni Sahu said Odisha has been a significant contributor to the growth engine of India. With rapid growth, aspirations of people are rising constantly.

"Odisha has been witnessing rapid economic growth in the last two decades. The state has attracted

the highest investment during the last couple of years. We have been demanding rapid expansion of the rail network in the state, time and again, as it can contribute immensely to the country's economy," Sahu said.

In a bid to ensure faster connectivity, Vande Bharat Express trains have been introduced across the country.

Sahu requested Vaishnaw to introduce the Vande Bharat Express train between Puri and Howrah to offer faster travel options to passengers. Stating that there are very few faster trains that connect western Odisha and state capital Bhubaneswar, Sahu de-



A trial run of Vande Bharat Express was conducted on Howrah-Puri route

manded introduction of the express train between Puri and Rourkela connecting Sambalpur. Pointing out that a large num-

ber of people from Odisha are staying in Hyderabad, Sahu requested Vaishnaw to introduce another Vande Bharat Express train connecting Bhubaneswar and Hyderabad which will facilitate faster movement of passengers between the two state capitals.

She further urged the Railways minister to consider genuine demands of the state which will offer better passenger convenience and faster travel options to businessmen, tourists and aspiring people of Odisha.

Meanwhile, a trial run of the Vande Bharat Express train was conducted on the Howrah-Puri route.

## SAMBALPUR VIOLENCE

# BJP FORMS 4-MEMBER COMMITTEE

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** Expressing anguish over violence during Hanuman Jayanti procession in Sambalpur, BJP president JP Nadda has formed a four-member panel to investigate the violence.

The team comprises four BJP MPs - Brij Lal, Samir Oraon, Aditya Sahu and Jyotirmay Singh Mahato. The panel will visit the violence-hit Sambalpur and submit its report to the party president.

Blaming the Sambalpur district administration for the violence, BJP leader and Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan urged the state government to perform 'Raja Dharma' in letter and spirit.

"Neutrality and peace does not mean surprising the majority of society and threatening them to put them behind the bars. Peace means neutrality, which should be reflected in action," Pradhan said.

Pradhan said that the Hanuman Jayanti procession is being held in Sambalpur for long. Such a situation aroused due to the inefficiency of the local administration, he blamed.

The police are trying to prosecute the prominent people of the society by accusing them in false cases. Police DG, local DIG and local SP are working there unilaterally, alleged Pradhan.

## KHARIF-2023

# Odisha targets to disburse ₹9,500 crore crop loan

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** The state government has targeted to disburse Rs 9,500 crore crop loans in Kharif-2023, Co-operation, Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak said Friday.

Nayak has instructed that financing of pulses, oilseeds, potato and other remunerative cash crops should be prioritised with focus on small and marginal farmers, tenant farmers, oral lessees, sharecroppers and women self-help groups.

Nayak said as over 60 per cent of the population of the state depends on agriculture for livelihood, they need to be provided with institutional financial support for agricultural operations.

The Short-Term Cooperative Credit Structure (OSCB, DCCBs and PACS) having a major share in crop loan dispensation in the state is mandated to ensure provision of timely credit through PACS as per requirement of the farm families of the state.

During last Kharif season, the Cooperatives have disbursed crop loans of Rs 8,710.78 crore to 18,00,999 farmers against the target of Rs 9,000 crore which is an all time high, Nayak said.

During Rabi 2022-23 season, as of March 29, 2023, the Cooperatives have disbursed Rs 7812.22 crore loans to 16,23,790 for cultivation of Rabi crops.

Odisha government has decided to disburse crop loans to the farmers at zero rate of interest up to Rs 1 lakh from

## Focus on ₹1,000 crore farm machinery sales

**BHUBANESWAR:** Odisha has witnessed a significant boost in the field of farm mechanisation with the sale of machinery reaching over Rs 805 crore during 2022-23. The state has set a target for Rs 1000 crore sales in 2023-24, said Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment Principal Secretary Arabinda Padhee, Friday.

Addressing the 'Meeting of Manufacturers of Farm Machineries/implements/equipments' at Krushi Bhawan here, Padhee cautioned the gathering against engaging in corrupt practices, emphasising that strict action would be taken against those who are not adhering to the guidelines. He stated that if manufacturers encounter any issues, they may contact department officials, including him.

Cooperative Banks, PACS, Commercial and Regional Rural Banks in the state.

For crop loans between Rs 1 lakh and Rs3 lakh, the effective rate of interest will be 2 per cent for prompt paying farmers.

Co-operation Principal Secretary Sanjeev Kumar Chadha has written to all Collectors to take expeditious steps to ensure implementation of the programme for Kharif-2023 and financing crop loans in the right perspective in the interest of the farming community.

## Spl incentive for docs with DNB titles

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** Medical officers serving in state with Diplomate of National Board (DNB) specialist and super specialist titles will now receive special incentives, an official said, Friday.

Medical officers serving in Odisha with qualification of DNB board speciality as per para 37 (2) of the National Medical Commission Act-2019 would be given Rs 20,000 incentive per month apart from the salary, according to a notification issued by Health Secretary Shalini Pandit.

Similarly, medical officers having DNB super speciality qualification would be given a monthly

incentive of Rs 30,000 in addition to the salary, the notification pointed out.

The state government has taken the decision of providing financial assistance to attract the doctors having the DNB specialist and super specialist to ensure qualitative health care.

Previously the medical officers in Odisha Health Medical Services (OHMS) cadre having post-graduate specializations /super specialisation degrees like MD/MS and DM/MCH were allowed these financial incentives.

Official sources said the new provision would add to qualitative human resource in OHMS cadre by attracting the DNB title holders from different parts of the country.

## 'Sorcerer' dupes Cuttack woman of ₹62 lakh, held

PNN & AGENCIES

**Cuttack, April 28:** The Commissionerate Police has arrested a man for allegedly duping a woman of Ranihat area here of around Rs 62 lakh by claiming himself a sorcerer, Friday.

Mangalabag police have arrested Sheikh Ashfaq and seized as many as 70 mobile phones, Rs 2.76 lakh in cash, two cars, and a motorcycle from his possession, said deputy commissioner of police (DCP) Pinak Mishra.

Mishra said Ashfaq had told the woman that he was a sorcerer and taken Rs 62 lakh from her in the last one year on the pretext of removing evil spirits from her house. Ashfaq had also promised her of unearthing hidden treasure from the house, the DCP said. The woman smelled a rat and approached the Mangalabag police which registered a case against Ashfaq and arrested him after investigation, the Cuttack DCP added.



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# Roads to be upgraded in all ULBs: H&UD secy

As mandated by the state government, all the kutchra and WBM lanes / bylanes / streets / roads in all ULBs are to be upgraded to paved roads on saturation basis



lanes / streets / roads in all ULBs are to be upgraded to paved roads on saturation basis. It is decided to take up the kutchra roads in the beginning and once substantial progress is achieved in respect of kutchra roads, the WBM roads can be upgraded subsequently. Vathanan has directed that the surveyed and validated list of kutchra & WBM roads along with geo-coordinates be submitted by the ULBs...

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** As part of transformative urban governance under 5T, the state government has decided to upgrade all the kutchra and water bound macadam (WBM) roads in all the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to

paved roads to enhance the livability of cities. This has to be completed by October, 2023. Housing & Urban Development Principal Secretary G Mathi Vathanan has issued instructions in this regard to all the ULBs. As mandated by the government, all the kutchra and WBM lanes / by-



UP IN ARMS: Lady matrons staged a demonstration at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, seeking fulfillment of their various demands, Friday

## Human chain formed by City AIIMS girl students

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** To celebrate India's G20 Presidency, AIIMS Bhubaneswar students Friday formed a large Human Chain depicting G20. To mark the theme of One Earth, One Family, One Family, only girl students of AIIMS Bhubaneswar formed G20 inside the premises of the national institute. Jan Bhagidari campaign of G20 Presidency at AIIMS Bhubaneswar



witnessed different programmes. Including millets in the diet of the students and patients, conducting free health camp in the periphery

villages, organizing different competitions for the students, leadership development programme by NSS bureau of AIIMS for students of different universities were part of the Jan Bhagidari campaign by AIIMS Bhubaneswar. Conveying his message on the occasion, AIIMS Bhubaneswar Executive Director Ashutosh Biswas expressed happiness over active participation of the national institute in the campaign. AIIMS Bhubaneswar is always committed to serve people with innovations. The human chain by the students implicates the global leadership of our country, added Biswas. The students of AIIMS also performed skit at OPD foyer to create awareness on Covid and other social issues. The concluding ceremony of the campaign was held at mini auditorium and the guests distributed prizes to meritorious students.

## 'UTSAV ODISHA' BEGINS AT UTKAL UNIVERSITY

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** The two-day Utsav Odisha, a festival on culture and national integration, organised by Utkal University and the Institute of Media Studies, kicked off with a patriotic spirit and pride here Friday. Inaugurating the festival at MKCG Auditorium, State Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) and Additional Chief Secretary to Odisha government Nikunjia Bihari Dhal urged students and teachers to take pride in the cultural heritage of the state and move forward for nation building. Speaking on the occasion, Dhal said, "Odisha has a strong role to



play in promoting rich cultural heritage of the nation. The state has a rich contribution in the field of art, culture, industry and education as well. Odia is an ancient language and Jagannath culture is a demonstration of world brotherhood in tolerance which is absolutely essential for national unity." Utkal University vice-chancellor Sabita Acharya said, "Art, literature and culture have been considered unique in Odisha since time immemorial. Odisha is continuously striving for development in education, health, tourism and various

other sectors, which are playing a major role in nation building. 'Utsav Odisha' will help spread the message of Odisha's art and culture to all Indians." Highlighting that Odisha is the land of service and sacrifice, chairman of PG Council Durga Shankar Pattanaik said the service and sacrifice of Odia leaders have always inspired others. Three sessions were held on the first day on 'Unity in Diversity: Role of Odisha in National Integration', 'Revisiting History: Our Roots & Unsung Heroes of Odisha' and 'India's G20 Presidency & the World: Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (One Earth-One Family-One Future)' where eminent experts shared their thoughts.

## Working to ensure healthy meal to every child: Faure

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** In a bid to promote workplace hygiene, dietary diversification and cooking healthy recipes in schools across the state, a two-day state level training of master trainers-cook-ump-helpers on food safety and hygiene in PM Poshan was inaugurated Friday at Mission Shakti Bhawan in Bhubaneswar. The workshop-cum-training session was jointly organised by PM Poshan, government of India, department of School & Mass Education, government of Odisha and UN World Food Programme (WFP) as part of enriching the nutritional contents of mid-day meal in all government and aided schools. Addressing the gathering WFP Country Director Elisabeth Faure highlighted the need for promoting healthy eating, dietary diversification and micronutrient supplementation among the school-going children. "The Government of India and WFP in collaboration with the state government are working in convergence to ensure distribution healthy and nutritious meal to each and every child in their growing and developing years. India is way ahead in achieving food safety and food security for its citizens," said Faure. PM Poshan State Nodal Officer Raghuram R Iyer delivered the welcome address and informed



that PM Poshan scheme could be further enhanced by providing capacity building training to cook-cum-helpers from across the state. He also stressed on maintaining hygiene and cleanliness while preparing food in the school kitchen. "Diet diversification is being introduced in Odisha schools to reduce anaemia and ensure nutritious meal for all students of government schools. The state government has also been promoting millets and nutrigarden in schools on a mission mode to achieve nutritional security for the future generations," he added. The first day of the workshop covered the areas of role and responsibilities of cook-cum-helpers, personal hygiene, cleanliness of kitchen and utensils, sources and mode of contamination, procurement, quality assurance and storage of raw materials, method of cooking, waste disposal and management in emergencies, rice fortification - cooking and safe storage, introduction of millets in mid-day meal and maintenance of nutri-garden in schools. In partnership with UN World Food Programme, the Government of Odisha has developed a training app FoSaFMDM to make mid-day meals safe and hygienic. The app has been educating the grassroots workers (cook-cum-helpers, school teachers) on food safety and hygiene practices.

### Engineer grilled in bribery case

**Bhubaneswar:** The Central Bureau of investigation (CBI) Friday grilled Dipak Kumar Gupta, Executive Engineer (Civil), Postal Division, Bhubaneswar in connection with a bribery case.

### Continued from P1

### C-Section audit...

For the purpose of auditing, three different prototype formats were worked out and circulated to all districts. Each CDMO and PHO was asked to designate a programme officer for coordinating with private health facilities regarding proper implementation of the C-Section audit. Experts said that outcomes of the audit would be helpful in making reproductive child healthcare more effective in years to come.

## SOA students display startup ideas

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 28:** Four startups developed by students of the Institute of Technical Education and Research (ITER), faculty of engineering of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) were showcased at the 6-day Future of Work Exhibition held on the sidelines of the G20 3rd Education Working Group meeting which concluded at the CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (IMMT) here Friday. Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan who inaugurated the exhibition, visited the SOA stall and appreciated the work done by the students. Of the four startups, Wedmist Technology Private Ltd had de-



veloped its product keeping in view the requirement of hyper local service providers through Artificial Intelligence (AI) while Twinverse Technology Private Ltd focused on areas of archaeology and tourism as product designing. Let's Drive, another startup, was working on creating employment opportunities in the use of electric vehicles. Extrava Study Tours

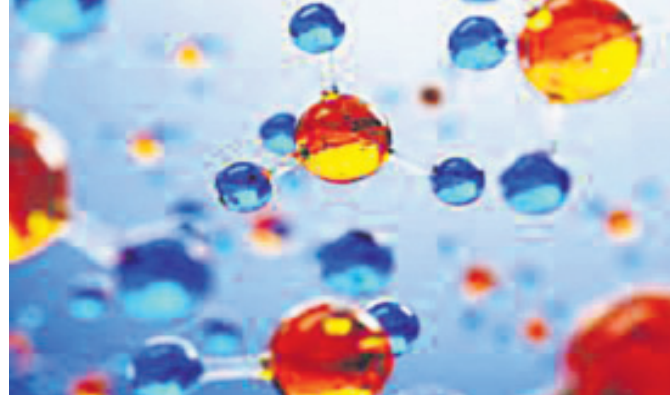
focused on enhancing the skill of people seeking employment. The stall was visited by Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Union Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Electronics and Information Technology on the second day while TG Sitharam, Chairman of AICTE, K Sanjaya Murthy, Secretary, Higher Education in the Ministry of Education, had a look at the startups on the third day. Union Minister of State for Education Subhas Sarkar, Anil Sahasrabudhe, Chairman, EC, NAAC and Nirmaljeet Singh Kalsi, Chairman, National Council for Vocational Education and Training went round the stall on the fourth day. SOA vice-chancellor Pradipta Kumar Nanda also visited the stall.

### CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit before the Executive Magistrate, Bhubaneswar on dt. 21.4.2023 vide S.I.No.86. I, K. Shyambabu Senapati do hereby declare that my name has been wrongly mentioned as Shyambabu Senapati instead of K. Shyambabu Senapati in Aadhaar Card. That here all to known as K. Shyambabu Senapati and Shyambabu Senapati is one and same person and will be known as K. Shyambabu Senapati for all purposes. Deponent

## Study uncovers details of evolution of molecular interactions

Mathematicians have uncovered details about the universal explanatory framework for molecular interactions that help them adapt to new and variable conditions while maintaining tight control over key survival properties. Throwing open a "window to evolution", the researchers said, their findings represented a blueprint for adaptation-capable signalling networks across all domains of life and for the design of synthetic biosystems. "Our study considers a process called robust perfect adaptation (RPA) whereby biological systems, from individual cells to entire organisms, maintain important molecules within narrow concentration ranges despite continually being bombarded with disturbances to the system," said Robyn Araujo, from Queensland University of Technology School of Mathematical Sciences, Australia, and corresponding author on the study. The researchers said that they had discovered fundamental molecular-level design principles that organised all forms of biological complexity into robustness-promoting, and ultimately, survival-promoting, chemical reaction structures. The study is published in the journal Nature Communications. Araujo said they had found that molecules of living systems cannot simply 'transmit' biochemical signals but must make 'computations' on these signals. "These complex intermolecular interactions must implement a special type of regulation known as integral control - a design strategy known to engineers for almost a century."



"However, signalling networks in nature are vastly different, having evolved to rely on the physical interactions between discrete molecules." "So, nature's 'solutions' operate through remarkable and highly intricate collections of interactions, without engineering's specially designed, integral-computing components, and often without feedback loops." "We show that molecular network structures use a form of in-

tegral control in which multiple independent integrals, each with a very special and simple structure, can collaborate to confer the capacity for adaptation on specific molecules." "Using an algebraic algorithm based on this finding, we have been able to demonstrate the existence of embedded integrals in biologically important chemical reaction networks whose ability to exhibit adaptation could never before be explained by any systematic method," said Araujo. "On the basis of this groundbreaking new research, RPA currently stands alone as a keystone biological response for which there now exists a universal explanatory framework." "At a practical level, this discovery could provide a completely fresh approach to tackle grand challenges in personalized medicine such as cancer drug resistance, addiction, and autoimmune diseases," said Lance Liotta, study author.

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# Admin learns no lesson as boat mishaps claim lives

# Youth fails to clear rlys exam, kills self

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, April 28:** Despite frequent boat mishaps, the Kendrapara district administration is yet to learn a lesson or two to make boat travel safer even as a boat capsized here Thursday in Brahmani river claimed life of a minor boy with one of the boatmen still missing.

It was a sad day for the local residents as the boat en route to Keradagad of Rajnagar from Ekamania with 30 passengers and eight to 10 two-wheelers on board capsized in Brahmani.

**Most of the boats and boatmen operating them are yet to be insured as per the Boat Rules. Hundreds of boats without having proper fitness proof move in these water bodies as nobody cares to check them**

RASHMI NANJAN SWAIN | SOCIAL ACTIVIST

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced ₹4 lakh compensation for the next of the kin of the deceased and expressed his deepest condolences over the tragedy.

Travelling by boats in the rivers



## TRAGEDIES GALORE

■ A fishing trawler had capsized under Talchua police limits of Rajnagar block, June 16, 2022

■ A boat had overturned near Pitapata under Mahakalapara block, June 19, 2020 in which five labourers escaped death by a whisker

■ A boat had turned turtle March 1, 2013 at the same spot killing 13 juvenile cricket players of neighbouring Jagatsinghpur district

■ 10 women including children had drowned after a boat they were travelling in capsized at Nipania, January 2, 2019

of Kendrapara district is always fraught with risk owing to the unsafe practices as fishing boats are being used to ferry passengers without any life jacket. However, the district administration is yet to wake up to this reality and adopt measures to make boat journeys safer for people.

There are hundreds of river ghats in this district from where boats ply perilously for their destinations carrying hundreds of passengers on board. These boats do not adhere to safety norms or boat rules. Furthermore, no life

jacket is given to the passengers, taking away from them the last chance of survival in case of a mishap.

The government has framed boat rules for safe travel in water bodies but people involved in this trade mostly use fishing boats to ferry passengers which often prove to be life threatening for them.

Social activist Pratap Kumar Padhi said over 17 panchayats like Padanipala, Ekamania, Singhagaon and Batighar are riparian areas surrounded by rivers

where boats are the only mode of transportation. Outsiders and locals visiting tourist sites like Hukitola, Havelikhata, Batighara, Barunei mostly use country boats, dinghies and fishing boats.

The state government's Odisha Boat Rules, 2004 are yet to be implemented here despite boats being the main mode of transportation in these areas. As a result, travelling by boat has become risky proposition in this district.

People travel for their destinations without having any knowledge about the boat rules. There

is a thin chance of getting compensation to the next of the kin of deceased if such a boat overturns claiming lives. He alleged that over 60 boats are being used sans any proper fitness certificate.

Narendra Kumar Das of Gupti in Rajnagar block said that the Bhitarkanika National Park is infested by over 1,700 crocodiles and boats regularly ply in these water bodies to Gupti, Chandbali, Khola, Jaynagar, Kharinasi, Bahakud, Jambu villages adjoining the wetland. Many of these boats do not have an experienced and senior boatman and minors have been engaged to row the boats.

Moreover, boats are always overloaded with passengers in lure of money as there is not restriction from the government. Construction of a bridge between Bahakuda and Kharinasi is yet to be completed leaving boat as the only option of transport especially during the rainy season.

When contacted, ADM Pitambar Samal said awareness programmes on safe travel are being regularly conducted among the boatmen. The district administration never hesitates to take action if any boat is found flouting rules.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, April 28:** There is no let up in suicide by minors and youths in state as yet another youth took the extreme step by hanging after he allegedly failed to clear a competitive examination for joining Railways at Shastrinagar under Gosaninuaogaon police limits in Ganjam district, in the wee hours of Friday.

The deceased was identified as Radhamohan Patra, 25, son of Gokul Patra at Krupanidhi Pentha near Sonepur under Golanthara police limits. He had taken a house on rent at Shastrinagar in the town to prepare for competitive examinations and was staying there with two of his friends. Police registered a case and handed over the body to his family members after a post mortem was conducted.

Preliminary inquiries indicated that he and one of his friends had appeared for an examination for a job in Railways. While his friend cracked the examination, Patra failed to do so. He was under severe mental trauma owing to the failure and this might have prompted him



to take the extreme step.

Patra and three of his friends went to sleep on terrace due to the heat. Later during the night, before committing suicide Radhamohan sent a message that read 'I am sorry' to his brother through Whatsapp, police said. His brother noticed the message early morning and called him over phone but the call went unanswered. Later, he called one of his friends and informed him about the message.

His friends ran downstairs and found the room bolted from inside and informed his brother Kailash Patra. Kailash soon reached the spot with some village youths and broke open the door and found him hanging with a napkin. They informed the police who reached the spot and launched an investigation.

# Tusker brings house down; infant dies, 3 hurt critically



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Dhenkikote/Ghatagaon, April 28:** A one-year-old girl child died in wall collapse while three of her family members sustained critical injuries after a tusker pulled down their house after straying into Mendhamundi Sahi village under Santrapur panchayat and Ghatagaon forest range in Keonjhar district, late Thursday night.

The tusker pulled down houses and fed on the paddy crops in the village. The deceased child was identified as Monalisha Munda, second daughter of Rashmi, 28, and Daktar Munda, 28, of the village.

In the wall collapse, the deceased's father, mother and elder sister Sonali, 6, sustained critical injuries and were admitted to the district headquarters hospital for treatment.

Sources said the family members went to sleep after having their dinner at home, Thursday night. A tusker strayed into the village late at night and demolished their house after it smelled the presence of country brew 'Handia' inside the house.

As a result, a wall of the house collapsed and fell on the family members. Hearing their screams, neighbours rushed to the spot, drove the animal away and rescued the family mem-

bers from under the debris.

On being informed, forest officials led by Dhenkikote forester Chittaranjan Parida reached the spot and admitted the injured family members to the district headquarters hospital. There doctors conducted a check up of the infant and pronounced her dead while the condition of the couple and their elder daughter undergoing treatment was critical.

Ghatagaon forest ranger Prabhas Kuanr reached the hospital and gave away ₹40,000 financial assistance to the family members. Dhenkikote beat house police officer Taranisen Bag handed over the body to the family members after an autopsy. A case was registered in this connection at Ghatagaon police station.

The tusker was later learnt to have strayed into Raghubeda village and pulled down a mutt and the house of a tribal at Masinabila village.

Forest ranger Kuanr said that ₹40,000 ex-gratia was given away to the victim's kin and the rest compensation of ₹3.60 lakh will be transferred to the bank account of the head of the family after completion of necessary formalities.

Meanwhile, 17 elephants were learnt to be present in areas under Ghatagaon forest range with forest officials keeping a close watch on their movements.

# Badmal Ordnance Factory explosion renders 2 critical



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Saintala, April 28:** At least three persons were injured, two of them critically, in a blast at the Badmal Ordnance

Factory under Saintala block in Bolangir district, Friday.

The two critically injured workers were identified as Junior Works Manager Saroj Panda and DBW employee Goutam Mahananda. Another DBW employee sustained minor injuries. The three were rescued and rushed to the hospital in the factory premises.

Later, Saroj and Goutam were shifted to the burn unit of Ispat General Hospital (IGH) in Rourkela after administration of primary treatment. The other injured employee was discharged after primary treatment.

The incident occurred when the three employees were engaged in mixing chemicals for preparation of explosives at Unit-3 of the ordnance factory at 9.45am, Friday, a press release issued by the factory authorities said.

The factory authorities have formed a board and directed for an investigation into the explosion.

संस्कृति मंत्रालय भारत सरकार

G20

75

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- Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

## A Celebration of a great milestone in Public-Discussion

To commemorate the momentous journey of 100th episodes of 'Mann Ki Baat', the Ministry of Culture is organising various programs at 13 historical monuments of the country.

April 29, 2023 | from 7.00 PM to 8.00 PM

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Golconda Fort, Hyderabad

Vellore Fort, Tamil Nadu

Fort and Palace Complex, Navratangarh Jharkhand

Ramnagar Palace, Jammu

Rang Ghar, Sivasagar, Assam

Chittorgarh Fort, Rajasthan

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of the day quote

This government has been working on enhancing opportunities in higher education so that students do not need to go outside the state to pursue higher studies... It appears that the BJP has the right to speak against others, but if anyone speaks about them then there is a problem... The current political discourse lacks cordiality

MAMIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM, BHUPESH BAGHEL | CHHATTISGARH CM, NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

Amid bitter war of words, BJP and Congress seek EC ban

New Delhi, April 28: With the election campaign in Karnataka witnessing a bitter war of words between the BJP and the Congress, both the parties rushed to the Election Commission Friday seeking ban on electioneering by top leaders of the other side... While the BJP sought an FIR and a bar on campaigning by Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, the Congress demanded restrictions on Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath...



and 500, which deal with defamation, and Section 504, which deals with the offence of deliberate insults and provocation... The BJP general secretary Tarun Chugh said Kharge is a "habitual offender" and noted that Congress leaders have made a number of "hateful" personal attacks on Modi.

Comparing anyone to a poisonous snake in Indian society projects such an individual as an "enemy, untrustworthy, unfaithful, treacherous, and deceitful", it said, adding that Kharge and his party are repeat offenders... The BJP memorandum to EC said...

Oppn leaders hit out at Usha

New Delhi, April 28: Several opposition leaders hit out at Indian Olympic Association president PT Usha Friday for criticising a protest by wrestlers in Delhi, alleging she has become a "political mouthpiece"...

Usha, a Rajya Sabha member, has condemned the protest, saying the grapplers lacked discipline in hitting the street in support of their demand... Responding to Usha, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said ignoring their pleas tarnishes the country's image, not their protest...

Rajnath's tough message to Pak, China at SCO meet

New Delhi, April 28: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Friday called upon the SCO member nations to fix accountability on supporters of terrorism and pitched for a framework of regional co-operation that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries in the grouping...



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu during a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Defence Ministers' meeting in New Delhi

need for respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all member states under a regional framework for cooperation came amid the three-year border row between India and China... The Pakistani defence minister did not participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) con-

clave and Special Assistant to Pakistan prime minister on defence affairs Malik Ahmed Khan joined the deliberations virtually... Highlighting the threat of terrorism, Singh called upon SCO nations to collectively work towards eliminating it in all its forms and fix accountability on its supporters.

SISODIA DENIED BAIL

A Delhi court Friday dismissed the bail application of AAP leader Manish Sisodia in a money laundering case related to the alleged excise policy scam. Special Judge M K Nagpal denied the relief to Sisodia, saying the stage was not fit to grant him bail



754 stranded Indians arrive from Sudan

New Delhi, April 28: India Friday brought home 754 people under its mission to evacuate stranded Indians from strife-torn Sudan... While 392 people arrived in New Delhi in a C-17 heavy-lift aircraft of the Indian Air Force, another batch of 362 Indians were brought to Bengaluru... The total number of Indians brought home now stands at 1,360, according to official data...

Sooraj Pancholi acquitted in Jiah Khan suicide case

Mumbai, April 28: Almost 10 years after Bollywood actor Jiah Khan was found hanging at her Mumbai residence, a special CBI court here Friday acquitted her then boyfriend Sooraj Pancholi in the case of abetment of her suicide citing "paucity of evidence"...



to paucity of evidence, the court holds Sooraj Pancholi not guilty. Sooraj, the son of actor couple Aditya Pancholi and Zarina Wahab, was present in court with his mother when it passed the judgement... The judge asked him to state his full name. The actor then replied, "Sooraj Aditya Pancholi." The judge then said, "Due to paucity of evidence, this court holds you (Sooraj) not guilty...acquitted."

PUBLIC NOTICE: Notice issuance to all concerned that, Mr. Busi gram Sabar, S/o. Late. Bucha Sabar, Kasturi Nagar, Rayagada, Mob :- 9437234533 has applied housing loan from LIC housing fin. Ltd., Berhampur with title deeds documents no - 665/1996 of SRO, Rayagada & original ROR, Vide Khata No -02/1002, Plot.No-17/1178 has been lost somewhere. All concerned there after having claim over the property mentioned above can claim with the under mentioned within 15 days from today and after that the claim will be lapsed and shall be treated as free from any disputes.

EAST COAST RAILWAY E-AUCTION PROGRAMME FOR JUNE-2023 FOR DEPOT & DIVISIONS. SCHEDULE OF E-AUCTION table with columns for Month, HQ/DIVISION, and Date.

Ministry of Science and Technology Department of Science and Technology WISE-KIRAN Division WISE Internship in IPR (WISE-IPR) [erstwhile Women Scientists Scheme-C (WOS-C)] Call for Applications (2023) Applications invited from women scientists for selection under 'WISE Internship in IPR (WISE-IPR)'.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Eminent citizens write to President

New Delhi, April 28: More than 120 eminent citizens, including retired high court judges and former bureaucrats, have written to President Droupadi Murmu opposing what they called "highly objectionable attempts" to legalise same-sex marriages.



molishing the institution of marriage either by way of a judicial interpretation or striking down or reading down the existing legislative framework for marriages... The issue is being considered by the constitution bench of the Supreme Court and has become a "rallying point" for some "typical pseudo liberals" who are already "divorced" from Indian values under the bogey of "progressive and liberated thinking", they said.

Mehrishi, former home secretary L.C. Goyal, former foreign secretary Shashank, former RAW chief Sanjeev Tripathi, Justice (retired) S N Dhingra and Justice (retired) Lok Pal Singh... They said it was imperative to let the Supreme Court know the accurate estimation and outcome of such a "culturally disastrous" step in the name of a "path-breaking approach"...

relatives and partners. The health and future of such children will be severely compromised," they claimed... The letter also claimed India "cannot afford" that its future generations live in such an atmosphere, "which surely will produce more gays and lesbians, and tear apart and destroy the institutions of family and society irreparably. They won't know about their parents, ancestors, culture, religious tenets and age-old values."

surely will produce more gays and lesbians, and tear apart and destroy the institutions of family and society irreparably. They won't know about their parents, ancestors, culture, religious tenets and age-old values."

URANIUM CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED (A Government of India Enterprises) Tummalapalle Uranium Mine, Po; Mabbuchintalapalle, Vemula Mandal YSR District, Andhra Pradesh - 516349. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI) EOI No. UCIL/TMPL/SCHOOL/02, Dated 01/05/2023

# Soon, heritage walks at Delhi's 'haunted' monuments

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: The Delhi Tourism Department is identifying "haunted" sites in the national capital to conduct heritage walks there, an official said.

Malcha Mahal, Bhooli Bhatiyari ka Mahal, Ferozeshah Kotla, and Tughalabad Fort are some of the historical sites where the walks will be conducted from 5.30 pm to 9.30 pm, they said.

"We started heritage walks recently and are happy with their success. We plan to expand the walks by adding haunted sites as we received numerous queries

The first such walk will start with the Malcha Mahal, situated in the heart of the national capital inside the Ridge forest near Chanakyapuri

about these places," said an official from the Tourism Department.

The first such walk will start with the Malcha Mahal, situated in the heart of the national capital inside the Ridge forest near



Chanakyapuri. Malcha Mahal was built by Sultan Feroz Shah Tughlaq and was used as a hunting lodge.

According to the official, Bhooli Bhatiyari ka Mahal, Ferozeshah

Kotla, and Tughalabad Fort too have a mysterious history that intrigues people. A detailed plan on the "hidden and unexplored" historical places in the city is being

prepared, he said.

"We are studying new places. Permissions are also being sought from the concerned departments," he added. According to another official, the department wants to promote the wonders of the city - its heritage, art and craft, diverse cuisine, and culture through these walks.

"Heritage walks create a positive impact on tourism, enhance the brand value of the city and project its culture. A unique way of experiencing the heritage of any area is to walk through the route with the help of a good interpreter," the official said.

# Survey on social, emotional skills of students in Delhi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: The Delhi government is conducting a survey on social and emotional skills among teenage students in 75 state-run schools in the city, according to an official circular.

The circular, dated Wednesday, said the survey started on Thursday and will be concluded May 6. The survey is being conducted among students aged between 15 years-

and-three months and 16 years-and-two months (as of April 12). It is being carried out by NGO Dream a Dream through data collection by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), it said.

The schools concerned have been directed to nominate a teacher to act as coordinator and cooperate with the NGO, the circular stated. "No foreign funding should be in-

involved in the project without the prior approval of the DoE and following the guidelines issued by the government of India. Privacy of students or parents should not be affected in the process of the project," it stated.

This survey is one of the first international efforts to develop a comprehensive set of metrics around social and emotional skills designed to enhance policies to improve the development and well-being of young people, officials said.

This survey is one of the first international efforts to develop a comprehensive set of metrics around social and emotional skills designed to enhance policies to improve the development and well-being of young people

The goal of this assessment is to gather empirical evidence on students' social and emotional skills and their relevance to various life outcomes along with providing robust and reliable insights, they said.

"The survey would target students (15 years old), teachers, principals, and parents. As per the international timelines of the study, we are to conduct the main study in April-May 2023. The field trial was conducted last year in May 2022," an official added.

# 'Delhi reported 40 Covid-linked deaths between April 19-27'



Medical experts have said Omicron sub-variant XBB.1.16 could be driving the surge in cases in the city

However, they have maintained that there is no need to panic and people should follow Covid-appropriate behaviour and get their booster shots

Mock drills were conducted in the Delhi hospitals April 11 to ascertain their preparedness to deal with any eventuality

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: At least 40 Covid-19 related deaths have been recorded in Delhi from April 19 to 27, with experts saying the infection is turning serious mostly in elderly patients and those with comorbidities.

The medical experts also said though the number of daily cases in absolute numbers is still not low, the count needs to be monitored over the next few days, before one can say if a downward trend has set in or not.

Delhi reported seven Covid-related fatalities for the second consecutive day Thursday and 865 fresh cases of the viral disease with a positivity rate of 16.9 per cent. With the new cases and fatalities, the national capital's Covid caseload has climbed to 20,37,061, while the death toll stands at 26,620, according to data shared by the city government's health department.

Of the seven fatalities reported Thursday, Covid-19 was the primary cause of death in three cases, the department said in a bulletin.

On Wednesday, Delhi registered 1,040 cases with a positivity rate of 21.16 per cent and seven fatalities, with Covid being the primary cause of death in three cases.

During the April 19-27 period,

the city health department did not issue a bulletin April 21. In this period, the city registered six Covid-related fatalities each April 19, 22 and 25. On April 19, Delhi recorded 1,757 cases with a positivity rate of 28.63 per cent, according to official data.

On April 20, the city saw 1,603 cases with a positivity rate of 26.75 per cent and three Covid-related deaths. The daily case tally stood at 1,515 on April 22, dropping to 948 on April 23 when the city saw a positivity rate of 25.69 per cent and two fatalities.

On Monday, the national capital logged 689 cases with a positivity rate of 29.42 per cent and three Covid-related deaths, according to official data. The total number of fatalities reported in the April 19-27 period, barring April 21, was 40.

The 865 cases logged on Thursday emerged from the 5,117 tests, including 3,599 RT-PCR or CBNAAT or True Nat tests, conducted to detect the infection the previous day, the bulletin said.

The number of active cases of the infection stands at 4,279 in Delhi as on Thursday. Of these, 3,143 patients are in home isolation, the bulletin said. Only 296 of the 7,974 COVID-19 beds in the national capital are occupied at present, the data showed.

# Students quench the thirst of strays

AHEAD OF SUMMER SEASON EVERY YEAR, JNU'S STUDENT FOR DEVELOPMENT (SFD) OR VIKASHARTH VIDYARTHI, LAUNCHES A CAMPAIGN TO KEEP WATER-FILLED BOWLS FOR BIRDS ON THE CAMPUS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: As sweltering heat grips northern India, including the national capital, a group of students at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) here have placed earthen pots filled with water across the campus to help birds and animals quench their thirst.

The campaign was started April 22 on Earth Day and students were divided into groups to cover the entire campus which is spread across an area of about 1000 acres.

They have also assigned among themselves the duty to ensure clean



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

and fresh water in the feeders everyday.

JNU is part of the Southern Ridge of Aravali Hills and houses various species of wild fauna. These range from Common Palm Civets, Small Indian Civet, Indian Golden Jackal, Indian Crested Porcupine, Blue Bulls, Rufus Tailed Hare, various lizards and varieties of snakes, birds and butterflies.

"This year too the students have placed the vessels around the campus and also distributed among themselves the responsibility to ensure that the vessels have clean water," said Convener of SFD-Delhi Manjul Pawar. SFD-JNU has taken

this initiative to inspire the student community on campus and "We hope to continue to make this work effective by reaching out to the community through various mediums", Pawar added.

Kiran Parihar, convener of SFD-JNU, said the sense of belongingness towards all living beings has been an integral part of the culture in India.

"A living example of this is clearly visible in our literary writings. Especially in birds, the charming description of a creature called Chatak (Papiha) reflects our tradition of love and care towards birds," he said.

# J&K expects to clock 2 crore tourists this year, says L-G



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

Srinagar, April 28: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Thursday said he expected more than two crore tourists to visit Jammu and Kashmir this year, breaking the all-time record for arrival of tourists in the Union Territory set last year.

"More than 300 film shoots were done here last year and this year, we will break that record as well. Our problem is that we compete against our own records. Last year 1.88 crore tourists visited Jammu and Kashmir and I expected more than two crore tourists to visit this

year. We will establish new records and break them," Sinha told reporters on the sidelines of a function here. Sinha was interacting with reporters after laying the foundation stone of first of its kind private hospital and medical college in Kashmir.

"There are many hospitals and medical colleges in public sector but I think in the private sector, there was no hospital or medical college of this size. Today that vacuum has been filled and I congratulate them for setting up 1000 bed hospital and 150 seat Medical college," Sinha said.

The LG said with this venture coming up in Kashmir, the local students will not have to go to other states and countries to study medicine.

"Our students go to other states and countries to study medicine. Now they can study here. It is an effort towards a new beginning. When investments will increase continuously, it will create more employment opportunities and we can take Jammu and Kashmir on the path of progress and development," he added.



Boatmen row their Shikaras carrying tourists during rain at Dal Lake in Srinagar

PTI PHOTO

## G20 KASHMIR MEETINGS

# Pak's social media campaign fizzles out

Pakistan-based terrorists have been involved in targeted killings of Hindus and Sikhs in Kashmir. In some of the attacks earlier this year, even Hindu children were killed by explosives placed by the terrorists

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 28: Data analytics show that Pakistan has been running a consistent social media campaign against G20 and Y20 meetings in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The Pakistani anti-G20 campaign has been supported by Canada-based political parties, Khalistani organisations and the Srinagar-based All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC).

Information compiled by Indian intelligence organisations shows that a number of Pakistani handles under fake names have been busy promoting anti-G20 propaganda against India. This is besides the diplomatic offensive that Pakistan

had been running since at least June 2022 against India's presidency of the G20.

Much before India took over the G20 in December 2022, the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) had launched a diplomatic diatribe against the G20 grouping and also India. Pakistani diplomats reached out to G20 countries to boycott India. Pakistan has been urging allies, including China, Turkey and Saudi Arabia to boycott the G20 meetings being hosted by India in J&K. It has also played up the Muslim sentiment saying that Muslim countries should support Pakistan over the Kashmir G20 meetings. Pakistan-based social media handles on Twitter -



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

Intelligence agencies show that China too has supported Pakistan in creating a negative sentiment against the G20 meetings  
Beijing decided to boycott the Y20 meeting held in the union territory of Ladakh April 26  
However, with 170 dignitaries, including 100 foreign delegates and photographers swamping social media, the Ladakh Y20 meeting has been a roaring success for India

@NimraChoudhar20, @new789807, @muhammednaseer2, @Natasha85852 - have been actively campaigning against the G20. Most of the anti-G20 comments were

traced to Lahore and Islamabad. These handles have been using hashtags, 'G20boycottmeetingini-jk', 'boycottG20', 'Kashmir Internationally Recogniz-

ed\_Dispute', 'G20\_Event\_In\_IIOJK\_Just\_A\_Ploy', 'changeG20venue' and 'freelashmirfromG20' in an effort to derail the G20 meetings in India, targeting J&K. Besides Pakistan, much noise was created by Canada-based organisations like the New Democratic Party (NDP) which called for a boycott of G20 events in Kashmir, Chandigarh and Punjab.

The World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO) too gave a call to Canada to boycott the G20 summit. Pakistan also used a number of organisations and universities to join its propaganda.

The Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR) wrote to Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida against India. Similarly, the Kashmir Diaspora Coalition (KDC) wrote to all the heads of States of G20 to not attend the meetings in India.

# Hospitality sector job postings up 60% in India, Delhi-NCR leads

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 28: The hospitality sector in India saw a 60 per cent rise in job postings from March 2022 to March 2023, with Delhi-NCR emerging as the top city for such jobs, a report showed Friday.

Hotel manager, travel consultant, resort manager, hospitality manager and travel agent were the most in-demand jobs.

While Delhi-NCR led with a 20.37 per cent increase in hospitality job postings over the past year, Mumbai and Bengaluru were second and third, respectively, according to the report by job portal Indeed.

During the second wave of the pandemic, change in jobs during the period of March 2020 to 2021 limboed at -13.80 per cent. "However,

from March 2022 to 2023, change in jobs has sprouted to a staggering 59.50 per cent. We remain optimistic about this growth, especially as local and domestic tourism continue to be attractive destinations," said Saumitra Chand, ca-



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

reer expert, Indeed India and Singapore.

With things returning back to normal, travel for leisure is seeing an uptick, especially with families breaking for summer vacations and long weekend trips. With increasing interstate travels, there continues to be a rising demand for job opportunities in the hospitality sector, said the report.

Hotel manager and travel consultant emerged as the top roles with yearly median salaries of ₹4,35,000 and ₹3,30,000, respectively.



## of the day quote

The proposed refinery project at Barsu village in Ratnagiri district will not be implemented without the local people's consent

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHARASHTRA CM

Naimisaranya will undergo a facelift on the lines of Kashi, Ayodhya, and Mathura. After Naimisaranya's rejuvenation, religious tourism will create employment opportunities in every sector

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

Ten per cent of the total compensation for crop damage will now go to the labourers employed by farmers

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

## SHORT TAKES

### Amartya Sen approaches court

Kolkata: Nobel laureate economist Amartya Sen has approached a district court in Birbhum district of West Bengal against the eviction notice issued by the Visva-Bharati University authorities in the ongoing dispute over 13 decimals of land. The university authorities accuse Sen of illegally occupying the land within the varsity campus at Bolpur Santiniketan in the district. The eviction notice was issued on April 20 asking the globally acclaimed economist to vacate the "disputed" 13 decimals of land by May 6. Sen is currently in the US.

### Inmate dies

Mainpuri: A 40-year-old inmate has allegedly died under mysterious circumstances in Mainpuri district jail. The deceased, Bhura Girhar -- a resident of Agra Road in Gihar colony in the district, was arrested and sent to jail two days ago after a non-bailable warrant was issued against him, said the police. The family of the deceased has alleged that 'he was tortured in custody'. Bhure was arrested from his home and sent to jail by the police in a petty crime case. When the family learned about his death, they created a ruckus in front of the district hospital, accusing the police of murder and demanding action.

### Body found

New Delhi: The body of a Nigerian woman was found wrapped in bedsheet and tucked away in a box bed in a flat at south Delhi on Friday, police said Friday. The flat had been rented by a Nigerian national identified as Obzone Alexander, who is now missing and considered absconding. Initial investigations suggest that the woman may have been killed several days before her body was found. According to police, a police control room phone was received at 11:21 am at Maidangarhi police station.

### Two injured

New Delhi: Two persons, including a property dealer, were injured after being shot at by three unidentified bike-borne assailants in north Delhi's Narela, an official said Friday. The official said that the police are investigating the incident from all angles, including the possibility of personal enmity. The injured were identified as Vikas Dahiya, a resident of Haryana, and Veer Singh, a resident of Alipur. According to police, on Thursday evening around 5:44 p.m. a police control room call regarding a shootout at Lampur border at the office of a property dealer by three bike-borne riders was received following which a police team rushed to the spot.



Nowadays, Union minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and other BJP leaders have started abusing me. Am I Ravan? You (Shekhawat) looted 2.5 lakh people in the Sanjeevani Society and they got ruined. Your friends are in jail. You can also go to jail anytime

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

## JHARKHAND GETS FIRST AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren Friday launched the state's first air ambulance service from Ranchi to other parts of the country. Soren flagged-off the service for which an aircraft of the Redbird Airways has been taken on lease, an official of the state civil aviation department said



# Why was Atiq paraded before media, SC asks UP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: The Supreme Court Friday questioned the Uttar Pradesh government why gangster-politician Atiq Ahmed and his brother Ashraf were paraded before media while being taken to hospital for a medical checkup in police custody in Prayagraj.

The top court, which was hearing a plea by advocate Vishal Tiwari seeking an independent probe into the killing of Ahmed and his brother Ashraf, also asked the UP government how the killers got the knowledge that they were being taken to hospital.

"How did they know? We have seen it on TV. Why were they not taken to the ambulance right from the entry gate of the hospital? Why were they paraded?" a bench of Justices S Ravindra Bhat and Dipankar Datta asked senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, who appeared for the UP government. Rohatgi informed the bench the state government is probing the incident and has constituted a three-member commission for this. A UP Police special investigation team is also investigating the matter, he said.

"This man and his entire family are embroiled in heinous cases for last 30 years. This incident particularly is a gruesome incident. We have apprehended the killers and they said they did this to gain importance," Rohatgi said.

"Everyone saw the killings on the television. The killers came in the guise of news photographers. They



THE COURT DIRECTED THE UP GOVERNMENT TO SUBMIT A STATUS REPORT ON STEPS TAKEN AFTER THE INCIDENT

ATIQ AHMED AND ASHRAF WERE SHOT DEAD AT POINT-BLANK RANGE BY THREE MEN POSING AS JOURNALISTS IN THE MIDDLE OF A MEDIA INTERACTION WHILE POLICE PERSONNEL WERE ESCORTING THEM TO A MEDICAL CLINIC

had passes, were carrying cameras, and were even carrying identity cards that were later found to be fake. There were 50 people there and more people outside. This is how they managed to kill," Rohatgi told the bench.

The court directed the UP government to submit a status report on steps taken after the incident. "A comprehensive affidavit would be filed indicating the steps taken to inquire into the deaths which occurred on April 15 near Moti Lal

Nehru Divisional Hospital, Prayagraj. The affidavit shall also disclose the steps taken with respect to the incident that occurred immediately prior to the one in question and also disclose the follow-up steps taken following Justice BS Chauhan commission report. List after three weeks," the bench said in its order. Former apex court judge Justice Chauhan headed a commission to probe the encounter of gangster Vikas Dubey in 2020. Atiq Ahmed (60) and Ashraf were shot dead at point-blank range by three men posing as journalists in the middle of a media interaction while police personnel were escorting them to a medical college.

The plea also sought an inquiry into the 183 alleged criminals killed in police encounters in UP since 2017. UP Police recently said they have gunned down 183 alleged criminals in encounters in six years of the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led government and this included Ahmad's son Asad and his accomplice.

## PM launches 91 FM transmitters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday inaugurated 91 FM transmitters and said this would revolutionise the radio industry, while asserting his government was working constantly for the democratisation of technology.

Underscoring the emotional connect of his generation with the radio, Modi said he has a relationship with the medium as a host too as he referred to the upcoming 100th episode of Mann Ki Baat this Sunday.

"This kind of emotional connect with the people of the country was possible only through the radio. Through this, I remained linked to the strength of the country and the collective power of the duty among the people of the country," he said.



Modi said government initiatives such as the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, and Har Ghar Tiranga became people's movements through the Mann Ki Baat. "Therefore, in a way, I am part of your All India Radio Team," the prime minister said after virtually inaugurating 91 FM transmitters covering two crore people across 85 districts.

Modi underlined that the inauguration of 91 FM transmitters was in line with the government policy to give preference to the underprivileged who have been deprived of this facility so far.

## DANTEWADA BLAST

# IED planted two months ago: Police



CRPF personnel during a search for Naxalites in sensitive areas of Dantewada district, Friday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raipur, April 28: The Chhattisgarh police Friday said the powerful improvised explosive device (IED) that exploded killing 10 policemen and a civilian driver in Dantewada had been planted by Naxalites at least two months ago.

The explosive, however, remained "undetected" during the demining exercise conducted a day before the attack on Wednesday, they said. Ten personnel, belonging to the District Reserve Guard (DRG) of police, and a civilian driver were killed after Naxalites blew up a multi-utility vehicle (MUV), which was part of a convoy carrying security personnel in Arampur police station area of Dantewada on Wednesday afternoon.

The incident occurred around 1 km from Arampur police station on the road that goes to Dantewada district headquarters.

"The preliminary investigation suggests that the IED was planted at least two months ago or before it. The grass had grown on the layer of soil under which the wire,

which was connected to the explosive, was concealed," Inspector General of Police (Bastar range) Sundarraj P said.

The explosive weighing around 40-50 kg was used and it seems that it was placed 3 to 4 feet beneath the road by digging a tunnel from roadside, he said.

A demining exercise to detect explosives was conducted on the same road a day before the attack, but neither an IED, nor any suspicious object was traced, the IG said, adding that an investigation is underway to ascertain how the explosive remained undetected.

Nearly 200 security personnel from the CRPF and state police's DRG launched an operation from Dantewada district headquarters on Tuesday night after getting information about the presence of Maoists belonging to the Darbha division in the area, police had said.

When asked if there was any violation of the standard operating procedure (SOP), the IG said, the personnel followed the operational tactics.

## Student beaten to death

The body has been shifted to AIIMS mortuary for post-mortem and efforts are on to identify the assailants, the DCP said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: A Class 8 student of an MCD school was allegedly bludgeoned to death by two men who dumped the body in a drain in southeast Delhi's Badarpur area, police said Friday.

The deceased has been identified as Saurabh (12), a resident of the Bilaspur camp in Molarband village here.

He was a student of a school run by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) at Tajpur Pahari, police said.

Around 8.20 pm on Thursday, a PCR call was received at the Badarpur police station, informing that a schoolboy was killed by two men, police said.

When a police team reached the spot between the Khatushyam park and Tajpur Road village, the body of the boy in a school uniform was found lying in a drain. A schoolbag

containing textbooks and other study material was also found at the spot. At a distance of about six yards from the schoolbag, four-five blood-stained stones and a blood-stained cotton towel were also found, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southeast) Rajesh Deo said.

The scene of crime was photographed and the exhibits were taken into possession, he added. On an inspection of the body, multiple head injuries, apparently caused by a blunt object, were noticed.

The presence of the blood-stained stones nearby indicated that the stones were possibly used in the commission of the crime, the officer said.

The body has been shifted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) mortuary for post-mortem and efforts are on to identify the assailants, the DCP said.

A case under section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code has been lodged and CCTV cameras installed near the scene of the crime are being scanned to identify the culprits and ascertain the sequence of events leading up to the incident, police said.



Volunteers hold replicas of mosquito during a rally to raise awareness regarding dengue in Kolkata

PTI PHOTO

## Reassign 'jobs scam' case: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: The Supreme Court Friday asked the Acting Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court to reassign the West Bengal school jobs scam case to another judge, days after voicing displeasure over Justice Abhijit

Gangopadhyay's interview to a TV news channel where he spoke about the raging controversy.

The top court also took note of the concerns raised by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the CBI and ED, that there has been a trend of individuals trying to browbeat judges the moment a judgement or an order goes against them.

An apex court bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, which also comprised justice P S Narasimha, was hearing the plea

of TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee alleging that the judge, who gave the interview to a TV news channel about the case, was incapacitated from hearing it.

"Pursuant to the order of this court, the registry has placed the affidavit. We have considered the note by Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay and have also perused the transcript of the interview. Having considered the transcript, we direct that the Hon'ble Acting Chief Justice of the High

Court of Calcutta shall re-assign the pending proceedings in the case to some other judge of the Calcutta High Court. The judge to whom the case will be re-assigned by the Acting Chief Justice would be at liberty to take up all the applications which may be moved in the case," the bench ordered. Moments after the bench had dictated the order, the solicitor general referred to certain incidents and claimed a trend has emerged of late to pressure judges.

# Climate change increasing risk of new emerging viruses: Experts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: Changing climatic conditions, particularly temperature and moisture variations following events such as extreme rainfall in some places and drought in others, will lead to a surge in the spread of vector-borne and infectious diseases across India, say scientists.

As concerns mount over the recent increase in respiratory viral infections, including H2N3, adenovirus and swine flu, in many parts of India, the scientists said it might be too early to attribute it to climate change. But is definitely plausible.

The prospect of climate change leading to an increased burden

with the spread of diseases such as dengue, chikungunya and malaria looms large. According to public health expert Poornima Prabhakaran, steadily rising temperatures affect the pattern of transmission of disease agents like viruses as well their vectors through a number of pathways.

"These include changes in the incubation period, the transmission potential and the duration of transmission - all of which can impact the trends of diseases," Prabhakaran, director, Centre for Environmental Health at Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), told PTI.

Incubation period is the time between exposure to a pathogenic organism and when symptoms



The prospect of climate change leading to an increased burden with the spread of diseases such as dengue, chikungunya and malaria looms large

and signs are first apparent. Changing climatic conditions, Prabhakaran noted, also become more favourable for the spread

and disease transmission potential of viruses and their vectors. "Hot and humid conditions can

both impact the disease transmission pathways, frequency of disease occurrence and severity of disease," she explained. Ecologist Abi T Vanak added that changes in climate will also result in the shift of habitat for species, thereby introducing new vectors to some areas, or making some species more susceptible to new viruses that may have the potential to transmit to humans.

"For example, extreme rainfall and flooding in the drier parts of the country can result in outbreaks of diseases that are typically associated with the wetter parts," Vanak, in-

terim director, Centre for Policy Design, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), Bangalore, told PTI.

"This is applicable to both water-borne diseases such as cholera and dysentery, as well as vector-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, and chikungunya," he explained. Extreme weather events such as heatwaves can also cause high stress of animals, making them more vulnerable to disease prevalence and outbreaks of potentially zoonotic diseases, he said.

Prabhakaran's team is involved in a collaborative research effort that aims to demonstrate the links between changing climate conditions and patterns of vector-borne diseases like dengue and malaria.

# international

## of the day quote

**National Cabinet today is the ideal opportunity to look at funding models and also to look at keeping patients out of hospitals by improving access to general practice and primary care**

**I urge North Korea to realise that it can do nothing with nuclear weapons and decide to denuclearise for true peace and mutual prosperity on the Korean Peninsula**

**With the delivery of nuclear fuel by sea and air to our plant, Akkuyu has now acquired the nuclear power plant status. Therefore, our country has risen to the league of countries with nuclear power, albeit after 60 years of delay**

### SHORT TAKES

**Chinese national released on bail**  
Islamabad: A Chinese national arrested in Pakistan on charges of committing blasphemy has been freed from a high-security prison after an anti-terrorism court granted him bail, officials said Friday. The court order came on a day when China's new Premier Li Qiang held talks with his Pakistani counterpart Shehbaz Sharif Thursday.

**Indonesia: 11 dead as speedboat capsizes**  
Pekanbaru: A speedboat carrying 74 people capsized in rough seas in western Indonesia, killing at least 11 and leaving one person missing, officials said Friday. Many of the dead were women and children, said Nyoman Sidakarya, chief of the Pekanbaru Search and Rescue Agency. He said 62 people had been rescued, including some who were unconscious after drifting in the choppy waters for hours. They were hospitalised and were in stable condition, he said.

**Extremists kill 33 soldiers**  
Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso): A large number of Islamic extremists launched an attack on Ouagadougou's military in the country's east, killing 33 soldiers and wounding a dozen others, the army said Friday. The assault took place Thursday in the Gourma province town of Ouagarou, according to an army statement.

**Imran Khan gets bail in mutiny case**  
Islamabad: A top court here Friday granted protective bail till May 3 to Imran Khan in a mutiny case registered against the former Pakistan prime minister. Manzoor Ahmed Khan, a magistrate, earlier this month filed a first information report (FIR) at Islamabad's Ramna police station against the ousted prime minister for "spreading hatred between the institutions and the public" and for "trying to cause unforgivable damage to the institutions and their top officers".

**2 journalists killed in Haiti**  
San Juan (Puerto Rico): Two local journalists have been killed in Haiti over the past couple of weeks as rampant gang violence has gripped the capital of Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas. The Committee to Protect Journalists said Thursday that radio reporter Dumesky Kersaint was fatally shot in mid-April, while journalist Ricot Jean was found dead Tuesday.



**We seem to be witnessing the sorry Sunset of that choral dream of peace, as the solists of war now take over**  
POPE FRANCIS | HEAD OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

### LANKA PARL APPROVES IMF BAILOUT PACKAGE

Sri Lanka's Parliament on Friday approved the much-needed USD 3 billion IMF bailout package to revive the island's economy which was hit hard by a catastrophic economic and humanitarian crisis sparked by years of mismanagement and the raging pandemic



## BBC chairman quits over Boris loan row

**London, April 28:** BBC chairman Richard Sharp resigned Friday after a report found he broke the rules by failing to disclose the role he played in helping former British prime minister Boris Johnson secure an 800,000-pounds loan.

and not material, which the facts he lays out substantiate... Nevertheless, I have decided that it is right to prioritise the interests of the BBC. I feel that this matter may well be a distraction from the Corporation's good work were I to remain in post until the end of my term. I have therefore this morning resigned as BBC Chair to the Secretary of State, and to the Board," he said.

The 67-year-old former Goldman Sachs banker, who has been the chairman of the UK taxpayer-funded licence fee-backed British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), said the investigation found he had breached the governance code for public appointments. The independent review, led by barrister Adam Heppinstall, looked at Sharp's appointment and his involvement in facilitating an 800,000-pound loan guarantee for Johnson - just weeks before the former prime minister appointed him. "Mr Heppinstall's view is that while I did breach the governance code for public appointments, he states that a breach does not necessarily invalidate an appointment," Sharp said in a statement.

Heppinstall was appointed by the UK's Commissioner of Public Appointments to investigate claims which appeared in 'The Sunday Times' newspaper. Sharp said the report finds he did not play "any part whatsoever in the facilitation, arrangement, or financing of a loan for the former Prime Minister". But he said with hindsight he should have disclosed his role in setting up a meeting between UK Cabinet Secretary Simon Case and Sam Blyth - a businessman who was offering the then Prime Minister financial help - to the appointments panel during the scrutiny process ahead of him taking up the senior role at the 100-year-old public broadcaster.



Lucy Williams, from Aberfan, holds her son Daniel as he takes the handbag from Britain's Kate, Princess of Wales during her visit with Prince William to the Aberfan memorial garden Friday. The garden sits on the site of the Pantglas school which was tragically destroyed in a coal-tip landslide in 1966 and led to the loss of 144 lives, including 116 children

## Explosions in Kyiv, sirens across Ukraine

The bombardment was nowhere near the war's sprawling front lines or active combat zones in eastern Ukraine, where a grinding war of attrition has taken hold

**Uman (Ukraine), April 28 :** Russia fired more than 20 cruise missiles and two drones at Ukraine early Friday, killing at least 22 people, almost all of them when two missiles slammed into an apartment building in a terrifying nighttime attack, officials said. Three children were among the dead. The missile attacks included the first one against Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, in nearly two months, although there were no reports of any targets hit. The city government said Ukraine's air force intercepted 11 cruise missiles and two unmanned aerial vehicles over Kyiv. The strikes on the nine-story residential building in central Ukraine occurred in Uman, a city located around 215 kilometers (134 miles) south of Kyiv.



**UKRAINE'S PRESIDENT CONDEMNS 'RUSSIAN TERROR'**  
**KYIV SAYS DECISION ON COUNTERATTACK LIES WITH COMMANDERS**  
**THE MISSILE ATTACKS INCLUDED THE FIRST ONE AGAINST KYIV, UKRAINE'S CAPITAL, IN NEARLY TWO MONTHS, ALTHOUGH THERE WERE NO REPORTS OF ANY TARGETS HIT**  
**THE CITY GOVERNMENT SAID UKRAINE'S AIR FORCE INTERCEPTED 11 CRUISE MISSILES AND TWO UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLES OVER KYIV**

fore their deployment to the battlefield. Survivors of the Uman strikes recounted terrifying moments as the missiles hit when it still was dark outside. Soldiers, civilians and emergency crews searched through the rubble outside for more victims, while resi-

to Ukraine and other nations. Shortly after Moscow unleashed the barrage, the Russian Defense Ministry posted a photo on Telegram showing a missile launch and saying, "Right on target." The message triggered outrage among Ukrainians on social media and some officials, who viewed it as gloating over the casualties.

Ukraine officials said last week that they had taken delivery of American-made Patriot missiles, providing Kyiv with a long-sought new shield against Russian airstrikes, but there was no word on whether the system was used Friday. The missile attack was the first on the capital since March 9. Air defenses have thwarted Russian drone attacks more recently. The missiles were fired from aircraft operating in the Caspian Sea region, according to Ukrainian Armed Forces Commander in Chief Valerii Zaluzhnyi. The war largely ground to a halt over the winter, becoming a war of attrition as each side has shelled the other's positions from a distance. Ukraine has been building up its mechanized brigades with armour supplied by its Western allies, who have also been training Ukrainian troops and sending ammunition, as Kyiv eyes a possible counter-offensive. Meanwhile, the Moscow-appointed mayor of the Russia-held city of Donetsk, Alexei Kulemzin, said a Ukrainian rocket killed seven civilians in the center of the city Friday.

## Heavy clashes rock Khartoum



A burned vehicle is seen in Khartoum

**Cairo, April 28:** Heavy explosions and gunfire rocked Sudan's capital, Khartoum and its twin city of Omdurman early Friday, residents said, despite the extension of a fragile truce between the county's two top generals whose power struggle has killed hundreds. After two weeks of fighting that has turned the capital into a war zone and thrown Sudan into turmoil, a wide-ranging group of international mediators - including African and Arab nations, the UN and the United States - were intensifying their pressure on the rival generals to enter talks on resolving the crisis. So far, however, they have managed to achieve only a series of fragile temporary cease-fires that failed to stop clashes but created enough of a lull for tens of thousands of Sudanese to flee to safer areas and for foreign nations to evacuate thousands of their citizens by land, air and sea. Fierce clashes with frequent explosions

and gunfire continued Friday in Khartoum's upscale neighbourhood of Kafouri, where the military earlier used warplanes to bomb its rivals, the Rapid Support Forces, residents said. Clashes were also reported around the military's headquarters, the Republican Palace and the area close to the Khartoum international airport. All these areas have been flash-points since the war between the military and the RSF erupted April 15. There were also signs that the paramilitary was struggling to treat injuries sustained by its forces. Doctors in the capital said the RSF is abducting medical personnel in desperation. Over the past 14 days of pummeling each other, the military led by Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan and the RSF led by Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, have each failed to deal a decisive blow to the other in their struggle for control of Africa's third largest nation. Still, world powers have struggled to get them to silence the weapons even for nominal truces.

## Berlin sees 10th day of road blockades by climate activists

**Berlin, April 28:** Climate activists staged a 10th straight day of protests in Berlin, blocking key roads during rush hour and bringing parts of the German capital to a standstill Friday before being removed by police. Members of the Last Generation group glued themselves to the road, causing a traffic jam for commuters driving into the city. The group wants to draw attention to the threat of global warming and the need for governments to step up measures to curb greenhouse gas emissions. At a crossing in the north of the capital, many drivers waited patiently for police to clear the road, though some hurled abuse at the activists, calling them "terrorists" and "scum". Several pedestrians applauded the protesters, giving them a thumbs-up, while one passerby offered them food and water. Last Generation has acknowledged that its protests are provocative.

### CORONATION OF KING CHARLES III

## Sunak, wife Akshata to lead with UK flag

**London, April 28:** British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and his wife Akshata Murty will be at the head of a procession of flag-bearers as the UK's flag is carried by a high-ranking Royal Air Force (RAF) cadet at the Coronation ceremony of King Charles III at Westminster Abbey in London May 6, Buckingham Palace said Friday. In a series of details released around the ceremonial roles to be carried out at the historic event when the 74-year-old monarch is formally crowned along with wife Camilla, the palace also confirmed that Indian-origin peers will be participating in the ceremony. They will represent the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim faiths as they hand over key elements of the royal regalia to King Charles. In keeping with this theme of diversity and inclusion for the Christian ceremony, one of the first processions into the Abbey will be made up of faith representatives of dif-



ferent religions. "The first processions into Westminster Abbey will be made up of faith leaders and faith representatives followed shortly afterwards by representatives from His Majesty's Realms," the palace said. "Flags of each Realm will be carried by national representatives accompanied by the Governors General and Prime Ministers. Bearing the flag of the United Kingdom ahead of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Mrs Akshata Murty will be Cadet Warrant Officer Elliott Tyson-Lee," it said. The ceremonial roles on the day include bearing the regalia in the procession and presenting the items to the King and Queen on the day. As previously revealed, Lord Narendra Babubhai Patel, 84, will represent the Hindu faith and hand over the Sovereign's Ring to Charles. While Lord Indrajit Singh, 90, will represent the Sikh faith and pres-

### China flies combat drone around Taiwan

**Taipei, April 28:** A Chinese uncrewed combat aircraft has flown around Taiwan, the island's defence ministry said, showcasing Beijing's ability to attack its fall-back east coast bases, as a US maritime patrol aircraft transited the Taiwan Strait. China, which views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, has increased military pressure on the island over the past three years as it tries to force Taipei to accept its sovereignty claim. This month, China staged war games around Taiwan after Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen met US House of Representatives Speaker Kevin McCarthy in Los Angeles. Taiwan's defence ministry said 19 military aircraft had entered the island's air defence identification zone. One of those was a TB-001 drone, which flew around Taiwan, first crossing the Bashi Channel that separates Taiwan from the Philippines, then up the east of Taiwan before crossing back toward the Chinese coast, according to a map provided by the ministry.

## of the day quote

The government is looking at legislative changes to fix timelines for patent grants/rejections

SANJEEV SANYAL | MEMBER, PM'S ECONOMIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

We are ramping up production of Chetak to touch around 10,000 units a month by June

RAKESH SHARMA | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BAJAJ AUTO

I'm pleased to report that 90 per cent of cabin crew and a majority of pilots have received and accepted the new compensation package offered last week, which will be back dated to 1 April 2023

CAMPBELL WILSON | CHIEF, AIR INDIA

### SHORT TAKES

#### UltraTech Q4 dips

New Delhi: Aditya Birla group firm UltraTech Cement Friday reported a 36.1 per cent decline in its consolidated net profit to ₹1,670.10 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2023, mainly due to an increase in input cost.

#### Jet's CEO-Designate Sanjiv Kapoor quits

Mumbai: A little over a year after coming on board to revive Jet Airways, the airline's CEO-Designate Sanjiv Kapoor has put in his papers.

#### Adani pre-pays Holcim's debt

Mumbai: Adani Cement Industries Ltd has paid back \$200 million in the past week, helping pare a \$1 billion loan taken from global banks to fund the purchase of Holcim AG's Indian units.

#### Swiggy to charge 'platform fee'

New Delhi: Online food delivery platform Swiggy has started charging all users a "platform fee" of ₹2 per food order, irrespective of the cart value.



India's major ports handled the highest ever cargo at 795 million tonne in 2022-23, registering an increase of 10.4 per cent over the previous year

SARBANANDA SONOWAL | UNION MINISTER

### AMID LAYOFFS, ZUCKERBERG'S WEALTH SURGES

Meta founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg's net worth surged by \$10.2 billion after the company posted strong quarterly results, leading to its shares rising by nearly 14 per cent.



## Core sector output drops

March's decline was caused by a drop in output from three important sectors: cement, electricity, and crude oil

AGENCIES

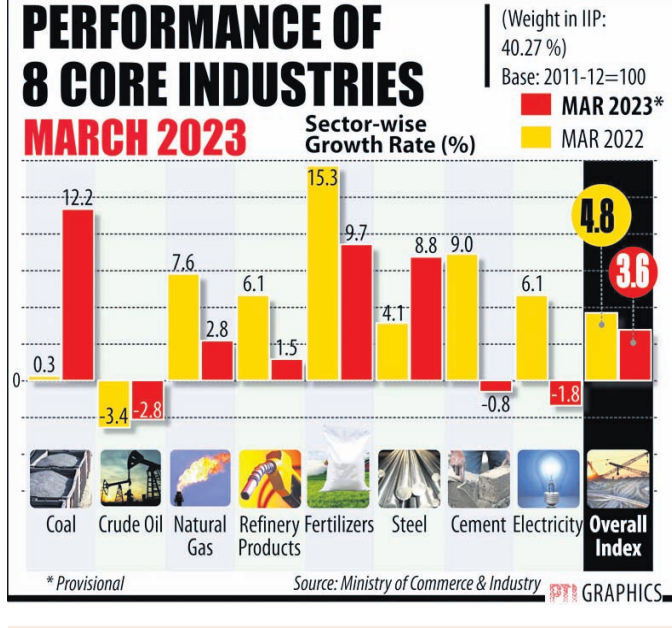
New Delhi, April 28: Growth in India's eight core sectors' output fell to a five-month low of 3.6% in March with electricity and cement production slipping from a year ago, and crude oil output falling for the tenth successive month.

The output of core sectors had increased by 7.2 per cent in February 2023 and 4.8 per cent in the year-ago month. The previous low was 0.7 per cent in October 2022.

For the full financial year 2022-23, core sectors recorded a 7.6% growth compared to 10.4% in 2021-22, with all sectors reporting higher production except crude oil, which shrank 1.7% during the year.

In March, growth in crude oil production was down to 2.8%, the lowest in three months, while refinery products grew at a four-month low pace of 1.5%.

Cement output contracted 0.8% in March, breaking growth streak in the last four months. Electricity generation dropped for the first



EIGHT CORE SECTOR INDUSTRIES POST 3.6% GROWTH IN MARCH

OUTPUT ROSE BY 7.2% IN FEBRUARY 2023 AND BY 4.8% YOY

time in at least a year, shrinking 1.8% in March. However, absolute output levels in both these sectors were significantly higher than February.

The cement production index at its highest point since April 2022 and electricity output at its high-

est since September 2022.

"Output of some of the sectors like electricity and cement is likely to have been dampened by the unseasonal rainfall in March," said Aditi Nayar, chief economist at rating firm ICRA.

With most available high fre-

Output of some of the sectors like electricity and cement is likely to have been dampened by the unseasonal rainfall in March

ADITI NAYAR | CHIEF ECONOMIST, ICRA

quency indicators weakening in March 2023 on a year-on-year basis, relative to February 2023, Nayar expects growth in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) to slow to around 3% to 4% in the month from 5.6% in February.

The final growth rate of the Index of Eight Core Industries for December 2022 is revised to 8.3% from its provisional level of 7.4%," the ministry said. It also revised February's growth rate to 7.2% from 6% estimated earlier.

The eight infrastructure sectors are coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and electricity. The Index of Industrial Production (IIP)'s eight Core Industries account for 40.27 percent of its weight.

### NSE tweaks index inclusion rules for spun-off entities

REUTERS

Bangalore, April 28: The NSE, one of India's two main stock exchanges, tweaked how it accounts for spun-off companies in its various equity indexes in order to reduce churn in their constituents.

The move comes as big companies such as HDFC Ltd and HDFC Bank are merging, with potential for entities to be spun off, and Reliance Industries Ltd plans to list Jio Financials separately.

The change will apply to any such spin-offs approved by shareholders of the parent companies on or after April 30, the NSE said in a circular late Wednesday.

Currently, all newly listed entities are excluded from indexes, and in cases of indexes with fixed constituents, are replaced with another eligible stock.

But now, any newly listed spun-off businesses will be initially included in a relevant index at a constant price, which is the difference between the demerged firm's closing price the day before the ex-demerger date and the price during a special pre-open session on the ex-demerger date.

Then, three sessions later, this entity will be removed from the index. If it hits the price band in the first two days, its removal will be deferred by another three days, the NSE said.

### Forex kitty eases from over 9-month highs

THE RESERVES STOOD AT \$584.25BN; \$2.16BN DOWN FROM LAST WEEK

REUTERS

New Delhi, April 28: India's foreign exchange reserves eased from over-nine-month highs and stood at \$584.25 billion for the week ended April 21, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) statistical supplement showed Friday.

That is a decrease of \$2.16 billion from the previous week. Reserves had gone up by a total of nearly \$8 billion in the prior two



weeks. The central bank intervenes in the spot and forwards markets to prevent runaway moves

### Nestle plans 10th India plant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 28: FMCG major Nestle India is planning to open a new factory to meet the growing demand here and is scouting for the ideal location, its Chairman & Managing Director Suresh Narayanan said.



This would be the tenth factory for Nestle India, which last year announced to invest ₹5,000 crore in the country by 2025 to accelerate its core business and leverage new

growth opportunities.

When asked about the possibility of a new factory in India, Narayanan told PTI: "Certainly. There is scouting for a site for the tenth factory."

"We will make up our minds sooner than later. There is some preliminary work that has been done. And then we will come with an announcement," he added.

Nestle is looking at numerous places, however, Narayanan said it will be eastern India where it is not having any production units.

Besides, Nestle India, as part of its ₹5,000 crore investment, is expanding its capacity.

### BIZ BUZZ

#### M Aruna new FGMO of Indian Bank, Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar: M Aruna, General Manager has taken over the charge of FGMO, Indian Bank, Bhubaneswar April 27. Prior to this, she was working as Zonal Head of Tirupati Zone of the bank.



#### IOB MD to visit Odisha May 1

Bhubaneswar: Indian Overseas Bank, MD & CEO, Ajay Kumar Srivastava is arriving Odisha May 1. On this occasion, he will inaugurate the new premises of Puri branch.



## Europe's economy barely grows as inflation pinches consumers

THE EUROZONE AVOIDED A WINTER RECESSION THANKS TO MILD WEATHER THAT ALLEVIATED PRESSURE ON NATURAL GAS SUPPLIES

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Frankfurt, April 28: The European economy scraped out meager growth in the first three months of the year, barely gaining momentum as stubborn inflation raises the price of groceries and erodes people's willingness to spend paychecks that are failing to keep pace.

Friday's less-than-stellar increase of 0.1 per cent from the previous quarter follows disappointing growth estimates from the US, which kept alive fears of a looming recession in the world's largest economy.

The 20 countries that use the euro currency picked up a little speed from January through March

after zero growth in the last three months of 2022.

European governments and utilities also scrambled to line up additional sources to heat homes, generate electricity and power factories after Russia cut off most of its supply to the continent over its war against Ukraine.

Germany, Europe's largest economy, turned in disappointing zero growth from the previous quarter. After a contraction of 0.5 per cent at the end of 2022, the country is in the "recession danger zone", said Carsten Brzeski, chief of global macro at ING bank. Ireland shrank 2.7 per cent.

Spain and Italy performed bet-



France managed a 0.2 per cent expansion thanks to exports.

The standout was Portugal, which needed a bailout during the eurozone debt crisis a decade ago, shining with 1.6 per cent.

European industrial activity has picked up, and China's reopening from Covid-19 restrictions has boosted the outlook for global economy. But the US disappointed, grow-

Easing supply bottlenecks, lower energy prices and signs of global economic resilience offset weakness in private consumption, with real household incomes still struggling under the weight of high inflation. We don't expect growth to pick up meaningfully over the course of 2023

RORY FENNESSY | EUROPEAN ECONOMIST, OXFORD ECONOMICS

ing at an annualised rate of 1.1 per cent, or 0.3 per cent compared with the quarter before. In Europe, the mild weather also allowed an early start to construction activity.

Annual inflation in the eurozone eased to 6.9 per cent in March from 8.5 per cent the month before but is well above the ECB's goal of 2 per cent considered best for the economy. So-called core inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy prices, also hit a record 5.7 per cent.

With fears that inflation is becoming entrenched in the economy longer term, the bank is likely to deliver another rate increase at its policy meeting Thursday.

Credit may get even tighter after the failure of Silicon Valley Bank in the US and the forced takeover of Credit Suisse by rival Swiss bank UBS. The turmoil could increase market and regulatory scrutiny of bank finances and make them less likely to risk lending. That could help ease inflation but also weigh on economic growth.

