

**Bold approach**  
Dancer-turned actress Nora Fatehi says she is not bothered about objectification of an actor's body by paparazzi

LEISURE | P2

**Fresh military aid**  
The UK pledges an additional \$620 million in new military supplies for Ukraine, including long-range missiles and four million rounds of ammunition

INTERNATIONAL | P10

**Inflation risk**  
Extreme weather events along with prolonged geo-political tensions may pose a risk to inflation, says RBI April Bulletin

BUSINESS | P11

**DC take on GT**  
Delhi Capitals look for a much-improved performance from their bowlers when they face an inconsistent Gujarat Titans in IPL

SPORTS | P12

**SHORT TAKES**

**Temperature to rise by 4-6°C in Odisha**

**Bhubaneswar:** The regional centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) here Tuesday predicted that the maximum temperature would gradually rise by 4-6 degrees Celsius at many places in the state over the next four to five days. According to the IMD forecast, the maximum temperature is expected to rise to 39-41 degrees Celsius in coastal Odisha and up to 44 degrees Celsius in the interior pockets for April 28. The weather office has issued a yellow warning (be updated) for Balasore, Khurda, Ganjam, Gajapati, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur and Nuapada districts for April 25. Thunderstorms with lightning and rainfall may occur at a few places in Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Ganjam, Gajapati, and Nayagarh, April 25.

**10 dead in Malaysia as choppers collide**

**Kuala Lumpur:** Two Malaysian military helicopters collided and crashed during a training session, Tuesday, killing all 10 people on board, the navy said. The helicopters were rehearsing at a naval base in northern Perak state for the navy's 90th anniversary celebration next month when the accident occurred, the navy said in a brief statement. "All victims were confirmed dead on site," it said, adding that the remains have been sent to the hospital to be identified. Seven crew members were aboard the AW139 maritime operation helicopter, the navy said.

**India seeks details on banned spices**

**New Delhi:** India, the world's largest producer, consumer and exporter of spices, has sought details from food safety regulators of Singapore and Hong Kong, which has banned certain spices of Indian brands MDH and Everest due to quality concerns. The Commerce ministry has also directed Indian embassies in both Singapore and Hong Kong to send a detailed report on the matter. The ministry has also sought details from the Indian firms -- MDH and Everest, whose products have been banned for allegedly containing pesticide 'ethylene oxide' beyond permissible limits.

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**



What a thoughtful and caring leadership! They won't even let us walk to the polling booth in such heat

**MARKET WATCH**

INDEX	73738.45	▲ 89.83
SENSEX	73738.45	▲ 89.83
NIFTY	22368.00	▲ 31.60
DOLLAR	83.34	▼ ₹0.02
EURO	89.09	▲ ₹0.29
GOLD	₹70,965	▼ ₹232
SILVER	₹80,506	▼ ₹73

**WEATHER**

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	41.8°C	38.2°C
Min Temp	26.7°C	27.5°C
Humidity	41%	62%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST  
DRY WEATHER VERY LIKELY



**RELIGIOUS FERVOUR:** Devotees take part in a 'Shobha Yatra' on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanti, at Chandni Chowk, in New Delhi, Tuesday

## Can't let public be taken for ride: SC

*In a terse observation that obliquely hinted at the alleged double standards followed by the Indian Medical Association (IMA) in prescribing drugs and FMCG products, a Supreme Court bench Tuesday pulled up the voluntary organization of doctors over the alleged unethical acts of its members in prescribing highly expensive medicines for 'valuable consideration'. Hearing a petition filed by the IMA related to misleading advertisements by Patanjali Ayurved Ltd, the top court said there are several other FMCG companies 'going that way' and the Centre has to respond as to what it has done about this. The court also asked the licensing authorities to 'activate' themselves to the violations, stating that the public can't be taken for a ride.*



Ministry of Ayush asking the licensing authorities not to initiate or take any action under rule 170 of Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, the apex court also pulled up the Indian Medical Association (IMA) about the alleged unethical acts of its members in prescribing highly expensive medicines for "valuable consideration". A bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah, while hearing the case related to misleading advertisements by Patanjali Ayurved Ltd, said there are several other Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) companies going that way and the Centre has to respond as to what it has done about this. "We can't let the public be taken for a ride," the bench observed, adding, "If this (misleading advertisements) is happening, the Union of India needs to activate itself and so do the state licensing authorities".

**New Delhi, April 23:** "We can't let the public be taken for a ride," the Supreme Court said Tuesday while asking the Centre and state licensing authorities to 'activate' themselves to deal with misleading advertisements. While questioning the Centre over an August 2023 letter by the

"You can't just shrug your shoulders and say I have conveyed the complaint to the state authority and it is for them to do what they are doing," the bench said. The bench told the IMA's counsel that while the association is pointing fingers at Patanjali, "The other four fingers are also pointing at you (IMA)". "It is not going to be all just that there are FMCGs. There is you and your members who are prescribing medicines on the strength of recommendations made for which there is valuable consideration from what we understand," the bench said, adding, "If that is happening, why should not we turn the beam on you?" The IMA's counsel said he would look into this issue. The bench also sought to know from the Centre about a letter issued in August last year by the Ministry of Ayush to all the states/UTs licensing authority and drug controllers of Ayush. Earlier in the day, the bench questioned Baba Ramdev and his aide Balkrishna about how prominently they have published their unqualified apology in newspapers. "Is it the same size of advertisements that you normally issue in newspapers?" the bench asked them while hearing the case. **MORE: P9**

## Top court suspends Moquim's sentence

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, April 23:** The Supreme Court Tuesday suspended the sentence of Congress MLA Mohammed Moquim in a corruption case. A bench of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Dipankar Datta issued notice to the Odisha government on the appeal filed by the Cuttack-Barabati MLA challenging the Orissa High Court's decision. "Issue notice. Having heard the senior counsel for the parties and taking into consideration all the attending circumstances, the sentence of the petitioner is ordered to be suspended," the bench said. The high court April 10 dismissed the appeal of Moquim who challenged the order of a vigilance court that sentenced him to three years of rigorous imprisonment and slapped a fine of ₹50,000 in connection with a corruption case. Special judge, Vigilance, Bhubaneswar, September 29, 2022, had convicted Moquim in a corruption case. The Vigilance department, in a statement, said Moquim, as the managing director of Metro Builders Pvt Ltd in collusion with an IAS officer and others obtained a pecuniary advantage in favour of the real estate firm in the guise of loans meant for rural poor from the state-run Odisha Rural Housing and Development Corporation Ltd (ORHDC).

## Kejriwal given insulin in Tihar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



**New Delhi, April 23:** Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was administered a 'low dose' of insulin after his blood sugar level spiked, officials of Tihar jail said, Tuesday with the AAP commenting that it was because of the blessings of Lord Hanuman. Tuesday is being celebrated as Hanuman Janmotsav, the Lord's birthday. According to a Tihar official, Kejriwal was given two units of low dose insulin Monday evening on the advice of the AIIMS doctors. His blood sugar level reading was found to be 217 around 7 pm, following which the doctors at the Tihar looking after him decided to give him the insulin dose, the official said. The AIIMS specialists, during a video conference with the chief minister April 20, had advised the Tihar doctors that insulin could be given to him if his sugar level crosses a certain level, he added. Delhi Cabinet minister Saurabh Bharadwaj participated in an event in his constituency to celebrate Hanuman Jayanti. A person dressed as Lord Hanuman was carrying vials of insulin with Bharadwaj carrying a mace (gadaa) as they trav-

elled in the area atop a vehicle. Vials of insulin were stuck on the mace. "Hanumanji has given insulin to his devotee Arvind Kejriwal. The court passed the order, the jail denied, but due to Hanumanji, Kejriwal got the insulin. We pray for his good health, long life, and may he soon be released," he said. Earlier in the day, Bharadwaj alleged that the officials were deliberately not giving insulin to Kejriwal. "Today it became clear that the chief minister was right. He needed insulin but the officials under the BJP-led Centre were deliberately not treating him. Tell me BJP people! If there was no need for insulin, why are they giving it now? Because the whole world is cursing them," he said in a post on X in Hindi. Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal visited the temple to offer prayers on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanti. **MORE: P9**

## Dating apps may sell your personal data

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**San Francisco, April 23:** Most dating apps - nearly 80 per cent - might share or sell your personal data for advertising, a new report revealed Tuesday. The developer of the Firefox Internet browser Mozilla examined 25 apps and labelled 22 of them as 'Privacy Not Included' - the lowest rating in its parlance. The researcher only gave positive feedback to queer-owned and run Lex, while Harmony and Happn received adequate ratings. "Dating apps claim the more personal data you share the more likely you are to find your love. We have no way of knowing if



that's true. What we do know is that most dating apps fail spectacularly at protecting that information," said Researcher Misha Rytov. According to the report, about 25 per cent of the apps collect meta-data from your content - which is

information in the files about when the photo (or video) was taken, where, and what day. In addition, the report mentioned most dating apps, such as Hinge, Tinder, OKCupid, Match, Plenty of Fish, BLK, and BlackPeopleMeet have access to precise geo-location data from their users. Some apps, like Hinge, even collect location information in the background when the app is not actively being used. For all dating apps, the researchers shared their top three privacy tips - treat your dating profile more like your LinkedIn profile, don't log in with a third-party account, and limit app permissions where possible.

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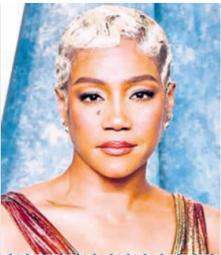


## ANNE HATHAWAY SHARES HER 'CHEMISTRY TEST' EXPERIENCE

American actress Anne Hathaway reminisced about the beginning of her career, recalling an audition where she had to kiss 10 boys. In an interview, the *Havoc* actress shared that back in the 2000s it was normal to ask actors to make out with potential co-stars during chemistry tests.

## TIFFANY USES AN UNDISCLOSED X ACCOUNT TO TROLL HER TROLLS

Actress and comedian Tiffany Haddish talked about how she felt the need to give her army of critics a taste of their own medicine. Tiffany admitted during a show that she uses an undisclosed X account to troll her trolls.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

Today, you may set out to please your beloved, and maybe even woo him/her all over again. There may be a bit of dissatisfaction regarding friends and relatives, but you can look forward to partying and new friendships this evening, says Ganesh.

#### TAURUS

Today, you are likely to pay attention to your health issues and eating habits. Fortune may not favour your efforts. However hard you may try, you may still find yourself back to square one at the end of the day. Try until you taste the sweet fruit of success, suggests Ganesh.

#### GEMINI

You will be in the mood to spend the day doing the things that you really love. You will consider helping people in need and will be in a generous mood. Your charitable bent of mind will bring you elevated social status and improved self-esteem, says Ganesh.

#### CANCER

Today, every word coming out of your sweetheart's lips will be music to your ears. Your relationship with your relatives will be harmonious. You may steer clear of your troubles, if you learn to restrain. The best way to deal with criticism is to take them constructively.

#### LEO

One way to assure success is by believing in oneself and one's abilities. Let this confidence and your high spirits take you to newer heights today, says Ganesh. Remain cheerful all day long, and you will see your hardships disappear as you tackle them with consummate skill. But more importantly, Ganesh foresees the day leading you to a fulfilling evening. Enjoy!

#### VIRGO

A medley of good and bad awaits you today. Emotional people will find you immature and inconsistent. But your bag o' jokes is never empty, and you remain the jester as always. Ganesh advises you to meditate and engage in spiritually rich activities to channel and focus all your talents.

#### LIBRA

There is no end to work, so buckle up, as it is highly probable that work pressure will take up most of your time today. This leaves precious little for your family, but as always, they fully understand. Ganesh expects you to be both hard-working and conscientious today. You may also launch a new business scheme, especially if you are self-employed.

#### SCORPIO

The spectre of financial instability will keep haunting you. But there can be a brighter side to life too, says Ganesh. Long overdue payments might get encashed today. And those blind bluffs you call sometimes in business might pay handsome rewards, predicts Ganesh.

#### SAGITTARIUS

You may have women swooning over you today; such is your charm and way with them, says Ganesh. But friends are highly valuable to you, and you shall spend much time with them cherishing their company and reliving amazing times spent together.

#### CAPRICORN

It may seem to be an unusual combination, but you will experience pain and pleasure in equal measure today, says Ganesh. The errands you may have to run for at home will leave you exhausted, so conserve some energy for the rest of the day. Your wit can get you whatever you want, but it's important that you use it in the right way and not just to meet your selfish interests.

#### AQUARIUS

Good news may hit home today. Promotion, profit, scholarship, anything you've been working for will probably materialise. You are ingenuous, and will crack the toughest of problems with consummate ease. Ganesh sees money lenders and brokers doing well.

#### PISCES

Being a friend in need is what today will be about, says Ganesh. Making new acquaintances and associations is also on the cards. Try not to let jealousy mar your better judgement while you are at it.

# NORA on getting objectified

**Mumbai:** Dancer-turned actress Nora Fatehi is not bothered about the paparazzi culture, where the cameras tend to zoom in on the actor's body and objectify her. In a new interview with an entertainment portal, the *Marjawan* actress shared that it might happen as they do not find the same body parts as 'exciting' in other actors.

Nora said, "I guess they've never seen a body like that before. It is what it is. The media doesn't just do it to me but to other female actors also. Sometimes, I think that there's nothing to zoom into, so what are they focusing on?"

She continued, "These are unfortunately the things that trend on social media. They're just playing the social media algorithm game. I'm blessed with a [good] body and I'm proud of it and my assets. I'm not ashamed of it... Their intention behind zooming in may be wrong but

that's a separate conversation. I can't grab each person and teach them a lesson. But I still move around the way I move and I'm very confident in my body."

Nora was recently seen in the film *Madgaon Express*, which marked the directorial debut of actor Kunal Kemmu. The film starred Divyendru, Pratik Gandhi, and Avinash Tiwary in the lead roles. It opened to positive reviews upon release and was received well by the audience.



## Aahana talks about impact of technology in theatre

**Mumbai:** Apart from movies, she might have ventured into the OTT space too, but Aahana Kumra doesn't want to let go of her roots. The actress, who's been a part of a play like *Sir Sir Sarla*, continues to perform live and recently performed in a play called *Constellations* with Kunaal Roy Kapoor.

What fascinates the actress is the fact that, just like other mediums, theatre has also evolved technologically over the years.

She says, "There has been a lot of new technologies in theatre of late. Especially, when I travel abroad, I get surprised seeing the kind of stuff people are doing in Broadway or in West End theatre. I get amused seeing cars suspended from the top and people jumping in from here and there. There is also a large-scale use of LED screens on the set."

Her last play too had use of technology which helped in the narration of the story better.

She, however, points out, "You cannot depend only on technology in a play, although this play I did depended a lot on how the set also looked, because it immediately transported you into a world that you need to be in."

# Nargis shares her first clamming experience



**Mumbai:** Actress Nargis Fakhri, who recently featured in the streaming series *TatluBaaz*, confessed to being a water baby. She shared her first experience with clamming.

The actress expressed her fondness for engaging in various water-based activities like sailing, paddle boarding, kayaking, and jet skiing.

The *Banjo* actress revealed that her preferred way of spending vacation or leisure time involves sitting on the deck, gazing at the water, and relishing tranquility.

The actress also recounted her unsuccessful first attempt at scuba diving, admitting that she was overwhelmed and panicked upon encountering numerous underwater creatures.

Talking about her 'super fun' clamming experience, Nargis said: "I did it for the first time in Abu Dhabi. You get off your boat and onto the sandbars. The water is just above your knee."

The actress added: "You have to dig in the sand for clams. I went home with the fresh catch and made pasta with the clams."

# Ayushmann reveals truth behind showbiz fashion

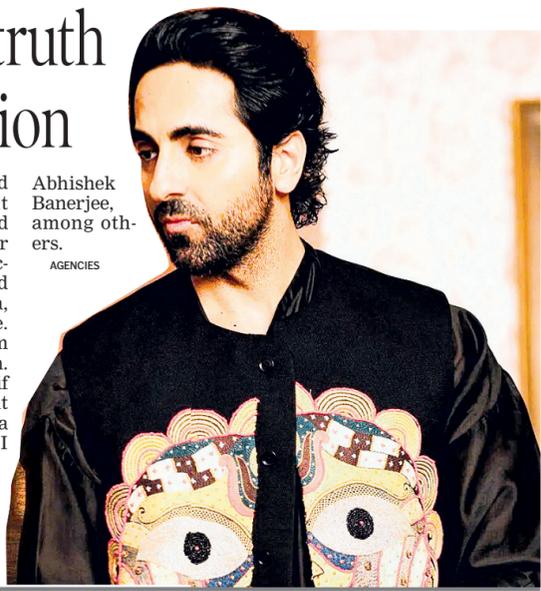
**Mumbai:** In a recent interview, actor Ayushmann Khurrana shed light on a common practice in Hindi film industries: Renting clothes for public appearances and film shoots. This challenges the perception of celebrities owning all the designer outfits they wear.

Speaking with *Mashable India*, the 39-year-old actor stated, "The entire Bollywood industry rents clothes. Do you think we actually purchase all those outfits? We hire stylists, they source the clothes and return the clothes. Where will we take so many clothes."

Ayushmann also expressed his admiration for Diljit Dosanjh's fashion sense and global influence. He further shared a lighthearted anecdote about his brother and actor Aparshakti Khurrana, and his fashion expertise. Ayushmann admitted, "I am not passionate about fashion. My life is very simple, but if you have to sport different looks for your work that's a part of your profession but I am not driven by it."

Speaking of the professional front, Ayushmann was last seen in *Dream Girl 2*, co-starring Ananya Panday, Paresh Rawal, and

Abhishek Banerjee, among others.



### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

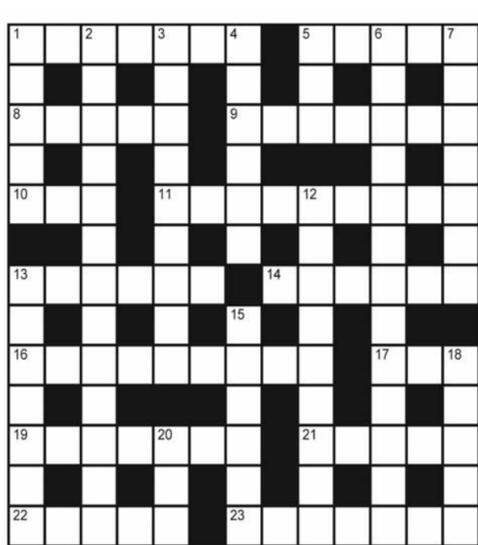


### BREVITY



### FUN post

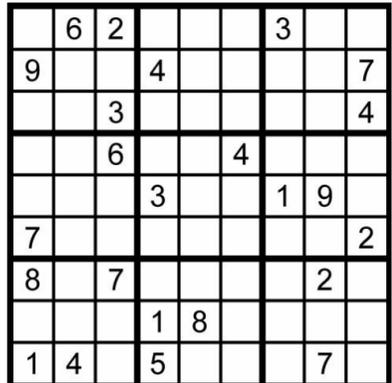
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Young tree
  - 5 After roulette or coffee
  - 8 Entertain
  - 9 Kick upstairs
  - 10 Washout
  - 11 Theatre section
  - 13 Marcel Duchamp, e.g.
  - 14 Stabilised
  - 16 Prevent
  - 17 Butterfly catcher
  - 19 2nd largest Chinese city
  - 21 Like krypton
  - 22 Golf score
  - 23 Yacht meeting
  - 3 Igloos
  - 4 Balkan nation
  - 5 Water tester
  - 6 Miss World, e.g. (6,7)
  - 7 Beryl variety
  - 12 Registering
  - 13 Cordial
  - 15 Fierce creature
  - 18 Aquarium fish
  - 20 Indignation

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS

#### CROSSWORD

CANE BLUDGEON  
LEBBAITPO  
AIRRAID COSTS  
SVEKDTIE  
SPECIFICALLY  
A NEETOH  
CLERGY BOUNTY  
T M P O R P  
OUTOFFASHION  
S L W F H R O  
H O A R D E L I T I S T  
O T E R N P S I C  
OVERRIDE CHIC

#### SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Artistes perform during the Nrutya Samarпита Festival at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



# downtown

## BJP releases list of 40 star campaigners for Odisha

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Tuesday released its list of 40 star campaigners for Odisha ahead of the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the state.

The star campaigners figuring in the list issued by BJP's National General Secretary Arun Singh will soon hit the campaign trail, said sources.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP National President JP Nadda, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and UP CM Yogi Adityanath are among the star campaigners

**PM Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP National President JP Nadda, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and UP CM Yogi Adityanath are among the star campaigners**

Vaishnav are some of the prominent leaders included in the star campaigners' list.

Others are: Smriti Zubin Irani, Bhupender Yadav, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Vishnu Deo Sai, Manmohan Samal, Baijayant

Jay Panda, Sunil Bansal, Vijaypal Singh Tomar, Sushree Lata Usendi, Shantanu Thakur, Bisweswar Tudu, Jaya Narayan Mishra, Jua Oram, Pratap Chandra Sarangi, Kedar Nath Kashyap, Aparajita Sarangi, Sambit Patra, Basanta Kumar Panda, Suresh Pujari, Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, Samir Mohanty,

Manas Kumar Mohanty, Golak Prasad Mohapatra, Poornima Kerketta, Sarada Prasad Satapathy, Ramesh Sahu, Anubhav Mohanty, Harihar Mohapatra, Pinky Pradhan and Sritam Das.



**FOR LORD'S WATER SPORTS:** Bhoi servants take out a boat from Narendra pond ahead of the Chandan Yatra of Srimandir deities in Puri, Tuesday

PIC: YAGNESWAR MOHANTY

## 7 held for looting morning walkers

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** The Commissionerate Police Tuesday busted a seven-member interstate gang allegedly involved in 11 cases of snatching and loot in the Capital city. The arrested men were using fake identity cards of several police officials to loot the valuables from unsuspecting morning walkers, said twin city Police Commissioner Sanjeeb Panda.

Addressing the media, the police commissioner said the accused were identified as Sadekh Hussain, 56, Sabir Ali, 33, Fayaz Hussain, 36, Hassan Ali, 20, Abuzar Ali, 23, Zahir Ali, 34 and Rajendra Kumar Kushwaha, 32 - all natives of Madhya Pradesh. Sources in the police station revealed that Rs 3.5 lakh cash, gold ornaments, a car, six cell-phones, documents and other



valuables have been seized from the accused.

About the modus operandi, Panda said, "The gang used to target the elderly and women residents of the City when they step out for morning or evening walk. Two of the gang members would reach their easy targets with a motorcycle and introduce themselves as police officials by showing them the fake ID cards. To further win their confidence,

the miscreants would tell them that an incident of snatching has occurred in this area half-an-hour ago and pester them to hand over their jewellery for safety."

Once the victims deposit the jewellery, the gang members would exchange the valuables with small pebbles wrapped in a paper (which they have with them) and hand it over to them, said the police commissioner,

adding that they would tell the victims not to open the paper until they reach home.

Furthermore, Panda said during loot two members of the gang would approach the victim while the remaining four would be waiting for them on a motorcycle with the engine on. In case a victim hesitates to hand over the gold ornaments, the men would rob them at knife-point, he added.

As per preliminary investigation, the gang members were found to be vagabonds who used to spend nights at roadside dhabas.

The Commissionerate Police has registered a case against the accused under Section 392, 34, 420, 419 and a host of other Sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). They were produced in a local court for remand, said a senior police official.

## BJD, BJP fighting a fixed match in state: Srikant Jena

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** Though the BJP and BJD are fighting against each other, people know that it is a 'fixed match', senior Congress leader Srikant Jena claimed Tuesday.

Jena, a former Union minister who is fighting the election from Balasore, alleged that farmers of the country were suffering and unemployment was rising.

"BJD and BJP have entered into an understanding, and they have been exposed. Even before the elections, people know that the match is fixed," he alleged.

He claimed the Narendra Modi government at the Centre has failed to keep its promises on providing jobs.

Jena said that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who ruled Odisha for 25 years, has made the state 'number 1 in poverty, unemployment and migration'.

"The per-capita income of the people of Odisha is the lowest in the entire country," he claimed.

"On the other hand, a few corporates have been allowed to loot precious mineral resources from Odisha," he alleged.

Jena said many developmental works were taken up in Balasore when he was its MP from 2009 to 2014.

"Nothing happened from 2014 to 2024, except the inauguration of a marine police station. A software technology park was established in Balasore, but it has not become operational due to the apathy of both the state and the Centre," he added.

## 26,679 cases pending in HC for over a decade



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** Odisha has been grappling with a huge judicial backlog. A staggering 26,679 cases in the high court are being dragged for over 10 years, according to the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) Tuesday, putting an enormous emotional, financial, and psychological burden on the litigants.

According to the NJDG, Orissa High Court has a whopping 1,43,483 pending cases - 1,05,764 civil and 37,719 criminal ones.

While 34,697 (24.18 per cent) cases have been pending in the state's apex court for nearly one year, as many as 25,668 (17.89 per cent) cases have been pending for somewhere between one and three years.

As many as 16,755 (11.68 per cent) cases have been pending for three to five years and 33,998 (23.69 per cent) for five to 10 years.

Similarly, 26,679 (18.59 per cent) of cases have been pending for 10 to 20 years, 5,241 (3.65 per cent) cases for 20 to 30 years and 445 (0.31 per cent) for more than 30 years.

About the nature of cases, 24,265 (22.94 per cent) civil and

10,432 (27.66 per cent) criminal cases have been pending for nearly one year.

As many as 21,464 (20.29 per cent) civil and 4,204 (11.15 per cent) criminal cases have been pending for one to three years, while 14,477 (13.69 per cent) civil and 2,278 (6.04 per cent) criminal cases have been pending for three to five years.

While 27,059 (25.58 per cent) civil and 6,939 (18.4 per cent) criminal cases have been pending for five to 10 years, 15,067 (14.25 per cent) civil and 11,612 (30.79 per cent) criminal cases have been pending for 10 to 20 years.

As many as 3,067 (3.65 per cent) civil and 2,174 (3.65 per cent) criminal cases have been pending in the HC for 20 to 30 years, while there are 365 (0.35 per cent) civil and 80 (0.21 per cent) criminal cases pending for over 30 years.

The HC, at present, has 21 judges, including the Chief Justice, against the sanctioned strength of 33. The strength of the HC was increased to 33 from 27 February 2, 2022 as 49,817 Odisha Administrative Tribunal cases were transferred to the state's top court following abolition of the tribunal.

## Praveen Kumar Verma new CEO of TPWODL

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** Parveen Kumar Verma has been appointed as the new chief executive officer (CEO) of TP Western Odisha Distribution Limited (TPWODL), a joint venture between Tata Power and the state government.

With over two and half decades of experience in power distribution sector, Verma succeeds Gajanan Kale, who has taken on the responsibility of CEO at Tata Power Delhi Distribution (TPDDL) and will be based in New Delhi. Prior to joining TPWODL, Verma was the Chief of Commercial Services of TP Central Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL) from 2020 to 2023. He has also served in the same capacity at TP Northern Odisha Distribution limited (TPNODL) for a couple of months.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## WARN to predict irregular heartbeat 30 minutes before onset

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, April 23:** Researchers have developed a new AI-based model - WARN - that can predict irregular heartbeat, or cardiac arrhythmia, about 30 minutes before its onset.

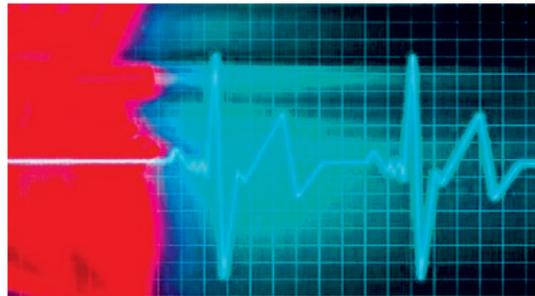
The researchers found that the model proved to be 80 per cent accurate in predicting the transition from a normal cardiac rhythm to atrial fibrillation, the most common type of cardiac arrhythmia in which the heart's upper chambers (atria) beat irregularly and are out of sync with the lower ones (ventricles).

The team, including researchers at the University of Luxembourg, said that their AI-

model, which gives early warnings, could be easily installed in smartphones to process the data recorded on smartwatches. The warnings could allow patients to take preventive measures to keep their cardiac rhythm stable, they said. The study is published in the journal Patterns.

For developing the model, the team trained it on 24 hour-long recordings gathered from 350 patients at Tongji Hospital in Wuhan, China. The model, that the researchers have named WARN (Warning of Atrial fibrillation), is based on deep-learning, a type of machine-learning AI algorithms that learn patterns from past data to make predictions.

Deep-learning is more spe-



cialised as it has multiple layers in its decision-making process.

The researchers found that WARN gave early warnings, on average 30 minutes before the start of atrial fibrillation, and is

the first method to provide a warning far from onset, they said.

"We used heart rate data to train a deep learning model that can recognise different phases -

THE TEAM, INCLUDING RESEARCHERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LUXEMBOURG, SAID THAT THEIR AI-MODEL - WARN, WHICH GIVES EARLY WARNINGS, COULD BE EASILY INSTALLED IN SMARTPHONES TO PROCESS THE DATA RECORDED ON SMARTWATCHES

THE WARNINGS, ACCORDING TO THE TEAM, COULD ALLOW PATIENTS TO TAKE PREVENTIVE MEASURES TO KEEP THEIR CARDIAC RHYTHM STABLE

(normal) sinus rhythm, pre-atrial fibrillation and atrial fibrillation - and calculate a 'probability of danger' that the patient will have an imminent episode," Jorge Goncalves, from the

Luxembourg Centre for Systems Biomedicine (LCSB), University of Luxembourg, and the study's corresponding author, said.

When approaching atrial fibrillation, the probability increases until it crosses a specific threshold, providing an early warning, Goncalves said.

Being of low computational cost, the AI-model is ideal for integration into wearable technologies, the researchers said.

"These devices can be used by patients on a daily basis, so our results open possibilities for the development of real-time monitoring and early warnings from comfortable wearable devices," study author Arthur Montanari, an LCSB researcher, said.

## Drugs worth ₹1cr seized; 2 arrested

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** Brown sugar worth over Rs 1 crore has been seized and two persons have been arrested in Angul district, police said Tuesday.

Acting on a tip-off, the Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police conducted a raid in Talcher Monday morning and seized 1.1 kg of brown sugar, an officer said.

Two persons, identified as 43-year-old Rakibul Sheikh from West Bengal and 26-year-old Bijay Birbarma from Angul district, were arrested, the STF official said.

WORLD BOOK DAY

# Books open doors to new ideas: CM



are forever' among others. The activity was carried out throughout the day in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Puri, Rourkela, Sambalpur and Berhampur.

To mark the occasion, Bakul Foundation organised a book reading marathon called 'READ-A-THON' at the Bakul Library in Satyanagar here.

The marathon was open to all readers, below the age of thirty. They were divided in two categories, ten years or below and those between 11 and 30 years. The participants had to read for three hours to achieve 30 points in order to complete the marathon. One had to read the longest and garner maximum points to win the marathon. Over 100 children and youth participated along with their parents.

Founder of Bakul Foundation Sujit Mahapatra said that although other events like storytelling have attracted children to the Bakul library, this event was more focused on reading. It is heartening that many parents brought their children after 6pm, knowing that the child cannot complete the marathon, but they wanted their child to participate in it.



QUENCHING THIRST: Students and teachers put up a free water kiosk outside DAV Public School in CDA, Cuttack, Tuesday, as a relief measure amid heatwave

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** On World Book Day (WBD) Tuesday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik shared his views on power of reading by saying 'books open doors to new ideas and new thoughts'.

Taking to X, the CM said, "Let's celebrate the power of books, promote diverse voices in literature to enhance our intellect and protect cultural heritage."

To mark the day, hundreds of people including commuters and children enthusiastically took part in various activities in City.

On this occasion, the Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) team distributed 10,000 bookmarks amongst the commuters, across all routes of MO Bus operational areas, to encourage the habit of reading and using public transport to commute. The team also visited State Library to create awareness on reading and using public transportation. The bookmarks had special messages written on it, such as 'A book let you travel places', 'Good Habits: Reading books and using public transport', 'Read books, travel places and change the world', and 'Books

## Govt asks Centre to ensure early supply of anti-TB drugs

**Bhubaneswar:** The state government has urged the Centre to streamline supply of anti-tuberculosis (TB) drugs under National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP). In a letter to Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Mansukh L Mandaviya Monday, Health Minister Niranjan Pujari said that since February last year, there has been an inadequate supply of anti-TB drugs from the Central TB division which has adversely affected implementation of the programme in the state. Pujari said that state authorities have indent the drugs as per their requirements from time to time but supply of the same from Centre has been grossly inadequate. "An attempt was made by the state to procure anti-TB drugs locally but the same was unsuccessful due to non-availability of the drugs in the local market," he wrote. "TB drugs are also out of stock at several district headquarters hospitals. Although the director of public health and mission director of National Health Mission have brought the matter to the notice of the Centre several times this year and in 2023, there has been no respite from the medicine crisis," Pujari's letter read. "The National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) is a flagship programme, wherein emphasis is given for early detection, treatment and prevention of tuberculosis. The state has been implementing all the interventions and has achieved good results in the past," he said. Pujari urged Mandaviya to urgently look into the matter and take steps for early supply of anti-TB drugs to the state.

## Affordable meals for general passengers

PNN & AGENCIES

**New Delhi, April 23:** Train passengers travelling in unreserved compartments are now getting hygienic meals and snacks at affordable prices at stations under a new initiative by the Railways, an official said.

These meal counters are operational at over 100 stations and nearly 150 counters across Indian Railways, and the facility will be expanded further.

"Indian Railways along with Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is stepping up to serve unreserved coaches passengers by offering hygienic meals and snacks at affordable prices," the railway official said.

He added, "We anticipate a surge in passenger traffic during the summer months and recognise the challenges faced by those travelling in unreserved compartments (General Class coaches), who may not always have access to convenient and budget-friendly meal options."

According to Railways, to ensure easy access, these meal counters are conveniently placed near general second class (GS) coaches on platforms.

"There are two categories, the economy meal which costs



## MORE SUMMER SPECIAL TRAINS

**Bhubaneswar:** Keeping in view the public demand and to avoid additional rush in regular trains during the summers, East Coast Railways (ECoR) announced more special trains from Sambalpur and Puri. Special trains include, Puri-Udhna (Surat) bi-weekly Summer Special (08471/08472), Puri-New Delhi Weekly Summer Special (08479/08480), New Delhi-Puri-New Delhi Summer Special (04082/04081), Sambalpur-Erode-Sambalpur Summer Special (08311/083612) and Visakhapatnam-Bengaluru Summer Special (08549/08550). Earlier, ECoR had notified 20 pairs of special trains to be operated during summer.

₹20 and the snack meal which comes at ₹50. Passengers can buy their refreshments directly from these counters, eliminating the need to search for vendors or venture outside the station," the official said.

He said the service was successfully piloted at about 51 stations last year.

"Building on that success, Railways has significantly expanded the programme, with counters now operational at over 100 stations and nearly 150 counters in total. The initiative is slated for further growth, encompassing even more stations in the near future," the official said.

## Body found in ship at Paradip

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Paradip, April 23:** Mystery shrouds the death of a man whose body was recovered under mysterious circumstances from a foreign ship at a berth in Paradip port, Tuesday morning.

The deceased was identified as Bibhuti Barik, a resident of Badamba area in Cuttack district. He worked as a heavy vehicle operator at OSL company.

Though the exact reason behind the death is still not ascertained, preliminary investigation indicated that Barik could have died due to suffocation inside the hatch of the ship.

According to reports, Bibhuti, working in cargo ship MV THRASYVOULOS, had gone to the hatch of the ship Sunday night. His body was recovered after 30 hours, Tuesday morning.

While the exact circumstances that led to his death are yet to be ascertained, the police have sent the body for autopsy and launched an investigation into the incident. The body of the deceased has been kept at port hospital. On being informed, cops from Paradip Adarsh police station reached the spot and initiated an investigation into the incident.

## AIIMS Bhub opens Low Vision Clinic

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Bhubaneswar Tuesday opened a Low Vision Clinic for patients with severe visual impairments.

The clinic, set up by AIIMS-Bhubaneswar in collaboration with Centre, AIIMS-Delhi and Cristoffel Blinds Mission (CBM), Germany, is a first-of-its-kind service started in any government institution in Odisha to provide visual rehabilitation services to those in need.

According to the institute, the clinic will be helpful for patients having very low vision due to glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, diabetes, retinal diseases and other blinding diseases, and those who cannot benefit from surgery or spectacle correction. With low vision aids, they can lead an independent life.

Executive Director of AIIMS-Bhubaneswar Ashutosh Biswas inaugurated the clinic in the presence of Praveen Vashist of RP Centre, AIIMS-Delhi, Medical Superintendent Dillip Kumar Parida and Dean Prashant Raghav Mohapatra



were also present. Emphasising on regular follow-ups, Biswas also unveiled the training manuals designed to empower accredited social health activists (ASHA) and volunteers with essential eye-care knowledge.

Addressing the gathering, Vashist shed light on the collaborative efforts between the Government of India and NGOs like CBM, culminating in the establishment of similar clinics nationwide under the 'Roshini' project.

Over 75 patients have already benefitted from the Low Vision Clinic at the AIIMS, informed Head of the Ophthalmology department Sucheta Parija.

She hinted at future collaborations by the department with blind schools and training of frontline workers to provide primary eye-care at the community level.

# 'Anwasha' a game changer for tribal students in state

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** Urban Education Programme 'Anwasha' has become a game changer for tribal students adding a quality of life and opportunities by ensuring quality education in English medium to nurture their inherent talent.

Helping the tribal kids to join the path of competitiveness and excellence, 'Anwasha' is currently operational in 17 districts across the state and has enrolled 22,340 students in 163 schools and 98 hostels so far.

This flagship venture, since its inception in 2015-16, has been helping the poor parents to realise their dreams of providing quality education to their kids in public schools. Anwasha is also providing hos-

tel facilities to accommodate students from remote pockets thus creating an ecosystem to nurture young talents.

Initially launched for five years, it was further extended by five years (till 2025) with an estimated cost of ₹569.90 crore. Selected through a lottery system, the ST and SC students are taken in equal proportion with a ration of 70:30 boys and girls from BPL households.

ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare department has introduced subject teachers in Mathematics, English, and Science, in addition to the existing set of tutors. The basic concept of tutors is to work as 'after-school mentors' as the concept is to nurture young minds with confidence of English



medium education. So to supplement the effectiveness of the tutors, the subject teachers are hired for the students. Each functional Urban Education Complex can have three teachers in the above-mentioned subjects to meet the educational needs of

the children. Narendra Minz, father of Sourav Minz said, "My son is now in Class IX and he is doing well both in academics and extra-curricular activities. He is staying at Urban Education Complex in Sundargarh. This

unique programme has given us everything which we never imagined in our life."

Students staying in 'Anwasha' hostels are given healthy diet to make them mentally and physically strong. They are given a variety of options every week for breakfast, school tiffin, lunch, snacks and dinner.

Ramesh Beheramajhi, father of Lizarani said, "My daughter is staying in an 'Anwasha' hostel in Phulbani and everything is taken care of by the authorities. We don't have to worry as my daughter has found the environment of a "second home" there.

'Anwasha' also provides indoor and outdoor game equipment to engage the kids during leisure hours and help in building the team spirit. Indoor

games like Chess, Ludo, Snakes & Ladders, Table Tennis, Badminton, Scrabble, Puzzles and Carrom are favourites among the kids. Similarly, they play several outdoor games like kho-kho, football and cricket among others.

"These initiatives create a base for healthy ST and SC students with smart body and mind so that they do well in the CBSE/ICSE Board examinations and our department tries to fulfil its mandate to provide free educational opportunities to the kids to shine like bright stars through their upbringing in the ecosystem run by the scheme," ST & SC Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare Commissioner-Secretary, Roopa Roshan Sahoo said.

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# NH-326 set for expansion

# Heatwave disrupts plans of politicians

# Man dies of sunstroke

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Dharakote, April 23:** An elderly man died after suffering a sunstroke Tuesday at Panibandha village under Jhadabandha panchayat of this block in Ganjam district, officials said. The deceased has been identified as Shibaram Bisoi, 58, son of Mochia Bisoi. Locals informed that Shibaram was on the way to Jahada village on his bicycle. However, he suddenly lost consciousness and fell from the cycle. Locals and his family members rushed him back to home and tried to bring him back to his senses. However, he did not respond and by the time he was taken to the hospital, Shibaram had breathed his last.

This incidentally is the second sunstroke death in the state this year. Health department officials said more than 100 people have been admitted to hospitals in different districts of Odisha after suffering from sunstroke.



four-lane highway, Koraput district will also undergo economic development. Transportation of various cargo-laden vessels will also increase the state's coffers, the officials said. They added that a separate road from NH-326 will connect it to the 'Biju Expressway'.

The four-lane highway will veer from this town via the bypass road at Amalabhata Square under this block. Moreover, flyovers will also be constructed at various strategic points of the highway including one over the railway tracks that passes close to the Sai International Hotel

located in this town. Reports said that NH-326 is currently a two-lane highway. The Centre has decided to convert it into a four-lane highway. A detailed project report has been prepared in which the 205-km stretch from Berhampur to here and 131-km stretch from this town to Jeypore will be divided into two parts to facilitate the expansion of the highway.

The detailed project report (DPR) talks about construction of a number of bypasses at various places to avoid traffic jams and accidents on the highway as there are many densely-populated villages in Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada and Koraput districts. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has already applied for forest clearance to complete the project as quickly as possible, sources informed. They added that land acquisition for the project will start after the Lok Sabha elections.



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Koraput, April 23:** With day temperatures in Malkangiri and Nabarangpur districts hovering between 39 degrees Celsius and 42 degrees Celsius, political parties are focusing more on evening meetings and small village gatherings while campaigning for the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. This mode of campaigning will continue as the IMD has predicted that heatwave will continue in the districts for the next few days.

Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of Odisha, Nikunja B Dhal has suggested that political parties and candidates undertake election campaigns by taking proper precautions against heat.

BJP candidate for the Nabarangpur Lok Sabha seat Balabhadra Majhi said, "I had prepared a chart for campaigning soon after my nomination. However, I had to alter my schedule due to the soaring temperatures. I am concentrating on evening meetings and small village gatherings."

Pradeep Majhi, the BJD candidate for the same constituency acknowledged that heatwave has caused disruptions in his election campaign. However, he is hopeful that the weather will turn pleasant as the poll date

draws near.

Many candidates, including BJP's Kaliram Majhi for the Koraput Lok Sabha seat, emphasised that indoor campaigning is the order of the day. He informed that due to the unbearable heat he is limiting outdoor meetings and roadshows.

Congress candidate from the Jeypore Assembly segment Tara Prasad Bahinipati has also adopted the same plan. "We are unable to organise roadshows and meetings because of the prevailing heatwave. Hence, I prefer indoor campaigning to outdoor meetings," he stated.

Sitting Koraput MP and Congress candidate Saptagiri Ulaka highlighted the importance of staying hydrated and taking afternoon breaks to combat the heat. "I had planned a few meetings in urban areas, but have postponed it due to the heatwave. I am concentrating on door-to-door meetings with people in my constituency," informed Ulaka.

It should be stated that BJD's Puri Lok Sabha constituency candidate Arup Patnaik was rushed to hospital after he fainted Monday while campaigning near Pipili. However, he recovered within a few hours and resumed campaigning.

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**

Tender Notice No.: 03-SBP-TRD-OT-2024-25, Dtd. 15.04.2024

Name of Work: BONDING WORK IN CONNECTION WITH TRR, TSR AND CTR WORKS IN SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹47,57,779.60

EMD - ₹95,200/-

Completion Period: 08 (Eighty) Months

Tender Closing Date & Time: At 1530 hrs. on 07.05.2024

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in)

The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IRPS portal. Only registered tenderer/bidder can participate on e-tendering.

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for the tender. Website: [www.irps.gov.in](http://www.irps.gov.in)

Sr. Divl Electrical Engineer (TRD)

PR-40/P/24-25 Sambalpur

## Diarrhoea spreads in Bolangir village

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Deogaon, April 23:** More than 50 persons have been affected with diarrhoea at Uparjhar village under this block in Bolangir district, sources said Tuesday.

As per reports, the condition of six out of the 50 persons suffering from diarrhoea is critical and all are undergoing treatment at the district headquarters hospital (DHH) at Bolangir.

Soon after the news spread, the administration swung into action. A medical team from Deogaon hospital set up a camp at Uparjhar village for treating patients. CDMO Kumar Mahanta reached Uparjhar village Tuesday afternoon and took stock of the situation.

Officials said the medical team is providing healthcare services at the doorsteps by visiting each affected home in the village. The medical team has managed to control the situation, the Health department said. Currently 20 persons affected with diarrhoea are undergoing treatment at the village, it added.

## Minor succumbs to burn injuries

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Paralakhemundi, April 23:** A minor girl, aged around five years, succumbed to burn injuries Tuesday at the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. She had been admitted to the hospital since April 16 after she accidentally fell into a vessel in which dal was being cooked at the Damadia Government Girls' Ashram School under Mohana block in Gajapati district.

Sources said that the victim had gone to the school with her mother who works there as a cook. While her mother was busy doing chores, the girl accidentally fell into the vessel full of boiling dal.

The critically injured girl was rescued and rushed to a hospital in Mohana for treatment. Later, she was shifted to the SCBMCH after her condition deteriorated. However, all the efforts of the doctors failed and she died Tuesday.

# 1 dead, 1 hurt as bike hits truck

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Tihidi, April 23:** One person was killed and another suffered serious injuries when the bike they were travelling on crashed against a stationary Hyva truck at Fatepur Square on Bhadrak-Chandbali state highway in Bhadrak district late Monday night. The deceased, a pharmacist, was identified as Satyabrata Behera, 28, a resident of Gualipada village under Delang police limits in Puri district. The injured, identified as Ganesh Pandab, 35, was a resident of



Kanpur village under Pirahat police limits in Bhadrak district and was an ambulance driver. Police informed that the

mishap occurred at around 11.00pm Monday night when the two were coming from Kanpur to this place. Locals took both to the Tihidi hospital, where doctors pronounced Satyabrata dead on arrival.

After the condition of Ganesh deteriorated he was shifted to the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. As per last reports Tuesday, his condition is still critical. Police have registered a case of unnatural death. The body of the deceased was handed over to his family members after post-mortem.

## Villagers demand cancellation of lease of Dumangdiri quarry



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, April 23:** Demands to stop excavation at the Dumangdiri stone quarry under Kuanrunda tehsil in Sundargarh district is growing by the day and the issue is turning into a major controversy just before the elections. Villagers living in the vicinity of the quarry are determined to stop excavation as it is harming the natural environment and polluting the atmosphere.

Recently inhabitants of a number of villages including Dumangdiri, Mundatola, Bhalulata, Boneilata and Puturikhaman organised a protest to press forward their demand. "Stop excavation, it is destroying our lives," said many of the posters and placards carried by them.

Earlier April 17, more than 300 villagers had organised another meeting on the issue. They blocked entry of vehicles into the quarry. The protest was led by local leader and environment activist Roilane Budu.

"The rampant excavation of the

quarry has made our lives miserable. Everyone is suffering the effect of environmental pollution. Our demand is to stop activities totally. The lease of the stone quarry must be cancelled," Budu said. Locals however, pointed out that it is a distant dream as the quarry belongs to a powerful leader of the ruling party.

Sometime back, Biramitrapur MLA Shankar Oram had completely stopped activities at the quarry. However, once the vigil eased, sporadic excavation at the quarry started again.

"After our protests April 17, we have heard that the district administration is planning to cancel the lease of the quarry. If it happens, it will certainly be good for us," said some villagers Tuesday. They asserted that they will remain united regarding their demand. "This is not just about us, but our future generations. We do not want them to suffer due to pollution," said an old lady.

Repeated attempts to speak to Biramitrapur tehsildar Gouri Nayak on the issue failed as calls went unanswered.

## Swarit enters 'India Book of Records'

**YOUNGSTER MAKING A MARK IN STATE AND NATIONAL-LEVEL QUIZ COMPETITIONS**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sundargarh, April 23:** Swarit Upadhyay, a Class VIII student of Riverstone International School here, has made the state proud by securing his name in the prestigious *India Book of Records*. Swarit has found a place in the book for his outstanding achievements in 27 quiz competitions, both on off and online platforms. With his deeds, Swarit is the pride of not only his school, but this district also. He has won prizes both at the state and national levels and has brought honours for his school and Odisha.

Over the past four years, Swarit has been a force to reckon with in the quizzing circuit. Notable among his triumphs is the state-level quiz com-



petition organised by the Forest, Environment, and Climate Change department of the Odisha government. He has also won the state-level quiz on wildlife organised by Nandankanan Zoological Park. At the national level his successes include victories in quiz competitions like the Tourism and Festival of India quiz organised by government of India and events conducted by 'Zeus'.

Hailing from Jhurimal village under Lephripara block, Swarit is the only son of Digambar Upadhyay and Anupama Upadhyay. Since child-

hood, it was his curiosity which attracted him to acquire knowledge. He showed keen interest in subjects like wildlife, bio-diversity, culture and science. All this helped him in becoming a brilliant quizzier.

Roshan Patel, director of Riverstone International School, lauded Swarit's exceptional talent and described him as one of the most successful students of the institution. Patel praised Swarit's relentless pursuit of knowledge and his desire to surpass the pinnacle of success as the driving forces behind his achievements.

Swarit thanked his school teachers, parents, mentors and other family members for the success he has so far achieved. His ultimate ambition is to max the *Kaun Banega Crorepati* programme hosted by Amitabh Bachchan.

No doubt, Swarit's remarkable journey serves as an inspiration to aspiring quiz enthusiasts and underscores the importance of perseverance and passion in the pursuit of excellence.

**बैंक ऑफ इंडिया**  
**Bank of India**

**Bank of India**

**Gold Auction Notice**

Zonal Office: Bhubaneswar Zone, 1/1D, Star House, Jaydev Bihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015, Ph.:0674-2362249

It is hereby brought to the notice of the following gold loan borrowers, their legal heirs, person engaged in the business of gold ornaments and general public that in spite of repeated notices by the Bank, the following borrowers are not repaying their dues to the Bank. Notice is hereby published that if they fail to deposit all their dues in their respective gold loan accounts (including Up-to-date interest and all costs, charges/expenses) by 14.05.2024, their pledged gold ornaments will be auctioned at **Kandia Branch Premises on 15.05.2024 at 11.00 AM**. For this Bank shall not be held responsible for any inconvenience or damage caused to the concerned borrowers and no allegations or representations will be entertained from any borrowers in this regard. Bank reserves the right to cancel the auction without assigning any reason in case, the bidding price so arrived at is observed to be low or inadequate. Further, if needed Bank reserves the right to change the date and time of the above scheduled auction or cancel the same without assigning any reasons thereon. Purity and net weight and reserve price of gold ornaments/ coins etc. will be available to interested bidders on auction date and auction venue/auction portal.

Sl. No.	A/c. No.	Name & Address of the Borrower(s)	Gross Wt. in Gram	Net Wt. in Gram	Total Dues as on 30.03.2024 (excluding unapplied interest Charges, Cost & Expenses)
<b>KANDIA BRANCH, KANDIA HAT, AT/PO: KANDIA, DIST.: KENDRAPADA, PIN-755016, MOB.: 7030797866</b>					
1.	510977610000080	Ami Malik, C/o- Rasika Malik, At/PO: Jari, Dist.: Jajapur, PIN-755016	9.375	9.375	₹ 18,372.00
2.	510977610000098	Dasarath Behera, S/o- Mayadhar Behera, At: Bangara, Chhotagadi, PO: Bangara, Dist.: Jajapur, PIN-755016	21.575	21.400	₹ 83,728.00
3.	510977610000446	Dashua Malik, D/o- Baban Malik, At: Panasaganda, PO: Barha Damodarpur, Kendrapada, PIN-755016	17.805	15.134	₹ 75,911.00

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 23.04.2024

Zonal Manager, Bank of India

**भारतीय थल सेना**

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तकनीकी स्नातक कोर्स (टी जी सी-140) (जनवरी 2025 में निर्धारित) के लिए ऑनलाइन आवेदन आमंत्रित किए जाते हैं।

आवेदन 10 अप्रैल 2024 से 09 मई 2024 तक खुले रहेंगे।

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**OFFICER ENTRY**

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**CBC 10601/11/0002/2425**

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

# A CLIMATE-ALIGNED IMF



Given that the IMF has never had a non-European managing director, it will take fundamental governance reforms to convince climate-vulnerable economies that it truly represents their interests

Implicit in this approach is a move away from conventional austerity-based measures, and toward strategies focused more on resource mobilisation.

To be sure, the recent addition of a third African chair on the IMF Executive Board was a welcome development. But at the end of the day, last year's 16th General Review of Quotas was a missed opportunity to rebalance voting power. Given that the IMF has never had a non-European managing director, it will take fundamental governance reforms to convince climate-vulnerable economies that it truly represents their interests. To that end, Georgieva should offer her support for ongoing efforts to recognise the V20 as an official inter-governmental group at the IMF.

Finally, since Georgieva cannot undertake these efforts alone, the IMF Board must support her in hiring and funding additional staff from diverse disciplines and backgrounds. Additional resources would allow the IMF to scale up its direct country engagement and ensure that national policies are tailored to local contexts. Coordination with other international institutions is also essential. The World Bank, for example, can help leverage the RST's limited resources to mobilise more money, especially toward resiliency programs like Climate Prosperity Plans.

In her first term, Georgieva won the argument that climate change is central to the IMF's mandate. Now, she will have to show that the institution can rise to the challenge posed by the climate crisis at this "now or never" juncture.

**Mohamed Nasheed, a former president of the Maldives, is Founder and Secretary-General of the Climate Vulnerable Forum. Rakesh Mohan, a former deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India, is a member of the Task Force on Climate, Development, and the International Monetary Fund.**

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Recently, the board of the International Monetary Fund approved current Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva for another five-year term. It is a welcome development that comes at a critical moment. Her second term will finish just before the end of this "make-or-break" decade for reining in climate change and delivering on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Georgieva has made significant progress in aligning the IMF with these goals. She was instrumental in the IMF's decision to acknowledge climate change as a critical macro issue under its institutional mandate. Under her leadership, the IMF launched its first-ever climate-change strategy; created the Resilience and Sustainability Trust (RST), its primary climate-finance instrument; and fostered global dialogue on the issue through its flagship publications and research.

But now even bolder leadership is needed. As the only multilateral institution charged with maintaining global financial and fiscal stability, the IMF's role is critical for addressing climate change. Georgieva can build on the progress made in her first term by doing four things: committing the IMF to align with the Paris agreement; ensuring that it has ample financial firepower; elevating the voices of climate-vulnerable emerging-market and developing economies (EMDEs); and mobilising international support for climate mitigation and adaptation efforts.

The first task is the most important. All the IMF's programmes – not just those that are explicitly climate focused, like the RST – need to start promoting low-carbon development. Critically, that means avoiding scenarios that lock in fossil-fuel-intensive growth paths that will leave countries stranded in a net-zero future. All the IMF's work must be consistent with models of inclusive growth and development, including those where value is generated from natural capital and biodiver-

sity. Equally, the IMF's surveillance efforts (which involve all countries, not just borrowers) should help governments identify how best to achieve their development and climate goals.

But aligning IMF financing and operations with the Paris goals will not be enough. With governments negotiating a new climate-finance goal this year, the IMF should help policymakers identify potential sources of financing and better understand the macroeconomic dimensions of the issue. This will require fresh thinking, because the evidence shows that carbon pricing will not be enough to generate the resources needed to support the net-zero transition. Robust analytics from the IMF can help to foster a global consensus on how best to generate international and domestic public finance – whether through taxation, revenue from carbon border adjustment mechanisms, or other channels.

Second, Georgieva must ensure that the IMF itself has ample financing firepower. As she has previously warned, the world is increasingly prone to a wide range of shocks, many of which would have profound macroeconomic consequences. In this fraught new setting, the IMF's operations and balance sheet must be calibrated against what member states need to re-

main resilient. While the IMF Board approved a 50 per cent increase in member states quotas (contributions) last December, that is far below the 267 per cent increase required to meet the gross external financing needs of the most vulnerable members.

Similarly, the transition to net-zero will radically alter the economic terrain for many countries, especially those that have long relied on exporting or taxing fossil fuels. The IMF should track these trends and prepare to support countries that need help pursuing an orderly, low-carbon transition.

Third, Georgieva has a special responsibility to ensure that climate-vulnerable economies are involved in the IMF's decision-making. These economies are more likely to seek IMF help, so it is all the more important that they have a say in how the IMF works. Yet, as of October 2022, the Vulnerable Group of 20 (V20) commands only around 5 per cent of the voting power at the IMF, despite being home to 17 per cent of the world's population.

One major V20 demand is to "make debt work for the climate." That means revising the IMF's debt-sustainability model to incorporate urgent investment and spending needs, and to determine what it will take for each country to meet them.



Mohamed Nasheed & Rakesh Mohan

**AS THE ONLY MULTILATERAL INSTITUTION CHARGED WITH MAINTAINING GLOBAL FINANCIAL AND FISCAL STABILITY, THE IMF'S ROLE IS CRITICAL FOR ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE**

IN JEST THIS

## Expand your vocabulary with new words

Every now and then, I come across a word whose meaning escapes me. Sometimes it's my wife who points this out to me — my complete ignorance about the meaning of a word.

For example, on 14 February, Valentine's Day, she said to me, "Do you even know what the word 'romantic' means?"

It means doing something special as a couple, I thought, so I asked her if she wanted to go to the gym to work out. She agreed to do this, but when I got into the car without first opening the door for her, she said, "Do you even know what the word 'chivalry' means?"

I told her all about the knights of the Middle Ages and the gallantry and honour expected of them. She listened for a few minutes and then said, "Do you even know what the word 'mansplaining' means?"

In my defence, "mansplaining" was not added to the dictionary until about six years ago. But perhaps I should make it a point to learn the meaning

of any new additions to the dictionary. That's why I studied the list of words and phrases that Dictionary.com added this year. They will certainly be useful in my everyday communication — and not just with my wife. Here are some of my favourites:

**Enshittification:** This is a big word that contains a shorter, more offensive word. It's so obvious that even my dog, Lulu, would quickly spot the offensive word: "cat." No, I'm talking about the S-word, of course. It's there because it captures the state of many online platforms and services, including Facebook and X. They once offered significant benefits to users but in aggressively pursuing profits they've gone down the path of enshittification.

**Greedflation:** This is when your rent, food or other prices rise not because of market conditions but because of greed. Corporations and individuals who are already making healthy profits are eager to make even more. This word should not be

confused with gradeflation, which is when students get a higher grade than they deserve, or when the groom gives himself an 'A+' after the wedding night, despite taking several 30-second timeouts to check the score of the NBA game.

**Bussin':** A Gen Z term that came out of African-American culture, it means "great" or "wonderful." If you're a schoolteacher and hear your students say, "Our bussin' was really bussin' today," you may want to pass the compliment to the school bus driver. And if you find a clean table at a busy restaurant, you may want to throw out a compliment yourself: "Whoever's doing the bussin' here is doing a really bussin' job!"

**Range anxiety:** If you're driving an electric vehicle, you have "range anxiety" if you're worried that the battery will run out before you get to your destination or a charging station. Range anxiety is also what you feel when you park your brand new Tesla on the street across from the golf

range.

**Mid:** This is an adjective that means "mediocre" or "unimpressive." If you're having a midlife crisis, it might be because you're having a mid life.

**Bed rotting:** This is when you spend time in bed not to sleep but to give yourself a break from the stress of daily life. Bed rotting is a form of self-care and may include snacks, an electronic device and occasionally a book. Bed rotting is considered a positive term, as long as there is no bed spotting.

**Skipplugging:** You want to fly from Delhi to Paris for a vacation. Instead of a direct flight, you find a cheaper flight from Delhi to London with a layover in Paris. You book the flight, intending to skip the second leg of the trip. "I'm saving ₹20,000 by skipplugging. LOL!" you brag to your friends and others online. But the airline finds out, cancels your flight and you're stuck in Delhi, learning a new word: Skipplugging.

WISDOM CORNER

**The first principle is that you must not fool yourself and you are the easiest person to fool.**

RICHARD P. FEYNMAN

**If you don't design your own life plan, chances are you'll fall into someone else's plan. And guess what they have planned for you? Not much.**

JIM ROHN

**In faith there is enough light for those who want to believe and enough shadows to blind those who don't.**

BLAISE PASCAL

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

**1800:** The Library of Congress was officially founded as U.S. President John Adams approved the \$5,000 appropriated to acquire "such books as may be necessary for the use of congress"; it eventually became the largest library in the world.

**1915:** The Ottoman Empire begins its systematic extermination of Armenians. An estimated 1 million people were killed in the Armenian Massacres during and after World War I. The event is considered one of the first genocides in modern history.

**1916:** Members of the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army seized strategic points in Dublin during the Easter Rising, which heralded the end of British power in Ireland.

**1949:** Communist forces occupied the Chinese capital, Nanking (Nanjing), after crossing the Yangtze River virtually unopposed by adherents to the Nationalist government under President Chiang Kai-shek.

**1957:** The Suez Canal reopens after the Suez Crisis. The conflict between Egypt on the one hand and France, the United Kingdom and Israel on the other, erupted in October 1956 when Egypt announced that the canal will be nationalized.

**1967:** Soviet cosmonaut Vladimir Komarov became the first man to die during a space mission when his spacecraft became entangled in its parachute during an attempted landing.



Melvin Durai

**IF YOU'RE HAVING A MIDLIFE CRISIS, IT MIGHT BE BECAUSE YOU'RE HAVING A MID LIFE**

## Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

Orissa POST

B-15, Rusalgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Trade dynamics

Sir, India's merchandise exports surged to a notable 12-month peak of \$41.7 billion last month, showcasing resilience amidst global economic fluctuations. Concurrently, imports experienced a significant decline of 6% to \$57.3 billion, contributing to a commendable reduction in the trade deficit. This robust export performance, coupled with consecutive months of outbound shipment growth, underscores India's economic dynamism and adaptability in navigating complex global trade dynamics. Despite the prevailing challenges, such as fluctuating commodity prices and geopolitical tensions, India's exports have demonstrated remarkable stability, fueled by sustained demand from key international markets. The consecutive months of strong export growth have bolstered India's outbound shipments from \$354 billion in January to an impressive \$437.1 billion for the full year, nearing the record performance set in 2022-23. This upward trajectory signals a promising outlook for India's trade sector, reflecting the country's resilience in the face of evolving global circumstances. Economists now anticipate a rare current account surplus for the January-March quarter, a testament to India's ability to effectively manage its trade balance amidst challenging conditions.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

Food safety

Sir, It is a matter of shame and shock that curry powder products produced by two prominent Indian companies have come under scanner and were banned by the food safety authority in Hong Kong and Singapore. The authorities tested and discovered that curry and masala powder sold by these companies contain pesticide — ethylene oxide, classified as a Group 1 carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer. Ethylene oxide poses serious health risks, including an increased risk of breast cancer. This has alerted the FSSAI which has decided to issue an order and probe into products exported to foreign countries. Serious questions rise regarding this matter. Curry powders are indispensable part of Indian kitchen and cuisine and all these years have we been consuming toxic matters hidden in them? What was the food safety authority doing all this while? Are quality checks not done before these products reach the market? The concerned ministry should urgently execute a probe.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

# Jobs a major issue for young Muslim women voters in UP's Aligarh

# You are freeloader, not us: JNUSU slams VC Pandit

THIS COMES AS A RESPONSE TO PANDIT'S STATEMENT IN A RECENT INTERVIEW THAT JNU HAS A PROBLEM OF FREELoadERS -- BOTH OVERSTAYING STUDENTS AND ILLEGAL GUESTS -- AND THE ADMINISTRATION IS NOW TIGHTENING THE NOOSE ON THEM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) has hit out at Vice-Chancellor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit over her freeloader on campus remark and accused her of failing to address slanderous narratives of certain films targeting the varsity.

In an open letter to the VC, the union accused her of conveniently ignoring the lavish perks enjoyed by certain politically favoured groups on campus and said she was a freeloader; and not the students.

"Who's the real freeloader here? Is it the students and faculty striving for academic excellence, or perhaps it is you who is occupying the VC's office, earning a salary from the taxpayers' dime while failing to fulfil your responsibilities to the university community," the open letter released Monday late night read.

Pandit in an interview with PTI had said the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has a problem of freeloader -- both

overstaying students and illegal guests -- and the administration is now tightening the noose on them.

The vice-chancellor had also said that with the appearance of rival political outfits, the Left dispensation in the Jawaharlal Nehru University has weakened and is forced to join hands since it struggles to win elections independently.

The JNUSU urged the VC to introspect and reconsider her statement on the characterisation of students as freeloader. The union also accused Pandit of favouritism and allowing RSS-backed events on campus.

It is concerning that while you accuse students of being freeloader, RSS-affiliated events enjoy unrestricted access to campus facilities, including classrooms, auditoriums, convention centre, lawns without so much as a penny exchanged. This double standard is glaring, especially when students have to protest merely to access basic resources, only to get issued proctorial notices, the letter read.

"Our VC proudly claims to be an alumnus of JNU, and she



finds no shame in speaking to the media about certain 'freeloaders' in the campus who are wasting taxpayer's money. She conveniently ignores the lavish perks enjoyed by certain politically favoured groups on campus," the union retorted.

The taxpayers' money should indeed be utilised for education and research, not for propagating ideological agendas under the

guise of academic activities, it added. The JNUSU further accused Pandit of recruiting substandard faculty and asserted, "We are not freeloaders. You are wasting taxpayers' money by recruiting substandard faculty and not ensuring a conducive environment for us (students) to study."

It also criticised Pandit for being silent on defamatory films

targeting JNU students such as 'Bastar' and 'Jahangir National University' which allegedly show the varsity in negative light.

"It is shameful that you, being an alumnus of this university yourself, have allowed the screening of Bastar on campus; a film that openly calls for killing JNU students in full public sight. These films not only misrepresent our community but also perpetuate harmful stereotypes and prejudices. As the custodian of our university's reputation, you have failed to address such slanderous narratives," the students' body said in the letter.

Responding to Pandit's remark on weakening of Left politics on campus, the students' body, the union said, "Your role as VC should transcend partisan interests and prioritise the welfare of all students, regardless of their affiliations. However, you are quick to comment and make statements when your beloved ABVP faces electoral setbacks."

The JNUSU is jointly held by Left groups and Birsa Ambedkar Phule Students' Association (BAPSA).



Polluted Yamuna river, behind the Taj Mahal in Agra, Tuesday. The Supreme Court Monday ordered the urgent clearing of silt, garbage and sludge from the Yamuna riverbed.

PTI PHOTO



the identity attacks Muslim women continuously face on the basis of their clothes, on the basis of their religious practices, on the basis of their marital choice," Tasneem said.

"Like for me, I have recently begun this practice of adorning a hijab and I am very happy to do so. Not because I am forced to do so, but because it is my choice. I feel comfortable in it and I think there is a large majority of girls who do it wilfully. So it is their choice and Article 25 guarantees the same," she said.

Kashish Khan, another student at AMU, stressed the importance of candidates focusing on developmental goals over religious slogans.

"I would vote for a candidate who addresses issues like lack of opportunities for women and communal tensions," she said.

With employment emerging as a key electoral issue, political candidates are aiming to address these concerns.

Samajwadi Party candidate Bijendra Singh has highlighted rising unemployment and the need for Hindu-Muslim unity in his campaign.

Incumbent MP Satish Gautam of the BJP has also promised to prioritise job creation.

In the midst of broader political discourse, Muslim women voters in Aligarh are eager for substantive solutions to their employment challenges, viewing this issue as pivotal to their pursuit of independence and empowerment, Jahan said.

Aligarh goes to poll in the second phase of elections April 26. Khair, Baroli, Atroli, Kol and Aligarh city are assembly segments in the Aligarh parliamentary constituency.

Asra Alavi, a 29-year-old PhD scholar at AMU, spoke candidly about the challenges of securing employment, particularly in academia.

"The main problem we are facing right now, irrespective of gender or religion, is unemployment," she said, expressing concern over the reduction in academic positions and emphasising the need for sustainable development plans beyond election cycles.

Sadaf Tasneem, a 22-year-old pursuing MA in Modern Indian History at AMU, highlighted the multifaceted concerns affecting women, including employment and safety. "As a student, I will prioritise employment and women's safety, given the current state of confusion and violence in the country," she said.

Noting that women themselves are a caste in India, she said even in that specific caste and class Muslim women are more vulnerable.

"... And when I say that I mean

nothing for women like her. "I am 80 now. I tried but now at this age what will I do even after getting recognition as a voter. It is better to spend my last moments peacefully taking Krishna's name rather than wandering from door-to-door," she told PTI while waiting for her turn to sing in a temple.

"I know that elections are happening. The condition of Bengal is also serious but I want to live peacefully here. There is no interest left neither in casting vote nor in getting Voter ID made."

Das came to Vrindavan from Kolkata after the death of her husband 17 years ago and has spent a major part of her widowed life in the bylanes of Vrindavan, which falls in the Mathura Lok Sabha constituency.

In the world's biggest festival of democracy when politicians

across parties are trying to attract the voters, the widows, without any social capital, find they have no political capital either because most are not registered voters.

Their stories find echo in every corner of the narrow streets of Vrindavan, Radhakund and Govardhan where the women in white sarees are either found begging, standing outside a temple waiting for 'bhandara' (free food), or singing bhajans for hours for a meagre ₹20.

Many have accepted political indifference as their destiny, coming to terms with the fact that they are not voters and therefore don't matter. They comprise less than one per cent of the more than 18 lakh voters in the constituency.

Although there is no official figure, NGOs working in the

## LIVING IN THE SHADOWS

The women, mostly in their 60s and 70s, have taken refuge in this holy town, abandoned by their families and left with virtually no identity -- other than being banded together as women whose husbands have died. There are no promises for them this election season

bank accounts were also opened but now we are tired of visiting government offices for voter IDs. It doesn't matter to anyone whether they vote or not," she added.

Most of the widows are unwilling to move too far from the town because it will keep them from accessing the Krishna temples and their everyday routine of 'darshan' and 'bhajans'.

BJP MP from the area Hema Malini agreed that the widows are reluctant to move from where they are.

"We care for them and that's why we built Krishna Kutir in 2018 with all modern facilities. But it's difficult to convince them to stay there. They want to live where they are living. What can we do?" she asked.

Some found places in private or government ashrams but most of them share cramped and dirty rented rooms. They get a token for singing bhajans in the city of temples and after singing bhajans for four hours, they get ₹10 with tea and one meal. You also have to wait for a long time for your turn to sing bhajans.

The Mathura Lok Sabha constituency is set to hold elections April 26 during Phase 2 of the voting schedule. Two-time MP and actor Hema Malini will face competition from Mukesh Dhangar of the Congress and Suresh Singh of the BSP.

As politicians across the spectrum woo voters, these are the women left out. Many say they have accepted their fate and have nothing but an anonymous death in the bylanes of Brijbhoomi.

## BIRYANI BLUNDER

# Lord Ram's image on plates sparks outrage

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 23: A biryani vendor in northwest Delhi was found serving his dish on disposable plates with images of Lord Ram printed over it. This was also verified with the factory owner," said the police official.

Meanwhile, people took X and shared the images of plates with Lord Ram's image on it used by the vendor.

"He is doing this intentionally ... He also knows this is wrong, but continually serving biryani in plates with Lord Ram images," wrote an X user, Sandeep.

"Biryani served on plates with Lord Ram's photo in Delhi's Jahangirpuri. Hindu organisations noticed this and called the police. They saw the plates being served with Biryani and discarded in the trash after use. Please don't ask the name of the shop owner," said another X user Shilpa.

The incident surfaced Saturday afternoon when local Hindu groups noticed the plates featuring the revered deity's likeness at the biryani shop. Protests also erupted; however, police reached the spot and controlled the situation after assuring thorough probe into the matter.

A senior police official said that the shopkeeper was detained soon after they received information. "He was booked under section of 107/151 (preventive detention) CrPC and later allowed to go," said the official.

A video showing Lord Ram's images on the disposable plates went viral on social media and a crowd gathered near the shop Saturday. The locals confronted the vendor, observing people being served biryani on these plates, only to see them discarded later.

"Two plates with Lord Ram's photo printed on it were found at a biryani shop. During the probe, it was revealed that the

shopkeeper had bought 1,000 disposable plates from a factory and only four of them had Lord Ram picture on it. This was also verified with the factory owner," said the police official.

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# Widows of Vrindavan, a forgotten lot this election season

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Vrindavan (UP), April 23: The buzz of electioneering stops where the quiet of their lives begins. Thousands of women, known simply as the 'Widows of Vrindavan', have been relegated to the margins even in the noisy, participative general elections with little interest in a group largely without voter IDs.

The women, mostly in their 60s and 70s, have taken refuge in this temple town, abandoned by their families and left with virtually no identity -- other than being banded together as women whose husbands have died. Crowded together in dirty rooms and earning about ₹20 a day, or even less, singing bhajans, there are no promises for them this election season.

And while most are resigned to their fate, some still fight it. Like Gayatri Mukherjee who regrets she does not have voting rights despite being a citizen of India.

Mukherjee lost her husband and her only daughter to cancer and came to Vrindavan after repaying the loan taken for their treatment.

"I voted in every election in Kolkata. I am a citizen of this country and I feel that I should also take part in this festival of democracy. Perhaps this is not possible now, so what will be the point of mourning," said the politically aware 67-year-old.

Anita Das, also abandoned by her family, knows an election is around the corner but has come to stoically accept that there is

nothing for women like her.

"I am 80 now. I tried but now at this age what will I do even after getting recognition as a voter. It is better to spend my last moments peacefully taking Krishna's name rather than wandering from door-to-door," she told PTI while waiting for her turn to sing in a temple.

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shopkeeper had bought 1,000 disposable plates from a factory and only four of them had Lord Ram picture on it. This was also verified with the factory owner," said the police official.

Meanwhile, people took X and shared the images of plates with Lord Ram's pictures on it used by the vendor.

"He is doing this intentionally ... He also knows this is wrong, but continually serving biryani in plates with Lord Ram images," wrote an X user, Sandeep.

"Biryani served on plates with Lord Ram's photo in Delhi's Jahangirpuri. Hindu organisations noticed this and called the police. They saw the plates being served with Biryani and discarded in the trash after use. Please don't ask the name of the shop owner," said another X user Shilpa.

The incident surfaced Saturday afternoon when local Hindu groups noticed the plates featuring the revered deity's likeness at the biryani shop. Protests also erupted; however, police reached the spot and controlled the situation after assuring thorough probe into the matter.

A senior police official said that the shopkeeper was detained soon after they received information. "He was booked under section of 107/151 (preventive detention) CrPC and later allowed to go," said the official.

A video showing Lord Ram's images on the disposable plates went viral on social media and a crowd gathered near the shop Saturday. The locals confronted the vendor, observing people being served biryani on these plates, only to see them discarded later.

"Two plates with Lord Ram's photo printed on it were found at a biryani shop. During the probe, it was revealed that the



Congress leader Bhakta Charan Das addresses a merger meeting in Ladugaon panchayat under Koksara block of Kalahandi district, Tuesday

Several BJD and Congress workers join BJP at a merger meeting held in the presence of party's MLA candidate Sitanshu Sekhar Mohapatra at the party's election office at Kuansh in Bhadrak, Tuesday

## PARADIP ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCY

# CONG VOTERS HOLD KEY

# Naveen roots for 'double conch'

The term 'double conch' was coined to take on the BJP's call for forming 'double engine' government at the Centre and the state

**Jagatsinghpur, April 23:** Paradip Assembly constituency in Jagatsinghpur district is witnessing a political churning after the ruling BJD replaced its sitting MLA and fielded his wife from the seat while the Congress party fielded a new candidate following defection of party leader Arindam Sarkhel to BJD.

Niranjan Nayak alias Babul is now the Congress candidate in place of Arindam Sarkhel while BJP has re-nominated Sampad Swain from the constituency. On the other hand, simmering anger against the sitting MLA Sambit Routray has gripped the ruling party.

However, following the death of the sitting MLA's father and veteran leader Damodar Rout, BJD replaced him and nominated his wife Geetanjali Routray as the party candidate from this seat. BJD is learnt to have played the women card and fielded Geetanjali to gain sympathy votes arising out of the death of her father-in-law.

Political analysts are of the



opinion that under the changed circumstances, the Congress voters will decide the outcome of the poll. This is because both the BJD and BJP candidates will try to lure the Congress voters to win the polls.

Reports said veteran leader and former minister Damodar Rout won from Paradip Assembly seat in 2009 and 2014 polls. Later, Rout left BJD and contested from Balikuda-Erasama Assembly seat on a BJP ticket in 2019 poll. He then shot into prominence for launching a vitriolic attack

on the ruling BJD. Later, it was discovered that the reason behind the attack on the ruling party was to shape the political career of his son.

He used his political acumen gained over the years and played a major role in getting the party ticket for his son from the ruling BJD. His son Sambit Routray also won as a BJD candidate from Paradip Assembly seat in 2019 polls.

However, with change in time, Arindam Sarkhel who was the main rival of Sambit from

Congress has recently joined the BJD. In the 2019 elections, BJD candidate Sambit received 69,871 votes, the then Congress candidate Arindam got 48,879 votes and BJP candidate Sampad Swain garnered 35,037 votes.

BJD now seems to be in a comfortable position to win from this seat as both Sambit and Arindam are in the ruling party. However, the changing political equation speaks something else. This is because Arindam has distanced himself from Congress party programmes and workers after his defeat as Congress candidate in 2019.

Meanwhile, some Congress leaders claimed that Arindam's departure will have no impact on the party. On the other hand, the ruling BJD has also failed to strengthen its organisational network due to factional feud gripping the party. However, BJP candidate Sampad Swain has managed to strike a chord with the voters by taking advantage of the internal squabbles in BJD and the silence of Arindam during his stint in Congress party.

Replacing Sambit, BJD has given the ticket to his wife

Geetanjali; but the dissidents in the party are yet to accept her as their leader as many of them were vying for the party ticket. They alleged both Damodar Rout and his son have ruled the constituency for 40 years and the party is again fielding another member of the family from the constituency instead of choosing a new face.

On the other hand, Arindam defected to BJD with a hope of getting the party ticket but his wish did not materialise as the ruling party fielded another Rout scion from the constituency.

BJD has tried to placate Arindam by appointing his wife Monideepa Sarkhel as the working president of party's labour wing Biju Shramika Samukhya; but only time will tell how long this will keep him in good humour.

Meanwhile, it will be a difficult task for Geetanjali to placate the dissidents while Congress' new candidate Niranjan is strengthening the party from the grassroots level. As a result, the swing of the Congress votes will decide the outcome of the poll, according to political analysts.

## 1,351 candidates in fray for Phase 3 polls

**New Delhi, April 23:** As many as 1,351 candidates from 12 states and union territories are in the fray for the third phase of the Lok Sabha elections May 7, the Election Commission said Tuesday.

These include eight candidates from Betul seat of Madhya Pradesh, where the election was to be held in the second phase but was postponed to the third following the death of the BSP candidate, the EC said in a statement.



BJP candidate from Surat seat in Gujarat Mukesh Dalal has been elected unopposed.

The last date for the withdrawal of candidature for all 12 states and union territories was April 22.

A total of 2,963 nominations were filed for 95 seats, including Betul.

After the scrutiny of all nominations, 1,563 were found to be valid.

In the third phase, Gujarat had the maximum of 658 nomination forms from 26 parliamentary constituencies, followed by Maharashtra with 519 nominations from 11 seats, according to the EC.

Osmanabad constituency in Maharashtra received the maximum of 77 nomination forms, followed by Bilaspur seat in Chhattisgarh with 68 nomination forms, the poll panel said.

# Raseswari, Simarani quit BJD ahead of polls

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** Two prominent women BJD leaders have quit the ruling party, weeks ahead of the simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the state. While Hindol MLA Simarani Nayak resigned from the BJD Monday, former Sambalpur legislator Raseswari Panigrahi announced her decision to quit Tuesday.

Nayak resigned from the primary membership of the party, hours after being denied a ticket to contest the Assembly polls.



She was replaced by Dhenkanal MP Mahesh Sahu. Later in the day, Nayak joined the BJP.

In her resignation letter to BJD president Naveen Patnaik, the two-time MLA cited personal problems as the reason behind

her move. Nayak had won the seat in 2019, defeating BJP candidate Ashok Kumar Nayak by almost 19,000 votes. Panigrahi said she quit after the BJD leadership fielded candidates who were from outside the district.

The BJD initially fielded former MP Prasanna Acharya from Bargarh for Sambalpur Assembly seat, but later named Rohit Pujari from Rairakhol as its candidate for the constituency.

In 2014, Panigrahi had defeated veteran BJP leader and former minister Jayanarayan Mishra by 9,958 votes. However, Mishra emerged victorious in 2019, polling 4,380 votes more than her.

At least five sitting BJD MLAs - Arabinda Dhali (Jayadev), Premananda Nayak (Telkoi), Parsuram Dhada (Soro), Ramesh Chandra Sai (Athmallick) and Simarani Nayak - have so far resigned from the BJD after being denied party tickets.

Two party MPs - Bhartruhari Mahatab and Anubhav Mohanty - have also quit ahead of the polls.

# Cong tried to give reservation for Muslims from Dalit quota: Modi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jaipur, April 23:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday said the Congress has tried to extend reservation to Muslims out of Dalit quota, and accused the party again of hatching a "deep conspiracy" to snatch people's wealth and distribute it among a "select" group.

In a blistering attack on the opposition party, he charged that it is difficult to follow one's faith under the Congress rule and even listening to Hanuman Chalisa becomes a crime.

His remarks at an election rally in Rajasthan's Tonk came on the day the country celebrated Hanuman Jayanti.

"Modi is giving you a guarantee that reservation for Dalits and the backward tribals will neither end nor allowed to be divided in the name of religion," he said.

He said the then prime minister Manmohan Singh had given a speech in which he had said Muslims have the first right on the country's resources.

"This was not a coincidence. This is not a single statement. The Congress ideology has always been of appeasement and vote bank politics.

"As soon as the Congress formed the government at the Centre in 2004, one of the first things it did was to reduce the SC/ST reservation in Andhra Pradesh and give it to Muslims," Modi said.

"This was a pilot project which the Congress wanted to try in the entire country," he charged.

"Between 2004 and 2010, the Congress tried to implement Muslim reservation in Andhra Pradesh four times but due to legal hurdles and the awareness of the Supreme Court, it could not fulfil its intention," he claimed.

"In 2011, the Congress tried to implement it throughout the country. They played the game of snatching away the rights provided to the SC, ST and OBC and giving them to others for vote bank politics," he said.

"The Congress did this deliberately and without caring about



the Constitution and BR Ambedkar," he added.

Modi's speech at a rally in Rajasthan's Banswara had triggered a political row Sunday when he referred to the Congress manifesto and charged that the party was set to redistribute people's wealth to "infiltrators" and "those who have more children".

He made a similar remark - but skipped the direct reference to Muslims - at an Uttar Pradesh

rally Monday. And he returned to the theme in Tonk Tuesday.

The PM dared the Congress to "declare" openly that if it comes to power it would provide reservation to Muslims out of the quota for Dalits and tribals.

Modi said when the BJP government in Karnataka got an opportunity, it abolished the Muslim quota created by the Congress government out of the reservation for the Scheduled

Castes and Tribes.

He said the constitutional limit for reservation - in education and government jobs - was ending in 2020 and he extended it for Dalits and the tribals for another 10 years.

Referring to his Sunday rally, Modi said the Congress and the opposition INDIA bloc were peeved after he "exposed" their vote bank and appeasement politics.

"I have put forth the truth before the country that the Congress is hatching a deep conspiracy to snatch your wealth and distribute it among select people," he said.

He claimed that when he exposed the vote bank politics of Congress, it angered the Congress and its INDI Alliance so much that they have started abusing him everywhere. Why is the Congress scared of the truth and "hiding" its policies, the prime minister asked.

"You made the policy and took the decision and when Modi exposed the secret and your hidden agenda came out, you are trem-

bling," he said.

He said it was written in the Congress manifesto that they would "survey" people's wealth.

"Their leader has said in a speech that X-ray of wealth will be done. This means that if something is kept in a box or hidden in a wall, it will be searched through X-ray," Modi claimed.

They will then seize property from people who have more than what is required and distribute it among others, he added.

Modi also referred to an incident in Karnataka some weeks back when a shopkeeper was allegedly thrashed for playing Hanuman Chalisa. "Even listening to Hanuman Chalisa becomes crime under Congress rule," he said.

He claimed that during the Congress rule in Rajasthan, those who pelted stones on a Ram Navami procession were given protection and restrictions were imposed on such processions.

However, after the formation of the BJP government in the state, no one has the courage to question faith, he added.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** Chief Minister and BJD supremo Naveen Patnaik has urged people to vote for 'double conch' in the simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the state.

The term was coined to take on the BJP's call for forming 'double engine' government at the Centre and the state.

In a video released by the BJD, Patnaik is seen holding two conch symbols, the party's logo, on both hands, appealing people to vote for 'double conch' while exercising their franchise.

"This time, vote for double conch, one for MLA and one for MP," Patnaik said.

Simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections will be held in Odisha in four phases from May 13 to June 1.

Patnaik is set to hit the campaign trail for the polls from his home turf Hinjili in Ganjam district Wednesday.

This time, he will contest from two Assembly constituencies - Hinjili, which he represents, and Kantabanji in western Odisha.

Patnaik has been representing Hinjili seat since 2000. He has been elected from the seat five times in a row. If he retains power, he is set to become the longest serving chief minister in the country.

Women were seen performing puja in various temples of Hinjili, wishing Patnaik a grand success in the polls.

The BJD president's campaign trail will begin a day before Union Home Minister Amit Shah's proposed rally at Sonepur in Bolangir Lok Sabha seat.

Patnaik is also scheduled to campaign for BJD candidates in Rayagada district April 25.

Four Lok Sabha seats in Odisha - Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Berhampur and Koraput - and the Assembly segments under their jurisdictions will go for polls May 13.



Serving Bihar is my dharma. The entire state is like family to me NITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CM

FIRE IN ADJACENT BUILDING OF ALLIANCE AIR OFFICE

Alliance Air Tuesday said there was a fire in a building adjacent to its office at Terminal 1 of the Delhi airport. No one was injured in the fire incident that was reported to the fire department at around 6.29 am and eight vehicles were pressed into service to douse the fire



of the day quote

There was a time when a leader would stand up, and people of the country expected him to be an ethical person. They would expect morality from him but today the biggest leader of the country has given up morality and does drama before you

PRİYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

Military strength and capabilities are necessary to prevent war or to present a credible deterrence as well as to enable a robust response to threats and winning wars, when required, across the entire spectrum of conflict

MANOJ PANDE | ARMY CHIEF GENERAL

Congress destroyed the secular fabric of the nation... But the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi refrain from any discrimination on the basis of religion or caste

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Terror module member held

Chandigarh: The Punjab Police has arrested a member of a terror module who was allegedly being handled by Pakistan-based operatives, officials said Tuesday. The Director General of Police, Punjab, Gaurav Yadav, said preliminary investigations reveal that the accused was tasked to carry out target killings in Jammu and Kashmir to create fear and unrest. Pakistan-based operatives were allegedly handling the accused, the DGP said.

Pickup rams into pedestrians, kills 3

Raichur (Karnataka): Three men were killed Tuesday after a pickup vehicle allegedly rammed into them while they were on their way to fetch water from River Krishna to perform religious rituals on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanthi, police said. Udayakumar (30), Ayyangowda (28) and Mahesh (24) were walking along with a group of 'Hanuman Maladaris' when the accident took place at Shaktinagar in Raichur taluk, they said. According to the police, the three persons were a part of a group of people from Hegasannahalli village who had set out to perform the puja.

3 killed as bike crashes into tree

Gonda (UP): Three people were killed and one person was injured Tuesday when they lost control of their bike and rammed into a tree in the Itia Thok area here, police said. The incident occurred near the Bendul village. The victims were identified as Bilal (22), Ahmad (22), Shahid (22) and Rizwan (20), Station House Officer Vivek Trivedi said. The victims were travelling on a bike, without a helmet and lost control. They hit a tree and were seriously injured and rushed to a hospital, the SHO said. While Bilal, Ahmad and Shahid succumbed to their injuries, Rizwan is undergoing treatment, he added.

NCP (SP) moves EC

Pune: The Nationalist Congress Party (SP) has filed a complaint with the Election Commission of India (ECI) over the symbol of a trumpet-like instrument allotted to an independent candidate contesting from its stronghold, Baramati, in Maharashtra's Pune district. The NCP (SP) has claimed the ECI has allotted a trumpet-like symbol to independent candidate Shaikh Sayalshah Yunusshah and has identified it as "tutari".

Intense heatwave in eastern states spreads to south India

In a statement, the IMD said heat wave to severe heat wave conditions are expected in east India and south peninsular India during the next five days

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: The searing heatwave sweeping large parts of east India continued unabated and spread to southern parts of the country Tuesday, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

Maximum temperatures settled two to seven degrees Celsius above normal in parts of Odisha, Gangetic West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

The mercury soared to 43.5 degrees Celsius in Anantapur and 43.2 degrees Celsius in Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh, and 42.3 degrees Celsius in Salem and 42 degrees Celsius in Erode in Tamil Nadu.

The ongoing spell of heat wave is the second this month. Heatwave conditions have been prevailing in Odisha since April 15 and the Gangetic West Bengal since April 17, according to the Met department.

In a statement, the IMD said heat wave to severe heat wave conditions are expected in east India and south peninsular India during the next five days.

Maximum temperatures are predicted to rise by 2-4 degrees Celsius in northwest and east India and 3-4 degrees Celsius in Maharashtra during the next 4-5 days. Heatwave to severe heatwave conditions are expected in parts of West Bengal, Karnataka, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Sikkim, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand during the next five days.

High humidity could add to people's inconvenience in coastal Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu,



The monsoon is critical for India's agricultural landscape, with 52 per cent of the net cultivated area dependent on it. It is also crucial for replenishing reservoirs critical for drinking water apart from power generation across the country

Puducherry, Karnataka, Goa, Kerala, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Bihar, they said.

Warm night conditions are likely in Odisha during April 25-27. High night temperatures are considered dangerous because the body doesn't get the chance to cool down. Increasing nighttime heat is even more common in cities because of the urban heat island effect, in which metro areas are significantly hotter than their surroundings.

The threshold for a heat wave is met when the maximum temperature of a weather station reaches at least 40 degrees Celsius in the plains, 37 degrees in the coastal areas and 30 degrees in the hilly regions, and the departure from normal is at least 4.5 notches. A severe heat wave is declared if the departure from normal temperature exceeds 6.4 notches.

Amid the prevailing but weakening El Nino conditions, the IMD had earlier warned of extreme heat during the April-June period when around a billion people are expected to

exercise their franchise during the seven-phase Lok Sabha elections, heightening concerns about vulnerability to heat waves.

Voting for the first phase of elections took place April 19. The second phase of polling is scheduled for April 26.

The Met Office has said four to eight heat wave days are expected in different parts of the country in April against a normal of one to three days. Ten to 20 days of heat wave days are expected against a normal of four to eight in the entire April-June period. The areas and regions predicted to witness a higher number of heatwave days are Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Maharashtra, Vidarbha, Marathwada, Bihar and Jharkhand. Some places may record more than 20 heatwave days.

The intense heat could strain power grids and result in water shortages in parts of India.

Global weather agencies, including the IMD, are also expecting La Nina conditions to develop later in the year. El Nino conditions - periodic warming of surface waters in the central Pacific Ocean - are associated with weaker monsoon winds and drier conditions in India. La Nina conditions - the antithesis of El Nino - lead to plentiful rainfall during the monsoon season.

Kejriwal, Kavitha's jail stay gets longer again

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: A Delhi court Tuesday extended till May 7 the judicial custody of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and BRS leader K Kavitha in a money laundering case related to the alleged excise policy scam.

Special judge for CBI and ED matters Kaveri Baweja extended the custody of Kejriwal and Kavitha along with co-accused Chanpreet Singh, who allegedly managed the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) funds in the 2022 Goa assembly elections, after they were produced before the court through video conference on the expiry of their remand.

The judge also extended the judicial custody of Kavitha, a Telangana MLC and the daughter of former Telangana chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao, till May 7 in a related corruption case being probed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The court, meanwhile, adjourned for Wednesday the hearing on Kavitha's bail application in the money laundering case. The judge had April 22 reserved for May 2 its order on her bail application in the corruption case. Kavitha is in judicial custody in both the cases lodged by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the CBI.



She was arrested by the ED from her Banjara Hills residence in Hyderabad in the money laundering case March 15. Later, she was arrested by the CBI from Tihar jail April 11.

Kejriwal was arrested by the ED March 21, hours after the Delhi High Court refused to grant him protection from coercive action by the federal anti-money laundering agency. He is currently lodged in Tihar jail. The CBI is probing alleged corruption in the formulation and execution of the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy 2021-22, while the ED is investigating the money laundering aspect.

SC grills Patanjali over tiny apology for misleading ads



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: In the cross hairs of the Supreme Court over misleading advertisements, Yoga Guru Ramdev and his aide Balkrishna Tuesday faced questions about how prominently they have published their unqualified apology in newspapers.

"Is it the same size of advertisements that you normally issue in newspapers?" a bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah asked them while hearing the case related to misleading advertisements by Patanjali Ayurved Ltd. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the duo, told the bench they have issued Monday an unqualified apology for the "lapses" on their part. "Where was it published?" the bench asked.

Rohatgi said the apology has been published in 67 newspapers across the country. "Prominently?" the bench probed the advocate further and directed that the apology published be filed on record. It said it wanted to see the actual apology published in newspapers.

"The said advertisements are not on record. It is submitted that the same have been collated

Ramdev and Balkrishna had earlier tendered an "unconditional and unqualified apology" before the top court over advertisements issued by the firm making tall claims about the medicinal efficacy of its products

and shall be filed in the course of the day with copies to counsel for the parties. Needful shall be done within two days with copies to counsel for the parties," the bench said.

It said the matter related to the apology published by Ramdev and Balkrishna will be considered April 30. The apex court is hearing a plea filed in 2022 by the Indian Medical Association alleging a smear campaign against the Covid vaccination drive and modern systems of medicine.

Ramdev and Balkrishna had earlier tendered an "unconditional and unqualified apology" before the top court over advertisements issued by the firm making tall claims about the medicinal efficacy of its products.

SNIPPETS

Under-construction bridge collapses in T'gana

Hyderabad: A portion of an under-construction bridge in Telangana's Peddapalli district collapsed Monday night. Two concrete girders, out of five between two pillars about 100 feet apart, collapsed around 9.45 pm after a strong wind blew in the area. Locals apprehend the other three may give way soon too. "Luckily, a marriage party of 65 people on a bus passed by just one minute earlier and escaped being crushed by the concrete," Sirikonda Bakka Rao, who was sarpanch of Odedu village - 600 metres away, till his term lapsed two months ago, told NDTV. The nearly one-kilometre bridge across the Manair river was inaugurated by the then Telangana assembly Speaker S Madhusudhana Chary and local MLA Putta Madhu in 2016 and nearly 49 crore was sanctioned for it.

UGC warns against fake online MBA degrees

New Delhi: The University Grants Commission has warned the public against fake online programmes with abbreviations similar to recognised degree nomenclature, officials said, flagging a particular "10-day MBA" course. "Some individuals or organisations are offering online programmes and courses with abbreviated forms similar to the higher education system's recognised degree programmes. One such programme to which the attention of the commission has been drawn is '10 Days MBA'," University Grants Commission (UGC) Secretary Manish Joshi said. "The nomenclature of a degree, including its abbreviated form, duration and entry qualification, is specified by the UGC, with the previous approval of the central government, through the publication of a notification in the official gazette," he added.



A farmer inspects the damage after heavy rains and strong winds flattened wheat crop, on the outskirts of Amritsar, Punjab

Asia world's most disaster-prone region in '23: WMO

Floods and storms led to the highest number of reported casualties and economic losses, and the impact of heat waves intensified, said the World Meteorological Organization's (WMO) State of the Climate in Asia - 2023 report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: Asia continued to bear the brunt of weather, climate and water-related hazards in 2023, making it the world's most disaster-hit region, according to a new report by the World Meteorological Organization.

"Many countries in the region experienced their hottest year on record in 2023, along with a barrage of extreme conditions, from droughts and heat waves to floods and storms. Climate change exacerbated the frequency and severity of such events, profoundly impacting

societies, economies, and, most importantly, human lives and the environment that we live in," said WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo.

Climate activist Harjeet Singh said the new report highlights the profound vulnerabilities of the region to the escalating threats of climate change.

"It is crucial to emphasise the need for robust climate finance mechanisms to scale up adaptation and address loss and damage. Developing countries in Asia bear the brunt of climate-related adversities without adequate means to combat foreseeable disasters and the



In India, severe heat waves in April and June resulted in about 110 reported fatalities due to heatstroke

A major and prolonged heat wave affected much of southeast Asia in April and May, extending as far west as Bangladesh and eastern India, and north to southern China, with record-breaking temperatures

worsening impacts of climate change, he said, adding that international solidarity and financial support from wealthier nations are imperative to empower these countries to build resilience and respond effectively to inequitable climate impacts.

Citing the Emergency Events Database, the report said 79 disasters linked with hydro-meteorological hazards struck Asia in 2023, with floods and storms accounting for over 80 per cent of incidents, resulting in more than 2,000 fatalities and affecting

nine million people.

The annual mean near-surface temperature over Asia in 2023 was the second highest on record, 0.91 degrees Celsius above the 1991-2020 average and 1.87 degrees above the 1961-1990 average. Japan and Kazakhstan each had record warm years.

Parts of the Turan Lowland (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan), the Hindu Kush (Afghanistan, Pakistan), the Himalayas, around the Ganges and lower course of the Brahmaputra rivers (India and Bangladesh), the Arakan Mountains (Myanmar) and the lower course of the Mekong river reported below-normal precipitation.

Southwest China suffered from a drought, with below-normal precipitation levels nearly every month of 2023, and the rain associated with the Indian summer monsoon was below average. In June, July and August, several

floods and storm events resulted in more than 600 reported deaths across India, Pakistan and Nepal. Heavy rainfall led to flooding in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Yemen.

In August and early September, the far eastern part of the Russian Federation suffered catastrophic flooding in one of the largest disasters in recent decades, affecting about 40,000 hectares of rural land. The High-Mountain Asia region is the high-elevation area centred on the Tibetan Plateau and contains the largest volume of ice outside of the polar regions, with glaciers covering an area of around 1,00,000 square kilometres. Over the last several decades, most of these glaciers have been retreating, and at an accelerating rate.

Twenty out of the 22 observed glaciers in the High-Mountain Asia region showed continued mass loss.



We are a proud nation that loves sovereignty and freedom, which we have shown to the international community as well  
MOHAMED MUIZZU | MALDIVES PRESIDENT

## MAN FACES 14 MONTHS IN JAIL SENTENCE FOR KILLING 76 CATS

A South Korean man has been sentenced to 14 months in prison for killing 76 cats in one of the country's most gruesome cases of animal cruelty in recent years



## of the day quote

Our focus is to now get flights off the ground, and I am clear that nothing will stand in our way of doing that and saving lives



RISHI SUNAK | BRITISH PM

In forging a relationship of brothers and sisters, together as one we will go forward



ANTHONY ALBANESE | AUSTRALIAN PM

Moreover, the agricultural sector in the country experienced notable growth with bumper crops, promising a positive ripple effect on the industrial sector



MUHAMMAD AURANZEB | PAKISTAN'S FEDERAL MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND REVENUE

## SHORT TAKES

### Court rejects Evan Gershkovich's appeal

Moscow: Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich will remain jailed on espionage charges until at least late June, after a Moscow court Tuesday rejected his appeal that sought to end his pretrial detention. The 32-year-old US citizen was detained in late March 2023 while on a reporting trip and has spent over a year in jail, with authorities routinely extending his time behind bars and rejecting his appeals.

### SL Army to probe racing car tragedy

Colombo: Sri Lanka Army Tuesday said a seven-member panel will probe the tragic incident at a motor racing event organised by it that left seven dead and over 20 others injured. The racing event named the Foxhill Supercross was organised by the Sri Lanka Army Sunday as part of the traditional New Year festivities. The mishap was caused during a motor car racing event at the central hill resort of Diyathalawa in Uva province when a competing car veered off the track and ploughed into spectators. At least seven people, including an eight-year-old girl, were killed in the accident.

### SK to launch 1st nanosatellite

Seoul: South Korea is set to launch a homegrown earth observation nanosatellite into space this week, as part of its plan to create the country's satellite constellation by 2027, the country's science ministry said Tuesday. According to the Ministry of Science and ICT, the nanosatellite, the first unit of the envisioned satellite constellation, will be launched from Rocket Lab's spaceport in Mahia, New Zealand, at around 10:08 a.m. Wednesday (local time), Yonhap news agency said.

### Qatar's Emir visits Nepal, meets President

Kathmandu: Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani Tuesday met Nepal's President Ramchandra Paudel here and discussed matters related to bilateral interests and diplomatic ties. Sheikh Tamim, who arrived here on a two-day visit to Nepal Tuesday, called on President Paudel at the Shital Niwas. During the meeting, the two leaders discussed matters related to bilateral interests and diplomatic relations, according to a statement issued by the President's Office. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Narayan Kaji Shrestha, Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation Shakti Bahadur Basnet and other officials were also present at the delegation-level meeting.

# UK unveils \$620mn military aid for Ukraine

AGENCIES

Warsaw, April 23: UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced Tuesday that the country is to increase defense spending to 2.5% of GDP by the end of the decade. Sunak made the announcement during a visit to Warsaw, where he also described a new pledge to send arms to Ukraine. He said the government is putting the UK's defence industry "on a war footing," describing it as the "biggest strengthening of our national defence for a generation."

"In a world that is the most dangerous it has been since the end of the Cold War, we cannot be complacent," he said at a news briefing in Warsaw alongside NATO secretary general Jens Stoltenberg. "As our adversaries align, we must do more to defend our country, our interests and our values."

The announcement followed the UK pledging an additional \$620 million in new military supplies for Ukraine, including long-range missiles and 4 million rounds of ammunition, at a time when Ukraine is struggling to hold off advancing Russian forces on the eastern front line of the war, now in its third year.

Sunak spoke with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to confirm the assistance and "assure him of the UK's steadfast support for Ukraine's defence against Russia's brutal and expansionist ambitions," Sunak's office said.

Ahead of the visit the UK government said Sunak would announce 500 million pounds (\$620



## US preparing \$1bn weapons package

Washington: The United States is preparing a \$1 billion military aid package for Ukraine, the first to be sourced from the yet to be signed Ukraine-Israel bill, two US officials told Reuters Tuesday. The aid package includes vehicles, Stinger air defence munitions, additional ammunition for high-mobility artillery rocket systems, 155 millimeter artillery ammunition, TOW and Javelin anti-tank munitions and other weapons that can immediately be put to use on the battlefield, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity. President Joe Biden had asked the US Congress to provide \$60.8 billion in aid to Ukraine, but the initiative stalled when Republicans in the House of Representatives refused to move the measure forward for months.

million, 580 million euros) in new British military supplies, including 400 vehicles, 60 boats, 1,600 munitions and 4 million rounds of ammunition. The shipment will include British Storm Shadow long-range missiles, which have a range of some 241 kilometers and have proved effective at hitting Russian targets.

"President Zelensky thanked the prime minister for the UK's continued support, saying the new military assistance would make a material difference to ordinary Ukrainians fighting on the front line to defend their country," Downing Street said.

However, Downing Street did not indicate whether the aid would be immediately available

for delivery. Zelensky has pleaded for greater international assistance, warning that his country will lose the war without it.

The announcement came three days after the US House of Representatives approved \$61 billion in aid for Ukraine, as American lawmakers raced to deliver a fresh round of US support to the war-torn ally. The Senate was expected to vote on the package Tuesday.

Ammunition shortages over the past six months have led Ukrainian military commanders to ration shells, a disadvantage that Russia has seized on this year — taking the city of Avdiivka and currently inching towards the town of Chasiv Yar, also in the eastern Donetsk region.

# Five migrants drown in English Channel hours after Rwanda bill passes

AGENCIES

Paris, April 23: Five people, including a child, died while trying to cross the English Channel from France to the UK, French authorities said Tuesday, just hours after the British government approved a migrant bill to deport some of those who entered the country illegally to Rwanda.

The prefecture responsible for the north of France said in a statement authorities spotted several boats, packed with migrants, off the coast of Pas-de-Calais, attempting to depart in the early morning.

Several French navy ships, including assistance and rescue tug Abeille Normandie, intervened to rescue "a very overcrowded boat carrying more than one hundred people on board," the statement emailed to *The Associated Press* said.

"They rescued several people, but unfortunately, five people have died despite the emergency services' swift intervention," it said. The regional prefect Jacques Billant said a woman, three men and a 7-year-old girl died. He also said the boat attempted to sail off the beach in Wimereux and carried 112 people. The statement added that the rescue operation was ongoing and helicopters and boats were already deployed on scene.

The Voix du Nord, a regional newspaper, said the bodies were discovered at the Wimereux



This came only hours after British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's latest effort to send some migrants to Rwanda finally won approval from Parliament

The UK government plans to deport some of those who enter the country illegally as a deterrent to migrants who risk their lives in leaky, inflatable boats in hopes that they will be able to claim asylum once they reach Britain

beach in northern France Tuesday morning. About 100 migrants have been rescued and placed aboard a French navy ship. They will be taken to the port of Boulogne, the paper said. This came only hours after British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's latest effort to send some migrants to Rwanda finally won approval from Parliament.

The UK government plans to deport some of those who enter the country illegally as a deterrent to migrants who risk their lives in leaky, inflatable boats in hopes that they will be able to claim asylum once they reach Britain.

## SNIPPETS

### Two Indian students killed in traffic collision

Washington: Two Indian students in the United States were killed on the spot in a head-on traffic collision near Lake Pleasant in Arizona, according to police. The victims, reportedly from Telangana, have been identified as 19-year-old Nivesh Mukka and 19-year-old Goutham Parsi. The two Indians were enrolled as international students at Arizona State University. According to the Peoria Police, officers responded to a report of a collision around 6:18 pm April 20 on Castle Hot Springs Road, just north of State Route 74. The multiple-vehicle collision involved two vehicles -- a white 2024 Kia Forte and a red 2022 Ford F150 -- that had collided head-on. Preliminary investigation shows that the driver of the red F150 was travelling southbound on Castle Hot Springs Road while the white Kia Forte was travelling northbound.

### Germany lawmaker's aide held over spying charges

Berlin: A man who works for a German lawmaker in the European Parliament has been arrested on suspicion of spying for China, German prosecutors said Tuesday. The detention came less than 24 hours after three people were arrested for spying for China in a separate German case. The suspect, identified only as Jian G in line with German privacy rules, was arrested Monday in the eastern German city of Dresden, federal prosecutors said in a statement. They said that he has worked for a German lawmaker in the European Union's legislature since 2019. The statement didn't specify which lawmaker employed him, but German news agency dpa reported, citing unidentified security sources, that he works for Maximilian Krah of the far-right party Alternative for Germany. Other German media also linked the suspect to Krah, who is the party's top candidate in the European Parliament election in early June.

### Imran's party alleges 'blatant rigging' in by-polls

Islamabad: Jailed former Pakistan premier Imran Khan's party has alleged that "blatant rigging" took place in the recently held by-elections in which the ruling PML-N got the lion's share, as it announced a plan for countrywide protests, a media report said Tuesday. By-elections were held Sunday to 21 national and provincial assembly seats amidst tight security and suspension of cellular and internet services in specific districts of Punjab and Balochistan to maintain law and order. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) won at least two national and 10 provincial assembly seats, according to the unofficial results Monday.

## Taiwan rattled by over 200 quakes

REUTERS

Taipei, April 23: Taiwan's quake-hit eastern county of Hualien was rattled by more than 200 aftershocks late Monday and early Tuesday, but only minor damage was reported and no casualties and major chipmaker TSMC said it saw no impact on operations.

Largely rural and sparsely populated Hualien was hit by a 7.2 magnitude earthquake April 3 that killed at least 17 people, and there have been more than 1,000 aftershocks since.

Buildings across large parts of northern, eastern and western Taiwan, including in the capital, Taipei, swayed throughout the night, with the largest quake measuring a 6.3 magnitude. All were very shallow. "Especially at 2 a.m., it shook very strongly. In fact, for a moment even I thought about rushing downstairs, but as we live on the sixth floor, I felt it a bit troublesome to go down," said Taipei resident Aden Peng, 44, a medical researcher.

"Then again, according to my previous experience, I thought it should be fine and hoped it would be fine," Peng added.



Family and supporters of hostages held in the Gaza Strip hold up their hands, painted red to symbolize blood, to call for the captives' release and to mark 200 days since the Hamas-led October 7 cross-border attack in Tel Aviv, Israel

# Haiti's health system nears collapse

HAITI'S HEALTH SYSTEM HAS LONG BEEN FRAGILE, BUT IT'S NOW NEARING TOTAL COLLAPSE AFTER GANGS LAUNCHED COORDINATED ATTACKS FEBRUARY 29, TARGETING CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CAPITAL AND BEYOND

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Port-au-Prince (Haiti), April 23: On a recent morning at a hospital in the heart of gang territory in Haiti's capital, a woman began convulsing before her body went limp as a doctor and two nurses raced to save her.

They stuck electrodes to her chest and flipped on an oxygen machine while keeping their eyes on a computer screen that reflected a dangerously low oxygen level of 84%.

No one knew what was wrong with her. Even more worrisome, the Doctors Without Borders hospital in the Cite Soleil slum was running low on key medicine to treat convulsions.

It's a familiar scene repeated daily at hospitals and clinics across Port-au-Prince, where life-saving medication and equipment is dwindling or altogether absent as brutal gangs tighten their grip on the capital and beyond. They have blocked roads, forced the closure of the main in-



ternational airport in early March and paralysed operations at the country's largest seaport, where containers filled with key supplies remain stuck.

Haiti's health system has long been fragile, but it's now nearing total collapse after gangs launched coordinated attacks February 29, targeting critical infrastructure in the capital and beyond.

The violence has forced several medical institutions and dialy-

sis centres to close, including Haiti's largest public hospital. Located in downtown Port-au-Prince, the Hospital of the State University of Haiti was supposed to reopen April 1 after closing when the attack began, but gangs have infiltrated it.

One of the few institutions still operating is Peace University Hospital, located south of the shuttered airport. From Feb 29 to April 15, the hospital treated some 200 patients with gunshot

wounds, and its beds remain full.

More than 2,500 people were killed or wounded across Haiti from January to March, a more than 50% increase compared with the same period last year, according to a recent UN report.

Even if a hospital is open, sometimes there is little or no medical staff because gang violence erupts daily in Port-au-Prince, forcing doctors and nurses to stay at home or turn around if they encounter blocked roads manned by heavily armed men.

The spiralling chaos has left a growing number of patients with cancer, AIDS and other serious illnesses with little to no recourse, with gangs also looting and setting fire to pharmacies in the capital's downtown area.

Doctors Without Borders itself has run out of many medications used to treat diabetes and high blood pressure, and asthma inhalers that help prevent deadly attacks are nowhere to be found

in the capital, Lavigne said.

At the Doctors Without Borders hospital, medical staff recently tried to save a boy with a severe asthma attack by giving him oxygen, she said. That didn't work, and neither did another type of medication. Finally, they ended up injecting him with adrenaline, which is used in emergencies to treat anaphylactic shock.

People's health is worsening because the daily medication they need for their chronic conditions is not available, warned Doctors Without Borders project coordinator Jacob Burns.

Scores of people line up outside the hospital each day and risk being shot by gang members who control the area as they await medical care.

Everyone is allowed to enter the hospital compound, but medical staff set up a triage to determine which 50 people will be seen. Those with less urgent needs are asked to return another day, Burns said.

## David Pecker agrees to be 'eyes and ears' of Trump's 2016 bid

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, April 23: A veteran tabloid publisher testified Tuesday that he pledged to be Donald Trump's "eyes and ears" during his 2016 presidential campaign, recounting how he promised the then-candidate that he would help suppress stories that had the potential to harm the Republican's election bid.

The testimony from David Pecker was designed to bolster prosecutors' assertions of a decades-long friendship between Trump and the former publisher of the National Enquirer that culminated in an agreement to give the candidate a heads-up on negative tips and stories so they could be quashed.

Pecker is the first witness in Trump's historic hush money trial in Manhattan.

The effort to suppress unflattering information was designed to influence the election, prosecutors have alleged in seeking to elevate the gravity of the first trial of a former American President.

## of the day quote

With a robust order book and a strategic focus on redevelopment and land monetisation, NBCC is well-positioned to not only sustain but also incrementally elevate its growth trajectory, propelling sustainable development forward in India's construction and infrastructure landscape

KP MAHADEVASWAMY | NBCC CMD

As far as going to the campus and making offers for the next year is concerned, we will definitely look at it cautiously because (of) the demand and supply (situation) where we are able to get the supply as we need. We don't need to rush into forward looking 12 month commitments

SANDEEP KALRA | PERSISTENT SYSTEMS CHIEF EXECUTIVE

By combining multiple functionalities into one cost-effective device, we're providing a comprehensive solution tailored to the varied needs of small and medium businesses across diverse sectors

NALIN NEGI | BHARATPE CEO

## Q4 RESULTS CORNER

### TCPL net profit down 26.69%

**New Delhi:** Tata Consumer Products Ltd Tuesday reported a 26.69 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to ₹212.26 crore in the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2024, impacted by exceptional items related to costs of amalgamation, acquisitions, asset write-downs and fair value loss on financial instruments. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹289.56 crore in the same period a year ago. Tata Consumer Products Ltd said in a filing. Consolidated revenue from operations in the quarter under review stood at ₹3,926.94 crore as against ₹3,618.73 crore, it added. During the quarter, the company said it incurred exceptional items of ₹215.8 crore.

### ICICI Prudential Life net dips 26%

**New Delhi:** ICICI Prudential Tuesday reported a 26 per cent drop in net profit to ₹174 crore for the quarter ended March 31 on higher expenses. The private sector insurer had a profit of ₹235 crore in the fourth quarter of 2022-23. The insurer's net premium income rose 17 per cent to ₹14,788 crore in the March quarter compared to ₹12,629 crore in the year-ago period. The company's expenses of management rose 10 per cent to ₹2,550 crore in the fourth quarter of FY'24, from ₹2,320 crore at the end of the March quarter of 2022-23. For the full 2023-24 fiscal, ICICI Pru's net profit rose 5 per cent to ₹852 crore. In 2022-23 fiscal, the net profit was ₹811 crore.

### Tata Elxsi net declines 2.2%

**New Delhi:** Tata Elxsi, a provider of design-led technology services, Tuesday reported a 2.2 per cent decline in net profit at ₹196.93 crore in the fourth quarter ended in March. The company had posted a net profit of ₹201.51 crore in the same period of the previous fiscal, Tata Elxsi said in a regulatory filing. Revenue from operations in the quarter under review stood at ₹905.94 crore as against ₹837.91 crore in the year-ago period, it added. The company said its total expenses were higher at ₹677.21 crore compared to ₹613.39 crore a year ago. For the fiscal ended March 31, 2024, the company's net profit was ₹792.23 crore over ₹755.19 crore reported in FY23, it said.



It is an extremely critical time for the world as our collective future depends on a rapid transition to a net-zero world

GIRISH TANTI | VICE CHAIRMAN OF SUZLON GROUP

## S&P DJI AIMS TO SELL ENTIRE STAKE IN ASIA INDEX

Leading index provider S&P Dow Jones Indices (S&P DJI) is targeting to sell its entire equity stake in Asia Index Private Ltd (AIPL) by May 31, according to an update by BSE Tuesday. AIPL, a joint venture between S&P DJI and BSE, is best known for calculating and maintaining the popular index Sensex.



# Weather events risk to inflation: RBI Bulletin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 23:** Conditions are shaping up for an extension of a trend upshift in real GDP growth in India, though extreme weather events along with prolonged geo-political tensions may pose a risk to inflation, said the RBI's April Bulletin released Tuesday.

The retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) factors for its monetary policy, eased to 4.9 per cent in March after remaining at 5.1 per cent during the two preceding months.

"There is a sizzle in the spring of 2024," said an article on 'State of the Economy' published in the Bulletin.

Global weather agencies are in agreement that March 2024 was the warmest March since record-keeping began in 1850 - the global surface temperature was at 1.6 degrees Celsius (3.01°F) above the 1880-1899 period.

Careful monitoring during the summer is warranted as overlapping food price shocks

play out, before an above-normal Southwest monsoon this year, as projected by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), enabling an easing of food price pressures, said the article authored by a team lead by RBI deputy governor Michael Debabrata Patra.

"In the near term, however, extreme weather events may pose a risk to inflation along with prolonged geopolitical tensions that could keep crude oil prices volatile. Overall, the projection indicates further easing of headline inflation in the coming months before unfavourable base effects kick in during the second half of the year, which have to be seen off," it said.

While alignment with the inflation target is gradually occurring, incoming data will provide greater clarity and confidence on the disinflation path, it added.

On economic growth, the article said conditions are shaping up for an extension of the trend upshift that took the average real GDP growth above 8 per cent during 2021-24.



"In order to achieve its developmental aspirations over the next three decades, the Indian economy must grow at a rate of 8-10 per annum over the next decade to reap the demographic dividend that started accruing from 2018 and, as calculations show, will last till 2055," it said. It also noted that global growth momentum has been sustained in the first quarter of 2024 and the outlook for global trade is turning positive. Treasury yields

and mortgage rates are ticking up in major economies as expectations of interest rate cuts are being pared.

On stock exchanges introducing a beta version of the T+0 rolling settlement cycle on an optional basis in equity cash markets for a limited set of scrips effective from March 28 this year, the authors said it marks a landmark in the progress of settlement and clearing timelines relative to global financial markets,

showcasing India's Market Infrastructure Institutions' (MIIs) global leadership in the digital ecosystem.

The RBI said the views expressed in the Bulletin article are of the authors and do not represent the views of the central bank.

The article further said that while credit growth (y-o-y) picked up across the board, it remained higher for private sector banks (PVBs) (19.3 per cent) compared to public sector banks (PSBs) (14.7 per cent).

PSBs, however, continued to be the major driver of incremental credit extended by all scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) in 2023-24.

Also, transmission across bank groups indicates that the increase in the deposit and lending rates was higher in the case of public sector banks, except for outstanding loans, from May 2022 to February 2024.

The lending rates of PSBs continued to remain lower than those of private banks while their deposit rates were higher, the article added.

## NCLT adjourns hearing in Byju's rights issue case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 23:** The injunction on the use of rights issue funds by Byju's will continue as a company law court in Bangalore adjourned the matter to June 6 after hearing investors as well as the management.

In its order earlier this year, the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Bangalore Bench, said the funds received by the company with respect to the rights issue should be kept in a separate escrow account and not be withdrawn till the disposal of the matter.

While investors have alleged that Byju's has misused the funds and levelled charges against it over non-compliance with the court's past order, the embattled edtech firm on Tuesday stated it has completely followed the NCLT directions. The matter has now been listed for the next hearing June 6. Byju's has been accused by four investors of violating the tribunal order and utilising some of the funds raised during the rights issue.

## Lalchnd presents 'Gold Lock Offer' for Akshaya Tritiya

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** As gold prices surge in the international market amidst rising demand, Lalchnd, the most trusted jewellery brand of Odisha that boasts the largest showrooms and widest range of jewellery designs in all of eastern India, is delighted to offer its esteemed customers an extraordinary opportunity. With Akshaya Tritiya around the corner, as market analysts forecast further spikes in gold prices, Lalchnd Jewellers has launched the ingenious "Gold Lock Offer" to protect its patrons from this risk.

Customers can now reserve their favourite 22-karat HUID gold jewellery by paying in advance a nominal 10% of the total price of their chosen pieces. Then, on the auspicious day, they can come by and take home all of their gold either at the pre-booked rate or the prevailing rate, whichever is lower. This exclusive offer is accessible across all Lalchnd showrooms nationwide.

To celebrate Akshaya Tritiya with its customers, Lalchnd Jewellers is also unveiling its latest collections of gold, silver, di-



amond and platinum masterpieces. It is worth noting that Lalchnd Jewellers' immense popularity is owed to the purity of its gold jewellery, the uniqueness of its jewellery designs and its unparalleled focus on customer satisfaction. Also, Lalchnd is well known for offering the lowest making charges for its gold jewellery on the market all year round.

Apart from its mission to always provide the highest quality of certified jewellery, Lalchnd remains the foremost crusader of transparency and integrity in an industry where ambiguous offers are still being used far too often to mislead customers. As the winner of over 100 national and international awards, the biggest jewellery brand from Odisha has been actively alerting the public to the deceptive practices of certain jewellers both within and outside its home state through extensive media campaigns over the years.

# Markets climb for 3rd day on firm cues

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

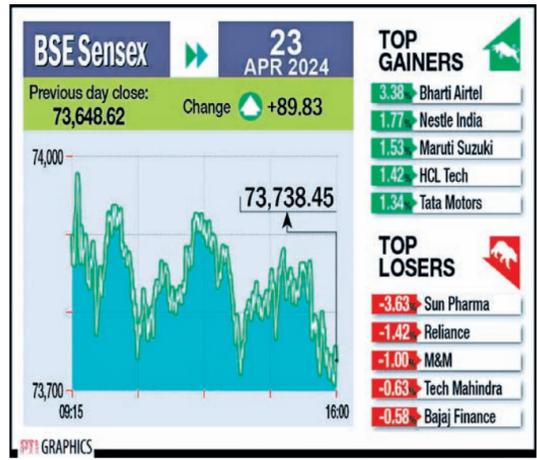
**New Delhi, April 23:** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher for the third session in a row Tuesday, following gains in telecom, tech and consumer durable shares amid a firm trend in the global markets.

However, rising global crude prices and renewed foreign capital outflows amid geopolitical tensions restricted the markets' appreciation bias, traders said.

After rallying over 400 points, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 89.83 points or 0.12 per cent higher at 73,738.45. During the session, it jumped 411.27 points or 0.55 per cent to 74,059.89.

Trimming most of its early gains, the NSE Nifty ended 31.60 points or 0.14 per cent up at 22,368. During the day, it climbed 111.15 points or 0.49 per cent to 22,447.55.

"The domestic market exhibited range-bound performance, tracking positive global cues with sustained outperformance of the broader market. While tensions between Iran and Israel were perceived to have limited escalation, the uptick in crude



prices suggests investors' reassessing the risks. With higher levels of the dollar index and US bond yields, FIIs are expected to continue with outflows, but inflows from DIIs are supporting the recovery," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Heavy selling pressure in index heavyweight Reliance Industries, mainly due to profit booking, dragged mar-

ket indices lower. Reliance lost over one per cent to end at ₹2,918.50 per scrip.

From the Sensex basket, Bharti Airtel, Nestle, Maruti, Tata Motors, HCL Technologies, NTPC, Asian Paints and State Bank of India were the major gainers.

In contrast, Sun Pharma, Reliance Industries, Mahindra & Mahindra, JSW Steel, Tech Mahindra and Bajaj Finance

were among the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge jumped 1.05 per cent, and the midcap index climbed 0.52 per cent.

Among the indices, telecommunication zoomed 4.27 per cent, realty climbed 2.42 per cent, teck (1.23 per cent), utilities (0.95 per cent), consumer durables (0.82 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.77 per cent) and commodities (0.52 per cent).

Oil & Gas, metal and energy were the laggards.

In Asian markets, Tokyo and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory while Seoul and Shanghai ended lower.

European markets were trading with gains. Wall Street ended in positive territory Monday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.41 per cent to \$87.36 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹2,915.23 crore Monday after a day's breather, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark climbed 560.29 points or 0.77 per cent to settle at 73,648.62 Monday. The NSE Nifty went up by 189.40 points or 0.86 per cent to 22,336.40.

# Curbs on staples: India diversifies food exports

REUTERS

**New Delhi, April 23:** India's agricultural food exports in the 2023/24 financial year fell slightly short of the previous year, hitting about \$50 billion as efforts to diversify shipments to the United States, Europe and other markets helped to offset curbs on rice, wheat and sugar exports.

The export curbs were imposed by the world's second-largest producer of wheat, rice and sugar last year to rein in rising domestic prices.

The curbs have hit food exports by between \$5 billion and \$8 billion, said commerce ministry official Rajesh Agrawal, adding that overall agriculture



exports could be about \$50 billion for the year to March 31. That compares with a total of about \$53 billion the previous year.

"The government aims to reduce dependence on a few items ... and promote a wide range of farm products, such as oilseeds,

fruit, vegetables and processed foods," he said.

India's merchandise exports fell for the first time in 2023/24 since 2020/21, hit by geopolitical tensions and export curbs.

Exports have also been dented by a slowdown in global demand,

the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war and the Red Sea shipping crisis brought on by conflict in the Middle East, Agrawal said.

Exports of basmati rice had reached \$5.2 billion by the end of February, up 22% year on year, helped by an increase in global prices, he said. Official numbers for the full 12-month period are expected to be announced in the next few days.

To boost exports, the government has identified 20 agricultural products with high export potential in developed countries. These include items such as bananas, mangoes, cashew nuts, buffalo meat and alcoholic beverages.

Abhishek Dev, chairman of

the Agriculture and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEEDA), a state-run agency that aims to boost farm exports, said India's share in the \$400 billion global market of such products was only 2.23% in 2022, amounting to \$9 billion.

"The aim is to capture 4% to 5% market share in the next few years," he said, adding that shipments of bananas and pomegranates had been sent to Russia and the United States.

Dev said that India's fruit and vegetable exports rose 14% in 2023/24 to \$3.7 billion, followed by a 12.4% rise in exports of meat, dairy and poultry items to \$2.8 billion.

## Auction route for spectrum to continue

**New Delhi:** The government will continue to auction telecom spectrum, and the administrative allocation route will be used sparingly, only in those cases where it is technically not feasible to do so or for areas that are strategic in nature, sources said. The Department of Telecom (DoT) is gearing up to hold the next round of spectrum auction on June 6 for eight spectrum bands (800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1,800 MHz, 2,100 MHz, 2,300 MHz, 2,500 MHz, 3,300 MHz, and 26 GHz) meant for mobile phone services at a base price of about ₹96,317 crore. The spectrum will be assigned for 20 years and successful bidders will be allowed to make payments in 20 equal annual instalments in the coming mega auction.

# Indians most confident in adapting to tech changes

The report by global job site Indeed said around 54 per cent workers in India predict a substantial shift in their roles within the next five years and 95 per cent expressed confidence in their ability to adapt to these changes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 23:** Indians are most confident in adapting to changes due to tech innovations at work places and a large majority of professionals seem to be ready for any change in their roles, a report said Tuesday.

The report by global job site Indeed said around 54 per cent workers in India predict a sub-

stantial shift in their roles within the next five years and 95 per cent expressed confidence in their ability to adapt to these changes.

The report - 'Tomorrow's World: The Workplace and Workforce of the Future' - is based on an online survey across 11 countries, including India.

Global market research firm YouGov on behalf of Indeed col-



lected data from November 30-December 21, 2023, from 16,671

working professionals. The participants comprised 9,592 em-

ployees, 4,592 employers and 2,487 HR decision-makers.

The report revealed that India led the way in fostering optimism towards technology and artificial intelligence (AI), with 75 per cent of respondents expressing confidence in the transformative potential of tech advancements.

India's zeal for tech and AI far outweighs any other nation such as Germany (41 per cent), Canada and France (42 per cent), it stated.

Over 44 per cent of respondents also felt that more jobs will be created by AI-related opportunities, the report said.

"India is at the forefront of embracing the future of work, driven by a profound belief in the power of technological innovation. Our findings underscore a remarkable readiness among the Indian workforce to adapt and evolve," Indeed India Head of Sales Sashi Kumar said.

According to the report, employees in India have adopted a proactive stance towards career learning and development to adjust to forthcoming shifts in the workplace with 53 per cent having upskilled to develop longer-term skills and learning in the last three years.

# STOINIS SPOILS RUTU PARTY OFC inch closer to ISL final



Marcus Stoinis plays a shot during his match-winning knock; (inset) Ruturaj Gaikwad celebrates his century

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, April 23:** Marcus Stoinis made a bustling unbeaten hundred, a perfect anti-thesis to Ruturaj Gaikwad's classy century to shepherd Lucknow Super Giants to a stunning six-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings in their IPL match here Tuesday. Stoinis (124 n o, 63b, 13x4, 6x6) helped the LSG to mount the highest chase - 211 - at the Chepauk in IPL, ending up at 213/4. Gaikwad (108 n o, 60b, 12x4, 3x6) and Shivam Dube (66, 27b, 3x4, 7x6) added 104 runs for the fourth-wicket stand to power the Super Kings to a competitive 210/4. Thus, LSG also scored a rare

back-to-back home and away win over Chennai as they had won the match at Ekana Stadium a few days back. Stoinis' innings was in direct contrast to the silken smooth knock of Gaikwad. The Australian's 6'1 inch frame is a storehouse of power and he made no effort to hide it too, crunching some fours and sixes, and nothing was more special than his maximum off pacer Mustafizur Rahman, who had earlier consumed LSG skipper KL Rahul cheaply. At the other end, Poooran was on overdrive from ball one, partly because of the linear 55-run stand between Stoinis and a

struggling Devdutt Padikkal (13), whose misery was ended when Matheesha Pathirana (2/35) produced a 151 kmph scorching to uproot the batter's leg stump. It mandated that Poooran, who added 70 with Stoinis, did not have the luxury of taking his time to settle in, but he was up to the task and smoked Shardul Thakur for 20 runs in the 16th over including two sixes and a four. Poooran's dismissal by Pathirana left the task of taking LSG home to Stoinis, who reduced the equation robbing 15 runs off the 19th over bowled by the Lankan. Stoinis needed to take 17 runs off the last over bowled by

Rahman and did the job with three balls to spare, smashing the Bangladesh left-arm quick for 6, 4, 4 (+1NB) and 4.

Earlier, Gaikwad and Dube gave steam to Super Kings innings after a rather subdued powerplay (49/2) and the middle passage. The CSK should primarily thank Gaikwad, who played an innings which was a connoisseur's delight, for that total after the early departure of Ajinkya Rahane.

Gaikwad took a classic route, timing the ball through the gaps for fours. In fact, his first fifty contained no fours but still he managed to maintain a strike-rate of above 180 during that phase. The fifty came off just 28 balls.

His focus was also on constructing useful alliances with his teammates as 45 runs were made with Daryl Mitchell and 52 were made alongside Ravindra Jadeja (17). However, both Mitchell (11), who was dropped on four, and Jadeja would rue missing out on a chance to chip in with a far bigger knock.

While Gaikwad was the main contributor in those partnerships, the pressure was slightly lifted off his shoulders once Dube arrived at the crease. The left-hander played some powerful hits around the field and, not so surprisingly, fetched CSK's first six of the innings in the 13th over off Stoinis.

Gaikwad soon slammed the first six of his innings in the 45th ball he faced. However, Dube seamlessly slipped into his six-hitting avatar and pacer Yash Thakur bore the brunt as the left-hander smashed him for three successive sixes.

Gaikwad, who reached 99 with a six off Thakur over extra cover, reached his second IPL hundred with a four in the next ball off the same bowler as he made 16 runs in the 18th over. Gaikwad and Dube brought up 100 of their partnership in just 46 balls.

**BRIEF SCORES:** CSK 210/4 (Ruturaj Gaikwad 108 n o, Shivam Dube 66; Matt Henry 1/28) lost to LSG 213/4 (Marcus Stoinis 124 n o, Nicholas Poooran 34; Matheesha Pathirana 2/35) by 6 wickets.



Odisha FC players acknowledge the support from home fans after their win in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, April 23:** Odisha FC rallied to secure a 2-1 victory against Mohun Bagan Super Giant in the first-leg semifinal of the Indian Super League here Tuesday, fighting back after conceding a goal as early as in the third minute.

The Juggernauts thus registered their first-ever ISL win over the Mariners after nine attempts, as a game of close margins kicked off amid frenetic circumstances with all three goals being netted in the first half at the Kalinga Stadium.

Manvir Singh handed the Antonio Lopez Habas-coached side an early lead, but Carlos Delgado (11th minute) and Roy Krishna (39th) scored once each for Odisha to help the team maintain their unbeaten streak at home this season (13 matches). The second leg of this last-four clash will be held at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata Sunday.

Eventually, both teams brought an end to this tightly contested

clash with 10 men on either side, as goal-scorer Delgado and Mohun Bagan striker Armando Sadiku were sent off in the 74th and 67th minutes respectively after picking up a couple of yellow cards each.

Both these teams are renowned for their expansive, free-flowing footballing styles. However, they were naturally tightly organised in this match, leaving no gaps exposed in their backlines, compelling each other out of their comfort zones and making them look for unique ways to find the back of the net.

Manvir, who has been a dazzling presence on the flank for the Mariners, at 2:21 minutes, netted the second fastest goal in the ISL playoffs, behind Lalrindika Raite's goal at 2:08 minutes for ATK against Mumbai City FC, December 10 in 2016.

The ball was delivered to him from a corner by striker Dimitrios Petratos. He carried a rich vein of form into this match, providing a razor sharp cross that Manvir, positioned at the

centre of the box, headed home to break the deadlock.

Odisha FC were not left too far behind though, replying in similar fashion courtesy, the duo of Ahmed Jahouh and Delgado nine minutes later. The Moroccan was accurate with his corner delivery, and Delgado made his way through a crowded 18-yard box to deposit the ball into the back of the net.

A rather tense back-and-forth passage of play ensued thereafter, before Roy Krishna finally broke through with the winner before the half-time break.

As the Mariners looked to press high from an Odisha FC goalkick, custodian Amrinder Singh sensed a unique opportunity and put in a long ball straight towards Krishna inside the Bagan half.

Krishna brought the ball down with his head, before sprinting past Hector Yuste and putting the ball beyond Vishal Kaith to become the highest-ever goalscorer for Odisha in a single ISL season with his 13th strike of the campaign.

## Capitals eye improved bowling effort vs Titans



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 23:** Rishabh Pant's leadership skills will be under scrutiny as a struggling Delhi Capitals would seek a much-improved performance from their bowlers when they take on an inconsistent Gujarat Titans in the IPL here Wednesday.

It was not an ideal homecoming for Pant as after two consecutive wins, DC slumped to a 67-run loss against a marauding Sunrisers Hyderabad at home Saturday. The loss saw DC slip to the eighth position with three wins and five defeats. They very well know they can't afford to falter if they want to keep their playoff hopes alive.

Against SRH, Pant erred in his decisions a few times, starting from the toss as he misjudged the dew factor at the Arun Jaitley Stadium and decided to bowl first. Pant's decision to hand the second over to Lalit Yadav, was even more contentious as SRH were off to a blazing start, scoring a record 125 for no loss in the powerplay.

On the personal front, Pant wasn't in his element as he struggled for timing en route a painstaking 44 off 35 balls while chasing a mammoth score. To chase a target of 267, a team need their openers to fire from ball one but Prithvi Shaw and David Warner haven't been too successful.

Young Jake Fraser-McGurk smashed 65 off just 18 balls to keep DC in the hunt but he lacked

support from the other end, even though Abhishek Porel (42 off 22) tried his best.

DC bowlers were taken to the cleaners by SRH and they need to pull up their socks. Kuldeep Yadav has been DC's best bowler in the season so far with 10 wickets from five games at an economy rate of 7.60.

GT have also been equally inconsistent under new skipper Shubman Gill. But the three-wicket win over Punjab Kings in their last game has helped the former champions move up slightly in the pecking order at sixth spot from four wins and as many losses.

They would be hoping to continue the winning momentum to scale up the leaderboard and be in contention for a playoff berth. The onus would be on Gill to lead from the front.

The likes of Sai Sudharsan, David Miller and Azmatullah Omarzai also need to let their willow do the talking while Rahul Tewatia would look to continue his pyrotechnics towards the end stage of their innings. On the bowling front, the likes of veteran Mohit Sharma, Noor Ahmad and Rashid Khan will be expected to deliver the goods.

### MATCHDAY

Indian Premier League

DC vs GT

Time: 07:30 pm

Telecast: Star Sports Network

Stream: Jio Cinema

## Djoko, Bonmati take top Laureus honours

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Madrid, April 23:** Spain's first Women's World Cup triumph last year earned two more major plaudits at the Laureus World Sports Awards Monday. Spain were chosen world team of the year for 2023 and midfielder Aitana Bonmati was picked as the best sportswoman.

Novak Djokovic received the sportsman of the year at the ceremony in Madrid, and American gymnast Simone Biles was given the comeback of the year award. Real Madrid forward Jude Bellingham earned the breakthrough prize, and Rafael Nadal won the sport for good award thanks to his foundation.

The Spanish women's World Cup breakthrough last August in New Zealand and Australia was tarnished in the following weeks because of an unwanted kiss of forward Jenni Hermoso by then-



federation president Luis Rubiales after the final.

Laureus rewarded Spain as the first all-female team to win the team award. Before the World Cup, Bonmati also helped Barcelona win a second Women's Champions League. She's the first female soccer player to win the Laureus, after also receiv-



ing the Ballon d'Or and FIFA best player award.

"I want to thank all my teammates and the staff of my club and national team who have helped me a lot, and because of them I am here today," Bonmati said.

Djokovic won his record-equaling fifth Laureus sports-

## Double delight for Inter at San Siro



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Milan, April 23:** Winning the derby ended up being the cherry on top of a special night for Inter Milan. Holding off AC Milan 2-1 Monday clinched for Inter the Serie A title that had been signposted for weeks, and earned a coveted second star on their jersey for winning a 20th Italian league title, breaking a tie with its fierce city rival.

"I told the guys, We find ourselves in a situation that's never happened before," Inter captain

Lautaro Martinez said. "We needed to take advantage of this opportunity, because look around, the entire stadium is ours now."

Not even the pouring rain could dampen the spirits of the Nerazzurri and their fans. Francesco Acerbi and Marcus Thuram scored and, although Fikayo Tomori's late goal for AC Milan threatened to delay the celebrations, Inter held on for the win that stretched their lead to an insurmountable 17 points over second-placed Milan, with five rounds remaining.

## Narine rules out his return for T20 WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, April 23:** Former West Indies bowling all-rounder Sunil Narine, who is having a terrific IPL season, won't be reversing his retirement decision for the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Caribbean and USA, insisting that the "door is now closed".

The 35-year-old last played for the West Indies in a T20I in August 2019 before retiring from international cricket in November last year. But owing to his sensational form with both bat and ball for KKR this IPL season, attempts were being made to convince Narine to reverse his decision for the T20 WC.

"I'm truly flattered and humbled that my performances recently have moved many people to publicly express their wish for me to come out of retirement and play in the upcoming T20 World Cup," Narine wrote in Instagram post.



He asserted that he has made peace with his decision and will be supporting the team from home. "I have made peace with that decision and whilst I never wish to disappoint, that door is now closed and I will be supporting the guys who take the field in June for West Indies.

"Guys who have worked hard over the past few months and deserve to show our wonderful fans that they are capable of winning another title. I wish you all the best," he added.