



Relationship goals

Actor Raveena Tandon says a couple has to have each other's backs in good as well as bad times

LEISURE | P2



Istanbul fire kills 29

A fire at an Istanbul nightclub kills at least 29 people. Several people, including managers of the club, have been detained for questioning

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Solid growth

India's manufacturing industry enjoys solid growth in March, expanding at the fastest pace in 16 years

BUSINESS | P11



DC face KKR today

After their comfortable win against CSK, Delhi Capitals would be keen to carry their momentum forward when they take on KKR

SPORTS | P12

ECI orders transfer of two DMs, 5 SPs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 2: The Election Commission of India (ECI) Tuesday ordered the Odisha government to transfer eight officers including two district magistrates (DMs), five superintendents of police (SPs) and an IGP.

ECI secretary Rakesh Kumar in a letter to Odisha Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena directed him to transfer the officers to a non-election related work.

"I am directed to state that the Commission has decided that the eight officers be transferred out to a non-election related post with immediate effect," read the letter.

The EC has ordered for transfer of Cuttack District Magistrate (DM) and District Election Officer (DEO) Vineet Bhardwaj, Jagatsinghpur DM & DEO Parul Patawari, Angul SP Sudhansu Sekhar Mishra, Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M, Khurda SP Jugal Kishore Banoth, Rourkela SP Mitrabhanu Mahapatra, Sundergarh SP Kanwar Vishal Singh and IGP central Ashish Singh. P9



AFTERMATH OF A DISASTER: Villagers stand near damaged houses after the recent storm in Jalpaiguri district, Tuesday. At least five people were killed and several others injured after the storm hit parts of the West Bengal district

DGCA SEEKS DAILY REPORT FROM VISTARA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Mumbai, April 2: Aviation watchdog DGCA has asked Vistara to submit a daily report on flight cancellations and delays as the Tata group airline cancelled more than 50 flights for the second straight day, Tuesday, amid non-availability of pilots.

The civil aviation ministry is also monitoring the situation of flight cancellations at Vistara, which saw resignations of at least 15 senior first officers in the recent past. The airline cancelled over 50 flights Tuesday, according to a source.

As per the summer schedule, which started from March 31, the airline is to operate a little over 300 flights daily. It has around 800 pilots.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Tuesday said in view of various flight disruptions of Vistara, it has asked the airline to submit daily information and details of flights that are being cancelled and delayed.

The DGCA officials are also monitoring the situation to ensure compliance with requirements for providing facilities to passengers in case of flight cancellations and delays.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



What's there to think about? Trains and buses hardly run on time

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	CHG	VAR
SENSEX	73903.91	↓	110.64
NIFTY	22453.30	↓	8.70
DOLLAR	83.47	↑	₹0.04
EURO	89.80	↓	₹0.36
GOLD	₹68,834	↑	₹545
SILVER	₹76,918	↑	₹1386

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	37.2°C	38.4°C
Min Temp	26.0°C	25.2°C
Humidity	77%	81%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST: DRY WEATHER VERY LIKELY

No trace of money: SC

Gaping holes have surfaced in the ED-probed Delhi excise policy case that has seen a series of top AAP leaders landing in jail before the upcoming elections, with a Supreme Court bench Tuesday making terse observations on the rationale behind the arrest of Sanjay Singh without a shred of evidence, including the 'bribe' money, to link the Rajya Sabha MP to the alleged scam while granting him bail. The top court's order nevertheless, is being viewed as a jolt to the BJP-led Union government in the backdrop of accusations made by the Aarudh Kejriwal-led party of unleashing Central agencies to arm-twist Opposition to toe to its line, and stifling dissent.

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 2: The Supreme Court Tuesday granted bail to Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Sanjay Singh, arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case related to the Delhi excise policy scam October 4 last year, while posing the Central investigating agency a volley of questions, including why the Rajya Sabha MP had been jailed for nearly six months without a trail or re-



covery of bribe money of Rs 2 crore.

"Nothing has been recovered... there is no trace (of money allegedly received by the AAP as bribes for allotting liquor licences to the 'South Group')..." the SC bench told Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, appearing for ED which claims the party received Rs 600 crore in bribes, while hearing Singh's plea for bail, and an appeal challenging his arrest and remand in the money laundering case.

In the morning session, the SC bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Dipankar Datta and PB Varale asked Raju to take instructions on whether the ED needed further custody of Singh. During the post-lunch session,

Join BJP or be ready for arrest: Atishi

NEW DELHI: Four senior AAP leaders, including herself, would be arrested soon, Delhi minister Atishi said Tuesday, claiming the BJP approached her through a 'very close' person to join it or be prepared to be nabbed by the ED within a month. At a press conference here, Atishi claimed that she, Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj, MLA Durgesh Pathak and Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha would be arrested. However, Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva claimed that Atishi was 'lying'. The entire Aam Aadmi Party was involved in the 'liquor scam' and its leaders were fighting among themselves over the apprehension about who would be the next 'sacrificial lamb', he said. P9

Raju said he has taken instructions from the probe agency and it has no objections if Singh is enlarged on bail.

Taking note of the statement, the bench ordered that Sanjay Singh be released on bail during pendency of trial on terms and conditions set by the trial court. The bench told Raju that no money has been recovered from Singh's possession and the Rs 2 crore bribe allegations can be tested in the trial.

The bench however, said the concession of bail granted to Singh will not be treated as 'precedent'.

The bench said the AAP leader can continue with his political activities but cannot make any statements with regard to the case.

The bench said Singh will remain out on bail during the course of the entire trial and that the terms and conditions for the bail will be fixed by the special court.

During the hearing, senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Singh, said the AAP leader was arrested on the basis of approver Dinesh Arora, who in the tenth statement recorded before the agency has named him.

Meanwhile, the AAP welcomed the Supreme Court's decision calling it 'big day for democracy in the country and a moment of hope'. In a joint press conference, AAP leaders claimed that the court order 'exposed' that the entire liquor scam case was based on statements 'extorted' from witnesses and approvers.

BJP, Cong announce Assembly & LS picks

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 2: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) released its first list of 112 candidates for the Assembly elections, while the Congress announced its initial list of eight Lok Sabha and 49 Assembly nominees, Tuesday.

The lone legislator who has been denied the BJP ticket was Lalitendu Bidyadhar Mohapatra from Brahmagiri in Puri district. Mohapatra's niece Upasana Mohapatra has got the ticket from the seat. There are eight women candidates in the list.

Party state president Manmohan Samal will contest from Chandbali Assembly segment in Bhadrak district while senior party leader and sitting MP from Bargarh Suresh Pujari, who was denied a Lok Sabha ticket this time, will contest from Brajarajnagar Assembly seat.

The BJP has fielded Sisir Mishra against Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik from Hinjili Assembly constituency.

Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Jayanarayan Mishra will contest from his traditional Sambalpur Assembly seat. Five turncoats from BJD—Arabinda Dhali, Akash Dasnayak, Sidhant

Mohapatra, Purna Chandra Sethi and Priyadarshi Mishra — were given BJP tickets.

Jagannath Pradhan has been fielded from Bhubaneswar Central, while Babu Singh from Bhubaneswar Ekamra.

The Congress, on the other hand, released its first list of eight candidates for the Lok Sabha polls and 49 Assembly nominees. The party renominated its sitting MP Saptagiri Ulaka, who will contest from the Koraput seat.

The other candidates for the Lok Sabha seats are Sanjay Bhoi (Bargarh), Janardan Dehury (Sundargarh), Manoj Mishra (Bolangir), Droupadi Majhi (Kalahandi), Bhujabal Majhi (Nabarangpur), Amir Chand Nayak (Kandhamal) and Rashmi Ranjan Patnaik (Berhampur).

Among the Assembly poll nominees, it named Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Sarat Pattnaik as the candidate for Nuapada, while the party's campaign committee chairman and former Union minister Bhakta Charan Das will contest from Narla seat in Kalahandi district. Bureaucrat-turned-politician Bijay Patnaik has been fielded from the Parlakheundi seat in Gajapati district. MORE P3

12 Naxals killed in encounters

AGENCIES

Raipur/Balaghat, April 2: As many as 12 Naxalites, including two women cadres, were gunned down in two separate exchanges of fire with security personnel in Chhattisgarh and neighbouring Madhya Pradesh, Tuesday.

In the first incident, 10 Naxalites, including a woman, were killed in an encounter in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, police said.

The gunfight occurred around 6 am in a forest between Lendra and Korcholi villages under the Gangaloor police station area, where a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxal operation, Inspector General of Police (Bastar Range) Sundarraj P said.

Personnel belonging to the District Reserve Guard (DRG), Special Task Force (STF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and its elite unit Commando Battalion

for Resolute Action (CoBRA) were involved in the operation, he said.

"After the exchange of fire stopped, bodies of four Naxalites were recovered from the spot, and subsequently, six more bodies were found at the encounter site during the search," the IG said.

A light machine gun (LMG), a .303 rifle, a 12-bore gun, a large number of barrel grenade launchers and shells, and other arms and ammunition were also seized from the spot, he said.

A search operation was still underway in the area, he said.

"The identity of the Naxalites was yet to be ascertained but prima facie, it appears that they belonged to PLGA (Peoples' Liberation Guerilla Army) company no. 2 of Maoists," the official said.

In the second incident, two hardcore ultras, including a woman, were killed in an encounter with police in Madhya Pradesh's Balaghat district, an official said.

World's oldest monarchy makes Instagram debut

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tokyo, April 2: Japan's imperial family, the world's oldest monarchy, made an Instagram debut with a barrage of posts, hoping to shake off their reclusive image and reach out to younger people on social media.

The Imperial Household Agency, a government agency in charge of the family's affairs, posted 60 photos and five videos Monday showing Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako's public appearances over the past three months.

The agency said they wanted the public to have a better understanding of the family's official duties and that Instagram was chosen because of its popularity among youth.

By Monday evening, their verified account Kunaicho_jp had more than 2,70,000 followers.

The first photo published was of the imperial couple sitting

on a sofa with their 22-year-old daughter Princess Aiko, all smiling as they marked New Year's Day. Other postings also included the Imperial couple's meetings with foreign dignitaries, including Brunei Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah and his wife.

A video of Naruhito addressing well-wishers during his February 23 birthday celebrations garnered over 21,000 views in less than a day.

So far, the images are limited to the family's official duties and do not include private or candid moments. The agency said it was considering adding activities of other royal members.

"It's nice we get to see a bit of their activities because we hardly know what they are doing," said Koki Yoneura, a 21-year-old student. "It's good that they seem to be a bit closer to us."

Yukino Yoshiura, also a student, said she was excited to see



more posts about Princess Aiko. "Aiko-sama is close to our age and just graduated from university, so I'm very happy to be able to see her images," she said, using a respectful honorific to refer to the princess.

However, both students said they didn't plan on following the royal family's Instagram account.

The Japanese imperial family's social media debut comes 15 years after Britain's royal fam-

ily joined X, formerly Twitter, in 2009.

"I actually assumed they already had one. So I am surprised it's just now that they are making one," said Daniela Kuthy, an American student. She said the content seemed "very PR-clean," but that wasn't necessarily a negative thing.

Naruhito's father, Emperor Emeritus Akihito — who abdicated the throne in 2019 — and his wife were popular during

their reign. But the royal family's fans largely belong to older generations.

Palace officials had been considering using social media to get more people interested in the family and their activities. Last year, the agency set up a team of experts to study the effects of using social media on the imperial family.

The agency had become cautious after the Emperor's niece Mako Komuro and her commoner husband faced a severe backlash on social media and in tabloids following concerns over her mother-in-law's financial situation, causing her marriage to be delayed. She also declined to receive a dowry as the public did not fully celebrate her union.

The former princess said, at the time, she suffered psychological trauma because of the media bashing, including those online.

leisure

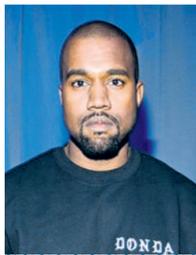


DOHERTY SELLING OFF HER POSSESSIONS

Beverly Hills, 90210 actress Shannen Doherty, who is living with stage 4 cancer, has revealed she's selling off her possessions to 'make things easier' for her mother when she dies. She's using the money to fund some fun trips so that the pair can make memories together, said the 52-year-old.

KANYE WEST SHUTS DOWN HIS INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

Rapper Kanye West, who is known for his rants on social media, often has a turbulent relationship with social media. West, who had received a lot of flak over his anti-Semitic posts, has now shut down his Instagram account.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
You will be very logical and rational today, as creativity is put on the back-burner. The situation at your workplace will be full of challenges, but you will take them head-on. Later, all the stress will be mitigated by the soothing touch of your loved ones, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
It will be an optimistic day with its share of day dreaming, says Ganesh. You will be submissive at work, giving in or blindly following the advice of your peers. Things at work may be tense and cause some trouble today afternoon, but they will be much more to your liking by nightfall as you return to the comfort of your beloved and your home.

GEMINI
Today will prove to be an emotional and engaging day for you, predicts Ganesh. Fortune will favour you, though your emotions may cloud your reasoning and slow down your progress. Your spare time will be spent on devising methods to make the best use of your knowledge.

CANCER
Today, you will use money to fulfil your needs. If there is anything that according to you needs changing, you will throw some money to get it changed. Your loved ones will celebrate your financial gains and spend some more of it in the process.

LEO
Maybe it is the weather, or just one of those days, but today, you are extremely prone to wild mood swings, says Ganesh. You must remember that nothing is permanent, except change. So go with the flow and do not get caught in the undercurrent of the changes that are taking place all around you.

VIRGO
Today you will find yourself overflowing with ideas. You have a soothing touch, the hands of a healer, and so you will be able to help many people, says Ganesh. You will be very considerate, and your mind-reading abilities will work wonders both for you and your loved ones.

LIBRA
Love is in the air, and passion lurks right around the corner. So keep your eyes and ears open, because you may soon find yourself entrapped in a passionate love episode. But the price of new love is always steep, and your beloved may burn a hole in your pocket.

SCORPIO
You shall groom yourself all prim and proper today. The thought of how you look dominates your mind today. You are likely to capture the imagination of people - both at work and at social gathering. Cash will exit left, right and centre from your pockets on account of fun and entertainment.

SAGITTARIUS
Dark and gloomy shall be your temperament for most part of the day today. But the afternoon may just see the skies clearing. The apparent mood change, says Ganesh; will mainly be because of good news from abroad and business profits from your partner.

CAPRICORN
Certain revelations about a relationship will draw your attention; you will find it intriguing and will spend a good amount of time trying to solve the mystery, says Ganesh. Besides, your impressive communication power will help dissolve conflicts that may have risen because of misinterpretation.

AQUARIUS
You have managed to carve a niche for yourself. Today, you may see the tangible benefits of all your past hard work. But business rivals may poke and pinch; even your health may trouble you. However, your will manage to smile and take things in the right spirit, approves Ganesh.

PISCES
You are unlikely to be your calm and lucid self today. You will likely catch yourself worrying unnecessarily and putting in more efforts than required at work. However, some leisure time will come your way in the evening wherein you will regain your usual perspective, says Ganesh.

Priyanka can't wait to tell tale of love, hunger

Mumbai: Priyanka Chopra might have moved to a foreign land, but she hasn't cut ties with the country she was born into. After conquering the film industry, she moved to producing and backing stories that needed to be told. One such tale is of a courageous tiger and the lovely bond she shares with her cub. PeeCee Tuesday revealed the release date of the OTT film titled *Tiger*.

She took to Instagram and shared the powerful poster featuring a tigress and her cub. Her post read, "*Tiger*, a story that captures the wild and brings out everything that happens within it - tales of love, conflict, hunger, survival and so much more. In the bustling jungle, where creatures big and small, timid and majestic roam, there's Amba - a tiger with a timeless legacy. She cares for her cubs with so much love that the beautiful bond between mother and child shines through. I had so much fun lending my voice to this in-

credible story and exploring the jungles through this film. I can't wait for y'all to enjoy the jungle with us! 'Tiger' on your screens this Earth Day, 22nd April." She also dropped a teaser of the wildlife documentary which is going to be released on on Disney+ Hotstar. The *Bay Watch* star will be narrating the story of Amba living in the vast jungle of India.



Aryan sparks dating rumours with Brazilian star

Mumbai: The dating rumours of Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan have stirred the internet. According to reports, he has allegedly been involved with Brazilian model turned-actress Larissa Bonesi. It all started when an internet user noticed that the star kid was not only following the actress but also her mother, Renata Bonesi. The report further suggested that recently, Larissa's mother had also received a gift from the star kid's clothing brand, D'yavol X. An old video on the internet suddenly started doing the rounds where Aryan was seen attending a concert with Larissa. She has also featured for Aryan's apparel brand, which also starred his dad Shah Rukh and sister Suhana Khan. The rumoured love birds have not yet reacted to the news surround-



ing their alleged relationship. Nevertheless, the bond seems to have evolved between Suhana and Larissa as the two follow each other on the internet. For the unversed, Larissa, born in March 1990, started off modeling at the age of 12 and relocated to India a few years back. Her professional realm expands across multilingual industries. The talented diva has worked in the Hindi, Telugu, and Punjabi film industries.

When Kriti reflected on her ideal life mate

Mumbai: Kriti Sanon is riding high on the success of some of her recent movies like *Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya* and now *Crew* with Kareena Kapoor Khan and Tabu. Kriti at heart is a simple girl and that could be seen in the fact that she had once spoken about her ideal life partner and the importance of small gestures in a relationship. Kriti had said that little thoughts or gestures in a relationship are so meaningful. In an interview with *Vogue India*, Kriti had said that she's longing for mornings wherein

she would soak in some sunshine, have cuddles with her puppies with someone really special by her side. Talking more about her ideal partner, she expressed the desire to have someone who values small details. "Something as insignificant as carrying a jacket while going to the movies in case I feel cold or thoughtfully ordering food when I come back home after working late can make a relationship feel so meaningful," said Kriti. On the work front, Kriti's last release *Crew* had a great first weekend as it made around Rs 30 crore in India. The actress has also turned producer and her first project is *Do Patti* alongside Kajol which will release on OTT.



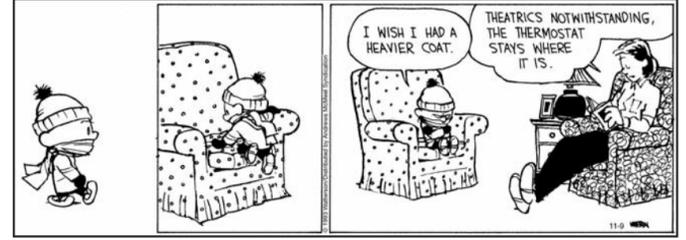
Raveena defines relationship goals

Mumbai: Raveena Tandon has talked about relationships and her on-screen romance with co-star Manav Vij in the streaming film *Patna Shuklla*. Raveena, who has been married to film distributor Anil Thadani for over two decades, said, "I believe that a successful marriage is the result of a strong partnership. You have to have each other's backs in good as well as bad times." Talking about her character, she added: "Tanvi and her husband have their own bumps in the relationship however, they stand solidly by each other." The actress said that one thing that the film highlights is how communication plays an important role between the couple. "One important thing that *Patna Shuklla* shows is how strong is the communication between the Shuklla couple, no matter what, they talk it out, fight it out and for me, they are relationship goals," Raveena said. *Patna Shuklla* is streaming on Disney+ Hotstar.

PEANUTS



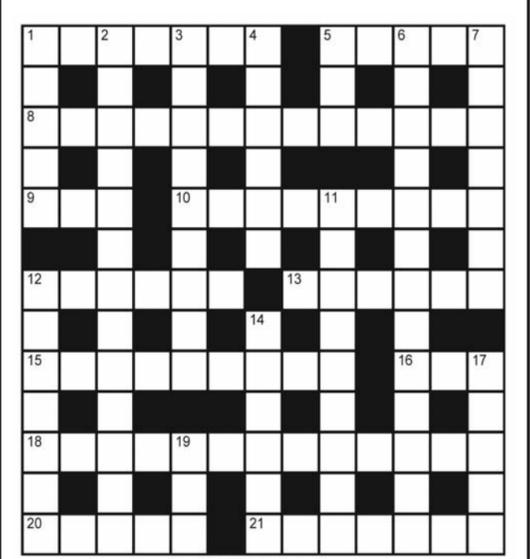
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Tombstone inscription
 - 5 English psychic and occult author Leek
 - 8 Taking advantage
 - 9 Apple picker
 - 10 Educate
 - 12 Distributed, as blankets by the Red Cross
 - 13 Overcharge
 - 15 Memory loss, at times (5-4)
 - 16 Increases
 - 18 Marine supplier (5,8)
 - 20 Poison plant
 - 21 Level
 - Down**
 - 1 Overact
 - 2 Art movement
 - 3 Understanding
 - 4 Like some wages
 - 5 Go downhill fast?
 - 6 Take the bull by the horns (4,3,6)
 - 7 Permit
 - 11 Quarry worker (4,5)
 - 12 Stands firm
 - 14 Interlocks
 - 17 Truth
 - 19 Pouch

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

T	Y	P	O	S	T	A	T	I	O	N	S
U	R	S	H	R	R	U					
R	O	O	S	T	E	R	I	D	I	O	M
N	M	R	A	G	G	O					
P	R	O	C	E	S	S	I	O	N	A	L
I	P	H	N	M	B						
K	A	R	A	T	E	B	O	N	I	T	O
E	A	O	I	M	N						
O	U	T	M	A	N	O	E	U	V	R	E
T	C	Y	T	T	A	H					
S	T	O	I	C	E	N	R	O	U	T	E
A	U	T	R	Y	L	A					
R	E	S	O	N	A	N	T				
S	T	U	D								

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

CITY & STAGE PLAY

Artistes stage a play 'Chithi' organised jointly by Odia Language, Literature and Culture department, Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi and Odisha Natya Sangha at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



PIC: MAUSAM NANDA



AT LORD'S ABODE: Devotees stand in long queues to enter Srimandir in Puri, Tuesday

PIC: YAGNESWAR MOHANTY

BJP, CONG CANDIDATES FOR UPCOMING POLLS

The BJP released the list of candidates for 112 of the 147 Assembly constituencies in the state, while the Congress named its candidates for eight Lok Sabha and 49 Assembly seats, Tuesday

BJP

SL NO.	ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCY	CANDIDATE
1.	Padampur	Gobardhan Bhoj
2.	Bijepur	Sanat Kumar Gartia
3.	Bargarh	Ashwini Kumar Sarangi
4.	Attabira	Nihar Ranjan Mahananda
5.	Bhatli	Irasis Acharya
6.	Brajarajnagar	Suresh Pujari
7.	Jharsuguda	Tankadhar Tripathy
8.	Talsara	Bhabani Shankar Bhoi
9.	Sundergarh	Kusum Tete
10.	Biramitrapur	Shankar Oram
11.	Raghunathpali	Durga Charan Tanti
12.	Rajgangapur	Narsingha Minz
13.	Bonai	Sebati Nayak
14.	Kuchinda	Rabinarayan Naik
15.	Rengali	Nauri Nayak
16.	Sambalpur	Jayanarayan Mishra
17.	Rairakhol	Debendra Mohapatra
18.	Deogarh	Subash Ch Panigrahi
19.	Anandapur	Alok Kumar Sethi
20.	Keonjhar	Mohan Charan Majhi
21.	Jashipur	Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia
22.	Udala	Bhaskar Madhei
23.	Badasahi	Sanatan Bijuli
24.	Baripada	Prakash Soren
25.	Morada	Krushna Chandra Mohapatra
26.	Jaleswar	Braja Pradhan
27.	Balasore	Manas Kumar Dutta
28.	Remuna	Gobinda Chandra Das
29.	Soro	Rajendra Das
30.	Simulia	Padmalochan Panda
31.	Bhadrak	Sitansu Sekhar Mohapatra
32.	Dhamnagar	Suryabanshi Suraj
33.	Chandabali	Manmohan Samal
34.	Binjharpur	Babita Mallick
35.	Barchana	Amar Kumar Nayak
36.	Dharmasala	Smruti Rekha Pahi
37.	Jajpur	Goutam Ray
38.	Korei	Akash Dasnayak
39.	Sukinda	Pradeep Balasamantha
40.	Dhenkanal	Krushna Chandra Patra
41.	Kamakshyanagar	Satrugnan Jena
42.	Parjanga	Bibuti Bhusan Pradhan
43.	Pallahara	Ashok Mohanty
44.	Talcher	Kalandi Ch Samal
45.	Angul	Pratap Ch. Pradhan
46.	Chhendipada	Agasti Behera
47.	Athamalik	Sanjeeb Sahoo
48.	Birmaharajpur	Raghunath Jagdala
49.	Sonepur	Pramod Mahapatra
50.	Loisingha	Mukesh Mahaling
51.	Patnagarh	Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo
52.	Bolangir	Gopalji Panigrahi
53.	Titlagarh	Naveen Jain
54.	Kantabanji	Laxman Bag
55.	Nuapada	Abhinandan Kumar Panda
56.	Khariar	Hitesh Kumar Bagarti
57.	Umarkote	Nityananda Gond
58.	Nabarangpur	Gouri Sankar Majhi
59.	Lanjigarh	Ramesh Chandra Majhi
60.	Junagarh	Manoj Kumar Meher
61.	Dharmagarh	Sudhir Pattjoshi
62.	Bhawanipatna	Pradipta Kumar Naik
63.	Narla	Aniruddha Padhan
64.	Baliguda	Kalpna Kumari Kanhar
65.	G. Udayagiri	Managobinda Pradhan
66.	Phulbani	Uma Ch Mallick
67.	Kantamal	Kanhai Ch Danga
68.	Boudh	Saroj Pradhan
69.	Baramba	Sambit Tripathy
70.	Banki	Tusharkant Chakrabarti
71.	Athagarh	Abhay Kumar Barik
72.	Choudwar-Cuttack	Nayan Kishore Mohanty
73.	Niali	Chabi Mallick
74.	Cuttack-Sadar	Prakash Ch Sethi
75.	Mahanga	Sumant Ghadei
76.	Patkura	Tejeswar Parida
77.	Aul	Krushna Ch Panda
78.	Mahakalpada	Durga Prasanna Nayak
79.	Paradeep	Sampad Ku Swain
80.	Tirtol	Raj Kishore Behera
81.	Nimapara	Pravati Parida
82.	Puri	Jayanta Kumar Sarangi
83.	Brahmagiri	Upasana Mohapatra
84.	Satyabadi	Om Prakash Mishra
85.	Pipili	Ashrit Kumar Pattnayak
86.	Jayadev	Arabinda Dhali
87.	Bhubaneswar Central	Jagannath Pradhan
88.	Bhubaneswar North	Priyadarshi Mishra

89.	Ekamra-Bhubaneswar	Babu Singh
90.	Jatani	Biswaranjan Badajena
91.	Chilika	Prithiviraj Harichandan
92.	Ranpur	Tapas Ranjan Martha
93.	Khandapada	Dusmanta Swain
94.	Daspalla	Raghav Mallick
95.	Nayagarh	Pratyusha Rajeswari Singh
96.	Bhanjanagar	Pradyumna Kumar Nayak
97.	Polasara	Gokula Nanda Mallick
98.	Kabisuryanagar	Pratap Chandra Nayak
99.	Khallikote	Purna Chandra Sethi
100.	Chhatrapur	Krushna Ch Nayak
101.	Aska	Saroj Kumar Padhi
102.	Surada	Nilamani Bisoyi
103.	Hinjili	Sisir Mishra
104.	Gopalpur	Bibhuti Bhusan Jena
105.	Berhampur	K. Anil Kumar
106.	Digapahandi	Sidhant Mohapatra
107.	Chikiti	Manojaranjan Dyan Samantaray
108.	Paralekhemundi	K Narayana Rao
109.	Gunupur	Trinath Gomanga
110.	Koraput	Raghuram Machha
111.	Pottangi	Chaitanya Hantali
112.	Malkangiri	Narsingh Madkami

CONGRESS

SL NO.	LOK SABHA CONSTITUENCY	CANDIDATE
1.	Bargarh	Sanjay Bhoi
2.	Sundargarh	Janardan Dehury
3.	Bolangir	Manoj Mishra
4.	Kalahandi	Draupadi Majhi
5.	Nabarangpur	Bhujbal Majhi
6.	Kandhamal	Amir Chand Nayak
7.	Berhampur	Rashmi Ranjan Patnaik
8.	Koraput	Saptagiri Ulaka

SL NO.	ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCY	CANDIDATE
1.	Padampur	Tankadhar Sahu
2.	Bijepur	Kishor Dafadar
3.	Bargarh	Nipon Kumar Dash
4.	Bhatli	Brahma Mahakud
5.	Brajarajnagar	Kishore Chandra Patel
6.	Talsara	Prabodh Turkey
7.	Sundargarh	Sudharani Raudia
8.	Biramitrapur	Left to JMM
9.	Raghunathpali	Gopal Das
10.	Rourkela	Birendra Nath Pattnaik
11.	Rangapur	CS Raazen Ekka
12.	Bonai	Left to CPI-M
13.	Loisingha	Om Prakash Kumbhar
14.	Patnagarh	Anil Meher
15.	Bolangir	Samarendra Mishra
16.	Kantabanji	Santosh Singh Saluja
17.	Nuapada	Sarat Pattanayak
18.	Umarkote	Sanraj Gond
19.	Jharigond	Harabati Ghosh
20.	Nabarangpur	Dilip Pradhan
21.	Dabugun	Lipika Majhi
22.	Lanjigarh	Balabhadra Majhi
23.	Junagarh	Tuleswar Naik
24.	Dharmagarh	Rasmirekha Rout
25.	Bhawanipatna	Sagar Charan Das
26.	Narla	Bhakta Charan Das
27.	Baliguda	Surada Pradhan
28.	G. Udayagiri	Prafulla Ch Pradhan
29.	Phulbani	Prativa Kanhar
30.	Kantamal	Manoj Kumar Acharya
31.	Boudh	Naba Kumar Mishra
32.	Banjanagar	Prasanta Bisoyi
33.	Polasara	Agasti Barada
34.	Kabisuryanagar	Chiranjeevi Bisoyi
35.	Surada	Harikrishna Rath
36.	Sanakhemundi	Ramesh Chandra Jena
37.	Chikiti	Ravindra Nath Dyan Samantaray
38.	Mohana	Dasarathi Gomango
39.	Paralekhemundi	Bijay Patnaik
40.	Gunupur	Satyajeet Samango
41.	Bissam Cuttack	Nilamadhab Hikaka
42.	Rayagada	Kadraka Allapaswamy
43.	Laxmipur	Pabitra Saunta
44.	Kotpad	Anama Dian
45.	Jeyapore	Tara Prasad Bahinipati
46.	Koraput	Krushna Ch Kuldeep
47.	Pottangi	Ramchandra Kadam
48.	Malkangiri	Mala Madhi
49.	Chitrakonda	Mangu Khila

SBI refuses to share bond SOP

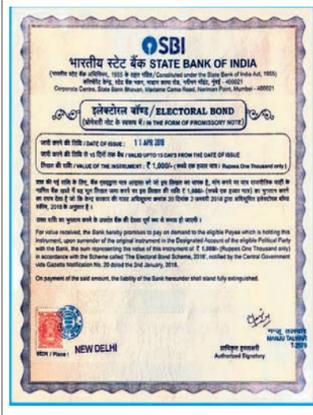
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 2: The State Bank of India (SBI) has refused to disclose its standard operating procedure (SOP) for the sale and redemption of the electoral bonds that were issued to its authorised branches, citing the exemption given under 'commercial confidence', according to an RTI response.

In an application filed under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, transparency activist Anjali Bhardwaj had sought the details of the standard operating procedure issued to the SBI's authorised branches on the sale and redemption of the electoral bonds.

"Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of Electoral Bond Scheme-2018 issued to authorised branches from time to time are internal guidelines with regard to sale and redemption of electoral bonds (meant for internal circulation only), which is exempted under section 8(1)(d) of the Right to Information Act," the response from M Kanna Babu, the central public information officer and deputy general manager of the SBI, said on March 30.

Section 8(1)(d) of the Act exempts from revelation "infor-



In an application filed under the RTI Act, transparency activist Anjali Bhardwaj had sought the details of the SOP issued to the authorised branches of SBI on the sale and redemption of the contentious electoral bonds

ditional time of four months to comply with the Supreme Court's judgment to disclose the details of the electoral bonds," she said.

The RTI response from the SBI was sent within weeks of the apex court admonishing the bank for the non-disclosure of the unique alphanumeric numbers of the bonds in compliance with its directions.

The court said its order required disclosure, specifically of all details of the bonds, including the names of the purchaser, the amounts and the dates of purchase.

A Constitution bench of the top court had directed the SBI to furnish to the Election Commission (EC) all details of the electoral bonds purchased, and as the case may be, redeemed by political parties, including the dates of purchase.

The bench said, "It has been submitted that the SBI has not disclosed the alpha-numeric numbers of the electoral bonds."

In its landmark verdict on February 15, the court scrapped the Centre's electoral bonds scheme that allowed anonymous political funding, calling it "unconstitutional", and ordered disclosure by the EC of the donors, the amounts donated by them and the recipients by March 13.

mation including commercial confidence, trade secrets or intellectual property, the disclosure of which would harm the competitive position of a third party unless the competent authority is satisfied that larger public interest warrants the disclosure of such information".

"It is shocking to note that even after the Supreme Court has struck down the electoral bonds scheme as unconstitutional and explicitly directed and ensured disclosure of all details of the EBs purchased and redeemed, the SBI continues

to deny important information about the operation of the electoral bonds scheme," Bhardwaj said.

She said the SOPs would reveal the official instructions governing the particulars of information that were to be stored as well as the form and manner in which information was to be maintained by the bank on the sale and redemption of the electoral bonds.

"It is relevant to note that the SBI cited the standard operating procedures in its application dated March 4, when it sought ad-

21.5kg marijuana seized; couple held

Bhubaneswar: The Commissionerate Police Tuesday seized 21.5kg marijuana from a four-wheeler (Bolero) under Bharatpur police station and arrested a couple in connection with the case. The arrested were identified as Niranjan Digal, 46, and Jhansi Nayak, 21 - both natives of Giruti village in Kandhamal district, said a senior official at Bharatpur police station. Zone III assistant commissioner of police (ACP) Tapas Chandra Pradhan said, "We were tipped off by Bharatpur IIC in the wee hours of Tuesday that two persons are about to arrive near IGKC with a drugs consignment." The informant said that the accused are planning to sell the drugs in small quantities to avoid police surveillance, Pradhan added. He said the cops rushed to the spot and waited for the vehicle to reach there. As the vehicle approached the service road near IGKC hospital, the police officials intercepted it and conducted a search inside the vehicle. They confiscated the marijuana consignment, the ACP added.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



HOW ROLEX WATCHES PUT PERU PREZ IN SOUP

Peru has had six Presidents since 2018 and current head of state Dina Boluarte is in political hot water and facing calls to step down amid questions about the provenance of her collection of Rolex watches.

Boluarte is under investigation for illicit enrichment for possessing luxury watches without proving how she got them. Dozens of police and prosecutors raided her home and office over Easter weekend looking for evidence in the case.

Boluarte who took power in 2022 after her predecessor was impeached for illegally trying to shutter Congress, saw the beginning of her term marked by protests and ensuing crackdown that left dozens dead.

Despite widespread calls for her resignation or to bring forward elections, Boluarte survived but is now facing renewed calls to step

down over the scandal.

In a televised address to the nation Boluarte called the raid 'abusive' and said she would serve her term until 2026. Congress has already taken initial steps to impeach Boluarte.

What's the Rolex scandal
In March, a popular political YouTube show 'La Encerrona' reviewed thousands of photos of Boluarte and found she wore a number of Rolex watches worth between \$14,000 and \$25,000.

On March 18, the Peru's prosecutor's office announced 'preliminary proceedings' against Boluarte for alleged 'illicit enrichment' and failure to declare ownership of the expensive Rolex watches in documents.

What happened during the raid?
Dozens of prosecutors and police arrived at Boluarte's house near midnight on Good Friday for the search.



In March, a popular political YouTube show 'La Encerrona' reviewed thousands of photos of Boluarte and found she wore a number of Rolex watches worth between \$14,000 and \$25,000

Prosecutors said they had requested the watches from Boluarte but they had not been handed in and the raid produced 'elements of interest' for the in-

vestigation.

Local media outlets published documents from the raid showing at least one Rolex watch, a Datejust 36 model with a purchase date of July 8, 2023. A similar model on Rolex's website costs at least \$14,800.

Eight lower-priced watches from other brands were found in the Government Palace, according to local media reports. Boluarte's salary as President is about \$4,200 with expenses and housing paid for by the state.

What happens next?
Boluarte's defense has asked the prosecutor to postpone the President's testimony, but are now requesting she give a statement Friday April 5 due to the 'political turbulence' the case is causing.

Mostly left-wing opposition legislators presented a motion in Congress Monday to begin

Boluarte's impeachment for 'permanent moral incapacity'. Only 26 of 130 legislators are needed to start the process, 52 votes are needed to debate the impeachment in Congress and 87 are needed to impeach.

Boluarte has already survived two attempts to start impeachment proceedings but both failed to receive 52 votes to proceed. Impeachment is unlikely since right-wing legislators have a majority in Congress and support Boluarte.

Six of Boluarte's ministers, including the interior minister, have resigned Monday over the scandal.

Gustavo Adrianzen, who took over as prime minister in March, must be confirmed by Congress on Wednesday and if he fails the vote of confidence, Dina Boluarte's entire cabinet must resign.

GANESWAR BEHERA QUILTS CONG, LIKELY TO JOIN BJD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 2: Senior Congress leader and former minister Ganeswar Behera Tuesday resigned from the primary membership of the party.

Behera, who hails from Kendrapara district, sent his resignation letter to Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Sarat Pattanayak.

He, however, thanked the party for giving him an opportunity to serve the people of Odisha as an MLA and Congress worker.

Sources said that Ganeswar is likely to join BJD, which is likely to field him from Kendrapara Assembly segment which is re-

served for Scheduled Caste (SC) candidates.

In 2019 polls, Shashi Bhusan Behera of BJD had won the seat by defeating Ganeswar Behera by a margin of 6,320 votes.

Ganeswar has said that his well-wishers and voters of his constituency have been urging him to join the BJD.

Several Congress leaders including former

OPCC working president and ex-MLA Chiranjib Biswal, former minister Surendra Singh Bhoi, sitting MLA Adhiraj Panigrahi, ex-MLA K Surya Rao and Anshuman Mohanty have joined the BJD in the recent past.



WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

Naveen calls for support to persons with autism



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 2: On World Autism Awareness (WAA) Day, Tuesday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik called on people to extend support to autistic individuals for promoting a more inclusive society.

Taking to social media account the CM said, "Awareness about autism will ensure empowerment and acceptance of individuals with autism. On #WorldAutismAwarenessDay, let's reaffirm the commitment to extend more support and power to the autistic individuals for fostering a more inclusive society."

The WAA Day theme this year is 'Empowering Autistic Voices' aimed at providing more support to the individuals with the condition, to help them excel in life and lead a meaningful one.

KIIT International School, under its 'Sen Globe' initiative,

observed WAA Day with a series of events aimed at shedding light on autism and advocating for the acceptance and support of individuals with autism. The dignitaries including Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) chairperson Alka Mishra, KIIT and KISS president Saswati Bal and UNFPA state programme coordinator Mohammad Nadeem Noor graced the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Mishra said that autism should not be seen as a disability but rather a different ability. She stressed the need for developing skills in children with autism, to enable them to be as capable as their peers. Mishra underscored the importance of providing autistic children with various life skills training to harness their unique capabilities.

KIIT International School chairperson Mona Lisa Bal said,

"Under the SEN Global initiative, we have succeeded in putting 15 per cent of the enrolled special children into mainstream education."

Mohammad Noor, in his address, pointed out, "Every child with autism is unique and independent and must be creatively provided education to foster their innate talent". He underscored the necessity of taking special care to nurture creativity among these children.

Saswati Bal advised the parents to offer more love and compassion and accept the fact that their children are specially abled, will eventually lead to a holistic development.

Health expert Amrit Pattojoshi said, "Autism is not rare disease; it affects millions worldwide across all ages."

Gargi Bhattacharya, Chief Trustee, Zain Foundation Trust and crusader of autism spectrum disorder said, "Autism is a developmental disorder, the severity of which varies from individual to individual. People on the autism spectrum have difficulty with social interaction and communicating. They are not retarded but their brains are wired in different ways. We need to step up as a responsible society and include them in the mainstream."

KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta observed the day with children who presented cultural shows on this occasion.



MORNING SCHOOL: Students return home after attending morning classes from Government Girls' High School at Kazi Bazar area in Cuttack, Tuesday OP PHOTO

ECoR freight loading crosses 250MT in FY 23-24

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 2: East Coast Railway (ECoR) has surpassed all records of Indian Railways in freight loading, in the last financial year 2023-24. It became the first zone to cross 250 million tonne (MT) of freight, Tuesday.

ECoR sources Tuesday said during 2023-24 financial year, from April 1 2023 to March 31, 2024, ECoR loaded 256.22 MT of originating freight which is 14.72 MT more and registered a growth of 6.1 per cent in comparison to



the 2022-23 fiscal.

The ECoR has also become the first zone to cross the milestone of 200 MT of freight loading for the fifth time in a row.

The three railway divisions of ECoR have contributed greatly to the stupendous feat achieved

by it. It was the second railway zone after the undivided South Eastern Railway to load 200 MT in the financial year 2019-20.

During the financial year 2023-24, ECoR has loaded 152.95 MT of Coal, 13.29 MT of raw materials to steel plants, 20.77 MT of

Steel and Slag, 31.26 MT of iron ore, 1.24 MT of Cement, 3.24 MT of food grains, 6.46 MT of fertilisers, 3.10 MT of mineral oil, 23.91 MT of freight in containers and other goods. This is 6.1 per cent more than the corresponding period of last year.

Khurda Road division of ECoR has contributed 159.94 MT followed by 76.48 MT by Waltair division and 19.80 MT by Sambalpur division. All the three railway divisions have performed better than previous year and surpassed their last year loading figure.

Actor Sabyasachi turns saviour

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 2: The State Transport Authority (STA) and Commerce and Transport (CT) department Tuesday expressed gratitude to Odia film actor Sabyasachi Mishra for helping two accident victims to reach hospital in time.

Taking to social media account, STA and CT department wrote, "Even if the accident is not avoidable, the life of the accident victim can be saved if he gets medical attention in time. The State Transport Authority appreciates actor Sabyasachi for such greatness."

According to reports, Ashok Rath from Daspalla, Nayagarh was returning from Puri Srimandir with his parents. They met with an accident near Pipili bypass. Ashok and his father Muralidhar fell unconscious after their bike hit a stray cow on the road.

Meanwhile, Sabyasachi, who was also returning from Puri, stopped his vehicle to help the victims. He ensured that the victims reach the nearby hospital and get the treatment.

'Aahaar' initiative completes 9 years of service to people

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 2: 'Aahaar', a state government initiative for subsidised meals to the needy in the urban areas has completed nine years, Tuesday.

The CM Naveen Patnaik, in a post on X, said, "Aahaar is the hope of food security for the poor and helpless in urban areas. Aahaar has gained everyone's admiration by providing a full meal for just ₹5. My best wishes and sincere regards to Mission Shakti mothers and individuals working for its management and success on the occasion of nine years of Aahaar Seva."

The Aahaar programme was launched April 1, 2015 on the auspicious day of 'Utkal Divas' by the CM. The initiative was earlier piloted in five Municipal Corporations - Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur, Sambalpur and Rourkela-with 21 Aahaar kendras.

Currently, a total of 167 Aahaar outlets including 58 outlets (lunch & dinner) near hospitals are operational across the state. The



food to these stations is supplied from 38 central kitchens where it is cooked under standardised hygienic conditions. In order to reach more beneficiaries and make the programme more accessible, the food outlets have been constructed in areas having higher concentration of people. The production cost of each

meal provided under Aahaar is ₹23 rupees. The state government makes this affordable to the poor by bearing ₹18 from the total cost. The consumers are left to pay only ₹5 per meal. A total of 185 Mission Shakti self-help groups manage the Aahaar kitchens and outlets from end to end.

Rashmi chairperson of FICCI FLO Bhub

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, April 2: The director of Ruchi Foodline and founder of Frozit and Rays Foundation, Rashmi Sahoo officially took over as the chairperson of FICCI FLO Bhubaneswar Chapter for the term 2024-25.

The transition of leadership was announced during a ceremony held in New Delhi, where Rashmi succeeded the outgoing chairperson, Poonam Mohapatra, to steer the Chapter towards new heights of growth and development.

She brings a wealth of experience and expertise in the food and agriculture sector. Her visionary leadership and dedication to empowering women entrepreneurs will undoubtedly contribute significantly to the objectives and initiatives of the FICCI FLO Bhubaneswar Chapter.

Rashmi aims to foster a conducive environment for women entrepreneurs, facilitate skill



development programmes and promote inclusive growth across industries. She envisions collaborative efforts with stakeholders to address key challenges and create opportunities for women-led businesses in the region.

She has an honorary degree in Sociology, Diet & Nutrition and is a resource management alumni from the Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI), Mysore. Her commitment to excellence and her passion for driving positive change make her an ideal candidate to lead the FICCI FLO Bhubaneswar Chapter.

NALCO sets new records in production & sales

Bhubaneswar: National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO), the country's leading manufacturer and exporter of alumina and aluminium has created new records in production and sales for the FY 2023-24. The company has achieved the highest-ever Cast Metal production of 4,63,428 Metric Tonnes (MT), highest-ever Bauxite excavation of 76,00,230 MT and Highest-ever Metal Sale of 4,70,108 MT, surpassing all previous records since inception. In FY 23-24, the company has also added a new Aluminium Alloy Ingot (AL-59) to its product range. Achieving 101.15 per cent capacity utilization, NALCO's Alumina Refinery has produced 21,24,000 MT of Alumina Hydrate, while the Captive Power Plant has generated a gross 7193.62million units of power. NALCO CMD Sridhar Patra said that the company has always striven to do better than the previous set benchmarks. Expressing his gratitude for significant achievements, he congratulated the NALCO collective and the stakeholders. Acknowledging the dedication and hard work of the employees and cooperation received from various stakeholders, he said that many major milestones have been achieved by way of backward integration and securitization of raw materials and energy in the past four years.

6 genes found to control one's personality, well-being

Six genes have been found to be at the heart of emotional response and meaning perception, in turn making up one's personality, including their outlook and functioning, according to new research.

These genes were also found to be "highly preserved" throughout evolution, from single-celled organisms to modern humans, a finding that researchers said confirms their crucial role in the functioning of all forms of life on Earth.

The study examined how personality regulates an individual's gene expression and hence, affects their health and well-being. Gene expression happens at the fundamental level of one's being where genes translate into

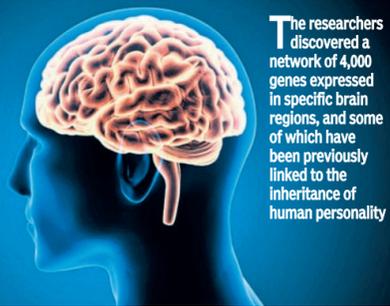
observable traits and behaviour. The researchers said the findings shed new light on the "long-standing mystery" behind how the mind and body interact.

The international team of researchers, including genetics and psychology specialists, led by the University of Grenada, Spain, employed artificial intelligence in analysing data of 459 adults in Finland collected over four decades.

Data was collected on participants' health, physical condition and lifestyle, along with their personality assessments regarding habits and emotional response (temperament), and goals and values (character).

"In our research, we made two key discoveries about the

The international team of researchers, including genetics and psychology specialists, led by the University of Grenada, Spain, employed artificial intelligence in analysing data of 459 adults



They found these genes to be clustered into several modules, involved in regulating gene expression and helping an individual adapt

expression and organisation of genes according to the personality profiles of these individuals," explained Coral del Val, a researcher at the University of Grenada, and co-lead author of

the study published in the journal Molecular Psychiatry.

The researchers discovered a network of 4,000 genes expressed in specific brain regions, and some of which have been previously linked to the inheritance of human personality. They found these genes to be clustered into several modules, involved in regulating gene expression and helping an individual adapt.

"The modules turned on and off in a flexible manner, facilitating adaptation to the everyday challenges we all face, and choreographing our development," said del Val.

"What's most remarkable is the fact that the networks for emotion and meaning (and control-

ling these modules) are coordinated by a control centre made up of six genes," said Elisa Diaz de la Guardia-Bolivar, University of Grenada, the other co-lead author of the study.

"It is particularly interesting that we found that the six genes of the control hub are highly preserved throughout evolution, from single-celled organisms to modern humans. This finding confirms their beneficial role in regulating the functioning of all forms of life on Earth," she said.

The researchers also found that while certain outlooks on life are conducive to a healthy, fulfilling and long life, others lead to a stressful, unhealthy and short life.

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'Tigresses need proper places to give birth'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, April 2: An increase in the population of Royal Bengal Tigers at Similipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district has created happiness in the minds of wildlife lovers. Forest officials have said that if the tigresses in the park get conducive atmosphere for reproduction, then in the years to come, the population will continue to grow. Currently the total number of tigers in the park stands at 27, according to the latest census.

Regional chief conservator of forests (RCCF) Dr Prakash Chand Gogineni said Tuesday that tigresses are not ready to mate under any circumstance. The first and foremost condition for any tigress is to find a suitable place where its cubs will be safe and plenty of food will be available. More than the tiger, it is the tigress which is fiercely protective about its cubs. It rears the cubs, provides them with hunting lessons and finally when they mature, the tigress lets them go on their own. It also leaves the male once the cubs are born.

Gogineni informed that the Similipal Wildlife Sanctuary



had only four Royal Bengal Tigers in 2004. Among them, three were tigresses and the other one was a black melanistic male tiger. One of the tigresses gave birth to melanistic cubs next year after it mated with the male tiger. Out of the 27 Royal Bengal Tigers in Similipal, 14 are females. Five of the tigresses in the recent past have given birth, though the exact number of cubs born is yet to be ascertained. It just goes to show the importance of conducive atmosphere for tigresses. Tigers usually have a life span ranging from 14 to 16 years. From the age of 11, they start getting old. A tigress will never mate with an 'old' tiger as the latter cannot hold on to its own territory. Once a tigress turns pregnant, it goes away from the male. The rules of the tiger king-

Tigresses usually tend to get rid of the weak cubs and look after the ones that are strong and will survive the first few weeks

dom are strange indeed. The tigress usually allows those cubs to suckle her who she deems fit will survive the first six to seven weeks. The weak are neglected and sometimes they die. During the first six-seven months she takes care of the food for the cubs. Then slowly she introduces them to hunting so that by the time they are two years old, they are ready to be on their own. Once the cubs turn into adults, the tigress is ready to mate again and give birth. Prior to that, she will never mate as the cubs cannot fend for themselves.

When contacted, former honorary wildlife warden of Similipal National Park, Bhanumitra Acharya said the Forest department should immediately clampdown on poaching activities in the park. He feels that if it happens, the tiger population in STR will grow substantially in the years to come.



SCINTILLATING PERFORMANCE: Dancers perform at a cultural programme held at the Indira Gandhi Park in Rourkela which was organised by Rourkela Steel Plant on the occasion of Utkal Divas

2 dead, 4 hurt in Bhadrak accident



POST NEWS MISHAP

Bhadrak, April 2: Two persons, including a woman died and four others suffered critical injuries after the SUV in which they were travelling crashed into the rear of a stationary truck at Nalanga on NH-16 under Bhadrak Rural police station limits in this district in the wee hours of Tuesday.

One of the deceased was identified as Pampa Parida, 40, wife of Suresh Parida. However the identity of the other person, the driver of the vehicle, is yet to be ascertained. The injured persons were identified as Suresh, 53, his two daughters Isika Parida, 21, Deepisikha Parida, 14 and Sampa Chowdhury, 35.

Police said that the six persons from Belgharia locality in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal were travelling to Puri in the ill-fated Scorpio (Regd No-WB 24-AY-8234) when the accident occurred. Immediately after the accident, the driver along with the truck fled from the spot. On being informed, police reached the accident site and rescued the persons inside the car. All the six were rushed to the Bhadrak district headquarters hospital where Pampa and the driver were pronounced dead on arrival. The four others were shifted to the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack later in the day as their conditions deteriorated.

Locals said that the accident had occurred as the truck was illegally parked on the highway. They added that steps should be taken to seize illegally parked vehicles.

2 arrested for smuggling heroin

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, April 2: Personnel from the Bhadrak Rural police station have arrested two persons Monday and seized 17.85gm of brown sugar worth ₹2 lakh from their possession. Bhadrak Sadar SDPO, Sourav Otta said Tuesday. The seizure came during checking of vehicles between Rambhila and Ranital in this district Monday. The two arrested persons were identified as Tapan Mallick, 25, resident of Charampa Baulapokhari village and Anil Nayak, 22, belonging to Birigadia village.

Otta informed that the two were travelling on a motorcycle (Regd No- OD 22-X- 6409) when they were stopped by the police. During checking police found



the contraband item hidden inside the bike. Both Tapan and Anil were then arrested. The two were forwarded to court Tuesday after a case (No 229/24) was registered against them.

During interrogation police came to know that the accused had procured the contraband item from a person living in Jaleswar of Balasore district. Police did not disclose the identity of the person because the investigation is still on. Tapan is a history-sheeter with four cases already pending against him, Otta informed.

POLICE YET TO ARREST LOOTERS OF DONATION BOX AT BALADEVJEW TEMPLE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 2: Keonjhar police are yet to arrest any of the miscreants involved in the loot of the donation box at the Sri Baladev Jew Temple, in this district, sources informed Tuesday. After the donation box had been broken open and cash looted, police had promised that security measures will be tightened at the temple. However, three days have elapsed since the loot, but no additional security measures have been implemented, sources added.

The Sri Baladev Jew Temple was established in 1671 and is

spread over an area of more than two acres. The height of the temple is 135 feet while the height of the world famous chariot is 72.4 feet. Currently a project is on for the beautification and development of the temple at a cost of ₹2 crore. However, construction work is preventing the implementation of tighter security measures thereby leaving it open for burglary attempts, people in the know of things pointed out.

Many places in and around the temple, especially the gates are in a dilapidated condition due to construction work. Hence it is an open invitation for burglars to enter the temple, sources informed. "The quality of work is not good and the premises are unsafe as the engineers in charge of the work are not visiting the site regularly. It is clear that both the 'Devottar' and PWD de-



SRI BALADEVJEW TEMPLE

partments have a sloppy attitude towards work. In case of future theft attempts or loot, they should be held responsible," said Ashok Kumar Das, a senior lawyer and devotee.

IIC Town police station Ramakanta Soi informed that they are trying their best to identify the culprits and arrest them. "We are taking all possible steps to identify and arrest the miscreant/s involved in the looting of the donation box. We have also asked the department engaged in construction to tighten security measures," Soi said.

Executive officer of the Endowment department as well as sub-collector of this district, Trilochan Mohanty said "We have told the concerned department undertaking construction work to take proper steps for protection of the temple premises."

Clash in Biramitrapur, 2 hurt, 3 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, April 2: Prompt police intervention prevented a tense situation from escalating after a clash broke out Monday night between two groups in Biramitrapur. Police said Tuesday that two people who suffered injuries are undergoing treatment at the Rourkela Government Hospital while three others have been arrested. The condition of the injured is stated to be stable.

According to information available, two youths identified as Mahadev Sharma and Deepak Sharma had gone to the Gajpattana fair Monday evening in Biramitrapur. There they had an altercation with another group. As the spat turned ugly, Mahadev and Deepak were repeatedly stabbed by the youths belonging to the other group with knives and machetes.

Friends of the two injured rushed to the spot as soon news of the attack spread. A huge crowd then tried to attack a chicken shop which allegedly



belonged to one of the attackers belonging to the other group. However, due to the alertness of the personnel at the Biramitrapur police station, the situation was brought under control quickly.

Later additional forces were rushed to the spot to maintain peace in the locality. Currently 10 platoons of police have been posted in and around the troubled spot to keep a watch on the situation. Top police officials including SP of Sundargarh also rushed to the spot to take stock of the situation.

Biramitrapur SDPO Susant Kumar Das informed Tuesday that though the situation is tense

it is under control. "We have deployed 10 police platoons including a couple of armed ones. The problem did not escalate as the police reacted quickly. A committee has been formed comprising senior members of both the groups. They are discussing ways and means to maintain peace and harmony," Das stated.

Biramitrapur MLA Shankar Oram, blamed the group that had attacked the two youths for the clash. "Many of them have criminal antecedents, so they should be arrested and put behind bars. It is they who are responsible for the law and order situation," Oram stated.

Legendary puppet artiste Maguni Kuanr hospitalised

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 2: Padma Shri winner, renowned puppet dance artiste Maguni Charan Kuanr was admitted to the district headquarters hospital here Tuesday after he suddenly fell ill. Later in the day, he was shifted to a private hospital in Bhubaneswar for better treatment facilities.

Keonjhar sub-collector Trilochan Mohanty, district culture officer Ramesh Chandra Naik, district information and public relations officer Sarthak Ray, vice-chairman, Keonjhar Municipal Council, Baroda Das visited the hospital here. They wished Maguni a speedy recovery. "His condition is stable. However, he has been shifted to a private hospital in Bhubaneswar for better treatment facilities," informed Naik later in the day.

Maguni is not only a puppeteer but also master in wood carving and making of mud idols. Born February 12, 1937 in Baidaraj Sahi locality of

Keonjhar old town, Maguni has spent most of his life to preserve the endangered wooden puppet dance art form. He gained popularity and fame by performing the puppet dance (locally called 'Kandhei Nacha') on more than 45 different mythological and social themes.

Maguni has also sensitised people on various issues through puppet dance. "During programmes, sitting behind the curtain, he conducts the movement of the puppets, recites poems and dialogues and also emits sounds of birds and animals as the situation demands. He has taken the art form to a new level with his troupe 'Sri Viswakarma Kalakunj'", said Bharat Patra, an admirer.

Maguni has been the recipient of various awards both in Odisha and outside the state. He was honoured in 2004 by the 'Central Sangeet Drama Akademi' and in 2014 by the 'State Sangeet Akademi'. In 2023, he was honoured with the Padma Shri.

EAST COAST RAILWAY	
e-Tender Notice No.:	E-Tender- Elect-G-94-23
Description of Work: MANDATORY ENERGY AUDIT OF TRACTION SUBSTATION, LOCO SHED AND LOCO'S (CONVENTIONAL ELECT. PASSENGER LOCO, 3-PHASE REGENERATIVE PASSENGER LOCO, CONVENTIONAL ELECT. GOODS LOCO, 3 PHASE REGENERATIVE GOODS LOCO & DIESEL LOCO (LATEST).	
Approx. cost of work:	₹ 4,30,700,00, EMD: ₹ 8,600,00. Completion period: 03 Months.
Tender closing date & time: At 1500 hrs. of 19.04.2024.	
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.	
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in	
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender.	
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G), PR-1215/O/23-24 Khurda Road	

EAST COAST RAILWAY	
e-Tender Notice No.:	MDCBBBS Hemodialysis-SI-08, Dt. 22.03.2024
Name of Work: OUTSOURCING FOR HEMODIALYSIS OF CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE AT CENTRAL HOSPITAL/ EAST COAST RAILWAY/ MANCHESWAR/ BHUBANESWAR FOR A PERIOD OF THREE (03) YEARS.	
Approximate cost of the work :	₹ 2,13,37,344.00, EMD: ₹ 2,56,700.00, Cost of tender document: ₹ 3,000.00, Completion period of the work: 03 years (36 Months).
Tender closing Date & Time: At 1500 hrs. on 22.04.2024.	
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.	
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in	
The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS portal. Only registered tenderer/bidder can participate on e-tendering. All relevant paper must have uploaded at the time of participating on e-tendering as per instruction.	
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender.	
Medical Director, CH/Mancheswar, PR-1207/O/23-24 Bhubaneswar	

Polls herald good times for conch blowers

PNN & AGENCIES

Berhampur, April 2: The services of conch blowers are generally required during auspicious occasions like that of Hindu marriages, thread ceremonies and other events. However, with the elections to the 147-member Odisha Assembly and 21 Lok Sabha seats in the state fast approaching they are in high demand as 'sankha' (conch) is the symbol of the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD). On most occasions, the regional party candidates across the state start their campaigns in all parts of the state by blowing of conches.

The conch blowers are hired by BJD candidates during the elections to familiarise the voters with the party symbol 'sankha' during their campaign



trail. The BJD candidates in all the 168 constituencies (21 Lok Sabha and 147 Assembly segments) deploy conch blowers during the campaign. There are around 25,000 conch blowers in Ganjam district and most of them are engaged in the elec-

tion campaign for BJD candidates in different constituencies. "As of now, some candidates have already approached us for our services for the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. The demands will increase after filing up of the nominations," said

Rajendra Prasad Patra, a conch blower belonging to Narendrapur village in Ganjam district.

Pabitra Kumar Mohapatra, another conch blower said they would chalk out the plan for campaigning in different constituencies. As the elections will be held in four phases in Odisha, they will not face any problem campaigning for different candidates in various regions.

In the 2019 elections, after campaigning for the candidates in the first phase of elections in Ganjam and Rayagada, the conch blowers had moved to Chandbali, Dharmasala, Bhanjanagar and some other towns and districts, informed Mohapatra.

Attired like tribal folk dancers wearing yellow or green clothes and turbans, the team mem-

bers, each adept at blowing twin conches, lead the way of the candidates on the dusty roads. "Poll managers of many candidates want 'jodi sankha' (twin conch blowers)," said Tutu Roul of the Roulapalli, near Kabisurya Nagar.

However, the conch blowers are not ready to talk about politics or their inclination towards any political party. "We only render our services to anyone who needs us," said a conch blower.

Mohapatra informed that in the past they have worked for other parties also. "We have also rendered our services for a few BJP candidates in the last elections, but not by blowing conches. We only beat drums attired in saffron colour dresses. After all we are all professionals," stated Mohapatra.

17 nabbed for illegal fishing in Gahirmatha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajnagar, April 2: A Forest department patrolling team arrested 17 fishermen for trespassing into the Gahirmatha marine sanctuary in Kendrapara district in the wee hours of Tuesday. The area has been banned for fishing as it is the favourite nesting place for the Olive Ridley turtles. The 'gillnetter' boat 'Maa Srabani' which the fishermen were using was also seized.

The team led by range officer Pradosh Kumar Maharana, found that the 'gillnetter boat' was fishing illegally five-kilometre inside the banned area, while they were patrolling the area. They seized the boat and arrested the fishermen. Three VHF wireless systems, an identical number of fishing nets and one fishfinder machine were also seized.

FOCUS IDENTITY

THE CASE FOR ISRAEL

In 2009, the late British historian Tony Judt argued that Israel's identity as a uniquely Jewish state was "bad for Israel" and "bad for Jews elsewhere who are identified with its actions." While his remarks incited controversy at the time, the global reaction to the ongoing Hamas-Israel war in Gaza appears to have proven him right, as Jews around the world find themselves blamed for Israel's alleged "genocide" against the Palestinian people.

Over the past six months, reports of the atrocities in Gaza have been followed by spikes in anti-Semitic incidents in cities like London, New York, and Vienna. Synagogues have been defaced with hateful slogans, Jewish cemeteries have been desecrated, and individuals identified as Jews have been harassed.

To be sure, many Jews are actively participating in antiwar protests calling for a free Palestine "from the river to the sea," and it is wrong to conflate any criticism of Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's far-right government with anti-Semitism. But it is also true that some people have rushed to label Israel's conduct in Gaza as genocide with an eagerness unseen in reactions to mass violence in places like Syria, Sudan, or even Ukraine. This disproportionate attention suggests that criticising Israeli actions may serve as a relief for those who are tired of being made to feel guilty about the Holocaust.

Israeli governments bear some responsibility for this resentment, not just because of their appalling treatment of Palestinians over the years but also because Israeli officials frequently invoke the Holocaust to justify the country's cruel policies. Since the 1961 trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, Israel has claimed to speak for all of the Holocaust's victims. If Israel had existed in the 1930s, the argument goes, six million Jewish lives would have been



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saved from the Nazi inferno.

This is presumably why Israeli President Isaac Herzog was invited to attend the opening of Amsterdam's new Holocaust Museum on 10 March. When Gaza exploded in violence and Herzog claimed that an "entire nation" was responsible for Hamas' 7 October massacre of Israeli citizens and that there were no innocent civilians in Gaza, it was deemed too late to rescind the invitation. This ignited widespread protests, with demonstrators screaming pro-Palestinian slogans at Jews filling into the Amsterdam synagogue to remember the Dutch Jewish community that had been almost entirely annihilated by the Nazis.

Judt's answer to Jews being equated with Israel was to separate Jewish identity from the Jewish State. "We could thus hope," he wrote, "to establish a natural distinction between people who happen to be Jews but are citizens of other countries; and people who are Israeli citizens and happen to be Jews." Judt was not the first to sug-

gest this. The Hungarian-born writer Arthur Koestler – like Judt, a former Zionist – argued that Jews who wanted to live as Jews should relocate to Israel, whereas those who did not should stop identifying as Jews. While this may seem like a simple solution, it is not, because the self-perception of Jews does not necessarily change how non-Jews see them. During the Holocaust, secular Jews who viewed themselves as Germans first were gassed alongside Orthodox Jews from Polish shtetls.

The clearest expression of Israel's Jewish character is the 1950 Law of Return, which grants every Jew the right to move there. Originally designed to establish Israel as a refuge from anti-Semitism, this law has been criticised for its vague definition of Jewish identity. Currently, it enables anyone with at least one Jewish grandparent or those who have converted to Judaism to qualify for Israeli citizenship.

This is patently unfair to the Palestinians whose families were expelled from their an-

cestral lands by Jewish forces during the 1948 war. Why should a French or Russian person with one Jewish grandparent be allowed to immigrate to Israel while the descendants of Palestinian refugees cannot?

Many Jews might say that they feel no affinity whatsoever with Israel and resent any suggestion that they should feel loyal to it, or defend its policies. There is indeed no reason for Jews to defend Israel's policies, and many don't. But the fact that some Jews in Europe and the United States feel that persecution is a thing of the past does not mean that Jews in less privileged regions do not face adversity. It is also true that Israel today hardly appears to be a safe haven, partly through the machinations of its own government, but that doesn't alter the principle.

Even so, one might argue that Israel should reconsider the Law of Return as an outdated policy that makes lasting peace with the Palestinians all but impossible. But while repealing this law would certainly be fairer to the Palestinians, doing so would also compromise Israel's founding principle as a sanctuary for Jews in need.

Overlooking Israel's role as a potential refuge shows a certain lack of solidarity and imagination. Unless one believes that Jews have the right to their state because God promised the holy land to the Jewish people, the ideal of building a homeland for all persecuted Jews remains the strongest rationale for its existence.

As long as this remains the case, it will be hard for Jews to totally dissociate themselves from Israel. And even if diaspora Jews deny any connection with Israel, many non-Jews will insist on it. After all, identity is often imposed on us by others – a reality with which Jews are all too familiar.

The writer is the author, most recently, of Spinoza: Freedom's Messiah.

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Democratic Renewal

In an unexpected turn of events Turkey sends a signal to autocratic rulers of the world that they should not be complacent of their victories and get prepared for reversal of electoral fortunes any time. Turkey's main Opposition party has got a sudden shot in the arm following a surprise set of results that has enhanced the prospects of democratic renewal in the country. Less than a year ago, Turkey's main Opposition parties had a drubbing when the country's authoritarian leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan trounced them, winning a third term in presidential elections. This was followed by an equally resounding victory of his Justice and Development party (AKP) which emerged more powerful from a parliamentary poll. This happened when the country's economy was in doldrums. As in the case of several other autocratic rulers, Erdogan became unassailable for his aggressive brand of politics and overwhelming media dominance.

The victories created such an illusion of invincibility that Erdogan and his party are now shell shocked by the unanticipated reverses in the local elections 31 March. The people seemed to have felt so liberated that there were wild celebrations into the early hours. In Istanbul, Turkey's largest city, the incumbent mayor, Ekrem Imamoglu inflicted a crushing defeat on Erdogan's candidate. Imamoglu's Republican People's Party (CHP) also had a clean sweep in other major cities, registering a landslide victory in the capital, Ankara. What appears unbelievable is that the CHP managed to win the elections in the conservative towns and villages in the heartland in Anatolia and near the Black Sea, regarded as bastions of Erdogan. The Islamic far right New Welfare Party (YRP) also forged ahead in these areas at the AKP's expense, adding to the woes of the President.

Despite the jubilation in the Opposition camp, it would be too early to conclude the results represent a turning point in Turkey's politics. This is because Erdogan's grip on institutional networks built during the past two decades is formidable indeed. At the same time, the electoral reverses for the President and his party give rise to hope to secular, liberal voters. Resentment among the people is running high with inflation at nearly 70 per cent coupled with a big rise in interest rates. Obviously, the austerity measures Erdogan adopted since he was re-elected have brought cheers to Western markets, but alienated the core AKP support base. Rubbing salt into injuries, Imamoglu has played his cards so well during the past few months that he has been able to attract more conservative voters to the CHP. This is in sharp contrast to the lacklustre performance of the Opposition last May.

The most significant fallout of the electoral outcome of 31 March could be that Erdogan may refrain from seeking further constitutional change to allow him to run for yet another term as President. For over a decade, Erdogan has been positioning himself as more and more authoritarian with a relentless erosion of democratic checks and balances. Things came to such a pass that in 2017 constitutional reforms led to the role of prime minister being abolished. The European Commission has recently noted sharp deterioration in the rule of law and human rights. The governing coalition led by the AKP does not have the numbers to change the constitution on its own, but a spectacular victory in the local elections could have paved the way for it. Fortunately, for the votaries of democracy that was not to be.

The setback to Erdogan is likely to have ramifications beyond its borders too. If his popularity is on the wane, as indicated by the 31 March results, strong messages go out to the authoritarian brand of politics sweeping many countries around the world. This is what Imamoglu hinted at in his victory speech.



The cup has to be left clean and empty for the divine liquor to be poured into it.

SRI AUROBINDO



Ian Buruma

OVERLOOKING ISRAEL'S ROLE AS A POTENTIAL REFUGE SHOWS A CERTAIN LACK OF SOLIDARITY AND IMAGINATION

WISDOM CORNER

The more a man can forget, the greater the number of metamorphoses which his life can undergo; the more he can remember, the more divine his life becomes.

SOREN KIERKEGAARD

Though a quarrel in the streets is a thing to be hated, the energies displayed in it are fine; the commonest man shows a grace in his quarrel.

JOHN KEATS

I would warn you that I do not attribute to nature either beauty or deformity, order or confusion. Only in relation to our imagination can things be called beautiful or ugly, well-ordered or confused.

BARUCH SPINOZA

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1860: The Pony Express mail delivery system, which used continuous horse-and-rider relays along a 1,800-mile (2,900-km) route between St. Joseph, Missouri, and Sacramento, California, was launched in the United States.

1940: Soviet troops massacre about 22,000 Polish nationals. The Katyn massacre is considered the worst massacre of prisoners of war in history. The order to execute all captive members of the Polish Officer Corps was signed by Joseph Stalin.

1948: Harry S. Truman signs the Marshall Plan. \$12.4 billion was allocated to help rebuild European economies after the end of World War II and prevent communists from seizing control.

1968: At an event for the Memphis sanitation workers strike, American civil rights activist Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his Mountaintop Speech; the following day he was assassinated.

1973: The first handheld mobile telephone call was made by an employee of Motorola, who called AT&T's Bell Laboratories. Motorola's Martin Cooper called Joel Engel of Bell Labs. He later told the BBC that his first words were "Joel, I'm calling you from a 'real' cellular telephone. A portable handheld telephone."

IN JEST THIS

Nothing wrong with being No. 20 in world

I have never been on Vistara, the Indian airline that flies to about 50 destinations in 12 countries, but if I ever do, I'm looking forward to enjoying Vistara World, the wireless in-flight entertainment.

It's going to be a great experience. I'd call Vistara World "second to none," but it would be more accurate to say "second to nineteen."

Yes, Vistara is No. 20 in the world for in-flight entertainment, just behind British Airways (No. 17), Oman Air (18) and Gulf Air (19).

I know this because an X user named Ritesh Banglani shared a photo of a leaflet in the airline's seat pocket, which touted Vistara World as the "20th best in-flight entertainment in the world."

Being No. 20 in the world is rather impressive, but perhaps not to Banglani, who wrote, "I may fall upon hard times, but I hope things are never so bad

that I have to brag about being 20th best in anything."

Another X user named Manish Maheshwari came to Vistara's defense: "At least they are honest."

Yes, at least they are honest. In fact, Vistara is the "20th most honest airline in the world." When they tell you your flight will depart in two hours, they're not off by more than two hours.

Actually, there's no category for honesty in the World Airline Awards, which are given out by Skytrax, a UK-based consulting firm that ranks airlines and airports based on passenger surveys.

In commenting on Vistara's honesty, Maheshwari added that "there is always a way to slice data in a way that you come out at the top."

Is this really true? I mean, if we conducted a survey of all the women in the world, I don't think there'd be any way for me to slice data in a way to make me the "20th most handsome man in the world."

Even 20 millionth would require not just data slicing, but also data deleting.

It's worth noting that more than 325 airlines are included in the survey results that determine the World Airline Awards. Being 20th among 325 airlines is indeed impressive.

As an X user named Rajesh Balasubramaniam pointed out, "If I were 20th best in some things, for instance in IIT JEE, I practically wouldn't stop bragging about it."

Yes, being 20th in the IIT Joint Entrance Exam is something you might even want to inscribe on your tombstone. "Here lies Paulraj James. He was 20th in IIT JEE."

The National Football League in America produces an annual list of its Top 100 players. If you're in the Top 100, you are a big star, probably earning more than \$10 million per year. But I have yet to hear a player brag that he's No. 99.

Everybody wants to be the best or pretend that they're the best.

If you're a dad, try to imagine how you'd feel on Father's Day if your children gave you a T-shirt that said, "20th Best Dad."

If you're a mom, try to imagine how you'd feel on Mother's Day if your children gave you a plaque that says, "Top 100 Mom."

Truthfully, most of us would be upset if our kids said we were merely "one of the better" moms or dads.

We are fooling ourselves, of course, because there are some great moms and dads out there, like the ones we see on TV who never raise their voices, never judge their kids, and never turn off the Wi-Fi.

My kids, if they were as honest as Vistara, would give me a T-shirt that says "Best Dad*."

The asterisk would be explained on a small tag behind my neck: "Within a radius of 10 meters."

LOL

Drunk at the bar

One night a police officer was staking out a particularly rowdy bar for possible DUI violations. At closing time, he saw a fellow stumble out of the bar, trip on the curb and try his keys on five different cars before he found his. The man sat in the front seat fumbling around with his keys for several minutes. Meanwhile, all the other patrons left the bar and drove off. Finally he started his engine and began to pull



away. The police officer was waiting for him. As soon as he pulled onto the street, the officer stopped him, read him his rights and administered the breathalyzer test to determine his blood-alcohol content. The results showed a reading of 0.0. The puzzled officer demanded to know how that could be. The driver replied, "Tonight I'm the designated decoy."

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

ED at it again

Sir, This refers to "Judicial custody for Kejriwal till April 15" (Orissa Post, April 2). It is on record that the ED does not wish to seek an extension of Kejriwal's remand, but has however kept the option open if Kejriwal continues to be non-cooperative and mislead the interrogation. The people are bound to say that this is no ground for prolonging the judicial detention of Kejriwal, who ought to have been released on bail by imposing conditions including house arrest to meet the ends of justice. There is nothing on record to show that prior to his arrest Kejriwal tampered with evidence in any manner whatsoever and therefore the apprehension of the ED that the accused if enlarged on bail will tamper with the evidence does not hold good.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

BJP's vision for south

Sir, The BJP's grand endeavour to fortify its presence in the southern states ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections symbolises a strategic paradigm shift in its electoral approach. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recurrent visits to Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh epitomise the party's acknowledgment of the region's pivotal role in shaping national politics. Despite historically being formidable bastions for the BJP, these states proffer substantial electoral dividends, with Tamil Nadu and Karnataka alone constituting a significant chunk of the Lok Sabha seats. Crafting its southern strategy, the BJP has embraced a multifaceted approach. Through alliances with regional parties such as JD(S) in Karnataka and PMK in Tamil Nadu, the party endeavours to harness local support bases and broaden its electoral appeal. Concurrently, in states like Kerala and Telangana, where it treads independently, the BJP endeavours to directly engage with the electorate and articulate its governance vision. While its triumph in Karnataka serves as a blueprint for expansion, the party discerns the imperative for nuanced strategies tailored to the socio-political dynamics of each state. In Tamil Nadu, for instance, where Dravidian parties have traditionally held sway, the BJP's emphasis on ideological dissemination alongside electoral endeavours underscores its far-sighted vision for the region.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

TMC, BJP favour turncoats over seasoned leaders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 2: In the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal, both the ruling TMC and the opposition BJP are adopting a common strategy of favouring turncoats over seasoned leaders in their candidate selections.

Once scorned in Bengal's political realm, both parties are increasingly embracing the practice of endorsing turncoats, causing dissatisfaction among their loyal supporters. The TMC, in its roster of 42 candidates, has included four turncoats who are either elected representatives from other parties or joined the party in recent years.

The party's candidate list also features three other nominees, currently serving as either MPs or MLAs under the TMC banner, yet with a history of affiliations with different parties or previous public representations. On the contrary, the BJP has nominated five turncoats out of the 40 seats announced thus far.

Both parties have justified their decisions, citing 'winnability and political strategy' as paramount considerations. However, the nomination of turncoats has triggered protests and resentment against both the TMC and the BJP in certain regions.

Despite acknowledging the risks associated with nominating turncoats, leaders from both parties admit that 'there is no guarantee of their allegiance'. TMC's Rajya Sabha MP Sukhendu Sekhar Roy remarked, "It is not that we lack competent leaders for nominations. However, in politics, various factors must be considered. Winnability and the party's strategy are paramount."



Until a few decades ago, political defections and the nomination of turncoats were rare in West Bengal, with politicians primarily identified by their ideological convictions. Despite acknowledging the risks associated with nominating turncoats, leaders from both parties admit that 'there is no guarantee of their allegiance'.

In the 2019 elections, TMC secured 22 seats, BJP won 18, and Congress bagged two. Although 16 of the 23 incumbent MPs were retained, the TMC opted not to renominate seven, notably excluding BJP defector Arjun Singh from Barrackpore.

The candidate list showcased 26 fresh faces, including 11 political novices. Notably, none of the candidates who lost in the previous polls was offered candidature this time. Among the notable turncoats fielded by the TMC are Biswajit Das, Mukutmani Adhikari, and

Krishna Kalyani, contesting from Bongaon, Ranaghat, and Raiganj Lok Sabha seats respectively.

All three are presently BJP MLAs who switched allegiance to the TMC but have yet to resign as legislators. "The BJP has done nothing for the masses and that is why I felt that the TMC is the best platform to serve the people of the state," Adhikari, who is contesting from the Matua-dominated Ranaghat seat, said.

Another prominent candidate, Sujata Mondal from Bishnupur, is a former BJP leader and ex-wife of BJP MP Soumitra Khan. Mondal unsuccessfully contested the assembly polls on a TMC ticket in 2021. Meanwhile, actor-turned-politician Shatrughan Sinha, who won the Asansol seat in a bypoll on a TMC ticket in 2022, has been renominated from the same seat.

Sinha, a former union minister and two-term BJP MP from Patna Sahib, had defected from the BJP to join the Congress ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha

polls before joining the TMC in 2022. Biplab Mitra, a TMC veteran who had briefly joined the BJP before returning to his former party ahead of the 2021 assembly polls, is also in the fray.

Similarly, the BJP has also entrusted turncoats with nominations over its established leaders. BJP MP from Barrackpore, Arjun Singh, who returned to the saffron camp last month after defecting to the TMC two years ago, was re-nominated from the seat. Tapas Roy, a four-term MLA from TMC, joined the BJP due to disagreements over candidate selection and was nominated from Kolkata North.

Silbhada Dutta, a two-term TMC MLA who switched to the BJP ahead of the 2021 assembly polls, was nominated from the Dum Dum Lok Sabha seat. Soumendu Adhikari, former TMC leader and chairman of TMC-led Kanthi municipality, is contesting from Kanthi. He switched sides after his elder brother Suvendu Adhikari joined the BJP.

OVER 1.13L KASHMIRI MIGRANTS TO VOTE

The Jammu and Kashmir administration will hold special awareness camps for Kashmiri migrants in Jammu and Udhampur districts from April 3 to 14 to ensure their participation in the Lok Sabha elections.

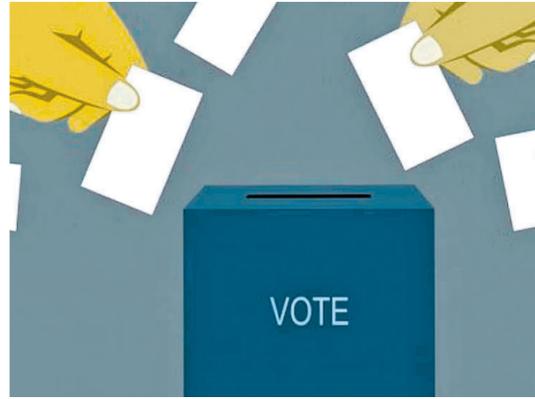
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, April 2: Over 1.13 lakh Kashmiri migrants are registered to cast their votes for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections for three seats in the Valley, officials said.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration will hold special awareness camps for Kashmiri migrants in Jammu and Udhampur districts from April 3 to 14 to ensure their participation in the Lok Sabha elections.

"We have 1.13 lakh registered Kashmiri migrant voters as of now. The updated voter list is being prepared as per the election process," Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner Arvind Karwani said. Karwani, who is looking after the arrangements for the polling of migrants, said that polling will be held in three phases in the Valley.

"In Anantnag, polling will be held May 7, followed by Srinagar May 13 and Baramulla May 20. It will be held in three phases, and polling stations for each constituency will be the same,"



Karwani said. A total of 26 polling stations have been set up for the migrants, out of which 21 polling stations have been set up in Jammu, four in Delhi and one in Udhampur, Karwani said.

"The migrant voters can vote in two ways. First, they can do so by filling up an M-form, which is prior information and can vote in the special polling set up for them," he said. The second option is voting through postal ballots for which they have to fill up Form-12C.

"They can get a vote from the assistant returning officer (ARO) and cast it through the postal ballot process," he said. He further urged the Kashmir migrants to vote in large numbers.

"It is our appeal to all migrant voters to take part in voting in large numbers and exercise their democratic right. We have made facilities for them and authorised zonal officers and camp

commandants to distribute and attest M-form on the spot," he said.

Migrant voters from places like Bangalore, Delhi and Mumbai can also use the state Election Commission's portal to get the M-form. "The AROs have been appointed in Delhi, Jammu, and Udhampur for polling. Once they get the M-form, they will enlist their votes in particular polling stations as per the law," he said.

"We are making all efforts to ensure that awareness about the voting process reaches migrant electors. For this, we have started special awareness camps from April 3. The camps will be held in all the four migrant camps and non-camp areas where there is a major concentration of the Kashmir migrants in Jammu," he said. Efforts would be made to hold such camps in Delhi too, he added.

Pension proposed for inmates of open correctional homes



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, April 2: The West Bengal government has mooted a proposal to introduce old-age pension for those inmates of open correctional homes who have crossed the age of 60 and also lost their ability to earn a living.

A senior official from the state correctional services said that the difference between the inmates in regular correctional homes and those in open correctional homes is that people in the second category have to earn a living to meet their expenses.

"The state government takes their financial responsibility only for the first three months after the inmates are transferred to open correctional homes. After three months, they are allowed to go outside and do some work to meet their daily expenses at

the home. They go out to work, and return to the home at sunset after purchasing items for their daily necessities, including food," the official said.

However, he added that recently a communication had been received from the authorities of one of the three open correctional homes in the state. The communication pointed out that this particular clause of paying for their own expenses is causing difficulties for aged inmates who have lost their ability to go out every day and earn money to fulfill their needs.

"While the communication has come from one open correctional home, the other two such homes also have similar inmates who are unable to earn a living. That's why the plan was mooted for the possibility of introducing some token old-age pension for such inmates." However, it is only at a discussion level and its implementation will take some time and it will have to be cleared by the state cabinet," the department official said.

The West Bengal correctional services minister, too, said that the proposal might be considered once it is placed in the state Cabinet.



TMC candidate Mahua Moitra campaigns for upcoming Lok Sabha elections, at Krishnanagar in Nadia district, West Bengal, Tuesday. PTI PHOTO

J&K chief secy reviews admin's readiness for Amarnath Yatra

During the meeting, the chief secretary took stock of measures taken till now by Border Roads Organisation regarding maintenance of tracks on both the Pahalgam and Baltal axis in adherence of the Supreme Court directions.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jammu, April 2: Jammu and Kashmir chief secretary, Atal Dulloo, Monday had a detailed review of preparations being made by the administration for smooth conduct of annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) this year.

During the meeting, the chief secretary took stock of measures taken till now by Border Roads Organisation (BRO) regarding maintenance of tracks on both the Pahalgam and Baltal axis in adherence of the Supreme Court directions.

"He assessed the status of works like widening of walking track/passages and installation of railing and retaining walls as per the directions of



the Supreme Court," an official statement said.

"He enquired from the concerned Divisional Commissioners about the disaster mitigation measures like on ground demarcation of flood prone/vulnerable zones and other disaster preparedness on part of the divisional administrations, as was done during 2023. He called for demarcation of safer zones for holding of langars and tentages for the pilgrims."

Dulloo also assessed the works to be done by the Rural Development Department along with Housing and Urban Development Department to ensure adequate arrangements for sanitation during Yatra this year.

"These included installation of requisite number of toilets/baths with provision of sufficient water supply, deploying sufficient number of sanitation workers and supervisors, carrying out scientific disposal of waste etc," the statement added.

Mian Altaf not an outsider: Omar Jalpaiguri residents await relief, rehabilitation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pahalgam (J&K), April 2: National Conference leader Omar Abdullah Tuesday scoffed at suggestions that party candidate for Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat Mian Altaf Ahmad was an 'outsider' to the constituency, saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi hails from Gujarat but contests elections from Uttar Pradesh.

"How is Mian Sahib an outsider? He is as much from Rajouri-Poonch as much as he is from here (Anantnag) or elsewhere in Kashmir. If PM Modi can come from Gujarat and contest in Uttar Pradesh, your channels have no problems with that," Abdullah said.

"Leaders from south India go to the Rajya Sabha from north India seats, you have no issues with that. Mian Sahib contests from within Kashmir valley and you start raising questions. Does he not have the right to contest from the Rajouri-Poonch



Anantnag seat?" he asked. The former Chief Minister was talking to reporters after a party rally at Liver-Pahalgam in this south Kashmir Lok Sabha constituency. Abdullah also hit out at the media for making efforts to create a wedge between his party and the PDP, which are partners in the opposition INDIA bloc.

"Why are you making the PDP fight us? Has the PDP said anywhere that they will contest elections? It is you people who are fuelling this. I heard the speech of Mehbooba Mufti in Delhi, she said Farooq sahib and we are together and we will not break the INDIA alliance. Why are you trying to make us fight?" he asked.

Asked if the National Conference (NC) was contesting all three seats in Kashmir due to pressure from the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Abdullah said that the decision was taken on the basis of having won the previous elections.

"For DDC polls, we took the 2014 assembly election results and wherever PDP had won, they contested the DDC polls and wherever NC had won, we got the opportunity. PC was also with us then and they chose their candidate where they had won. We used the same formula here as well. Where does the ED come in this?" he asked.

On the electoral bonds issue, Abdullah said that he has not revealed any secret. "I have not said anything that was hidden. All this information is in public domain after the Supreme Court order. If the media persons do not question the government, then it becomes our responsibility," Abdullah said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jalpaiguri, April 2: Residents of Jalpaiguri town and its surrounding areas in West Bengal continue to grapple with the aftermath of Sunday's storm, which left at least five people dead and rendered over 200 homeless.

Amid the chaos, a hapless Pankaj Ray stares at the ruins of his home, surrounded by scattered bricks and twisted tin walls. His family, once united by love, now bears the scars of the storm. While one family member is fighting for life in hospital, others are struggling to manage a square meal.

Ten-year-old Anjali clings on to her father's hand, seeking comfort in the midst of the destruction. Their once joyful abode has been torn apart, forcing them to run from pillar to post looking for a place to stay.

"Where will we go, baba? Our shelter is gone," Anjali said. Her father Pankaj had no answers. Several people are clueless about



when life will get back to normal. "The storm which came from nowhere has destroyed our homes. We don't know how and when we can rebuild it," said Kajol Dutta, a resident of Mainaguri, around 40 km from Jalpaiguri. Efforts are underway by rescue personnel to clear the debris and provide assistance to those affected. Nearly 200 people

Efforts are underway by rescue personnel to clear the debris and provide assistance to those affected.

were injured and several houses were damaged, trees uprooted and electric poles came crashing down as strong winds accompanied by hail struck most parts of the district headquarters town and many areas of neighbouring Mainaguri.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who rushed to the district late Sunday night, assured

people of all help from the administration. "So far, we have reports of the death of five people. The number of injured is quite high. I met the injured and the family members of those who died in the storm. The state administration will do everything to help the affected families," she said.

Asked about providing compensation, Banerjee said, "As the model code of conduct is in place, I can't say anything about it. You have to talk to the district administration." Banerjee, accompanied by TMC party leaders, went to Jalpaiguri Medical College and Hospital and on her way spoke to those in the relief camps in other parts of the district.

BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari said relief work should not be politicised, underlining the importance of prioritising assistance to those in need. Among the most affected areas in the district were Rajarhat, Barnish, Bakali, Jorpakdi, Madhabdanga and Saptibari, officials said.



PARTY SWITCHING: Several workers of BJP and Congress from Mohana block of Gajapati district joining the Biju Janata Dal at Sankha Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



CAMPAIGN MODE: BJP candidate for Bhadrak Lok Sabha constituency Abhimanyu Sethi campaigning in Barandua panchayat under Basudevpur block in Bhadrak district, Tuesday

NDA pulled Bihar out of 'jungle raj': Modi

The PM takes potshots at political adversaries, without taking their names



AGENCIES

Patna, April 2: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday urged BJP workers in Bihar to make young voters aware that the state was pulled out of 'jungle raj' only after the NDA came to power. In an interaction with booth-level workers via 'NAMO app', ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, Modi also underscored the need for spreading the word that "3.5 crore poor people in Bihar have come out of poverty during the 10 years of NDA rule at the Centre". "Besides, nine crore people will be benefited by the free ration scheme and nearly three crore women have got free cooking gas connections through the Ujjwala Yojana. People must be told about these things again and again," he said. The PM, whose party has an alliance with four other parties in Bihar, stressed the need for allies to work in coordination and make the voters aware that "every vote they cast in favour

of NDA, will be for Modi". In the virtual interaction that lasted about an hour, the PM took potshots at political adversaries, without mentioning their name. On Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 'shakti' remark, he said, "I am a worshipper of shakti. But the INDI alliance members want to destroy shakti, which implies divine power. What havoc they would create if they achieve power, must be explained to the people." Referring to the Mithila region, which is believed to be the birthplace of Goddess Sita, Modi said, "It came as no surprise that when the 'pran pratishtha' of Ram temple at Ayodhya was taking place, people of Mithila seemed to be moved the most. They must always be reminded that there are political parties which had refused to acknowledge that Lord Ram ever existed, and never wanted the temple to be constructed." He also took a veiled dig at the opposition RJD-Congress combine in Bihar, referring to former PM Rajiv Gandhi's remark that out of every rupee the Centre sent, only 15 paise could reach the people. "Then came the time of 'jungle raj' in Bihar, when forget about the 15 paise, the entire rupee used to be eaten up," alleged Modi, calling attention to the nearly 15 years of rule by RJD president Lalu Prasad and his wife Rabri Devi, both of whom have been named in a number of corruption cases.

With BJP's Rourkela decision pending, aspirants are in a fix

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

Rourkela, April 2: Although the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Tuesday declared its candidates for 112 Assembly segments surpassing BJD's number of 72 in a single phase, the party still holds its cards close to its chest when it comes to Rourkela Assembly seat under Sundargarh Lok Sabha segment. The pending decision about Rourkela, considered as a crucial and prestigious Assembly seat, has left the aspirants as well as their supporters in a state of uncertainty. Ticket aspirants from BJP - Dhiren Senapaty, Bimal Bisi and Nihar Ray - are undecided about their future move, said sources. Senapaty, an RSS cadre, has been the frontrunner for the



BJP ticket while Bisi, a retired general manager of Rourkela Steel Plant and a former secretary of SEFI, is said to be the next in the race. Similarly, Ray, who had lost the election to Sarada Nayak in 2009 on Congress ticket and in 2019 on BJP ticket, is also a strong contender. He is from RSS background and currently is the spokesperson of the party. Ray's chances of getting a ticket appear to be bleak, if party insiders are to be believed. For, he had lost the elections twice to the same candidate - Sarada Nayak. While Bisi is learnt to be the dark horse in the race, both Senapaty and Bisi share some common personality traits. They are affable, gentle and humble. But when it comes to organizational activities, they appear to be not so strong. Ray, on the other hand, is considered as a street fighter with good organisational capacity. Meanwhile, grapevines have it that local heavyweight and former BJP MLA Dilip Ray, who left the party over Brahmani

Bridge issue, is likely to re-join the saffron camp and get a ticket. He was handed down a three-year jail term in the coal scam case and is currently out on bail. Dilip has approached the Delhi High Court to get a stay so that he can fight this election. Chatters are abuzz that Dilip is going to contest from Rourkela on a BJP ticket. Earlier, there was speculation that he might get a BJD ticket for Kendrapara Lok Sabha but this turned out to be a damp squib when Anshuman Mohanty was named for the seat. Some of his supporters said, "He (Dilip Ray) had a meeting with some BJP top brass yesterday and everything is clear now." This has added further fuel to the already charged political atmosphere of Rourkela.



MERGER MEETING: A Congress leader addressing a merger-cum-party workers' meeting at Badash panchayat under Baliapal block in Balasore district, Tuesday

Ex-MLA of Aska resigns from BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, April 2: Debaraj Mohanty former MLA from Aska in Ganjam district, resigned from the BJP after being denied ticket to contest the Assembly election. The BJP Tuesday announced 112 candidates, including 12 in Ganjam district out of 13 Assembly seats. Mohanty, a BJD legislator from Aska in 2000, 2009 and 2014, sent his resignation to party state president Manmohan Samal. Ahead of the 2019 election, he had resigned from the BJD after being denied a ticket and joined the saffron party. He unsuccessfully contested in the last election. "Since I joined the BJP, I have been actively involved in all party activities in Aska. But the party did not give me a ticket," said the 71-year-old Mohanty. In place of Mohanty, BJP has fielded Saroj Padhi, also a former MLA. Padhi was elected to the Assembly in 2004 as an Independent. "I will consult my supporters to decide on the future course of action," Mohanty said. He has also not ruled out returning to BJD if given a ticket. The BJD and Congress are yet to declare their candidates for Aska. **Shivaji Moulik quits JMM** Senior JMM leader and spokesperson Shivaji Moulik Tuesday resigned from the primary membership of the party. In a letter to the JMM Odisha unit president Anjani Soren, Moulik said he is "forced to quit" as the party "frequently changes its stand" on the seat adjustment with other parties of the INDIA bloc. "Due to this change of stand, our workers are confused. Under such circumstances, it is not possible to continue to work," he said. Moulik had been associated with the JMM for over two decades and his resignation could impact the electoral prospects of the party in Odisha, which will have simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in four phases.

Not afraid of taking on CM in Hinjili: BJP nominee

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 2: BJP nominee Sisir Mishra, who has been pitted against Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in his home turf Hinjili in Ganjam district, is upbeat about his prospects, saying he is not afraid of taking on the BJD chief and that he will make him realise that he has "neglected his constituency for 25 years". Despite being a newcomer in electoral politics at the age of 58, Mishra also feels fortunate to contest against Patnaik in Hinjili. "I may be contesting elections for the first time, but I have been fighting against the local administration for the last seven years. We have given a befitting reply to the BJD government in both the panchayat and urban polls," Mishra told PTI Tuesday after being named as BJP candidate for Hinjili. Mishra asserted that BJP is steadily gaining traction in Hinjili, citing recent electoral performances. He mentioned that the party had fiercely contested the municipal elections, securing 5,200 votes compared to the ruling party's 6,400. Mishra, the grandson of freedom fighter Jagannath Mishra who unsuccess-

fully contested against Hinjili's seven-time MLA Brundabana Nayak, said his late elder brother Sarat Mishra was a prominent BJP leader and worked towards creating a support base for the saffron party in Ganjam district. Asked if he was nervous to face Odisha's tallest politician who has been a Chief Minister for five times in a row, Mishra said, "Why should I? I am a local man, born and brought up in Hinjili. I have no fear, but elated that my questions will open Patnaik's eyes. He (Patnaik) may for the first time realise that he has neglected his constituency for 25 years." "I am a local man and Naveen Patnaik, though elected from Hinjili for five times, is instead an outsider. Local people used to see him once or twice during elections every five years. I am with people all 365 days," he said. Mishra alleged that though Patnaik continued to win the Assembly elections from Hinjili five times in a row since 2000, the basic needs of people were not fulfilled. "There is a huge migration of people to other states in search of work. People leave their houses because they do not get jobs locally," he said. Citing an instance, Mishra said,



SISIR MISHRA

"There is a gram panchayat named Saru under Hinjili block. Over 60 per cent of houses there remained locked as people have migrated. Has Patnaik checked migration in his own assembly segment?" A commerce graduate, Mishra alleged that Patnaik has never attempted to solve the migration problem in Hinjili

There is a gram panchayat named Saru under Hinjili block. Over 60 per cent of houses there remained locked as people have migrated. Has Patnaik checked migration in his own Assembly segment?

SISIR MISHRA | BJP NOMINEE

assembly segment. "We have two blocks - Seragarh and Hinjili. People from these two blocks migrate to other states such as Gujarat and Maharashtra in search of work. There is no end to the miseries of people in Hinjili and Patnaik has never bothered about the welfare of local people," he said. Mishra alleged that Patnaik might have done good things for the people elsewhere in the state, but his contribution for the welfare of Hinjili people is negligible. "People in Hinjili are still not getting piped water. This is sufficient to speak about the welfare of Hinjili people," he pointed out. Asked whether he could defeat Patnaik in his home turf, Mishra said he would seek votes on the basis of 'Modi ki guarantee'.

"Name anyone in the village, he or she must be a beneficiary of Modi's schemes," Mishra said, adding that he would remind people about the Modi government's welfare schemes and failure of the state's BJD government in implementing them. Patnaik, who has been representing Hinjili since 2000, for the first time recorded a fall in the victory margin in 2019. He had earlier registered a continuous increase since 2000 when he contested the assembly elections for the first time. In the first election in 2000, Patnaik's victory margin was over 29,826 votes. It later increased to 76,586 in 2014 assembly elections, but dropped to 60,160 five years later in 2019. While his vote share in 2009 elections was over 76 per cent, it gradually declined to little more than 73 per cent in 2014 and just above 66 per cent in 2019 polls. In the last assembly election, Patnaik contested from both Hinjili and Bijepur, a western Odisha constituency. He, however, retained Hinjili and left Bijepur. Patnaik stands on the brink of setting a record as the longest-serving chief minister if he emerges victorious in the 2024 elections, surpassing the tenure of Pawan Kumar Chamling of Sikkim.

national

of the day quote

The Congress and all INDIA bloc partners have officially demanded from the EC to provide an ecosystem where political parties are not hindered in the run up to the elections and all parties are treated impartially and without biases

SACHIN PILOT | CONGRESS LEADER

BJP claims it has replaced stones with laptops in Kashmir. But just a glance at what is happening in the rest of the country is ample proof that they've emboldened disgruntled unemployed youngsters to wield lathis & dandas at Muslims only to vent their frustration

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

If by-elections are held in all the nine Assembly seats along with the Lok Sabha polls June 1 and the BJP wins, the Congress party would come in a minority

JAI RAM THAKUR | LEADER OF OPNN OF HIMACHAL

SHORT TAKES

More trouble for Mahua Moitra

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a money laundering case against TMC leader Mahua Moitra and businessman Darshan Hiranandani in connection with an alleged cash-for-queries scam case, official sources said Tuesday. The federal agency filed the enforcement case information report (ECIR), the ED equivalent of a police FIR, against the two, taking cognisance of a CBI complaint, the sources said. The ED case was registered two-three days ago.

HC grants divorce to chef Kunal Kapur

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court granted divorce to celebrity chef Kunal Kapur Tuesday on the ground of cruelty meted out to him by his estranged wife, saying the woman's conduct towards him was devoid of dignity and empathy. The high court allowed Kapur's appeal challenging a family court's order denying him divorce and said it is a settled position of law that making reckless, defamatory, humiliating and unsubstantiated allegations against a spouse in public amounts to cruelty.

Kerala TTE pushed to death from train

Thrissur (Kerala): In a shocking incident, a Travelling Ticket Examiner (TTE) met with a tragic fate after allegedly being pushed by a passenger, who was travelling without a ticket, from a moving train in this central Kerala district Tuesday. Police said the incident occurred Tuesday evening in the Velappaya area under the Thrissur Medical College police station limits. The victim has been identified as K Vinod, a resident of Emakulam. According to police, Vinod, while performing his duties, fell from the moving train after being allegedly pushed by the passenger in question.

SUV rams into shop, 6 injured

New Delhi: A speeding SUV ramed into a famous 'kachori' shop in north Delhi's Civil Lines area, injuring six people, police said Tuesday. The incident took place on Rajpur Road Sunday afternoon. A purported CCTV footage of the incident doing the rounds on social media showed the white SUV hitting some people standing outside the shop and tossing them in the air before ramming into a wall.



Behind the 3D Selfie Points of Modi ji and the event-driven green flags for Vande Bharat, lies the story of absolute apathy, complete neglect and deliberate emaciation of the Railways by the BJP

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

Doctors at a city hospital performed a rare combined liver and kidney transplant on a 46-year-old critically ill patient from Uzbekistan, with organs harvested from live donors' wife and daughter in a surgery spanning 16 hours



India rejects China's 'invented names' for Arunachal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 2: India Tuesday outrightly rejected as "senseless" China renaming some places in Arunachal Pradesh, and asserted that assigning "invented" names does not alter the reality that the state "is, has been, and will always be" an integral part of India.

India's reaction came in response to Beijing announcing Chinese names for 30 more places in Arunachal Pradesh which the neighbouring country claims as southern part of Tibet.

"China has persisted with its senseless attempts to rename places in the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. We firmly reject such attempts," external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "Assigning invented names



will not alter the reality that Arunachal Pradesh is, has been, and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India," he said in response to media queries on the matter. The Chinese Ministry of Civil

Affairs released the fourth list of standardised geographical names in Zangnan, the Chinese name for Arunachal Pradesh which Beijing claims as part of south Tibet, state-run Global Times reported on Sunday.

The ties between India and China came under severe strain following the eastern Ladakh border row that began in May, 2020

In April last year too, India had reacted sharply when Beijing released the third list of standardised names of 11 places in Arunachal Pradesh.

The first batch of the standardised names of six places in Arunachal Pradesh was released in 2017 while the second batch of 15 places was issued in 2021.

On March 28, India said Beijing may "repeat its baseless claims" over Arunachal Pradesh as many times as it wants but that is not going to change New Delhi's po-

sition that the state "was, is and will always remain" an integral and inalienable part of the country.

Jaiswal had said this during his weekly press briefing, in response to a query on China continuing to harp on its claim over Arunachal Pradesh.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during his Gujarat visit, asserted Monday that Arunachal Pradesh was, is, and will remain an Indian state in the future. Addressing a press conference in Surat, he had said nothing will be gained by changing the names.

"If I change the name of your house, will it become mine? Arunachal Pradesh was an Indian state, is an Indian state and will remain so in the future. Nothing will be gained by changing names," Jaishankar had said.

Foreign medical graduates cannot be treated differently: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 2: The Supreme Court has said that foreign medical graduates cannot be treated differently and should be paid stipend during their internship like their counterparts who have done MBBS from Indian colleges.

A bench comprising justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Prasanna Bhalachandra Varale took note of the submissions of lawyer Tanvi Dubey, appearing for a group of doctors, that foreign medical graduates in certain medical colleges are not being paid stipends during their internships.

The bench, Monday, asked National Medical Commission (NMC) to produce details of three colleges with status of payment of stipend to foreign medical graduates. The colleges are Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government Medical College, Vidisha, Dr Laxminarayan Pandey Government Medical College, Ratlam and Employees State Insurance Corporation Medical College, Alwar.

The court said it was paramount that stipend is paid and warned the colleges that the strictures will be passed if its earlier order on payment of stipend is not complied with.

"The medical colleges cannot treat MBBS and foreign medical graduates differently," the bench said and asked the NMC and the medical colleges to get back with the instruction on the issue.

Earlier, the top court January 23 had sought responses from the NMC and the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government Medical College on a plea filed by five foreign medical graduates including Sajith SL of Thiruvananthapuram.

Road crash leaves seven dead in UP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chitrakoot (UP), April 2: Seven people died and one was seriously injured when a speeding truck ramed into their autorickshaw here Tuesday, police said.

While five people died on the spot, two succumbed to their injuries during treatment in hospital, police said. Chakrapani Tripathi, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP), Chitrakoot, said the speeding truck hit the autorickshaw, which was going to Ramghat from Karvi railway station, near Kapsethi village on Amanpur road in the Karvi Kotwali area.

The deceased were identified as Anirudh (30), Atar Singh (50) and Akhilesh Singh (22) of Kannauj district, Dharmendra Soni (30) and Nidhi Soni (19) of Hamirpur district, Nirbhay (20) of Chitrakoot, and autorickshaw driver Suraj Balmiki (20), he said in a statement.

The injured is undergoing treatment at a hospital in Prayagraj, he added.

The truck driver fled the scene after the accident, leaving behind his vehicle. Efforts are being made to trace him, the SHO said.

Atishi claims ED will arrest her

AT A PRESS CONFERENCE, ATISHI CLAIMED THAT SHE, DELHI MINISTER SAURABH BHARADWAJ, MLA DURGESH PATHAK AND RAJYA SABHA MP RAGHAV CHADHA WOULD BE ARRESTED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 2: Four senior AAP leaders, including herself, would be arrested soon, Delhi Education Minister Atishi said Tuesday, claiming the BJP approached her through a "very close" person to join it or be prepared to be nabbed by the ED within a month.

At a press conference here, Atishi claimed that she, Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj, MLA Durgesh Pathak and Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha would be arrested.

However, Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva claimed that Atishi was "lying". The entire Aam Aadmi Party was involved in the "liquor scam" and its leaders were fighting among themselves over the apprehension about who would be the next "sacrificial lamb", he said.

Atishi further claimed that she had been told that the Enforcement Directorate would conduct raids at her residence and that of her kin in the coming days. After that, summons would be sent and arrests would be made, she claimed.

There is no reason for Arvind Kejriwal to resign as Chief Minister because he has neither been charge-sheeted nor convicted in the excise policy case. Moreover, he enjoys an "overwhelming majority in the Delhi Assembly," she said.

If he resigns from the Chief Minister post, it will become a "simple and straight standard operating procedure" for the



BJP to topple governments by sending chief ministers behind bars in false cases, Atishi asserted.

"The BJP has realised that sending only Kejriwal to jail would not lead to the disintegration of the AAP and now it aims to get four second-line leaders of the party, including me, Saurabh Bharadwaj, Raghav Chadha and Durgesh Pathak, arrested," she said.

"I was approached by the BJP through a person very close to me who asked me to join the BJP to save and enhance my political career, or I will be arrested within a month." Atishi claimed the BJP has been rattled by the success of the INDIA bloc's Ramlila Maidan rally Sunday and by the AAP's protests against Kejriwal's arrest. "The BJP hoped AAP would disintegrate after the arrest of its top leaders - Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, Sanjay Singh and Satyendar Jain. But now it feels that the next top four leaders need to be sent to jail," she

said. "I want to tell the BJP that we are not going to be scared by your threats. We are soldiers of Kejriwal and disciples of Bhagat Singh. We will fight to save the country and for the betterment of the people till the last AAP volunteer," she asserted.

Bharadwaj termed the "offer" to Atishi to join the BJP or get arrested an "open threat". "Despite the arrest of four leaders, including Kejriwal, the AAP is surviving. So now they want to send the next line of leaders (to jail). The first would be me, next Atishi and then Raghav Chadha and Durgesh Pathak."

Reacting to the AAP leaders' remarks, the Delhi BJP chief said, "Since Kejriwal has stated that excise policy case accused and AAP leader Vijay Nair, who is in jail, used to report to Atishi and Bharadwaj, the AAP leaders are fighting among them. Atishi by saving her skin has led Chadha and Pathak in trouble."

Bharadwaj said Nair had given his statement one and half years ago and the BJP leaders were "using" it now which showed the party's "absurd political strategy".

Kejriwal, arrested March 21 by the ED in connection with a money laundering case linked to the now-scrapped excise policy of his government, was Monday sent to judicial custody till April 15 by a city court.

The AAP has accused the BJP of wanting to impose President's rule in Delhi by poaching its legislators and breaking the party.

TIDBITS

AAP MLAs meet Sunita Kejriwal

New Delhi: AAP MLAs Tuesday met Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal and asserted that the Delhi Chief Minister should continue to run the government from jail and not step down. Kejriwal is in judicial custody till April 15 after his arrest last month by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with a money-laundering case linked to his government's now-scrapped excise policy. During Tuesday's meeting, the AAP MLAs told Sunita Kejriwal that two crore people of Delhi stand with the Chief Minister and he should not resign at any cost, party leaders said. Of the AAP's 62 MLAs in Delhi, 55 were present during the meeting.

Azad to contest from Anantnag seat

Srinagar: Former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Ghulam Nabi Azad will contest the Lok Sabha elections from Anantnag-Rajouri constituency, his party DPAP said. Azad left the Congress in 2022, ending his five-decade-long association with the party, and floated his own political outfit-Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP). "Today the core committee of DPAP met and we have decided that (party president) Ghulam Nabi Azad will contest the Anantnag-Rajouri seat," DPAP leader Taj Mohiuddin told reporters here. This will be the first Lok Sabha election for Azad after he lost from Udhampur constituency in 2014 to BJP leader Jitendra Singh. Azad was elected to Lok Sabha twice - in 1980 and 1984 - from the Washim constituency in Maharashtra. He was a member of Rajya Sabha from 1990 till 2006.

Poll body appoints observers in states to monitor fair elections

Special observers will station themselves at the state headquarters and if needed, tour the areas where sensitivity is high and necessary coordination is required

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 2: The Election Commission Tuesday appointed special observers for administrative, security and expenditure monitoring purposes in several states to ensure a level playing field during the upcoming elections.

The special observers - former civil servants with brilliant track record - have been tasked with overseeing the electoral process

with strict vigilance, particularly against the backdrop of challenges posed by the influence of money, muscle and misinformation, the poll panel said.

Special Observers (General and Police) have been deployed in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Bihar where the population is more than seven crore and also in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha where the simultaneous elections to the Assemblies are to be held, the poll authority said.

Special Expenditure Observers have also been deployed in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha, it said.

Besides general, expenditure and police observers, the EC had been deploying special observers in poll-going states. They can seek requisite in-



puts from time to time from the observers deployed in the parliamentary constituencies, assembly seats or districts, wherever necessary, without interfering in their work. They are also mandated to seek inputs and coordinate with re-

gional heads and nodal officers of various agencies involved in monitoring activities.

The special observers will have a special focus on border areas and work towards plugging the inflow of inducements and also work on seeking inputs

on the redressal of grievances of the public. Also on their agenda is quick response to counter false narrative and monitoring of the last 72 hours before the poll, to ensure free and fair elections.

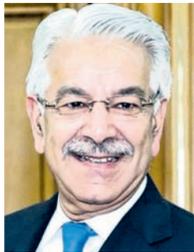
While retired IAS Manjit Singh has been deployed as a general special observer in Bihar, former IPS Vivek Dubey has been posted as a police special observer in the state. In Maharashtra, Dharmendra S Gangwar, a retired IAS, has been made general special observer while N K Mishra, a former IPS, is the police special observer.

In Uttar Pradesh, retired IAS officer Ajay V Nayak is the general special observer and Manmohan Singh, a former IPS officer, is the police special observer. Similarly, in Andhra Pradesh, the general special ob-

server is retired IAS officer Ram Mohan Mishra and the police special observer is former IPS Deepak Mishra who was once with the Delhi Police. Former IAS officer Yogendra Tripathi and retired IPS Rajnikant Mishra have been appointed as a general special observer and police special observer, respectively for Odisha. In West Bengal, the general special observer is former IAS Alok Sinha and the police special observer is retired IPS Anil Kumar Sharma.

The special expenditure observers for the five states are Rajesh Tuteja in Uttar Pradesh, Himalini Kashyap in Odisha, B Murali Kumar in Karnataka, Neena Nigam in Andhra Pradesh and B R Balakrishnan in Tamil Nadu. All are former Indian Revenue Service officers.

international



Our relations with India could be improved after elections there
KHAWAJA ASIF | PAKISTAN'S DEFENCE MINISTER

NETANYAHU DISCHARGED FROM HOSPITAL

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was discharged from the hospital Tuesday after a successful operation for a hernia Sunday and is said to be in excellent condition to carry out his daily work



of the day quote

The people of Ukraine, they want to see justice delivered
DMYTRO KULEBA | UKRAINIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

We must have enough people with the right skills at the right time
BJORN ARILD GRAM | NORWAY DEFENCE MINISTER

Military buildup, including nuclear and missile development, has been accelerating in areas surrounding Japan and attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force are growing
FUMIO KISHIDA | JAPAN PM

SHORT TAKES

Eight killed
Tirana (Albania): A car crashed into a river Tuesday in southeastern Albania, killing all eight people inside, including seven suspected migrants and a local driver, police said. The driver of the vehicle lost control and veered into the Vjosa River about 240 kilometres (150 miles) southeast of the capital, Tirana, around 4 am, according to a police statement. Seven of the victims were suspected to be "from third countries," it said, a description police often use to refer to migrants. Regional police chief Ardiyan Cipa said the car failed to stop at a police checkpoint and sped away. A police vehicle then followed the car and saw it had crashed into the river.

Ukraine attacks Russian oil refinery
Kyiv (Ukraine): Ukrainian drones attacked one of Russia's biggest oil refineries and a drone factory in the Russian province of Tatarstan, officials said Tuesday, in what appeared to be Kyiv's deepest strike inside Russian territory since the war began more than two years ago. The attack on facilities near the cities of Yelabuga and Nizhnekamsk, located some 1,200 kilometres (745 miles) east of Ukraine, injured 12 people, Russian regional authorities said. In recent months, Russian refineries and oil terminals have become priority targets of Ukrainian drone attacks, part of stepped-up assaults on Russian territory.

Congo appoints its first female PM
Kinshasa (Congo): Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi appointed the country's first female Prime Minister, fulfilling a campaign promise and taking an important step toward the formation of a new government after his reelection late last year. Former planning minister Judith Suminwa Tuluka will step into the role at a time of worsening violence in the country's mineral-rich east, which borders Rwanda. The long-running conflict has displaced more than 7 million people according to the United Nations, making it one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

N Korea test-fires ballistic missile
Seoul: North Korea Tuesday test-fired a suspected intermediate-range ballistic missile toward waters off its eastern coast, South Korea's military said, adding to a series of weapons demonstrations that have raised tensions in the region. South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missile was launched from an area near the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, but it did not confirm how far the weapon flew.

MATTER OF CONCERN

Israeli airstrike kills 7 aid workers

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, April 2: Food aid organization World Central Kitchen said Tuesday that an Israeli strike killed seven of its workers in the Gaza Strip. "World Central Kitchen is devastated to confirm seven members of our team have been killed in an IDF strike in Gaza," the US-based charity said in a statement. It added that those killed were "from Australia, Poland, United Kingdom, a dual citizen of the US and Canada and Palestine." The aid organization also announced it was "pausing our operations in the region". Since the start of the war, World Central Kitchen has been involved in relief efforts, including supplying meals to hunger-stricken Gaza. It is one of two NGOs spearheading efforts to deliver aid to Gaza by boat from Cyprus and was also involved in the construction of a temporary jetty. The NGO said its team was travelling in a "deconflicted" area in a convoy of "two armored cars branded with the WCK logo and a soft skin vehicle" at the time of the strike. "Despite coordinating movements with the IDF, the convoy was hit as it was leav-



ing the Deir al-Balah warehouse, where the team had unloaded more than 100 tons of humanitarian food aid brought to Gaza on the maritime route," it said. World Central Kitchen "lost several of our sisters and brothers in an IDF air strike in Gaza. I am heartbroken and grieving for their families and friends and our whole WCK family," the group's founder, chef Jose Andres, wrote on social media platform X. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese Tuesday confirmed one of the killed aid workers was Australian national Zomi Frankcom. "This is completely unacceptable. Australia expects full accountability for the deaths of aid workers," Albanese said. Earlier, the Gaza health ministry had said the bodies of four foreign aid workers and their Palestinian driver were brought to the hospital in the central town of Deir el-Balah after an Israeli strike targeted their vehicle. Hamas said in a statement that the aid workers included "British, Australian and Polish nationalities, with the fourth nationality not known" and that the fifth person killed was a Palestinian driver and translator. US National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said the White House

Since the start of the war, World Central Kitchen has been involved in relief efforts, including supplying meals to hunger-stricken Gaza

The NGO said its team was travelling in a 'deconflicted' area in a convoy of 'two armored cars branded with the WCK logo and a soft skin vehicle' at the time of the strike

was "heartbroken and deeply troubled by the strike". "Humanitarian aid workers must be protected as they deliver aid that is desperately needed, and we urge Israel to swiftly investigate what happened," she wrote on X.

The Israeli military said in a statement that it was "conducting a thorough review at the highest levels to understand the circumstances of this tragic incident", adding that it had been "working closely with WCK" in the effort to provide aid to Palestinians.

Since Hamas's October 7 attack, Gaza has been under a near-complete blockade, with the United Nations accusing Israel of preventing deliveries of humanitarian assistance to 2.4 million Palestinians.

Pak's ruling coalition sweeps Senate elections

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, April 2: Pakistan's ruling coalition swept the Senate elections as the results of 19 seats were announced after the election process to fill 48 vacant seats of the upper house of the bi-cameral Parliament. The alliance led by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and including Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and other parties bagged 18 seats out of 19 while an independent candidate also was elected with their support. Polling was held on 12 seats from Sindh, five seats from Punjab and two seats from the Islamabad capital territory. In Punjab, PML-N grabbed all seats while in Sindh, PPP got 10 seats and one seat went to Muttahida Qaumi Movement and an independent candidate. The PML-N and the PPP won one seat each from Islamabad.

Eighteen candidates had already been elected unopposed, including eleven from Balochistan and seven from Punjab. Elections in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province were postponed due to controversy over oaths of members elected on reserved seats. Foreign minister Ishaq Dar was elected senator after getting 224 votes in the National Assembly. His opponent Raja Ansar Mehmood from the opposition Sunni Ittehad Council got 81 votes. Rana Mehmood ul Hassan of the Pakistan Peoples Party also won his seat by defeating Farzand Hussain Shah of the Sunni Ittehad Council. Thus the ruling alliance won both senate seats from the Islamabad capital territory.



Indian Coast Guard (ICG) personnel after ICG's Pollution Control Vessel 'Samudra Paharedar' made a port call as part of its overseas deployment to ASEAN countries, in Vietnam, Tuesday

29 killed in Istanbul nightclub fire

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Istanbul, April 2: A fire at an Istanbul nightclub during renovations Tuesday killed at least 29 people, officials and reports said. Several people, including managers of the club, were detained for questioning. At least one person was being treated at a hospital, the Istanbul governor's office said in a statement. The Masquerade nightclub, which was closed for renovations, was on the ground and basement floors of a 16-story residential building in the Besiktas district on the European side of the city bisected by the



SHOCKING INCIDENT

1 killed, 2 hurt after student opens fire



FINNISH PRESIDENT ALEXANDER STUBB AND PRIME MINISTER PETERI ORPO OFFERED CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES OF THE VICTIMS IN POSTINGS ON X WITH BOTH SAYING THEY WERE SHOCKED OVER THE SHOOTING

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Helsinki, April 2: A 12-year-old student opened fire at a secondary school in southern Finland Tuesday morning, killing one and seriously wounded two other students, police said. The suspect was later apprehended.

Heavily armed police cordoned off the Viertola school — a large educational institution including lower and upper secondary schools with a total of about 800 students — in the city of Vantaa, just outside the capital, Helsinki, after receiving a call about a shooting incident at 9:08 am.

Police said both the suspect and the victims were 12 years old. One of the students had died instantly after being shot, Chief of Police Ilkka Koskimäki from the Eastern Uusimaa Police Department told a news conference. The other two were seriously wounded, he said. The weapon used in the shoot-

ing was a registered handgun that was licensed to the suspect's relative, Koskimäki said. The suspect was detained in the Helsinki area later Tuesday with a handgun in his possession, police said. He admitted to the shooting in an initial police hearing but there is no immediate word of the motive, police said, adding that the case is being investigated as a murder and two attempted murders.

Finland President Alexander Stubb and Prime Minister Petteri Orpo offered condolences to the families of the victims in postings on X with both saying they were shocked over the shooting. "What makes it particularly shocking is the age of the victim and the suspect," Orpo said during a news conference later Tuesday. "I can assure you that this (shooting) will be carefully reviewed and conclusions will be drawn that this will not happen again," he said.

The minimum age of criminal liability in Finland is 15 years, which means the suspect cannot be formally arrested. A suspect younger than 15 can only be heard by the police after which they will be handed over to Finland's child welfare authorities. In the past decades, Finland has witnessed two major deadly school shootings.

In November 2007, an 18-year-old student armed with a semi-automatic pistol opened fire at the premises of the Jokela high school in Tuusula, southern Finland, killing nine people. He was found dead with self-inflicted wounds.

Faye sworn in as Senegal President

REUTERS

Dakar, April 2: Senegal's once jailed opposition candidate Bassirou Diomaye Faye was sworn in Tuesday as the West African nation's fifth and youngest President ever, promising to restore stability and bring economic progress.

The 44-year-old former tax inspector defeated Amadou Ba, the candidate of outgoing President Macky Sall's ruling coalition, by a landslide in the first round of voting, reflecting high hopes for change in the country of around 18 million.

"The results of the election showed a profound desire for change," Faye said after taking the oath of office at a ceremony he attended with his two wives.

Over a dozen heads of state and regional representatives attended the inauguration, including Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu, Ghana's President Nana Akufo-Addo and African Union Commission Chair Moussa Faki Mahamat. The military juntas of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger also sent representatives.

The smooth transition was a welcome boost after three years of unprecedented political turmoil in Senegal that had raised concern about democratic backsliding in the coup-prone region of West Africa, where juntas have seized power and cut ties with traditional Western allies in favour of Russia.

"Senegal will be a country of hope, at peace, with an independent justice system and a stronger democracy," Faye said, promising to manage affairs ethically and to build the economy. Millions queued for hours to cast their ballot in an election that eventually took place March 24 after unsuccessful attempts by Sall's government to postpone it from February to December, then June.

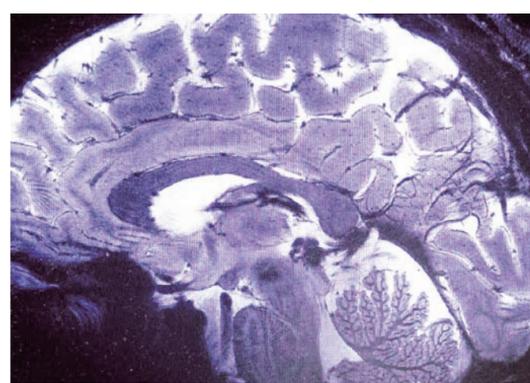
Most powerful MRI scans first images of human brain

RESEARCHERS AT FRANCE'S ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION FIRST USED THE MACHINE TO SCAN A PUMPKIN BACK IN 2021. BUT HEALTH AUTHORITIES RECENTLY GAVE THEM THE GREEN LIGHT TO SCAN HUMANS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Saclay, France, April 2: The world's most powerful MRI scanner has delivered its first images of human brains, reaching a new level of precision that is hoped will shed more light on our mysterious minds -- and the illnesses that haunt them. Researchers at France's Atomic Energy Commission first used the machine to scan a pumpkin back in 2021. But health authorities recently gave them the green light to scan humans.

a physicist working on the project. The magnetic field created by the scanner is a whopping 11.7 teslas, a unit of measurement named after inventor Nikola Tesla. This power allows the machine to scan images with 10 times more precision than the MRIs commonly used in hospitals, whose power does not normally exceed three teslas. On a computer screen, Vignaud compared images taken by this mighty scanner, dubbed Iseult, with those from a normal MRI. "With this machine, we can see the tiny vessels which feed the cerebral cortex, or details of the cerebellum which were almost invisible until now," he said. France's research minister Sylvie Retailleau, herself a physicist, said "the precision is hardly believable!" "This world-first will allow better detection and treatment for pathologies of the brain,"



she said in a statement. Inside a cylinder that is five metres (16 feet) long and tall, the machine houses a 132-tonne magnet powered by a coil carrying a current of 1,500 amps. There is a 90-centimetre (three-foot) opening for humans to slide into. The design is the result of two decades of research by a partnership between French and German engineers. The United States and South Korea are working on similarly powerful MRI machines, but have not yet started scanning images of humans. One of the main goals of such

a powerful scanner is to refine our understanding of the anatomy of the brain and which areas are activated when it carries out particular tasks. Scientists have already used MRIs to show that when the brain recognises particular things -- such as faces, places or words -- distinct regions of the cerebral cortex kick into gear. Harnessing the power of 11.7 teslas will help Iseult to "better understand the relationship between the brain's structure and cognitive functions, for example when we read a book or carry out a mental calculation," said Nicolas Boulant, the project's scientific director. The researchers hope that the scanner's power could also shed light on the elusive mechanisms behind neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's -- or psychological conditions like depression or schizophrenia.



Not just the market, but the entire economy rests on the edifice of trust
MADHABI PURI BUCH | SEBI CHAIRPERSON

DOMESTIC AIR TRAFFIC MAY TOUCH 153.4MN

Domestic air passenger traffic is estimated at 153.4 million in 2023-24, according to aviation consultancy CAPA India. In October last year, it had revised the 2023-24 estimate to 155 million from the projection of more than 160 million domestic air passenger traffic in March 2023.



of the day **QUOTE**

As regulators, we would want to ensure continuous vigil to mitigate risks emerging from both within and the periphery of the financial ecosystem



M RAJESHWAR RAO | RBI DEPUTY GOVERNOR

GE Aerospace moves forward with a strong balance sheet and greater focus to invent the future of flight, lift people up, and bring them home safely



H LAWRENCE CULP JR | GE AEROSPACE CHAIRMAN AND CEO

While I am in the process of implementing the required steps and actions across all the verticals of the company, I intend the required change in mindset, to begin from my desk



PUNIT GOENKA | ZEEL MD AND CEO

SHORT TAKES

Bajaj Auto sales up 25%

New Delhi: Bajaj Auto Ltd Tuesday reported 25 per cent year-on-year growth in its total vehicle wholesales, including exports at 3,65,904 units in March. The Pune-based automaker had sold 2,91,567 two-wheelers and commercial vehicles in March 2023, according to a company statement. Total domestic sales (including commercial vehicles) rose 18 per cent at 2,20,393 units in the last month compared to 1,86,522 units sold in the same month last year. Total exports during the month under review rose 39 per cent at 1,45,511 units from 1,05,045 vehicles shipped out to overseas markets in March last year, according to the statement. For the fiscal ended March 31, 2024, the company reported wholesales of 4,350,933 units, an 11 per cent increase over 3,927,857 units in the 2022-23 fiscal.

HMSI sales surge 81%

New Delhi: Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India Tuesday reported an 81 per cent year-on-year jump in domestic wholesales at 3,58,151 units in March. The company had dispatched 1,97,542 units to its dealers in March 2023. Exports increased 95 per cent to 28,304 units last month from 14,460 units in March 2023, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India (HMSI) said in a statement. The total sales rose to 3,86,455 units last month against 2,12,002 units in the same month last year, it added.

Ashok Leyland sales decline 7%

Chennai: Hinduja Group flagship company Ashok Leyland has reported a seven per cent decline in its vehicle sales made in March at 21,317 units. The city-headquartered heavy commercial vehicle maker had sold 22,885 units during the same month of last year. Ashok Leyland had sold 14,517 units of medium and heavy commercial vehicles in March 2024 while light commercial vehicles were at 6,800 units, totaling 21,317 units. However, total cumulative sales made till March 2024 grew by 1 per cent to 1,82,830 units, as compared to 1,80,916 sold last year during the same period, a company statement said here. Total sales including domestic and exports, made by Ashok Leyland in March slipped by 4 per cent to 22,866 units, as compared to 23,926 units sold in the same month of last year. Ashok Leyland had sold 15,562 medium and heavy commercial vehicles in domestic and overseas markets in March.

March factory growth rises to 16-year high

REUTERS

Bangalore, April 2: India's manufacturing industry enjoyed solid growth in March, expanding at the fastest pace in 16 years thanks to accelerating demand, according to a survey that also showed hiring increased at the strongest rate in six months.

Ahead of the general elections this month, the data is likely to boost support for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, which has focused on manufacturing to improve the economy, already the fastest-growing among its major peers.

The HSBC final India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index, compiled by S&P Global, rose to 59.1 last month from February's 56.9, the highest since February 2008, but slightly lower than a preliminary estimate of 59.2.

That puts the reading above the 50-mark, which separates growth from contraction, for a 33rd consecutive month - the longest streak since July 2013.

"The HSBC final India Manufacturing PMI indicates that production growth continued to be strong, supported by both domestic and external demand," said Ines Lam, economist at HSBC.

Both output and new orders



sub-indexes rose to their highest levels since October 2020. Exports expanded at the fastest pace in nearly two years.

That boosted hiring in March and employment generation was at its strongest since September after remaining largely stagnant in the previous two months.

"Buoyed by robust demand and improving profit margins, manufacturers have an optimistic outlook about future business conditions," added Lam.

While the outlook for the upcoming year was optimistic, the sub-index eased for a second

month to 63.3 as inflation concerns weighed on confidence.

Input costs rose at the fastest pace in five months but not all were passed on to clients, with the prices charged sub-index at its lowest in over a year as efforts to retain customers prevented some firms from hiking fees.

Concerns about sticky inflation have led the Reserve Bank of India to push back against interest rate cuts, with no one in a Reuters poll expecting it to pivot this month and the first cut to not come until the September quarter.

Paradip Port largest in cargo throughput

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 2: State-owned Paradip Port in Odisha has emerged as India's largest major port in terms of cargo volumes by clocking 145.38 million tonne cargo throughput in FY24, surpassing Deendayal Port Authority in Gujarat.

For the first time in the 56-year history of operation, Paradip Port has surpassed previous records set by Deendayal Port, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways said in a statement.

"Paradip Port Authority's (PPA) remarkable journey has reached new heights with the recent record-breaking achievement of clocking an incredible 145.38 MMT (million metric tonne) cargo throughput in FY2023-24 and surpassed Deendayal Port, Kandla, to emerge as the highest cargo handling major port of the country," it said.

According to the statement, during FY24, the port achieved the highest-ever coastal shipping traffic of 59.19 MMT, with a growth of 0.76 MMT - 1.30 per cent over the previous year.

The thermal coal shipping has reached 43.97 MMT - 4.02 per cent over the previous year's cargo handling. The growth tra-

jectory of Paradip Port was driven by an improved system of operation at a mechanised coal hand plant to reduce idle time between rake unloading, resulting in the highest handling of thermal coal - 27.12 million tonnes.

"Thus, the Paradip Port is emerging as a hub for coastal shipping in the country," the statement said.

Paradip Port has been able to improve its berth productivity to 33,014 MT from 31,050 MT in the previous financial year, registering a 6.33 per cent growth.

The berth productivity achieved by Paradip Port is the highest among all the ports of the country. During FY24, Paradip Port handled 21,665 numbers of rakes, registering a year-on-year growth of 7.65 per cent. During the financial year, the port handled 2,710 ships, registering an increase of 13.82 per cent in FY23.

The operating revenue has crossed Rs 2,300 crore in FY24 against Rs 2,074 crore in comparison to the previous fiscal, resulting in an increase of 14.30 per cent. As per the statement, Paradip Port, with 289 million tonnes capacity, is poised to cross the 300 million tonnes capacity mark in another 3 years with the commissioning of the Western Dock project.

Equities end 3-day winning run as IT, bank shares drop

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 2: Stock markets snapped the three-day winning run Tuesday with benchmark Sensex falling by 110 points due to profit-taking in select IT, private bank and auto shares amid weak trends from the US markets and foreign fund outflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 110.64 points or 0.15 per cent to settle at 73,903.91 with 16 of its components ending lower and 14 settling higher. During the day, the index dropped by 270.78 points or 0.36 per cent to a low of 73,743.77 points.

The broader NSE Nifty closed lower by 8.70 points or 0.04 per cent at 22,453.30 despite recovery at the day-end.

Both Sensex and Nifty scaled lifetime high levels in intra-day trade Monday before settling around 0.5 per cent higher.

From the Sensex basket, Kotak Mahindra Bank fell the most by 1.84 per cent. ICICI Bank dropped 1.63 per cent, HCL Technologies by 1.82 per cent, and Infosys by 0.84 per cent. Tata Consultancy Services, Wipro, Tech Mahindra and Larsen & Toubro were the major laggards.

Mahindra & Mahindra, Nestle, Tata Motors and IndusInd Bank

Byju's laying off 500 employees: Sources

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 2: Byju's is laying off about 500 employees, including from sales, amid a financial crunch, sources said, even as the troubled edtech firm maintained that it is in the final stages of business restructuring to streamline operations.

The layoffs in the embattled edtech company began 15-20 days ago, sources said, adding that it would impact 500 employees.

They, however, pointed out that the edtech player might not have to resort to further rationalisation, except in the 'worst case scenario'.

The latest round of job cuts will impact sales functions, teachers and some tuition centres.

There was no official word from Byju's, which has been embroiled in a legal dispute with some of its investors, with regard to the layoffs.

When contacted, Byju's spokesperson, in an email response, said, "We are in the final stages of a business restructuring exercise announced in October 2023 to simplify operating structures, reduce the cost base, and better cash flow management."

"As you are also aware, we are going through an extraordinary situation in the company because of the ongoing litigation with four foreign investors, where every employee and the ecosystem is going through tremendous stress, given the present circumstances," the spokesperson said.

Govt panel proposes iron ore exchange



REUTERS

New Delhi, April 2: A government-appointed panel has proposed setting up India's first iron ore exchange to determine the domestic sale price of the key steelmaking raw material, according to a document reviewed by Reuters and a source with direct knowledge of the matter.

After the Ministry of Mines pointed out that some iron ore miners tried to keep the average sale price artificially low to pay lower royalties to the government, the federal government late last year formed a panel to work out an 'alternative mechanism' to determine domestic iron ore prices.

"As a long-term measure to solve the issue of transparency in the returns being received, (the) Ministry of Mines should develop a National Iron Ore exchange, mandating the buying and selling of iron ore on the online platform," the panel said in its recommendations, according to the document.

Details of the panel's recommendations have not been previously reported.

The proposed exchange would record real-time transactions and physical delivery of iron ore, the document said.

"Once the exchange is implemented, ASP (average sale price) for each state and grade can be auto-published every month, based on the weighted average of monthly sales on online platform," it said.

Currently, prices of the same grade of iron ore differ widely across the country, creating an anomaly which the panel believes makes it easier for miners to lower rates artificially to avoid higher royalty payments to the government. India's Cabinet will consider the recommendations of the panel, said the source who could not be named because the proposal is not public.

The Union mines ministry did not immediately comment on a Reuters email seeking comment. The panel has also recommended the use of blockchain technology at the exchange, according to the document.

The technology allows stakeholders such as miners, traders, buyers, and government agencies to quickly and securely share verifiable information.

India, EEU bloc officials hold FTA talks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 2: Senior officials of India and the five-nation Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) bloc held detailed discussions last month to formally start negotiations for a free trade agreement to boost economic ties, an official said.

The five members of the EEU are Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. The official said two feasibility studies have already been conducted on the proposed agreement.

In such agreements, two or more trading partners either eliminate or significantly reduce customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them. These agreements provide greater market access to Indian goods and services.

"Senior officers of both sides have met March 28 here and have discussed formally starting talks for the FTA," the official said. An industry expert said domestic exporters from sectors like engineering goods, electronics and agriculture can get an edge from the agreement.

Russia is the top trading partner of India in the bloc, with bilateral trade worth \$49.4 billion in FY23.

TRADITIONAL PRE-ELECTION RALLY ELUDES INDIAN STOCKS

ANALYSTS SAY THIS TIME IS DIFFERENT, POINTING TO A STELLAR RALLY IN THE PAST YEAR, RICH VALUATIONS AND UNCERTAINTIES AROUND POLITICAL ISSUES

REUTERS

Mumbai, April 2: With weeks to go before India starts voting in a general election that the incumbent government is widely expected to win, Indian equity markets are uncharacteristically languid and not seeing the traditional pre-election rally.

Analysts say this time is different, pointing to a stellar rally in the past year, rich valuations and uncertainties around political issues such as corruption and electoral funding as factors giving investors reason to pause.

The Nifty index has climbed over 30 per cent over the past year, the second biggest gain among Asian indexes, but has faltered this month.

Abhisekh Goenka, founder and CEO of wealth management firm IFA Global, said stocks had been weighed down by profit-taking at the financial year end

in March and political factors. Parliamentary elections will be held in phases from April 19 to June 1. The consensus is for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coalition to win the elections.

But a string of recent developments including disclosures on political funding for Modi's party, and other tax and corruption charges against parties in the Congress-led Opposition alliance have cast doubts over whether Modi's BJP can get a re-sounding victory.

"The uncertainty will loom till election results are out, and as widely expected, if BJP sweeps the polls, we expect a further breakout rally in the equities," Goenka said.

Historically, Indian equities have started strong in election years, with the Nifty index averaging a 5.2 per cent return in



the first quarter of the previous three election cycles. However, the index saw only a modest 2.7 per cent increase in the same period this year.

Foreign capital inflows have also dried up. In contrast to the

could see some volatility amongst specific areas of the Indian market, such as small-cap stocks, which have rallied over 54 per cent over the past 12 months," said Malcolm Dorson, senior portfolio manager and head of emerging markets strategy at Global X ETFs.

"Prices have moved ahead of earnings momentum, making some of these names more vulnerable to headline risk."

However, the Nifty Volatility index, commonly known as India's VIX, is trading around 12, its lowest in the run-up to the election compared to the last three cycles.

Not everyone is apprehensive. Investors betting on India's strong growth say its stock market is more appealing than that of other emerging markets.

Martin Schulz, head of the international equity group at Federated Hermes, said he has

increased allocation to India in the fund's investment strategies over the past year reaching 16 per cent of its emerging markets strategy funds.

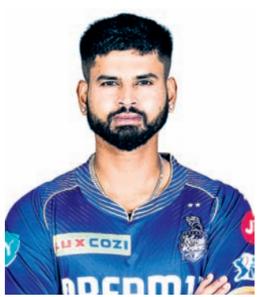
Fitch revised its economic growth projections for India upward for this fiscal year and next, citing robust domestic demand and continued growth in business and consumer confidence.

"Polls expect a Modi victory, which would suggest economic continuity and act as a catalyst for positive flows," said Global X ETF's Dorson.

"If we see an unexpected loss for Modi, the market could correct, however, it would open a valuation-based window, as investors digest the surprise and realise that this economy still benefits from strong secular tailwinds. Either way, I expect a strong second half of the year for Indian equities."

De Kock, Mayank lift LSG

Delhi Capitals ready for Knight Riders challenge



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Visakhapatnam, April 2: Delhi Capitals would be keen to prove that their comfortable win against Chennai Super Kings was not a flash in the pan while Kolkata Knight Riders would be eyeing a hat-trick of victories when the two sides face off in the IPL here Wednesday.

The Capitals would be buoyed by the 20-run victory here on Sunday, their first of the season, against defending champions CSK who were outsmarted by Rishabh Pant and Co. in all departments of the game.

And come Wednesday, the Capitals will have to put another such performance against KKR, whose batters pummelled Royal Challengers Bengaluru bowlers to notch their second win of the season March 29.

For DC, the onus will be on Prithvi Shaw and veteran Australian David Warner to provide a solid start. Meanwhile, Pant continues his inspirational journey. After two scratchy innings, the skipper gave a glimpse of his devastating best as he scored his maiden fifty (51 off 32 balls) of the season and seems to be slowly finding his groove.

The likes of South African Tristan Stubbs and Australian Mitchell Marsh, both capable of launching an assault on the opposition, need to be better towards the end as DC lack domestic power hitters.

While Stubbs showcased his prowess with the bat against Rajasthan Royals, a consistent show from him will do a world of good for DC. On the other

hand, Marsh is yet to produce a glimpse of his brute power with the willow which could prove to be DC's lethal weapon.

South African Anrich Nortje is yet to find his rhythm as he returned to action after a long injury layoff. The Capitals' Indian pace unit will thus have to punch above its weight against a formidable KKR side.

Khaleel Ahmed's performance against CSK was commendable, yet his long-standing fielding troubles remain a concern. He struggles particularly with aerial catches, dropping more than he successfully takes. He dropped a catch of MS Dhoni against CSK. Mukesh Kumar lacks pace while veteran Ishant Sharma is more than capable of asking pertinent questions.

KKR, on the other hand, have looked good this season, registering two wins from as many games. Opener Phil Salt, all-rounder Andre Russell and Venkatesh Iyer have been in good nick in the first two games and would look to pose a challenge for the Delhi pacers. Skipper Shreyas Iyer also got some runs under his belt in the win against RCB.

Rookie pacer Harshit Rana has impressed so far, picking five wickets in two outings, but Mitchell Starc, their record buy, and Varun Chakravarthy have gone for runs aplenty.

MATCHDAY

Indian Premier League
DC vs KKR
Time: 07:30 pm
Telecast: Star Sports Network
Stream: Jio Cinema

Saul strike helps Atletico edge past Villarreal in La Liga

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, April 2: Atletico Madrid scored early and late to beat Villarreal 2-1 in an entertaining Spanish league game and snap a two-game losing streak.

Villarreal won their last four matches and was nine games unbeaten, but a last-gasp goal from substitute Saul Niguez gave Atletico all three points and took it into fourth place in La Liga, two points above Athletic Bilbao. Villarreal remained in 10th place, ahead of Getafe on goal difference and a point behind Osasuna in ninth.

Saul got the winner with three minutes remaining when he coolly side-footed a low shot past the goalkeeper from 17 yards out. It was the first league goal of the season for the central midfielder, who went on to replace Pablo Barrios just three minutes earlier.

Axel Witsel put the capital club 1-0 up when he headed home a corner from Rodrigo Riquelme after eight minutes. Villarreal's Norwegian striker Alexander Sorloth equalized four minutes into the second half with his 14th goal of the season.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, April 2: Quinton de Kock's astute fifty and pace sensation Mayank Yadav's youthful brilliance fashioned Lucknow Super Giants' 28-run romp over Royal Challengers Bengaluru in their IPL match here Tuesday.

Lucknow constructed their 181/5 around Quinton De Kock's 81 (56b, 8x4, 5x6) and Nicholas Pooran's unbeaten 40 (21b, 1x4, 5x6). RCB threatened to miraculously scale 182 briefly through Mahipal Lomror, who produced a forceful 33 (13b, 3x4, 3x6).

However, Mayank's scorching three-wicket haul (3/14) was not to be denied as the hosts were bundled out for 153. But in reality, RCB's chase never really took off - partly by their own follies and partly by the excellence of Lucknow bowlers.

Lucknow opened the bowling with two spinners - Manimaran

Siddharth and Krunal Pandya - and it did surprise Faf du Plessis (19) and Virat Kohli (22). But the introduction of pacer Naveen-ul-Haq saw Kohli upping the ante.

The left-arm spinner Siddharth soon fetched the massive wicket of in-form Kohli. RCB went on a slide from that point losing skipper Du Plessis, to a mindless run-out, Glenn Maxwell and Cameron Green and found themselves at 58/4 in the eighth over.

This was the period when Mayank cranked up the pace in his three-over spell (3-0-13-2). Maxwell tried to pull a 151 kmph laser beam from Mayank, but the high pace meant that the Aussie could not time his pull, resulting in a simple catch to Pooran at short mid-wicket.

Green was beaten by Mayank's raw pace as the delivery straightened a bit after pitching on the

KKR's home game against Rajasthan Royals was Tuesday advanced by a day to April 16, while the match between Gujarat Titans and Delhi Capitals in Ahmedabad was also rescheduled by the BCCI which did not give any reason for the move

good length to rattle his off-stump. The right-arm quick later added Rajat Patidar (29) to his kitty to reduce RCB to 103/6, and the home side was sinking fast then.

Earlier, De Kock manifested his exceptional hitting skills with a fifty but Lucknow could not progress beyond a par score.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 2: The Indian men's hockey team has left for Australia to compete in a five-match Test series beginning April 6, a crucial assignment ahead of the Paris Olympics in July-August. The Harmanpreet Singh-led side left Monday night.

The team have been in good form and recently won three out of their four matches during the FIH Pro League in Bhubaneswar. After the opening game April 6, the series features matches April 7, 10, 12 and 13.

It is essential for the Indian team to enhance their performance, build and check-through the improvement areas for the coming Paris Olympics, Hockey India stated in a press release.

"As we embark on this crucial tour to Australia, we are filled with determination and excitement. The series presents an excellent opportunity for us to assess our strengths and areas for improvement ahead of the Paris Olympics," Harmanpreet said before the side's departure.

The left-hander selected the bowlers and positions around the ground to play his shots with precision but the RCB bowlers did not allow other batsmen, except Pooran, a free run.

The Super Giants went off the block quickly, reaching 32 for no loss in three overs and then making it 54 in the powerplay. KL Rahul started slowly making six runs off his first 10 balls. But a six off left-arm pacer Yash Dayal gave his innings momentum.

However, Rahul perished soon as an attempt to pull Maxwell's good length delivery ended up in the palms of Mayank Dagar inside the circle.

The second substantial alliance in LSG innings followed Devdutt Padikkal's exit as De Kock and Marcus Stoinis (24) added 56 runs off 30 balls for the third wicket. De Kock, who brought his fifty in 36 balls, kept his end going during this al-

liance as Stoinis hammered a six each off Maxwell and Green as LSG rolled on.

But the blooming partnership ended when Stoinis' half-hearted swat was pounced by Dagar at point. De Kock departed soon, lofting Reece Topley to Dagar at long-on. The LSG were 143/4 in 16.3 overs at that stage and needed a few more runs to reach safer shores.

Pooran, who biffed left-armed seamer Topley for three sixes in a row in the 19th over and two more maximums in the final over off Mohammed Siraj, gave them those during his final assault.

BRIEF SCORES

LSG 181/5 (Quinton de Kock 81, Nicholas Pooran 40 n o; Glenn Maxwell 2/23) beat RCB 153 (Mahipal Lomror 33, Rajat Patidar 29; Mayank Yadav 3/14, Naveen-ul-Haq 2/25) by 28 runs.

Mauricio goals help Odisha beat Punjab



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 2: Odisha FC scored twice in the second half to overcome a fighting Punjab FC 3-1 in an Indian Super League match here Tuesday. Diego Mauricio (34th, 68th) scored twice for the hosts, while Isak Ralte (61st) scored the third goal. Madih Talal (38th) scored the only goal for the away side.

Odisha FC, who remained unbeaten at home, moved to second in the table, while Punjab FC remained on eighth, still in contention for the final playoff spot.

Odisha took the lead with Diego Mauricio leaping ahead of Dimitrios Chatziastrias from a Jerry Lalrinzuala cross and planting a header past the diving goalkeeper.

Punjab were not behind for long as they found the equalizer just four minutes later. Left back Mohammed Salah pounced on a loose ball from Ahmed Jahouh and found Madih Talal. The Frenchman drove ahead and hit a perfect shot which found the bottom corner for his fifth goal of the season.

Punjab Coach Staikos Vergetis received a yellow card for dissent with the match officials just before halftime, which will see him suspended for the next match against Mohun Bagan.

The home side controlled the next phase of the match, increasing the tempo and testing the Punjab side. Odisha took the lead after a couple of quick passes in the right wing found Amey Ranawade whose cut back was expertly finished by Isak Ralte.

Odisha was awarded a penalty in the 67th minute. Suresh Meitei kicked Mourtada Fall inside the box and the resultant penalty was converted by Mauricio who had to take it twice after the first attempt was chalked off for a penalty box infringement by an Odisha player.

With a two-goal lead, Odisha put in a professional display passing the ball around and not allowing Punjab any chance to come back into the game.

Punjab FC will next face Mohun Bagan Super Giant in their penultimate match in Delhi April 6.

INDIA MEN HEAD TO AUSTRALIA

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"As we embark on this crucial tour to Australia, we are filled with determination and excitement. The series presents an excellent opportunity for us to assess our strengths and areas for improvement ahead of the Paris Olympics," Harmanpreet said before the side's departure.



"We are fully committed to giving our best on the field and making every moment count."

Vice-captain Hardik Singh stated that this tour holds immense significance for the team. "We have been working hard as a team to refine our skills and strategies, and we are confident in our abilities. We are focused on putting up a strong per-

formance and making our country proud," he said.

The Team:
GOALKEEPERS: Krishan Bahadur Pathak, PR Sreejesh, Suraj Karkera; **DEFENDERS:** Harmanpreet Singh (C), Jarmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas, Jugraj Singh, Sanjay, Sumit, Amir Ali; **MIDFIELDERS:** Manpreet Singh, Hardik

Singh (VC), Vivek Sagar Prasad, Shamsheer Singh, Nilakanta Sharma, Rajkumar Pal, Vishnukant Singh; **FORWARDS:** Akashdeep Singh, Mandeep Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Abhishek, Dilpreet Singh, Sukhjete Singh, Gurjant Singh, Mohammed Raheel Mauseen, Bobby Singh Dhami, Arajjeet Singh Hundal.

Stokes opts out of T20 World Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, April 2: England's star player Ben Stokes Tuesday pulled out of the upcoming T20 World Cup, saying the "sacrifice" will help him focus on regaining his fitness to bowl full throttle and be the "all-rounder I want to be for the foreseeable future".

The country's Test captain has informed the England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) about his decision, two months ahead of the showpiece that will be held in the USA and West Indies.

"I'm working hard and focusing on building my bowling fitness back up to fulfill a full role as an all-rounder in all formats of cricket. Opting out of the IPL and the World Cup will hopefully be a sacrifice that allows me to be the all-rounder I want to be for the foreseeable future," Stokes said in a statement issued by the ECB.

Stokes, 32, was in-charge of the team that suffered a 1-4 Test



series loss to India earlier this year and said the tour made him realise that he isn't quite up for it when it comes to bowling.

The recent Test tour of India highlighted how far behind I was from a bowling point of view after my knee surgery and nine months without bowling.

"I'm looking forward to playing for Durham in the County Championship before the start of our Test summer. I wish Jos

(Buttler), Motty (Matthew Mott) and all the team the best of luck in defending our title."

England will be defending the title in the Caribbean having triumphed in the last edition of the tournament in Australia in 2022, with Stokes hitting the winning run in the final for a five-wicket victory over Pakistan at the MCG. However, he has only played two T20 matches since, both at last year's IPL.

JENA URGES INDIAN ATHLETES TO IMPROVE THEIR MINDSETS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 2: Olympic-bound javelin thrower Kishore Jena says facilities and funding have never been as good as they are right now for India's athletes, who need to improve their mindset and start considering themselves as good as anyone else in the world.

Jena undertook a 35-day training stint in Gold Coast in Australia from February 5 to March 10, funded by Target Olympics Podium Scheme (TOPS). Speaking to PTI, Jena said he hardly found anything different save for the warmer weather Down Under, which was more conducive for his training.

"We have everything here. I trained at NIS Patiala where the facilities are world class and as good as in Australia. I have been looked after very well by Sports Ministry, SAI (Sports Authority of India), getting funding from

TOPS," Jena, youngest of the seven children of a paddy farmer in Kothasahi village near Puri in Odisha, said in the interview facilitated by SAI.

"What is lacking is in ourselves (athletes), our mindset, the mindset that we are as good as any other in the world though we are improving on this front as well."

His goal is to deliver his personal best at the upcoming Paris Olympics but the Asian Games silver-medallist feels he can enter the exclusive Indian club of Diamond League top-three finishers.

Jena, who improved his personal best from 78.05m to 87.54m last year, is beginning his season at the Doha leg of the prestigious Diamond League May 10. He will also take part in Golden Spike at Ostrava, Czech Republic, May 28 - a World Athletics Continental Tour gold level event - and the Paris leg of the Diamond League July 7.