

LEISURE | P2



### NATO's 75th birthday

NATO marks 75 years of collective defence across Europe and North America, with its top diplomats vowing to stay the course in Ukraine

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Mining in Goa resumes after a gap of six years, with mining major Vedanta commencing operations at Bicholim mineral block in the state



### **CSK face SRH today**

A tough test awaits Chennai Super Kings when they go head to head against an unpredictable Sunrisers

SPORTS | P12

### **SHORT TAKES**

#### Sonia, Ashwini among 14 take oath for RS

New Delhi: Former Congress president Sonia Gandhi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw were among the 14 who took oath as members of the Rajya Sabha (RS) Thursday. Vice-President and RS Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar administered the oath to them in the new Parliament house building. While Sonia Gandhi took oath as a member of the Upper House from Rajasthan, Vaishnaw was sworn-in as a member of the same house from Odisha. Congress leaders Ajay Maken and Syed Naseer Hussain from Karnataka, BJP leader RPN Singh from Uttar Pradesh, and BJP member Samik Bhattacharya from West Bengal were among the 14 who took the RS oath

#### Classes XI, XII exam format changed: CBSE

New Delhi: The exams for Classes XI and XII from the 2024-25 session will include more competency-based questions that assess the application of concepts in real-life situations. according to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) officials who announced a change in the format, Thursday. While the percentage of competency-focused questions in the form of MCQs, casebased questions, source-based integrated questions or any other type has been increased from 40 to 50 per cent, the percentage of constructed response questions including short and long answers has

### **Gold hits all-time high**

been reduced from 40 to 30 per cent.

New Delhi: Gold prices surged by ₹850 to reach a new peak of ₹70,050 per 10 grams (24 carats) Thursday on strong global cues, according to HDFC Securities. This is the second straight session that precious metal prices have hit all-time high levels. In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at ₹69,200 per 10 grams. Silver prices also zoomed ₹1,000 to hit record ₹81,700 per kg. In the previous session, it had finished at ₹80,700 per kg.

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



woke up I switched my party. I saw the ED in my dream

I slept and dreamt and as soon as I



### Mining resumes in Goa

BUSINESS | P11



Hyderabad in the IPL

12 PAGES | ₹5.00

#### OLUME 14, ISSUE 5 | www.orissapost.com **BHUBANESWAR | FRIDAY APRIL 5 2024**



MILITARY DRILLS: A service member of the 37th Marine Brigade of the Ukrainian Armed Forces removes empty cartridges from a French AMX-10 RC armoured fighting vehicle during military drills, in

### **HOLIDAY ON VOTING DAYS**

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 4: The state government Thursday announced localised public holidays in respective constituencies during the four-phased Lok Sabha and Assembly polls.

Elections in the state will be held May 13, May 20, May 25 and June 1. "The government of Odisha has been pleased to declare holiday for the employees of the state government offices and magisterial courts (executive) May 13 (Monday), May 20 (Monday), May 25 (Saturday) and June1 (Saturday) for the offices within the Parliamentary constituencies and Assembly segments coming within those Parliamentary constituencies in order to enable the employees to exercise their franchise," read the notification. According to the election schedule, voting for 28 Assembly segments and four MP segments— Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Berhampur and Koraput — will be held May 13, while Bargarh, Sundargarh, Bolangir, Kandhamal and Aska MP constituencies along with 35 Assembly seats under these LS seats will vote May 20.

# Open drain claims 1 more life HC respite for Kejriwal

The killer drains of Cuttack claimed yet another precious life when a 48-year-old migrant worker fell into the death trap late Wednesday night. The incident is a horrific reminder of a series of casualties reported in the Millennium City over the years as uncovered drains and unmarked pits continue to play havoc for pedestrians, children, and citizens at large. Despite repeated whippings from NHRC and law courts, the civic administration refuses to wake up from its deep slumber and address the clear and present danger.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, April 4: Uncovered drains across the Silver City have been proving perennial death traps, with the latest victim being a 48-year-old man whose body was recovered from an open drain in Mahima Nagar area of Nuabazar under CRRI police limits here, Thursday.

The deceased, Zakir Khan, a resident of Murshidabad in West Bengal, had been working as a mason in the Millennium City.

It was around 7 am when a few locals spotted the body afloat



sanitation worker, died after falling into an

JULY 16: An uncovered drain at Jhola Sahi claimed the life of Rahul Khati, 21, a resident of Rajasthan who had come to visit his relatives in Cuttack

in the drain and informed the police. Soon, a police team rushed to the spot and recovered the body before sending it for an au-CRRI police inspector in-

charge (IIC) Bijaya Kumar Barik said Khan's mobile phone helped ascertain his identity. "During the search, a mobile

phone was found in his pocket. We used it to dial his contacts and subsequently learn his identity. Khan's family members have student of Modern Public School, died after falling into an open drain in Bidanasi area

FEBRUARY 1, 2018: 32-year-old Santosh Kumar Das died after falling into an open drain in Meria Bazaar area

been informed and the body will be handed over to them after completing the post-mortem procedures," Barik said, adding that an unnatural death (UD) case has been registered in this regard.

About the events and circumstances leading to the tragic incident, Barik said they suspect Khan could have fallen into the drain in an inebriated condition.

Locals, however, alleged that

irrespective of the reasons, the mishap occurred as the contractor had left the drain open after removing its slabs for desilting work.

Meanwhile, the incident has reportedly woken up the Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) authorities from the deep slumber as the slabs have been put back on the open drains in the area.

Cuttack Mayor Subash Singh said the slabs have been removed for desilting work. "There are many open drains in various parts of the city and slabs are being put on them in a phased manner. The required funds have been sanctioned and work is in progress," Singh said.

Nevertheless, bamboo barricades were put up near the open drains following a series of mishaps here over the last few years. However, the barricades are broken at many places. The issue has triggered widespread public resentment on the failure of the administration to come out with a durable and timely solution to the burgeoning problem facing the city.

Open drains in the Silver City have claimed at least four lives since 2018.

New Delhi, April 4: In a respite for Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the high court here Thursday refused to entertain a PIL seeking his removal as the CM following his arrest in the excise policy-linked money laundering case, saying it was his 'personal call'.

A bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Manmeet PS Arora said it recently dismissed a similar PIL seeking Kejriwal's removal from the CM's post and thus, it cannot take a different view. "At times, personal interest has to be subordinate to national interest but that is his personal call. If he does not want to do that it is up to him. We are a court of law and have to go by the law. Your remedy does not lie here, it lies elsewhere. You go before the competent forum." the bench said.

As the court refused to interfere in the matter, petitioner Vishnu Gupta's lawyer said he has instructions to withdraw the petition and that he will approach Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG) VK Saxena with his plea. The court disposed of the plea while allowing the petitioner to withdraw it. During the hearing, the peti-

tioner's counsel said a consti-



tutional deadlock has been created following Kejriwal's arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) March 21.

The court, however, made it. clear that it cannot decide the matter and it is up to the LG or the President of India to take a call on the issue.

"How can we declare that the government is not functioning? The LG is fully competent to decide it. He (LG) does not need our guidance. We are no one to advise him. He will do whatever he has to in accordance with law," the bench said. It asked whether there was any precedent of a court imposing President's rule or Governor's rule.

"This is a practical issue, not a legal issue. We won't go into this. We will declare that the government is not functioning? Governor is fully competent. He does not need our guidance. There is a discretion to take the call. Let's not anticipate that they won't discharge their functions. We can't venture into this," it said.

## How Taiwan's tallest skyscraper withstands quakes

AGENCIES

Taipei, April 4: When a 7.4magnitude earthquake rocked Taiwan Wednesday, killing at least 10 people, toppling buildings and even triggering tsunami warnings, those inside the island's tallest skyscraper – Taipei 101— were protected by a large 'vellow pendulum' at the building's centre that helped absorb the shock.

Amid the chaos, eerie footage shows the \$1.8 billion skyscraper gently swaying like a stick in the breeze.

Measuring 1,671 feet in height, the building is fitted with an ingenious solution - passive damping system - that reduces overall building sway by 40 per cent during quakes and winds.

A 660 metric tonne golden sphere called the 'tuned mass damper' hangs inside the building from the 92nd floor.

As the building moves in one direction, the steel sphere sways in the other direction and main-

tains the building's overall balance. If wind or the force of an earthquake pushes the tower to the right, the sphere will provide an immediate and equal force to the left, cancelling out the initial motion.

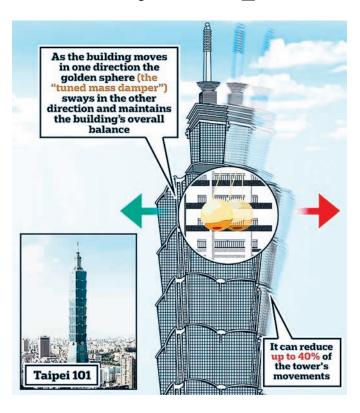
So, although the tower sways, it doesn't topple.

The system operates without any external power or control just gravity and the movement of the building.

Meanwhile, hydraulic pistons underneath the massive sphere absorb and dissipate the energy

Agathoklis Giaralis, a professor of structural dynamics at City, University of London, described the clever spherical device as 'like a pendulum'.

'This steel sphere rests on damping devices which are designed to dampen the relative sway movement between the structure and the sphere, acting in a similar way to the shock absorbers in car suspensions, Giaralis told MailOnline.



Although it is odd to see a building swaying, modern skyscrapers are built to be flexible, especially in earthquake-prone zones like Taiwan.

"The materials they are made out of are elastic which means that they stretch or contract according to the changing loads acting on them," professor Antony Darby at the University of Bath's Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering told MailOnline.

'The amount of this deformation in an individual element (a beam or column) is only very small, but when you multiply this across all the elements in a tall building, this can lead to significant lateral [sideways] movements. These movements are not dangerous to the structure itself, but, if excessive can lead to discomfort to occupants," Darby said. Construction of Taipei 101 began in 1999 and was completed in time for New Year's Eve 2004, when it finally opened to the public.

It was designed to resemble a bamboo shoot rising upwards in eight sections – looking like a series of square buckets stacked one on top of the other. Every floor was installed with

supporting steel 'outrigger trusses' running from the building's core to its outer columns to increase the towers stiffness. While other tall buildings keep tuned mass dampers hidden,

Taipei 101's is visible to visitors on the 88th through 92nd floors, making it something of a tourist attraction. Unfazed tourists have even filmed the sphere's movement during previous earthquakes, which are a frequent occurrence on the island.

Taiwan is one country especially prone to earthquakes because it's close to where two tectonic plates meet - the Philippine Sea plate and the Eurasian plate.

Powerful seismic activity can be detected along the tectonic plate borders, where the plates rub up against each other, causing earthquakes.

V	IARKE	T WAT	CH	
IN	DEX		VAR	ATION
BOURSES	SENSEX	74227.63	1	350.83
	NIFTY	22514.65	1	80.00
BULLION CURRENCY	DOLLAR	83.50	•	₹0.03
	EURO	90.67	1	₹0.45
	GOLD	₹69,929	1	₹151
	SILVER	₹ 79,855	•	₹844

### **WEATHER**

**BBSR** CTC 38.0°( **Max Temp** Min Temp **Humidity** Rainfall **FORECAST** DRY WEATHER

VERY LIKELY



# leisure



### **JULIA GARNER JOINS** THE FANTASTIC FOUR

**Emmy and Golden Globe-winning** actress Julia Garner has been roped in to join Marvel's The Fantastic Four as Shalla-Bal, a version of Silver Surfer from the comics, reports variety.com

#### **BROOKE SHIELDS 'PROUD' OF STRIPPING IN LATE 50s**

Model-actress Brooke Shields has revealed she felt 'sexy' posing in lingerie for Kim Kardashian's SKIMS shoot - admitting she feels 'proud' to have been able to strip off at the age of 58.



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High hopes and expectations are a good thing as long as they can push you to give your best. You will plan with care and perform admirably. But you may be focused on impressing a member of the opposite sex! Don't get carried away, says Ganesha, especially while taking

#### **TAURUS**

Stress might take its toll on you today. Ganesha fore-sees a demanding and difficult day. There may be a need for solitude to spend time with yourself. In relationships, you will look for a common ground to live and let live,

#### GEMINI

Today, you would want to take your beloved into your embrace and confidence You will whisper your feelings and secrets into his/her ears as you hold him/her. There are other things though, in your list of preoccupations, education heing the tonmost.

### CANCER

Today you may behave quite aggressively for most part of the day, predicts Ganesha. You may spend the afternoon can use your aggression in a controlled manner, vou can secure a very important deal today.

#### **LEO**

Today, you are defined by high hopes and expectations. It makes you incredibly calculative, and you weigh all pros and cons before taking any decision regarding work. The upshot of this is that your performance in financial transactions will be phenomenal. After all, money always increases one's fascina tion and appeal, particularly in the eyes

### **VIRGO**

Opening up to your beloved about your whims and fancies, as well as your goals, is the key today. Energy levels will hit the sky today. Pay due reverence to higher education and social customs. People will look up to your epicurean tastes, especially in the performing kinds.

When it comes to your children, no pain is too much. Today seems to justify that statement as you may indeed take pains to improve your children's welfare. But it's all worth the effort in the end Afternoon brings with it the possibility of happiness and success.

### SCORPIO

You will understand the importance of creating a divide between your per sonal and professional life, feels Ganesha On the professional front, your diligence and commitment to work will bring praise and benefits. Later in the evening, you will celebrate your success with your sweetheart.

### SAGITTARIUS

The fountain of creativity will be gushing within you today. You may strive to take on new challenges later in the day. Workplace may offer economic gains later in the evening. But do not neglect your health, says Ganesha.

### CAPRICORN

Power is a privilege of a few. It's a day for those of you in power, of governance and the national purse, says Ganesha A marvellous day awaits all civil servants and government employees. The dealings you will undertake will materialise and earn you distinction; rewards for the commendable efforts you have put in the past may also come.

### AQUARIUS

A sunny day and a starry night! Today is for friends says Ganesha. You chat, sing, yell, and even talk philosophy, values and politics with your pals. You may indulge in a romantic evening with your partner, either in a restaurant or at the beach, or simply on the sofa watching Clark Gable woo Scarlet O' Hara.

### **PISCES**

Honesty, sincerity and integrity both in your dedication to work and in your devotion to your family, is your hallmark. On the strength of this foundation, you will reach an important milestone today. Socially as well, your reputation will receive a boost, says Ganesha

### Priyamani's take on north-south divide

Mumbai: Actress Priyamani has opened up about the south actor tag. In an interview with an entertainment portal, she spoke about the response to her recent Hindi film *Article 370* as well as the challenges she faced as an actor who worked predominantly in the south.

When asked if she has faced stereotypes in Hindi films because she started her acting career with Telugu and Tamil cinema, Priyamani, who was seen in Shah Rukh Khan-starrer *Jawan*, said, "Yeah, sometimes they (Bollywood filmmakers) will say, 'Oh, because it is a south Indian character, we want to cast you'. I hope that changes soon.

The Family Man actress added, "See, even though we are from south India, I think we can speak the language (Hindi) quite fluently; we are as good-looking as anybody else. Probably our skin type might not be as fair and sparkling white as the ladies (Bollywood), but I don't think that should matter. I think now the thing of north and south should change. We are always Indian

tors. On the work

will be seen next in Maidaan, co-starring Ajay Devgn. AGENCIES

Priyamani

is

opinions on



media and public platforms, says that those assuming she voices her opinions with a political motive are wrong and that she is only doing her job as a citizen of a democratic country.

Richa

Radiating in the glow of her pregnancy, Richa, who was accompanied by husband Ali Fazal spoke candidly when asked if her outspoken bursts have any political motive. "When I have an opinion, it is only mine, and I am not acting as a mouthpiece for anyone," she clarified, adding, "As a tax-paying upright citizen in a democracy, I am entitled to free speech, which we all do. But often we outsource this responsibility of airing the right opinions to courts and law agen-

"People often ask me if I have political aspirations. But if I am commenting on the pollution or inflation in the prices of commodi ties, is that personal or political? I am not interested in becoming a politician," she said.



vond her career. "At this point, I feel my professional choices are largely driven by the value of my time. 1

ding interview, she dis-

cussed her newfound

appreciation for life be-

project is worth my time because I want to enjoy life beyond work. The second factor is relevance. I would love to cherish my filmography years from now. So, I don't want to invest time in something that will not stand the test of time

Regarding her marriage, although

the actress has not officially confirmed the event that reportedly occurred in March in Udaipur, a leaked video of the wedding has delighted fans worldwide. The video captures moments of joy as Taapsee, adorned in a striking red salwar suit, enters the ceremony with her sister and friends to the song Kothe Te Aa Mahiya. The ceremony featured traditional rituals, including garland exchanges, amidst a celebratory atmosphere.

On the professional front, Taapsee's upcoming projects include Phir Aavi Haseen Dillruba and Khel Khel Mein.



New Delhi: Love it, hate it, but you surely can't ignore the fashion statement of the Gen-Zs as they have brought back the baggy wear fever or the Y2K dressing with bright hues. 'Zoomers' are being praised by popular actors for 'rewriting the rulebook' for style.

Talking about how she feels Gen-Zs have redefined fashion, Alaya F expressed: "I definitely feel that Gen-Zs have redefined fashion. I feel they have influenced a lot of trends They sort of grew up in the era of trends. Thanks to social media, everything is about the newest trend and concept growing viral."

On how they have given a



fresh new take to fashion, she shared: "Their fashion trends are fun, a lot more colours

have come in. Comfort is key and that has made a comeback. Another aspect of Gen-

SUDOKU

3

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWOR

2

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a

manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains

6

8 9

2

3

the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any

9 6

and even some cute miniskirts, crop tops, and bright colours, Gen-Z style has brought variation to it and I think very customisable for each individual. There is no body-type that will feel that Gen-Z style is daunting for them because it implies to evervone.

Actress Barkha Singh, who has worked in Madhuri Dixit-Nene's film Maja Ma, said, The Gen-Zs have definitely redefined fashion. I think they started with trashing the skinny jeans, which we millennials absolutely loved. I actually enjoy Gen-Z fashion because they believe in a lot of baggy clothes, and I absolutely love baggy clothes.

4

6

5 8

2

6

### **PEANUTS**









### **CALVIN AND HOBBES**



### BREVITY



### FUN

# **CROSSWORD** 22 Copyright ©2024 PuzzleJunction.com 2 Thrifty shopper Across 18 Cinematic

7 Sudden violent

- storm
- 8 Little angel 9 Canine tooth
- 10 Soak
- 11 Tasteless
- 13 Fish and
- 15 Antsy 16 Cézanne, e.g.
- **Down**

21 Beach

22 Big cat

accessories

stand-in (5,3)

19 Tolstoy hero

- 1 Prefix with

plane or lung

(7,6)

4 Intense

3 Charge card

5 Deplorable

6 More than one 12 Footnote, e.g. 14 Exaggerate

20 Family member

17 Demolish

# 5 8

CARDBANISHED

SUDOKU

8 9 1 7 4 6 9 5 8 2 7 8 1 7 2 5 6 4 3 9

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

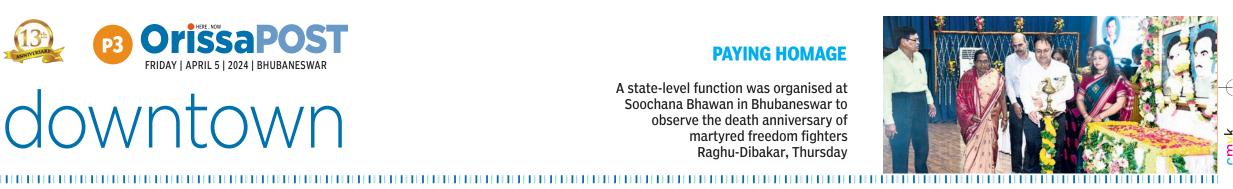




## downtown

#### **PAYING HOMAGE**

A state-level function was organised at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar to observe the death anniversary of martyred freedom fighters Raghu-Dibakar, Thursday



# 30pc turncoats among BJD LS picks



**Surendra Singh Bhoi** 





Parineeta Mishra

Bhubaneswar, April 4: In the lead-up to the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in the state, there's a flurry of party-switching among leaders, with the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) nominating around 30 per cent turncoats as candidates.

Out of the 20 candidates announced by the BJD for the 21 Lok Sabha seats, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's party has nominated at least seven leaders who came from either the BJP or the Congress.

The turncoats who have been nominated by Patnaik for the Lok Sabha elections are Surendra Singh Bhoi (Bolangir), Parineeta Mishra (Bargarh), Bhrugu Baxipatra (Berhampur), Manmath Routray (Bhubaneswar), Ansuman Mohanty (Kendrapara), Pradeep Majhi (Nabarangpur) and Dhanurjay

Sidhu (Keonjhar). While a number of senior

leaders including former MP Prasanna Patsani were in the race for the party ticket from Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat, Patnaik preferred to pick Manmath Routray, a commercial pilot and son of six-time Congress MLA Suresh Routray. He was given BJD ticket within hours of his induction in the regional outfit.

In case of Berhampur Lok Sabha seat, Patnaik denied renomination to the party's sitting MP Chandrasekhar Sahu. The party elevated Sahu to the post of vice-president and manifesto committee chairperson before announcing name of Bhrgu Baxipatra as its candidate. Baxipatra joined the BJD on Wednesday.

Similar was the case of BJP leader Parineeta Mishra. Mishra and her husband Sushat joined BJD after resigning from the saffron party Wednesday afternoon and got Patnaik's

nomination in the evening. Baxipatra, who was a vice-

president of BJP and a party cadre for last 23 years, will take on Pradeep Panigrahy, a former close aide of Patnaik. Panigrahy was expelled from

the BJD in November 2020. Baxipatra, was the runners up in Berhampur Lok sabha seat in the 2019 polls. Patnaik preferred to field him in the seat after dropping incumbent MP Chandrasekhar Sahu.

In Balangir parliamentary constituency, the BJD has fielded Surendra Singh Bhoi, a three-time Congress MLA and a former minister. He joined the party March 29 and got a ticket April 3.

BJD also picked ex-Congress MLA Anshuman Mohanty and fielded him as its candidate. Similarly, Patnaik fielded Pradeep Majhi as the BJD's Nabarangpur candidate. Mahji was a former Congress MP and got elected in 2009. He had joined the ruling dispensation

ahead of 2022 panchayat polls. The ruling BJD denied nomination to its sitting MP Chandrani Murmu from Keonjhar and fielded former Congress MLA from Champua Dhanurjaya Sidu as its candidate from the seat.

In 2019, Sidu had contested on a BJP ticket from Telkoi Assembly seat and lost to BJD's Premananda Nayak by 5,920 votes. Sidu then switched to BJD ahead of the 2022 panchayat polls, following which Nayak resigned from the party and joined the BJP.

Similarly, the BJP from among its 21 Lok Sabha candidates, picked three BJD leaders and fielded them. They are Bhatruhari Mahtab (Cuttack), Pradeep Panigrahy (Berhampur) and Malavika Keshari Deo (Kalahandi).

Malavika Keshari Deo, wife of former MP Arka Keshari Deo, is a member of the royal family of Kalahandi district.

Arka Keshari Deo was elected to Lok Sabha from Kalahandi in 2014 as a BJD candidate after the death of his father Bikram Keshari Deo, who won the seat thrice. Arka and his wife quit the BJD after being denied tickets in 2019 and joined the BJP in 2023.

Cuttack's sitting MP Mahtab, who resigned from the BJD on March 22 and joined the BJP on March 28, was announced as the saffron party's candidate from the same seat.

Gopalpur MLA Panigrahy, who was expelled from the BJD in 2020, joined the BJP in February and was fielded as a saffron party aspirant from Berhampur Lok Sabha seat. Panigrahy will face BJD's

### POLITICKLE by MANJUL

I'VE IMPROVED THE ECONOMY SO MUCH THAT EVEN THE LOSS-MAKING COMPANIES COULD DONATE HUNDREDS OF CRORE TO US

## Four held over dacoity plans

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 4: The Commissionerate Police here arrested four hoodlums for allegedly preparing to commit dacoity, under Tamando police station limits, Thursday.

Three knives, one hammer, chili powder packets and mobile phones were seized from the possession of the accused, said a senior officer at the Tamando police station, adding that they have been booked under Sections 399 and 402 of IPC.

IIC Tamando police station Sudhir Kumar Meher said the hoodlums were loitering near Subudhipur cricket ground a little past Wednesday midnight with an intention to rob motorists and heavy vehicle drivers. They had fixed their targets on he added. The accused were identified the vehicles plying from Tamando

to Kalinga Nagar area, he added. Meher said during questioning, the hoodlums failed to provide satisfactory answers after a police team apprehended them near the spot. Later, during sustained questioning they disclosed about their intention to rob motorists,

@MANJUL

as SK Rahim alias Raja, 37, Ananta Das alias Ganesh, 22, Akash Swain, 26 and Niranjan Nayak, 28. The arrested accused were produced before a local court for remand, today.

www.cutm.ac.in

## Prepared to counter Naxal activities during polls: DGP

Odisha Police set up special cell to deal with circulation of -fake news during elections

Bhubaneswar, April 4: The Odisha paredness to counter any Maoist activity during the Lok Sabha elections. Director General of Police (DGP) Arun Sarangi said, Thursday.

"Maoist activities have substantially reduced in the last few years. During the last elections in 2019, there were 20 Maoist-affected districts in Odisha. The number has come down to 10 in this election," Sarangi said

"Maoists along the Odisha-Andhra Pradesh border have withdrawn to Chhattisgarh, but they might create disturbances during the elections,' he cautioned.

Maoists in the state are confined to core areas in Boudh, Kandhamal and Kalahandi districts and the police have made elaborate security arrangements and operational plans to counter their activities, if those increase during the election period, he said.

"Anti-Maoist operations are underway. Recently, we have neutralised



a divisional committee commander and seized explosive materials in the last two to three months," the DGP said.

On election preparedness along the inter-state border areas, he said 15 police districts of Odisha share borders with neighbouring West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh.

"We have already held inter-state cooperation meetings with Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh, while we will have a meeting with West Bengal very soon," he said.

During the meetings, discussions were held on issues related to border sensitivity, the movement of various elements that may disturb the election

process, and the movement of cash. illicit liquor, and narcotic drugs.

Odisha has already set up 118 check posts along different borders. "We have our longest inter-state

boundary with Chhattisgarh and that area is affected by Maoist activities. So, our discussion was mostly around the exchange of intelligence and operational coordination, joint anti-Maoist operations, and how to counter the movement and infiltration of Maoists to either side," the DGP added.

Similar discussions were held with Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh authorities and those were successful, he said.
"We are emphasising cooperation

from the lower level to the level of DGP with these states so that the elections are held smoothly, peacefully and fairly, allowing a level playing field for everyone during the polls, he said.

When asked about steps taken to check fake news, Sarangi said a special cell under the leadership of an IGP has been formed to deal with it.

'We are keeping a close watch on social media and the contents shared in it. If we find any content that may affect public peace and security, we will take strong action," he added.

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- B.Sc. Operation Theatre Technology
- B.Sc. Optometry
- B.Sc. Anesthesia Technology
- B.Sc. Emergency Medicine Technology
- Bachelor in Physiotherapy
- Nursing

### **Masters Courses:**

- M.Sc. in Medical Laboratory Technology
- M.Sc. in Applied & Clinical Microbiology
- M.Sc. Optometry

CAMPUSES: PARALAKHEMUNDI | BHUBANESWAR | VIZIANAGARAM | BOLANGIR | RAYAGADA | BALASORE | CHATRAPUR

## Free blue checks are back on X

New York, April 4: Elon Musk's X. the platform formerly known as Twitter, has begun restoring complimentary blue checks for some of its users, the latest unexpected shift to cause a lot of confusion on the platform.

For years, Twitter's blue checks mirrored verification badges that are common on social media, largely reserved for celebrities, politicians and other influential accounts. That changed months after Musk bought the platform for USD 44 billion in October 2022.

Last year, X began issuing verification checks only to those who paid the starting price of USD 8 per month for it, and stripping verification badges from many celebrities and other prominent accounts. That also led to confusion, complaints, and a large number of fake accounts pretending to be someone else, blue check included.

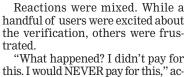
But late Wednesday night and early



Thursday, numerous users reported seeing the blue checks return to their accounts, or appear for the first time, despite the fact that they were not paying for "premium" service on X.

Musk said last week that all X accounts with more than 2,500 verified subscriber followers would get Premium features — which includes a checkmark — for free going forward, and that accounts with over 5,000 would get Premium+ for free.

Specific reasoning behind this new policy was not clear. X did not immediately respond to a request by The Associated Press for comment Thursday.



tress Yvette Nicole Brown, who appeared to be among the prominent names to see a blue check return, wrote in a post Wednesday evening As X's blue check has also evolved

into what some argue is a signal of support for the platform's new ownership and subscription model, a few other accounts even shared instructions on how to get their newly-placed blue checks removed through settings changes.

Multiple AP staff had also received verification status that they did not pay for or request as of Thursday.

Beyond blue checks, X has faced user and advertiser pushback amid ongoing concerns about content moderation as well as the spread of misinformation and hate speech on the platform, which some researchers say has been on the rise under Musk.

# **MERCURY TOUCHES 42°C AT TWO PLACES**

According to IMD, maximum and minimum temperatures in Bhubaneswar are likely to be around 39 degree and 27 degree Celsius respectively in the next 24 hours



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 4: The state. which is reeling under intense heat, Thursday recorded the season's highest temperature so far of 42 degrees Celsius at two places, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

Seven places in the state recorded a maximum temperature of 41 degrees Celsius and above, while the mercury shot up to 42 degree Celsius at Malkangiri and Boudh.

After Malkangiri and Boudh, Angul and Bolangir were the hottest at 41.7 degrees Celsius, followed by Jharsuguda (41.6), and Bhawanipatna (41).

The twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack registered maximum temperatures of 37.4 and 38 degree Celsius re-

spectively. The maximum and minimum temperatures in Bhubaneswar are likely to be around 39 degree and 27 degree Celsius respectively in the next 24 hours, the IMD said.

The Regional Meteorological Centre at Bhubaneswar said that the maximum temperature is likely to be above 40 degree Celsius at many places in the state and may be above normal by three to five degree Celsius in some districts till April 6.

The IMD predicted heatwave conditions to prevail at one or two places in Bolangir, Keonjhar, Boudh, Malkangiri, Nayagarh and Angul districts.

Warm night conditions are likely at one or two places in Bolangir, Kandhamal, Boudh and Bhadrak, it said.

In its evening bulletin, IMD said, "Due to prevailing Northwesterly dry air and high solar insolation, maximum temperature (Day) likely to be more than 40 degree Celsius at many places over the districts and likely to be above normal by 2 to 4 degree Celsius over till April 6. People are advised to take precautionary measures while going outside during day time between 11am and 3pm.

Also maximum temperature (Day) likely to be between 39 and 41 degree Celsius at few places over the interior districts of the state and between 37 and 39 degree Celsius over the coastal districts of the state during next 3 to 4 days. Heat is tolerable for general public but slight health concern for vulnerable people including infant, elderly, pregnant women and sick people.

IMD advised to avoid prolonged heat exposure, wear light weight, light colored, loose cotton clothes, cover your head with a wet cloth, use hat or umbrella while going out during peak hours, drink sufficient water to avoid dehydration, use ORS, homemade drinks like lassi, torani (rice water), sugarcane juice, lemon water and buttermilk to re-hydrate the body.



LODGING COMPLAINT: A BJD delegation meets Chief Electoral Officer Nikunja Bihari Dhal over alleged attack on party supporter from Chandbali, Mahendra Patra, by BJP workers, in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

## Enrolment drive held for City slum children

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 4: With the objective of putting the dropout slum children back in government schools, ActionAid, in collaboration with Centre for Child and Women Development (CCWD) and Government Primary School Second Postal Colony, conducted an enrolment drive on the occasion of Pravesh Utsav, Thursday.

The programme was organised at Patharabandha slum under ward 17 of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC).

Under the drive, the aim was to identify the children from urban slum pockets working as child labourers, domestic help and rag pickers and enroll them in

Various slogans like "Dhara silata dhara khadi, chala jiba patha padhi" and "Sisu ra bikash desha ra bikash"were used to sensitise the slum dwellers and to enroll their children in schools. Headmistress Sailaprava Panda, teachers Majulata Behera and Naxtramalini Pattanayak joined the campaign

"Education helps a child become a confident individual. It teaches them how to socialise with people in society, outside their family, and more. It also helps a child interact with peo-

ple of different beliefs, ages, genders, backgrounds, and a lot more," Panda said.

"Education provides stability in life, and it is something that no one can ever take away from you. By being well-educated and holding a college degree, you increase your chances for better career opportunities and open up new doors for yourself," she

The programme was coordinated by Bhaskar Chandra Pradhan, Shiba Sahoo, Soumya Ranjan Das, Sucharita Behera and Bishnupriya Samal.

### **SUMUM bags** top honours at **Kuala Lumpur**

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 4: SUM Ultimate Medicare (SUMUM), Odisha's newest quaternary care hospital here was presented the 'Excellence in Hospitality and Healthcare Service Award' at an event held recently at Kuala

SUMUM's Chief Executive Officer, Swetapadma Dash received the award, for being chosen as the best hospital in eastern India, at the event organised

"I am deeply humbled to accept this award as this recognition has filled us with immense

pride and joy," Dash said. Within four years of its inception, the 500 -bed hospital has made remarkable progress by becoming the most preferred healthcare centre, she said adding "this award exemplified the hard work and dedication of every member of our team.'

'Together we have created history and set new standards of excellence in the healthcare industry. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our patients, their family members and the community at large for their unwavering support. This award is as much theirs as it is ours, she said



## BEO seeks reply from schools on RTE violation

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 4: The Block Education Officer (BEO) sent show-cause notice to 13 private schools for violation of Right to Education (RTE) Act here Thursday.

The notice was sent after several parents gheraoed the BEO office and locked the gates. They unlocked it following assurance from the BEO.

In a letter to private schools, BEO said, "As per allegation of Odisha Parents' Federation (OPF), you have denied to take admission of the students selected under RTE Paradarshi. The parents are agitated against your refusal. Hence you are di-



rected to explain regarding denial of admission by April 5."

Earlier, the parents launched a protest in the City alleging that children, who are eligible to receive free education in private schools, are being deprived of the benefit and the schools do not adhere to the guidelines.

OPF, in a letter to BEO said, 'Some schools are saying they don't have seats for this year admission in Class I. In the admission portal, vacant seats were reflected and updated by these schools. Some schools have strongly denied accepting this year RTE applications due to as fundamental right.

non-payment of last few years RTE students' fee. We met the Director, Elementary Education of the state yesterday and submitted our grievances to him.'

'We request your kind support to initiate an inquiry on the above violation of RTE Act 2009 and Rule 2010 and recommend for strong action on it," the letter said.

The guardians pointed out under the Right to Education Act 2009, privately managed schools are required to reserve 25 per cent of seats i.e. 15 per cent of seats to be reserved for the disadvantaged and the rest 10 per cent is for children belonging to the weaker sections of society

### SCB conducts 1st liver transplant surgery Hyderabad and SCBMCH. Both

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 4: With an aim to facilitate the poor patients with advanced medical technology, Srirama Chandra Bhanja Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH), Cuttack, for the first time, conducted the liver transplant surgery, Wednesday. A male patient suffering from liver cirrhosis was transplanted with liver donated by his family member.

Taking to X, the Health and Family Welfare department said, "Glad to share that SCBMCH has successfully conducted its first liver transplant operation today. The 10-hour long surgery was conducted by experts of Institute of Asian

the recipient and the donor are in good condition. The care was provided completely free of cost."

After almost a decade long wait, complex treatment process has been facilitated in the state government hospital. The advanced treatment has begun at the special modular operation theatre at the trauma building on the hospital premises.

Notably, liver transplant costs between Rs 25 lakh and Rs 30 lakh in private hospitals across the country. However, the state\_ government is planning to make it affordable at SCBMCH.

The complex operation took around 12 to 13 hours. Recently, an MOU was signed between AIG and SCBMCH for the liver Gastroenterology (AIG), transplantation process.

### **ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL**

## Jatan Nagar Palace: A glimpse into bygone era of grandeur

henkanal's history is intricately woven with tales of valour, culture, heritage and fairs and festivals. This district in Odisha boasts a rich tapestry of history dating back centuries.

Jatan Nagar Palace is one such place which is located amidst the serene landscapes of the district, has its own share of tales, a palace which is embedded in everyone's memory but still seems forgotten.

The palace stands as a testament to the grandeur and architectural finesse of the region's royal heritage. Built in the early 20th century, this palace is located at a distance of around five kilometers from Dhenkanal town.

According to the legend, while Raja Sri Shankar Pratap Singh Deo Mahindra Bahadur was in England, his younger brother, Pattayet Nrusingha Pratap Singh Deo was ruling over Dhenkanal and built the Jatan Nagar Palace.

It is believed that the palace was built with forced labour and elephants were used to carry the heavy stones to



build this mega structure. Every worker was tortured a lot and it is said that many of them even died during the construction and their spirits live within the walls of the palace. The labourers were said to be tortured and in addition to that the Raja's accountant also extracted money from common men. Subsequently, the building was ruined and became one of the haunted palaces

After all these incidents people expected an improved state of affairs after Raja Sri Shankar Pratap would return from abroad and take over administration from his younger brother. Though there are these stories that exist about this palace but no one can pin point if it is true or some of it is just a myth.

Some stories say there were 99 rooms and some mention that there were 100

rooms, people also believe that the king never actually stayed at the Jatan Nagar Palace or even that it was never completed but during an interview with RP Singh Deo, a member from the king's family, mentioned that there aren't 99 or 100 rooms and that the

king did indeed stay there for a few days but because of the agitation

against Britishers he could not manage to live there alone and took the decision to

to Cuttack. It was also mentioned in the interview that people talk about the

shift all the way

palace for various reasons and he also talked about how some say that a person from their family went to stay at the palace for a night and vanished but RP Singh Deo termed it as not true.

Over the years, the Jatan Nagar Palace has been offering a glimpse into the bygone era of royalty and grandeur. As of today, it stands as a heritage landmark, attracting tourists and history enthusiasts alike, who are drawn to its majestic architecture and past, ensuring that the legacy of Dhenkanal's royal heritage lives on for generations to come.

Jatan Nagar Palace is a tangible testament to the city's rich historical legacy and this magnificent palace stands as a symbol of grandeur. Currently the palace is being maintained and has been set up with various lights to give it a whole new look at night and caretakers have also been stationed who look after the maintenance of it and switch those on once the sun sets.

Today, it has become more like a local hangout spot where students often spend time and people often go to conduct photo shoots and night photography as well since the palace is situated on top of a hill and provides

a marvelous view of the night sky. Another reason people visit the palace is that it offers a huge view of the town of Dhenkanal and looks even more as-

tonishing once the sun goes down.

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

# Firm flouts rules for mineral transport

**FEEL THAT VEHICLE MOVEMENT WILL SEVERELY AFFECT BIO-DIVERSITY AND ALSO HARM WILDLIFE** IN THE FOREST

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, April 4: Despite being banned from using a road running through a forest in this district. a mining company is allegedly using it for transportation of minerals, locals alleged here Thursday. They added that it would not have been possible for the firm to do so had it not been for the tacit understanding between it and Forest department officials

Sources said that the firm allegedly denuded a forest land of its green cover to facilitate transportation of minerals from Inganijharan BC Dev mines under Joda mining division in Keonjhar district. Upon coming to know about the development, the Forest department had dug a deep trench on the road. Initially the road re-



mained unusable for a few days. Later on locals were surprised to find that the trench had been filled up and the vehicles of the company were using it again to transport minerals.

Councillor Dipti Ranjan Behera of Ward No 13, his associate Churchill Mahakud of Khuntapani locality and the local villagers lodged a written complaint with the Forest department highlighting this development. They demanded a probe into the irregularities and alleged that the company has been given permission to transport minerals through the forest illegally. They added that the permission was granted without organising a gram sabha in accordance with the Forest Rights Act (FRA).

Locals alleged that the firm initially had built the road through the forest by felling trees illegally. When the Forest department came to know about the development, it had dug a trench March 15 to prevent the movement of vehicles. However, it was filled up within a few days and now vehicles are plying through the road on a

What is surprising to note is that a letter (No 2405/6F-Miningby the DFO and in possession of this correspondent, states that the company has been allowed to use the rural road through the forest for mineral transportation. The letter states that the Baitarani (A) and (B) reserve forests have a 1.7 km-long rural road passing through them. The firm has been given temporary permission to use the road without violating the bio-diversity and harming wildlife.

Villagers living in and around the road alleged that initially the trench was dug up on the direction of the DFO. They asserted that the trench couldn't have been filled up if the DFO had not issued the order. They pointed out that the mining company must have reached an 'understanding' with the Forest department to use the road again.

Earlier, the firm used to transport minerals through the Sai Temple road passing through Ward No 7 of this town. However, the road passing through the forest is a more convenient and shorter. Environmentalists however, fear that the rampant vehicle movements will seriously affect the bio-diversity and harm wildlife in the forest range.

### Fever patient given anti-rabies injection

Bhandaripokhari: In a case of gross negligence, a patient suffering from high fever and body ache was wrongly administered an anti-rabies injection instead of a painkiller. The incident occurred Thursday at the community health centre (CHC) here in Bhadrak district. The patient's family lodged an official complaint and demanded action against the errant nurse. According to information, 56-year-old Bijava Biswal, a resident of Dakshinabada village in Bhadrak district was admitted to the CHC after his family members found he was suffering from high fever and body ache. Accordingly the doctor on duty prescribed an injection for Biswal. However, the nurse on duty gave him an anti-rabies shot instead of the one prescribed by the doctor. Later fearing a backlash, the nurse allegedly fled the spot along with the prescription. "This is a gross negligence on part of the government hospital authorities," the victim's family alleged. "We demand strict action against the nurse," the family members added. Incidentally antirabies injection is given to someone who has been bitten by a dog. Officials of the hospital assured that action will be taken against



POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, April 4: An eightday old newborn boy undergoing treatment at a special care unit at the district headquarters hospital (DHH) here went missing Thursday. Sources said that the boy had been stolen by miscreants who exchanged the newborn with a baby girl. The incident sparked panic among pregnant women admit-

ted to the DHH. The newborn went missing despite the presence of security officials. Till reports last came in, police have failed to trace the baby. It should also be stated here that so far there have been no takers for the baby girl who was found in the cot of the newborn. Family members of the boy and their relatives demanded a

high level probe into the incident. The matter has come as a rude eveopener to many regarding the security provisions in the government-run health facility.

The newborn boy was identified as the baby of Tikili and Susant Barik of Athabatia locality under Baliapal police limits in this district. Tikili gave birth to the baby at the Bhograi community health centre, March 28. Incidentally it was her first baby.

However, the newborn boy



headquarters hospital after doctors at the Bhograi health centre found that he was fuffering from jaundice. The boy was admitted to the newborn care unit of the DHH, Tuesday.

Tikli had come out of the ward for a few minutes Thursday to attend to a doctor. On her return, she found the boy missing and in his place, a baby girl lying in the cot. She immediately raised an alarm, but said that initially the security personnel and nurses in the ward did not pay much heed to her. "Had they acted promptly, my boy could have been saved," she lamented.

Later, Susant informed the CDMO and lodged a complaint at the police outpost inside the hospital. Police rushed to the spot and launched an investigation. Questions are being raised as to how someone could steal the newborn when two CCTV cameras are installed within the ward and in presence of security staff.

### Class-III student critical after falling in hot gruel



Marshaghai, April 4: A Class-III student sustained critical ininto a pot filled with hot rice gruel at the Ananta Narayan Government Upper Primary School at Bahakandia village under Mehendinagar panchayat of Marshaghai block in Kendrapara district.

The injured student was identified as Ahan Nayak, son of Bijayalakhsmi Nayak, a resident of the same village. School authorities rescued him and got him admitted to the burn ward of the district headquarters hospital in Kendrapara. Doctors informed that the kid suffered severe burns on his back. However, he is responding to treatment.

Eye-witnesses said that Ahan had come out from the class to go somewhere. In a hurry, Ahan slipped and landed in a pot filled with hot gruel and suffered injuries. His mother, who reached the school soon demanded that authorities pay for the treatment of Ahan.

## Youth's death in accident sparks tension; villagers set truck ablaze

Keonjhar, April 4: A 22-year-old youth was killed on the spot after being run over by a 14-wheeler truck at an area in Banspal block of this district Wednesday night. The deceased was identified as Santosh Dehuri of Binida village in the same district. Locals said that Santosh was the sole earning member of his family. He is survived by his elderly parents, wife and a two-month-old son.

The mishap occurred when Santosh was returning home from his workplace at around 11.00pm, Wednesday. The death of the youth sparked tension in the area with the locals setting the 'killer' truck on fire. However, the driver and his assistant managed to flee the spot.

Family members and villagers guarded the body all night and blocked the road demanding compensation. On being informed, police reached the spot but were confronted by an irate group of villagers.

A scuffle broke out between villagers and the police. Phul Jenis Jinia, officer in-charge (OIC) of Suakati police outpost, sustained critical injuries during the scuffle with the mob. He was first admitted to the Banspal community health centre at night but later, shifted to the district headquarters hospital here. Later



Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, sources said.

Locals complained about police atrocity Wednesday night. They said that a contingent of police arrived in Binida village, which is two kilometres away from the accident spot. It has been alleged that the cops mercilessly thrashed many of the villagers and detained a number of them. Since then, most of the village is wearing a deserted look with many of

its residents running away. Police continued Thursday their efforts to control the situation. In the afternoon, police handed over the body to family members after post-mortem for cremation.

Ward member Arvind Dehuri

said cops arrested about 25 people including children and took them to the police station. They are vet to be released. He alleged that women had been harassed by the cops and the doors of many houses had been broken open.

The sarpanch of Raigoda panchayat said that many innocent people have been taken into custody. "It was a spontaneous reaction of the mob after the accident. We appeal to the police to let the innocent people go and not detain them any longer,'

Inspector in-charge of Sadar PS Trinath Sethi said, "We appeal to the people to maintain peace. After an inquiry, the details would emerge," he said.

#### **DEMAND NOTICE** 1.SHREERAM FOOD PRODUCTS Dist. Nayagarh, Odisha - 752081 4.Shri Survakanta Sahoo w/o of Late Baikuntha Nath Sahoo,(In the capacity of Lega s/o of Late Baikuntha Nath Sahoo heir of Baikuntha Nath Sahoo since deceased), Nelia Sahi Nelia Sahi, Nandighore, Dist. Nayagarh, Odisha - 752081 5.Shri Suryakanta Sahoo s/o of Late Baikuntha Nath Sahoo,(In the capacity of Lega heir of Baikuntha Nath Sahoo since deceased) Nelia Sahi, Nandighore,Dist. NayagarhO,disha - 752081 s/o of Late Baikuntha Nath Sahoo Nelia Sahi, Nandighore, Dist. Nayagarh, Odisha – 752081 7.Shri Tarakanta Sahoo 8.Shri Chandrakanta Sahoo s/o of Late Baikuntha Nath Sahoo. (In the capacity of Lega heir of Baikuntha Nath Sahoo since decease Nandighore,Dist. Nayagarh, Odisha – 75208 9.Shri Chandrakanta Sahoo s/o of Late Baikuntha Nath Sahoo,(In the capacity of Legal heir of Baikuntha Nath Sahoo since deceased). Nelia Sah NandighoreDist. Nayagarh, Odisha - 752081 Sub: Notice under Section 13 (2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Security Interest Act, 2002.

We, Axis Bank Limited (hereinafter referred to as "the Bank") having its Registered Office at Trishul, Opp Samartheswar Temple, Law Garden, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad — 380006 and its Corporate Office at Axis House, C-2, Wadia International Centre, P.B.Marg, Worli , Mumbai-400 025 and having Structured Asset Group, East at 1 Shakespeare Sarani, AC Market 4" floor, Kolkata-7000071 do hereby give this Notice under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, in its capacity as Secured Creditor.

You No.1 carrying business in the name and style as "Mys SHREERAM FOOD PRODUCTS" (hereinafter referred to as "the firm") had approached the bank for availing certain credit facilities and after due consideration, the bank sanctioned credit facilities vide sanction letter no. AXISB/SME/BBSR/1033/2016-17 dated 24,03,2017 and AXISB/SME/BBSR/318/2018-19 dated 28.08.2018 on such terms and conditions mentioned therein. Thereafter, the facilities have been reviewed/renewed/enhanced from time to time and the same have been duly accepted by you all on such terms and conditions more specifically mentioned therein.

The details of the credit facilities availed by you No. 1 with Axis Bank Ltd are as follows: Limit sanctioned

Term Loan -You No.1 as well as the addressee no. 2, 4, 6, 8 and Late Baikuntha Nath Sahoo (Since deceased presently represented by addressee no. 3, 5, 7 and 9 in the capacity of his legal heirs) have accepted all the terms and conditions of said sanctions and you had entered into and executed various documents/Agreements/Joint documents and created various securities as

detailed in Schedule I and II, with the Bank, inter alia, agreeing to repay the principal amount along with applicable interes That in terms of the sanction, Late Baikuntha Nath Sahoo (Since deceased presently represented by addressee no. 3, 5, 7 and 9 in the capacity of his legal heirs) have created equitable mortgage over properties together with all building and structures

more particularly described in the schedule, for securing due repayment of all the aforementioned credit facilities sanctioned to the proprietorship firm and also extended from time to time.

You No. 2, 4, 6, 8 and Late Baikuntha Nath Sahoo (Since deceased presently represented by addressee no. 3, 5, 7 and 9 in the capacity of his legal heirs) have executed the necessary documents including Deed of Guarantees in favour of the Bank thereby guaranteeing the due repayment of the credit Facilities along with the interest and future charges.

We say that the above credit facilities are also secured by hypothecation of current assets, book debts, movables, stocks, mor particularly mentioned in the Schedule I. The aforesaid securities are "Secured Assets" within the meaning of Section 2(1)(zc) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction o Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act")

The aforesaid Secured Assets are fully owned by you, the addressees above named who are "Borrowers" within the mean of Section 2 (1)(f) of the Act. We state that despite having availed the aforesaid credit facility, You No.1 have committed various defaults in repayment o We state that despite having availed the aloresaid credit facility, found, it has committed values a standard in Ferral interest and principal amounts as per due dates. The said Credit facility is classified by the bank as a Non-Performing Asset (NPA) w.e.f. 02.05.2019 in accordance with the directions / guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India from time to time. The present position of the credit facilities after giving credit to all the payments made by you is as under: (Amount in Rupees)

Total dues as on 31 Contractual Rate

Limit sanctioned	01.2024 (Interest applied upto 31.01.2024) #	of Interest	Penal Interest
6,00,00,000.00	9,67,56,067.86	3 months MCLR + 1.60%	4.00% over and above the existing interest rate
95,00,000.00	1,21,61,407.56	1 year MCLR + 2.10%	2.00% over and above the existing interest rate
75,15,000.00	87,40,038.20	1 year MCLR + 1.60%	2.00% over and above the existing interest rate
76,00,000.00	86,92,204.20	1 year MCLR + 1.60%	2.00% over and above the existing interest rate
8,46,15,000.00	12,63,49,717.82		
	6,00,00,000.00 95,00,000.00 75,15,000.00 76,00,000.00	Limit sanctioned 01.2024 (Interest applied upto 31.01.2024) # 6,00,00,000.00 9,67,56,067.86 95,00,000.00 1,21,61,407.56 75,15,000.00 87,40,038.20 76,00,000.00 86,92,204.20	Limit sanctioned         01.2024 (Interest applied upto 31.01.2024) #         of Interest           6,00,00,000.00         9,67,56,067.86         3 months MCLR + 1.60%           95,00,000.00         1,21,61,407.56         1 year MCLR + 2.10%           75,15,000.00         87,40,038.20         1 year MCLR + 1.60%           76,00,000.00         86,92,204.20         1 year MCLR + 1.60%

# The above amount due as on 31.01.2024 (This amount include interest applied upto 31.01.2024) together with further interes we followed to your failure to meet your liability in respect of the said credit facility and classification of your account as NPA, we hereby invoke the provisions of Section 13 of the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of

Security Interest Act, 2002 and by this Notice issued under the provisions of Section 13(2) of the aforesaid Act and without prejudice to the Bank's rights arising from the various documents executed by you, we hereby call upon You No. 1 as Borrower, and You No. 2, 4, 6, 8 and Late Baikuntha Nath Sahoo (Since deceased presently represented by addressee Borrower, and You No. 2, 4, 6, 8 and Late Balkuntha Nath Sahoo (Since deceased presently represented by addressee no. 3, 5, 7 and 9 in the capacity of his legal heirs) as Guarantor, jointly and severally, to make payment of an amount of Rs. 12,63,49,717.82 (Rupees Twelve Crores Sixty Three Lacs Forty Nine Thousand Seven Hundred seventeen and paise eighty two only) being the amount due as on 31,01.2024 (This amount include interest applied upto 31,01.2024) together with further interest w.e.f 01.02.2024 at the contractual rate of interest, till the date of payment, within a period of 60 days from the date of this notice. In case of your failure to make repayment of the Bank's dues in the aforesaid manner, the Bank will be entitled to and will exercise all or any of the rights available to it under Section 13 (4) and 15 of the Act in respect of the secured asset(s) mentioned hereinabove including the management of the business of You No.1.

Please further note that as mentioned in sub-section 13 of Sec.13 of the aforesaid Act, you shall not transfer by way of sale.

lease or otherwise any of the assets stated under security referred to in this Notice without prior written consent of the Bank As per the provision of the aforesaid Act, all of you are also informed that in case if the proceeds from the liquidation of the secured assets are not adequate to cover the dues of the Bank, the Bank reserves its right to proceed against all of you jointly and severally for recovery of balance dues by initiating appropriate legal action.

And severally for recovery or balance does by initiating appropriate legal action.

Kindly note that all costs, charges, expenses that shall be incurred by the Bank in the process of its actions under Section 13 (4) and incidental thereto shall be recoverable from you in the manner prescribed under the Act.

Please further, we draw your attention to the provisions of Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act and the Rules framed thereunder which deals with your right of redemption over the secured assets.

Please further note that Demand Notices issued u/s 13(2) of SARFAESI Act dated 11.02.2022 and published on 09.07.2023 in

Orissa Post (English) and Sambad (Odhia)and Demand Notice issued u/s 13(2) of SARFAESI Act dated 22.11.2023 and published on 13.12.2023 in Orissa Post (English) and Sambad (Odhia) stands withdrawn and any action taken thereafte SCHEDULEI

**DETAILS OF HYPOTHECATED ASSETS** 

a) The whole of the Borrower's all stocks of raw material work in progress semi-finished goods and finished goods such as packing materials, consumable stores and spares etc., whatsoever situate and or transit whether now belonging to or that may at any time during the continuance of this security belong to the borrower or that may be held by any party any where to the order and disposition of the borrower.

(b) All the present and future book-debts, outstanding monies, receivables claims bills, contracts, engagements and securities which are now due and owing or which may at any time hereafter during the continuance of this security become due and owing to the borrower in the course of its business by any person firm company or body corporate or by the Government of India or any state Government or any Government Department or office or any Municipal or local or Public or Semi-Government body or authority whatsoever including those relating to the assets leased out and/or given on hire purchase basis.

SCHEDULE II

DETAILS OF MORTGAGED PROPERTY

Figuritable Mortgage of Land & Building on Plot No. 618, 617 (Khata No. 196/185 and Plot No. 613 Khata No. 196/361.

No. 614 and 612

Place: Odisha

Date: 05-04-2024

Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building on Plot No. 616, 617 Khata No. 196/185 and Plot No. 613 Khata No. 196/361, Mouza – Akhupadar, admeasuring total area of AC 1.46 dec, registered in the name of Shri Baikuntha Nath Sahoo.Booted And bounded by -North: Plot No. 618 and 821, South: Plot No. 615 (Anabadi) and Plot No. 797, East: Road, West: Plot No. 615 (Anabadi)

### Woman injured in tusker attack

Rourkela, April 4: A woman suffered serious injuries when she was attacked in the wee hours of Thursday by a tusker while collecting 'mohua' flowers in a forest of Sundargarh district. The ill-fated lady, identified as Lata, is a resident of Mahullata village under Kuliposh forest range of Bonai division. Initially the injured woman was rushed to the Bonai community health centre (CHC) and later she was transferred to the Rourkela Government Hospital here after her condition deteriorated. Doctors informed in the evening

that the condition of Lata is stable.

It should be stated here that the 'mohua' flowers are also delicious fodder for the elephants. Lata was unaware about the presence of the tusker in the forest when she was collecting the flowers. Suddenly the elephant appeared out of nowhere and attacked Lata.

Luckily for Lata, other villagers were nearby. Hearing Lata's screams they rushed to the spot and managed to scare the elephant away. Despite catching Lata with the trunk, the elephant could not throw Lata to a distance as other villagers had arrived. However, even then Lata suffered a number of broken bones

### Man gets 20 yrs RI for raping minor

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 4: Keonjhar Fast Track Court Judge Bijay Kumar Mishra sentenced Thursday, a 53-year-old man to 20 years rigorous imprisonment for raping a five-year-old girl. The convict, identified as Kampani Padukar of Masinabila village under Ghatgaon police station, has also been levied a penalty of ₹10,000. Failure to do so will entail an additional six months in jail. Padukar had committed the heinous crime, April 9, 2023.

Sources said that on the fateful day the victim was playing alone in front of her house while her parents had gone to collect forest produces. Taking advantage of the situation, the convict forcibly took the minor to some distance away from her house, gagged her and then raped her. Padukar then fled the spot. Little while later, when the victim's parents were returning home they saw her bleeding and crying in pain.

The kid then narrated her ordeal to her parents. They immediately took her to the Ghatgaon community health



centre for treatment. Based on a complaint lodged by the victim's father at the Ghatgaon police station, cops ar rested the convict.

"Today, the Fast Track Court has pronounced the sentence under Section 6 of the POCSO Act based on the statements of 16 witnesses and the police re port," special public prosecutor, Gyanendranath Jena said. He added that he has recommended to the district legal services authority to provide an assistance of ₹4 lakh to the victim's family.

IndusInd Bank 🖼

Regional Office: 3A Upper Wood Street Branch, 1st Floor, Savitri Tower, Kolkata - 700017

APPENDIX IV [Refer Rule 8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the IndusInd Bank Ltd. under th Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act,2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued Demand Notice dated 13-09-2023 calling upon the Borrower - M/S SIDHARTH ENGINEERING (Represented by its Proprietor Mr. Ranjan Kumar Das), MR. RANJAN KUMAR DAS (Guarantor/Mortgagor) and MRS. SMITARANI DAS (Guarantor) to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice being Rs. 49,11,172.41/- (Rupees Forty Nine Lakhs Eleven Thousand One Hundred Seventy Two and Paisa Forty One Only/-) as on 31 August, 2023 with further interest from the date and Interest mentioned agains respective credit facility in the said notice dated 13-09-2023 plus penal interest @ 18.75% p.a. (Simple Basis) from 1st September, 2023 plus costs, charges and expenses etc within 60 days from the date of the said notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers

and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this the 03<sup>rd</sup> day of April of the year 2024.

The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the IndusInd Bank Ltd. for an amount of Rs. 49,11,172.41/- (Rupees Forty Nine Lakhs Eleven Thousand One Hundred Seventy Two and Paisa Forty One Only/-) as on 31 August, 2023 with further interest from the date and Interest mentioned against respective credit facility in the said notice dated 13-09-2023 plus penal interest @ 18.75% p.a. (Simple Basis) from 1st September, 2023 plus costs, charges and expenses etc The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act,

in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of Immovable Property

All that piece and parcel of land together with the construction there upon (if any) situated at District Angul, Tahasil Banarpal, Mouza Turanga, Khata No. 929/2823, Plot No 6358/9978, Area Ac.0.030dec. out of Ac.0.070dec; Plot No. 6359, Area Ac.0.030dec out of Ac.0.050dec; Plot No. 6360/9979, Area Ac.0.005dec.; Plot No. 6361/9982, Area Ac.0.005dec.; Plot No. 6362/9974. Area Ac.0.015dec.; Plot No. 6380/9993, Area Ac.0.020dec. out of Ac.0.055dec.; Khata No. 929/3487, Plot No. 6374/10601, Area Ac.0.005dec.; Total Area Ac.0.110dec. corresponding to Mutation & conversion Khata No. 929/3974, Plot No. 6358/9978/11014, Area Ac.0.030dec.; Plot No. 6359/11015, Area Ac.0.030dec.; Plot No. 6360/9979, Area Ac.0.005dec.; Plot No. 6361/9982, Area Ac.0.005dec.; Plot No. 6362/9974, Area Ac.0.015dec.; Plot No. 6380/9993/11016, Area Ac.0.020dec.; Plot No. 6374/10601, Area Ac.0.005dec.; Total Area Ac.0.110dec. Kisam Gharabari i.e. Homestead. Butted and bounded, as mentioned in Deed No 10011701676/2017, in North by: Sinibasis Company; in South by: Self; in East by: Road and in West by: Road

\*The details/Description of the property are more particularly mentioned in Registered Sale Deed being No. 10011701676 dated 23.06.2017 for the year 2017 which was registered in the name of Mr. Ranjan Kumar Das

**Authorized Office** Date: 03/04/2024 IndusInd Bank Ltd.



The Atheist is God playing at hide

**SRI AUROBINDO** 



Mark Jones

Historians agree

that Hitler's 1924

trial was a travesty.

Instead of ending

Hitler's political

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him into the leader

who would

later

dismantle the

**Weimar Republic** 

less than a decade

## **Lessons From History**

n 1 April, 1924, Adolf Hitler should have been terrified. Four and a half months earlier, the Nazi leader had led a failed coup d'état in Munich, the Bavarian capital. Inspired by the Italian Fascist Benito Mussolini, Hitler had planned to march his supporters on to Berlin, where they would destroy the democratic Weimar Republic.

The insurrection began just after 8 pm on 8 November, 1923, when Hitler and his followers burst into a political rally and held the crowd hostage. During the drunken rampage that followed, Hitler's Sturmabteilung (Storm Troopers) vandalised their opponents' political offices and assaulted the city's Jews as they tried, but failed, to occupy central Munich.

The Nazi attempt to seize power ended the following morning, with a column of 2,000 armed putschists, led by Hitler, confronting the police and the German army in the Odeonsplatz (a large public square). After a brief firefight, four Bavarian policemen lay dead. Hitler, who was dragged to the ground when the gunfire started, fled the scene in agony, having dislocated his shoulder. The man standing beside him was fatally shot.

After two and a half days in hiding, Germany's most wanted man

was discovered in the rural Bavarian home of his ardent supporter, Harvard graduate Ernst "Putzi" Hanfstaengl. Hitler was charged with treason, and his trial began on 26 February, 1924. The prosecutor advocated severe punishment, calling him the "soul" of the insurrection. And yet, on 1 April – ironically, April

Fools' Day – the judge, having found Hitler guilty, imposed the minimum sentence required by Bavarian law: five years of "honorable confinement," with the possibility of early release for good behaviour. After the ruling, Hitler was permitted to leave the court and pose for photographs outside. Prosecutors were unable to appeal the lenient sentence, and Hitler was free before the end of the year, having used his time in confinement to write Mein Kampf. Germans who supported the Weimar

Republic were outraged. A man who had tried to overthrow their democratic system of government had received a slap on the wrist. The light sentence handed down to Hitler demonstrated that the authority of the state was "dead and buried," as Germany's most important Catholic newspaper put it. Influential liberals accused the court of giving putschists a green light to repeat the crime

Hitler's sympathisers gleefully taunted his liberal opponents, telling them not to get too "emotional" and that they should 'let the past be the past," while calling the sentence "severe." Their celebrations marked the culmination of a month-long publicity campaign that portrayed the Nazi leader as the victim of a biased justice system bent on tearing down

Some media outlets eagerly played along. One center-right Munich newspaper even declared that it was "no secret" that its sympathies lay with the accused, before referring to the founders of the Weimar Republic as the "November criminals," a phrase used by Hitler to legitimise the Nazis' violence.

Hitler had played to this audience during the trial. The packed courtroom was filled with his supporters, a curious mixture of women and adolescent males. As the case came to an end, he went so far as to claim - in one final act of triumphant propaganda - that the judge's decision was irrelevant because the "goddess of history" would acquit him.

Historians agree that Hitler's 1924 trial was a travesty. Instead of endng Hitler's political career, the case helped solidify his popularity and mold him into the leader who would dismantle the Weimar Republic less than a decade later. That miscarriage of justice was facilitated by the trial's location in the anti-democratic south, and by the role of the presiding judge, Georg Neithardt, a conservative who was happy to allow Hitler to use his court as a platform to attack the Republic.

But there is less consensus about the relevance of Hitler's 1924 trial today. Just as American conservatives reject comparisons of Trumpism and fascism, some historians argue that the fate of the Weimar Republic, however fascinating, offers few lessons for navigating the current political tumult in the United States. For them, Hitler's coup attempt in 1923 bears no resemblance to the events of 6 January, 2021, when President Donald Trump's "Save America" rally ended with an insurrection at the US Capitol that left five people dead and another 140 injured, and forced members of Congress to flee for their lives.

Conservatives are not alone in their unwillingness to draw these parallels: most American liberals are likewise reluctant to dissect the events of 1924. If they did, they would understand that the various cases against Trump, the Republican party's presumptive presidential nominee, are having the same effect as the Hitler trial had a century earlier: invigorating the defendant's supporters.

Like Hitler in 1924, Trump is using the courtroom as a stage on which to present himself as the victim, arguing that a crooked "deep state" is out to get him. Only by taking this comparison seriously, rather than rejecting it out of hand, will Democrats come to recognise the importance of campaigning on what they are, rather than what they

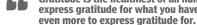
The writer is Assistant Professor of History at University College Dublin.

### WISDOM CORNER



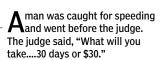
The most glorious moments in your life are not the so-called days of success, but rather those days when out of dejection and despair you feel rise in you a challenge to life, and the promise of future

There is no fixed physical reality, no single perception of the world, just numerous ways of interpreting world views as dictated by one's nervous system and the specific environment of our planetary



Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have







The man replied, "I think I'll take the

### FOCUS KATCHATHEEVU ROW

## FLOGGING A DEAD HORSE



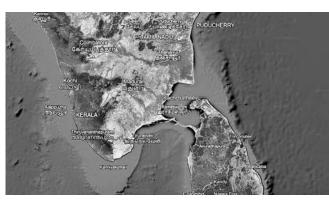
DK Giri

KATCHATHEEVU IS NOT THE **SAME AS ANY TERRITORY OCCUPIED OR CLAIMED BY CHINA** 

tweet by the Prime Minister has stirred up a hornets' nest in diplomatic and political circles. On 31 March, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted, "Eve opening and startling new facts reveal how Congress callously gave away Katchatheevu Islet to Sri Lanka. Critics in no time screamed that Modi was trying to score a political point in Tamil Nadu. The state votes for Parliament on 19 April. The Congress and DMK are in alliance. Modi added that Congress government did it in tacit concurrence of DMK patriarch M Karunanidhi. This incurred sharp reactions from DMK as well as the Congress, and some diplomatic counter from Sri Lanka.

Scanning the reactions, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, son of Karunanidhi tried to take a pot shot against the Prime Minister, "What steps Prime Minister has taken to retrieve the Islet? Karunanidhi had opposed ceding it away." Stalin's reaction was countering the Prime Minister as well as appealing to the Tamil sentiments, mainly the fishermen, associated with the Islet. The Congress contends that the Islet was given away as a part of friendly arrangement. Sri Lankan government stated that the sovereignty of the Islet has been settled by the 1974 and 1976 Boundary Agreements.

The Prime Minister's tweet rings a bell regardless of accusations of political opportunism. Under the Congress leadership, India lost quite a bit of territory and strategic advantages, ironically, after the British pulled out of the Indian Sub-Continent. I am referring to about 5000 sq km of territory under Chinese occupation, and in particular, the loss of Tibet, an independent country to the Chinese. The British administration in India had maintained Tibet as a buffer between China and India.



One may say the Prime Minister is flogging a dead horse; it is a political rhetoric during election time. However, the historic lapses with regard to our territory are painfully reminded through the reference to Katchatheevu

Historians argue that Chou-en-Lai, the Chinese Premier, talked Nehru into legitimising Chinese sovereignty over Tibet without any reciprocal concession. Nehru acquiesced in Chinese wish as "he had too much faith and confidence in China.

Katchatheevu is a tiny island consisting of 285 acres in the Palk Straight, a stretch of ocean between India and Sri Lanka. It is 1.6 km long and 300 metre wide and 33 km far from the Indian coast in the North-West of Rameshwaram. Its distance from Jaffna. Sri Lanka is about 62 km. There is only one structure on this Islet, a church built by the British in the 20th Century and run by pastors from India and Sri Lanka. Both countries stake claim to fishing rights in the waters around Katchatheevu.

In 1974, Sri Lanka and India signed a Maritime Boundary Agreement which ended the dispute. India relinquished any claim over the Island. The Agreement affected the rights of Indians in Katchatheevu. Since then, Indian fishermen continued to be arrested by Sri Lankan Naval authorities as

India had surrendered fishing rights in the Island. A subsequent pact signed on 23 March, 1976 about Gulf of Mannar, the Bay of Bengal and related matters "settled beyond doubt" the sovereignty of Sri Lanka over the Islet.

The Congress argument refers to the exchange of territories around these agreements. India secured, in return, the exclusive rights of Wadge Bank the waters in the South of Cape Comorin.

The DMK argument is that Karunanidhi had not consented to the 1976 agreement which deprived Indian fishermen of their rights to fish around Katchatheevu; he was not in power at that time. But the RTI document reveals the facts to the contrary

Apparently, the BJP is attempting to correct some strategic mistakes committed in the past. As said above, giving away Tibet is one such blunder. Taking Kashmir into the United Nations as Indian Army was clearing the Pak-backed tribal invaders is another. Several such lapses have been pointed out by historians. I have referred to quite

a few of them in this column Digging into the debates in the 1960s about Katchatheevu, indicate an indifferent approach adopted by Nehru. As per the available documents, Nehru said that he attached, "no importance at all to Katchatheevu and that he would have no hesitation in giving up claims to it." At the same time, the officials of the Foreign Ministry and other experts thought that India had a "good legal case to assert claim over Katchatheevu"; an Indian king "continuously and interruptedly" ruled the Island between 1875 and 1948.

Nehru's attitude was similar when he harshly commented that "not a blade of grass grew in Aksai Chin." This was during a debate in Rajya Sabha when China was invading, in filtrating and occupying Ladakh (Aksai Chin). In fact, a Member of Parliament, Mahavir Tyagi sarcastically retorted to Nehru pointing to his bald head "There is no single hair on my head, shall I then cut it off?" In any case, historians and experts attribute Nehru's statement as a lame excuse for the failure of not being able to defend Indian territory against Chinese aggression.

Of course, Katchatheevu is not the same as any territory occupied or claimed by China. It was given away or relinquished under a peaceful, negotiated agreement. Also, Sri Lanka is a friendly country. One may say the Prime Minister is flogging a dead horse; it is a political rhetoric during election time. However, as said, the historic lapses with regard to our territory are painfully reminded through the reference to Katchatheevu. The country has to deal with that pain, by correcting the faultlines and precluding their recurrence.

The writer is Secretary General, Association for Democratic Socialism.

### SPECTRUM MEDIATION

## Boon for commercial dispute resolution



P Madhva Rao

IT TOOK TIME FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO REALISE THAT **COMMERCIAL MATTERS TOO CAN BE RESOLVED THROUGH MEDIATION** 

crore cases pending in Indian Courts, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms are gaining importance and becoming quite approachable to industry, businesses, and individuals in resolving their commercial disputes. The Mediation Act, 2023, enacted in September 2023, has changed the landscape of dispute resolution in India, reducing dependency on traditional courts. Mediation, however, is not new to India, and Section 89 of the Civil Procedure Code was amended in 2002 to include mediation as an approach to dispute resolution through amicable settlement outside courts, where courts are the ones recommending cases to mediation. The amendment provided reference to all cases pending before courts for mediation so that sensitive family matters could be amicably settled through a dialogue between the parties. The amendment had allowed parties to compromise on trivial matters that do not require lengthy probe by courts. This amendment conveniently forgot to include commercial cases pending between government, government agencies, public bodies, and individual disputants.

It took time for the govern-

ment to realise that commercial matters too can be resolved through mediation. Thus, the commercial courts came into existence with over 8,200 cases pending in them for settlement today. The Commercial Courts Act, 2015, after realising the importance of the approach of mediated settlement of disputes, was amended in 2018 to include pre-institutional mediation between parties for an amicable settlement outside courts. The law makers again forgot

that the cases in motor accident claims tribunals, debt recovery tribunals, disputes under negotiable instruments, acts, civil and construction contracts between government bodies and private firms, and licencing systems for starting businesses could also form part of commercial disputes and could be amicably settled to allow trouble-free growth of industry and business. It was argued by many disputants that this avoidance was not a simple oversight of the government but a calculated effort for reasons better known to the administrators and lawmakers.

The promises of creating an environment of ease of doing rect investments, and creating trouble-free access to justice for the industrial community within India and from outside India made the government re-think allowing commercial disputes pending between the government and the individual or an industry to be settled amicably. The Mediation Act. 2023, emphasises this in the opening sentences of the Act by saying, "An effective dispute resolution process has a significant impact on the economy and doing business in the country, thereby promoting ease of living for citizens, access to justice, and the rule of law. The rapidly changing society and progress in various areas, not limited to the economic, industrial, or financial sectors, demand commensurate expeditious settlement of disputes between the parties, which at present is time-consuming. Thus, there is a need to further promote alternative dispute resolution (ADR), inter alia, through institutional mediation. The Act further goes empha-

sising on application of the act to mediations conducted in India for resolving government disputes involving individuals in its section 2(iv) wherein one of the par-

business, bringing foreign di-ties to the dispute is the Central or agencies, public bodies, corporations, and local bodies, including entities controlled or owned by such Government and where the matter pertains to a commercial dispute or (v) to any other kind of dispute if deemed appropriate and notified by the Central Government, or a State Government from time to time, for resolution through mediation under this Act, wherein such Governments, or agencies, public bodies, corporation, and local bodies including entities controlled or owner by them, is a party.

This emphasis on the government's intention about a mediated settlement of its commercial disputes with the public need not be overemphasised. The Act assigns enormous responsibility to the government now to institutionalise mediation in India, establish the proposed Mediation Council of India, and accord permissions to existing mediation institutions so that the public could utilise mediation services without waiting any further for the already delayed system of easy access to justice.

The writer is a former international senior advisor to the UNDP.

TO THE EDITOR Readers of Orissa POST

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

rissapost B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

### Maritime development

Sir, In hindsight India is yet to fully realise its maritime potential. Every 5 April is observed as National Maritime day to defend, shield and preserve India's maritime zone. For a country with a long coastline of over 7,500 km, this only reflects a lack of political will. Maritime development can act as engine of growth and development besides boosting a country's economic growth. The "waterways trade" or the inland waterway can supplement, or even ease, the road and rail trade load. The government's plan of doubling the port capacity by 2025 is ambitious. Similarly, the need to upgrade the existing ports should occupy its attention. There should also be important infrastructural changes at seaports. Old and worn out ships must make way for new, robust ones. Prudent utilisation of funds and effective implementation of decisions will go a long way in carrying our maritime strength to exalted levels apart from generating thousands of jobs. Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

### **Breather for Cong**

Sir, In a breather for the Congress, the Income Tax Department informed the Supreme Court that it would abstain from taking any coercive action against the cash-strapped party regarding tax demands till the Lok Sabha elections were over. The Congress noted that the party can expect a level playing field. Trouble had been mounting for the Congress, with the taxman raising a total tax demand of ₹3,567 crore from the party.

> NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

### Whims of agencies

Sir, This refers to the news report "No trace of money: SC" (Orissa Post, April 3). The AAP MP Sanjay Singh has been released on bail by the apex court as no bribe money has been recovered from him. The pertinent question arises why and for whose fault he suffered mental and physical trauma by languishing in jail for so many months? Who will compensate him and his family members? This is no child's play for the fundamental right of a person cannot be curtailed at the whims of the probe

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA





## UTTAR PRADESH TWO STATES





FRIDAY | APRIL 5 | 2024 | BHUBANESWAR

## LS polls: Tough road ahead for SP, Congress Jute sector crisis may give edge to TMC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 4: Lower gov ernment demand against the annual projections of jute bags resulting in a short-term instability in mills' operations and curtailment of the labour force may cast a shadow on the BJP's poll fortune in the jute belt of West Bengal, a major producer of the golden fibre, industry stakeholders said.

Despite an increase in minimum support price for raw material and no dilution of the norm of 100 per cent food grain packaging in jute bags by the Centre, the temporary order crisis ahead of the elections may give an edge to the TMC in the electoral battle, as the ruling party in the state is making the wage revision by mills in January a poll plank to galvanise support among labourers, they

Mills in Bengal directly employ about 2.5 lakh workers, while 40 lakh farmers are engaged in producing the raw material in the state, and political parties are reaching out to them to secure their support in the jute belt comprising parts of several Lok Sabha constituencies in Hooghly, North 24 Parganas and Howrah

"Mills have already started curtailing production by 10-15 per cent, and this is expected to worsen further to 20-25 per cent. Some units are operating four to five days a week to match output with actual demand. Mills produce jute bags based on projections. In the current Rabi crop season, the government procurement for jute bags for food



grains has been lower by 3.5 lakh bales as compared to projections given by the government at the beginning of the season." Indian Jute Mills Association chairman Raghav Gupta said.

Apart from production cuts, there are reports of mill closure and the main cause is a lack of government demand for jute bags, he said. At least one mill. Syamnuggur Jute Factory in Hooghly, has recently issued a suspension of work notice, citing labour-related problems, and hundreds of workers became iobless, an industry veteran said on condition of anonymity.

"Although the BJP-led NDA government has remained steadfast in improving the sector and held a stakeholder meeting for a five-vear rejuvenation roadmap. this may not translate into votes for the saffron party in the upin mill operations and labour cut has become an issue," he

Traditionally, many workers usually return to their native places for agriculture purposes when they have no jobs in mills, the industry veteran said, adding that "this will not augur well for the BJP as many of them are voters in the labourers' colony and are supporters of the saffron camp"

Arjun Singh, who is seeking re-election from the Barrackpore Lok Sabha seat in North 24 Parganas on a BJP ticket, blamed a section of mill owners for the ongoing crisis

The jute bag procurement crisis is due to some unscrupulous mills, which illegally procure Bangladeshi raw jute and use old sacking bags. I have written to the government, and except that the problem may get sorted

tailing production this year? They should meet the government demand," he claimed.

In 2019, the BJP secured Barrackpore and Hooghly Lok Sabha constituencies where the presence of jute mills is on the higher side, while the TMC bagged seats in regions having a significant concentration of jute farming.

TMC MP Abu Taher Khan from Murshidabad, known for raw jute cultivation, claimed that the state government has done a lot for the industry, and the issue of low prices of the raw material is part of the party's campaign.

"In January, the TMC government concluded a new wage agree ment for mill

workers. MC MP Abu Taher Khan from Murshidabac Their bene fits were raised by at least 30 per cent. The state government is also ruling party in the providing crop instate. "I am more con-

surance, while the Centre is neglecting the sector," said Khan, who is seeking re-election from the seat.

CPI(M) trade union arm CITU general secretary Tapan Kr Sen said the party is highlighting inactions by the Centre and the state government in the jute sector, and how it is adversely impacting labourers. Notably, the iute belt of Bengal comprises over 130-odd assembly seats, of which BJP had won only 49 in 2021, while the remaining seats went to the TMC.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, April 4: The 16 seats going to the polls in the first two phases of Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh pose major challenges for INDIA bloc members Samajwadi Party and the Congress.

In the first phase, elections will be held April 19 on eight seats, namely Saharanpur, Kairana, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Nagina (SC), Moradabad, Rampur and Pilibhit -- dominated by Muslims and Dalits.

The BJP had bagged Muzaffarnagar, Kairana and Pilibhit seats in 2019, the SP Moradabad and Rampur while the BSP won three, namely Saharanpur, Nagina and Bijnor.

The Samajwadi Party had contested the 2019 election in alliance with the BSP. In the second phase, eight parliamentary constituencies --Amroha, Meerut, Baghpat, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Bulandshahr (SC), Aligarh, and Mathura - will be going to polls April 26.

Seven seats were won by the BJP in 2019 while the BSP could win only one seat -Amroha. Dalits and Muslims will play a crucial role in deciding the winners in this phase but the BJP now has a major advantage of Jat votes, following its alliance with the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD).

The BJP's gain is the SP's loss because of the RLD factor. The SP is contesting 11 seats in these phases while the Congress has got five.



win Saharanpur where it has fielded Imran Masood and Amroha where it has put up BSP turncoat Danish Ali.

The SP, on the other hand, is banking on Muslim consolidation to win seats in these phases.

However, the party is facing trouble over ticket distribution in the two Muslim-dominated constituencies of Moradabad and Rampur.

SP president, Akhilesh Yadav, has cancelled the ticket of sitting MP, ST Hasan and opted for Ruchi Veera on the insistence of senior leader Mohd Azam Khan.

As a result, ST Hasan has announced that he will not campaign for the SP candidate in this constituency. His supporters have not joined Ruchi Veera's campaign.

A similar situation prevails in Rampur where the party did not field Asim Raza - a candidate of Azam Khan's choice.

The SP candidate is Mohibullah Nadvi and Azam Khan has withdrawn his sup-

## Basu trying to spoil my relation with CM: Guv

Kolkata, April 4: Days after Bengal Education Minister Bratva Basu labelled him as 'insane' amid discussions on the operational confusion in state run universities, Governor C V Ananda Bose Thursday said such remarks came after he had already endorsed names for interim vice-chancellors, as proposed by the minister.

The Governor said that Basu's allegations were an attempt to tarnish his relationship with his constitutional colleague, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. "Minister Shri Bratya Basu

has called Governor 'insane' and suffering from Alzheimer. This is at a time when as desired by the HCM, HG has accepted all the 4 names suggested by the Minister for appointment as interim VCs of the vacant universities," the Raj Bhavan posted

"HG feels that the minister is spoiling the relation between the HG and HCM HG holds HCM in very high regards," the post



added. The Governor's office also issued 'strict' warnings to the VCs who "stall" university activities citing the state education department's "illegal" order contradicting Supreme Court

"Chancellor issues strict warning to those Vice Chancellors who scuttle or stall University acthe Department of Higher Education of Govt. Of West Bengal, which are contrary to the Supreme Court judgments. This is to protect the interests of the student community," the post

Basu had also accused the governor of taking "illogical and inconsistent steps" with regard to functioning of state universities. Responding to it, the Governor issued a statement Wednesday night affirming his commitment to safeguarding the autonomy of these institutions against government in-

Bose asserted that the Chancellor, as the head of the university, has the right to communicate directly with the VC, and vice versa, without involving additional authorities. He criticised rules passed by the West Bengal assembly in December 2019, which sought to establish an intermediary body between the Chancellor and the VC, undermining university autonomy.

### LU's historic building to get a makeover

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Singh, who

rejoined the

TMC after

winning the

Sabha polls.

returned to the

BJP last month

as he was denied

a ticket from the

cerned about the industry rather

than vote bank politics," he said.

(BMS) functionary Binod Singh

claimed that "most of the mill

workers are BJP supporters and

will vote for the saffron camp

as they know the "NDA gov-

ernment at the Centre are keen'

ders. In March 2024, the order

flow was 5.58 lakh bales while

mills have committed for 4.85

lakh bales. Why mills are cur-

'The Centre is giving more or-

to address their issues.

Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh

Lok

2019

Lucknow, April 4: Lucknow University's (LU) historic arts quadrangle, popularly known as the Canning College building, will soon get a makeover for Rs 5 crore that is to be received under the Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA).

According to LU officials, the Canning College building is the oldest structure on the campus where classes are held. While it is a structure of the British era, its roofs are leaking, walls remain damp and ceilings of the building need immediate repair and renovation.

Among all proposals sent to the government by the university for PM USHA funds, the repair of Canning College is one the biggest priorities as it houses classrooms of 10 departments, a proctor and

dean office and three halls. LU Vice Chancellor Prof Alok Kumar, said, "Canning College was an independent college and existed even before LU was established in 1920. Hence the building is in desperate need of renovation. While the Malviya and AP Sen Hall University have already been renovated with LU funds, next is the major repair work required in classrooms of the art faculty in the building."

## Bundelkhand wheat variety gets GI tag

The indigenous farm produce wheat, popularly known as Kathiya Gehu (wheat), has been conferred the prestigious GI tag

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jhansi (UP), April 4: The Bundelkhand region in Uttar Pradesh has received its first Geographical Indication (GI) tag for a farm produce.

The indigenous farm produce wheat, popularly known as Kathiya Gehu (wheat), has been conferred the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag. Bhupesh Pal, the Assistant General Manager, NABARD Jhansi, said an application for the GI certification was filed by a local FPO. Khativa Wheat Bangra Producer Company Limited with the support of NABARD and technical guidance by director, Human Welfare Organisation, Varanasi Padma Shri Rajnikant Rai in January

After a long process of two years the GI tag vide certificate number 585 was issued March 30, 2024. "It is a big achievement



for the Bundelkhand region to get the GI tag, the first in the region for any farm produce. This will help in promoting this indigenous brand of wheat which is rich in protein and can be grown with very less irrigation," said Pal. On the other hand, S.K. Chaturvedi, director of research, Rani Lakshmi Bai Central Agricultural University (RLB-CAU) said that Kathiya wheat, also known as Durum wheat, is very prevalent in this region. Apart from being rich in nutrition, it is gluten free which makes

it healthier.

It can be grown in harsh climatic conditions with minimum requirement of water, he said. "With the confirmation of the GI tag on Kathiya, its brand value will increase and will help the farmers of this region prosper. RLBCAU, in collaboration with the international centre for agricultural research in the dry areas (ICARDA), have initiated a higher research on the wheat to get bet ter varieties of seed that can enhance its production," said S.K. Chaturvedi.

## Special module to prepare kids for formal education

*Under this, children, who have directly enrolled in Class I this year, will be taught* pre-literacy, pre-numeracy and social skills through a series of activities



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, April 4: The Uttar Pradesh education department is carrying out a special drive to prepare kids, who have no access to formal pre-primary education, through a specially designed 12-week readiness programme.

Under this, children, who have directly enrolled in Class I this year, will be taught pre-literacy pre-numeracy and social skills through a series of activities. This 12-week play-based module is a transition aid to help students ease into physical classes for the first time. The programme, said a government spokesman, is aimed at filling

gaps in pre-primary education. "Children in schools will be encouraged to learn while playing. The readiness programme follows NEP which stresses preprimary education. "Pre-schooling is a key strategy to equip young children with school readiness. Special efforts are put by the department to strengthen the early childhood education systems," said the spokesman.

The state government is also introducing NCERT books for Classes I and II from the new session. School readiness helps children to develop essential skills, knowledge and attitudes that are required to succeed in school and to continue learning later in life.

Physical, cognitive, social and emotional development is an essential ingredient of school readiness. To reach out to the maximum number of kids, the department will also carry out the programme in Bal Vatikas. Besides, the first 15 days of the new session from April 1 will be spent in admissions and orientation programmes for parents.

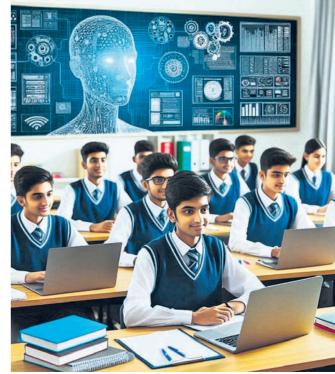
## WBCHSE suggests warm-up course on AI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 4: The West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE) has proposed that secondary schools introduce a warm-up course for Class 10 students interested in pursuing the new Applied Artificial Intelligence and Cyber Security subjects in the higher secondary curriculum.

Council president Chiranjib Bhattacharya said this shortterm course will serve as a basic warm-up for students considering subjects like Modern Computer Applications, Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence, Applied Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, and Cyber Security in higher secondary classes

"Applied Artificial Intelligence and Cyber Security are the two new subjects set to be introduced from the academic year 2024-25. The syllabus for the existing subjects, Modern Computer Application and Computer Science, has been updated to ensure relevance and contemporaneity," Bhattacharya added.



He added, "Given this scenario, the council believes that a basic warm-up course is nec-

essary for interested Class 10 students of 2024. In a statement to schools April

1, Bhattacharya suggested a short-duration computer course, termed the 'Bootstrap Program,' which would provide students with a basic platform to pursue any of the aforementioned courses.

Bhattacharya clarified that the council is only suggesting schools to consider implementing the Bootstrap Program and

not mandating its conduct. He proposed that the months of April and May be utilised for this course before the commencement of the core higher secondary curriculum. The results of the higher secondary exams, held in mid-February, are expected to be announced

within 90 days. "Theory classes may be conducted in the classroom or online, as per the school's convenience. If a school is unable to conduct the course, the study materials provided by the council may be shared with interested students. Schools planning to conduct the course can drop an email at academic@wbchse.Netwith relevant details,' Bhattacharya said.

**BINJHARPUR ASSEMBLY SEAT** 

# Pramila may face tough fight

The ruling BJD aims at highlighting the success of state government in implementation of various welfare schemes while the opposition parties are preparing to target the ruling dispensation over corruption and failure in implementation of various schemes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur/Pritipur, April 4: BJD's Pramila Mallik is likely to face a tough fight in Binjharpur Assembly constituency under Jajpur Lok Sabha segment this time, said sources

According to reports, all the Assembly constituencies, including Binjhapur, in the district will witness a high-octane fight this time.

The ruling BJD aims at highlighting the success of state government in implementation of various welfare schemes while the opposition parties are preparing to target the ruling dispensation over corruption and failure in implementation of various

The Assembly seat is the only reserved constituency in the district. Chatters are abuzz that Pramila, who has been on a winning spree since the BJD was formed, will have to face a tough

On the other hand, BJP has fielded Babita Mallik while Kanaklata Mallik is an aspiring candidate from Congress. Speculations are rife that if Congress declares Kanaklata as its candidate, the contest will be among three women. While



the BJD and BJP have announced their candidates, the delay in declaring the nominee by Congress has led to wide spec-

Political analysts said that the contest will be mainly between BJD and BJP. However, multiple aspirants in BJP, before Babita was picked by the party, emerged as a concern for the saffron party. One such candidate is Amiyakanta Mallik, who had contested from Jajpur Lok Sabha segment in 2019. He is reportedly unhappy over Babita's nomination. He might play spoilsport for Babita if BJP fails to

Babita is active in Biniharpur politics for the last two decades and had faced Pramila in 2019, securing 58,000 votes.

Likewise, Congress aspirant Kanaklata is a former block chairperson of Binjharpur and has a sizeable support base.

The ruling BJD is using implementation of public welfare schemes as its major poll plank. It claims to have achieved 50 per cent success in transportation and communication sector in the constituency.

Observers, however, claimed that the success rate in road construction sector could have reached 100 per cent had the au-

thorities spent 80 per cent of the government funds sanctioned for the constituency. However, the constituency is only witnessing the rule of contractors as corruption has reached its peak, observers said.

Check dams have been built for the farmers but most of them are lying defunct. The double-laning of Singhpur-Jajpur road that began during 2019 elections is yet to be completed. Multiple projects announced for the constituency is only on pen and papers, they added.

Ghantiali-Kantia bridge, upgradation of Binjharpur community heath centre (CHC), establishment of blood bank and availability of surgery facilities in the hospital are still a distant

Benga nullah project, which aimed at providing irrigation facilities to 30 per cent of the farmlands, declaration of Binjharpur as an NAC, Kharasrota river embankment project and construction of a dam on the downstream are some of the projects which are yet to be implemented.

These are some of the major poll issues which the opposition parties are cashing in on to cor-

Gamang, Pangi families out

of poll fray after 5 decades



MERGER MEET: BJP and Congress members of Pottangi block in Koraput district join BJD at Sankha Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

### **CLOSE CONTEST IN BRAJARAJNAGAR ON CARDS**

POST NEWS NETWORK

Brajarajnagar, April 4: Buzzing political activities and speculations by fortune tellers have now become new normal in this Assembly constituency of Jharsuguda district as all the three prominent parties have declared their nominees for the

hustings. While the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has declared Bargarh MP Suresh Pujari as its MLA candidate for Brajarajnagar constituency, the Congress has fielded former minister Kishore Patel. Likewise, BJD Wednesday re-nominated Alaka Mohanty, wife of late BJD MLA Kishore Mohanty from the constituency. Alaka had registered a landslide victory in the 2022 byelection.

However, it would be a tough task for the voters to pick the right candidate this time as all are old and known faces.

The 2022 by election saw a tri-

angular fight between Patel (Cong), Radharani Panda (BJP) and Alaka (BJP). While Radharani secured 22,745 votes, Kishore polled 27,450 votes. Alaka, who foraved into electoral politics straight from the kitchen, won the bypoll by securing 93,540 votes. Alaka, who aimed at realising the dreams of her late husband, carried forward the developmental activities of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik by relying on party workers in the constituency.

Similarly, BJP candidate Pujari is an experienced and capable leader, though he had faced drubbings thrice in previous elections from the same Assembly seat.

Political analysts believe that it would not be a cakewalk for Pujari to unite and convince them to work for him. Three youth leaders and ticket aspirants of BJP - Sujit Singh, Radheshyam Pradhan and Biswajit Sarangi - have enganged themselves in organisational activities for the last two years in Brajarajnagar.

There are similar issues in Congress too. Party leader and Belpahar municipality chairman Bulu Panda being denied a ticket may pose hindrances to Patel. It remains to be seen how the three candidates for the Assembly seat would face the election given the fact that dissidence is ubiquitous.

## Rourkela Congress faces infighting bar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, April 4: The Congress in Rourkela has been riddled with infighting hurdles like elsewhere in the state. No sooner than Birendra Nath Pattnaik got the Congress party ticket for Rourkela Assembly seat, a powerful faction has risen against the decision of the party high command.

One group led by DCC president Rabi Ray, former DCC president and 2019 MLA candidate of the party Biren Senapaty and Prabhat Mohapatra, comprising more than 100 workers Thursday threatened to resign from the grand old party en masse if the decision was not

reversed. They also expressed their dissatisfaction against trade union leader Gopal Das who has got the ticket from Raghunathpalli Assembly constituency.

In the meeting, the decision of the PCC was pooh-poohed by these prominent local leaders who have been raising the Congress flag for over a few decades. Attempts to speak to Biren Senapaty failed as he did not respond. However, Prabhat Mohapatra, the last Congress candidate to win from here in the 90s in a David vs Goliath fight by defeating Dilip Ray, was found in

party candidate for Koraput Assembly constituency, Thursday

a different mood.

Speaking about the development, he said, "I think instead of opposing him let us listen to Birendra Nath Pattnaik and also Gopal Das." In my opinion both should talk to all those persons who are opposing their nominations and sort out the matter. This needs immediate attention so that the wound would not fes-

ter enough to damage the party, he further

On the other hand. Rashmi Padhi, who was moved from the DCC president post after a two-and-half-month stint recently by PCC chief Sarat Pattanayak, was not happy with the

development. "I have been removed as DCC president very quickly. Have I done anything against the party or the leadership? That was a party decision so let us respect it," Rashmi said. Castigating the dissident groups severely he said, "Biren babu lost by a huge margin and now he wants the ticket. I don't know how he is staking his claim."

Some of the known faces like Sabbir Hussein, Rashmi Padhi, Prabodh Das, Satyakanta Barik were absent in the meeting. Observers say, "This is the same old story of Congress. The party has touched rock bottom still they don't understand.'

Koraput, April 4: The announcement of Congress party's candidates for Koraput and Nabarangpur Lok Sabha seats highlighted the absence of prominent political families, including those of former chief minister Giridhar Gamang and ex-Koraput MP Jayaram Pangi.

If they opt not to run as independent candidates, it would be the first time in over five decades that these influential families won't be in the electoral competition in this tribaldominated district.

Gamang, 81, who served as the Chief Minister of Odisha from February to December 1999, had represented the Koraput Lok Sabha constituency nine times between 1972 and 2004 before facing defeats to BJD in 2009 and 2014.

Despite his wife, Hema Gamang, also having represented the Koraput Lok Sabha seat in 1999, the landscape changed when the Gamang family switched allegiance from Congress to BJP in 2015, later aligning with Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) before returning to the grand old party in January.

Although Gamang's son Sisir sought the Nabarangpur Lok Sabha seat, and Hema applied for the Gunupur Assembly constituency under Koraput Lok



Sabha seat, the denial of tickets tered the state Assembly at ag to Gamang family members by Congress sidelines them from the electoral process, potentially

for the first time since 1972. According to political observers, the Gamang family's debacle in electoral politics started in 2009 when Gamang lost the Koraput LS seat on a Congress ticket to his rival BJD's Jayaram Pangi.

In the same year Gamang's wife Hema lost the Assembly polls from Gunupur seat.

In 2014, Gamang was again defeated by BJD's Jhina Hikaka from Koraput LS seat and his wife, who had switched over to BJD from Congress and contested the 2014 Assembly poll from Laxmipur. lost the election, in spite of CM Naveen Patnaik's wave sweeping across

Similarly, Pangi who had en-



25 by winning the Pottangi Assembly constituency under Koraput Lok Sabha seat in 1977 as a Janata Party candidate was denied a Congress ticket despite his recent entry to the party.

Pangi, who had joined the BJP in 2017 before briefly affiliating with the BRS, expressed shock over ticket selection, indicating a potential grievance against the decision.

In response to the exclusions, Sisir expressed dismay, hinting at a possible challenge to the de-

"We are shocked over the ticket distribution and will put our grievance before the appropriate authority," said Sisir.

Replying to whether he would file as an independent candidate, Sisir said, "Nothing has been decided. There is time. Let's see what happens.'

### One can trust a snake but not BJP: Mamata

TMC SUPREMO URGES EC TO ENSURE LEVEL PLAYING FIELD FOR ALL PARTIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cooch Behar/Malbazar (WB), April 4: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Baneriee, at a poll rally Thursday, accused the BJP of not adhering to the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) for the Lok Sabha polls, asserting that one can trust a poisonous snake but not the saffron camp.

Addressing a rally in Cooch Behar, Banerjee alleged that the central investigating agencies. Border Security Force (BSF), and Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) are working at the behest of the BJP, urging the Election Commission to ensure a level playing field for all political parties.

"The BJP is asking you to enroll names for Awas Yojna again. Why will the names be enrolled again? They want further enrollment so that they can remove them. You can trust a poisonous snake; you can even pet it, but you can never trust the BJP... The BJP is destroying the

country," she said. Asserting that her party TMC will not bow before the "threats of central agencies", Banerjee urged women in Cooch Behar to file police complaints if "there are instances of BSF torturing locals" ahead of the polls, scheduled for April 19.



Income Tax, central forces like BSF and CISF are working for the BJP. We will humbly plead to the Election Commission to ensure a level playing field for all parties as central agencies are working for the saffron camp. I will ask the people to guard the EVMs after the voting till results are out as BJP will try to tamper with people's verdict," she said.

Recalling the death of four civilians at Sitalkuchi in Coochbehar district during assembly elections in 2021 in firing by central forces, Baneriee accused them of being trigger-happy.

She also charged the BJP with trying to use Indian Army hospitals for its self-interest, accusing the saffron party of eroding the independence of forces which had been the pride of the nation for ages. The BJP only "follows the principle of one nation, one party", the TMC supremo claimed.





STIFF RESISTANCE: Several BJP workers submit a memorandum to party's former state president Samir Mohanty in Bhubaneswar, Thursday, opposing the nomination of Sisir Mishra as MLA candidate from Hiniili constituency





# national



Earlier, students were compelled to go abroad for medical education but we ensured that they get quality medical education in the country

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA UNION HEALTH MINISTER

### **GOVT LAUNCHES 'myCGHS' iOS APP**

The government has launched the 'myCGHS' app for iOS to provide Central **Government Health Scheme beneficiaries** access to electronic health records, information, and resources





cooperative banks in Kerala, mismanagement of state funds, the silence of Rahul Gandhi on these issues, especially the misgovernance of the INDI alliance partner -- the Left

front -- speaks volumes

SMRITI IRANI UNION MINISTER

**Employment** is my biggest priority. The children who are educated till seventheighth standard can also get jobs through skill development and driving learning centres which were set up because of my initiative

KAMAL NATH | FORMER MP CM

I'm criticised for travelling by helicopter (to a farm) and doing farming. But why is there so much pain when the son of a farmer becomes a Chief Minister? It is better to travel on a helicopter and do farming than do photography from it

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHARASHTRA CM

#### SHORT **TAKES**

### Rahul Gandhi declares assets worth Rs 20cr

Wayanad: Rahul Gandhi, who is seeking a successive term from the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat, has declared assets of over Rs 20 crore in his nomination papers. Gandhi filed the papers before the returning officer on Wednesday. He has declared movable assets to the tune of Rs 9,24,59,264 and showed the purchasing price of his selfacquired immovable assets as being worth Rs 7,93,03,977 in the affidavit. He has also declared that the current market value of the self-acquired immovable assets is Rs 9,04,89,000 and the value of the inherited assets is Rs 2,10,13,598.

### HDK, Tejasvi Surya file nominations

#### Jawan shoots himself dead

### **Earthquake hits** Chamba in HP

Shimla/Chandigarh: Tremors were felt in parts of north India as a 5.3-magnitude earthquake hit Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh Thursday. The earthquake struck at 9.34 pm, the National Center for Seismology (NCS) said. Mild tremors were also felt in Chandigarh and parts of Puniab and Harvana. The earthquake occurred at a depth of 10 km in Chamba district, officials of the meteorological department in Shimla said.

## SANDESHKHALI VIOLENCE COURT RAPS WB GOVT

Calcutta High Court Thursday pulled up the ruling Trinamool Congress government in Bengal while hearing several pleas filed on the Sandeshkhali violence. During the hearing, the court said that it's entirely the ruling party's "responsibility" if a citizen's safety is under threat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 4: Observing that it would be "highly shameful" if even one per cent of the allegations of sexual assault in Sandeshkhali were found to be true, the Calcutta High Court Thursday said that West Bengal's image as the safest state for women will fall.

Petitioner-lawyer Priyanka Tibrewal submitted a voluminous compilation before the court which she said contained around 100 affidavits of alleged victims of sexual assault, apart from those of land grabbing and violence.

"If at least one per cent (of the allegations) is true, it is highly shameful," a division bench presided by Chief Justice T S Sivagnanam said. The division bench was hearing a suo motu motion on alleged sexual assault and land grabbing at Sandeshkhali in North 24 Parganas district and petitions seeking transfer of investigation of these cases to the CBI.

**Vistara cancels flights:** 

efforts continue to

address pilots' issues

Mumbai, April 4: Vistara

continued to cancel flights

Thursday as the Tata Group

works to address pilot issues,

while fares spiked in some routes

due to cancellations, according

to sources and travel industry

A day after Vistara CEO Vinod

Kannan apologised to pilots

about the issues and assured

them of taking steps to resolve

them, the airline saw cancella-

The number of flight cancel-

lations was in the double digits

Thursday but less than 26 can-

cellations were seen Wednesday and the situation is improving,

the sources said. Vistara, which

is to operate more than 300 flights

daily in the ongoing summer

schedule, has decided to temporarily scale back operations.

Meanwhile, two pilots'

groupings Thursday said the

problems raised by Vistara pilots

are not isolated but rather

indicative of systemic issues

across Tata Group aviation en-

tities. In a detailed letter to Tata

Chandrasekaran, the Indian

Commercial Pilots' Association

(ICPI) and the Indian Pilots'

Guild (IPG) urged the group to

engage in a constructive dia-

logue with the pilot community.

Chairman

tions of around 20 flights.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

executives.



Opposing the prayers for transfer of investigation, West Bengal's Advocate General Kishore Dutta claimed before the division bench that central agencies have lost the trust posed in them. He guestioned the conviction rate of central agencies in cases they were probing in the state, while the Enforcement Directorate's counsel accused it of non-cooperation in taking forward investigations. Maintaining that it is shameful if even one of the affidavits is correct, the Chief Justice said, "The entire district

administration and the ruling dis-

pensation have to owe moral responsibility, 100 per cent responsibility.'

He said that West Bengal boasts of a statistics report to be the safest state for women. "As per the NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) report, West Bengal stands number one for safety of women; and if one affidavit filed by Tibrewal is proved to be right, the statistics falls, the public image falls, the opinion falls," he said. "If it falls and crumbles, you cannot resurrect it," he said. The court said that the world does not become dark

Tibrewal, who prayed for transfer of investigation to the CBI, placed before the division bench, also comprising Justice Hiranmay Bhattacharyya a number of complaints by alleged victims. Stating that she had gone to Sandeshkhali on three weekends along with other lawyers and notaries to record the affidavits, Tibrewal claimed that the voluminous files contained around 100 complaints by women alleging sexual assault, apart from several of alleged land grabbing and other instances of violence and destruction of property. Tibrewal also prayed for constitution of a committee by the court to look into the complaints and payment of compensation to the victims.

if one closes his or her eyes.

The division bench had March 7 granted permission to Tibrewal, who claimed to represent the victim women, to file an application/supplementary affidavit bringing on record whatever the alleged victims wish to place before this court.



People take part in a boat rally during a voting awareness campaign organised by the district administration ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh

### **CASTE CERTIFICATE CASE**

## SC relief to Amravati **MP Navneet Rana**



AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 4: The Supreme Court Thursday restored the scheduled caste certificate of sitting Amravati MP Navneet Kaur Rana, holding that

Bombay High EARLIER IN JUNE 2021, THE SUPREME COURT HAD STAYED Court over-THE OPERATION OF THE BOMBAY stepped while HIGH COURT WHICH CANCELLED re-appreciating HER CASTE CERTIFICATE SAYING the findings of IT WAS OBTAINED BY USING the scrutiny FARRICATED DOCUMENTS committee, in a huge last-THE TOP COURT HAD REMARKED miniute relief that cleared the

decks for her to contest the CONSIDERATION Maharashtra IN HER SPECIAL LEAVE PETITION, seat reserved for dalits on a

BJP ticket. Pronouncing the order on the last day of nomination for the PRODUCED BEFORE IT seat, the apex court set aside the 2021 Bombay High Court

verdict on a plea seeking cancellation of her caste certificate dated August 30, 2013 issued by a Mumbai deputy collector who held she belonged to the 'Mochi' "We are of the considered opinion that High Court inad-

vertently undertook an erroneous exercise of appreciating evidence in exercise of its jurisdiction under Article 226 of Constitution and swayed itself into a roving inquiry which was not expected as per settled legal position," a bench comprising jus-

JK Maheshwari and Sanjay Karol said in the judgement.

Writing a 44-page judgement for the bench, Justice Maheshwari referred to the 2012

rules and said the adjudication of caste on the basis of the documents falls solely within the domain of the scrutiny committee which decided the issue after taking note of inputs received from the

the

vigilance cell.

"Having perused

the order passed by Scrutiny

Committee and

findings recorded

by it to reach its

subjective satisfac-

tion with respect to

claim of appellant,

at this juncture, if

we look at the whole

exercise carried out

THAT THE HIGH COURT OUGHT TO HAVE SENT THE MATTER BACK TO THE COMMITTEE FOR FRESH

RANA PLEADED THAT THE TERMS MOCHI AND CHAMAR ARE SYNONYMOUS, AND THE **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HAD DECIDED HER CASTE STATUS BASED ON ORIGINAL RECORDS** 

> by high court from the perspective of settled principles of law for invocation of jurisdiction under Article 226 of Constitution, particularly in relation of writ of certiorari, it leaves us with no scope of doubt that the high court has clearly overstepped by re-appreciating the evidence in absence of any allegation of malafide or perversity," it said.

A writ of certiorari is issued by a court higher in authority to a lower court or tribunal ordering them either to transfer a case pending with them to itself or quash their order in a case.

## Bangalore: JD(S) leader H D

law and noted cardiologist C N Manjunath, Bangalore South MP Tejasvi Surya were among prominent candidates, who filed their papers Thursday, the last day for filing nominations for the first of two-phase Lok Sabha polls in Karnataka, April 26. Kumaraswamy, a former Chief Minister is contesting from the Mandya Lok Sabha seat. He was accompanied by BJP veteran B S Yediyurappa, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and party candidate from neighbouring Mysuru and scion of the erstwhile Mysuru royal family Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar.

New Delhi: A 36-year-old CISF constable allegedly killed himself using his service rifle at the Paschim Vihar (West) Metro Station Thursday, officials said. The incident took place at around 6:40 am, they said. The body of the deceased jawan, Sahare Kishore Samrao, was recovered from near the X-ray baggage scanner, they said.

### **India urges Israel to** ensure safety of workers

New Delhi: India Thursday said it has urged Israel to ensure safety of the Indian construction workers who have gone to the country this week under the framework of a bilateral mobility agreement. Israeli Ambassador to India Naor Gilon said Tuesday the first batch of over 60 Indian construction workers has left for Israel. "As you are aware, these (first batch) workers have gone to Israel as part of a mobility agreement that we have signed with the country," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing. "This agreement predates the conflict. We are conscious of their safety. We have urged the Israeli authorities to ensure their safety and wellbeing," he said. Last month, India said it is focusing on ensuring the safety and security of all its citizens in Israel in the wake of the death of an Indian in that country in a missile attack reportedly launched by Hezbollah.

सी ए आर - टी सेल थेरेपी राष्ट्र को समर्पण

ous CAR-T Cell Therapy to the Nation

### IAF's Apache attack chopper makes emergency landing

New Delhi: An Apache helicopter of the Indian Air Force (IAF) made an emergency landing during an operational sortie in Ladakh and it sustained damage due to "undulating" terrain and high altitude, the IAF said Thursday. The IAF said the incident took place Wednesday and both the pilots on board are safe. It was the first such incident involving an Apache chopper in the IAF, military officials said. A Court of Inquiry has been ordered into the incident. The IAF had procured 22 Apache attack helicopters and the chopper that had to make the emergency landing was based in the Pathankot Air Force station in Punjab. "An IAF Apache helicopter carried out a precautionary landing during an operational training sortie in Ladakh April 3. During the process of this landing, it sustained damage due to undulating terrain and high altitude,'

the IAF said in a brief statement.

### **Haryana Women Commission** issues notice to Surjewala

Chandigarh: The Haryana State Commission for Women Thursday issued a notice to Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala for allegedly making "indecent" remarks against actor and BJP leader Hema Malini. Commission chairperson Renu Bhatia said Surjewala has been asked to present himself before the panel April 9 and give a clarification. The commission took suo motu cognisance of media reports and issued the notice. It said his alleged "indecent" remarks hurt the dignity of a woman. BJP IT department head Amit Malviya had shared an undated video on X in which the Congress general secretary is purportedly making some objectionable remarks about the actor-politician and two-time Mathura MP while attacking the ruling party. However Thursday, Surjewala alleged that BJP's IT Cell has developed a habit of distorting facts and spreading lies and added that he neither intended to insult Hema Malini nor hurt anyone.

### SC asks Sharad, **Ajit Pawar groups** to abide by its order

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 4: Days before the first vote for the Lok Sabha polls is cast, the Supreme Court Thursday asked the rival NCP factions led by party founder Sharad Pawar and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar to abide by its directions on the use of symbols, party names and disclaimers in publicity material for the elections.

On March 19, the top court had allowed the Sharad Pawar faction to use 'Nationalist Congress Party-Sharadchandra Pawar' as its name and 'man blowing turha' (a traditional trumpet also known as tutari) as the symbol for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls and assembly elections in four states.

Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Odisha are being held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha polls.

The Election Commission has recognised the faction led by Ajit Pawar as the "real' Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and allotted it the 'clock' poll symbol used by the outfit before the split.

The apex court has said to which faction the 'clock' symbol ultimately goes will depend on the outcome of the proceedings initiated by Sharad Pawar against the EC's decision.

The top court had directed the Ajit Pawar bloc to issue a public notice in English, Hindi and Marathi newspapers making it clear that the matter of allocation of the 'clock' symbol is sub judice before the courtand its use is subject to the final outcome of the proceedings.

## India gets first home-grown gene therapy for cancer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 4: President Droupadi Murmu Thursday launched India's first indigenously-developed CAR T-cell therapy for cancer treatment, hailing it as a major breakthrough that provides "new hope for humankind" in the battle against the disease.

Developed by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay and Tata Memorial Centre, the gene-based therapy is being rolled out in India at about one-tenth of its price outside the country, a senior official said. Speaking at the launch event at IIT Bombay here, Murmu said the indigenous development of the therapy was an example of the Make in India

A CAR T-cell therapy involves modifying a patient's T cells (a type of immune system cell) in

the laboratory and using them

to attack and destroy cancer

The 'NexCAR19 CAR T-cell therapy' is the country's first 'Made in India' CAR T-cell therapy which is expected to bring down the cost of treatment significantly.

This therapy is considered a phenomenal advance in medical sciences, the president said in her speech. "The development of this therapy is also an example of the 'Make in India' initiative and speaks volumes about Indian scientists and physicians," she said.

The launch of India's first gene therapy is a major break-through in our battle against cancer. As this line of treatment, named CAR T-cell therapy, is accessible and affordable, it provides a new hope for the whole of humankind," Murmu added.

Sudeep Gupta, director of the Tata Memorial Centre, said the CAR T-cell therapy was enormously expensive and out of the

tom manufac-

tured for every

development of this therapy is reach of an also an example of overwhelming the 'Make in India' majority of people. initiative and speaks NexCar19 volumes about Indian needs to be cusscientists and physicians

DROUPADI MURMUR | PRESIDENT

ment for the country and for cancer patients, and places India firmly on the global map of cell and gene therapy, he said. Gupta said the treatment will help some 20,000 Indians every year, and its rollout is a milestone in the field of cancer care

"This treatment is not only a scientific achievement of the highest order, but also has immense practical application. NexCAR19 will save many, many lives and wipe many, many tears," he said.

patient under the most strin-

gent conditions, but it has been

rolled out at approximately one-

tenth of the price at which it is

available outside India, he said.

IIT Bombay director Prof

Subhasis Chaudhuri said the

treatment costs approximately

Rs 4 crore abroad against Rs 30

lakh in India. The low-cost CAR

T-cell therapy is a huge achieve-

and genetic engineering.

# international



If Paris follows up on its statements about the possibility of sending a **French military contingent** to Ukraine, it will create problems for France itself SERGEI SHOIGU | RUSSIA'S

#### **YELLEN IN CHINA**

**Treasury Secretary Janet** Yellen arrived in China Thursday for five days of meetings in a nation determined to avoid open conflict with the United





reason to be China is offering to hosting of the foreign

I have no doubt Russia would



EMMANUEL MACRON FRENCH PRESIDENT



this out of moral cause and because it is the only way that the two states, Israel and Palestine, can live together in peace

PEDRO SANCHEZ SPAIN PM

#### SHORT **TAKES**

#### 22 arrested in EU raids

Brussels: Police in Italy, Austria, Romania and Slovakia arrested 22 people Thursday as part of an investigation into the suspected siphoning of hundreds millions of Euros in from the European Union (EU). The 600 million Euros (USD 650 million) were part of Italy's post-pandemic money, the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) said. The EPPO said it suspects a criminal organization of having diverted the non-refundable funds from the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan between 2021 and 2023.

### **Pakistan govt** to launch probe

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday said the government will launch a probe into threat letters laced with a

"suspicious powder" received by the judges of the Supreme Court and the high courts in Islamabad and Lahore, Fight judges of Islamabad High of Lahore High Court received threatening letters with white powder suspected to be anthrax. "The letters that were sent to various judges yesterday, and the reports that have emerged about a suspicious powder in them [...] So I think that we should show full responsibility on this and not let any kind of politics near this [matter]," Dawn News quoted the Prime Minister as saying during a cabinet meeting here.

### Pak rules out talks with TTP

Islamabad: Pakistan Thursday ruled out any talks with the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and vowed to fight all militant outfits and defeat them, a day after a senior Afghan Taliban leader urged Islamabad and the banned terrorist organisation to sit together and negotiate for peace. Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch was responding to a question at her weekly briefing about a suggestion to Islamabad by Afghanistan's deputy interior minister to

### 4 killed, 12 injured

hold talks with the rebels.

**Kyiv:** Russian troops launched waves of Shahed drones against the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv overnight, killing four people and wounding 12, regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said Thursday. Russia attacked Ukraine's second-biggest city with at least 15 drones, some of which were shot down by air defence. Three rescuers struck a multistory building damaged in an earlier strike. Six people were wounded at

# RESCUE EFFORTS CONTINUE AFTER QUAKE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hualien (Taiwan), April 4: Rescuers searched Thursday for missing people and worked to reach hundreds stranded when Taiwan's strongest earthquake in 25 years sent boulders and mud tumbling down mountainsides, blocking roads.

Ten people died and more than 1,000 were injured. The powerful quake struck during the morning rush hour a day earlier, sending schoolchildren rushing outdoors and families fleeing their apartments through the

The ground floors of some buildings collapsed, leaving them leaning at precarious angles. Though the island is regularly rattled by earthquakes and generally well prepared, authorities did not send out the usual alerts because they were expecting a smaller temblor.

Some residents of the eastern coastal city of Hualien near the epicentre were staving in tents, and the main road linking the county to the capital, Taipei, was still closed Thursday afternoon, but much of Taiwan's dayto-day life returned to normal.

Some local rail service to Hualien resumed, and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., one of the world's most important manufacturers of computer chips, restarted most op-



erations, the Central News Agency reported.

Nearly 1,070 people were injured in the quake. Of the 10 dead, at least four were killed inside Taroko National Park, a tourist attraction famous for canyons and cliffs in mountainous Hualien County about 150 kilometres from Taipei.

One person was found dead in a damaged building and another was found in the Ho Ren Quarry. Rescuers also carried out the body of a man, who had a hiking trail.

Hundreds of people were stranded when rocks and mud blocked the roads leading to their hotel, campground or work site — though most were safe while they awaited rescue. It wasn't clear Thursday if any people were still trapped in buildings.

Liu Zhong-da, a 58-vear-old construction worker, and his colleague were on their way to work on a road in the national park and were inside a tunnel when the quake hit. A boulder blocked

their exit and they were trapped along with some other people.

'We almost got covered up,' Liu said. "No communication could be made (to the outside world)." Liu and his colleague were rescued Thursday afternoon and received a quick medical checkup outside the park. About 60 workers who had been unable to leave a quarry because of damaged roads were also freed, authorities said. Six workers from another quarry were airlifted out.

Some 700 people remain cut off, the vast majority of them em-

lundreds of people were stranded when rocks and mud blocked the roads leading to their hotel, camparound or work site - though most were safe while they awaited rescue

Some residents of the eastern coastal city of Hualien near the epicentre were staying in tents, and the main road linking the county to the capital, Taipei, was still closed Thursday afternoon, but much of Taiwan's day-to-day life returned to normal

ployees and guests at a hotel in the national park. Authorities said they were safe and had food and water, and that work to repair the roads to the hotel was nearly finished. Another 10 workers from the same hotel were stranded elsewhere in the park, after most of the others in the group were rescued or managed to walk out.

Authorities said they were unable to contact a handful of other people, and their condition was not known. Numbers have fluctuated frequently as authorities have learned of more people in trouble and rescued others. In the city of Hualien Thursday, workers used an excavator to stabilize the base of a damaged building, as chickens pecked among potted plants on the flat roof slanting at a se-

### 18 militants, 10 troops dead in Iran clashes

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai (United Arab Emirates). April 4: Iran's state media said security forces were able to release hostages taken by gunmen Thursday following clashes in three separate areas in southeastern Iran that left 18 militants and 10 troops dead.

The fighting erupted overnight in Sistan and Baluchistan province when gunmen opened fire on Revolutionary Guard posts in Rask and Sarbaz towns and a coast guard station in Chahbahar city, some 1,400 kilometers (870 miles) southeast of the capital, Tehran, the agency

The gunmen took several civilians hostage at two sites and some of the assailants wore suicide vests, state TV reported. Shootouts ensued before security forces gained control of the three areas.

The 10 security forces killed included six members of the Revolutionary Guard and its affiliated troops, two policemen and two members of coast guard, state TV said. At least 10 others were injured, some of them in serious condition, it said.

State media blamed the militant group Jaish al-Adl, which allegedly seeks greater rights for the ethnic Baluch minority. No group claimed responsibility. Authorities arrested two militants from the group Thursday on suspicion of involvement in the clashes, state TV said.

## Israel cancels leave for combat units



Jerusalem, April 4: The Israeli military halted leave for all combat units Thursday amid concerns of a possible escalation in violence after the killing of Iranian generals in Damascus this week drew threats of retaliation.

"In accordance with the situational assessment, it has been decided that leave will be temporarily paused for all IDF (Israel Defence Forces) combat units," the military said in a statement.

"The IDF is at war and the deployment of forces is under continuous assessment according to requirements," it said. Wednesday, the military said it had drafted reservists to boost aerial defences. Reuters journalists and Tel Aviv residents said Thursday that GPS services had been disrupted, an apparent measure meant to ward

off guided missiles.

Iran has vowed revenge for the killing of two of its generals along with five military advisers in an airstrike on an Iranian diplomatic compound in the Syrian capital Damascus Monday It was widely believed to be an Israeli attack, one of the most significant yet on Iranian interests in Syria, which Israel has neither confirmed nor denied and which carries the risk of further inflaming the region.

Israel has been pressing its war on Hamas for six months, after the Palestinian Islamist group led an attack on southern Israel October 7, and has also been trading fire almost daily with Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Until now, Iran has avoided directly entering the fray, while supporting allies' attacks on Israeli and US targets.

**TODAY, UKRAINE ALSO WANTS A SEAT AT NATO'S TABLE, BUT** THE ALLIANCE WORKS **ON UNANIMITY AND THERE IS NO CONSENSUS ON** WHETHER IT SHOULD **JOIN. MOST ALLIES OPPOSE MEMBERSHIP WHILE WAR RAGES** ON ANYWAY

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brussels, April 4: NATO marked Thursday 75 years of collective defence across Europe and North America, with its top diplomats vowing to stay the course in Ukraine as better-armed Russian troops assert control on the battlefield.

The anniversary comes as the now-32-nation alliance weighs a plan to provide more predictable longer-term military support to Ukraine. Plagued by ammunition shortages. Ukraine this week lowered the military conscription age from 27 to 25 in an effort to replenish its depleted ranks.

"Ukraine is under heavy attacks, like daily, 24-seven,' Estonian foreign minister Margus Tsahkna said, appealing for more military materiel for Ukraine like air defence systems, drones and artillery

## NATO marks 75th birthday



NATO foreign ministers begin to gather for a ceremony to mark the 75th anniversary of NATO at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Thursday АРРНОТО

shells."We need to give these systems which we are not using to Ukraine, to take and protect their people, civil infrastructure and also energy infrastructure." he said, before a ceremony with his counterparts to mark the day NATO's founding treaty was signed: April 4, 1949, in Washington.

A bigger celebration is planned when NATO leaders meet in Washington from July 9 to 11. Hundreds of staffers filled the vast air terminal-like space at the centre of NATO's sprawling Brussels headquarters, while

teers gathered at a charity

kitchen in Damascus to prepare

vegetables, meat and rice, then

packaged the meals for distri-

bution. They put on their silver,

black or bright yellow helmets,

ready to ride into the sunset:

this time to a home for the eld-

erly on the outskirts of

Damascus. The bikers move nim-

bly through busy areas, evad-

ing heavy traffic to deliver the

meals swiftly.

scores of others looked down from glassed walkways and stairways as Belgian and Dutch military bands played the NATO Hymn, the original Washington Treaty laid before them.

"I like the Washington Treaty. Not least because it is very short," NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said with a smile. "Just 14 paragraphs over a few pages. Never has a single document with so few words meant so much to so many people. So much security. So much

prosperity and so much peace.' Outside Brussels Wednesday

They cover the cost of fuel

themselves, a great help in a

country blighted by petrol

evening, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken had paid tribute "to the millions of soldiers, sailors, and aviators whose courage and willingness to put their lives on the line have given weight to our sacred commitment to defend one another.'

Blinken said that even as foreign ministers mark more than seven decades of peace, "that security - together with the Alliance's core principles of democracy, liberty, and the rule of law-is once again being threatened by those who believe that might makes right ... and who seek to redraw borders by force."

Ukraine's foreign minister, Dmytro Kuleba, also attended Thursday. His message was more direct."Only today, 20 Shahed drones were shot at the city of Kharkiv and four people have been killed," he said, adding that rescuers trying to help victims in the area were also killed."It is impossible to comprehend why allies cannot find additional batteries to deliver them to the place where ballistic missiles are being fired every day," Kuleba said.

Sweden's foreign minister, Tobias Billstrom, was taking part in the first ministerial-level meeting since his country became NATO's 32nd ally last month. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 drove Sweden and Finland into NATO's arms.

## Born to help: Syria bikers deliver Ramadan meals

### THE GROUP SAYS IT HAS NO POLITICAL AFFILIATION AND CROSSES FAITH BOUNDARIES, WITH CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM MEMBERS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Damascus, Syria, April 4: Every evening during Ramadan, members of a motorbike club zip down the streets of Damascus to deliver meals to those in need during the Muslim holy month.

'We hit the most disadvantaged areas," said Tarek Obaid, head of Hope Bikers Syria, whose 50 volunteers make and distribute the food for various charities in the Syrian capital. The bikers -- some sporting beards or wearing large silver rings on their fingers -- head out as sunset approaches, racing to hand over the food so Muslims recipients can break their daytime fast.

The volunteers don their club's signature blue vest, the front and back embroidered with their emblem: a flaming motorbike and the Syrian flag. They help out for "humanitarian or moral" reasons, said Obaid, a swimming coach in his fifties who super-

vises the Ramadan rounds. But the act of charity also lessens the stigma around bikes and their "Born to be Wild" image. "Before, people avoided the motorbikes when they saw them, but now they are happy to see our blue (vests) or hear the noise of our bikes," Obaid said.

The group says it has no political affiliation and crosses faith boundaries, with Christian and Muslim members. The Muslims among them break their fast after the rounds are 'They love us'

"People have gotten to know us, they smile at us, they love us," said Obaid, directing the riders on sport, dirt and classic motorbikes. Syria has been ravaged by 13 years of war that has killed more than half a million people and battered the country's economy and infrastruc-

Around 90 percent of the population is in poverty, according to the United Nations. The motorbike club began its volunteer work during the Covid-19 pandemic, transporting oxygen bot-



tles for those in urgent needed. As the pandemic subsided, the bikers turned their attention elsewhere, including helping victims of an earthquake in February last year that ravaged parts of Syria, killing about 6,000 people there. They have also been part of organising, with non-government organisations, recreational activities for orphaned children.

Earlier in the day, the volun-

shortages that drive up prices, particularly after subsidies were lifted last year. "Even though the motorbikes use less petrol, we struggle to get fuel due to shortages and high costs," said George Hafteh, 37, a photographer and one of the bikers. Motorcycles have also earned

a bad reputation over the years of Syria's economic crisis because thieves often use them to snatch bags or phones from people on the street. But Hafteh said the group was trying to return biking to "its place in society, taking on our responsibility towards the people"

When they arrive at the centre for the elderly, he and his fellow bikers take the meals up to the rooms, distributing them to people in beds. Fellow club member Amer Totanji, 31, who works at a private-sector company, says he takes pleasure in what he can do on motorbikes

### Trump leads Biden in 6 of 7 battleground states: Opinion poll

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, April 4: Ahead of the upcoming US election scheduled for November, President Joe Biden is trailing behind his main opponent Donald Trump in six of the seven battleground states, according to a latest opinion poll.

Voters are broadly dissatisfied with the national economy and there are deep doubts about Biden's capabilities and job performance, the survey conducted by the Wall Street Journal revealed.

Trump leads between two and eight percentage points in six battleground states of Pennsylvania, Michigan, Arizona, Georgia, Nevada and North Carolina. However, Biden 之 is leading Trump by three points in Wisconsin.

In every state in the survey, negative views of the President's job performance outweigh positive views by 16 percentage points or more, with the gap topping 20 points in four states.

were killed when Russia that location.





# business



It is important to us to keep the oil supply on the market. But what we want to do is limit **Putin's profit from it** 

ERIC VAN NOSTRAND | ASSISTANT SECRETARY (ECONOMIC POLICY),

#### **RAPIDO COMPLETES 100CR RIDES**

Ride-hailing platform Rapido has completed 100 crore rides across 120 cities, the commute app which offers auto, bike-taxi, and cab services said Thursday. It has emerged as a platform offering employment opportunities to gig workers to gig workers, Rapido said





The real estate another exceptional period characterised by robust

performances in both the office and residential sectors

SHISHIR BAIJAL | CHAIRMAN AND MD,





ANKIT AGARWALA MD, PAGEGROUP



would challenge the growth in the securitisation market, though at this juncture we expect an increase in both forms of funding

ABHISHEK DAFRIA GROUP HEAD (STRUCTURED FINANCE RATINGS), ICRA

### **Q4 RESULTS**

### **Vedanta aluminium** output rises 4%

New Delhi: Diversified natural resources firm Vedanta Ltd Thursday said its total aluminium production increased 4 per cent to 5,98,000 tonne in the fourth guarter of FY24, over the year-ago period. The company's aluminium production was 5,74,000 tonne in the corresponding quarter of FY23, Vedanta said in a filing to BSE. The company's alumina production at Lanjigarh refinery unit in Odisha increased 18 per cent to 4,48,000 tonne on the back of better operational performance, the company said. At Zinc India, the mined metal production in Q4 dropped to 2.99,000 tonne. over 3,01,000 tonne in the fourth quarter of FY23.

### HDFC Bank loan

lender HDFC Bank Thursday said its loan book crossed ₹25 lakh crore in the fourth quarter ended March 2024. The bank's gross advances aggregated to ₹25.08 lakh crore as of March 31, 2024, a growth of 55.4 per cent over ₹16.14 lakh crore as of March 31, 2023, HDFC Bank said in a regulatory filing. The figures for the period ended March 31, 2024 include the operations of erstwhile HDFC Ltd, which amalgamated with HDFC Bank July 1, 2023 and hence are not comparable with those of the corresponding period of the previous year, it said.

# Services growth speeds up

March witnesses one of the strongest expansions in total sales and business activity in close to 14 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 4: India's services sector witnessed one of the strongest growth rates in over 13-and-a-half years in March on the back of strong demand that spurred sales and business activity, a monthly survey said Thursday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services Business Activity Index rose from 60.6 in February to 61.2 in March, one of the strongest expansions in total sales and business activity in close to 14 years

In the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction. The HSBC India Services PMI is compiled by S&P Global from responses to questionnaires sent to a panel of around 400 service sector companies.

The upturn was largely attributed to healthy demand conditions, efficiency gains, and positive sales developments, the survey said.

Companies signalled a substantial improvement in new

62.0 Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb MAR

order intakes during March. The rate of growth was one of the best seen since June 2010.

Source: Nikkei, Markit

New export business rose at the fastest rate since the series started in September 2014. Survey participants reported gains from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, the Americas, and the Middle East.

Services companies indicated that the substantial upturn in new business volumes added pressure on their capacities. Accordingly, service providers recruited additional staff in March. "The latest increase in employment was the 22nd in as many months, and the jointstrongest since November 2022,'

D-St hits fresh record highs

India's services PMI rose in March, following a small dip in February, on the back of strong demand that spurred sales and business activity.

GRAPHICS .

**Service providers increased** hiring at the fastest pace since August 2023 in order to expand production capacity INES LAM | ECONOMIST, HSBC

The survey further noted that there has been an intensification of price pressures, with both input costs and output charges increasing at faster rates. "Input costs rose at a faster rate,

- NEW ORDER INTAKES GROWTH WAS ONE OF THE BEST SEEN SINCE JUNE 2010
- NEW EXPORT BIZ ROSE AT FASTEST RATE SINCE THE **SERIES STARTED IN SEPT 2014**

yet service providers were able to broadly maintain margins by charging higher output prices, the survey said.

Going ahead, services companies expect demand trends to remain favourable, with marketing efforts also seen as a growth opportunity. There were, however, some concerns surrounding competitive pressures, the survey said.

Meanwhile, the HSBC India Composite PMI Output Index rose from 60.6 in February to 61.8 in March, highlighting the second-strongest upturn in over 13-and-a-half years

Composite PMI indices are weighted averages of comparable manufacturing and services PMI indices. Weights reflect the relative size of the manufacturing and service sectors, according to official GDP data.

March data pointed to a sharp increase in aggregate output across India, as both goods producers and service providers noted a pick-up in growth.

**Union Bank Berhampur** 

gets new regional head

## Govt pulls all stops to meet power demand



India is set to experience extreme heat during April-June period, with the central and western peninsular parts expected to face the worst impact

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 4: The government has asked all power plants to operate at full capacity as it pulls all the stops to meet peak electricity demand in the searing summer season, Power Minister RK Singh said Thursday.

With the meteorological department forecasting a harsh and long summer, the government has asked all plants that are shut for maintenance or other reasons, to quickly start operating and harness surplus power available at generating stations dedicated to specific users.

The government is also ensuring that thermal power plants the backbone of India's electricity supply - have enough coal stocks to last through June and has asked all units to offer their uncontracted or surplus power in power exchanges.

In an interview with PTI, Singh exuded confidence of meeting peak summer demand without any disruption. He said, "We are mobilising

our entire capacity whether it is thermal, hydro, renewable or gas-based. So I think we will meet the demand. The Ministry of Power has projected a peak power demand

of 260 gigawatt (GW) this summer (April-June), higher than the record of 243 GW in September last vear.

The ministry had projected 229GW of peak power demand last vear. but due to unseasonal

The peak demand in **2013-14** was 130 GW to 140 GW. While the **Today it is** 

cent RK SINGH

243 GW, So

it has gone

up by 80 per

rains the all-time high demand was recorded at 243GW in September 2023. Singh said, "The Coal stocks are fine at power plants. Currently we have a coal stock of around 45 million tonne (at power plants).' He said he has reviewed all

capacities, on which the country depends for power supplies.

"I am trying to take almost all the capacities online. Whatever (plant or generation capacity) is down either for planned maintenance (completed already) or whatever (plant) is on unplanned outage, we are trying to bring them online," he said.

He informed that power demand has improved 9.5 per cent in the last year.

He also informed that India has added capacity of about 200 GW which is mostly renewable.

"We are adding more capacity We are setting up about 80 GW of thermal capacity. We have about 15 GW of hydro capacity under construction. I also have 103 GW of renewable energy capacity under construction," he said, explaining about efforts being made to meet the ever-increasing power demand in the country. He also said that India's peak power demand would touch

### book shines

New Delhi: Private sector

#### repo rate due to prevalent in-TOP GAINERS flation worries. Meanwhile, the **BSE Sensex** broader market has shown resilience in select sectors like 3.06 HDFC Bank



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 4: Equity benchrebounded sharply to hit record fresh highs Thursday, propped up by buying in IT, consumer durables and financial stocks amid expectations of a robust corporate performance. Besides, investors lapped up se-

lect banking stocks expecting a status quo in the interest rate decision of the RBI's monetary policy committee, analysts said.

The six-member rate-setting panel, which began its deliberation Wednesday, will announce the decision Friday.

The 30-share BSE Sensex surged 350.81 points or 0.47 per cent to settle at its lifetime high of 74,227.63. During the day, the index oscillated between the high of 74,501.73 and the low of

SENSEX UP 350.81 POINTS TO SETTLE AT LIFETIME HIGH OF

■ NIFTY ALSO HIT ITS FRESH PEAK **OF 22,514.65, GAINING 80 POINTS** 

The broader NSE Nifty also hit its fresh peak of 22,514.65, gaining 80 points or 0.36 per cent. As many as 31 components of the 50-share benchmark ended with gains

Both indices had ended lower in the previous two sessions.

On March 7, Sensex recorded its previous peak of 74,119.39. Nifty scaled its previous high of 22,493.55

"Market breadth displayed a positive trend within a narrow trading range, with attention focused on the RBI's upcoming monetary policy announcement tomorrow. Expectations lean towards the likely status quo in the

banks in anticipation of decent Q4 results and exports based on composite PMI data reflecting strong business conditions. Vinod Nair. Head of Research. Geojit Financial Services, said. Among the Sensex constituents, 20 stocks ended the session in green with HDFC

and Asian Paints being the major TCS, Maruti, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Bajaj Finserve were the other gainers. In contrast, SBI, Bharti Airtel, JSW Steel, PowerGrid, ITC and Reliance

Bank, Titan, Tech Mahindra,

closed the trading with losses. Among sectoral indices, IT rose 0.93 per cent, followed by consumer durables which went up by 0.85 per cent. While utilities gained by 0.78 per cent, financial services climbed by 0.69 per cent. Bankex, teck and auto advanced by 0.57 per cent, 0.47 per cent

and 0.25 per cent, respectively. On the other hand, oil & gas lost 1.64 per cent, energy fell 1.01 per cent and services declined by 0.59 per cent.

BSE largecap gained 0.34 per cent and smallcap rose 0.54 per cent, while the midcap index

lost marginally by 0.11 per cent. On Wednesday, the BSE benchmark Sensex declined by 27.09 points or 0.04 per cent to settle at 73,876.82. The NSE Nifty declined 18.65 points or 0.08 per cent to 22.434.65

#### ioined as the new regional head of Union Bank of India, Berhampur region Prior to this, he was working as deputy

Berhampur: Banshidhar Tripathy has regional head under Kanpur region. Tripathy joined the bank in 2009 and has 15 years of

vast working experience in various functional capacities in different places in Mumbai. Ahmedabad.

Chandigarh, Pune, Rajkot and Kanpur. Berhampur region has 63 branches that cover Ganiam, Boudh, Navagarh and Kandhamal districts with business mix of ₹6.436 crore. During his tenure as regional head in Berhampur region. Tripathy is likely to give more emphasis

## **RBI** defers implementing FX derivatives rules

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 4: The Reserve Bank Thursday deferred implementation of its directions on exchange traded currency derivatives (ETCD) linked to rupee by a month to May 3 in view of feedbacks received from stakeholders.

A circular issued January 5 on 'Risk Management and Inter-Bank Dealings -- Hedging of Foreign Exchange Risk' was earlier scheduled to come into effect from Friday (April 5, 2024).

In a statement, the Reserve

Bank of India (RBI) also said the regulatory frame-

work for ETCDs has remained consistent over the years and that "there is no change in the RBI's policy approach"

The statement comes in view of some concerns expressed about participation in the ETCD market in the light of the January circular.

Certain brokers had clients to square off their existing in currency derivatives by April 4, 2024, before market closure.

400 GW by 2032.

Regarding the circular, the RBI said it sets out the Master Direction and reiterates the regulatory framework for participation in ETCDs involving the Indian rupee (INR) without any change.

"As hitherto, participants with a valid underlying contracted exposure can continue to enter into ETCDs involving the INR up to a limit of \$100 million without having to produce documentary evidence of the underlying exposure." the RBI said.

### **TIDBITS**

### Tesla begins making cars in Germany for export to India this year

**NEW DELHI:** Tesla has begun production of right-hand drive cars at its plant in Germany for export to India later this year, three people aware of the company's plans told Reuters, as it moves ahead with a possible entry into the world's third-largest car market. A team from Tesla is expected to visit India later this month to look at sites for a local car manufacturing plant that would require an investment of about \$2 billion, said two of the three people, who declined to be named because the plans are not public yet. India last month slashed the import tax rate on certain electric vehicles if their makers invest at least \$500 million in the country and start production there within three years. The move is a win for Tesla which had lobbied for months for lower taxes, but faced resistance from local carmakers.

### Allianz Partners becomes 1st foreign reinsurer to launch ops in GIFT City

**NEW DELHI:** France-based Allianz Partners Thursday announced the launch of its IFSC Insurance Office (IIO Reinsurance Branch) in International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) GIFT City, Gandhinagar. The company has become the first foreign reinsurer to open its office at IFSC, marking a significant milestone in its strategic expansion efforts in India. The IIO is a reinsurance branch of AWP P&C SA, a group entity of Allianz Partners headquartered in Paris, that aims to transform the reinsurance landscape in India with its B2B offerings, the company said in a statement. The establishment of the IIO Reinsurance Branch aligns with Allianz Partners' overarching business strategy, which aims to foster growth in the insurance sector and strengthen its presence in the Indian market, it said

## MINING RESUMES IN GOA AFTER 6 YEARS

#### **VEDANTA BEGINS OPERATIONS AT BICHOLIM BLOCK**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 4: Mining in Goa resumed after a gap of six years, with mining major Vedanta Thursday announcing that it has commenced operations at Bicholim Mineral Block in the state.

Bicholim Mineral Block is the first auctioned mine to become operational since 2018 when the Supreme Court imposed a blanket ban on mining in the coastal state, the company said.

"Heralding a new era of inclusive development, Vedanta Sesa Goa commenced mining operations at Bicholim Mineral Block- Block 1 in the state of Goa," the company said in a statement.

Vedanta Limited had in 2022

emerged as a successful bidder

for the mining block which was

auctioned.

Vedanta was the highest bid $der\ with\ 63.55\ per\ cent\ revenue$ for Bicholim Mining Block, spread over 485 hectares. "Vedanta Sesa Goa's com-

mencement of its operations in Goa's Bicholim Mineral Block signifies a new chapter of collaboration between Vedanta and the state of Goa, reinforcing a shared vision for progress and prosperity for the state of Goa. Bicholim Mineral Block is the first auctioned mine in the state

to become operational and heralds a new era of larger revenue share with the government for development of the state and welfare of local communities,' the company said

This significant milestone, the company said, marks a pivotal moment for both the local community and the economy of

significant development and opens new & additional vistas for the progress and socio-economic development of the people of Goa. We reaffirm our firm commitment to upholding the highest standards of corporate responsibility and environmental stewardship," Navin Jaju, CEO,

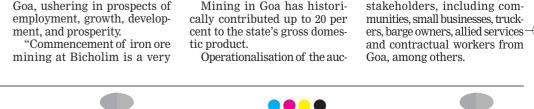
Sesa Goa-Vedanta Ltd, said. tic product.

tioned mines in the state will contribute significantly to state GDP, as revenues will accrue to the state through auction premiums, royalties, and contributions to the District Mineral

Foundation paid by the lessees. "We are well prepared to initiate & sustain safe & responsible mining operations & will be relying on increasingly modern & advanced technologies to operate the mines in a sustainable manner," said Krishna Reddy, COO-Mining, Sesa Goa, Vedanta Ltd.

Last year, Vedanta also bagged the Cudnem mineral block in Goa through an auction.

The company further said mining operations will catalyse the generation of direct and indirect employment opportunities, stimulate the business environment, and benefit various stakeholders, including com-



# Shashank show sinks GT



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, April 4: Gujarat Titans skipper Shubman Gill's unblemished unbeaten half century was overshadowed by uncapped Shashank Singh's fiery knock as Punjab Kings registered a thrilling three-wicket win in an Indian Premier League match here on Thursday.

Gill made an unbeaten 89 (48b, 6x4, 4x6) to guide GT to an im-

generously by B Sai Sudharsan's 19-ball 33 (6x4) and Rahul Tewatia's eight-ball unbeaten 23 (3x4, 1x6).

However, there was a heartbreak in store for GT as Shashank played the knock of his life, remaining unbeaten on 61 (29b, 6x4, 4x6) to guide PBKS home with a ball to spare. He was ably supported by  $\bar{A}shutosh$ Sharma (31, 17b, 3x4, 1x6) as the duo shared 43 runs off just 22 balls to raise PBKS' hopes, which eventually came true.

Chasing a big total, PBKS suffered an early jolt in the form of captain Shikhar Dhawan off Umesh Yadav. Jonny Bairstow (22) was then cleaned up by Afghanistan left-arm wrist spin-

ner Noor Ahmad. PBKS kept on losing wickets at regular intervals as the next to follow was Prabhsimran Singh (35, 24b, 5x4, 1x6) as PBKS slid to 64/3 by the end of the eighth over. Sikandar Raza was dropped twice in Umesh's 11th over, albeit

both were difficult chances.

But it was Shashank who capitalised on the lives, clobbering Umesh for two boundaries and a six to pick up 17 runs in the 11th over. Raza, however, didn't last long as he edged a Mohit delivery to Wriddhiman Saha behind the stumps.

Shashank kept on using his long handle, picking up a few boundaries and sixes to keep PBKS in the hunt. He held on to just 25 balls. Shashank singlehandedly kept PBKS in the fray with his pyrotechnics. He was ably supported by Ashutosh as the duo snatched victory from the jaws of defeat.

Earlier sent in to bat, opener Gill made a rousing start to the innings as he clobbered spinner Harpreet Brar straight over his head for the first six of the match. Runs flowed for GT till the third over before Kagiso Rabada (2/44) ousted Saha.

Kane Williamson (26), who replaced injured David Miller, looked in great touch. But his knock was cut short by Brar's extra bounce in the ninth over. Gill and new man Sudharsan then picked up 14 runs off the 12th over.

Gill led from the front and clobbered Rabada for a maximum before Sudharsan struck the bowler to the mid-off boundary to keep up the tempo. Sudharsan went about his business in style, picking up boundaries at will while Gill was happy to play second fiddle.

Sudharsan's cameo came to an end when Harshal Patel snared him. Gill brought up his fifty off 31 balls with a boundary behind deep square leg in the 15th over. Gill was at his imperious best as he dispatched Harshal over long-on for a maximum in the 17th over.

While Gill was going all guns blazing from one end, Vijay Shankar was flat and was caught by a diving Brar at long-off off Rabada. In his second spell, Harshal was wayward with his lengths and Tewatia made good use of it as the penultimate over yielded 20 runs. Tewatia played a blinder, including two boundaries off pacer Arshdeep Singh in the last two balls.

#### **BRIEF SCORES**

GT 199/4 (Shubman Gill 89 n o, Sai Sudharsan 33; Kagiso Rabada 2/44) lost to PBKS 200/7 (Shashank Singh 61 n o, Prabhsimran Singh 35, Ashutosh Sharma 31 n o; Noor Ahmad 2/32) by 3 wickets.

Super Kings take on unpredictable SRH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, April 4: Without their in-form bowler Mustafizur Rahman, Chennai Super Kings will need to sharpen their allround game when they take on an unpredictable Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL here Friday.

Consistency is the hallmark of CSK who would be looking to restore "normal service" following their first loss of the season against Delhi Capitals.

It is a long tournament and an odd dip in performance is expected, as mentioned by the CSK captain Ruturaj Gaikwad after the game in Visakhapatnam. However, he and his opening partner Rachin Ravindra will need to be ready for the moving ball after being found wanting on that front against Delhi.

The majority of cricketing world wants MS Dhoni to bat higher than number eight, especially after his 16-ball 37 in his very first outing with the bat this season. However, that is unlikely to happen as Dhoni would want the likes of Shivam Dube and Sameer Rizvi to finish the job ahead of him.

In the bowling department, CSK will need to rethink their combination with Mustafizur back in Bangladesh to process his visa for the T20 World Cup in the USA and Caribbean.

The overseas combine of Mustafizur and Matheesha Pathirana had been working well for CSK who could bring in a like-for-like replacement for the Bangladesh cricketer in



Mukesh Choudhary. Shardul Thakur is also yet to get a game thus far. Their opposition Sunrisers Hyderabad will be looking to make the most of home comforts in their second game at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium.

The batters will take immense confidence from their record showing against Mumbai Indians here. The pressure is piling up on opener Mayank Agarwal who is yet to make an impact.

The game against Gujarat Titans was Sunrisers' first batting failure in the tournament and they would be looking for immediate course correction.

Even on the bowling front, the likes of Jaydev Unadkat, Mayank Markande and Bhuvneshwar Kumar have proved expensive. The seasoned Bhuvneshwar has especially been disappointing with the new ball and is yet to pick up a wicket in three games.

Skipper Pat Cummins have kept things tights with a sub 8 runs per over economy rate to complement his four wickets in three games. He will need support from others Friday night.

The pitch in the opening game here produced more than 500 runs, raising hopes of another six-hitting slugfest.

#### **MATCHDAY**

Indian Premier League **SRH vs CSK** Time: 07:30 pm **Telecast: Star Sports Network** Stream: Jio Cinema

## Foden steps up in Haaland absence

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, April 4: Erling Haaland was left out of Manchester City's starting lineup for its Premier League match against Aston Villa. But it didn't hinder the defending champion as Phil Foden scored a hat-trick in a 4-1 rout at Etihad Stadium.

Haaland, the league's top scorer, was named as a substitute for the game a day after City manager Pep Guardiola described him as the "best striker in the

Haaland was criticized by former Manchester United captain and now TV analyst Roy Keane after he



failed to score in City's 0-0 draw with Arsenal Sunday. Guardiola defended the forward Tuesday but still opted

against naming him in a

potentially crucial game in

City's title defense. Kevin de

Bruyne was also named as

a substitute.

"We put the players out to win it not just to rest players," Guardiola said afterward. "We need fresh legs and we only played three days ago against Arsenal. We needed it because of the schedule so we needed the

The win moved thirdplace City level on points with Liverpool in second. Arsenal moved top after a 2-0 win against Luton at Emirates Stadium.

Guardiola's team plays at Crystal Palace Saturday before facing Real Madrid away in the first leg of their Champions League quarwww.vedantaaluminium.com

### ଆଲୁମିନିୟମ : ଭବିଷ୍ୟତର ଧାତ୍ର

ଆଲ୍ମିନିୟମ ଏକ ବିଶ୍ୱଞରୀୟ ଉସାଦନ କେନ୍ଦ୍ରରେ ପରିଶତ ହେବାର ଉଚ୍ଚାକାଂକ୍ଷା ନିମନ୍ତେ ଅତ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଗୁରୁ ତୃପୂର୍ଣ୍ଡ । ଏହା ଉଚ୍ଚ-ପ୍ରଯୁକ୍ତିଯୁକ୍ତ ଉଦ୍ୟୋଗ, ଉଦୀୟମାନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ର ଯଥା ମହାକାଶ, ପ୍ରତିରକ୍ଷା, ଅକ୍ଷୟଶକ୍ତି ଏବଂ ବୈଦ୍ୟାତିକ ଯାନ ଇତ୍ୟାଦି ପାଇଁ ଅପରିହାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ।

ଭାରତ ବିଶ୍ୱର ହିତୀୟ ବହଉମ ଆଲୁମିନିୟମ ଉତ୍ସାଦନ କ୍ଷମତାର ଅଧିକାରୀ ।

### ବେଦାନ୍ତ ଆଲୁମିନିୟମ

- ଦେଶର ସର୍ବବୃହତ ଆଲୁମିନିୟମ, ସବୁଜଧାତୁ ଉମ୍ମାଦନକାରୀ।
- ଜିଡ଼ିପି ଉପରେ ୧% ପ୍ରରୋଚିତ ପ୍ରଭାବ ପଳାଏ ଏବଂ ସହସ୍ରାଧିକ ଏମଏସ୍ଏମଇ ଏବଂ ଲକ୍ଷାଧିକ ନିଯୁକ୍ତି ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରେ ।
- ଡୋ ଜୋନସ୍ ସଞ୍ଜେନବିଲିଟି ସୂଚୀରେ ବିଶ୍ୱସ୍ତରୀୟ ଆଲୁମିନିୟମ କମ୍ପାନୀଗୁଡିକ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ସାନରେ ଅବସ୍ଥିତ ।

### DOUBLES PAIR OF SATWIK, CHIRAG PULLS OUT OF BAC

New Delhi, April 4: Shuttler Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty Thursday pulled out of their men's doubles title defence at next week's Badminton Asia Championships with the former recuperating from a

shoulder injury. Last April, Satwik and Chirag, currently ranked world number one, had made history by breaking a 58-year-old drought as they became the first Indians after Dinesh Khanna to be crowned champions at the Asia Badminton Championships in Dubai. Dinesh Khanna had achieved the rare feat of winning gold in 1965.

However, Satwik and Chirag, who have been in rollicking form this season, having won the French Open Super 750 and finishing runner-up in two finals, Thursday decided to opt out of the tournament. "It is not a new injury, it is something which happens due to overuse of shoulder and Satwik is already on road to recovery. They are still training but the intensity is little less. So, looking at the bigger picture, they decided to withdraw," a source in the know of things told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

'They have been consistently playing the finals and in a way they are lucky that it didn't crop up during major events. So it is a good time to address the issue.

They are elite athletes and need to choose events wisely, they shouldn't rush things.

It is a recurrent injury as Satwik has been troubled by his right shoulder in the past but he had recovered from it as he and Chirag went on to win laurels for the country. But following the European leg this season, it seemed to have flared up a bit.

Satwik and Chirag are currently into their 10th week as world number one, surpassing Saina Nehwal's record of nine successive weeks at the top of BWF rankings.

The crack pair had a stellar season in the last two years, winning the 2022 world championships bronze, 2022 Commonwealth Games gold medal, 2023 Asia championships gold, the 2023 Asian Games gold medal, 2022 Thomas Cup winners, 2023 Indonesia Super 1000 champions and 2023 Korea Open winners.

The duo has been named in India's strong Thomas Cup team which will look to defend their title in China from April 27. "Thomas Cup remains an important event and they will be back for the prestigious tournament as we are the defending

championships," the source said. The withdrawal of the top pair means HS Prannoy, Lakshya Sen and PV Sindhu will now lead India's charge at the prestigious tournament.

### Double delight for Saina at chess nat'ls



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 4: Woman International Master Saina Salonika clinched two gold medals - individual and team events – in the National Team Chess Championship, played in Dharmasala from March 29 to April 4.

Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) bagged gold medal in team event while Telengana and LIC of India bagged silver and bronze medals, respectively. Saina was representing PSPB in the tournament.

PSPB team won all the seven matches they played and secured top position. The gold winners in the team event bagged a prize money of ₹1,25,000 while Telengana pocketed ₹1,00,000 and LIC were awarded ₹75,000 for their second and third place finishes.

Saina won all four matches she played and clinched the yellow metal while her teammate IM Soumya Swaminathan got gold medal and both IM Nisa Mehta and WGM Marry Ann Gomes got individual silver medals in their respective board.

Another Odia girl WGM Kiran Manisha Mohanty, who was representing LIC, clinched individual gold medal in her board and team bronze medal. Smaraki Mohanty of Odisha also bagged individual bronze in her board.

