

Katrina Kaif explains her criteria for film choices, emphasising a balance between audience appeal and personal fulfilment LEISURE | P2

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 30 | www.orissapost.com



Reports point to the involvement of RAW official Vikram Yadav in the assassination plot of Sikh separatist leader Gurpatwant Singh Pannun

INTERNATIONAL | **P10**



RBI expresses concern and directs some banks and lenders resorting to unfair practices to take corrective measures

BUSINESS | P11

HS Prannoy returns to winning ways as India qualify for Thomas Cup quarterfinals defeating England 5-0

poll is possible when the Election Commission 'looks the other

way' while candidate after can-

Congress spokesperson Supriya

Shrinate asserted that Bam has

been 'forced' to withdraw his nom-

ination. Sources in the Congress

informed that an attempt to mur-

der case had been slapped on Bam

and his father Kantilal Bam in a

land-grabbing case only five days

before he withdrew his nomina-

tion. This is a clear case of in-

timidation," Shrinate stated.

didate is being 'intimidated'.

SPORTS | P12

12 PAGES | ₹5.00



IN SEARCH OF GLORY: Participants push their bulls to run harder Monday in a bullock cart race at Thegur in Chikkamagaluru district of Karnataka

Odisha requests for 1.5cr mosquito nets

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha government has requested the Centre to provide 1.56 crore Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLIN) to curb malaria cases in the state. Odisha Health and Family Welfare Minister Niranjan Pujari wrote Monday a letter to Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, in this regard. Pujari highlighted that the Centre had provided 1.56 crore LLINs to Odisha in 2020-21, effectively preventing malaria infections. According to the National Centre for Vector Borne Diseases Control (NCVBDC), Odisha recorded the highest number of malaria patients in 2023 among all states with 41,971 cases.

Nomination process for 3rd phase begins

Bhubaneswar: The ECI published Monday the notification for the third phase of elections in Odisha. In this phase, polls will be held in Sambalpur, Keonihar, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Puri and Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha constituencies and 42 Assembly seats under them May 25. Filing of nominations which began vill continue till May 6

Delhi cops summon Revanth

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 29: Delhi Police have asked Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to join their probe May 1 in connection with Union Home Minister Amit Shah's doctored video being circulated on social media, official sources said here Monday. They added that the police have issued notices to five members of Telangana Congress, including its chief Reddy, who

posted the video on 'X'. Reddy has been asked to appear with his mobile phone allegedly used for posting the fake video.

The Special Cell of Delhi Police had Sunday registered an FIR after the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), which is under the Ministry of Home Affairs, filed a complaint about the 'doctored' video of Shah where his statements indicate a commitment to abolish quota for Muslims on religious grounds.

Indore, April 29: In a major blow to the Congress in Madhya Pradesh, its Indore Lok Sabha seat candidate Akshay Kanti Bam withdrew his nomination Monday, a fortnight before polling in the key constituency. Later on he visited the BJP office here and joined the saffron party. This development will certainly help the BJP's sitting MP Shankar Lalwani (62), who will now have to contest against four independent candidates.

After Bam opted out of the race, the Congress in Delhi said there is a 'threat to democracy' as the opposition party faced another crisis after its Surat candidate's nomination form was



MP Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya with Akshav Kanti Bam (back seat left)

rejected over discrepancies last week, paving the way for the BJP nominee Mukesh Dalal

to get elected unopposed. Witnesses said Bam (45), accompanied by local BJP MLA Ramesh Mendola, reached the district collector's office and withdrew his papers. On his way back, he left in a car with Mendola. District Magistrate and Returning Officer Ashish Singh confirmed Bam has withdrawn his papers. "Three candidates, including Congress candidate Bam, withdrew their nominations today (April 29) as per due procedure. The process has been videographed," Singh informed. He added that nine candidates out of the 14 in fray have withdrawn

MP Cabinet Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya posted a picture on his 'X' account in which Bam was seen sitting in a car with him along with Mendola.

'Congress Lok Sabha candidate from Indore Akshay Kanti Bam is welcome to the BJP under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, party national president JP Nadda," Vijayvargiya said in a tweet in Hindi.

In Delhi, the Congress said there is a 'threat to democracy' and wondered if a free and fair

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polls a Congress candidate has been ousted from frav

Congress cries foul over 'intimidation' of its candidates their nominations.

12 kids hurt in bee attack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kamakhyanagar, April 29: Twelve students suffered injuries, some of them seriously when they were attacked by a swarm of bees at Sapua dam near Baligorada in Dhenkanal district Monday morning. The conditions of two of the students are stated to be serious, officials of the Kamakhyanagar police station said.

Officials stated 90 students belonging 'Sanskar Public School' had gone to the

Chatterjee informed that all the injured students were taken to the sub-divisional hospital here for treatment by the locals. He added that while some of the students have been discharged, others are still undergoing treatment.

Cases of bee attacks are not new in Odisha. In fact the state registers a large number of bee attacks every year. In December 2023, two persons were killed after being attacked by bees in Kadua village in Dhenkanal district. Earlier in March the same year, nine stu-



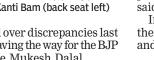
BHUBANESWAR | TUESDAY APRIL 30 2024 Indore clones Surat

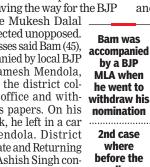
candidate getting elected unopposed, a similar development has taken place in Indore. Congress candidate Akshay Kanti Bam withdrew his nomination Monday, leaving the path clear for BJP's sitting MP, Shankar Lalwani. After withdrawing his nomination, Bam accompanied by MP Cabinet Minister Kailash . Vijavvargiva. reached the BJP office. The entire development left the Congress red-faced and it termed the development as 'threat to democracy'.

Much on the lines of BJP's Surat

AGENCIES







nomination paper verification will take place May 7 and the last date for withdrawal is May 9, the ECI said in the notification.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Sapua dam to participate in a summer camp. However, the moment activities started, a swarm of bees attacked themleaving some of them injured. Principal of the school, Shantanu

dents of Class X were attacked by bees as they reached their school to appear for the Matric exams. In May, 2023, a sarpanch was stung to death by bees in Ganjam district.

2ND SUNSTROKE DEATH IN STATE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Odisha registered its second heat-related death Monday in Dhenkanal district as per information available from the Health department. Earlier this month, a person had suffered sunstroke and had breathed his last in Balasore. Officials informed that currently 257 persons are undergoing treatment at various hospitals due to heat-related ailments or after suffering sunstroke. Meanwhile, the regional office of the IMD said that the ongoing heatwave will continue till May 2. Baripada registering a temperature of 44.8 degrees Celsius emerged the hottest in the state. Thirty two places in Odisha registered temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius or more, the IMD informed.

Angul continued to boil at 44.3 degrees Celsius followed by Boudh (44.1°C), Talcher (44.0), Titilagarh, Bolangir and Malkangiri (all 43.5°C) and Dhenkanal (43.2°C).

Bhubaneswar recorded the maximum day temperature of 41.3 degrees Celsius, while in Cuttack it was 42.5 degrees Celsius.

California.

During Sunday's 18-song

concert set list, the *Rolling*

Stones played several tracks

off the new record, including

lead single 'Angry'. They also

played classics including Sympathy for the Devil

'Gimmer Shelter', 'Honky Tonk

Burden', Jagger said that con-

cert-goers here had voted to in-

clude it on the set list. "You

can't go wrong with that,'

one man in the audience could

While the stage was sur-

be heard screaming.

After playing 'Beast of

Women' and 'Start Me Up'.

Rolling Stones gather no moss

Frontman Mick Jagger and lead guitarist Keith Richards at 80 still performing like youngsters

AGENCIES

Houston, April 29: Time marches on and all good things must come to an end. But don't tell that to *The* Rolling Stones. What many believe to be the greatest rock 'n' roll band in the world showed no signs of slowing down anytime soon as they kicked off their latest tour Sunday night at the NRG Stadium here. The Rolling Stones have

been touring for more than 60 years now. Frontman Mick Jagger and lead guitarist Keith Richards are both 80, with guitarist Ronnie Wood not far behind at 76. Their tour is being sponsored in part by 'AARP

But during a vibrant twohour show, *The Rolling* energy

Stones played with the energy of a band that was on tour for the first time.

"It's great to be back in the Lone Star State," Jagger told the packed stadium, filled with long-time fans, many wearing faded concert shirts from previous tours.

played many fa-

miliar guitar riffs

beloved by

fans. Jagger

often led the

audience in

"The

sing

alongs.

Jagger often strutted up and down the stage with 🧳 seemingly boundless while energy Richards and Wood

rector, said before the concert. The Rolling Stones have hit the road to support the release of their latest album,

level is up and it's always

up with them. The age does-

n't show," Dale Skjerseth,

the Stones' production di-

'Hackney Diamonds', the band's first record of original music since 2005. Houston was the first stop on the band's 16-city tour across the US and Canada. Other cities on the tour include New Orleans, Philadelphia,

Vancouver and British

rounded by a large collec-Columbia. tion of video screens projecting images throughout The tour ends July the show, the main focus of

the concert was the band 17in Santa and their songs Clara.

When asked if the band might be thinking about retiring, Skjerseth said he doubts that will happen.

My journey has been nothing but transformative, owing to the experiential learning facilitated through a dynamic curriculum designed to cater to the evolving demands of the Industry.

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leisure



MEG RYAN FEELS LIBERATED SINCE REACHING HER 60s

When Harry Met Sally... star Meg Ryan has felt totally liberated since she reached her 60s. The 62-year-old actress says with age comes maturity and wisdom and she now feels confident enough to speak her mind and share her opinions on love, life and relationships.

BEYONCE TO PERFORM AT MTV VMAS AFTER 8 YEARS

Singer-songwriter Beyonce is set to perform at the upcoming edition of the MTV Video Music Awards(VMAs) to mark its 40th anniversary this September. This is the first time since 2016 that the Cowboy Carte hitmaker will grace its stage.



FORTUNE FORECAST



ARIES

Today, you are raring to go. It's best you put that adren aline to good use. This is the time to WORK and not plan. It's a day you can lift mountains and cross the seas. You can party hard later, says Ganesha.

TAURUS

Spontaneity, predicts Ganesha, is the need of the hour. Ignore the negative aspects and focus on the positive side. Your action rather than thoughts will yield results today. Listen to some light music to soothe your soul, suggests Ganesha

GEMINI

God helps those who help themselves. Maybe. But He definitely helps those who help others. Support your colleagues and they will be grateful to you. This way, even your bosses will notice your talents. if they haven't already. They will shower praise on you, and favours too. An entirely enjoyable evening with your loved ones will serve as the icing on the cake, says

CANCER

You are likely to be in good spirits throughout the day. With you brimming with confidence and positive energy, others around you will also feel upbeat. The entire day, you will be looking forward to the evening, so that you could spend some quality time with your loved ones. It will be worth the wait.

LEO

With Lady Luck smiling down on you, today promises to be rather special, fore casts Ganesha, Expect to find favourable conditions and come out with flying colours in whatever task you undertake, especially if it happens to be something like an interview. Bask in the kudos and appreciation at work, as your perform ance far exceeds the expectations of the management.

VIRGO

There is an indication that you may assume a leadership role and dictate the agenda at work today, predicts Ganesha You may spend your afternoon window shopping, looking for a gift that you feel like giving to a loved one. You will spend the evening planning your long-term goals with a close friend or family



Samantha shares her special calling

Samantha Ruth Prabhu is not just known for her on een performances but also for her commitment to physical and mental well-

being. In fact, she recently described it as her special calling. The *Puspa* actress highlighted the connection profound impact they can have on physical health as well.

I was well aware of the fact that she wouldn't be every-

vestment in the role, the Freddy actress explained, "Sometimes, certain scenes after editing end up looking differently onscreen, and that's something out of my control. I gave my

heart, and I did what

AGENCIES

IN THAT CASE, I

SHOULD DEFAULT

I thought was the

best.

"This is the cause that is closest to my heart, a special calling," Samantha admitted, expressing her unwavering commitment to advocating for mental health despite initial resistance.

Thus, she affirmed her readiness to invest time and effort in the cause. She finds fulfillment in the prospect of making a positive impact, even if it's with a limited audience, underscoring her belief that following one's heart leads to the right path.

The actress, however, addressed the complexities of transitioning her fans' focus from entertainment to matters of health and mental wellness. Samantha said, "I have many fans who are more interested in entertainment, fashion and make-up.'

Meanwhile, Samantha's dedi cation to mental health advocacy starts with her own battle with myositis, an autoimmune condition that affects muscle tissues, causing weakness, pain, and fatigue.

On the work front, Samantha will be seen next in Citadel: Honev Bunny with Varun Dhawan AGENCIES

Kat's evolving criteria for film choices

Mumbai:

Katrina Kaif,

hailed as one

of the most

hardwork-

tresses.

delved

into her

ing ac-

approach to selecting roles in the wake of her recent film, *Merry Christmas*. Despite the disappointment at the box office, the movie showcased an evolved portrayal of Katrina as an actress, no-tably opposite South Indian star Vijay Sethupathi.

In an interview with a foreign journal, Katrina articulated her evolving criteria for film choices, emphasising a balance between audience appeal and personal fulfilment. She asserted, "I've always put the audience first ... It's about finding a balance, what story do I feel is going to connect with the audience? And who do I connect with personally and as an actor right now? What's going to give me growth? What's going to give me satisfaction? This is just ex-

actly what I want to be doing right now."

Her candid revelations offer a glimpse into the inner workings of an actress navigating the complexities of fame and artistic fulfilment. As she continues to evolve her craft, Katrina's journey serves as an inspiration for aspiring actors and industry veterans alike. Through her introspective approach to film selection, she not only aims to entertain but also to grow personally and artistically, ensuring her continued relevance in the ever-changing landscape of Indian cinema, asserted the Boom actress. Agencies

Aamir reflects on 'power of namaste'

Mumbai: Aamir Khan recently appeared on Kapil Sharma's show for the first time. In the latest episode of Netflix's The Great Indian Kapil Show, the actor shared several anecdotes from his acting career. Aamir shared that he learnt the power of 'namaste' during the shooting of

Dangal in 2015 The *Dil* actor recalled, We shot Dangal for more than two months in a small village in Punjab. You won't believe it, but when I used to reach there at around 5 or 6 in the morning, as my car entered, people would stand outside their homes just to welcome me with folded hands and 'Sat Sri Akaal.' They used to just wait to welcome me. They never disturbed me, never stopped my car, nothing. After my pack-up, when I would return

Night." The *Ghajini* actor said, being a Muslim, he was not used to folding his hands and greeting people with 'namaste.

He went on to add, "I'm used to raising my hand (gesturing adaab, the way Muslims greet each other) and bowing my head. After spending those two and a half months in Punjab, I understood the power of 'namaste." It's such a wonderful emotion. People in Punjab have so much respect for everyone and do not discriminate based on stature.



cently starred in the action film Bade Miyan Chote Miyan (BMCM), addressed the movie's underwhelming box office per-

recent interview.

a positive outlook on the experience. Speaking to a news portal, Alaya stated, "It didn't bother me because I feel that I got a lot from the film. I managed to reach a new audience who perhaps didn't know of me.

The actress acknowledged that a big, action-packed movie like BMCM often focuses more on entertainment than on critical acclaim.

Alaya indifferent towards her last movie's

formance in a Despite the film's commercial

struggle, Alaya revealed

failure

'When you're making a film of that scale and an action masala one at that, the reviews aren't going to be all about critical acclaim." Alava remarked

Regarding her character in the

film, she said, "I chose to do the char-

She advocates for simple practices that promote mental health, recognising the

acter in a certain way one's cup of tea.

Reflecting her commitment and emotional in-

between mental and physical health, stressing the impor-

tance of prioritising both aspects for overall well-being.

Mumbai: Alaya F, who re-

you will receive that much awaited good news from abroad. At the workplace, you will remain completely focused. You may devise and come up with some innovative method to speed up work, much to your relief.

SCORPIO

It is guite likely that you will have an outstanding field day today, predicts Ganesha. At the workplace, you will possibly feel that you are stuck in the rut doing regular activities day after day. In relationship matters, evening will be full of surprises and excitement for you, expects Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

Handicraft business is likely to draw your attention. People around you will man vel at your commitment and dedication to work and family alike. Ganesha advises you to bite the apple of love and share some romantic moments with your spouse.

CAPRICORN

Not many know how stu pendous is your wealth of wisdom; today will be a good day to make a display of it, says Ganesha. You will have your wits about you and will impress many with your show of intellect. In the social circuit, you will indulge in spreading the message of love while at work, your excellent managerial skills will ensure that everything is under control.

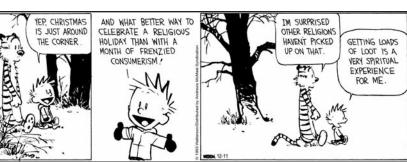
Today, you will speak and everyone else will listen! Your eloquence will bring you recognition. But you must take it a sten further. You will also manage to impress someone, and Ganesha sees the beginning of a new relationship. But don't forget to listen sometimes.

PISCES

Good times are coming your way, and this could be in the form of a promotion or a pay hike, says Ganesha. You will devote time equally between your work and family, taking a little time off to take them out on a leisure trip. Enjoy!

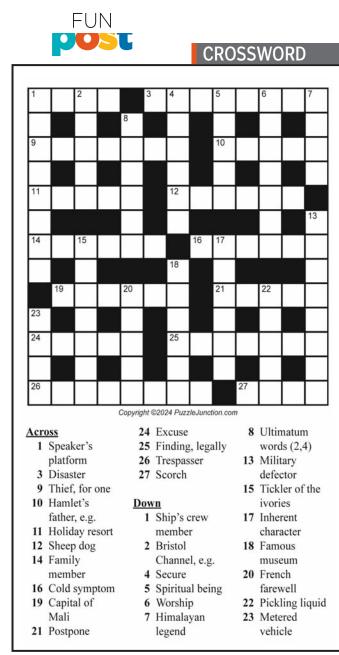


CALVIN AND HOBBES









CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

they would again be standing outside their homes and would greet me Good

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.

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SOLUTIONS

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downtown

FOUNDATION DAY

Odisha Association for the Blind founding member Gyana Ranjan Mohanty being felicitated with 'Bhima Bhoi Award of Excellence for 2024' during the 50th foundation day celebration of the association in Bhubaneswar, Monday



MP scammer who stole ₹9cr DMF funds held



The savings account of Zilla Parishad Mayurbhanj is being maintained with Bol Baripada branch in the name of District Mineral Foundation Trust

- The fraudsters managed to transfer ₹9,56,76,600 to 2 different accounts in the name of PT Constructions & Suppliers maintained with Bank of Maharashtra and SK Enterprises maintained with Punjab & Sind Bank
- & Suppliers and SK Enterprises

OUT OF THE ILLEGALLY TRANSFERRED AMOUNT, ₹5,04,06,900 HAS BEEN BLOCKED, WHILE ₹13,56,948 LYING IN 33 ACCOUNTS HAS BEEN FROZEN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Odisha Police has arrested a man from Balaghat in Madhya Pradesh on charges of swindling ₹9.6 crore from Mayurbhanj **District Mineral Foundation** (DMF) using clone cheques, official sources said, Monday.

The accused, identified as Pomesh Tembhare, was arrested April 26 under Sections 419, 420, 467, 468, 471 and 120B of the IPC and produced before the Court of CJM, Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh, an EOW official said.

'He was then brought to Bhubaneswar on the strength of a transit remand and was produced before the Court of PO, Designated Court under OPID Act, Balasore, Monday," added the official.

The case was registered on the basis of the allegation of Sujata Kanungo, chief manager of Bank of India (BoI),

The money was further diverted to many other accounts from the accounts of PT Constructions

phone switched off in a Naxalinfested village in the MP. The EOW team, with the help

Baripada, that illegal trans-

actions of ₹9.56.76.600 were

made from the account of

District Mineral Foundation

Trust of Zilla Parishad,

Mayurbhanj, maintained with

BoI, Baripada branch, by pro-

ducing four cheques, which

were later found to be cloned,

was found that the savings ac-

count of Zilla Parishad,

Mayurbhanj, is being maintained

with BoI Baripada branch, in

the name of District Mineral

Foundation Trust. The fraud-

sters managed to transfer

₹9,56,76,600 to two different ac-

counts in the name of PT

Constructions & Suppliers main-

tained with Bank of Maharashtra

During the investigation, it

April 10 and 18.

the official.

of local police and CAPF, arrested the accused, whose firm PT Constructions & Suppliers is functioning in Raipur.

SK Enterprises. Out of the ille-

gally transferred amount,

₹5,04,06,900 has been blocked,

while ₹13,56,948 lying in 33 accounts has been frozen," he said.

Pomesh was found to be the

owner/signatory authority of

PT Constructions & Suppliers,

to which more than ₹2.68 crore was illegally transferred. After

the incident, Pomesh was hiding

himself, keeping his mobile

"The firm is a sham and was created only for fraud. The accused is a member of a larger gang with a complex network in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Odisha," he said. The EOW has obtained im-

portant clues about the entire gang, which has been operating for at least four years. They have been using well-

planned and meticulous methods, from cheque cloning to multilayering of money transfers, creation and operation of multiple mule bank accounts, withdrawal of money, information network, and local touts.

and SK Enterprises maintained During the investigation, with Punjab & Sind Bank, said many incriminating clues have been seized, and they are under "The money was further diinvestigation to reach out to the other fraudsters, including verted to many other accounts from the accounts of PT the boss of this gang, EOW Constructions & Suppliers and sources said.

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The Congress Monday alleged that the BJP was responsible for the 'essurfaced." cape' of former prime minister H D Deve Gowda's grandson

Prajwal Revanna against whom a 'sexual harassment' case has been registered. Revanna is the BJP-JD(S) alliance candidate from the Hassan Lok Sabha constituency in Karnataka, where voting was

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

tions April 26.

held in the second phase of elec-

Senior Congress leader Ajoy Kumar claimed, "Revanna left India shortly after several sex scandal videos recorded by him

"He has recorded obscene videos. Such an accused has been allowed to leave the country freely. The BJP is responsible for it. The prime minister is also responsible for the escape of Revanna," the Congress leader in-charge of Odisha alleged.

He mocked the BJP. stating that it should be called 'Balatkari Janata Party' as the saffron camp was supporting a rapist.

responsible for Revanna's escape: Cong

The JD(S) has decided to suspend Revanna over sexual abuse allegations, party chief HD Kumaraswamy said Monday as the Congress and others tore into the BJP over the issue and its alliance with the southern party.

complaint from a woman, who

Armed man terrorises NZP officials

worked in their household.

lakh' "For the first time, the country has been witnessing a prime Police Sunday booked Prajwal minister, who is looking at all and his father - JD(S) MLA and crimes from the party angle. former minister HD Revanna -The PM has a soft corner towards BJP leaders, irrespective for sexual harassment and criminal intimidation based on a of the accusation of heinous

Congress leader claimed.

As per official data, crimes

against women have increased

by 50 per cent during the NDA

regime, Kumar claimed, adding

that the number of such cases

has 'risen from 3 lakh to 4.45

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NOTIFICATION OUT FOR 3RD VARIATION PHASE OF ELECTIONS MAY 25 22643.40 1 223.45 **1** ₹0.13 AGENCIES **1** ₹0.21

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has issued a notification for the third phase elections in the state, where six Lok Sabha and 42 Assembly seats will go to polls May 25, official

The CEO has received 2,143 cases of violation of model code of conduct from the 6 Lok Sabha and 42 Assembly constituencies, out of

voters, and 1,288 transgenders, will exercise their franchise in the third phase polling (which coincides with the sixth phase at the national level).

Among the voters, 2.35,764 are in the age group of 18 to 19, while 18,42,816 are in the age group of 20 to 29, who will ex-



rectors after threatening them with a sharp weapon.

crimes against them," the

Sources said the terrified staff at the office locked themselves in their chambers as the miscreant hurled abuses and went on a rampage.

On being informed, Nandankanan police reached the place. However, by that time the miscreant had made good his escape. The police collected CCTV footage and are making efforts to identify the

Meanwhile, it is leant that the

Sources claimed that the in-

cident could be the fallout of

the favouritism practiced by

some officials in the posting of

employees to appease local

heavyweights in the transfor-

mation work of NZP into a

hoodlum is well known to some

staff and rangers of NZP.

miscreant.



WEATHER	2	
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	41.3℃	42.5°(
Min Temp	27.9°C	27.0°C
Humidity	69%	77%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
FORECAST		
Heatwave to severe heatwave condition	E	S

sources said, Monday.

According to the notification, the last date for filing nominations is May 6, and scrutiny of the nominations will be conducted May 7. The last date for withdrawal of nominations is slated for May 9.

The six Lok Sabha seats going to polls in the third phase in the state are Sambalpur, Keonjhar, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Puri, and Bhubaneswar. Alongside, 42

which 2,128 have been disposed off

Assembly seats spread over 13 districts in the state will also go to polls May 25.

According to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) here, a total of 94,41,797 electorates, comprising 48,26,375 male voters, 46,14,134 female ercise their franchise.

The polling will be held in 10,515 booths, of which 36 are described as 'auxiliary booths' where the voters are more than 1.500.

The CEO office sources said it has received 2,143 cases of violation of model code of conduct from the six Lok Sabha and 42 Assembly constituencies, out of which 2,128 have been disposed off.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Barang, April 29: An unidentified armed miscreant unleashed terror for over 30 minutes at the office of the Deputy Director of Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) here, Monday.

Though no one was injured in

the incident the miscreant fled after causing extensive damage to furniture and computers in the office

According to sources, at around 4pm, the unidentified man, said to be from a nearby village, barged into the Deputy Director's office. He allegedly roughed up two assistant di-

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Dinosaurs not as intelligent as monkeys

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: Dinosaurs were 'more like smart giant crocodiles' but not as intelligent as monkeys as an earlier study had found, according to new research. In a study published in January 2023, neuroscientist author Suzana and Herculano-Houzel of Vanderbilt University, US, had said that brains of theropod dinosaurs, a species of which is T. rex, had neurons comparable to those in the brains of monkeys and baboons.

Dinosaurs like T. rex, or Tyrannosaurus rex, had an exceptionally high number of neurons, "which would make these animals not only giant but also long-lived and endowed with flexible cognition, and thus even more magnificent predators than previously thought,' the author

Findings contradict earlier study which claimed theropod dinosaurs, a species of which is T. rex, had neurons comparable to those in the brains of monkeys and baboons

wrote in the study published in the Journal of Comparative Neurology. In the latest research, an in-

ternational team of palaeontologists, behavioural scientists and neurologists re-examined the brains of dinosaurs, including T. rex, and found them to behave

Naish from the

School of

more like reptiles. They were more like 'smart giant crocodiles,' according to study author Darren

ron counts, and showed that gauging the intelligence of a species based on neuron count estimates is not reliable. The findings are published in The Anatomical Record jour-

nal "Neuron counts are not good predictors of cognitive performance, and using them to predict intelligence in longextinct species can lead to highly mis-

leading interpretations," said study author Ornella Bertrand

from

Biological Sciences, University of Southampton, UK The team found that the ze of the dinosaur brains had been overestimated, along with neu-

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain. The research follows along the lines of decades of analysis in which palaeontologists and biologists have exam-

ined dinosaur brain size and anatomy, and used these data to infer behaviour and lifestyle, the authors said.

Information on dinosaur brains comes from mineral fillings of the brain cavity, termed endocasts, as well as the shapes of the cavities themselves, they said.

"We argue that it's not good practice to predict intelligence in extinct species when neuron counts reconstructed from endocasts are all we have to go on," said lead researcher Kai Caspar from Heinrich Heine University, Germany.

They said that to reliably reconstruct the biology of long-extinct species, researchers should look at multiple lines of evidence, including skeletal anatomy, bone histology (study of the microscopic structure of tissues) and the behaviour of living

relatives and trace fossils.

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downtown

Provide 1.56cr mosquito nets, state urges Centre

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The Odisha government has requested the Centre to provide 1.56 crore Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLINs) to curb malaria cases in the state.

OrissaPOST

TUESDAY | APRIL 30 | 2024 | BHUBANESWAR

Health and Family Welfare Minister Niranjan Pujari Monday wrote a letter to Union Health Minister Mansukh L Mandaviya, in this regard.

Pujari highlighted that the Centre had provided 1.56 crore LLINs to th state in 2020-21, effectively preventing malaria infections among highly vulnerable populations. The replacement of these nets,

scheduled for 2023, has been delayed by nearly a year, leaving the state susceptible to a surge in malaria cases, he said.

Pujari urged the Central government to promptly supply the LLINs to prevent further escalation of malaria cases.

According to the National Centre for Vector Borne Diseases Control (NCVBDC), the state recorded the highest number of malaria cases in 2023 among all states with 41,971 cases.

It was followed by Chhattisgarh (31,713), Jharkhand (31,140), West Bengal (26,493), Tripura (22,412), Mizoram (17,991), Maharashtra (16,164) and Uttar Pradesh (13,585).

BMC MARATHON FOR



At least five districts -Rayagada. Kalahandi, Malkangiri, Koraput and Kandhamal recorded maximum cases fuelling the numbers in the state. The districts are among nine where targeted interventions were made to achieve malaria elimination by 2030.

The highest 9,925 cases were reported in Rayagada followed by 7,543 in Kalahandi, 7,007 in Koraput, 5,062 in Kandhamal and 3,888 in Malkangiri. The annual parasite index (API) that had come down to 0.52 in 2022, again shot up to 0.93 and it was more than four in five districts. The API was over 10 in Rayagada, 6.9 in Kandhamal, 6.3 in Malkangiri, 5.07 in Koraput and 4.7 in Kalahandi.

Health experts working in malaria-prone areas of the state attributed the alarming rise in cases to drop in guard and behavioural changes of local pop-

Bhubaneswar, April 29: O'Brain, one of the leading com-

merce coaching centres in the

City at Rasulgarh here suc-

cessfully completed 25 years of

cum-Founder, Saroj Kumar

Biswal launched the 'Commerce

online classes' through digital stu-

dio for Plus II (CHSC / CBSE) and

Plus III students. The facility

will help students all over the

state to fulfill their dreams, a

statement issued by the coach-

financially sound as well as

weaker backgrounds to study

This will enable students from

On this occasion, Director-

service recently.

ing centre stated

According to the National Centre for **Vector Borne Diseases** Control (NCVBDC), the state recorded the highest number of malaria cases in 2023 among all states with 41,971 cases

ulace towards routine practices suggested by health teams. The insecticide effect in

LLINs lasts up to three years or 20 washes. The nets distributed in the malaria-prone districts in 2019 needed to be replaced by the end of 2022. Though more than a year has lapsed, the nets are yet to be replaced. In many villages, the old nets have been damaged and people in last summer did not use the nets at all citing sweltering weather conditions leading to rise in malaria cases," said a health staff.

Once a high prevalence state with around 3.23 lakh malaria cases in 2017, the state had seen an 80 per cent decline since 2018 due to large-scale distribution of LLINs and Durgama Anchalare Malaria Nirakaran (DAMaN), a multi-component malaria intervention in hard-to-reach villages, drawing appreciation from World Health Organisation (WHO).



POLL MEASURES: Police personnel conducting search of a vehicle as part of a routine exercise ahead of the elections at Begunia in Khurda district, Monday

ITI Bhub to have 'School of Welding Excellence'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 29: In a significant step towards fostering education and advancing skill development, the Directorate of Technical Education & Training (DTET), in collaboration with Thyssenkrupp, has announced the setting up of the 'Thyssenkrupp School of Welding Excellence' at Government Industrial Training Institute (ITI), Bhubaneswar Monday.

In this regard, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by DTET director Reghu G and Thyssenkrupp assistant manager (CSR) Pooja Jorhar, in the presence of ITI Bhubaneswar principal Jeetamitra Satpathy, Thyssenkrupp Senior Executive Subhranshu Pal, and



welding.

Thyssenkrupp Industries Private Limited senior manager Judishthir Behera.

The initiative, aimed at promoting education and creating employment opportunities, underscores the commitment of both parties to empower individuals through enhanced welding skills. The School of Welding

gap between education and industry requirements. By offering specialized training in welding, we aim to empower the youth with practical skills that are in high demand in today's iob market.

"Through this initiative, we aim to empower individuals with the necessary skills to succeed in the welding industry while simultaneously fostering eco-nomic growth," a Thyssenkrupp official said.

Thyssenkrupp is a German industrial engineering and steel production multinational conglomerate. It is a leading global manufacturer of steel, construction materials, automotive parts and assemblies, and industrial and mechanical services.

Affordable online **VOTERS' AWARENESS** classes by O'Brain POST NEWS NETWORK



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), in collaboration with the Khurda district administration is organizing a marathon under 'Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP)' programme to increase the awareness amongst voters of the Capital City.

The marathon will be flagged off at Infocity Junction 6am today (April 30). It will culmi-



officer, and Subhasini Bal. International Human Rights officer, were present at the event as the chief guest and guest of honour, respectively.

Biswal informed that most of the alumni of O'brain have successfully got jobs in multi-national companies (MNCs) and financial institutions across the country

Anti-quackery cells to identify fake doctors

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar; April 29: In a bid to curb the menace of fake doctors who are exploiting the people, mostly in inaccessible tribal pockets, a decision was taken at a meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena to constitute district-level anti-quackery cells to identify and crack down on these thugs.

The cell members include representatives of the district Collector and superintendent of police (SP), chief district medical officer (CDMO) and public health officer (PHO), nominee of district legal services authority and representative of Indian Medical Association (IMA).

Family Welfare (H&FW) department Odisha will take appropriate action, said sources.

The district level anti-quackery cells will sit as and when any complaint/information regarding fake doctors from any source - individual, electronic/print media, social media or caller - is received, before the matter is disposed of. The cells will send quarterly reports of such cases and action taken thereon to the H&FW department.

Notably, following the High Court order, the state government had decided to crack down on fake doctors or allopathic



class training and certification

programmes, equipping students

with the knowledge and expertise

required to excel in the field of

Speaking on the occasion, G

Reghu said, "This collabora-

tion marks a significant mile-

stone in our efforts to bridge the

December 21, 2022 and June 22, 2023, and latest February 27 this year directing the Health Secretary to come with a comprehensive plan under which survey will be conducted to ascertain that every allopathic doctor practicing in Odisha possesses proper and relevant qualification

As per the decision taken in the meeting, a surveillance mechanism will be put in place to identify fake doctors.

Verified database regarding registration of allopathic practitioners in the state will be uploaded on Odisha Council of Medical Registration (OCMR) website by the Registrar of OCMR for public access.

This will enable the public at ____ large to have a means for verifying the genuineness of doctors, officials said.

Following the order of the Chief Secretary, the data of maximum number of doctors have

nate at Patia Junction.

Chief Secretary Pradeep Jena. state Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Nikunj Dhal, BMC Commissioner Rajesh Pravakar Patil, Collector cum DM Khurda Chanchal Rana and Swachha brand ambassador of BMC Olympian Anuradha Biswal will attend the event. All BMC officials will also take part in the programme. More than three hundred participants are likely to join the marathon.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I, Madhulika Panda, D/o -Sushil Jha, W/o - Manoj Kumar Panda resident of Plot No. 130, Co-Operative Colony, Bokaro Steel City, Bokaro, Jharkhand, Pin -827001, presently residing at Flat No. 720, Tower 5, Royal Lagoon, Nandankanan Road, Dist -Khorda, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Pin - 751024, declare by this affidavit No. CF 46, Dtd. - 08.04.2024 that now onwards I shall be known as Madhulika Jha for all future purposes.

commerce courses right from their homes by paying a paltry ₹200 per month. This will also allay the need to take any extra coaching or tuitions for pursuing their commerce courses. Chittaranjan Shastri, a for-

mer Central Excise and Customs

and abroad. That apart, the centre has produced 65 chartered accountants (CAs), 38 certified management accountants (CMAs), eight Company Secretaries (CS), five University gold medalists, 42 Plus II toppers and five Plus III toppers, so far.

The anti-quackery cell in every district will send quarterly reports on fake doctors, if any, following which the Health and practitioners serving in different parts of the state.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting held under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary here.

According to sources, the HC had issued orders on fake doctors

It also directed the H&FW department to file an affidavit on whether any surveillance mechanism to identify the fake doctors is in vogue in the state; if not, whether the state is contemplating to introduce any such mechanism.

been uploaded on the portal. One can search a doctor's name on the website and find his/her genuineness. If some doctor's name is not there, the patient can lodge complaints with the concerned authority for further action at their end, they said.

Exploring the timeless allure of heritage Indian clothing

ndia's cultural diversity is vividly reflected in its traditional attire, showcasing a myriad of styles, colours and techniques. From the opulent ghagra choli of Rajasthan to the refined grace of Kerala's Kasavu sarees, each garment encapsulates centuries of tradition and craftsmanship.

Though related, Traditional and modern wear represent divergent approaches to Indian fashion. Traditional wear reveres the past, preserving ancient techniques and motifs with meticulous care, while modern wear embraces innovation and global influences, reinterpreting classic styles for contemporary tastes. Despite their differences, both categories contribute to India's

vibrant sartorial landscape, offering a tapestry of options for self-expression and cultural celebration. Together, they form a dynamic fusion of heritage and modernity, embodying the enduring allure of India's rich cultural heritage in the ever-evolving world of fashion.

Traditional wear in India is more than just clothing; it is a tangible expression of the country's rich cultural heritage and identity. Spanning across regions and communities, traditional attire serves as a unifying force, transcending geographical boundaries to embody the essence of pan-Indian culture.

Whether adorned with the intricate embroideries of Banarasi sarees or the reflective brilliance of Rajasthani lehengas, each garment tells a story of craftsmanship and tradition passed down through generations. These garments are not mere fabric; they are living testaments to India's historical legacy, carrying within them the artistry and skill of centuries-old techniques.

From the vibrant hues of Gujarat's Bandhani to the graceful drapes of South India's



Kanjeevaram sarees, traditional wear celebrates the diversity of Indian craftsmanship while preserving the cultural nuances that make each region unique.

What distinguishes traditional wear in India is its unwavering commitment to authenticity. These garments act as guardians of cultural heritage, carefully conserving ancient techniques and motifs originating from eras long past. From the intricate handloom textiles of Varanasi to the elaborate weaving traditions of Kanchipuram, traditional wear pays homage to the craftsmanship of vestervears with unparalleled precision.

In an era marked by rapid modernisation, traditional wear serves as a timeless link to the past, offering a sense of continuity in an ever-changing world. It embodies a profound reverence for heritage, not merely as clothing but as tangible embodiments of cultural identity and

legacy. The revival of ancient techniques and motifs in modern fashion highlights the lasting significance of traditional wear, demonstrating that amid the pursuit of innovation, the treasures of history continue to serve as invaluable wellsprings of inspiration and admiration.

Modern wear in India epitomises innovation and adaptability, charting a bold new course in the realm of fashion. Unlike traditional wear, which draws inspiration from the past, modern wear embraces contemporary aesthetics and global influences, transcending cultural boundaries to create a fusion of styles. It thrives on pushing limits, experimenting with unconventional silhouettes and materials to redefine traditional motifs in refreshing ways.

From the fusion of Eastern and Western elements in couture to the avant-garde designs that defy categorization, modern wear embodies a spirit of experimentation and individuality. It reflects a dynamic and ever-evolving landscape, where designers constantly seek to anticipate and respond to shifting tastes and trends. In a world characterized by rapid change, modern wear serves as a mirror of society's evolving values and aspirations, celebrating diversity, creativity, and the limitless possibilities of self-expression.

A blend of traditional and modern wear in India complements each other, creating a vibrant tapestry of fashion that celebrates both heritage and innovation. While traditional wear preserves cultural authenticity, modern wear provides a platform for self-expression and liberation from conventional norms. Together, they offer diverse avenues for individuals to express their identity, bridging the gap between tradition and contemporary style.

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SENSITISATION DRIVE: Government officials take part in a voter awareness rally organised by Rasulpur block office at Kuakhia Bazaar in Jajpur district, Monday

Fire breaks out at BOI zonal office in Baripada; 3 injured

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Baripada, April 29: Three persons were injured after a fire broke out at the zonal office building of a public sector bank in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district on Monday, an official said.

They were rescued from the smoke-filled three-storey office building in Baripada, but they were in unconscious condition at that time, he said.

The injured were admitted to PRM Medical College and Hospital here and their condition is stated to be stable, the official said, adding that others who were in the office came out safely Two fire tenders were pressed

into service to douse the blaze, first spotted around 1 pm, assistant fire and emergency serv-



ices officer Bhabendra Nath Dey said. It was suspected that the fire broke out at the Bank of India's zonal office canteen, located on the third floor of the building, he said

It took almost three hours to douse the blaze, the official said,

adding that an investigation has been initiated and the exact cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained.

Firefighters faced difficulties in conducting the operation as thick smoke engulfed the office building, he added.

Poultry biz goes haywire in Kendrapara

BIG COMPANIES CALL THE SHOTS IN **POULTRY BUSINESS** AS FARMERS EARN PEANUTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, April 29: With the lone chick producing farm lo cated inside the veterinary hospital here lying closed for the last 12 years, poultry business in the district has slipped into the hands of big companies.

These big companies, who own or control everything except the farms, call the shots in the poultry business. Poultry meat is sold around ₹220-350 per kg in hundreds of shops spread across the district. However, poultry farmers have failed to make any gain as they earn only peanuts from the business due to large scale interference of big companies. Despite the demand for poultry meat witnessing a sharp rise in the state, the farmers here have failed to reap any benefit.

In the absence of administrative control, the farmers have no way other than depending



on these big companies for their every link of a survival. Owing to administraproduct's supply tive apathy and lack of foresight, chain from start an incubator purchased at a cost to finish. This of ₹11 lakh and a generator to has happened as maintain uninterrupted power the state governsupply have been gathering dust ment has failed to with no effort being made for regulate the big comrevival of the defunct chick propanies Sources said the state govducing centre established at an

ernment is providing loans to investment over ₹1 crore. women self-help groups (WSHGs) As much as 97 per cent of the poultry meat consumed by peoand youths to run poultry farms. ple is produced by a farmer under Loans are provided through contract with a big company. banks under its ambitious These poultry farmers are the last Mission Shakti scheme. This independent link in the comhas encouraged women and pany-owned supply chain. In youths to start poultry busithis scenario, the company owns nesses

However, poultry farmers have been trapped by these big companies who are supplying them poultry feeds, chicks and medicines. As a result the farmers, instead of making profits, are facing losses. The situation has remained unchanged despite a rise in price of poultry meat all over the state. This has disappointed those who have started poultry farms to earn a livelihood. Poultry farmers Kalia Samantaray of Indupur,

No

the lone chick

for the last 12

years

Subhasis Jena of Kansar village, Ramakant Mallick of made for revival of

Pakhar village and Sheik Hassan of producing centre in the Barimula vildistrict lying defunct lage alleged that the state government has no role in regulating the market price of poul-

try products leaving the rein in the hands of the big companies. It is alleged that big traders from Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and only a couple of local firms have monopolized the poultry trade in the state.

The companies sign a contract with the independent farmers while the latter spend only

on construction of farms, houses water and power supply and manpower required to run a farm. In exchange they supply farmers with poultry feeds, chicks and medicines on time. After raising the chicks, the farmers get only ₹3-5 per kg of poultry meat irrespective of the market price at that time as they cannot sell their products in the market directly

Company employees collect the fully-grown chicken and sell them both outside and inside the state. These companies charge exorbitant prices for their products if the farmers are unwilling to sign an agreement with them. In such a scenario, poultry farmers have asked the state government to intervene and bail them out of this situation.

When contacted, Chief District Veterinary Officer (CDVO) Deepti Mohapatra said that the state government has launched various schemes providing subsidy for the benefit of the poultry farmers. They can enroll in these schemes and reap the benefit. However, no legal action can be taken as the farmers are entering into contracts with these big companies. However, efforts are on to revive the chick producing centre, she added

Mahua flowers worth ₹1 crore seized; 5 held



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 29: The district Excise enforcement squad and mobile unit nabbed five persons along with seizure of five vehicles loaded with huge quantities of Mahua flower worth over ₹1 crore during a raid at Banpar village under Town police limits in this district, Monday.

The Excise personnel arrested three drivers and two helpers of the seized vehicles and detained the vehicle owners for investigation.

The accused persons were identified as Ramjee Kuanwar of Bihar, Gura Munda of Dhrupada village, Giridhari Naik of Janardanpur, Raja Munda of Judiasahi under Town police limits and Sabyasachi Munda of Katha Karanjia under Sadar police limits. Two of them on board the vehicles fled the scene during the raid, police officials said. As per the direction of Keonjhar

Excise Superintendent Pradipta Kumar Das, a raid was conducted with participation of all staff.

District mobile unit official Chandan Kumar Mandal said, "The vehicles were transporting Mahua flowers from Raipur area to East Singhbhum in neighbouring Jharkhand. However they were caught red-handed while shifting the stock at Banpar village." More than 280 quintal Mahua flowers along with a 16wheeler truck and four Bolero pick-up vans were seized dur ing the raid, he added.

A total of five persons including three drivers were arrested and two vans seized, while two others escaped during the raid. The owners of the vehicles have been detained for further investigation to identify their involvement in this illegal trade. The raid was conducted in view of the upcoming general elections in the state.

NIT R felicitates alumni who cracked UPSC-CSE Ganja worth ₹3 crore seized; 2 arrested ←

Rourkela, April 29: NIT Rourkela

POST NEWS NETWORK



echelons in the nation." "NIT Rourkela is the place where y childhood dream concretised

Malkangiri: Kalimela police seized 350 kg gania worth ₹3 crore and arrested two persons Sunday night while patrolling near Kenduguda village under Kurmanur panchayat in this district. Acting on a tip-off about ganja smuggling in the forest, Kalimela police conducted a raid and arrested two smugglers while they were preparing to smuggle the contraband hidden in sacks outside the state. The approximate cost of the seized contraband would be over $\overline{\mathbf{x}}$ crore, said the police. However, identity of the accused duo has not yet been ascertained. Kalimela police after registering a case started an investigation in this regard. Police are currently interrogating the accused and after completion of investigation, the names and addresses of the accused will be shared, police informed.

Monday felicitated five of its illustrious alumni who made it to the UPSC Civil Services Examination merit list in a packed Bhubaneswar Behera Auditorium on its campus here

Five former students of the premier institute have succeeded in the UPSC CSE for 2023, the result of which was declared April 16. The alumni who have qualified the prestigious exam are Animesh Pradhan (AIR 2), Computer Science and Engineering, 2021; Padmanav Mishra (AIR 176), Electrical Engineering, 2018; Biswajit Panda (AIR 343), Electrical Engineering, 2016; Anushka Sarkar, (AIR 426), MA in Development Studies, 2019 at Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Kallul Hazarika (AIR 992), Mechanical Engineering, 2016 batch.

The event commenced with Dean Himanshu Bhushan Sahu ex-

tending a warm welcome to all the successful candidates. On this occasion, K. Umamaheshwar Rao, Director, NIT Rourkela said, "These outstanding individuals have not only made their alma mater proud but also set a shining example for current and future students of NIT Rourkela to aspire for greatness and make meaningful contributions in any field they want to work. I thank all of them for making all of us elevated by their achievements.

Thanking NIT Rourkela, second topper Animesh said, "I am extremely thankful to the NIT Rourkela fraternity for giving me

the opportunity to share my happiness and gratitude. I owe a lot of my success to NIT Rourkela for the kind of ecosystem it has. And to the budding aspirants, I would like to emphasise that this won't be an easy ride."

Padmanav Mishra, a local youth from Chhend Colony, said, "The diversity of this service is unparalleled and it gives the ability to touch the lives of thousands of people. I feel honoured for all the wishes and blessings from my alma mater. Holding high the name of NITR brings me great happiness and I believe that in the coming years, our institute will ascend to the highest

as the place shaped my personality to a great extent with its supportive teachers, inspiring friends, and conducive atmosphere serving as constant motivators. Engaging in co-curricular and extracurricular activities further enriched my journey. To the younger students at NIT Rourkela, I offer this advice: clarity of purpose is essential," said Biswajit Panda.

Anushka Sarkar, remembering her days here, said she remained in touch with her department. "It was in NIT Rourkela that I stayed away from home for the first time. The first step of my UPSC journey took shape here when my classmate first told me about the exam," she added. Kasturi Panda, IAS (Alumni, B.Tech 2019) who got AIR-67 in UPSC CSE (2022) also shared a message to the aspirants of NITR as she could not attend the programme due to an urgent assignment.

PRESS RELEASE ELECTION OBSERVERS CONTACT DETAILS OF KEONJHAR DISTRICT

No.D-18: Any complaints or grievances relating to Simultaneous General Election, 2024 pertaining the 04-Keonjhar(ST) and 20-Telkoi(ST) AC,21-Ghasipura AC, 22-Anandapur(SC) AC, 23-Patna (ST) AC,24-Keonjhar (ST) AC, 25-Champua AC 30-Karanjia(ST) AC, Mayurbhanj may be lodged to the below mentioned

SI. No.	Name of the Observer	Observer for PC/AC	Contact No./ Whatsapp No.	Email ID	Address
1	Rakesh Kumar Das, IRS(R-19246)	04-Keonjhar(ST) PC	7008257215	rakesh.k.das@income tax.gov.in	Room No. 01 Circuit house, Keonjhar
2	Raj Kamal Ranjan, IA & AS (O-35171)	20-Telkoi(ST) AC, 21-Ghasipura AC, 22-Anandapur(SC) AC 30-Karanjia(ST) AC Mayurbhanj	7978352192	ranjanrk@cag.gov.in	Room No. 07 Circuit house Keonjhar
3	Indana Ashok Kumar, IRS(C&CE) (R-35580)	23-Patna(ST) AC, 24-Keonjhar (ST) AC, 25-Champua AC	7978090413	ashok.indana@gov.in	Room No. 06 Circuit house Keonjhar
	R-12062/11/0001/242	-		Sd./-Dt.29.04.3 rict Election Officer & C	

One killed in dynamite blast

Keonjhar: A youth was killed in explosion after he accidentally touched a dynamite set up by miscreants to catch fish from Karo river under Joda block in this district, late Sunday night. The deceased was identified as Mangua Duta (24), son of Mohana Duta from Dubulita village under Bolani police limits in the district. According to the sources, Mohana went to the Karo river Sunday noon for a bath where he unknowingly touched a dynamite set up by some miscreants to catch fish. The dynamite suddenly exploded injuring him critically. In the impact of the blast, his left hand was severed entirely off his body. Family members immediately rushed him to the district headquarters hospital where he succumbed during treatment, late Sunday night. Bolani police arrived at the hospital, launched an investigation after registration of a case.

Body found on railway track

Berhampur: The Government Railway Police (GRP) here recovered the body of a 34-year-old man from the railway tracks adjacent to the jail near Berhampur Railway Station Sunday night. Police found an Aadhaar card and a Voter ID from the body belonging to the deceased identified as Rabindra Dakua, a resident of Lanjia village under Sadar police limits.



Police registered a case (35/24) of unnatural death and after post-mortem handed over the body to Tarini Dakua, the deceased's brother. Monday, Rabindra had left home without informing anybody Sunday morning. However, when he did not return home till evening, his brother launched a frantic search but was unable to find him. After preliminary investigation. police suspect that Rabindra, who was reportedly suffering from depression, might have died after jumping in front of the train.

YOUTH SENT TO JAIL FOR RAPING MINOR

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, April 29: Kendrapara Town police arrested a 24-year-old youth on charge of raping an eight-year-old fellow village girl studying in Class III at a local primary school.

The accused, identified as Laxman Bhoi, was produced before the Additional Sessions Judge-cum-Special Judge, POCSO Court Monday, which remanded him into jail custody.

Kendrapara Town police station IIC Dillip Sahu said while the victim was playing near her house, the accused, finding her alone, raped the minor girl.

As the girl screamed and cried, the accused fled the spot but threatened the minor victim not to disclose the matter to anybody

The victim's mother later lodged an FIR with Kendrapara Town police station.

Acting on the FIR, the police registered a case under Section 376(AB) of the IPC and Section 6 of the POCSO Act and arrested the accused. The police recorded the victim's statement under Section 161 of CrPC and sent both the accused and victim for medical examination.



POSSESSION NOTICE [Rule-8(1)] of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of India, Udala Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notices calling upon the Borrower Mortgagor in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Mortgagor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules The Borrower/Mortgagor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properies and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India, Udala Branch for an amount mentioned below with interest 8 expenses thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

UDALA BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrower/Mortgagor	Liabilities due as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession	Description of the Immovable Property
Borrower/Mortgagor: Mr. Bikartan Behera, S/o.: Ram Chandra Behera, At/ PO.: Radho, Udala, Dist.: Mayurbhanj, PIN-757041	₹17,85,890.68 + interest & expenses thereon	09.02.2024 / 26.04.2024 Kissam: Gharabari, stan	Equitable Mortgage of Land situated at Mouza: Radho, Tahasil: Udala, Khata No.: 1093/168 bearing Plot No.: 1512/3855, Area: Ac. 0.07 Dec., ding in the name of Mr. Bikartan Behera .
· · · · ·	+ interest & expenses thereon Ac. 0.02 Dec., F	Plot No.: 135/775, Area:	Equitable Mortgage of Land situated at Mouza: Udala Town Unit No.: 11, Tahasil/P.S.: Udala, Khata No.: 92/324 bearing Plot No.: 134/774, Area: Ac. 0.04 Dec., Total 1 Khata & 2 nos of Plot with
Total Area: Ac.0.06 Dec., Kissam: Gha	rabari, standing i	n the name of Mr. Ghana	a Shyam Sethy.
Borrower/Mortgagor: Mrs. Sunita Panda, W/o.: Ashit Kumar Behera, At: Udala, Ward No.: 6, PO./P.S.: Udala, Tahasil: Udala No.: 295, Dist.: Mayurbhanj, PIN-757041	₹25,93,183.71 + interest & expenses thereon Udala No.: 96, ⊺		Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building situated over Khata No.: 65, Plot No.: 2608/2704, Area: Ac.0.20 Dec., Kissam: Gharabari, Mouza: Nijkainsari, P.S.: tanding in the name of Mrs. Sunita Panda
Place: Baripada, Date: 29.04.2024			Authorised Officer, Bank of India





fatal to the soul.

tries following the independent review.

quered by Israel.

military aid to Israel.

no end to it.

lealousy is a dead poison that is

THE MOTHER

Calling The Bluff

The ruse of Israel that the UN agency for Palestinian refugees

(UNRWA) harboured 12 Palestinians working for Hamas that

launched the attack on Israel 7 October, 2023, has fallen flat. An

independent group of experts headed by former French Foreign

Minister Catherine Colonna has nailed the lie in its report released re-

cently. The importance of this revelation lies in the fact that it has ex-

posed the hollowness and insensitivity of countries, including the US,

which used the unsubstantiated allegation by Israeli Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu as an alibi for stopping their financial contributions

to the UN agency crippling its functioning. An immediate fallout of the

report is the announcement on 26 April by Germany and a few other

countries to resume aid to the UN agency. It is indeed a welcome de-

velopment that UNRWA has won back support from some donor coun-

employees in Gaza were accused by Israel of involvement in the mas-

sacre of Israeli civilians on 7 October, 2023 during the assault by Hamas

militiamen that triggered the current war. What followed this devel-

opment was stunning indeed. For, based solely on this allegation, in-

ternational donors starting with the US withdrew their donations to

the UN agency. France, however, took a more cautious stand and con-

tinued its aid under certain conditions. The injustice done to the hap-

less Palestinians was that some supposed individual errors were used

to condemn an entire agency, whose finances have always been precarious.

Netanyahu seized the opportunity to accuse UNRWA of being "to-

tally infiltrated with Hamas" and called for its abolition. It gave him

an excuse to launch a new attack on an institution created in December

1949 after the first of the Israeli-Arab wars, which led to the exodus of

tens of thousands of Palestinians driven from the territories con-

Israel has always opposed the flow of aid and other support systems

for the Palestinian refugees displaced from their homes following the

Israeli-Arab wars of 1948-1949 and 1967. The number of these refugees

now runs into several millions. However, the Israeli strategy got jolted

by the report published by the group of independent experts which dis-

missed many of Israel's accusations. That the report is credible enough

can be gauged from the fact that it does admit there are problems of

political neutrality, but at the same time it found that UNRWA has more

mechanisms to ensure this neutrality than other UN agencies. It em-

phasised there is room for improvement of the functioning of the

Significantly, it also noted that Israel had not yet provided any proof

of its accusations. This only shows the international financial with-

drawals had been hasty, to say the least. It speaks volumes for the jus-

tification of the continuation of UNRWA that the report concluded the

agency remains "irreplaceable and indispensable." The irony is the US

has not only frozen its contribution until 2025, but granted massive new

At a time when Gaza has been facing multidimensional humanitarian

and even existential crisis for a long time, the attack on this agency seems

highly inappropriate. In the light of the report it emerges that there

is a much better way of responding to the questions and criticisms about

UNRWA than calling for its abolition as Israel is clamouring for. It is

time the international community urgently acts for finding a political

solution to the vexed problem instead of letting the war decide the issue.

While saying this, it is admitted that the world probably realizes that

the core of the Israel-Palestine problem is an issue that seems to have

UNRWA, but all the same it is "indispensable" to Palestinians.

On 26 January, the UN agency had stated that 12 of its 13,000 Palestinian

FOCUS INEOUALITY

A WORKABLE WEALTH TAX

ndia's problem is that it is under-taxed. This has been said several times, including in the Economic Survey published by the government, and by a former Finance Minister on the floor of the Parliament. What is referred to here is the low tax to GDP ratio and not the tax rates. The rates are quite high, with top individual marginal income tax rates touching 42%, and median GST at 18%. GST is an indirect tax paid by all whether rich or poor, on their consumption. Since it does not depend on the income of the taxpayer, it is inherently regressive. Not surprisingly, a much higher proportion of total GST collected comes from the lower half of the income distribution, highlighting its unfairness. We need both income and consumption taxes, but the rate on GST has to be much lower. And dependence on income tax has to increase, and it should be progressive and rates

increasing by income slab. Unfortunately, we give such a large exemption, that upto ₹7 lakh of annual income the tax burden is zero. This is almost four times the per capita income of the country. It is equivalent to saying that in America nobody will pay income tax below an annual income of a quarter million dollars. In fact, Americans start paving income tax for income as low as 5000 dollars, only one tenth of their per capita income. India certainly needs to widen the income tax net. We have only 7 income taxpayers for every 100 voters as per the Economic Survey

Along with a low tax to GDP ratio we have rising inequality. The latest report from the World Inequality Lab based on hundred years of data from 1922 till 2023 shows income and wealth inequality to be the highest ever. Fighting inequality is not the same as fighting poverty. The poverty ratio has been falling in India, but there are people still living dangerously close to the poverty line or just above it. One illness in the family can drive the entire family below the

Not surprisingly, a much higher proportion of total GST collected comes from the lower half of the income distribution, highlighting its unfairness

reasonable way to tax wealth?

Countries like Spain, Norway,

Switzerland and France have

some form of wealth tax. Even

Netherlands has a tax called

"Box-3" which is a tax on wealth.

i.e. by taxation of savings and in-

vestment. Of course, all these are

rich countries. And their fi-

nancial systems are highly

evolved, with evasion rather dif-

ficult. You can't say that India

is a poor or medium income

country, so it is premature to

talk about wealth tax. It has

among the highest number of

dollar billionaires in the world.

A small annual tax of say 0.1%

would surely not deter these

wealthy from wealth or em-

ployment creation or investing

in India. If there is capital flight

out of the country it is not be-

cause of wealth taxes. In any

case this is an empirical ques-

cannot be healthy for any democ-

racy. As it is we are trying con-

stantly to reduce the influence

of money power on elections and

governance. The principle of po-

litical and social equality of our

republic is in sharp contradic-

tion to rising economic inequal-

ity. That is why we need to find

ways to arrest worsening income

and wealth inequality. No modern

capitalist economy can be rid of

inequality. But it is like indus-

trial pollution. Modern life is im-

possible without some emissions.

But there comes a time when as

a society we say this is enough.

Otherwise, worsening inequal-

Unlimited wealth concentration

tion which must be tested.

poverty line. Hence, we have food security schemes such as free food grain for 80 crore Indians, i.e. nearly 65%, even though poverty rate is below 15%.

One of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations calls for reduction in inequality. On that count India must exert more. By making the income tax net wider and ensuring a lower indirect tax burden of GST and other sundry taxes. Most importantly inequality of opportunity (not outcomes) can be reduced by providing much higher quality and quantity levels of primary education and healthcare. But spending on these social priorities has been going down as a fraction of government budgets. This means we need more tax collection. What other heads are there? This is where the discussion of wealth tax comes in. Thomas Piketty claims that just by taxing the wealth of the richest two hundred people in the world, at a small rate, the world can generate hundreds of billion dollars for social spending. That same logic can be applied in India. Wealth is difficult to assess,

especially if kept in real estate. It is also notoriously difficult to discover since people have an incentive to hide it. There is tax evasion and dodging. The correlation between wealthy individuals and highest income taxpavers in India is not strong. How many of the Forbes billionaires are also the highest income taxpayers?

So, is there a workable and

ity leads to social instability, rise of gated communities, the threat of rising crime and ultimately investor flight. What is that stage when inequality becomes intolerable and excessive is for us to decide collectively.

India's macro savings are only half in instruments like stocks, bonds, insurance and bank deposits. The rest is in real estate or gold. Real estate valuations are revealed only when there is a transaction on which a stamp duty is imposed. Such transactions are rare and hence stamp duty collection is low at the state level from real estate. Thanks to digitisation and better triangulation, we have good data on financial savings. Hence it is possible to levy a wealth tax on just that part, above a threshold of say ₹100 crore. It could be as small as 0.1%. The purpose is not merely to raise fiscal resources. Many prominent rich people such as Narayan Murthy, Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, Nikhil Kamath Sir Richard Branson have all said that they welcome higher taxes. In the Financial Times, Ian Gregg, Chairman of Greggs, wrote an op-ed saving that wealthy should be taxed more, and trickle-down economics was not working. Are these wealthy people saying tax us more just to sound politically right, or out of genuine compassion? Maybe a bit of both, and also to save society from a worsening scenario, where fury is unleashed on the obscenely wealthy. In the UK it was estimated during COVID, that a one-off small tax on the wealthy would generate a quarter trillion pounds for the government Such is the scale of this potential fiscal gain. A workable wealth tax can use best practices from some of the dozen countries which implement it and start with a small rate applicable on disclosed financial assets alone. Taxing real estate can be kept as a domain of stamp duty for now, and taxing the ownership of gold is something for the future.

> The writer is a noted Pune-based economist. ©THE BILLION PRESS

Ajit Ranade

BETWEEN

WEALTHY

INCOME

STRONG

INDIVIDUALS

AND HIGHEST

TAXPAYERS IN

INDIA IS NOT

CORRELATION

THE

SPECTRUM INTERNATIONAL LAW

- Our mind is capable of passing beyond the dividing line we have drawn for it. Beyond the pairs of opposites of which the world consists, other, new insights begin. HERMANN HESSE
- The problem isn't that Johnny can't read. The problem isn't even that Johnny can't think. The problem is that Johnny doesn't know what thinking is; he confuses it with feeling. THOMAS SOWELL
- There are two kinds of people one can call reasonable: those who serve God with all their heart because they know him, and those

Who should decide if it's genocide?

n 15 April, some of the the rise of authoritarianism. Worse, these governments fre-situation or conflict, Given that

who seek him with all their heart because they do not know him BLAISE PASCAL

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

WISDOM CORNER

- **1789:** George Washington, the first president of the United States, was inaugurated this day in 1789 in Federal Hall in New York City, addressing his constituency on "the proceedings of a new and free government."
- **1897:** English physicist J.J. Thomson announced that he had discovered the electron, which helped revolutionize the knowledge of atomic structure; he later was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics.
- **1900:** U.S. President William McKinley signed the Hawaiian Organic Act, vhich made Hawaii a territory of the United States.
- **1916:** Germany and its World War I allies become the first countries to use daylight saving time (DST). The rationale was to save energy to aid the war effort. Other European countries, such as the United Kingdom, first introduced DST later that year.
- **1926:** Aviator Bessie Coleman, the first American woman to obtain an international pilot's license from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, died after her plane crashed during rehearsal for an aerial
- **1945:** German dictator Adolf Hitler and his wife, Eva Braun, committed suicide in a bunker in Berlin. A day before committing suicide, Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun marry. On the same day, U.S. troops liberated the Dachau concentration camp near Munich.
- **1975:** The South Vietnamese capital of Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City) fell to North Vietnamese troops during the Vietnam War. The fall of Saigon marks the end of the Vietnam War. As Communist forces gained control of Saigon, South Vietnamese President Duong Van Minh, who had only been in office for 2 days, surrendered unconditionally.

LOI

Crowded store

t was the day of the big sale. Rumours of the sale (and some advertising in the local paper) were the main reason for the long line that formed by 8:30, the store's opening time, in front of the store. A small man pushed his way to the front of the line, only to be pushed back, amid loud and colourful curses.



punched square in the iaw. and knocked around a bit, and then thrown to the end of the line again. As he got up the second time, he said to the person at the end of the line..

"That does it! If they hit me one more time, I won't open the store!"



David Alton & Helena Kennedy

THE LIBERAL RULES-BASED GLOBAL ORDER IS ARGUABLY FACING ITS MOST PERILOUS **MOMENT SINCE** THE END OF WORLD WAR II

etters

are most welcome to contribute letters

postal address/email ID. They may also

and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

Orissapost

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

send in their valuable comments, opinion

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST

(200 words), articles and

requested to send their contact numbers and full

columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are

world's leading international lawyers and crossparty UK parliamentarians sent a public letter to British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Foreign Secretary David Cameron, urging them to support the Genocide Determination Bill that is currently under discussion in the House of Lords. This legislation, introduced by one of us (Alton) in late 2022, aims to establish an independent and impartial mechanism for preventing mass atrocities and ensuring that the UK adheres to its obligations under the 1948 Genocide Convention.

In December 2023, the international community marked the Convention's 75th anniversary. But mass atrocities, including crimes against humanity and genocide, remain a prominent and seemingly permanent feature of our world. Between 2000 and 2020, at least 37 countries experienced or came perilously close to experiencing mass atrocities. The impact of such crimes extends beyond the immediate harm to their victims. They also lead to massive displacement. threaten international peace and security, and contribute to

which heightens the risk of future atrocities. Despite these risks, the UK and other major countries have long adhered to a flawed policy of delegating responsibility for identifying crimes against humanity to international courts and tribunals rather than taking direct action. But international law, especially the obligation to prevent genocide, requires that governments - not courts - regularly assess the risk of genocide and use "all means reasonably available" to prevent or stop it.

While international courts can assess wrongful actions only after they have occurred, political, economic, and legal interventions by the global community are necessary well before any harm is inflicted. Consequently, governments must take the lead. Regrettably, governments often attempt to shirk their international commitments by refusing to classify mass atrocities as "genocide." While they argue that such determinations should be left to international courts, they decline to engage with tribunals that could help prevent, stop, or punish such crimes.

quently maintain full and normal relations with countries accused of committing these offenses.

The Genocide Determination Bill aims to remove this impasse. Under the proposed law, if a UK foreign secretary did not acknowledge an ongoing genocide or a significant risk of one, a designated parliamentary committee could conduct its own investigation. Should the foreign secretary agree with the committee's findings, they may take appropriate action.

Conversely, if the foreign secretary rejects the committee's conclusions, a UK court would have the authority to issue a preliminary ruling on the existence or potential risk of genocide. Should the court affirm the occurrence or risk of genocide, the secretary would be required to outline the reasonable steps that the government intends to take and specify the referral mechanisms, such as international courts, that it plans to use. Thus, the threat of parliamentary action would compel the government to act.

It is important to note that this bill is not tied to any particular

labeling a mass atrocity as genocide or a crime against humanity is often politically and legally contentious, the bill authorises an impartial, independent, and apolitical determination by a UK court when all other options have been exhausted. While much more can be done, acknowledging the existing legal and political realities is a crucial first step. Without this bill or a similar measure, political expediency will continue to prevail, and mass atrocities are likely to become even more widespread.

The liberal rules-based global order is arguably facing its most perilous moment since the end of World War II, as long-established international laws are increasingly challenged and frequently violated. Against this backdrop, the Genocide Determination Bill provides the UK government with a historic opportunity to align its policies with the UK's commitments and stated values, thereby setting an example for other governments to follow.

> The writers are members of the House of Lords. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Ignominious act

Sir, This refers to "Ex-PM Deve Gowda's son, grandson booked for sexual harassment," Orissa POST, April 29. The sexual harassment case against the former PM's son former minister and legislator HD Revanna and grandson, the MP from Hasan Prajwal Revanna has grabbed the headlines and put the entire family in predicament. Seen as the biggest political family in Karnataka, the sexual accusations made by the maids against the family members holding public posts is ignominious and sure to extract political costs. Following the registration of the case after a private television telecast the matter, the Prajwal is speculated to have fled to France, ostensibly, to evade the police actions and buy time. The Deve Gowda's family has been facing several allegations for long by the common people and political opponents over land grabbing, intimidation, harassment and blackmail in and around Hasan district. Even, former PM's wife Chennamma survived a murderous acid attack by Lokesh, Deve Gowda's nephew in 2001. However, the politically weakened JD(S) seen as a family outfit would be hard hit with the serious sexual harassment case. But, the criminal justice system should ensure justice to the victims without budging to influences

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Mountainous chase

Sir, The electrifying chase executed by Punjab Kings against Kolkata Knight Riders at Eden Gardens in the ongoing IPL will go down in the annals of cricket history as a remarkable feat. Powered by a blend of audacious batting display and an unshakable selfbelief in their abilities. Puniab Kings batters have achieved the highest successful run chase ever in T20 cricket. The mountainous chase orchestrated with more than an over to spare proves that no target is safe in the T20 format of the game. Punjab Kings' extraordinary accomplishment of surpassing a daunting 262-run target not just transcended mere numbers, but epitomised the team's unwavering spirit and explosive batting prowess. If anything on Punjab Kings' stupefying win, the imposing Howrah bridge and the tidal waves of the majestic Hooghly river running beneath it, will have plenty of tales to offer for -(generations

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

101







ADR reveals wealth difference among Guj LS polls candidates

BJP's Jamnagar candidate Poonam richest in Guiarat Lok Sabha poll fray, while BSP contestant poorest

with ₹2k

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, April 29: Bharatiya Janata Party's Jamnagar Lok Sabha candidate Poonam Maadam is the richest in the poll fray in Gujarat with assets of Rs 147 crore, as per the Association

for Democratic Poonam Reforms (ADR). Maadam has seen At the other her declared assets rise end of the list is Bahujan from ₹42.7 crore in the 2019 LS polls to ₹147 crore in 2024, comprising movable assets of ₹60 crore and Chaudhari, immovable properties from Bardoli of ₹87 crore

(Scheduled Tribe) seat, who has declared assets of just Rs 2,000

Samaj

Partv's

Rekha

contesting

Of the 266 candidates fighting on 26 Lok Sabha seats in the state, 'crorepatis' (a crore is Rs 10 million) stand at 68, or 26 per cent of the total, the ADR said Monday.

Mukesh Dalal, the BJP candidate who won unopposed from Surat, has assets of more than Rs 17 crore, said ADR, an apolitical and nonprofit organisation working on electoral and political reforms.

Maadam, who is seeking reelection from the seat, has seen her declared assets rise from Rs 42.7 crore in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections to Rs 147 crore in 2024 comprising movable assets of Rs 60 crore and immovable properties of Rs 87 crore. These include assets of her own, her spouse and those of Hindu



Among the Union ministers contesting the elections from Gujarat, Parshottam Rupala is the richest having declared assets of more than ₹17 crore

Bharat Makwana from Ahmedabad (West), a seat reserved for Scheduled Castes, is the richest among the Congress candidates with assets of over ₹25 crore

The BJP leads with 24 'crorepati' candidates, followed by 21 from the Congress, and four belonging to the Bahujan Samaj Party

Samaj Party.

'crorepati' candidates, followed

by 21 from the Congress, and

four belonging to the Bahujan

candidates stands at over Rs 15

crore, while the figure is Rs 6

crore for the Congress. Of the 15

richest candidates in Gujarat,

eight are from BJP and seven

As per details shared by ADR,

19 out of 266 candidates are

women. Out of 266 candidates.

"Five out of 266 candidates

have doctorates, seven are illit-

erates, 14 are literates, 32 grad-

uates, 24 graduate profession-

als, 18 postgraduates and 14

diploma holders," as per ADR.

from Congress," said.

"The average assets of BJP

Undivided Family (HUF)

Among the Union ministers contesting the Lok Sabha elections from Gujarat, Parshottam Rupala has declared assets of more than Rs 17 crore, of which Rs 11.5 crore is movable and Rs 5.9 crore immovable, as per ADR. Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has declared total assets of more than Rs 7 crore, including Rs 3 crore movable and Rs 4.95 crore im-

movable ones. Gujarat BJP pres-16 are in the age group of 25-30, ident CR Paatil, who is seeking while 61 are in the 31-40 segre-election from Navsari, has ment, 88 between 41-50 years, 60 declared assets of over Rs 39 in the 51-60 bracket, 35 are between 61 and 70, and six are crore Among Congress candidates, above 70.

Bharat Makwana from Ahmedabad (West), a seat reserved for Scheduled Castes, is the richest with assets of over Rs 25 crore.

The BJP leads with 24

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Budaun (UP), April 29: BSP chief Mayawati Monday asked poor people not to feel obliged to vote for the BJP because of the free rations they get from the central government.

"Since some time, the BJPled centre has been providing small amounts of ration to the poor families and during elections, the BJP and RSS people go to villages and ask them to repay the debt by giving their votes to the BJP," Mayawati said while addressing an election rally here in support of her party nominees.

People should not get misguided by this as the free ration being provided is not coming from the pockets of Prime Minister Narendra Modi or BJP, but from the taxpayers' money, the BSP supremo said. 'You need not think that it has to be repaid. This is your own money.²

In November last year, the Centre extended the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) scheme to provide 5 kilogrammes of free foodgrains per month to 81.35



crore poor for another five years that would cost the exchequer about Rs 11.80 lakh crore. The scheme was last extended till December 31, 2023.

She also stressed that the problems of the poor people will end only by providing them employment, and said that if given a chance her party's government will pay attention to it.

Attacking the Samajwadi Party, Mayawati alleged that it has been seen mostly that where Muslims are more in majority,

SP gives tickets to Hindu and where Hindus are more in number, they field a Muslim candidate. "This is the character of the Samajwadi Party," she said.

In Budaun, which has a sizable Muslim population, the SP decided that the candidate will be that of "their own family, of their own caste", she alleged and stressed that there is no discrimination in her party over ticket allocation and proper representation is given to everyone.

Aam Aadmi Party candidate

Chaitar Vasava and independent

nominee Ismail Patel, both

contesting from Bharuch

seat, have the highest

number of 13 criminal

cases each against them

Attacking her political oppo-

BJP-led centre has been providing small amounts of ration to the poor families and during elections, the BJP and RSS people go to villages and ask them to repay the debt by giving their votes to the **BJP**

MAYAWATI BSP CHIEF

nents, the BSP president alleged that like the Congress, the BJP too has politicised the investigating agencies. She said in the last few years, the development and progress of Muslims and religious minorities has stopped and atrocities and oppression under the guise of Hindutva is at its extreme.

Calling the voters to stop supporting the Congress, BJP and their allies, she said that these parties will try every means to come to power. She alleged that opponents are using media, opinion polls and surveys for it and said the same is the case of election manifesto with hollow promises which are mostly not implemented by these parties after

Fishing boat with narcotics seized; ICG detains two

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

polls.

Ahmedabad/New Delhi, April 29: The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has seized 173 kg of narcotics from an Indian fishing boat and detained two crew members on board the vessel off the Gujarat coast, an official said Monday

The ICG and Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) apprehended the fishing boat in a joint operation in the high seas Sunday afternoon, the coast guard said in a release in Ahmedabad.

The seizure comes a day after the ICG. ATS and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), in a joint operation, recovered heroin worth Rs 600 crore from a Pakistani boat with 14 crew members

This operation is the ICG's 12th apprehension in the last three years and a

and success of joint efforts of ICG and ATS

Gujarat for appropriate

AN ICG RELEASE

GUJARAT LOK SABHA ELECTIONS 36 NOMINEES FACE CRIMINAL CASES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

six out of the 266 candidates for the Lok Sabha polls in Gujarat have criminal cases against them, with some also facing attempt to murder and dacoity charges, as per an analysis of their affidavits by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR). Elections to 25 out of the 26 Lok

Sabha seats in Gujarat will be held May 7. The BJP candidate from Surat seat has already been declared elected unopposed.

"Out of the 266 candidates, 36, or 14 per cent, have criminal charges against them, as per details provided by them in Out of the 25 BJP candidates, four have criminal cases against them, with leaders Anant two facing serious Patel (Congress) and charges Dilip Vasava (Bharat Adivasi Party), contesting Out of the 23 from Valsad and Bharuch Congress seats respectively, are candidates, six are named in criminal cases, with three

the affidavits. Out of them, 21, or 8 per cent, have serious criminal cases against them," ADR's Gujarat coordinator Pankti Monday.

facing cases on charges Out of the total 118 of attempt to independent candidates, 18 murder have criminal cases against them, with 11 facing serious charges punishment of 5 years or more, are non-bailable, related to murder, rape, kidnapping, bribery, as-

Tribal

sault, causing loss to the ex-

Jog told reporters here on chequer, crimes against women, hate speech, and offences under Serious criminal cases are the Prevention of Corruption those which attract a maximum Act. she said.

SP eyes non-Yadav OBC nominees in eastern UP Yes, we have made a JDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE conscious effort this

Lucknow, April 29: The Samaiwadi Party (SP) is apparently making a conscious effort to downplay its pro-Yaday image and has focused on non-Yadav OBCs in candidate selection in eastern Uttar Pradesh. The SP has chosen candidates belonging to OBC caste groups like Kurmi, Nishad, Rajbhar, Bind and Kushwaha on prominent seats. The idea is obviously to bring the other backward castes closer to Yadavs and form a consolidated vote base. The Samajwadi Party, for instance, has fielded Pappu Nishad from Sant Kabir Nagar. He is challenging BJP candidate Parveen Nishad, son of Nishad Party President Sanjay Nishad in this seat. In Basti, SP has chosen veteran Ram Prasad Chaudhary, a Kurmi, to challenge BJP sitting MP Harish Dwivedi. Dwivedi had defeated Chaudhary in the 2019 elections. The BSP, this time has nominated Daya Shankar Mishra as its candidate. In Jaunpur, former BSP minister Babu Singh Kushwaha is the SP candidate. He is pitted against Kripa Shankar Singh of the BJP. Singh is the former minister of the Maharashtra government. The BSP has fielded Sreekala Reddy Singh, wife of mafia don and former MP Dhananjay Singh. In Salempur, the Samajwadi Party has fielded Rama Shankar Rajbhar, who wields influence among his Rajbhar community, while the BJP has repeated its





Ahmedabad, April 29: Thirty

facing serious charges



Alpasankhyak) formula A SAMAJWADI PARTY SPOKESMAN

sitting MP Ravindra Kushwaha.

In Mirzapur, the Samajwadi candidate is Rajendra Bind who also belongs to the riverine community. The Mirzapur seat is held by BJP ally -- Apna Dal (S) - and its leader Anupriya Patel will be seeking her third term from here.

In Maharajganj, the Samajwadi Party candidate is Narendra Chaudhary who belongs to the Kurmi community.

The SP has fielded Pintu Sainthwar, another OBC, from Kushinagar while it has named Lalji Varma, a Kurmi leader, from Ambedkar Nagar. The SP has also named a Kurmi candidate from Pratapgarh - SP Singh Patel.

Yes, we have made a conscious effort this time to give greater representation to non-Yadav OBCs and this is a part of our PDA (Pichhda, Dalit, Alpasankhyak) formula," said a party spokesman.

The SP, this time, has only five Yadavs in its list -- Akhilesh from Kannauj, Yadav Dharmendra Yadav, from Azamgarh, Dimple Yadav from Mainpuri, Akshay Yadav from Firozabad and Aditya Yadav from Budaun. It is another matter that all of them belong to

the same family.

Polls prep: An electoral officer demonstrates the functioning of the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) during a training programme for polling officials for Lok Sabha elections in Lucknow, Monday

This party wants to be voice of 'mard' in LS polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, April 29: Unlike other political parties, winning or losing elections does not matter to the Mera Adhikaar Rashtriya Dal (MARD), which has jumped into the electoral battle to be the voice of the 'mard' and to defend men's honour.

MARD has lost deposits on all seats it has contested so far since it was formed in 2018 but its leaders say they are undeterred by elections losses.

The party has released its 'MANifesto' for the ongoing Lok Sabha polls with the slogan "Beton ke samman me, 'mard' utre maidan me" (In honour of sons, men have stepped on to the battleground).

The party has so far announced candidates for three seats – Lucknow, Ranchi and



Gorakhpur. The MARD party has previously contested in seven different elections – Lok Sabha polls in Varanasi and Lucknow in 2019, bypoll in Bangarmau assembly seat in 2020, assembly polls in Bareilly, Lucknow North, Bakshi Ka Talab (Lucknow) and Chauri Chaura seats in 2022.

"We have jumped into the fray in honour of men, to raise the voice for those who are harassed and exploited in the name of women's security. Winning and losing does not matter to us," MARD party national general secretary Ashutosh Kumar Pandey told PTI.

When asked about the fate of his party candidates contesting polls this time, he candidly accepts, "This time too, they can lose their deposits.'

"We don't have a lot of resources and we also do not take donations. Our candidates contest on MERA ADHIKAR RASHTRIYA DAL their own expenses. The benefit of contesting the polls is that now more parties are coming to raise



Kapil Mohan, the party's national president, said men are "suppressed" in a bid to "empower half the population". The party wants to highlight this issue so that people pay attention to it, he said.

In the party 'MANifesto', the party has promised that a separate Men's Welfare Ministry and National Men's Commission will be created so that before

volved in smuggling around 173

kg of drugs, it said.

any policy or law is formulated, the point of view of men is taken into account.

"It will help in formulating

schemes keeping in mind the health, security and honour of men," Pandey added. The party has also

promised a Men's Security Bill to save men from exploitation by "laws made for women". The party has also promised to promote self-reliance of

rassed in the name of alimony", Pandey said.







Mahesh vs Simarani in Hindol prestige battle



Orissapost

PRIL 30 | 2024 | BHUBANESWAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, April 29: The battle for Hindol Assembly constituency under Dhenkanal Lok Sabha segment might take an interesting turn with the ruling BJD nominee pitted against his former party colleague and the incumbent MLA, a report said.

The Hindol Assembly constituency (SC) comprises Hindol and Odapada blocks in Dhenkanal district. Political temperature in Hindol Assembly constituency is soaring high after the three major parties - BJD, BJP and Congress - announced the names of their candidates. Sitting MLA Simarani Nayak after being deprived of a BJD ticket joined BJP and was fielded by the saffron party as its candidate from the constituency.

On the other hand, BJD dropped Simarani from the party ticket and fielded sitting Dhenkanal MP Mahesh Sahu as its nominee from Hindol Assembly constituency. This



has generated enormous heat in the constituency as two former colleagues are pitted against each other.

Reports said that Hindol Assembly constituency has remained a citadel of the erstwhile Janata Dal in past and of the ruling BJD since 2000. BJD's

Anjali Behera had won the elections twice between 2000 and 2009 and became a minister in the state government.

State government. Similarly, Simarani remained an MLA of the ruling party from this constituency from 2014 to 2019. She was expecting to get the BJD ticket again in 2024 election. However, the ruling party chose to drop her and fielded the sitting Dhenkanal MP as the party nominee. Later, she joined BJP and got a ticket from the

saffron party. The ruling BJD is trying to protect its citadel which it has built since 2000 while BJP has called for a change and fighting the election.

Similarly, all eyes are on the Congress nominee Gobardhan Sekhar Nayak as he is an engi-



neer by profession and a resident of Hindol. Sources said the locals are sympathetic to him. He is also learnt to be trying to spring up a surprise by winning the votes of the dissidents of

both BJD and BJP. Sahu said his party will fight the polls on the development

works being undertaken in the state under the leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. He will make the developmental initiatives being taken up in Hindol as his major poll plank and will give priority to development of the remote regions of the constituency.

BJP's Simarani said that she will fight the polls on the basis of developmental works and public welfare schemes of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Likewise, Congress nominee Gobardhan said he will make doctors' crunch, employment of local youths in various industries, establishment of cold storages, blood banks and death of e around 40 persons in a year due to elephant attack as the major joll issues.



Several BJP leaders and workers of Chhatrapur Assembly constituency joined BJD at Sankha Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Monday

Fight is between '2 flowers' & '2 conches': Pradhan

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Noting that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set the context for the upcoming elections, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Monday coined a new slogan 'Duiti Phoola' (two flowers) to counter the ruling BJD's 'Jodi Sankha' (two conches) campaign.

BATTLEFIELD 2024

While BJD's poll symbol is conch (sankha), it is lotus flower for BJP. The "Duiti Phoola Bahut Bhala" (two flowers mean greater good) slogan was given by Pradhan, the BJP candidate in the Sambalpur Lok Sabha seat, at an election rally at Athamallik.

Last week, BJD released a video in which Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik asked people to vote for the party and displayed



two conch symbols – one for Lok Sabha and another for Assembly polls. At the election rally Monday, Pradhan too showed two lotuses and appealed to people to cast their votes for the symbol.

Initially, BJD had coined "Jodi Sankha" slogan to counter BJP leaders' call for the "double engine sarkar". While speaking to reporters after the meeting, Pradhan said Prime Minister Narendra Modi in an interview has made the party's stand clear

BJD, BJP, Cong claim credit for Kalahandi transformation

that BJP will fight the polls in the state over the issue of "Odia Asmita" (Odisha pride). "The PM has set the context for the polls by rightly pointing out that Odisha's identity and language is under threat," Pradhan said. This election rally was not only about change but also about pride and development of the

state, he said. Reiterating Modi's statement, Pradhan said Odisha is rich in mineral and water resources, besides having fertile land and forest resources.

Despite this, the state is lagging behind other states in almost all sectors, he claimed. "Corruption is at its zenith and everything is in a mess in the state," he alleged. Pradhan also came down heavily on BJD government alleging that there is no proper system of governance in Odisha.

"Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is on a video and the remote of the video is in the hands of another man... Officers, drawing salaries from people's hard-earned money, are now at the helm. They need to be ousted," the Union minister said. Pradhan claimed that the wind

of change is clearly visible across the state. "Sankha has been damaged and it can no longer be blown," he said.

Rahul to campaign in Rayagada May 3

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will visit the tribal-majority Ravagada district May 3 to ad dress his second public meet ing in the state ahead of Lok Sabha and Assembly elections Speaking to mediapersons here, Odisha Congress campaign committee chairman Bhakta Charan Das said that Rahul Gandhi is scheduled to address a 'Nyay' rally in Rayagada May 3, where he would speak on tribal and OBC-related issues. After visiting Rayagada, Gandhi would also address another public rally in Bolangir district, where he is likely to



While BJD, BJP and Congress promise further development in the area if voters elect their candidates, all the three parties have fielded fresh faces for the ensuing Lok Sabha elections in consideration of

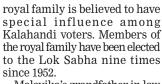
for the ensuing Lok Sabha elections in consideration of the fact that Kalahandi chose a new MP in each of the last three parliamentary polls

PNN & AGENCIES
Bhawanipatna, April 29: Once

had won the Kalahandi seat, while Arka Keshari Deo of BJD and Basanta Kumar Panda of BJP



ika Resilari Deo La



Malavika's grandfather-in-law Pratap Keshari Deo was elected to the Lok Sabha five times in a row from 1957 to 1977. While he was elected on the Swatantra Party ticket four times in 1957, 1962. 1967 and 1971. he won as an Independent in 1977. Her father-in-law BK Deo was elected from this Lok Sabha seat thrice as a BJP candidate while her husband Arka Keshari Deo also won the Lok Sabha elections in 2014 as a BJD candidate. Malavika expressed confidence that she would retain her family seat this time as well for her connection with the poor people. "People accept me and shower blessings. This indicates my clear victory in Kalahandi,' Malavika claimed. Malavika may be new to the electoral battle, but her family is a force in Kalahandi politics, said political analyst Ajay Mishra. Tribal leader and Congress candidate Draupadi Majhi started her political journey as a village sarpanch and went on to become a Zilla Parishad member of her party. She too is confident of winning the polls.

Dulal Pradhan quits Cong

Sambalpur: A day after he was replaced as Congress' Lok Sabha candidate for Sambalpur, senior leader of the party Dulal Chandra Pradhan Monday resigned from the primary membership of the grand old party. In his letter to AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge, Pradhan said, "I can never compromise on Sambalpur's future and the agenda for the welfare of Sambalpur." Pradhan was named the Congress' candidate for Sambalpur Lok Sabha seat. However, when the party released its fresh list April 28, he was found to have been replaced by former MP Nagendra Pradhan for the prestigious western Odisha seat. Nagendra Pradhan, a former minister in Naveen Patnaik government, had won Sambalpur Lok Sabha seat on a Biju Janata Dal (BJD) ticket in 2014.

raise the issues of unemployment and migration, he said.

Notably, Rahul Gandhi ad-

dressed his first public meeting

at Salipur Assembly constituency

in Cuttack district.

As Nabarangpur district was once the favourite place of former prime minister Indira Gandhi, the party has planned to bring Priyanka Gandhi for campaigning, Das said. Kalahandi Lok Sabha constituency in western Odisha seems to have undergone a remarkable transformation, with political parties across the board claiming credit for its development.

It appears that operationalisation of Indravati Irrigation project and schemes like the Revised Long-Term Action Plan (RLTAP) worked wonders for the region.

infamous for drought and star-

vation deaths during 1980s, the

While BJD, BJP and Congress promise further development in the area if voters elect their candidates, all the three parties have fielded fresh faces for the ensuing Lok Sabha elections in consideration of the fact that Kalahandi chose a new MP in each of the last three parliamentary polls. In the 2009 general elections,

Bhakta Charan Das of Congress

won the subsequent elections in 2014 and 2019 respectively.

The BJD has chosen Lambodar Nial, the BJP named Malavika Keshari Deo, a member of the Kalahandi royal family, replacing sitting MP Basanta Kumar Panda, and Congress has put up tribal community member Droupadi Majhi as a candidate for the seat.

Kalahandi now has an airstrip, a medical college, a university and many other projects worth indicating its real transformation. The erstwhile hunger zone of Kalahandi is now a major rice bowl of the state. The region is the second highest contributor to the state's food security basket after Bargarh, claimed BJD leader Sujeet Kumar.

He attributed all credit to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's efforts that changed the face of Kalahandi. While campaigning for BJD's Kalahandi Lok Sabha candidate Lambodar Nial, senior party leader Kartik Pandian said, "As head of the family Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has taken care of all of you. He has provided Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana, school transformation, improvement of hospitals and other works in Kalahandi."

Pandian said adivasis occupied a special place in Patnaik's heart and claimed the Chief Minister withdrew 50,000 cases against tribals, improved their places of worship and carried out other development projects in tribal areas.

"I appeal to you on behalf of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to vote for the conch symbol," Pandian said, referring to the poll symbol of the Biju Janata Dal.

Nial, who hails from the OBC community, is optimistic about

his victory. "The developmental achievements of the Chief Minister and the BJD government would certainly help me win the seat. The state's health scheme is extremely popular among the poor people of Kalahandi," Nial said.

The BJP, too, claimed credit for the transformation of Kalahandi. Sitting MP Panda claimed that important projects worth ₹3,000 crore have been completed during his tenure. National Highways and railway projects, including the Junagarh-Nabarangpur railway line, were taken up under Junagarh-Bhadrachalam new line project, he said.

The NDA government has also improved tele connectivity in the region for which people are very happy, claimed Panda.

The BJP has fielded Malavika Keshari Deo since the Kalahandi



BJP's Anandapur Assembly nominee Alok Sethi filing his nomination before the sub-collector-cum-returning officer of Anandapur in Keonjhar district, Monday OP PHOTOS



BJD workers join Congress in the presence of Jeypore's sitting MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati at his Laxminagar residence in Jeypore, Monday











national



Whenever there are elections, they use one issue or the other to flare up communal tensions. This time they are talking about the UCC and propagating that it is against a particular community. But this UCC is nothing but political rhetoric, and Hindus in no way will benefit from it

MAMATA BANERJEE | CHIEF MINISTER, WEST BENGAL

SHAH'S NARROW ESCAPE

Amit Shah, in the middle of a fake video row, had a narrow escape Monday as his helicopter went out of control for a brief period before the take off from Begusarai in Bihar. The Home Minister, 59, was in Bihar for a poll rally





For his MA in **Entire Political** Science, Mr Narendra Modi must definitely have read Joseph Goebbels on the value of

propaganda and taken inspiration from him JAIRAM RAMESH GENERAL SECRETARY, CONGRESS

I say this with responsibility that Arvinder Singh Lovely played a crucial role in our alliance with the Congress. I am not aware of the reasons for his contrary views now

SANJAY SINGH RAJYA SABHA MP. AAP

The people of Jammu and Kashmir have witnessed tough times in the past. Those did not last and neither will this (situation), but only if we fight it together through peaceful and democratic wave MEHBOOBA MUFTI PRESIDENT, PDP

SHORT TAKES

Ex-Union minister Sreenivasa dies

Bangalore: Veteran politician, BJP MP and former Union Minister V Sreenivasa Prasad died Monday, family sources said. The 76-year-old Lok Sabha member from Chamarajnagar was ailing for some time and being treated at a private hospital, where he passed away early today. Prasad is survived by wife and three daughters. He was a sixtime MP from Chamarajanagar and also served as MLA from Nanjangud in Mysuru district for two terms. On March 18 this year, Prasad announced his retirement from electoral politics, marking his 50 years in public life.

CCTV fails at vote counting centre

Erode: One of the CCTVs at a vote counting centre at the government's Institute of Road

THE EXPLICIT VIDEO **CLIPS ALLEGEDLY INVOLVING PRAJWAL STARTED MAKING THE ROUNDS IN HASSAN IN RECENT DAYS**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, April 29: The Congress Monday held protests in Karnataka demanding the immediate arrest of Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing allegations of sexually abusing hundreds of women.

Congress workers -- with women members joining in large numbers -- took to the streets in Hubballi, Hassan and Bengaluru, among other places, seeking action against the 33-year-old grandson of JD(S) chief and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda. In Bangalore, the protest was

led by All India Mahila Congress President Alka Lamba outside the office of Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee. Lamba said the horrifying

case of sexual violence against hundreds of women has shocked the nation. "More than 3,000 videos with

hundreds of women being sexually harassed, violated and even brutalised by MP Prajwal Revanna over the past few years have shaken the conscience of Kannadigas and Indians alike,'

she said. The Congress government in Karnataka on Sunday constituted a Special Investigation Team to investigate the allegations against the Hassan MP and Lok Sabha poll candidate after several videos of Revanna allegedly sexually abusing

New Delhi: The Ministry of Education (MoE) has

according to sources. So far, there has been no

mandate on the frequency of updating NCERT

textbooks. However, the National Council of

Educational Research and Training has been

asked the NCERT to conduct a review of its

textbooks and update them on yearly basis,



SEXUAL ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

Cong demands Revanna's arrest

More than 3.000 videos with hundreds of women being sexually harassed, violated and even brutalised by MP Prajwal Revanna over the past few years have shaken the conscience of Kannadigas and Indians alike ALKA LAMBA ALL INDIA MAHILA CONGRESS PRESIDENT

According to police sources, MP Prajwal Revanna, 33-year-old grandson of JD(S) chief and former Prime **Minister HD Deve** Gowda, fled the country after voting was over

as the videos began surfacing

> women came into the public domain.

The JD(S) joined the NDA in September last year. Prajwal is the NDA candidate in Hassan Lok Sabha constituency, which went to the polls April 26. According to police sources, he fled the country after voting was over as the videos began surfacing.

The Karnataka government started an SIT investigation after

a letter by Chairperson of Women's Commission Dr Nagalakshmi Chowdharv to the government regarding the sexual abuse of hundreds of women allegedly by Revanna. The three-member SIT of IPS

'JD(S) to suspend Revanna'

Shivamogga: JD(S) leader H D Kumaraswamy Monday said the party has decided to suspend Prajwal Revanna, his nephew and Hassan MP who is a Lok Sabha poll candidate in the current elections, over allegations of his sexual abuse of several women. The former chief minister also sought to distance JD(S)'s alliance partner BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi from the case, amid attacks by the ruling Congress seeking their response on the issue. Prajwal is the BJP-JD(S) alliance candidate for the Lok Sabha election from Hassan constituency, which went to the polls Friday. "A decision was already made. Tomorrow it is to be recommended at the core committee meeting in Hubballi. Because he (Praiwal) is a Member of Parliament, it has to be done from Delhi. So I had requested Deve Gowda (JD(S) National President and former PM). Neither he (Gowda) nor I were aware of this issue." Kumaraswamy claimed.

officers is led by the Additional Director General of Police (CID) Bijay Kumar Singh, while the other two members are Assistant Inspector General of Police

Superintendent of Police Seema Latkar. The SIT has been directed to complete its investigation swiftly.

POLITICAL

SLUGFEST

heinous crimes committed is

heart-wrenching. This ruined

women. Modi ji, will you still

The national media has just

revealed that the Revanna

unfolded in Karnataka of a

actually runs much deeper.

In fact, it goes to the top.A

Gowda, says that he had

brought the entire sex

and Prime Minister

SUSHMITA DEV | TMC LEADER

(Narendra) Modi

scandal to the notice of

Home Minister Amit Shah

former BJP candidate, Devraj

sex scandal that has just

JD(S) MP, an ally of the

Bharatiya Janata Party,

Just hearing about his

the lives of hundreds of

remain silent?

CONGRESS LEADER

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA

SC stays CBI probe into WB govt officials' role in teacher job scam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: The Supreme Court Monday stayed a Calcutta High Court order directing the CBI to probe the role of West Bengal government officials in a teacher recruitment scam. It, however, refused to stay for now the cancellation of the appointment of over 25,000 teachers and non-teaching staff.

The top court was hearing a plea by the West Bengal government against a high court order invalidating the appointment of 25,753 teachers and nonteaching staff made by the School Service Commission (SSC) in state-run and state-aided schools. A bench of Chief Justice DY

Chandrachud, Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice Manoj Misra, however, refused to stay the high court order cancelling the appointments and said it will hear the matter May 6.

Observing that taking away the jobs of about 25,000 persons is a serious matter, the top court asked if it is possible to segregate the valid and invalid appointments on the basis of the material available and who the ben-

eficiaries of the fraud are. "We will stay the direction which says the CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation) will undertake further investigation against officials in the state government," the bench said.

Calcutta High Court had said the CBI would undertake further investigations with regard to the persons in the state government involved in approving the creation of supernumerary posts to accommodate illegal appointments. If necessary, the CBI will un-

dertake custodial interrogation of such persons involved, it had said

Challenging the order, the state government, in its appeal filed before the top court, said the high court cancelled the appointments "arbitrarily"

"The high court failed to appreciate the ramification of cancelling the entire selection process, leading to straightaway termination of teaching and non-teaching staff from service with immediate effect, without giving sufficient time to the petitioner state to deal with such an exigency, rendering the education system at a standstill "the plea said

Calcutta High Court last week declared the selection process as "null and void" and directed the CBI to probe the appointment process. It also asked the central agency to submit a report within three months.

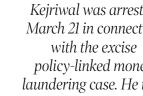
"All appointments granted in the selection processes involved being violative of articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution of India, are declared null and void and cancelled." the high court said in its April 22 order.

The high court said those appointed outside the officially available 24,640 vacancies, appointed after the expiry of the official date of recruitment, and those who submitted blank Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) sheets but obtained appointment to return all remunerations and benefits received by them with 12 per cent interest per annum within four weeks.

Khalistan slogans raised at Trudeau event; India summons Canada envoy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: India Monday summoned the Canadian deputy high commissioner and lodged a strong protest



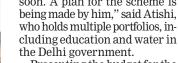
Sunita, Atishi meet Kejriwal in Tihar

Keiriwal was arrested March 21 in connection policy-linked money laundering case. He is in

soon. A plan for the scheme is being made by him," said Atishi, who holds multiple portfolios, including education and water in

the Delhi government. Presenting the budget for the

financial year 2024-25 in March,



the Delhi government had an-

Suman D Pennekar and Mysuru

and Transport Technology located at Chithode here failed Sunday midnight, District Collector and Returning Officer of Erode parliamentary constituency Raja Gopal Sunkara said Monday. The problem was immediately attended to and repaired within an hour, he said. The returning officer told the media Mondav noon that of the 221 CCTV cameras fitted and functioning round the clock at counting centres in the constituency, one of them where the Erode West constituency' FVMs were nlaced, suddenly stopped working at 12 midnight Sunday.

Local train derails

Mumbai: A coach of a local train on the Harbour Line derailed at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) here Monday morning, affecting services for more than three hours. No passenger was injured in the derailment that occurred when a train from Panvel entered CSMT around 11:35 am, a spokesperson of the Central Railway said. The second coach of the CSMT-bound train derailed as it pulled into platform number two of the station, said Swapnil Nila, chief public relations officer of the Central Railway.

Hoax bomb threat

Jaipur: The Jaipur International Airport Monday received a threat on its official email ID, warning that bombs will be planted at the airport as well as on three airlines. The mail was sent by "Terrorizers-111 Group" and said: "Do not take this warning lightly". In the wake of the threat, airport security personnel, police, bomb disposal and dog squads conducted a search operation but found nothing suspicious.

occasionally revising and updating content since 2017. A rationalisation exercise was also conducted in view of the closure of schools due to the pandemic but there were allegations from a section of agenda-driven editing. "In the fast-changing world of today, it is important that the textbooks are absolutely updated. The NCERT has been asked to conduct a review on a yearly basis and update them ahead of the beginning of the new academic session... they are soon going to put a system in place," a source said. "NCERT books once published should not remain the same for many years. They should be reviewed every year before printing and if any changes have to be made or some new facts have to be added, they should be included in the books. For instance, topics like Artificial Intelligence are very evolving," the source added. Currently, the NCERT is in the process of developing textbooks according to the New Curriculum Framework (NCF) announced last year.

SNIPPETS

NCERT to review, update textbooks on yearly basis

Clash with UPSC prelims: UGC-NET postponed

New Delhi: The National Eligibility Test (NET) has been rescheduled to avoid a clash with the UPSC preliminary exam and will now be conducted June 18, UGC Chairman Jagadesh Kumar announced Monday. Earlier, the exam was scheduled to be held June 16. The National Testing Agency and UGC have decided to shift the UGC-NET from 16 June (Sunday) to 18 June 2024 (Tuesday) because of feedback received from candidates about the exam clashing with UPSC prelims.

judicial custody till May 2

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita and cabinet minister Atishi met him in Tihar jail Monday, with the latter saying that he has directed to ensure that the city's residents do not face water woes during summer.

Sunita Kejriwal, whose application to meet her husband was earlier denied by the Tihar jail administration, was granted permission for the meeting Monday, according to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP).

After the meeting, Atishi told reporters that upon being asked about his well-being, Kejriwal told her not to worry about him.



"I asked him how was he doing and how was his health. He told me not to worry about him and his health," she said.

Atishi said he instead asked if schoolchildren were getting books, adding. "He also asked me whether children were facing any difficulty in studies and whether the problem of medicines in mohalla clinics had been resolved."

She also said that Kejriwal asked her to ensure adequate water supply so that people do not face woes during summer.

"He has asked to pay special attention to this matter. He has also given a message for women. He said he will come out soon and has promised that Rs 1,000 honorarium will be given to them

nounced a monthly honorarium scheme of Rs 1.000 for women aged above 18.

Atishi was also asked about Tihar authorities denying permission to Sunita Kejriwal to meet her husband.

"This is BJP's dictatorship. You will form new rules. Two people are allowed to meet in one go. We had permission to meet him but all of a sudden they refused. What conspiracy is this? You want to harass him. Such dictatorship did not happen even during the British rule. Political prisoners were treated with respect," the senior AAP leader said.

She charged that the Central government has "such hatred" for Kejriwal that they are making new rules.

over the raising of pro-Khalistan slogans at a public event in Toronto in the presence of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) described the raising of the slogans at the event as "disturbing" and said it illustrated once again the political space that has been given in Canada to "separatism, extremism and violence".

It said the actions not only impact India-Canada relations but also encourage a climate of violence and criminality in Canada to the detriment of its own citizens.

"The Canadian deputy high commissioner was today summoned to the Ministry of External Affairs with regard to the raising of separatist slogans on 'Khalistan' at an event which was being personally addressed by the prime minister of Canada," the MEA said.

"The Government of India's deep concern and strong protest was conveyed at such disturbing actions being allowed to continue unchecked at the event," it said.

"This illustrates once again the political space that has been given in Canada to separatism, extremism and violence," the MEA said in a statement.

It added: "Their continued expressions not only impact India-Canada relations but also encourage a climate of violence and criminality in Canada to the detriment of its own citizens."

The ties between India and Canada came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations in September of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar 🛁 June 18 in British Columbia.

Days after Trudeau's allegations, India asked Ottawa to downsize its diplomatic presence in the country to ensure parity. Subsequently, Canadawithdrew 41 diplomats and their family members from India.

123 of 1,352 candidates in third phase of LS polls women **18% HAVE CRIMINAL CASES AGAINST THEM, SAYS ADR REPORT**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: Only 9 per cent of the 1,352 candidates contesting in the third phase of the Lok Sabha elections are women while 18 per cent have declared criminal cases against themselves, the ADR said in a new report.

Seven candidates have also declared prior convictions, according to an analysis of details of candidates contesting the elections in the third phase by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and The National Election Watch.

Among the 244 candidates

with criminal records, five face

charges related to murder while

24 have been booked in cases of

have been linked to crimes

against women and 17 declared

cases related to hate speech.

Additionally, 38 candidates

attempted murder.

The analysis, based on the self-sworn affidavits of the 1,352 candidates, has shed light on trends in criminality and wealth accumulation among political aspirants.

The prevalence of criminal cases varies significantly across major political parties, with figures highlighting concerning trends among candidates from prominent parties such as the the BJP, Congress and the Samajwadi Party.

The report also highlighted the disparity in the candidates' financial backgrounds.

It disclosed that 29 per cent or 392 candidates are "crorepatis", with the average assets per candidate standing at a substantial Rs 5.66 crore. The top three candidates in

terms of declared assets possess wealth ranging into hundreds of crores, with the highest declared assets surpassing Rs

DON'T FORGET TOVOTE The 1,361 crore. the candidates. Since filing of the

will be held May 7

The analysis also delves into the educational and demographic backgrounds of

The report indicates that 47 per cent or 639 candidates have educational qualifications from classes 5 to 12 while 44 per cent or 591 are gradu-

ates or possess higher educational qualifications.

Agewise, 30 per cent or 411 candidates fall within the 25-40 years bracket while 53 per cent or 712 are aged between 41 and 60.

The report also highlights gender disparity in candidate selection with only 9 per cent or 123 women contesting the elections in the third phase.

In response to these findings, the ADR has proposed stringent measures to address the criminalisation of politics, including permanent disqualification of candidates convicted of heinous crimes and cancellation of tax exemptions for political parties fielding 'tainted" candidates.

The report underscored the pressing need for accountability and transparency within India's political landscape, emphasising the importance of electoral reforms to uphold the integrity of the democratic process.





the

nominations and the

Congress nominee

from Indore has with-

drawn his candidature.

affidavits,



third phase of the elections



international



We expect the **International Criminal Court to prevent the** issuance of arrest warrants against senior Israeli officials ISRAEL KATZ FOREIGN MINISTER, ISRAEL

HEATWAVE SHUTS SCHOOLS

Southeast Asia was coping with a severe heatwave Monday as record-high temperatures led to school closings in several countries and urgent health warnings throughout the region. Millions of students in all public schools across the Philippines were ordered to stay home Monday after authorities cancelled in-person classes for two days



uote

The fact that ... a woman dies every four days on average at the hand of a partner is just a national crisis

ANTHONY ALBANESE PM. AUSTRALIA

Today, I think the first and foremost problem is global inequity. The Covid-19 pandemic had exposed these imbalances and gaps

SHEHBAZ SHARIF PM, PAKISTAN

The people want President Yoon Suk Yeol to make a grand change in the basics of his policies. He must boldly accept

special counsel probes to resolve diverse suspicions surrounding the Yoon Suk Yeol government PARK SUNG-JOON OPPOSITION

SPOKESPERSON, SOUTH KOREA

SHORT TAKES

Abducted judge released in Pak

Peshawar: A district and sessions judge kidnapped by armed men in the country's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province has been released from captivity, said Barrister Saif, the spokesperson of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), early Monday. The judge was kidnapped near Tank and Dera Ismail (DI) Khan district bordering Afghanistan April 27. The driver of the judge was not harmed. The vehicle was also recovered from the spot. The session judge has been released from captivity unconditionally. He has reached home safe and sound, the counter-terrorism department of the KPK Police said

Spain PM decides

to stay in office

Minister Pedro Sanchez said

Madrid: Spanish Prime

PANNUN MURDER BID RAW official involved: Report Scotland's first

A report in The Washington Post claims that a RAW official was involved in assassination plot of Sikh separatist leader Pannun

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, April 29: A RAW official identified as Vikram Yadav was involved in the assassination plot of Sikh separatist leader Gurpatwant Singh Pannun in the US and the move was approved by the then Indian spy agency chief Samant Goel, according to an investigative media report published Monday.

Pannun is one of the main leaders of the Khalistan movement and the legal advisor and spokesperson for Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), which aims to promote the idea of a separate Sikh state. The Indian government has declared Pannun a terrorist.

In an investigative report, The Washington Post newspaper said, 'That India would pursue lethal operations in North America has stunned Western security officials."

'Yaday's identity and affiliation, which have not previously been reported, provide the most explicit evidence to date that the assassination plan - ultimately thwarted by US authorities — was directed from within the Indian spy service," the daily reported.

"Higher-ranking (Research and Analysis Wing) RAW officials have also been implicated, according to current and former Western security officials. as part of a sprawling investi-



gation by the CIA, FBI and other agencies that has mapped potential links to (Prime Minister

Narendra Modi) Modi's inner circle," it said. The top American daily -which is now owned by American billionaire Jeff Bezos, founder and head of Amazon -- said it is investigating a global surge in such campaigns of cross-border repression, as well as the

global forces leading India and other nations to employ tactics normally associated with the world's most repressive governments For this story, Post reporters conducted dozens of interviews with officials, experts and tar-

geted individuals in New Delhi. Washington, Ottawa, London, Prague and Berlin, it said.

"In reports that have been closely held within the American government, US intelligence agencies have assessed that the operation targeting Pannun was approved by the RAW chief at the time, Samant Goel," the daily claimed.

"That finding is consistent with accounts provided to The Washington Post by former senior Indian security officials who had knowledge of the operation and said Goel was under extreme pressure to eliminate the alleged threat of Sikh extremists overseas. "US spy agencies have more tentatively assessed that Modi's national security adviser, Ajit Doval, was probably aware of RAW's plans to kill Sikh ac-

tivists, but officials emphasised that no smoking gun proof has emerged," it said.

Quoting officials, The Washington Post said, the foiled assassination was part of an escalating campaign of aggression by RAW against the Indian diaspora in Asia, Europe and North America.

The alleged plot to kill Pannun in the US coincided with the June 18 fatal shooting of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Surrey in Canada's British Columbia province in June last year. That operation was also linked to Yadav, according to Western officials

Both plots took place amid a wave of violence in Pakistan, where at least 11 Sikh or Kashmiri separatists living in exile and labelled terrorists by the Modi government have been killed over the past two years, the report said.

Senior Indian government officials named in the Washington Post report did not respond to it seeking comment, the daily said.

However, when asked about the investigation into the allegations made by the US in the Pannun case, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said last week, "We have set up a high-level committee. The committee is looking into information that was shared

by the American side with us, because they also equally impact our national security. The high-level committee is

looking into those aspects and that is where it is right now, Jaiswal said in New Delhi April 25.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar April 1 had said that India's national security interests are involved in its investigation into the alleged involvement of a government official in the assassination plot aimed at Khalistani extremist Pannun.

The Washington Post reported that the Biden administration has refrained from making charges against Yadav.

"Charging decisions are the prerogative of law enforcement alone," National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson told The Washington Post, "and the Biden NSC has rigorously re-

spected that independence." "The only US charges made public to date are against an alleged middleman, Nikhil Gupta, who is described in the indictment as an Indian drug and weapons trafficker enlisted to hire a contract killer. Gupta, an Indian national who has denied the charges, was arrested in Prague on June 30 and remains in prison. He is awaiting a Czech court ruling on a US request for his extradition," the Post re-



London, April 29: Scotland's leader Humza Yousaf resigned Monday, further opening the door to the UK opposition Labour Party regaining ground in its former Scottish heartlands in a national election expected to be held later this year.

Yousaf said he was quitting as head of the pro-independence Scottish National Party (SNP) and first minister of Scotland's devolved government after a week of chaos triggered by his scrapping of a coalition agreement with Scotland's Greens.

He then failed to secure enough support to survive a vote of no confidence which had been expected later this week.

"I've concluded that repairing our relationship across the political divide can only be done with someone else at the helm," Yousaf said as he resigned little over a vear after he replaced Nicola Sturgeon as first minister and SNP leader.

He said he would continue until a successor was chosen in an SNP leadership contest.

The party is losing popular support after 17 years of heading the Scottish government, following a funding scandal and the resignation of Sturgeon as leader last year.

Yousaf abruptly ended a power-sharing agreement between the SNP and the Green Party after a row over climate change targets. There has also been infighting over how progressive its pitch should be as it seeks to woo back voters.

Caught between defending the record of the coalition government and some nationalists' demands to jettison gender recognition reforms and refocus on the economy, Yousaf was unable to strike a balance that would ensure his survival

Yousaf, the first Muslim head_ of government in modern Western Europe, succeeded Sturgeon as first minister in March 2023. Once hugely popular, Sturgeon has been embroiled in a party funding scandal with her husband, who was charged this month with embezzling funds. Both deny wrongdoing The Opposition parties welcomed his resignation, with the Scottish Tories saying Yousaf had averted a "humiliating defeat" at a vote of no confidence later this week and the Labour Party demanding a UK-wide general election soon for a "fresh start" across the country. Meanwhile, the race to replace Yousaf has commenced, with party veteran John Swinney - an ex-deputy to former first minister Nicola Sturgeon – leading the fray.



The East African country has postponed the reopening of its schools by one week due to ongoing flooding caused by heavy

rains since mid-March

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nairobi, April 29: A dam collapsed in western Kenya early Monday, killing at least 45 people and leaving dozens missing after a wall of water swept through houses and cut



submerged large areas. William Lokai told Citizen TV that he was woken up by a loud bang and shortly after, water filled his house. He escaped through the roof together with his brother and children.

Ongoing rains in Kenva

Cairo, April 29: Israeli airstrikes on three houses in the southern Gaza city of Rafah killed at least 25 Palestinians and wounded many others, medics said Monday, as leaders of Hamas arrived in Cairo for a new round of talks with Egyptian and Qatari mediators.

In Gaza City, in the north of the Gaza Strip, Israeli warplanes struck two houses, killing at least four people and wounding several people, health officials said. The strike on the other house killed two brothers, they added.

The strikes on Rafah, where more than one million people



We are hopeful the proposal has taken into account the positions of both sides, has tried to

Palestinians, 34 of them in the past 24 hours, and wounded 77,643, according to Gaza's health authorities. The war has dis-

ported. Israel kills 25 Palestinians in Rafah

office "even with more strength" after days of reflection. Sanchez shocked the country Wednesday, announcing he was taking five days off to think about his future after a court opened preliminary proceedings against his wife on corruption allegations. "I have decided to continue on with even more strength at the helm of the government of Spain," he said in a televised speech. The legal complaint against his wife, Begona Gomez, was filed by a far-right legal platform that says Gomez used her position to influence business deals.

off a major road, the Interior Ministry said.

The Old Kijabe Dam, located in the Mai Mahiu area of the Great Rift Valley

region that is prone to flash floods, collapsed and water spilled downstream, carrying with it mud, rocks and uprooted trees, police official Stephen Kirui told The Associated Press.

The Kenya Red Cross said 109 people were hospitalised while 49 others were reported missing. Vehicles were entangled in

the debris on one of Kenya's busiest highways and paramedics treated the injured as waters

have caused flooding that HEAVY has already killed nearly RAINS 100 people and postponed the opening of schools. Heavy rains have been pounding the country since mid-March and the Meteorology Department has warned of more

rainfall. Kenya's Interior Minister Kithure Kindiki ordered the inspection of all public and private dams and water reservoirs within 24 hours starting Monday afternoon to avert future incidents. The ministry said recommendations for evacuations and resettlement would be done after the inspection.

expected to host leaders of the Islamist group Hamas to discuss prospects for a ceasefire agreement with Israel. The Israeli military said it was checking the reports. Speaking Monday at a World Economic Forum meeting in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Egyptian

Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said Egypt was hopeful about a proposal for a truce and the release of hostages in the Gaza Strip but it was waiting for a response on the plan from Israel and Hamas.

extract moderation from have sought refuge from months of Israeli bombardment, took both sides. and we are place hours before Egypt was waiting to have a final decision

> SAMEH SHOUKRY FOREIGN MINISTER, EGYPT

Asked about the new round of talks in Cairo, a Palestinian official close to mediation effort told Reuters: "Things look better this time," but he declined to say whether an agreement was imminent.

Israel has vowed to eradicate Hamas, which controls Gaza. Its six-month-long military operation has now killed 34,488

placed most of the 2.3 million population and laid much of the enclave to waste.

The conflict was triggered by an attack by Hamas militants on Israel October 7 in which they killed 1,200 people and took 253 hostage, according to Israeli tallies. An assault on Rafah, which Israel says is the last Hamas stronghold in the Gaza Strip, has been anticipated for weeks but foreign governments and the United Nations have expressed concern that such action could result in a humanitarian disaster given the number of displaced people crammed into the area.

FIRST WAR, NOW DEPORTATION

Afghans in Pakistan face uncertain future

MILLIONS OF AFGHANS MADE PAKISTAN HOME TO ESCAPE WAR. NOW MANY ARE **HIDING TO ESCAPE DEPORTATION**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, April 29: Born and raised in Pakistan to parents who fled neighbouring Afghanistan half a century ago, an 18-year-old found himself at the mercy of police in Karachi who took his cash, phone and motorbike, and sent him to a deportation centre.

Scared and bewildered, he spent three days there before he was sent back to Afghanistan, a place he has never been to, with nothing but clothes on his back.

The youth is one of at least 1.7 million Afghans who made Pakistan their home as their country sank deeper into decades of war. But they've been living there without legal permission, and are now the target of a harsh crackdown on migrants who Pakistan says must leave.

Some 600,000 Afghans have returned home since last October, when the crackdown began, meaning at least a million remain in Pakistan in hiding. They've retreated from public view, abandoning their jobs and rarely leaving their neighbourhoods out of fear they could be next for deportation.

they run the risk of getting caught

by police or being reported to

The youth, who had been work-

ing as a mechanic in an auto

shop since he was 15, spoke on

condition of anonymity for fear

of arrest and deportation. He

has applied for the same docu-

mentation that his family has, but

authorities by Pakistanis.

It's harder for them to earn money, rent accommodation, buy food or get medical help because

he won't get it. Pakistan isn't issuing paperwork for Afghan refugees or their children.

"My life is here. I have no friends or family in Afghanistan, nothing," the young man told The Associated Press. "I wanted to come back (to Pakistan) sooner. but things had to calm down first," he said, referring to the

anti-migrant raids sweeping the country at the time. Taliban authorities gave him 2,500 afghanis (\$34) once he entered Afghanistan to start a new life. They dispatched him to northeastern Takhar province, where he slept in mosques and religious schools because he knew nobody to stay with. He passed his time playing cricket and football, and borrowed other people's phones to call his family.

Six weeks later, he travelled from Takhar to the Afghan capital, Kabul, then to eastern Nangarhar province. He walked for hours in the dark before meeting up with human smugglers hired by his brother in Pakistan.

Their job was to get him to Peshawar, the capital of Pakistan's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, for the price of \$70. He is relieved to be reunited with his family. But he is vulnerable.

Police have daubed numbers on homes in his neighbourhood to show how many people live there and how many have documentation. Hundreds of Afghan families have fled the area since the operation began. There are fewer people to hide among.

Lawyer Moniza Kakar, who works extensively with the Afghan community in Karachi, said there are generations of families with no paperwork. Without it, they can't access basic services like schools or hospitals.

Afghans were already under the radar before the crackdown, and rumours abound that Pakistan wants to expel all Afghans, even those with documentation. Pakistan says no such decision has been made.

Putin likely didn't order death of Navalny, says US official

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, April 29: US intelligence officials have determined that Russian President Vladimir Putin likelv didn't order the death of imprisoned opposition leader Alexei Navalny in February, according to an official familiar with the determination.

While US officials believe Putin was ultimately responsible for the death of Navalny, who endured brutal conditions during his confinement, the intelligence community has found "no smoking gun" that Putin was aware of the timing of Navalny's death — which came soon before the Russian president's reelection — or directly ordered it, according to the official. The official spoke on the con-

dition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive matter.

Soon after the Navalny's death, US President Joe Biden said Putin was ultimately responsible but did not accuse the Russian president of directly ordering it.

At the time, Biden said the US did not know exactly what had



happened to Navalny but that "there is no doubt" that his death "was the consequence of something that Putin and his thugs did.'

Navalny, 47, Russia's bestknown opposition politician and Putin's most persistent foe, died February 16 in a remote penal colony above the Arctic Circle while serving a 19-year sentence on extremism charges that he rejected as politically motivated.

He had been behind bars since January 2021 after returning to Russia from Germany, where he had been recovering from nerve-agent poisoning that he blamed on the Kremlin.









business



NHPC, OCEAN SUN SIGN PACT

State-owned NHPC Monday said it has signed an agreement with Norway-based Ocean Sun to explore opportunities in the domestic solar sector. The MoU was signed by VR Shrivastava, Executive Director, NHPC and Kristian Tørvold, CEO, Ocean Sun in the presence of May-Elin Stener, Ambassador of Norway to India at the Embassy of Norway, NHPC said in a statement.



uote 77

Unless the GDP is widened, we are not going to be able to meet the demands of the economy. We need investment, services to grow, educational institutions, and

money for people to buy houses, start businesses VIRMALA SITHARAMAN FINANCE MINISTER

The future of consumer goods companies will rest on their capability to penetrate more households, with more products for more occasions

and usage SURESH NARAYANAN NESTLE INDIA CMD

The headcount addition should not come as a surprise, because we had a good growth of 5.4 per cent (for FY24) in the current environment, so that obviously needs good talent to execute, and that's why our headcount is growing C VIJAYAKUMAR HCLTECH CEO

Q4 RESULTS CORNER

UltraTech Cement profit grows 35%

New Delhi: UltraTech Cement Ltd Monday reported a 35.24 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at ₹2,258.58 crore for the fourth guarter ended March 31, 2024, helped by lower fuel and raw material costs along with operational efficiencies and sales increase. The leading cement maker has posted a consolidated net profit of ₹1.670.10 crore in the January March guarter of the last fiscal year, according to a regulatory filing from UltraTech. Its revenue from operations was up 9.41 per cent at ₹20,418.94 crore during the period. It was at ₹18.662.38 crore in the corresponding period a year ago. UltraTech's total expenses in the March quarter stood at ₹17.381.09 crore, up 6.67 per cent. In the March quarter, UltraTech's logistic and power costs for grey cement declined 2 per cent each.

RBI asks lenders to follow fair practices

Central bank directs lenders to take corrective action and refund excess charges to customers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 29: Concerned over some banks and lenders resorting to unfair practices in charging of interest, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Monday directed them to take corrective action and refund excess charges to customers.

The guidelines on Fair Practices Code issued to various regulated entities (REs) since 2003, inter-alia, advocate fairness and transparency in charging of interest by the lenders. while providing adequate freedom to them as regards loan

pricing policy. "During the course of the onsite examination of REs for the period ended March 31, 2023, the Reserve Bank came across in-



stances of lenders resorting to certain unfair practices in charg-ing of interest," the RBI said in

a circular. The central bank has also highlighted certain unfair practices being followed by certain lenders.

level changes, as may be neces-

sary, to address," the issues con-

... in the interest of fairness and transparency, all REs are directed to review their practices regarding mode of disbursal of loans, application of interest and other charges and take corrective action, including system

cerning charging of interest, the circular said. During onsite examinations of

REs, the RBI said it observed charging of interest from the date of sanction of loan or date of execution of loan agreement and not from the date of actual disbursement of funds to the customer.

It also came across instances where interest was charged from the date of the cheque whereas it was handed over to the customer several days later.

In the case of disbursal or re-

payment of loans during the course of the month, some REs were charging interest for the entire month, rather than only for the period for which the loan was outstanding, the RBI said.

In some cases, it was observed that REs were collecting one or more instalments in advance but reckoning the full loan amount for charging interest.

The RBI further said unfair practices and other such nonstandard practices of charging interest are not in consonance with the spirit of fairness and transparency while dealing with customers.

"These are matters of serious concern to the Reserve Bank. Wherever such practices have come to light, RBI through its supervisory teams has advised REs to refund such excess interest and other charges to customers," the circular said.

REs are also being encouraged to use online account transfers in lieu of cheques being issued in a few cases for loan disbursal, it added.

India Inc's revenue growth weakest since Sept 2021

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 29: India Inc is likely to log 4-6 per cent revenue growth in the January-March quarter of 2023-24, marking the slowest quarterly growth since recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic which began in September 2021, said a Crisil report.

The report is based on an analysis of 350 companies which oil and gas sectors firms.

provement in revenue growth

Consumer discretionary prod-

was steered by healthy growth

back of higher volumes and price hikes in the past year. The organised retail sector, the

in passenger vehicles on the

report said, grew for the thirteenth quarter in a row, on healthy urban demand. Discretionary services, such as airlines and hotels benefited from MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions), weddings and rebound in corporate travel.

On the other hand, it said, revenue from constructionlinked sectors is expected to have grown at a tepid pace, essentially on account of a high base of the fourth quarter of fiscal 2023 that saw construction companies achieving their highest quarterly revenue.

The report further said that the cement sector, despite steady demand momentum during the quarter, recorded moderate revenue growth as prices remained under pressure amid higher supply and intense competition.

20 CRITICAL MINERAL BLOCKS TO BE PUT ON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: The government will put on sale around 20 critical mineral blocks in the fourth round of auction by the end of June, mines secretary VL Kantha Rao said Monday.

Rao further said that the auction process for seven critical mineral blocks put on sale in the first round is almost complete and the result would be declared in a month's time.

Critical minerals such as cop per, lithium, nickel, cobalt and rare earth elements are essential components in many of today's rapidly growing clean energy technologies - from wind turbines and electricity networks to electric vehicles. Demand for these minerals is growing quickly with clean energy transitions ____ gathering pace.



Sensex rebounds 941 pts Mahindra launches XUV 3XO – the 'New Disruptor'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai, April 29: Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., India's leading SUV manufacturer, Monday launched the XUV 3XO, with prices starting from ₹7.49 Lakh. Setting new benchmarks in the compact SUV segment, the XUV 3XO combines standout design, premium interiors, comfortable ride, cutting-edge technology, thrilling performance, and unmatched safety. The XUV 3XO represents Mahindra's commitment to innovation and excellence, culminating in an SUV that truly represents #EverythingYouWantAndMore.

The XUV 3XO was concep-

tualised at the Mahindra India

Design Studio (MIDS) in

Mumbai, and engineered and de-

veloped at the Mahindra

Research Valley (MRV) near

Chennai. The XUV 3XO repre-

sents the world-class capabili-

ties of Mahindra's global de-

sign and engineering team.

Built at Mahindra's state-ofthe-art facility in Nashik using advanced manufacturing processes, it offers customers a high-quality SUV that is robust

and engineered to last. Appealing to multiple segments XUV 3XO transcends the expectations of the new-age SUV buyers. Each variant is tailored to meet the specific needs and preferences of its respective segment, making the XUV 3XO a true category disruptor.

The XUV 3XO has been designed, developed, and engineered to meet rigorous global standards, ensuring that it delivers exceptional quality and performance to our customers. The XUV 3XO's bookings will open online and simultaneously at Mahindra dealerships from May 15, 2024. The deliveries of the XUV 3XO will commence starting from May 26, 2024, ensuring that customers can enjoy their new Mahindra SUV as soon as possible.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The NSE Nifty soared by 223.45 points or 1 per cent to close at 22,643.40 with 32 of its constituents advancing and 18 settling lower.

From the Sensex basket, ICICI Bank climbed nearly 5 per cent after the bank reported an 18.5 per cent growth in net profit for the March quarter to ₹11,672 crore, helped by lower provisions.

on buyin	ig in	banł	K S	tocks
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mumbai, April 29: Benchmark BSE Sensex rebounded sharply by 941 points while NSE Nifty closed above the 22,600 level	BSE Sensex Previous day close: 73,730.16	APR Change +94		TOP GAINERS 4.67 ICICI Bank 3.09
Monday on the back of buying in banking and infra shares and a rally in global markets. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 941.12 points or 1.28 per cent to settle at 74,671.28. As	74,800 -	74,671.28	wh.	2.93UltraTechCement2.90IndusInd Bank2.47Axis Bank
many as 26 Sensex shares closed in the green while four declined. During the day, Sensex zoomed 990.99 points or 1.34 per cent to a high of 74,721.15. The NSE Nifty soared by 223.45 points or 1 per cent to close at 22.643.40 with 32 of its con-	73,900		16:00	TOP LOSERS -5.79 HCL Tech -0.44 ITC -0.37 Wipro -0.01 Bajaj Finserv

dexes rebounded, aided by an upbeat in US tech quarter earnings and a drop in US 10-year yield. Domestically, the Bank Nifty outperformed, driven by its strong performance in the fourth quarter. Easing Middle East tensions, coupled with stable earnings, are expected to maintain positive market sentiment," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. "Market started the week on a strong note and gained a percent, in continuation of the prevailing trend. Favourable global cues combined with noticeable traction in banking majors aided a positive start, which further strengthened as the day progressed," said Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 0.79 per cent and smallcap index advanced 0.07 per cent.

exclude financial services and The moderation follows stronger growth in previous vears, the report said, adding "among the 47 sectors monitored by CRISIL, only 12 are expected to have clocked an im-

> both sequentially and on-year for the quarter.' ucts and services are expected to have led the show in the

January-March quarter. Among discretionary products, the automobiles sector

SALE BY JUNE-END

PNB Housing Fin profit up 57%

New Delhi: PNB Housing Finance on Monday reported a 57 per cent jump in its net profit to ₹444 crore in the fourth guarter ended March 2024. The housing finance company had posted a net profit of ₹283 crore in the same quarter a year earlier. Total income during the quarter rose to ₹1,806 crore from ₹1,628 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal, PNB Housing Finance said in a regulatory filing. The lender's interest income in Q4FY24 was higher at ₹1,684 crore, as against ₹1,581 crore in the same period a year ago. Net interest income grew 7 per cent to ₹632 crore at the end of the fourth quarter ended March 2024.

Trent profit sees multi-fold jump

New Delhi: Tata group's retail arm Trent Ltd Monday reported a multi-fold increase in consolidated net profit at ₹712.09 crore for the fourth guarter ended March 2024 helped by exceptional item gains. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹44.95 crore in the January-March guarter a year ago, according to a regulatory filing from Trent Ltd, which operates retail stores under the brand names -- Westside, Zudio and Star. During the quarter, Trent had a gain of ₹576.07 crore as it "reassessed the estimates of measurement and recognition of the right of use assets including related security deposits and corresponding lease liabilities" of lease contracts for its store operations.



UltraTech Cement rose by 2.7 per cent after the cement maker reported around 36 per cent jump in profit after tax for the last quarter of 2023-24.

IndusInd Bank, State Bank of India, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Tata Consultancy Services, Bajaj Finance and HDFC Bank were the other major gainers.

HCL Technologies tanked nearly 6 per cent after the company reported a flat year-on-year growth in net profit in the March quarter at ₹3,986 crore. ITC, Wipro and Bajaj Finserv were the other laggards.

"The Indian benchmark in-

Among the indices, bankex

mained unchanged. In Asian markets, Seoul, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory.

jumped 2.70 per cent, financial

services by 1.81 per cent), utili-

ties 1.12 per cent, power by 0.90

per cent and energy by 0.79 per

cent. Realty and services were the

A total of 2,015 stocks advanced

hile 1.894 declined and 179 re-

laggards.

European markets were trading on a mixed note. Wall Street ended with gains Friday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.51 per cent to USD 89.04 a barrel

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹3,408.88 crore Friday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark Sensex tanked 609.28 points or 0.82 per cent to settle at 73,730.16 Friday. The NSE Nifty declined 150.40 points or 0.67 per cent to 22,419.95.

pital details, and dedicated

Rao said, "When it comes to mining, we have done a lot of auctions. We have put 38 blocks (critical mineral) on auction... We are going to come up with the next auction in end June so this auction process will continue,' the secretary explained. Rao said that due to the gov-

ernment's efforts, the exploration of a lot of critical blocks was undertaken in the last two years. Consequently, over 100 critical mineral blocks are on the table for taking up for auction.

How to read a Customer Information Sheet?

nsurance, as we know it, provides a financial safety net in times of uncertainty. As we navigate life's ups and downs, comprehensive insurance coverage plays a crucial part in securing the unpredictable future. However, understanding the legal jargon and complex terms and conditions can be tricky and may require time and effort. Especially when it comes to health insurance, one must take the time and go through the policy document carefully to understand the crucial details and coverages of the policy thoroughly.

So, have you ever wondered about the convenience of having all the vital details for understanding the policy available and presented at a glance, simplifying the decision-making process? That is precisely what the CIS or Customer Information Sheet does for a policyholder. While the CIS has existed for some years, it is now enhanced with a few comprehensive information necessary for convenient review and under-

introduced revised CIS educates customers on features and will offer key policy details in a summarised format, thereby reducing information asymmetry between the policyholders and the insurer.

How to read the document?

The revised CIS is improved to cover and capture various policy aspects in a clear, uncomplicated, and uniform format. The CIS document adopts a user-friendly tabular format, providing information in concise and straightforward language for easy comprehension. Moreover, each heading will have a detailed description to enhance clarity and facilitate understanding. Furthermore, the headings will reference a corresponding clause in the policy document, emphasising the importance of reading the CIS in conjunction with the policy document for a holistic understanding of the information pro-

vided. So, to begin with, thoroughly review the name of the policy, which will be displayed at the be-

ginning of the document. The CIS will also give you information on the type of policy taken, whether indemnity, benefit, or both. It will also provide details regarding the sum insured that vou are covered for under the policy. The CIS will also

provide crucial in-

formation on the

coverages to

understand

what you are

covered for

in the policy

taken. Next,

examine the

major exclu-

sions to gain

a clear un-

derstanding of

what you are

not covered for.

ing periods

that

Additionally,

pay attention to

any stipulated wait-

may apply to your policy. Further, evaluate the payment basis, taking note of any co-payment, deductibles, and sub-limits that may be in effect. It also provides a comprehensive understanding of the free-look cancellation period, policy renewal, and

details regarding migration and portability specific to the opted policy.

For a stream lined and seamless claim process, the CIS provides valuable insights into the claim procedure. including the turnaround

time for claim settlement. information on network hos

helpline numbers. Moreover, it is important that the policyholders understand their obligations, too. Therefore, the CIS will also highlight the responsibilities of the policyholder or the insured. like the need to ensure fair disclosures of relevant information related to their health status, including any preexisting conditions. It also explains the potential implications in the claim settlement in the event of non-disclosure. By meticulously examining these elements, you can equip yourself with a comprehensive understanding of your insurance coverage, empowering informed decision-making and ensuring a seamless experience throughout your policy tenure.

Benefits

Is a seemingly simple sheet of paper possible to hold profound long-term benefits? Yes, CIS has the potential to go beyond mere documentation. Typically, an insurance policy document is lengthy and cumbersome to go through. Keeping customer centricity in mind, the CIS will help reduce the complexities the policyholders may face while purchasing an insurance policy. This will also invariably enhance the overall service experience for policyholders, making the process of buying insurance more straightforward.

The initiative led by the IRDAI will also enhance the clarity of conveying essential policy information and actively contribute towards better-informed policyholders. This can further translate to increased persistency, reduced grievances, and an overall hassle-free insurance experience for the policyholder. This, in turn, has the potential to narrow the insurance gap and enhance insurance penetration. Furthermore, this CIS will act as a vital communication bridge between the policyholders and the insurers, promoting transparency and building trust. This will also help cultivate a more informed and empowered insurance consumer base, positively impacting thelarger canvas of societal wellbeing.

standing. The recently



BHASKAR NERURKAR

Head - Health Administration Team, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance



* VARUN, SALT PROPEL KKR Rahul eyes WT20 spot as Lucknow take on MI



Varun Chakravarthy celebrates a wicket with teammates, Monday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 29: Spinner Varun Chakravarthy worked his magic to claim three important wickets before Phil Salt's scintillating half-century as Kolkata Knight Riders secured a convincing sevenwicket win over Delhi Capitals in the IPL here Monday.

Chakravarthy (3/16) shone in the middle overs following Vaibhav Arora's fine start (2/29) that limited Delhi to a modest 153/9 after Rishabh Pant opted to bat. On a two-paced pitch where most batters struggled, Salt capitalised on a reprieve on 15 to smash a 33-ball 68 (7x4, 5x6).

He forged a 79-run opening wicket partnership with Sunil Narine that came off just 38 balls. Skipper Shreyas Iyer (33 n o, 23b, 3x4, 1x6) and Venkatesh Iver (26 n o) then completed the chase as KKR cantered home in 16.3 overs to improve their net run-rate to 1.096.

KKR now have the best runrate in the 10-team standings as they consolidated their position at second place with 12 points from nine matches

DC's Lizard Williams will surely want to forget this outing. He bore the brunt of a wayward opening over that yielded 23 runs to set the tone for KKR's easy chase. There was worse in store for Williams in the next over as he spilled a sitter from Salt. There was no stopping the

World No.2 T20I batter from

thereon as he brought up a 26-ball fifty, his fourth from nine matches. With Salt firing on all cylinders, KKR raced to 79 for no loss in six overs.

Left-arm spinner Axar Patel (2/25) was introduced in the seventh over and he made an immediate impact, dismissing Narine (15) while in his next over, he cleaned up Salt and one wondered why Delhi brought into play their spin attack only after the power play.

Earlier, there were no fireworks for a change at this venue which has witnessed record runs being scored and innumerable sixes being hit so far in the season. The returning Arora gave KKR a fine start in the powerplay after Delhi opted to bat on a tacky wicket.

Introduced in the ninth over, Chakravarthy then spun a web as he bowled his four overs on the trot and snared the key wickets of Pant (27), Tristan Stubbs (4) and impact sub Kumar Kushagra (1).

The KKR bowlers dominated the powerplay, reducing Delhi to 67/3 on a pitch that seemed to be two-paced as batters struggled to get their timing right. Making a return after missing the last two matches, seamer Arora seized the early initiative, striking twice for KKR inside four overs.

First, Arora halted Prithvi Shaw's brisk start and dismissed him for 13. Then, he bowled a peach of a delivery that angled



in before darting away after pitching to clean up Hope (6). The Eden Gardens also missed a Jake Fraser-McGurk special

with Starc taking the latest IPL sensation's wicket in the third over. From Delhi's perspective, their run-rate was way above 11 and they needed someone to consolidate but KKR kept taking wickets. Pant got a reprieve on 18, when

Rana dropped a sitter, but the Delhi skipper looked scratchy and was dismissed by Chakravarthy. Harshit Rana also finished with two wickets (2/28). Veteran Sunil Narine went about his task quietly to end with 1/24.

On a day their batters failed to capitalise, Kuldeep became Delhi's top-scorer and his 26-ball 35 not out (5x4, 1x6) against his for-

mer franchise was the reason they crossed the 150.

BRIEF SCORES

DC 153/9 (Kuldeep Yadav 35 n o, Rishabh Pant 27; Varun Chakravarthy 3/16, Harshit Rana 2/28, Vaibhav Arora 2/29) lost to KKR 157/3 (Phil Salt 68, Shreyas Iyer 33 n o, Venkatesh Iyer 26 n o; Axar Patel 2/25) by 7 wickets.





PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, April 29: With ICC T20 World Cup (World T20/WT20) selection round the corner, KL Rahul will have one final chance to stake claim on the second wicketkeeper's spot in the Indian team when Lucknow Super Giants host Mumbai Indians in the IPL here Tuesday.

Rahul's strike-rate in T20 cricket has always been a bone of contention. Despite the advantage of field restrictions in the powerplay, Rahul has often started his innings on a slow note in the IPL. However, the LSG captain has managed to change gears this season.

In the 2024 edition, he has scored 378 runs at a strike rate of 144.27 but it is still less than that of Rishabh Pant (160.60) and Sanju Samson (161.08).

While comeback man Pant has all but sealed the first wicketkeeper's spot in the marquee event in the Caribbean islands and the USA in June by displaying some sharp work behind the stumps and sensational knocks with the bat, Samson has also made a strong case for himself by playing match-winning knocks for Rajasthan Royals at a brisk pace.

In such a scenario, Rahul needs to play more fearlessly and exploit the field restrictions not only to strengthen his Indian team selection prospects but also to help his side score in excess of 200 runs, which has become a norm in this edition.

LSG were handed a sevenwicket loss by Rajasthan Royals. The onus will also be on the team's big hitting troika of Quinton de Kock, Marcus Stoinis and Nicholas Pooran to hit those towering maximums and get match-winning totals as the race for the playoffs. They will fancy their chances

against a struggling Mumbai bowling unit which was carted all over the park by the Delhi Capitals batters the other day. MI bowlers struggled to find answers against young Jake Fraser-McGurk, who wreaked havoc in the powerplay.

Even the world-class Jasprit Bumrah conceded a 19-run over before returning to his frugal self while the likes of Luke Wood and skipper Hardik Pandya were pummelled into submission.

MI find themselves in a precarious position sitting ninth on the points table. They need to win all their matches to stay alive in the competition.

The likes of Indian skipper Rohit Sharma, premier T20 batter Suryakumar Yadav would be like to get into the rhythm and churn out some consistent performances ahead of the WC. All-rounder Pandya has flopped with the bat and ball this season.

MATCHDAY Indian Premier League LSG vs MI Time: 07:30 pm Telecast: Star Sports Network

Stream: Jio Cinema

CT venues named

Lahore: The Pakistan Cricket Board has earmarked Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi as venues for next year's Champions Trophy (CT), continuing to insist that the tournament will stay in the country despite speculation of a 'hybrid model' being under consideration to ensure India's participation. The Champions Trophy, which was last played in England in 2017, is expected to be held tentatively in February-March next year. India have not yet confirmed participation and there is speculation that the ICC could use the 'Hybrid Model' and hold the country's matches at a neutral venue if the team do not get government clearance to travel. The ICC has already made it clear that it will not ask any member nation to defy government policy.

City keep pace with Arsenal in title race

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, April 29: Manchester City kept their advantage in the Premier League title race after securing a 2-0 win at Nottingham Forest Sunday after Arsenal survived a late scare at Tottenham to stav narrowly ahead in the race for the Premier League title. Arsenal's 3-2 victory against Spurs helped them keep the top position in the 20-team table having a point ahead of the defending champions, who have a game in hand. The advantage is still with Pep Guardiola's team, which will clinch a fourth-straight title if they win their remaining games this season and responded to Arsenal's win with victory of their own at relegation-fighting Forest.

were always favourites to beat a Forest team that is desperately fighting for survival but without Phil Foden, who was ill, and Erling Haaland on the bench, Guardiola was without two of

Mumbai City set up ISL title date with **Mohun Bagan SG**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 29: Mumbai City FC (MCFC) notched up a 2-0 win over FC Goa in their second leg semifinal of the Indian Super League (ISL) here

India in Thomas Cup quarters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chengdu (China), April 29: Defending champions India sailed to the knockout stage of the Thomas Cup with a 5-0 rout of England in a Group C contest here Monday. India, who defeated Thailand 4-1 in their opening tie, notched up a second consecutive win to qualify for the quarterfinals. HS Prannoy returned to winning ways, defeating Harry Huang 21-15, 21-15 to give India a 1-0 lead. "To give a start to the team is really important, it gives a good boost to the team to go ahead. It is really important to finish off the matches clinically, you saw against Thailand one match was bad for us. So it's important to finish off the matches clinically,' Prannov said after his match. The star pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty was stretched to three games by Ben Lane and Sean Vendy in the first doubles fixtures before 2022 World Champions bronze medallist picked up a 21-17, 19-21, 21-15 win in one hour five minutes.



With Liverpool's title hopes further diminishing after dropping five points in two games this week, it is down to Arsenal to challenge City's domestic dominance.

Arsenal's win meant the pressure was on City to keep the heat on their title rivals. They

1

his big match-winners in the starting 11. An injury to goalkeeper Ederson also forced City into a change at halftime.

But Guardiola's team look to be in unstoppable form and a 2-0 win extended their unbeaten record in the league to 19 games, dating back to a 0-1 loss to Aston Villa at the start of December.

Back then there were questions about City's ability to win a sixth title in seven years. While Arsenal may lead the way, City's title-winning know-how could make the difference.

So could Haaland, who stepped off the bench to score the goal that effectively killed off Forest's challenge. The goal saw Haaland move clear of Cole Palmer as the league's top scorer with 21 goals. Josko Gvardiol headed City in front in the first half, but Chris Wood had two clear chances from close range to score for Forest.

Monday, setting up a bumper summit showdown with Mohun Bagan SG.

Mumbai City confirmed their placing in the title clash with a thumping 5-2 victory on aggregate across both legs against the Gaurs as they had edged past Goa with a late surge to secure a 3-2 victory in the first leg.

The final, to be played in Kolkata Saturday, will be rematch of the 2020-21 title clash. Mohun Bagan made it to the final after getting the better of Odisha FC across the two legs. After a goalless first half, Jorge-

Pereyra Diaz broke the deadlock and put Mumbai City FC ahead with his strike in the 69th minute. Playing at the Mumbai Football Arena, the home team doubled their lead through Lallianzuala Chhangte's 83rdminute goal.

Former World No.1 Kidambi Srikanth recorded a 21-16, 21-11 victory over Nadeem Dalvi to give

HS Prannoy reacts after winning a point against Harry Huang during India's Thomas Cup match against England, Monday

India an unassailable 3-0 lead. "Happy with the way both the matches have gone for me (in the tournament). There is a lot of pressure on players to win games. I feel I have played little easier opponents so far. But from now we will face better opponents and I have to be my best." Srikanth said. On his recent form, Srikanth

said: "I'm playing well but not able to pull off the matches. Obviously people will compare how I was playing from 2021-2022. I was in my 20s then."

The second doubles pair of MR Ariun and Dhruy Kapila then brushed aside Rory Easton and Alex Green 21-17, 21-19. In the final match, 24-year-old Kiran George prevailed 21-18, 21-12 over Cholan Kayan to wrap up the fixture.

India will take on group toppers and record 14-time champions Indonesia in their final group fixture Wednesday.

Deepika back in TOPS

New Delhi: Former World No.1 archer Deepika Kumari, who won a silver medal at the justconcluded World Cup in Shanghai, has been re-inducted into the **Target Olympic Podium Scheme** (TOPS) core group ahead of the Paris Games, the Sports Ministry announced Monday. Deepika, who missed the entire season last year after becoming a mother in December 2022, recently made a comeback and has been doing well both at the domestic and international stage. The 29-yearold recurve archer, who is a threetime Olympian, had also medalled at the Asia Cup earlier this year.

BRUP AIRNAYS

-Erling Haaland was delighted after scoring for Manchester City against Nottingham Forest in their Premier League match, Sunday

IFORTABLE ALCARAZ EARNS CON

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, April 29: Carlos Alcaraz continues to make a successful return from injury at the Madrid Open. The two-time defending champion cruised past Thiago Sevboth Wild in the third round Sunday to earn another comfortable win.

Alcaraz won 6-3, 6-3 for his second straight victory in his first tournament after skipping Monte Carlo and Barcelona because of an arm injury. The second-seeded Alcaraz had made his debut at the tournament with a 6-2, 6-1 win over Alexander Shevchenko.

Alcaraz had been scheduled to play at the Monte Carlo Masters and he also missed Barcelona to try to fully recover ahead of the French Open next month.

No.3-ranked Alcaraz is trying to become the first player to win

three straight Madrid Open titles. He will next face Jan-Lennard Struff, his opponent in last year's final in Madrid

Andrey Rublev continued his return to form with a 7-6(12-10), 6-4 win against Alejandro Davidovich Fokina. The World

No.8 arrived in Madrid coming off a four-match losing streak before defeating Facundo Bagnis in his opening match.

Tallon Griekspoor got his first top-20 win on clay Sunday by defeating World No.12 Holger Rune 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 to reach the

fourth round at an ATP 1000 event for just the second time. American Taylor Fritz, coming off an appearance in the final in Munich, defeated Sebastian Baez 6-2, 6-3

SABALENKA ADVANCES

Second-ranked Aryna Sabalenka survived a tough test against 19-year-old American wild card Robin Montgomery, prevailing 6-1, 6-7(5-7), 6-4.

Sabalenka is trying to become the second woman to win three Madrid titles after triumphing in the Spanish capital in 2021 and 2023. Petra Kvitova won the Madrid Open in 2011, 15 and '18.

Sabalenka will next face American Danielle Collins, who rallied to defeat Jaqueline Cristian 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 for her 15th straight victory. Collins went into the tournament having won the Charleston Open. and Miami Open.

Squad announced

Auckland: Kane Williamson will lead New Zealand in the T20 World Cup for the fourth time while opener Devon Conway, recovering from a thumb injury, has also been named in the 15-man provisional squad for the ICC event in USA and Caribbean in June. Bowler Matt Henry and batting allrounder Rachin Ravindra are the only two members of the 15 without World T20 experience. This will be Williamson's sixth appearance in a T20 World Cup squad. The squad: Kane Williamson (C), Finn Allen, Trent Boult, Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman, Devon Conway, Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Daryl Mitchell, Jimmy Neesham, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee.

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