



Humility personified

Actor Rashmika Mandanna says no joy in life or the success one achieves in career should be taken for granted

LEISURE | P2



China-Russia bond

China is helping Russia undertake its biggest military expansion since Soviet times, US officials said

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Rising power demand

India has asked companies to operate underutilised gas-based power plants in May and June, and extend operations of imported coal-based plants

BUSINESS | P11



Disappointing finish

The Indian men's hockey team suffer a whitewash in the five-Test series against Australia after losing the last match of the tour 2-3

SPORTS | P12

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SHORT TAKES

CBI books 2nd-biggest electoral bond buyer

New Delhi: The CBI has registered an FIR against Hyderabad-based Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Ltd, which was the second-biggest buyer of electoral bonds worth ₹966 crore, in an alleged bribery case. Eight officials of the NISP and NMDC and two officials of MECON were also named in the FIR for receiving alleged bribe of around ₹78 lakh in clearing bills of ₹174 crore of Megha Engineering in connection with works related to Jagdalpur Integrated Steel Plant, officials said Saturday. Megha Engineering donated the highest amount of about ₹586 crore to the BJP, according to the data released by the Election Commission March 21. The company also donated ₹195 crore to BRS, ₹85 crore to DMK, and ₹37 crore to YSRCP. The TDP got about ₹25 crore from the company, while the Congress got ₹17 crore.

6 stabbed to death in Sydney mall

Sydney: A man stabbed six people to death at a busy Sydney shopping centre Saturday before he was fatally shot, police said. Eight people, including a 9-month-old, were injured in the attack. The 40-year-old suspect began stabbing people at the Westfield Shopping Centre in Bondi Junction, which is in the city's eastern suburbs, before a police inspector shot him after he turned and raised a knife, New South Wales Assistant Police Commissioner Anthony Cooke told reporters. Six of the victims — five women and a man — and the suspect died. Commissioner Karen Webb said the eight injured people were being treated at hospitals.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Not a manifesto, it's a menu for us. What we should eat, what we shouldn't

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	38.4°C	37.0°C
Min Temp	21.4°C	21.5°C
Humidity	34%	56%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST

PARTLY CLOUDY SKY

'REMOVE BOURNVITA FROM 'HEALTH DRINKS' CATEGORY'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, April 13: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has issued an advisory to the e-commerce companies, directing them to remove all drinks and beverages including Bournvita from the category of 'health drinks', on their portal and platforms.

"National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), a statutory body constituted under Section (3) of the Commission of Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005 after its inquiry under Section 14 of CRPC Act 2005 concluded that there is no 'health drink' defined under FSS Act 2006, rules and regulations submitted by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and



ADVENTURE FREAKS: Tourists participate in river rafting in Manali, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

DEBUNKING JOBS CLAIM

Though the Centre often boasts about taking several measures like promoting manufacturing sector and spending heavily on infra projects to create employment opportunities, a series of recent reports present a grim picture of job scenario in India.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: A decade ago, when the BJP and its allies were voted to power, the government promised to generate at least two crore new jobs per year to address the unemployment issue, which was purportedly created by the previous government.

The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance is now seeking a third term, luring the voters with its new 'guarantee' bait (read 'Modi Ki Guarantee'). But the party these days is not interested to talk about the decade-old '2-crore-job-guarantee' plan of 2014.

However, surveys released a few weeks ago, by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Bank on India's job situation, revealed some worrisome statistics.

As per the data released March 28, in India, youths accounted for



83 per cent of the unemployed population in 2022.

The ILO report also revealed that the proportion of educated youth, who had completed secondary education, in the unemployed young population, rose from 35.2 per cent in 2000 to 65.7 per cent in 2022.

A week later, the World Bank, pointing to the high rate of unemployment in India in contrast to the tall claims of various government agencies, warned that India was not creating enough jobs to keep pace with the rapidly increasing working-age population.

Franziska Ohnsorge, the bank's regional chief economist, called it a 'missed opportunity', adding that the region, includ-

ing India's neighbouring countries, is 'squandering its demographic dividend'.

Though the Modi-led government often claims that it has taken a host of measures to create jobs, including reforms to promote manufacturing and spending heavily on infrastructure projects to boost growth, yet another report by the Institute of Human Development (IHD) presents a dismal picture of India's labour market over the last decade.

"Each year, around 70-80 lakh youths are added to the workforce but between 2012 and 2019, there was almost zero growth in employment — just 0.01 per cent," according to IHD.

"Ten years of NDA govern-

WORRISOME TREND

- According to a report by ILO, in India, youths accounted for 83 per cent of the unemployed population in 2022
- The World Bank recently warned that India was not creating enough jobs to keep pace with the rapidly increasing working-age population
- A survey by Institute of Human Development reveals, the proportion of educated youths, who had completed secondary education, in the unemployed young population, rose from 35.2 per cent in 2000 to 65.7 per cent in 2022

ment: A guarantee check', a report released by a civic action forum in Bangalore, also presented a reality check of Centre's claims on improving the conditions of employment, wages and inequity in the country.

Debunking the claim, the report noted that 42 per cent of graduates under the age of 25 are unemployed across the country. Though V Anantha Nageswaran, the Chief Economic Advisor to Government of India, tried to defend the government on unemployment issue saying, government can't solve every social and economic challenge and the commercial sector needs to do the hiring, all the aforementioned data reveals a worrying trend about the state of jobs in Indian economy.

17 Indians on board ship seized by Iran

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: Seventeen Indians were on board an Israeli-linked container ship that has been seized by the Iranian military amid heightened tensions between Iran and Israel, a report said, Saturday.

Official sources said India is in touch with Iranian authorities through diplomatic channels, both in Tehran and in Delhi.

The Iranian action came amid increasing fears that Tehran may launch an attack on Israeli soil in retaliation to a strike on the Iranian consulate in Syria 12 days ago.

"We are aware that a cargo ship 'MSC Aries' has been taken control by Iran. We have learnt that there are 17 Indian nationals onboard," said the source.

"We are in touch with the Iranian authorities through diplomatic channels, both in Tehran and in Delhi, to ensure security, welfare and early release of Indian nationals," it said.

Reports said Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards seized 'MSC Aries' Saturday morning when it was sailing through the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran's state-run IRNA said a special forces unit of the Guard's



navy attacked the vessel, the Portuguese-flagged 'MSC Aries', a container ship associated with London-based Zodiac Maritime.

Zodiac Maritime is part of Israeli billionaire Eyal Ofer's Zodiac Group. Zodiac declined to comment and referred questions to MSC. Geneva-based MSC later acknowledged the seizure and said 25 crew had been aboard the vessel.

IRNA said the Guard would take the vessel into Iranian territorial waters.

The Middle East had braced for potential Iranian retaliation over a suspected Israeli strike earlier this month on an Iranian consular building in Syria that killed 12 people, including a senior Guard general who once commanded its expeditionary Quds Force there. The Israeli war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip meanwhile is now six months old and is inflaming decades-old tensions across the whole region.

Flowers may be more ancient than dinosaurs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bristol, April 13: Flowers may look delicate but flowering plants, what scientists call angiosperms, are one of the most successful evolutionary organisms on the planet. Including more than 350,000 known species, they dominate the ecological system, shape food webs and play a vital role in oxygen production. Plus, many of them such as roses, grains and tomatoes are valuable commercial crops.

But not many are aware when flowers first evolved, and what has been unfolding over millions of years of evolution to cultivate these beautiful species. A recent research is bringing new insights to this longstanding debate among scientists.

When talking about fossils,



A REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE OF A FOSSILISED FLOWER

people probably think of dinosaurs and ammonites — creatures with bones or hard shells that stayed preserved in the rock despite huge geological changes.

But flowers with frail petals and tiny pollen can also be preserved by being sealed in amber, crystallised, or carbonised.

Generally, the most con-

vincing fossil evidence is from the Early Cretaceous period (about 132 million years ago). However, the earliest evidence of a flower bud has a Jurassic origin (around 164 million years ago). It is called Florigerminis jurassica and was found in China. But not all scientists agree that it is an angiosperm, due to the different definitions of flower organs.

Flowers can be preserved in striking detail. Dripping tree sap and resin fossilised the petals and pollen of a fossil flower in a Baltic conifer forest around 34-38 million years ago. This is the largest known amber-preserved fossil flower, measuring about 3 cm across and about three times as large as most floral fossils, showing beautiful details of this ancient flower.

The timing of flowers' evolution is still a matter of debate between scientists.

Analyses using molecular data (DNA or protein sequences) suggest flowers could be much older than the fossil record shows — a Jurassic (145 million years ago) or even Triassic origin (201 million years ago).

Understanding the origins of angiosperms gives scientists valuable insights into the intricate web of life on the Earth.

It can also guide efforts in agriculture and conservation. So, the next time while marveling at a vibrant flower or enjoying a juicy fruit, it should be remembered that the story of angiosperms is a tale of resilience, adaptation and beauty — much of which is still waiting to be discovered.

leisure



OPRAH HAS NEVER BEEN TO A THERAPIST

Television personality Oprah Winfrey reveals she's never sought therapy, relying instead on close friend Gayle King for support. Their nightly conversations serve as her true therapy, fostering a strong bond throughout their careers, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.

JADEN FEELS GROUNDED WHEN SURROUNDED BY NATURE

Jaden Smith, the son of actors Jada Pinkett Smith and Will Smith, has shared that he's looking forward to the Coachella music festival as he likes to surround himself with nature. He cherishes desert landscapes, ocean swims, and outdoor activities for their ability to disconnect and rejuvenate.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
A favourable day as any can be, says Ganesh. You are happy and content with what you have, and you've planned and are working towards what you want. A romantic date may prove interesting or throw up a controversy – decide where you want to take it.

TAURUS
There is every possibility that you will enjoy a good rapport with people around you, predicts Ganesh. You will think with your stomach today, craving for delicacies. Such a feeling might be because of repressed hunger. Something refreshingly different might be on the cards today, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
Your highly competitive nature will push you to perform better and better. You don't even know what being second best means. Getting in touch with like-minded people will only make your resolve stronger.

CANCER
Your business acquaintances will come forward in the manner that may seem nothing short of some divine intervention. This means that you will virtually save your neck from the guillotine, predicts Ganesh. You will grow wiser in your spending ways, as you will know what to buy and what not to buy.

LEO
Motivating people through your own actions is one way; the other is to let your words do the talking. Both are equally effective, says Ganesh. With a bit of help from the stars, today, it is your words that shall hold more weight than your actions, as you make optimum use of your presentation skills.

VIRGO
It is quite possible that you will love financial challenges that are thrown at you, as they whet your appetite for success. You will come up with innovative ideas and improved methods of problem-solving. Ganesh assures you that your current business ideas will work wonders.

LIBRA
Trivialities should be the least of your concerns today. Do not let the small things faze you out. Remember that it is the overall picture that matters, and not one small stroke of the brush. Bear this in mind, since you may come under some pressure from subordinates at your workplace. Just remember to consider all possibilities before making any decisions.

SCORPIO
You will live the day in two dominant shades, feels Ganesh. One part of your day will be tinted in nostalgia and thinking, while the other will be spent in making up for the time you lost while star gazing and ignoring your work.

SAGITTARIUS
Look before you leap, says Ganesh. Cupid has strung his bow and aimed an arrow at you. Love's labour will easily aid you to woo a young, tender heart. But don't be swept away by easy prospects and guard your reputation at all costs.

CAPRICORN
It will be one of those mundane days with nothing remarkable happening on any front. But don't be disheartened, advises Ganesh; planetary movements indicate there may be a change coming soon, most likely a good one. So, perk up and look forward to tomorrow.

AQUARIUS
You do have a way with words and today, you may succeed with your gift of the gab! But Ganesh says that your confused feelings may come in the way of your triumphant achievement. Also, sentiments may lead to a disastrous outcome. Sounds familiar?

PISCES
The fount of your creativity spurts today like there is no tomorrow. For lesser mortals, it takes inspiration, perspiration and a lot of desperation to come up with something creative. You, on the other hand, keenly remember the lessons from your past efforts, and use them today to scale new heights, says Ganesh.

Rashmika not taking success for granted

Mumbai: Actress Rashmika Mandanna, who is gearing up for her next release, *Pushpa 2: The Rule*, opened up about why she doesn't take that success for granted.

The *Mission Majnu* actress said, "I know that there are a lot of girls out there who are prettier and way more skilled and talented than I am, but I have been given this opportunity to be at the place that I am in today, and I'm truly grateful. No joy in life or the success you achieve in your career should be taken lightly; I have learned this over the last few years."

She added, "If you speak, the world listens and passes judgements and criticisms and has many opinions, which is perfectly normal, but if you're not thick-skinned, it can affect you mentally and emotionally, in ways that people are not very aware of."

On the work front, Rashmika has *The Girlfriend* and *Chaava* in the pipeline.

AGENCIES



Sonali wants to age gracefully

Mumbai: Actress Sonali Bendre, in a recent interview, said that she is interested in taking on roles that reflect her age and ideas and talked about how she wants to age gracefully and wants to wear her lines with pride.

The actress said, "Ageing is part of life. I don't want to fight it. I want to own it because I have lines on my face. The scars on my body are the stripes I have fought. These are the battles I have fought. I don't want to be rid of them. A blank face will be life that has not been lived. These lines show a life that has been well lived, and I want to

wear them with pride. I want characters and roles that go with this thought process of mine."

She further added that her illness has imparted the lesson that beauty lies in imperfection. She has come to appreciate her flaws and imperfections, realising that perfect things are not as captivating as imperfect ones. She now prioritises qualities beyond mere physical appearance, which is why she is eagerly waiting for the second season of *Broken News*.

AGENCIES



Will struggle to find good work: Ridhima

Mumbai: Actress Ridhima Pandit, who made a career by starring in television shows like *Bahu Hamari Rajni Kant*, talked in an exclusive chat about why she would never play regressive roles and more.

"I feel like 2024 is my year; I have some interesting projects in the pipeline that will help me evolve as an actor," says Ridhima, talking about her films and her choice of roles.

"I feel like life has always been a free flow for me, taking me from one place to another, and I've always been game for the ride. I've always been quick on my feet. But one thing I was sure I would never do is regressive work," says the actress.

"I always only did work that made sense to me, no matter how difficult it was. I didn't want to do illogical stuff, or worse, something that feels stuck in another era. It's not easy to go out searching for work, face rejection, and then turn down opportunities you don't think work for you. But I persevere," she concluded.

AGENCIES



Lucky Ali took 10 hours to record Tu Hai Kahaan

Mumbai: Singer Lucky Ali shared about the emotions and experiences that influenced the song *Tu Hai Kahaan*'s creation from the film *Do Aur Do Pyaar*, saying it took almost 10 hours to record the song to perfection.

Known for his songs like *Gori Teri Aankhen* and *Oh Sanam*, the singer shared, "*Tu Hai Kahaan* is deeply rooted in personal experiences of longing and reminiscence. It reflects on moments of nostalgia and the bittersweet emotions that come with them. When I first heard the scratch, I connected with it and knew that I wanted to sing it."

"So, the producers set up the recording in Bangalore, where I stay. It took us almost 10 hours to record the song to perfection. We wanted to get it just right. We tried out various permutations and combinations. It was a very fulfilling process. I think that's evident from the love that the track is finding," he said.

AGENCIES

FUN post

PEANUTS



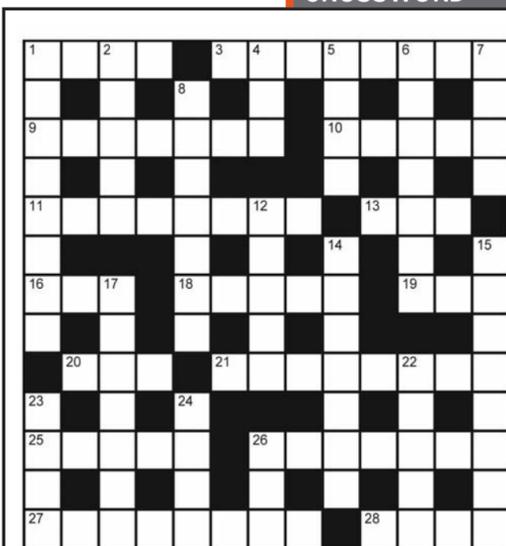
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Harvest
 - 3 Kind of orange
 - 9 Literary threesome
 - 10 Unbending
 - 11 Knightly conduct
 - 13 Hibernation site
 - 16 Born
 - 18 Queen topper
 - 19 Boozer
 - 20 Manta
 - 21 Relic, maybe
 - 25 Explode
 - 26 Japanese raw deal?
 - 27 Eaves, e.g.
 - 28 Add to the pot
- Down**
- 1 Reserved
 - 2 Cover story?
 - 4 "Take your pick"
 - 5 Small boat
 - 6 Feels remorse
 - 7 Lymph bump
 - 8 Novel idea
 - 12 Geneva's river
 - 14 Get ready for bed
 - 15 Food poisoning
 - 17 Wipeout?
 - 22 Burger topper
 - 23 Hostel of
 - 24 Fiddler fame
 - 24 Carve in stone
 - 26 Bright star

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

A	C	C	U	S	E	S	N	I	P	E	R
P	L	G	C	Y	E	O					
I	S	O	L	A	T	E	M	A	N	I	A
E	W	L	L	P	A	G	S				
C	A	N	A	L	E	X	H	A	U	S	T
E		O	B								
T	E	M	P	E	R	A	M	E	N	T	
I	M		A								
G	R	O	M	M	E	T	Z	E	B	R	A
U	T	I	A	I	U	L	S				
A	L	I	E	N							
N	O	G	G	K	A	E					
A	N	N	O	Y	S	C	A	R	T	E	L

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

TALENT FETED

Winners given away trophies at a function organised by Odisha Body Building Association at Utkal Karate School in Bhubaneswar, Saturday



Gang of robbers busted

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 13: The twin city Commissionerate Police busted a notorious gang involved in a slew of robberies across the state over the last two months, with the arrest of three persons from the Capital City here, Saturday.

The 'Kajal-Bitu-Madhu' gang was allegedly involved in five incidents of robbery in the Temple City, three in Puri and one in Bhadrak, Commissioner of Police Sanjeeb Panda said during a media briefing.

Among the items seized from their possession were a kilogram of gold jewellery, 1.3 kilogram of silver ornaments and Rs 3.25 lakh in cash, he said.

They used to break into the houses with arms, and in case of resistance, they attacked, police said. They have been booked

under Sections 457 (house-breaking), 380 (theft) and 395 (dacoity) of IPC, apart from the Arms Act.

Besides the three, police said they have arrested a man who received the gold ornaments from them.

The gang was also active in Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Jajpur and Nayagarh districts, police said.

Bitu and Kajal were arrested last year and were in jail, while Madhu was in Tamil Nadu during that time. Bitu and Kajal were released on bail in February, following which the three reunited and began robberies again.

As per the reports, the City police arrested the duo, Bitu and Kajal, in connection with similar crimes, around in June 2023. Panda said Madhu has been booked in 12 cases, Bitu in 38 and Kajal in 31 crimes.



HAPPY B'DAY: Chief Secretary PK Jena, DGP Arun Sarangi, twin city police commissioner Sanjeeb Panda, BDA Vice-Chairman Balwant Singh and other dignitaries at an event to mark the 76th foundation day of Bhubaneswar, near state Assembly in the City, Saturday

BJD accuses Sambit Patra of distributing clocks, moves EC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 13: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Saturday moved the Election Commission (EC) accusing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) nominee for Puri Lok Sabha constituency, Sambit Patra, of distributing clocks adorned with the saffron party symbol, and his photograph to shopkeepers ahead of the polls.

A BJD delegation, led by Rajya Sabha member Sulata Deo, has submitted a petition to the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Odisha in this regard.

"It has come to our attention that Sambit Patra and his campaign team have resorted to gross misconduct by distributing clocks adorned with the BJP logo, lotus symbol, and even Patra's photograph," the BJD alleged in its petition.

Alleging this move of Patra is a blatant attempt to influence voters and also a clear violation of the model code of conduct, the BJD said, "We strongly con-

We strongly condemn such reprehensible actions by Patra and his team. It is imperative that immediate and stringent action be taken by the EC to rectify this situation and ensure that the sanctity of the electoral process is upheld



BJD DELEGATION

The ruling party has approached the EC only to protect 'corrupt' government officers, without thinking about the people of Odisha

BIRANCHI TRIPATHY | BJP LEADER

demn such reprehensible actions by Patra and his team. It is imperative that immediate and stringent action be taken by the EC to rectify this situation and ensure that the sanctity of the electoral process is upheld."

The party demanded that the total cost of all these clocks should be added to the poll expenses of the BJP Lok Sabha candidate for Puri.

The regional party leaders requested the EC to take swift and decisive action against Patra and his campaign team.

In another petition filed before the EC during the day, the BJD

alleged that state BJP leaders and candidates are threatening and intimidating government officials on election duty in Odisha by misusing the name of the commission.

The BJD sought the EC's intervention to protect government officials on election duty from such threats and intimidations by BJP leaders.

Reacting to the allegations of BJD, Odisha BJP leader Biranchi Tripathy said the ruling party has approached the EC only to protect 'corrupt' government officers, without thinking about the people of Odisha.

City women to vote for jobs, safety & education

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 13: Women in the Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha constituency, who constitute nearly 50 per cent of the total electorate (7.83 lakh out of 16.3 lakh), have raised issues ranging from jobs, education, safety and better transport facilities, among others, which they expect the candidate/s in the fray for the upcoming general elections to address if voted to power.

In order to woo the voters, especially the youth, incumbent MP Aparajita Sarangi, also the BJP nominee this time, was recently seen performing Zumba with fitness enthusiasts at the Anandaban. Her rival BJD candidate Manmath Routray has been meeting people, mostly senior citizens, at public parks seeking support.

Speaking to **Orissa POST**, Sheela Pattnaik, who runs a NGO in the Capital city, which supports women from underprivileged background, said the elected leader must facilitate creation of more jobs for women in the City. "In every household the woman's income adds to the family budget and helps her



lead an independent life. It also shapes her personal and professional choices," she added.

A final-year Mass Communication Post Graduate student at the Rama Devi Women's University, who did not wish to be named, said,

"While other cities in the country have been making rapid strides in public transport, Bhubaneswar is moving at a snail's pace. Among the Tier-III cities in the country, Bhubaneswar does not have a functional metro rail as yet," she said, adding that the inauguration of the first phase of Bhubaneswar Metro project earlier this year is a welcome step.

She said the City needs to have a women-friendly transportation service which would operate round the clock. "Many students, who come from various parts of Odisha to fulfil their academic goals, or engaged in jobs, face hurdles to access emergency services at night. We expect the elected parlia-

mentarian to address this issue," she said.

Namita Panda, who is pursuing her final year PG in Mass Communication at Utkal University, said it's high time the elected representatives consider installation of CCTVs that cover



the nook and corner of the City. "With rising instances of crime against women in the City, the electronic surveillance system would be best means of instilling fear in the minds of anti-socials," she said.

Furthermore, she said, educational institutions in the City should introduce additional skill development courses which would create job-ready potential among youths in the future.

BJP mocks BJD for seeking help of cine stars

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 13: The Opposition BJP Saturday took a dig at the ruling Biju Janata Dal for trying to rope in Odia film stars to campaign for the party in the upcoming Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the state.

After several Odia film personalities-turned politicians snapped ties with the BJD over one issue or the other, party head and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik held a meeting with other cine stars Friday and allegedly urged them

to campaign for it.

Addressing a press meet here, BJP leader and actress Pinky Pradhan alleged that the BJD appeared to have been rattled after celebrities such as Anubhav Mohanty, Sidhant Mohapatra and Arindam Roy quit the party and joined the saffron camp.

With no star campaigners left in the party, the BJD is trying to rope in the young actors to pull crowds during its poll campaigns, Pradhan said. She alleged that the BJD government has done nothing for the welfare of the artists and

Odia film industry during its 24 years of rule. Pradhan accused the BJD of adopting a 'use and throw' policy towards artists.

She also charged Patnaik with trying to divide the artists based on party politics.

A group of Odia cinema celebrities including superstar Babusra Mohanty, Amlan Das, Sailendra, Ashiwini Tripathy, Pragyan, Bhumika, Supriya and others held a discussion with Patnaik and his close aide Kartik Pandian Friday.

Though many of the actors avoided questions from the media,

comedian Pragyan said, "We were told to participate in the BJD campaigning and informed about different welfare schemes of the state government. We were also told on the development taking place in Odia film industry and the government's future plan."

In recent past, veteran Odia film actors like ex-MP Sidhant Mohapatra, Kendrapara MP Anubhav Mohanty, actor Arindam Roy and some others have quit the ruling party. These actors had last time campaigned for the BJD during elections.

AI integration needs thorough scrutiny: CJI

With the launch of ChatGPT, a conversation has emerged about whether to rely on AI in reaching a conclusion for a case, says Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud



and addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from stakeholders worldwide, transcending geographical and institutional boundaries.

He was speaking at a two-day conference on technology and dialogue between the Supreme Courts of India and Singapore.

Chief Justice of Singapore Justice Sundaresh Menon, and several other judges and experts were also present during the conference.

Justice Chandrachud said in the legal sector, AI holds immense potential to transform the way legal professionals work - from enhancing legal research and case analysis to improving the efficiency of court proceedings.

He said in the realm of legal research, AI has emerged as a game-

changer, empowering legal professionals with unparalleled efficiency and accuracy.

With the launch of ChatGPT, a conversation has emerged about whether to rely on AI in reaching a conclusion for a case, the CJI said.

"These instances show that we cannot avoid the question of using AI in court adjudication. The integration of AI in modern processes, including court proceedings, raises complex ethical, legal, and practical considerations that demand a thorough examination," he said.

The CJI said amid the excitement surrounding AI's capabilities, there are also concerns regarding potential errors and misinterpretations.

"Without robust auditing mechanisms in place, instances of 'hallucinations' - where AI generates false or misleading responses - may occur, leading to improper advice and, in extreme cases, miscarriages of justice," he said.

Justice Chandrachud said the impact of bias in AI systems presents a complex challenge, particularly when it comes to indirect discrimination.

He said in the realm of AI, indirect discrimination can mani-

fest in two crucial stages - firstly, during the training phase where incomplete or inaccurate data may lead to biased outcomes, and secondly, during data processing often within opaque 'black-box' algorithms that obscure the decision-making process from human developers.

Black box refers to algorithms or systems where the internal workings are hidden from users or developers, making it difficult to understand how decisions are made or why certain outcomes occur, he said.

The CJI said facial recognition technology serves as a prime example of high-risk AI, given its inherently intrusive nature and potential for misuse.

He said the full realisation of AI's potential hinges on global collaboration and cooperation.

Capacity building and training play a crucial role in ensuring the ethical and effective utilisation of AI technologies and by investing in education and training programs, one can equip professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the complexities of AI, identify biases and uphold ethical standards in their use of AI systems, he said.

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MoR to ensure supply of drinking water



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 13: In view of imminent scorching summer, the Ministry of Railways (MoR) reviewed the availability of drinking water at stations and issued instructions to Zonal Railways to ensure adequate supplies. As per the MoR's ongoing commitment, all stations strive to provide clean drinking water to passengers in accordance with established norms.

To further strengthen these efforts during the potentially scorching summer months, East Coast Railways (ECoR) has taken the following measures which include availability and func-

tionality of existing water coolers, deployment of additional water tankers at critical stations, regular inspections to confirm water availability across all platforms, seek support from NGOs, Community Groups, Scouts and Guides and self help groups (SHGs) for distribution of water near general compartments of the train.

In addition, the rail authorities all address water scarcity situations by collaborating with Municipal Corporations/state governments and explore alternative water supply solutions.

Also, a system for round-the-clock monitoring will be implemented by railway staff to ensure consistent water availability and address any emerging issues promptly.

"MoR is committed to providing a comfortable and convenient travel experience for all passengers. These proactive measures aim to guarantee easy access to clean drinking water at stations throughout the summer season. MoR is committed to provide potable drinking water to passengers at all stations," officials said.



HEALTHY PRACTICE: Participants at CISCE Regional Yoga Olympiad 2024 organised at Loyola School in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

BIKASH NAYAK

Loyola hosts CISCE Regional Yoga Olympiad

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 13: With the primary objective of promoting fitness, awareness and nurturing a passion for yoga

among young participants, Loyola school hosted CISCE Regional Yoga Olympiad 2024 here Saturday.

The event provided a platform for 99 contestants from 13 schools,

to demonstrate their proficiency in various yoga techniques. Notable dignitaries such as CISCE Odisha state regional sports coordinator P Selvi, All Odisha ICSE Schools Association pres-

ident Leena Khurana and vice president BK Tripathy, Loyola School Rector Fr Augustine SJ and Principal Fr A Amaladoss SJ, graced the occasion with their presence. Yoga, considered as a

journey of self-discovery and empowerment, especially when introduced at a young age, equips children with invaluable skills to navigate life's challenges with grace and resilience.

Gorachand Pattnaik Memorial Law Lecture

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: The Gorachand Pattnaik Memorial Trust organised the 9th Gorachand Pattnaik Memorial Law Lecture at Bhanja Kala Mandap here recently.

Odisha State Bar Council Chairman SM Dwivedi inaugurated the function. The Law Lecture on 'Bar and Bench: Two Facets of Judiciary' was delivered by Orissa High Court Justice Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi.

Justice Sarangi also emphasised the need for and importance of a healthy and cordial relationship between the bar and the bench for proper dispensation of justice and also emphasised on



how a strong bar is essential for protection of rights of the citizens.

The Trust felicitated Jahidur Raheman, Sangram Keshari Pradhan and Jyotsnamayee

Mohanty for their unparalleled service to the society as long serving members of the Bhubaneswar Bar Association and the legal fraternity.

Outfit to organise 'Baishakhi' festival

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 13: Social services organisation Chinta O Chetana will hold the 46th edition of 'Baishakhi' festival here, the organisers informed Saturday. The two-day event will take place April 15 and April 16 amid Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

Organisation secretary Surendra Das said the festival will begin by beating of 'Ghantas' in order to appease the deities. This will be followed by performances by Odissi and Gotipua dancers.

A host of cultural activities will be organised on this occasion. A number of artistes from different fields of performing

arts from and outside the state will participate in the programmes. The event will feature performances by classical dancers and musicians as well as folk artistes of the state.

Chinta O Chetana is a premier social organisation of the state founded by Harekrushna Mahtab in 1980. The organisation is not only dedicated to cultural engagement but also committed for the growth of socially, economically and educationally oppressed communities. Eminent personalities from different fields are closely associated with the organisation and are committed to the cause of socio-cultural development of the people across India.

CSNR, NISWASS hold seminar on safeguarding the Constitution



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 13: City-based voluntary organisation, Centre for the Sustainable Use of Natural and Social Resources (CSNR) and the National Institute of Social Work and Social Sciences (NISWASS), jointly organised a seminar titled "Role of Students in Safeguarding the Constitution," on the birth anniversary of BR Ambedkar here Saturday.

Eminent political scientist Bijay Bohidar was the chief speaker at the event and emphasised the crucial role of students in protecting the constitution and human rights in recent societal context. He discussed the multifaceted aspects of the constitution and highlighted the biography of Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, the founder of the Indian Constitution.

Noted TV anchor and journalist Supriya Dash attended as guest of honour. She appreciated CSNR and NISWASS for organising such a conference under the current circumstances and stressed the importance of the media's role in protecting the constitution and human rights in the country. She encouraged students to take lead

in safeguarding the constitution, human rights and dignity.

The programme started with welcome speech by NISWASS director Sashmi Nayak. She introduced the guests and highlighted the life and works of BR Ambedkar. CSNR secretary Dharendra Panda, joined the event and explained the purpose of organising such a programme and the various development work undertaken by CSNR. He also emphasised the important role of students and youth groups in societal change. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks from program manager Chandranath Dani. Ranjit Sutar and Pallishree Dash of CSNR presided over the programme.

At the end, the winners of the essay competition were awarded with certificates and prizes. Last February, CSNR and NISWASS had jointly organised an essay competition on the topic "Role of Women and Children Desk in Police Stations for Safeguarding the Rights of Women and Children". Students from University Law College, Capital Law College, Institute of Media Studies, NISWASS and Ravenshaw University participated in the competition.

Ankkie's exclusive store at Jagamara

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 13: Ankkie opened its exclusive handloom store at Jagamara here Saturday. It's the first-ever walk-in store where customers can come and buy exclusive and exquisite collections.

The store deals in handloom sarees, kurta sets with hand painted, embroidered intricacy and trendy Co-Ord sets. In addition it also has handmade brass, German silver gifts and terracotta jewellery items. The showroom offer quality products in affordable price. The lowest price starts from ₹30 and goes up to thousands.

Ankkie is a seven-year-old home grown brand of Odisha founded by actress and fashion designer Ankita Mohanty. It started its journey in 2017.

"We have always followed our passion towards traditional fashion and its heritage. We have been participating in many government and private exhibitions and got many niche customers who believed in our creative work," Ankita said.

"This time we thought of something new. After launching our website which already has a pan-india reach, we are now looking to cater local customers' need," she said.



RAISING VOICE: Security guards and sanitation employees stage a protest outside Bhubaneswar Capital Hospital, Saturday, to press for fulfillment of their demands

OP PHOTO

Educating tribal kids through mother tongue-based learning

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

The commitment towards the multilingual education (MLE)-based learning ecosystem got a major boost after regularisation of 64 posts, July 26 in 2021. In fact, the process was initiated way back in 2008 by appointing 100 MLE teachers on contractual basis. Subsequently, the guidelines for engagement of tribal language teachers for MLE was held August 31, 2023 under the leadership of the Chief Secretary of the state, to face the challenges of the schools, run by ST & SC Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare (ST&SC, M&BCW) department. The guidelines were issued as per the mandate of the Right of

Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RCFCE) Act 2009 and National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasises and accord highest priority on mother tongue-based education for better learning outcome of the children in elementary grade.

Interestingly, the SSD schools (schools run by ST&SC, M&BCW department) often finds tribal children speaking of more than one language, belonging to the same class, due to the provision of free boarding facility. The engagement of tribal language teachers for MLE is a step toward addressing the language barrier and challenges, the tribal children face in their classroom transactions, more particularly in Class I to Class III.

Subsequently the ST&SC,



M&BCW department has created 200 posts of MLE teachers out of its 5,630 regular posts of teachers in 1,736 SSD schools across the state. Nearly 4.34 lakh students are studying in these schools out of which 90 per cent

belong to tribal communities. Likewise in another instance, 27 regular MLE teachers for Gond language in Nabarangpur district, under the SSD schools was sanctioned February 13, 2024 for the students of elementary

classes/grades. Again February 16, creation of 250 regular posts of tribal language teachers for MLE in different tribal languages under the ST&SC, M&BCW department were added making the MLE teachers in different districts to 577.

From the 250 posts created for the MLE teachers, on priority 73 posts of the tribal language teachers were allotted to different languages in different district like Kui-1 (Kandhamal), Koya-2 (Malkangiri), Santhali-32 (Mayurbhanj), Munda/Mundari-1, Saura-9 and Kuvi-23 (Rayagada), Kissan-1 (Sambalpur), Munda/Mundari-1, Oraon-3 in Sundargarh district.

Meanwhile, the Academy of Tribal Language and Culture (ATLC) has published several

books in tribal languages, but the "dialectal variations" among a particular community, staying in different geographic areas of a district have cropped in and as suggested by linguists and anthropologists, a detailed linguistic survey of the tribals (including the PVTGs) has become imminent across the State to ensure an effective MLE-based learning ecosystem. With the MIL (Modern Indian Languages) based teaching process since 1954 during the post-Independent era, the influence of regional languages, have thus partially eroded the ethos of the MLE pedagogy and a time has come to be more sensitive towards the mother-tongue based learning process to make the tribal kids at ease in their schools.

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MURRAM LOOT FUNDING POLL EXPENSES

Gopabandhu Hostel boarders protest over various problems

Land allotted to chemical firm raided

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, April 13: The allegations of murrām loot from land allotted to a private chemical firm for establishment of its plant at Kalinganagar in Jajpur district continues to make headlines as officials of Minor Minerals and Revenue departments conducted a joint raid on the land Friday.

The raid took place after Orissa POST published a report highlighting rampant loot of murrām from the land allotted to private firm VCI Chemical Industries Private Limited at Kalinganagar Industrial Complex in Jajpur district for establishment of its plant.

Notably, the chemical firm was allotted 22 acre land at Kalinganagar for establishment of 1.0 LTPA powered green field coal-tar distillation project. However, the chemical firm has reportedly gone back on its plan and allegedly used the land to loot murrām.

Locals have alleged that the raid is just eyewash aimed to clear the public suspicion arising out of publication of the report. They suspect that the money earned from the murrām loot



OP IMPACT

will be used to fund the poll expenses of candidates from both the ruling and opposition parties in the district.

The officials asked them to submit the lease papers and other documents and informed them that they have to first seek permission of Minor Minerals and Revenue departments as well as the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) to extract murrāms. However, the firm's authorities sought two days' time to submit the papers.

It was learnt that the firm authorities have launched all efforts to get the necessary papers to submit those by the deadline. It was alleged that the firm vio-

lated all norms regarding employment of locals, its corporate social responsibility (CSR), environment protection and pollution control measures despite receiving widespread support during public hearing for establishment of its plant.

After taking possession of the land, the firm authorities failed to overcome greed after coming to know that there is a huge deposit of murrām underneath.

It allegedly went back on its plan of establishment of a plant and used the land to loot murrām. The firm authorities allegedly connived with the local public representatives, officials of Minor Minerals department and police personnel to give shape to its plan. Meanwhile, it has allegedly looted murrām worth over ₹30

crore during last three months. Locals alleged that murrām extracted from the land is being transported outside at night without any transit pass. The transported murrām is seen being used in Jakhapura-Banshpuri rail route expansion works.

However, firm authorities rejected the allegations before the officials during the raid, Friday. They claimed that the extracted murrām is being used in ground leveling works. The raiding team also accepted their submission and returned. Locals alleged that murrām mining was apparent as large pits have been dug up on the land. Three days back, the officials of the Minor Minerals department and Jakhapura police conducted a surprise raid at the site at midnight.

However, the firm officials were smart enough to outwit the raiding officials before they could lay their hands on them. Tipped off in advance, the firm officials shifted the equipment from the site and stopped the ground excavation works for murrām extraction.

As a result, the raiding officials returned empty handed. It is suspected that some officials of the Minor Minerals department are also part of the loot in exchange of kickbacks.

Locals said that murrām loot can be examined by conducting a satellite survey but instead of going for it, the Minor Minerals department is indirectly cooperating with the firm. The residents suspect involvement of huge kickbacks or political pressure to facilitate the murrām loot.

When contacted, deputy director Jay Prakash Nayak of Minor Minerals department said that a joint raid was conducted with the help of revenue officials and papers were verified, Friday. The VCI has been asked to submit the papers regarding consent to operate (CTO). Moreover, no proof of murrām transportation at night was found during the raids, he added.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 13: Day after the students of Ananya ladies' hostel staged a demonstration over drinking water problems, a similar protest by boys has become the headache for Dharanidhar University administration.

Inmates of Gopabandhu Hostel of the university in Keonjhar have protested in front of the main gate for a long time for fulfilment of their long time demands. They said that due to non-availability of clean drinking water and unhygienic environment in the hostel they are facing problems.

The students have complained that only two toilets are functional when there are around 2,000 students living in the hostel. During the rainy days, water leaks from the roof into the room due to lack of maintenance. "We will continue protesting until these problems are not solved immediately," they said.

"Efforts will be made to solve this problem immediately," the university officials said. Narendra Sahu, Registrar of DDU, said money has already been deposited with the Public Works department. But they are delaying to execute the maintenance work.

Teacher attends poll rally; suspended

Bhubaneswar: A woman teacher of a government school in Boudh has been suspended by the district election officer-cum-district collector for allegedly attending an election rally and procession, an official notification said Saturday. The woman teacher of Government Nodal High School at Dahya had allegedly participated in a political rally from Palaspata to Ambagaon in Kantamal Assembly constituency two days ago in violation of ECI rules, it said. As per an ECI order dated March 15, 2024, and Odisha Government Servant's Conduct Rules, 1959, no government servant shall be a member of or be otherwise associated with any political or communal party or any organisation which takes part in politics or communal activities, nor shall he/she take part or subscribe in aid of assist in any other manner, any political or communal movement or activity. Her suspension comes into effect immediately, the notification issued by Boudh District Election Officer-cum-District Collector J Sonal said.

Balasore youth killed near prawn gheri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rupsa, April 13: A 20-year-old youth was brutally killed near a prawn gheri near Gandhia village under Singla police limits in Balasore district, late Friday night.

The deceased youth has been identified as Jagabandhu Swain, a resident of Patagaon village under Sadar police station limits in Balasore district.

According to sources, Jagabandhu along with his wife Taramani was residing and working in a prawn farm near Gandhia village. Jagabandhu went outside Friday evening to attend the call of nature. When he did not return home till late night, her wife searched for him frantically but could not find him. Saturday morning, when Taramani went outside, she found her husband lying dead near the farm and immediately informed the owner of the farm.

On being informed, Singla police station IIC Bhubanananda Sethi along with his team reached the spot and after preliminary investigation suspected it to be a case of murder. A forensic team along with a dog squad was also pressed into action. After registering a case (No-71/24) at Singla police station, police seized the body and sent it to hospital for post-mortem.

It is suspected that Jagabandhu was brutally hacked to death due to past enmity and acid was poured on his body to destroy evidence. "The exact reason behind the brutal murder will be ascertained after investigation and getting the post-mortem report," said IIC Sethi.

10 highway robbers held in Keonjhar



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 13: Jhumpura police led by IPS probationer Ramendra Prasad, arrested 10 dacoits near Chingudiposi Street, while they were robbing a vehicle and extorting money, late Friday night. This was stated here in a press conference held at Jhumpura police station, Saturday. Cash worth ₹2,500 was seized from their possession, Champua SDPO Vijay Mallik said.

The accused were identified as Rabindra Mahanta, 43, Chandramohan Mahanta, 45, Loknath Mahanta, 19, Mahendra Mahanta, 36, Bhagwan Mahanta, 31, Deepak Sitari, 20, Shivanand Sitari, 19, Vikas Lohar, 51, Rajesh Sitari, 22, Sushil Kalandi aka Kala, 24, of Chingudiposi village.

Police said it had received complaints of extortion from various vehicles such as trucks and cars on the Katalapashi-

Dhatika road under Jhumpura police station limits.

A police team led by the IPS probationer Prasad raided the area after a complaint was filed by some truck drivers plying on the route about a gang of robbers extorting money from them. Ten persons were brought to the police station on the charge and their involvement in the crime was proved during interrogation.

The police said that the accused regularly stopped vehicles on this road as part of their extortion bid from the drivers and the occupants. The accused demanded money from the drivers and beat them up when they refused to their demands.

Inspector Sambari Hansda, Sub Inspector Sanatan Mahanta, ASI Shrivanth Naik, Kalindra Pradhan, Jagannathan Kandelkar Major and armed police personnel also participated in the raid.

Peace committee meeting held for Ram Navami processions

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, April 13: An all-important peace committee meeting was held Saturday at the SP office here. Ram Navami, which is going to be celebrated April 17, is one of the most important events in the religious calendar of the Steel City.

This year 15 akhadas or arenas are to participate in the processions that start at different parts of the city. A few of the processions pass through some of the most sensitive parts of the city. However, so far there has not been any instance of community tension here.

The peace committee meeting lasted more than two hours. After listening to all sides, the administration has allowed five hours for the processions. "The akhada processions will be allowed for five hours, that is, from 2pm to 7pm. And I request all of you to adhere to the time limit, else this will create problems for all," said SP Brajesh Kumar Rai.

Besides, there will be no display of weapons during the processions. The processions will not stop in between and will continue to move from



Madhusudan Chowk till Bhatti Road. ADM Rourkela and returning officer Ashutosh Kulkarni, who was also present in the meeting, explained about the Model Code of Conduct. "Please maintain the Model Code of Conduct because everything is being watched by the Election Commission of India," said the ADM.

He further added, "The events should not have any political overtone. If you are inviting politicians, then don't allow any political speeches. Stick strictly to the MCC in order to

avoid any unpleasant situation." The administration is in discussion with the Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) for the immersion ceremony, which will take place at the Balughat. Special ponds will be created where the idols will be immersed.

Each akhada will have more than 500 volunteers. The processions, which will start from Bisra Chowk, will pass through the Main Road, in old Rourkela area, the main business district of the city and will culminate near Udit Nagar.



UP FOR SALE: Vendors display flags bearing images of Lord Hanuman for sale on the eve of Hanuman Jayanti in Sambalpur, Saturday



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Sl. No.	BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrowers / Account	Name & Address of the Guarantors / Mortgagors	Description of Properties	Demand Notice Amount / Demand Notice Date/ Possession Notice Date	Reserve Price EMD Bid Increase Amount
1.	CUTTACK PURI ROAD BRANCH / Borrower: M/s. Maa Laxmi Bastralaya, Prop: Mrs. Kuni Sahoo, W/o.: Mr. Trinath Paramanik, At: Jahangirpatna, P.O.: Banamalipur, P.S.: Balipatna, Dist.: Khurda, PIN-752103	Mortgagor: Mrs. Kuni Sahoo, W/o.: Mr. Trinath Paramanik, At: Jahangirpatna, P.O.: Banamalipur, P.S.: Balipatna, Dist.: Khurda, PIN-752103	All that part and parcel of Vacant Land in the name of Mrs. Kuni Sahoo, W/o.: Mr. Trinath Paramanik, situated at Mouza: Bhailo, P.S./ Tahasil: Baliana, Dist.: Khurda, Khata No.: 220/59, Plot No.: 35, Area: Ac. 0.090 Dec., Bounded by East: Not mentioned, West: Not mentioned, South: Laxman Das, North: Canal	₹ 15,49,154/- + interest & expenses thereon / 09.05.2023	₹17,64,000/- ₹1,76,400/- ₹10,000/-
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3.	KENDRAPARA BRANCH / Borrowers: 1) M/s. Mamuni Jewellery, Prop: Mr. Kedarnath Sahoo, S/o.: Mr. Dibakar Sahoo, 2) Mr. Subrat Kumar Sahoo, S/o.: Mr. Dibakar Sahoo, Both are At: Kampilgarh, P.O.: Amathpur, P.S.: Bari, Dist.: Jajpur, PIN-754214	Guarantors / Mortgagors: 1) Mrs. Kanaklata Sahoo, W/o.: Mr. Dibakar Sahoo, 2) Mr. Kedarnath Sahoo, S/o.: Mr. Dibakar Sahoo, Mortgagor: Mr. Subrat Kumar Sahoo, S/o.: Mr. Dibakar Sahoo, All are At: Kampilgarh, P.O.: Amathpur, P.S.: Bari, Dist.: Jajpur, PIN-754214	All that part and parcel of Land & Building in the name of Mrs. Kanaklata Sahoo, W/o.: Mr. Dibakar Sahoo, Mr. Kedarnath Sahoo, S/o.: Mr. Dibakar Sahoo and Mr. Subrat Kumar Sahoo, S/o.: Mr. Dibakar Sahoo, situated at Mouza: Kampilgarh, P.S./Tahasil: Bari, Dist.: Jajpur, Khata No.: 225, Plot No.: 2413, Area: Ac.0.030 Dec., Bounded by East: Sukadev Sahoo, West: Adikanda Sahoo, South: Gopal Sahoo, North: Road	₹ 9,44,477/- + interest & expenses thereon / 23.01.2019	₹17,57,500/- ₹1,75,750/- ₹10,000/-

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- Date & Time of E-Auction : 16.05.2024 from 11.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M with auto extension of 10 minutes.
- Last Date & Time of Submission of EMD online on or before 14.05.2024 up to 4.00 P.M.
- Date and Time of Properties Inspection: 15.04.2024 to 10.05.2024 on any working day during office hours.
- For Participating in the E-auction sale, the intending bidders should register their details with the service provider <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp> well in advance and shall get user ID & password. Intending bidders are advised to change only the password. For detailed terms & conditions of the sale please refer to the link provided in <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp> and Secured Creditor's website i.e. www.centralbankofindia.co.in. The interested bidders who require assistance in creating Login ID & Password, uploading data, submitting bid, training on e-bidding process etc. may contact to www.mstcecommerce.com or their Central helpdesk Number 033-22901004.
- Bidder will register on website <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp> and upload KYC documents and after verification of KYC documents by the service provider, EMD to be deposited in Global EMD wallet through NEFT/transfer(after generation for Challan from <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp>).
- For any property related query, bidders may contact: For Sl. No. 1 & 2: Mr. Soumendhra Kumar Sahoo, Branch Head, Cuttack Puri Road Branch, Mob.: 7381003432, e-mail id: bmbhub3432@centralbank.co.in, For Sl No.: 3: Mr. Satyapriya Mohapatra, Branch Head, Kendrapara Branch, Mob: 7381004191, e-mail id: bmbhub4191@centralbank.co.in at any working day during office hours.
- The purchaser shall bear the applicable stamp duties/additional stamp duties/transfer charges, fees etc. and also all statutory/non-statutory dues, taxes, TDS, rates, fees etc. owing to anybody.
- Other terms and conditions are available in the auction site.

STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 12.04.2024 Authorised Officer, Central Bank of India

“We must watch over our thoughts. A bad thought is the most dangerous of thieves.”

THE MOTHER



Never Forget

Three years ago, on 15 April 2021, the National Taskforce on COVID met for the first time in three months (the last meeting was on 11 January). Cases were now at 216,000 and deaths over 1,100. Two days after that, 17 April, Narendra Modi held what he said was his largest-ever rally in Asansol, with lakhs of people in the audience. Daily positive cases that day were 260,000 with 1,500 deaths. Till this time, Modi appeared to be oblivious to the power of exponential growth though the government was warned specifically and severally about an impending second wave. It was only after he returned that evening from Bengal and perhaps internalised the commentary on television of the devastation in Delhi's hospitals that Modi acted. The next day, 18 April, Modi cancelled further activity at the Kumbh. Daily cases were now at 275,000 but it still took another four days for Modi to cancel his rallies in Malda, Murshidabad, Birbhum and Kolkata. He said the rallies would be 'virtual' (in reality, only the speaker was virtual and appeared on a screen; the crowd still gathered). By now, cases were at 332,000 with 2,200 deaths daily. The same day that Modi cancelled his rallies, the obliging Election Commission banned rallies for all parties.

In guiding India through this second wave, Modi flew by the seat of his pants. Structurally, there was nothing other than his office running the COVID strategy. The Union Cabinet did not decide or discuss a single issue related to the pandemic as the second wave surged through March and April 2021. It met five times, but only to clear things like the second phase of Bangalore's metro project and some memoranda of understanding with foreign nations.

Even on 11 May, it met only to approve things like a ropeway project in Uttarakhand. Ministers did not appear to know what Modi's vaccination strategy was, or if indeed he had any. On 18 May, Nitin Gadkari asked for more firms to be issued the licence to make the vaccine. This was reported the next day, and it was pointed out that this was exactly what Manmohan Singh had suggested to Modi a month before (a suggestion that was met with an insolent reply from Harsh Vardhan).

In the face of calamity, Modi froze. In the seven months from March to September 2020, Modi made 82 public appearances—physical as well as virtual. In the next four months, he made 111 such appearances. From February to 25 April 2021, he clocked 92 public appearances. From 25 April, after he called off the Kumbh and his Bengal rallies, Modi disappeared. He made no public appearance for 20 days. The Prime Minister of India fled the field when his people needed the government most. Twice in 2020, in April and in November, the government had been warned that an oxygen shortage was looming. The minutes of one meeting said in clear terms: "In the coming days India could face a shortage of oxygen supplies."

While before April Modi did not himself take the pandemic seriously, he also insisted on managing it personally. If there was any strategy at all in tackling the pandemic, it came directly from Modi's office; there was "no role for the Cabinet in pandemic control, PMO calls the shots," as an Indian Express headline put it. This was in keeping with the way in which he has run the government all this time. A wave that began at the end of February was not only allowed to gather momentum, it was goaded on. Through four weeks of March, through three weeks of April, India held gigantic gatherings directly organised by the BJP or approved and encouraged by it. The consequences were felt by the country's healthcare system, which was always fragile and unavailable to the poor at the best of times. Here, the second aspect to tackling a pandemic, the failure to anticipate the effects of a sudden wave and the preparation of a warchest of medical equipment, came into play.

In the eight weeks between 1 March and 30 April, India's daily cases grew 40 times from 11,000 to more than 400,000. No healthcare system in the world can handle an explosion of patients of this sort. The only way to protect the population is to stockpile things that may not be immediately required today but are produced and procured and set aside in anticipation of a wave's peak. India did not do that. In April 2020, the government decided it would procure 50,000 'Make in India' ventilators, but ultimately only procured 35,000 of them after it determined that the pandemic had been seen off. Corporates like Maruti said they had made ventilators, but the government chose not to procure them.

Two months before the second wave, on 21 February 2021, the BJP passed a resolution: "It can be said with pride that India not only defeated COVID under the able, sensitive, committed and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, but also infused in all its citizens the confidence to build an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. The party unequivocally hails its leadership for introducing India to the world as a proud and victorious nation in the fight against COVID."

When the crematoria began to overflow, no reference was made to this. All this may not affect the claims and the bombast but this is not history from 1526, this happened to us three years ago and must not be forgotten.



Aakar Patel

The Union Cabinet did not decide or discuss a single issue related to the pandemic as the second wave surged through March and April 2021



Dasarathi Mishra

IT IS AN APPROPRIATE MOMENT TO RECAPITULATE THE PROCESS OF MAKING RBI A VIBRANT PUBLIC INSTITUTION

The Reserve Bank of India has reached a glorious milestone in its unrelenting journey. Established in 1935, the august institution celebrated the 90th commemoration on 1 April 2024. The commemoration ceremony was graced by Prime Minister Modi as Chief Guest and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as Chief Speaker. Governor Shaktikanta Das, in his welcome address mentioned that in its journey, RBI remains focused on ensuring a stable and strong financial system that "would act as a bedrock for our country's economic progress."

The Prime Minister, in his address, recognised the pivotal role of RBI in shaping India's economic landscape and lauded it for its unwavering commitment and professionalism. The Prime Minister highlighted the RBI's contributions to financial inclusion and digital payments, which have empowered millions of Indians. The Finance Minister noted that the RBI has had a remarkable history in dealing with challenges faced by the Indian economy over the decades. She cited how the RBI had deployed conventional and unconventional tools during COVID-19 pandemic to safeguard the financial system and the economy.

It is an appropriate moment to recapitulate the process of making RBI a vibrant public institution.

RBI commenced operations on 1 January 1935, as a shareholders' bank with its central office in Calcutta (now Kolkata). Sir Osborne Smith, an Australian national, was the first Governor. The choice of Smith as the Governor was well received in the financial and banking world. However, his tenure was short-lived as he resigned on 1 November 1936. Sir CD Deshmukh, in his Gokhale Institute address, had mentioned that Smith resigned due to difference of opinion between him and a Finance Member over fixing the bank rate.

In January 1938, the first bank notes were issued with the signature of the second Governor

FOCUS RBI@90

GLORIOUS MILESTONE



RBI commenced operations on 1 January 1935, as a shareholders' bank with its central office in Calcutta (now Kolkata). Sir Osborne Smith, an Australian national, was the first Governor

Sir James Braid Taylor: However, the untimely demise of Taylor in February 1943 created a vacuum. Sir CD Deshmukh, the first Indian to be Governor of RBI, assumed charge on 11 August 1943. During his tenure, he represented India at the Bretton Woods negotiations in 1944.

On 1 July 1949, Sir Benegal Rama Rau assumed office as Governor. The recommendations of the All India Rural Credit Survey Committee appointed during his tenure led to the transformation of the Imperial Bank of India into State Bank of India. Governor Rau resigned on 14 January 1957 on account of differences with Finance Minister TT Krishnamachari on the issue of autonomy of the RBI.

LK Jha was Governor from 1 July 1967 to 3 May 1970. During his tenure, 14 major commercial banks were nationalised by the government on 19 July 1969 - a step which had not got the endorsement of RBI.

Dr IG Patel, an eminent economist was Governor from December 1977 to September 1982. He played an active role in availing of IMF's extended funds facility in 1981 due to balance of payment difficulties. During his tenure, on 7 November 1981, the New Central Office Building was inaugurated by Finance Minister R Venkatraman.

Dr Manmohan Singh was RBI Governor from 16 June 1982 to 14 January 1985. During the period, comprehensive legal reforms in

banking regulation was carried out. RN Malhotra (Governor during February 1985 to December 1990) was instrumental in developing money market, setting up National Housing Bank.

Governor Venkitaraman held office from December 1990 to December 1992. During the period the country confronted a severe balance of payment crisis. His adroit management saw the country tide over the crisis.

M Narasimham, the thirteenth Governor of RBI was the first and so far the only one to be appointed from the RBI cadre. He was chairperson of the Committee on Financial System (1991) and Committee of Banking Sector Reforms (1998) - two landmark reports to shape the financial sector reforms in India.

Dr C Rangarajan who had taken charge as Governor, RBI on 22 December 1992 for a five-year term, was a formidable central banker. He was principal author of the report of the Chakravarty Committee to assess the function of Indian monetary system in 1985. The ending of automatic monetisation and financing of budget deficit at below market rates had a positive impact on market. The big bang policy announced by Rangarajan, on 15 April 1997 sought greater market orientation in the financial sector by empowering banks with greater operational flexibility.

Dr Bimal Jalan was Governor during 22 November 1997 to 6 September 2003. Under his lead-

ership, India weathered the storm of the Asian Financial Crisis; consolidated gains of economic reform. New private sector banks were given licenses under Sec 23 of the Banking Regulation Act during the period.

Dr YV Reddy, the twenty-first Governor (6 September 2003 to 5 September 2008) made significant policy contributions in areas of financial sector reforms, monitoring of balance of payment and exchange rates, external commercial borrowings and gold policy. His strict regulatory measures ring-fenced the economy during the Global Financial Crisis. Dr Duvvuri Subbarao was Governor from 6 September 2008 to September 2013. He steered the country well during the Global Financial Crisis.

Dr Raghuram Rajan assumed the charge as the Governor from September 2013 to September 2016. When Rajan took charge, the rupee was in free fall, inflation was high, India had a large current account deficit, foreign exchange reserves were falling and asset quality of banks was precarious. He outlined a vision that went beyond the immediate crisis focussing on long term growth. It restored confidence in Indian banking system.

Shaktikanta Das assumed charge of Governor on 12 December 2018 succeeding Dr Urjit Patel who had resigned. Das steered the economy so efficiently during the pandemic that it got international acclaim. He managed inflation parameters set by the government effectively. His out of the box thinking has been publicly lauded by the PM. Das has been rated "A+" in the Global Finance Central Banker Report Cards 2023.

We must justly be proud of the RBI and its stalwart governors. Dr Reddy once mentioned: "Among the public institutions in India, the RBI is unique in many ways. It has strong technical competence and professional skill. Over the years, it has preserved institutional memory."

The writer is a former central banker. Views are personal.

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

The case against solar geoengineering

At the most recent United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), held in Nairobi, African countries took a strong stand against potential new technologies that, if developed, could tip an already disrupted climate into chaos. The continent's leaders, with the support of other developing countries, helped shoot down a resolution that called for more research into the benefits and risks of solar radiation modifying technology (SRM). Also known as solar geoengineering, SRM is the controversial idea that deliberately modifying the atmosphere to reflect some of the sun's rays back into space could help cool a warming planet. Instead, these policy-makers supported International Non-Use Agreement on Solar Geoengineering.

Geoengineering encompasses a range of speculative technologies, of which SRM is just one, intended to address the effects, not the root causes, of climate change. Many solar-geoengineering techniques have been proposed, but the most contemplated is stratospheric aerosol injection, which envisages fleets of high-flying airplanes continuously spraying

large amounts of sulfur dioxide into the stratosphere to mimic the temporary cooling effects of volcanic eruptions.

In reality, such measures would likely destabilise an already severely disrupted climate. Consider that volcanic eruptions have historically precipitated extreme weather events and famines. Moreover, climate models have long indicated that stratospheric aerosol injection could alter Indian monsoons and cause more frequent and persistent droughts in the volatile Sahel region. According to the UN Human Rights Council, solar geoengineering could "seriously interfere with the enjoyment of human rights for millions and perhaps billions of people."

Some SRM proponents argue that if spraying sulfate aerosols into the stratosphere does not achieve the desired result, it is always possible to stop. But that could prove dangerous: the masking effect of the injected particles would disappear, causing a rapid rise in temperatures. This so-called termination shock would be a nightmare scenario. Africans see how their conti-

nent is being used as a testing ground for these dangerous technologies. Africa is the continent most vulnerable to climate change, the argument goes, and thus would benefit the most from geoengineering. Furthermore, disagreements over the use of SRM could exacerbate geopolitical conflicts and even trigger wars. And, given that geoengineering technologies are widely promoted by US-based interests and institutions funded by tech billionaires, African countries have good reason to fear that they would have little to no say in decisions about their deployment.

In addition to concerns about security and equity, geoengineering raises serious ethical questions. SRM and other related technologies appeal to those who repudiate the need for rapid, transformative societal change to limit global warming. Even entertaining this fantasy could become a dangerous distraction, especially as it gains traction as a tactic of delay for the fossil-fuel industry.

That is why African countries—together with Mexico, Colombia, Fiji, and Vanuatu—pushed back forcefully against Switzerland's

solar-geoengineering resolution at UNEA, arguing that research has already demonstrated the catastrophic risks. They advocated for UNEA to reaffirm a precautionary approach to these speculative technologies and to acknowledge African Ministerial Conference on the Environment's call for a non-use agreement—a pioneering decision taken in August 2023. But the US, Saudi Arabia, and Japan opposed this. Given the lack of consensus, Switzerland was forced to withdraw its resolution.

Susana Muhamad, Colombia's environment minister, put it succinctly in her powerful closing plenary statement at UNEA: "Pollution is not the solution for pollution." African leaders have warned that the world must not be hoodwinked and find itself on a slippery slope toward catastrophic geoengineering. It is time for the international community to listen.

Yacob Mulugetta teaches at University College London. Dean Bhekumuzi Bhebhe is campaigns lead at Power Shift Africa.

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WISDOM CORNER

- Have no fear of perfection - you'll never reach it. SALVADOR DALI
- The time you enjoy wasting is not wasted time. BERTRAND RUSSELL
- Reality leaves a lot to the imagination. JOHN LENNON

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1828:** Noah Webster published An American Dictionary of the English Language; based on the principle that word usage should evolve from the spoken language, the work was hugely influential, though it was initially attacked for its "Americanism."
- 1865:** U.S. President Abraham Lincoln is shot. The assassin, John Wilkes Booth, wanted to revive the Confederate cause, mere days after their surrender to the Union Army, bringing the American Civil War to an end. Lincoln died the next day.
- 1939:** American author John Steinbeck's classic The Grapes of Wrath—which was set during the Great Depression and traces the migration of an Oklahoma Dust Bowl family to California and their subsequent hardships as migrant farmworkers—was published.
- 1986:** A force of U.S. warplanes based in Britain bombed several sites in Libya, killing or wounding several of Muammar al-Qaddafi's children and narrowly missing Qaddafi himself.

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

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Wakeup call

Sir, Apropos, "Bangalore beware summer of 2024 is just a sneak peak," Orissa POST, April 13, Karnataka's worst drought in four decades is now taking a toll on its capital. Bangalore is reeling under a severe water shortage. The crisis has severely affected households, schools, hospitals, industries, offices and even the IT hub. Authorities have imposed strict curbs to prevent the misuse of potable water and have fixed rates for tankers supplying water to residential areas. But it will need to do much more because the unfolding situation could worsen in coming weeks. Till about 30 years ago, a large percentage of Bangalore's potable water requirement was met by the city's human-made lakes. As the city expanded to become the country's IT capital, it lost its water repositories. Developers cut down green hubs and lake catchments became dumping yards for municipal solid waste or building debris. Concretisation made groundwater recharge difficult. But successive governments did not heed the alarm bells. At the same time, the water supply infrastructure has not kept pace with the rapid urbanisation. The crisis in Karnataka's capital should be a wakeup call for other cities.

N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Meek surrender

Sir, When he had a very good opportunity to expose the alleged forced occupation of China in our borders by usurping about 38,000 sq km of our land in Ladakh and a sizeable land parcel in Arunachal Pradesh, in an interview Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave to the leading American journal Newsweek, he miserably failed to do so. The meek appeal made by him to China, the usurper of our lands and killer of many of our valiant soldiers in our borders, for their continued relationship to sort out the prolonged situation on our borders and to sustain peace and tranquility in our borders appears to one as if we have surrendered our rights to reclaim the lost lands to China. We feel let down by PM Modi's meek approach to this issue which concerns the self-respect of each and every patriotic Indian and more importantly, the sovereignty of our beloved motherland.

Tharcus S. Fernando, CHENNAI

Kashmiri Pandit outfit merges with Congress



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, April 13: A Kashmiri Pandit outfit, All India Kashmiri Hindu Forum (AIKHF), merged with the Congress at the party headquarters here Saturday.

Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee president Vikar Rasool Wani welcomed AIKHF chairman Rattan Lal Bhan and other office bearers into the party fold.

The AIKHF was formed in 1998. Hundreds of its members joining the Congress is a big boost for the party, Wani told reporters.

He also called on all Kashmiri Pandit organisations to join the party and accused the BJP-led central government of 'fooling' the community for the past 10 years.

"The BJP sold (their plight) across the country to come to

power and assured the community that they will do a lot for their rehabilitation, giving them hope. The BJP has been in power for the last 10 years but failed to do any work worth even 10 paise for them," Wani said.

"I appeal to other Kashmiri Pandit groups to come back to the Congress as the BJP is only fooling them for the last 10 years. The Nehru family originally belongs to Kashmir and has a lot of sympathy for the displaced Pandits and so does the Congress party as a whole," he added.

Bhan said he decided to merge his outfit with the Congress as the former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh-led government had done a lot for Kashmiri Pandits.

"We feel (like we are) back in our family. The BJP only exploited the Pandits and did nothing for us," he said.

five Kuki leaders so far. This time, all the candidates in the fray are Nagas, with no Kuki throwing their hat in the ring following the call of influential pressure groups to abstain from contesting.

Of Outer Manipur's eight lakh strong electorate, Nagas are the largest cohort with 4.61 lakh voters, followed by Kuki-Zomi (3.21 lakh). Meitis, on the other hand feel that at a time when their houses have been burnt and their lives pushed back by at least two decades, how can they think of voting.

"We were living in the hills, we used to visit the valley frequently and sell goods here, we had our vehicles running, business was good. Now, our house is no longer there, the means of livelihood are gone and there is constant threat if we ever make an attempt to visit even the remains... It feels like our lives have gone back to where they were two decades back... And they want us to vote?" said Oinam Cheema, a displaced Meiti.

The Election Commission has announced that the displaced population will have the opportunity to cast their votes from relief camps.

According to Election Commission officials, over 24,000 people living in the relief camps have been found eligible to vote and 94 special polling stations are being set up for the purpose.

Not right time for polls: Kukis & Meitis

Living separately and refusing to co-exist in future, many members of Kukis and Meitis communities ask - why elections at this time?

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal/Churachandpur, April 13: The Kukis and Meitis may be at loggerheads in Manipur but their thoughts on one point converge - this is not the right time for Lok Sabha elections in the restive state.

It has nearly been a year since ethnic violence broke out between the hill-majority Kukis and the valley-majority Meitis. It has not only killed over 200 people and displaced around 50,000 but also sharply divided Manipur along ethnic lines.

Elections for two Lok Sabha seats in Manipur will be held April 19 and 26. While Inner Manipur and some segments of Outer Manipur will vote in the first phase, the remaining segments of Outer Manipur will go to polls April 26.

Living separately and refusing to co-exist in future, many members of both Kukis and Meitis communities ask - why elections at this time and what difference will they make?

"Our demand is clear - we want a separate administration for the Kuki Zo community. For years the development has only been in the valley and not our areas and after what has happened last year, we cannot live together... There is no question or possibility," said Lhainelam, a Kuki who is the coordinator at a relief camp in Churachandpur



district, which was epicentre of the violence last year.

"There is no exchange happening between the two sides - neither of words nor of commodities, and the government wants us to vote for other side... How is that possible? A Kuki displaced from Meiti region has to vote for the Meiti constituency. How and why? The elections should have been conducted after addressing these sentiments and issues... Now is not the right time," he added.

The Kukis have already declared that they are not fielding any candidate in the upcoming

polls as an act of boycott. However, different groups are still contemplating whether they will abstain from voting too.

"Several meetings have been going on and there is still no decision on what stand will we take about voting... There is one view of voting for the right candidate who can raise the demand for a separate administration and another view is why there are elections at this time... In a state which has literally been burning, is this priority or some resolution to achieve peace?" asked a professor of a government college in Imphal, re-

questing anonymity.

The academician, a Kuki, hasn't visited his workplace since clashes broke out and has no idea about when he will be able to take classes.

"The Meiti students do not want to attend my classes. If I take classes online, there is no cooperation from my colleagues too, simply because I am from Kuki community... Why should I vote for a constituency which is no longer mine," he said.

The Outer Manipur constituency, reserved for the Scheduled Tribes, has been represented by six Naga and

Displaced voters may miss voting in LS polls

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Imphal/Aizawl, April 13: Despite the Election Commission's all-out efforts to increase voting turnout in the 18th Lok Sabha polls, several thousand voters, mostly tribals, would miss to cast their vote in Manipur as they took shelter in neighbouring Mizoram and other states after the violence broke out in Manipur.

The national average turnout in the 17th Lok Sabha election in 2019 was 67.40 per cent.

Over 12,000 people belonging to Kuki-Zomi communities in different phases took shelter in Mizoram and a large number of people of the tribal community shifted to other states after the ethnic violence broke out in Manipur May 3 last year.

The Election Officials in Manipur and Mizoram separately said that they have yet to get any directions from the Election Commission to make arrangements for the voting of the tribals sheltered outside Manipur.

"The people who took shelter outside Manipur are voters of the state but there are no specific records with the election authorities who are now staying where. Eligible voters among the displaced people can come back to Manipur and cast their votes in their notified areas," an election official told IANS.

Over 24,500 eligible voters, now sheltered in over 300 relief camps inside Manipur due to ethnic violence in the state, would exercise their franchise at 94 special polling stations in the two-phase elections for the state's two Lok Sabha seats, as directed by the Election Commission.

The 94 special polling stations will be set up in the relief camps in 10 of the state's 16 districts and many of the displaced voters would cast their votes in their original places of residence, he said.

The displaced - 12,000 people - taking shelter in different districts in Mizoram are unlikely to go to Manipur to cast votes.

Will keep Article 370 issue alive: Omar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, April 13: National Conference leader Omar Abdullah Saturday said the Supreme Court upholding the abrogation of Article 370 does not close the issue and his party will keep it alive till a dispensation comes at the Centre that is willing to discuss the restoration of special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

"This government will not remain forever. There is no power on earth that can keep Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi in office in perpetuity, there is no power on earth that can keep the BJP in office forever. Every government has a finite term, some are longer, some are shorter. Why would you assume that no government will come in future that will be unwilling to talk to us on Article 370," Abdullah told PTI in an interview here.

Abdullah, who is contesting the Lok Sabha polls from north Kashmir Baramulla constituency, said the Supreme Court verdict on petitions challenging abrogation of the Article 370 was unfortunate. "I would like to believe that there will be a government in the future that will be happy to en-



gagement with us on our core issues of the special status of J-K and until that comes, we will keep our struggle alive," he said.

"We will continue to fight for it and struggle for it. A stamp of the SC does not close the issue, because if a stamp closes the issue, then we had a stamp on Article 370 much before this one and the SC found in favour of Article 370. So, yes, the recent judgement is unfortunate, but that won't stop our political fight," the former J-K chief minister said.

He claimed that several Opposition parties were also on the same page. "Even now we have friends who talk in favour of the restoration of 370, whether it is in Tamil Nadu or West

Bengal or the Left. We have friends outside of J-K who see eye to eye with us on the issue of 370," he added.

The former chief minister said just like the BJP did not stop talking about the abrogation of Article 370 even when it had two Lok Sabha members in the 1984 elections, his party will continue to talk about the restoration of the special status.

"When the BJP was reduced to two members of Parliament after the victory of Rajiv Gandhi following the assassination of PM Indira Gandhi, did the BJP stop? It kept talking about 370 despite setbacks in court. So, our struggle (also) will not end," he said.

Asked about the 'silence' of the Congress on the demand for restoration of Article 370, Abdullah said while he was disappointed, he would not blame his INDIA bloc ally.

"It is disappointing but I do not blame them. I have always maintained that J-K's special status is the legacy of the Congress party. It was not an individual who gave it, it was the government that gave it. It was a sovereign commitment of the Union of India with the people of J-K, but you cannot escape the fact that it was the legacy of India's first prime minister. Therefore, I would have been happier if the Congress had defended its legacy a bit more."

"But, I do understand the political compulsions that make it difficult for them to do it. What I find surprising is that when people, whose legacy is the map of J-K, actually celebrate its dismemberment, that I find surprising because J-K's map is not a product of August 15, 1947, J-K's map actually predates independence. So, I would like to have seen people whose legacy is the territorial boundary of J-K perhaps defend it a bit more," he added.

Army marks 4 decades of presence in Siachen glacier

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: The induction of heavy-lift helicopters and logistic drones, deployment of all-terrain vehicles and laying of an extensive network of tracks are among a host of measures that have enhanced India's combat prowess in Siachen, the world's highest battlefield, officials said Saturday.

As the Indian Army marks the 40th year of its presence on the strategically-significant Siachen glacier, the officials said there have been extensive improvements in the operational capabilities of the force due to the enhancement of infrastructure in the region in the last few years.

The Siachen glacier at the height of around 20,000 feet in the Karakoram mountain range is known as the highest militarised zone in the world where soldiers have to battle frostbite and high winds.

Under its 'Operation Meghdoot,' the Indian Army established its full control over the glacier April 13, 1984.

"The Indian Army's control over the Siachen glacier has not only been a story of unparalleled valour and determination but also an incredible journey of technological advancements and logistical improvements that



transformed it from one of the most formidable terrains into a symbol of indomitable spirit and innovation," said an official.

The initiatives, especially laid out in the last five years, have made significant strides in improving the living conditions and operational capabilities of the personnel deployed in Siachen, he said on the condition of anonymity.

In January last year, Captain Shiva Chauhan from the Army's Corps of Engineers was posted at a frontline post in the Siachen glacier, in the first such operational deployment of a woman Army officer at a key battlefield.

The official cited above said there has been a noteworthy improvement in the aspect of mobility in Siachen.

"The development of an extensive network of tracks and the

introduction of all-terrain vehicles (ATV) have significantly improved mobility across the glacier," he said.

Another official said innovations like the DRDO-developed ATV bridges have enabled the Army to overcome natural obstacles, while high-quality 'Dyneema' ropes in aerial cables ensure seamless supply lines to even the most-remote outposts.

"The induction of heavy-lift helicopters and logistic drones has vastly improved the supply of essentials to the personnel deployed in posts that are cut off, especially in winters," he said.

"The availability of special clothing, mountaineering equipment and advanced rations has enhanced the ability of the soldiers to withstand the harsh conditions of the world's coldest battlefield," the official added.

He said gadgets, such as pocket weather trackers, with each soldier provides timely weather updates and warn them about possible avalanches.

"Recent initiatives concerning the improvement of connectivity have ensured that the personnel in forward posts in the northern and central glacier regions have access to fresh ration and vegetables instead of tinned ration, an aspect that could not have been imagined a few years ago," the official said.

"Fresh ration and vegetables are now a reality for our forward posts, thanks to new logistic initiatives," he added.

There has been a focus on improvement in mobile and data connectivity in the region as well.

"The introduction of the VSAT technology has revolutionised communication on the glacier,

providing the troops with data and internet connectivity," the second official said.

"This leap in technology has enhanced real-time situational awareness, telemedicine capabilities and the well-being of our soldiers by keeping them connected with their families," he said. The VSAT or very small aperture terminal is a data-transmission technology. The Army has also been focusing on boosting the medical infrastructure in Siachen.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has established telemedicine nodes that provide critical medical support not only to the troops but also to the local populace and tourists in the Nubra valley.

"The medical facilities in Partapur and the base camp boast of some of the best medical and surgical specialists, state-of-the-art HAPO chambers and oxygen generation plants, besides life-support systems. This has ensured that all endeavours are made to save every life in this challenging terrain," said a third official.

The HAPO (High Altitude Pulmonary Oedema) chamber is a life-saving device that provides emergency treatment in medical conditions relating to breathlessness and accumulation of fluids in the lungs etc.



Two former India hockey team captains in electoral battlefield

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 13: They have played captain innings in astroturf while representing the Indian hockey team, but this time they are trying their luck in the electoral battlefield in Sundargarh district, the cradle of hockey in Odisha.

They are Hockey India president and former Rajya Sabha MP Dilip Tirkey and ex-Indian hockey team captain Prabodh Tirkey.

While Dilip Tirkey is the ruling Biju Janata Dal candidate for the Sundargarh (ST) Lok Sabha constituency, his junior and former India hockey captain, Prabodh Tirkey is the Congress candidate from the Talsara (ST) Assembly segment also in Sundargarh district.

Both the BJD and Congress have picked Dilip Tirkey and Prabodh Tirkey in the electoral battle as Sundargarh is known as the cradle of hockey in the state and the game is very popular among the masses.

According to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Hockey is a way of life in tribal-dominated Sundargarh where toddlers start walking with hockey sticks.

Dilip Tirkey, 46, is pitted against former Union Minister and sitting BJP MP Jual Oram from the Sundargarh Lok Sabha seat. "It is good that Dilip is in the fray. He is certainly a master in the hockey field, but I am a seasoned player in politics," Oram, a five-time MP said, adding that the BJD will retain the Sundargarh Lok Sabha seat.

Dilip, who announced his retirement from hockey in 2010 after playing over 400 international matches, is also a former Rajya Sabha MP. Claimed Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's popularity along with the BJD government's good works for the tribals will help him win the



polls. Both Oram and Dilip Tirkey had faced each other in the Sundargarh Lok Sabha seat earlier in 2014 when the BJP candidate won the seat by a margin of 18,829 votes.

After a gap of 10 years, Tirkey and Oram will face each other again in the electoral field.

While Dilip Tirkey has started working on a BJD strategy, Oram is visiting the villages across the parliamentary constituency, attending small functions and spending nights in tribal villages. Tirkey and Oram both hail from the tribal community.

The BJD has never won the Sundargarh Lok Sabha seat which has been won either by the Congress or BJP.

Oram was elected to Lok Sabha from this seat in 1998, 1999, 2004, 2014 and 2019. "I lost the 2009 elections to Congress's ex-CM Hemananda Biswal due to a wrong strategy," Oram said.

Of the seven Assembly segments under the Sundargarh Lok Sabha constituency, BJD has two MLAs, BJP three and one seat each is held by Congress and CPI(M).

Talsara is one of the seven Assembly segments under the Sundargarh Lok Sabha constituency from where Prabodh Tirkey has been nominated by the Congress. The BJP candidate Bhabani Shankar Bhoi won

the 2019 Assembly elections in Talsara, a stronghold of the Congress.

Prabodh has announced to bring back the Congress' lost glory at Talsara. The Congress has won the Talsara Assembly segment in nine out of 12 elections held between 1974 and 2019.

Prabodh, 39, who started informally meeting people before formally launching his election campaign, said he never stopped connecting with the people but is yet to formally kick-start his campaign. "I am getting a very positive response from the Congress people. They are excited to get me as a candidate," Prabodh said.

Apart from being a former star international hockey player, Prabodh is also the younger brother of another hockey icon Ignace Tirkey.

Prabodh returned to his home in Nuapada village of Balishankara block after quitting his job with Air India. He is facing sitting MLA Bhavani Shankar Bhoi of BJP and BJD's Binay Toppo.

Both Dilip and Prabodh are popular and need no introduction to the people, particularly the youth. They have seen both Prabodh and Dilip in action on television, now the duo needs to display its heroism in the electoral battlefield.

BJP to release poll manifesto today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: The BJP will release its manifesto -Sankalp Patra - for the Lok Sabha polls Sunday, with its planks of welfare and development besides a roadmap for 'Viksit Bharat' expected to figure prominently in its election agenda.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other senior leaders of the party are expected to attend the unveiling of the manifesto at the party headquarters that coincides with the birth anniversary of BR Ambedkar, a towering leader from the Dalit community and an architect of the Indian Constitution.

As the BJP government has fulfilled most of its core ideological promises, including the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya and the repeal of Article 370, all eyes will be on how the ruling party's larger cultural and Hindutva agenda figures in the manifesto.

Party sources said measures for the youth, women, farmers and the poor -- four castes Modi has often spoken about -- will be among the highlights of its poll pledges.



HARD BARGAIN: Over 15 youths and villagers from Saratal village under Ukhura panchayat of Gumma block in Gajapati district left Congress and joined BJP at a merger meeting after BJD candidate for Paralakhemundi Assembly constituency Rupesh Panigrahi promised to construct a road to the village after he gets elected, Saturday

George, son Rohit confident of victory

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, April 13: George Tirkey and his son Rohit Joseph Tirkey, who has been given the BJD ticket for the Biramitrapur Assembly constituency, expressed their gratitude to the BJD president and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik during a presser here Friday.

Speaking to mediapersons, Rohit said, "It is a proud privilege to have got the ticket for the Biramitrapur constituency and for that I express my gratitude to Hon'ble CM Naveen Patnaik sir for having put his confidence in me."

Regarding his poll prospect, he sounded confident of winning. "Last time I pooled 44,212 votes as a Congress candidate. And BJD got 44,528. If you combine both then we will this time get more than one lakh votes. This will ensure BJD and my victory," said Rohit.

Speaking about his main opponent sitting BJP MLA Shankar Oram, he said, "He is never visible in his constituency. People are very dissatisfied with him. So, the votes that went to BJP will come to us this time and for that we have stepped up our exercise on the ground."

Announcing that 'abki baar, ek

lakh paar' is their slogan, Rohit said, "People are responding very positively during my campaigning." Rohit was optimistic as he has the advantage of his age along with his father's goodwill amongst the public.

Meanwhile, George Tirkey, a former Biramitrapur MLA and firebrand tribal leader, said, "I have trained Rohit for the last five years after he lost last time. He has travelled extensively across the length and breadth of the constituency. He established a good rapport with the public and they want him."

Besides, George exuded confidence about his own backing.

"He is my son and this time I am with him completely. In the last five years, people have come to see a bright leader in him."

Training guns on Rohit's opponent Shankar Oram, George said, "Despite Oram being the elected representative, locals always came to me to solve their problems. They are totally frustrated with Oram and his behaviour." During the presser, George tried to dispel the feeling that there was opposition against his son saying that he showed his strength by bringing most sarpanches and samiti members of Biramitrapur Assembly constituency to the meeting.

Odisha, WB police gear up to ensure free and fair polls in border districts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 13: Senior officers of Odisha and West Bengal police departments have conducted a virtual inter-state coordination meeting to ensure free and fair elections in the districts located on the border of the two neighbouring states, reports said Saturday.

Senior officials of both states including Odisha DGP Arun Kumar Sarangi, his West Bengal counterpart Sanjay Mukherjee, and Superintendents of Police (SPs) of border districts participated in the meeting.

Sarang stressed on the need to check the illegal supply of contraband brown sugar from Bardhaman, Lalgola and Murshidabad areas of West Bengal into Odisha.

He sought proper coordination between the police personnel of both the states to arrest the big drug peddlers involved in the illegal trade.

The participants held a threadbare discussion over plans for rigorous inspection at the border check posts, raids on unlawful trade in excise products like alcohol, arms, drugs and illegal cash transactions.

DGP Sarangi stressed on the need to check the illegal supply of contraband brown sugar from Bardhaman, Lalgola and Murshidabad areas of West Bengal into Odisha

The participants also emphasised on the need to ensure peaceful, violence-free and free and fair elections in border districts including Mayurbhanj and Balasore districts of Odisha.

The officials also deliberated on sharing of intelligence, arrest of interstate criminals etc. during the virtual meeting.



DRUMMING UP SUPPORT: Congress supporters take out a bike rally in support of party's Bolangir Assembly candidate Samarendra Mishra in Deogaon area of the district, Saturday



PARTY HOPPING: Several workers of other parties from Sarbahal and Kolabira areas joined BJP in the presence of party's MLA candidate for Jharsuguda Assembly seat Tankadhar Tripathy at a merger meeting held at the party office in Jharsuguda, Saturday

Rahul Gandhi's TN visit has trumped Modi's poll campaign: Stalin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tirupur (Tamil Nadu), April 13: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin Saturday said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's single day campaign in the state has beaten all the election trips of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the state to seek votes.

Referring to the April 12 meet addressed at nearby Coimbatore by him and Gandhi, Stalin said the turnout and the rally was magnificent like the movie Baahubali, and the total BJP was trumped, by a single public meeting.

Further, the chief minister said Gandhi's single day campaign in Tamil Nadu has beaten all the election trips of Modi to the state to seek votes. Rahul Gandhi has proven that Tamil Nadu people can be won over (ruled) only through love.

Citing Gandhi's comment in

Coimbatore that the Lok Sabha polls are an ideological battle, the DMK chief said he has been all along stating that the election is between the INDIA bloc -- committed to upholding social justice -- and the BJP front which is sowing seeds of discrimination in society. Rahul Gandhi's speech has echoed the same opinion.

The DMK regime is a beacon of social justice that provided reservation to marginalised people including the Backward, Most Backward and Scheduled Castes. "If Modi is again voted to power, he will first do away with reservation. It is because BJP is allergic to social justice. Modi will also change the Constitution drafted by Dr BR Ambedkar. That is why we say that Modi returning to power is a danger to the Constitution, a threat to the whole country," he said.

Furthermore, the DMK president alleged stoking violence



is in the BJP's DNA, and the nation will be an autocracy and the number of poor people will rise if Modi retains power.

Referring to a news item (a video clip was also shared in so-

cial media) on BJP workers allegedly assaulting a woman in Tirupur for posing GST related questions, he said both the BJP and Modi are detrimental to the nation and its people. The BJP

will turn Tirupur into a Manipur, he alleged. Pointing to the alleged assault, he accused the BJP of arrogance and alleged the saffron party has become drunk with power.

Industrial growth is possible only in a peaceful environment and peace and growth will be lost if violent parties like the BJP are allowed entry.

Due to GST and demonetisation, industries/MSMEs have been seriously affected. A company that came forward to invest in Tamil Nadu was intimidated and it was forced to start its venture in Gujarat, he alleged.

For the Production Linked Incentive scheme, tax is collected from Tamil Nadu people and the Centre is giving concession to start industries in Gujarat. Only these people are now seeking votes in Tirupur and Coimbatore.

Stalin addressed the meet at Avinashi in Tirupur district which is among the areas that fall under the Nilgiris LS constituency, where BJP's L Murugan is seeking his luck. In Coimbatore, TN BJP chief K Annamalai is the candidate.

national

of the day quote

Look at what is happening today. Wherever the BJP feels danger, candidates are arrested through some agencies. If this is not emergency, then release the opposition leaders and see whether the people support them or not

OMAR ABDULLAH | NC VICE PRESIDENT

Everyone is accountable to law. There was a time when some thought they were beyond the reach of law

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE PRESIDENT

The BJP can put Arvind Kejriwal behind bars, but cannot imprison the latter's ideas and the change he and his Aam Aadmi Party has brought about

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

ANDHRA CM JAGAN INJURED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh), April 13: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy was Saturday injured after stones were pelted by unknown persons during the YSRCP chief's election campaign in Vijayawada, his office said.

The Chief Minister suffered a small cut on the left side of his temple above the eye during his 'Memanta Siddham' (we are all ready) election canvassing bus tour.

"The stone struck the CM while he was acknowledging the crowds as part of his bus tour at Vivekananda School Centre in Singhanagar, Vijayawada," said a statement from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). The stone hit Reddy at a very high velocity and officials are suspecting that it could have been launched from a catapult, prompting the people standing around him atop the bus to wipe his forehead with a handkerchief initially.

Immediately, the Chief Minister was administered first aid inside the bus by a doctor. Reddy was seen being attended to by a doctor inside the bus and also grimacing from pain. However, unfazed by the stone pelting, he resumed his tour in the city, where he has been canvassing for nearly four hours.

Meanwhile, YSRCP leaders alleged that the TDP was behind this 'attack'. Reddy has embarked on a 21-day election campaign bus tour from Idupulupaya in Kadapa district to Ichapuram in Srikulam district.

Elections for the 175-member Assembly and 25 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh are scheduled May 13 and the counting of votes is slated for June 4.



There will be no BJP-led NDA government at the Centre. There is an undercurrent in the nation. There is something called silent voter phenomenon. You will see when the results are out

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

NEW INITIATIVE

The Andaman and Nicobar police have come out with a state-of-the-art chatbot to engage the general public with law enforcement agencies in tackling and raising awareness related to cyber crime cases in the archipelago, an officer said



Kavitha forced SC Reddy to pay ₹25cr to AAP: CBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: The CBI has told a special court here that Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha had allegedly 'threatened' Aurobindo Pharma promoter Sharath Chandra Reddy to pay an amount of ₹25 crore to the AAP for the five retail zones allotted to his firm under the Delhi government's excise policy.

According to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Kavitha had told Reddy that in case he does not pay the amount to the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the national capital, his business will be harmed in Telangana and Delhi.

Reddy, who was an accused in a money-laundering case linked to the alleged liquor scam in Delhi, had turned an approver in the case that is being probed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). The CBI is yet to file a chargesheet against him.

Seeking the BRS leader's custodial interrogation, the CBI told Special Judge Kaveri Baweja that it was at the "insistence and assurance" of Kavitha, the daughter of former Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, that Reddy got involved in the liquor business in Delhi.



Kavitha had allegedly assured Reddy that she had contacts in the Delhi government and that she would help him in the liquor business in the national capital under the now-scrapped excise policy.

"Kavitha further told Sharath Chandra Reddy that the payments of upfront money of ₹25 crore for wholesale business and ₹5 crore for each retail zone were to be made to the Aam Aadmi Party for getting liquor business and the same was to be paid to her associates, Arun R Pillai and Abhishek Boinpally, who would in turn coordinate with Vijay Nair, who was a representative of (Delhi Chief Minister) Arvind Kejriwal," the CBI told the court Friday.

The court has sent Kavitha to the CBI's custody till April

15. According to the agency, in March and May 2021, when the excise policy was being formulated, Pillai, Boinpally and Butchibabu Gorantla stayed at the Hotel Oberoi in Delhi to swing the policy in their favour through Nair by inserting provisions.

After receiving the assurance of support from Kavitha, Aurobindo Realty and Infrastructure Private Limited paid ₹80 lakh to her NGO, Telangana Jagruthi, under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in March 2021, the CBI has alleged.

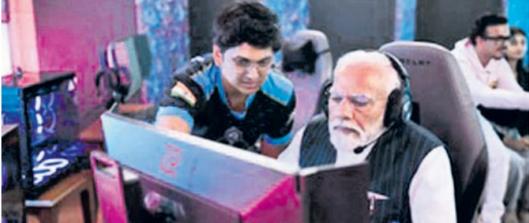
"The investigation has further revealed that in June-July 2021, K Kavitha had compelled Sharath Chandra Reddy to enter into a sale agreement with her for an agricultural land situated at Mahboob Nagar, Telangana, although he was not keen to purchase the said agricultural land and also not aware of the value of the said land," it has said.

Kavitha "insisted" that Reddy pay ₹14 crore against the land and "forced" him to enter into the sale agreement through Mahira Ventures Private Limited, one of the Aurobindo Group companies, in July 2021, the CBI has told the court, citing Reddy's statement and its investigation so far.



Tamil Nadu minister and DMK leader Udhayanidhi Stalin with party's candidate from Thoothukudi constituency Kanimozhi Karunanidhi during an election campaign ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, in Thoothukudi district, Saturday

PM interacts with top gamers



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: The gaming industry does not require any regulation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Saturday while asserting that it must remain free and only then it will boom.

In a free-wheeling interaction with top Indian online gamers on a host of issues about the future as well as the challenges before the e-gaming industry, the Prime Minister posed questions to the gamers while trying his hands at some of the games. When a gamer Naman Mathur asked Modi if there was any need for regulations for the gaming sector, he said regulate wouldn't be the right word because it is the government's nature to intervene.

"There are two things - either you try to impose restrictions under a law or try to understand and mould it based on our country's needs and bring it under an organised and legal structure

and uplift its reputation," the Prime Minister said.

"My attempt is to uplift the nation to a level that by 2047 the government is out of the lives of middle-class families in particular. Our life is stuck in paperwork. It is the poor who need the government, the government should be there with them in difficult times," he added.

The Prime Minister sought to know from the gamers about how they deal with the conflict between gaming and gambling. The gamers also discussed with the Prime Minister certain terminologies used in the industry such as 'noob' and 'grind'.

As the gamers explained to the Prime Minister that 'noob' is a reference to someone who is a newbie or not very skilled at a game, Modi chuckled, "If I use this word during elections, people will wonder who am I referring to. If I say it, you will assume it for a particular person."

RJD releases poll manifesto

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, April 13: The RJD, the largest constituent of Mahagathbandhan in Bihar, Saturday released its election manifesto for the Lok Sabha polls, promising 1 crore government jobs and ₹1 lakh per year to 'sisters' from poor families on Raksha Bandhan.

Former Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav, while releasing the RJD's election manifesto 'Parivartan Patra', said the party is making 24 'jan vachan' (public promises) for the 2024 polls, and it will fulfill these commitments.

"If the INDIA bloc comes to power at the Centre, the RJD will ensure that unemployed youth across the country get 1 crore government jobs... The process will start on Independence Day this year... It will be like 'berozgaari se azadi' (freedom from unemployment)," he said.

"Unemployment is our biggest enemy but the BJP leaders never talk about it. They had promised 2 crore jobs... But we deliver on our promises," he said. "On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan this year, we will start providing ₹1 lakh annually to our sisters belonging to poor



FORMER DEPUTY CM TEJASHWI YADAV SAID THAT THE AGNIVEER SCHEME OF CONTRACTUAL EMPLOYMENT IN ARMED FORCES WILL BE DISCONTINUED IF THE INDIA BLOC COMES TO POWER AT THE CENTRE

families," the RJD leader said. The manifesto further promised the implementation of the

Old Pension Scheme for government employees and LPG cylinders at ₹500. "For better connectivity in Bihar, we will build five new airports at Purnea, Bhagalpur, Muzaffarpur, Gopalganj and Raxaul, besides sanctioning a special package of ₹1.60 lakh crore for the overall development of the state. People of Bihar will also get 200 units of free electricity per month," he said.

Yadav said that the Agniveer scheme of contractual employment in armed forces will be discontinued if the INDIA bloc comes to power at the Centre. Lok Sabha elections for 40 seats in Bihar will be held in seven phases from April 19 to June 1.

RAMESHWARAM CAFE BLAST CASE

NIA gets 10-day custody of accused

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, April 13: A special NIA court here Saturday granted the national agency 10 days custody of two accused in the Rameshwaram Cafe blast case for further investigation.

Mussavir Hussain Shazib and Abdul Matheen Ahmed Taahaa were produced before a National Investigation Agency special court judge Saturday. The accused were brought to the state capital from Kolkata on transit remand, for their alleged role in March 1 blast at Rameshwaram Cafe here, which left 10 people injured. According to NIA, Shazib placed the IED at the cafe and Taahaa was the mastermind. Last month, the NIA announced a reward of ₹10 lakh each for those providing information leading to the arrest of these two accused.



GRIFFINS: THE FEW, THE FEARLESS

SAYAN CHATTERJEE

Amidst the vast expanse of mythology and modern warfare, a unique connection exists between legendary creatures and one of our elite military units. Griffins, the mythical beings embodying strength and guardianship, find an unexpected link with India's revered Marine Commando Force (MARCOS), a lesser-known fact that underscores their amphibious operational prowess.

Established within the Indian Navy in 1987, MARCOS is a formidable amphibious SF unit entrusted with specialised operations across diverse terrains. From coastal regions to dense jungles and intricate urban landscapes, MARCOS operatives exhibit unparalleled expertise in reconnaissance, raids, and amphibious assaults, reminiscent of the legendary griffins' agility and prowess.

efficient in underwater reconnaissance, sabotage, and precision demolition missions. Their swift and resolute responses to counter-terrorism exigencies showcase a proficiency akin to the mythical creatures they are linked with i.e the Griffins.

Beyond conventional warfare, MARCOS operatives adeptly employ guerrilla tactics and unconventional warfare strategies, supported by a diverse arsenal of specialised weaponry and equipment tailored to mission-specific requirements. From high-altitude parachute jumps into bodies of water to covert ingress and egress in hostile environments, MARCOS demonstrates versatility and effectiveness reminiscent of the mythical griffins' adaptability.

Operating within the framework of the Indian Navy, MARCOS engage in intensive training across a spectrum of skills, ensuring excellence in combat diving, airborne operations, close-quarter combat, and counter-terrorism. Selected from the Indian Navy in their early twenties, MARCOS un-



dergo stringent selection processes, reflecting the rigorous standards synonymous with the mythological griffins' legendary status.

In 1974, INS Abhimanyu, named after the legendary warrior from the Mahabharata, was established as the premier naval base for chariot operations within the Indian Navy. Its significance grew over time, leading to its official commissioning on May 1, 1980. Special operations became increasingly

paramount as the focus shifted towards unconventional warfare and low-intensity conflicts. Consequently 1987, the Indian Marine Special Force (IMSF) was formed, strategically co-located with INS Abhimanyu. Later, to imbue a sense of uniqueness, the acronym was modified to Marine Commandos Force (MCF). Eventually, the renowned name "MARCOS" emerged as the definitive moniker for this elite unit. Recognized for their excep-

tional performance in various operations, including Op-Pawan, Cyclone, Cactus, and Leech, MARCOS have played pivotal roles in key historical events such as the Kargil war and the 2006 Mumbai attacks. Their gallantry and expertise have earned them the highest number of awards in the Navy, solidifying their reputation as an indispensable asset in safeguarding India's maritime interests.

Deployed aboard Indian naval vessels and merchant ships in piracy-prone zones, MARCOS is a formidable deterrent against maritime piracy, echoing the griffins' legendary role as guardians against evil. India's proactive stance in combating piracy underscores its commitment to maritime security and global trade, with elite forces like MARCOS symbolising India's assertive presence as a responsible naval power in the Indian Ocean region. Comparable to the US Navy SEALs, MARCOS stands as a testament to excellence in military training and operations within the Indian Navy.

Patanjali Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj 'katha' enters 4th day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj 'katha' being organised by Baba Ramdev's Patanjali Yogpeeth in Haridwar entered its fourth day, Friday.

On day four, Swami Govind Dev Giri Ji Maharaj said that all the brave Maratha warriors of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj hailed from the Maval region. They were known for their valour and courage, and they were considered the epitome of bravery. He said Shivaji Maharaj did not forsake his warrior duty and bravely faced the enemies, establishing his writ and authority

On the occasion, Yoga Guru Baba Ramdev ji wished that all the mothers of India give birth to sons like Shivaji Maharaj, drawing inspiration from mother Jijabai. "Shivaji's life is an inspirational tale of overcoming obstacles and struggles to protect Sanatan Dharma," he said and added that the imperialists, capitalist and market forces, out to establish monopoly over the



world, must be resisted with nationalistic zeal.

Of late, corporate, medical, and pharmaceutical mafias, who label the knowledge of Yoga, Ayurveda, and Vedas as pseudo-science, have been making foolish and cunning remarks, denying the existence of Rama, Krishna, Shiva, and Hanuman. "They tarnish our culture and ancient values," Ramdev alleged.

He further stressed that the outdated laws that came into effect during the British rule must be replaced with new laws which would cater to the culture and needs of the nation.

international



The situation on the eastern front in recent days has grown considerably tenser. This is linked primarily to the significant activation of offensive action by the enemy after the presidential elections in Russia
OLEKSANDR SYRSKYI | ARMY CHIEF, UKRAINE

\$3.28BN: CHINA DISASTER COST
Floods, droughts, an earthquake and freezing conditions in China caused direct economic losses of 23.76 billion yuan (\$3.28 billion) in the first quarter, the government said Saturday. The disasters killed 79 people while 1,10,000 needed emergency relocation with 10.4 million people affected



of the day quote

The war, as well as the genocidal intent of Israel and the failure of the UN to stop the murder of thousands of Palestinians and to show respect for international humanitarian law, indicated to all of us that the world had reached a new low point in respect for justice and human rights
NALEDI PANDOR | FOREIGN MINISTER, SOUTH AFRICA

I think the trilateral agreement (US, Japan, Philippines) is extremely important. It is going to change the dynamic, the dynamic that we see in the region, in ASEAN in Asia, around the South China Sea
FERDINAND MARCOS JR | PRESIDENT, PHILIPPINE

Together, we've kept our promises to make some of the most significant investments in the Black American community ever
JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

ISRAEL-HAMAS CONFLICT

ISRAELI ARMY WARNS OF CONSEQUENCES AFTER IRAN SEIZES SHIP OFF UAE COAST

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Jerusalem, April 13: Iran's Revolutionary Guards Saturday seized a container ship "related to the Zionist regime (Israel) in the Gulf," state media reported, as tensions soar in the region.

Iran will suffer the "consequences" of escalating the conflict in the region, Israel's army warned Saturday, after Iran announced it had seized the ship. "Iran will bear the consequences for choosing to escalate the situation any further," military spokesman Daniel Hagari said in a statement.

"A container ship named 'MCS Aries' was seized by the Sepah (Guards) Navy Special Forces by carrying out a heliborne operation," IRNA state news agency reported.

It added that the operation took place "near the Strait of Hormuz", a waterway vital to world trade, and "this ship has now been directed towards the territorial waters" of Iran.

The Iranian report came after two maritime security agencies said "regional authorities" had seized a vessel off the coast of the United Arab Emirates.

"Vessel reported to have been seized by regional authorities"

War taking drastic turns



off the coast of Fujairah, the Royal Navy's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations agency said, without providing further details. Security firm Ambrey said it "observed still footage of at least three individuals fast-roping from a helicopter onto what appeared to be a container ship".

Iran's Revolutionary Guards "have previously used this method of boarding while seizing vessels in the Strait of Hormuz", Ambrey added.

Vessel tracking websites, vesselfinder.com and marinetraffic.com, say MSC Aries is a

Portuguese-flagged container ship. Both sites give its last reported position as in the Gulf. The April 1 strike killed at least seven members of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, including two generals. The surging tensions come against the backdrop of the six-month war waged by Israel against Iran-backed Hamas Palestinian militants in Gaza.

The conflict has since drawn in regional actors including Iran-backed groups in Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq.

The US, Israel's main backer, has stood by the country despite

growing concerns over Israel's war on Gaza killing more than 33,600 Palestinians and wounding over 76,200 more. Israel's war began after Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel that killed 1,200 people and saw some 250 others taken hostage.

The Gulf of Oman is near the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of all globally traded oil passes. Fujairah, on the United Arab Emirates' eastern coast, is a main port in the region for ships to take on new oil cargo, pick up supplies or trade out crew.

Since 2019, the waters off Fujairah have seen a series of explosions and hijackings. The US Navy blamed Iran for limpet mine attacks on vessels that damaged tankers. The UAE meanwhile has sought to mend

Oz airline redirects flight to avoid Iran

Sydney: Australian airline Qantas said Saturday it would redirect its long-haul flights between Perth and London to avoid Iran's airspace amid soaring Middle East tensions. A Qantas spokesperson told AFP the airline would temporarily adjust the flight paths due to "the situation in parts of the Middle East". "We'll reach out to customers directly if there's any change to their booking," the spokesperson said.

Germany urges its citizens to leave Iran

Berlin: Germany warned its citizens to leave Iran, saying that there was a risk both of a sudden escalation in Tehran's existing tensions with Israel and that Germans might be at risk of arbitrary arrest in the country. "In the current tensions, especially between Israel and Iran, there is a risk of a sudden escalation," the Foreign Office wrote in a fresh travel warning issued Friday. "It cannot be excluded that air, land and sea transport routes could be affected," it added. "German citizens are at concrete risk of being arbitrarily arrested and interrogated and being given long prison sentences. Dual citizens with Iranian and German nationality are especially at risk," the Foreign Office said.

ties with Iran and issued a statement condemning the suspected Israeli attack in Syria.

FBI to award \$250K for info on Indian wanted for killing wife in 2015

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, April 13: The FBI is now offering a reward of up to \$250,000 for information leading to the arrest of a 33-year-old extremely dangerous Indian national who is wanted in the US for allegedly killing his wife in 2015.

Bhadreshkumar Chetanbhai Patel, who was last known to be in the Newark area of New Jersey, is wanted for allegedly killing his wife Palak Patel by striking her multiple times with an object when they worked at a doughnut shop in Hanover, Maryland.

Patel is on the FBI's list of 'Ten Most Wanted Fugitives' and the federal agency announced a reward of up to \$250,000 for information leading to his arrest. Initially, the FBI had offered a \$100,000 reward for information about Patel.

Patel has been charged with first-degree murder, second-degree murder, first-degree assault, second-degree assault, and dangerous weapons with intent to injure, the FBI said in a statement.

A federal arrest warrant was issued in the Maryland district court April 20, 2015, after Patel was charged with unlawful flight to avoid prosecution.

Investigators believe Patel killed his wife, who was 21 at the time, in a back room of the shop just before midnight April 12, 2015. Patel allegedly stabbed his wife multiple times and fled by a rear door.

SHORT TAKES

15 yrs for treason

Miami: A former career US diplomat was sentenced Friday to 15 years in federal prison after admitting he worked for decades as a secret agent for communist Cuba, a plea agreement that leaves many unanswered questions about a betrayal that stunned the US Foreign Service. Manuel Rocha, 73, will also pay a \$500,000 fine and cooperate with authorities after pleading guilty to conspiring to act as an agent of a foreign government. In exchange, prosecutors dismissed more than a dozen other counts, including wire fraud and making false statements.

Militants kill 11

Karachi: At least 11 people, including nine bus passengers, have been killed by unknown militants in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province Friday. In the first incident, armed men stopped a bus on the highway in Noshki district and kidnapped nine men at gunpoint, police said. "The bodies of these nine men were later found with bullet wounds in the nearby mountainous areas near a bridge," one official said.

Trump to testify

Washington: Former US president Donald Trump said Friday that he plans to take the stand in his criminal trial for illegal payment of hush money that starts in New York on Monday. Asked by reporters at his luxury Florida home whether it would be legally risky to testify, Trump responded: "I'm testifying. I tell the truth. I mean, all I can do is tell the truth and the truth is there's no case." Trump will make history as the first former president to stand trial on criminal charges when his hush money case opens Monday with jury selection.

Border arrests fall

Washington: Arrests for crossing the US Border illegally fell slightly in March, authorities said Friday, bucking a usual spring increase amid increased immigration enforcement in Mexico. The Border Patrol made 137,480 arrests of people entering from Mexico, down 2.3% from 140,638 arrests in February, the first time since 2017 that arrests fell in March from the previous month. Crossings typically rise as temperatures turn warmer. Mexico detained migrants 240,000 times in the first two months of the year, more than triple from the same period of 2023, sending many deeper south into the country to discourage them from coming to the US.

SNIPPETS

Mexico warns of 'Zombie Drug'

Mexico City: In cities across the United States and Britain, the animal tranquilizer Xylazine has already been identified as a concerning threat. Now, Mexican public health officials are raising concerns after a study found xylazine present in opioids in cities along the country's northwest border with the United States. Nicknamed "tranq dope" and "zombie drug," Xylazine has worsened the opioid crisis in US cities like Philadelphia. It can make overdoses harder to treat and increase the risk of death. Mexico's health ministry issued an alert for medical personnel and first responders in border cities. Xylazine is not approved for human use in either Mexico or the United States. According to news agency Reuters, a study by Mexico's National Institute of Psychiatry found xylazine in 35% of heroin samples and 26% of fentanyl samples tested in Tijuana and Mexico. The ongoing study was not specifically looking for xylazine, highlighting its surprising prevalence. The findings come amid concerns about fentanyl use rising within Mexico. Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid responsible for tens of thousands of overdose deaths in the US each year.



One killed, 10 hurt in cable car mishap



Istanbul: One person was killed and 10 others were injured Friday in the southern Turkish province of Antalya after a cable car cabin collided with a broken pole, the interior ministry said Saturday. Twenty-four cabins were stranded in the air at 5:23 pm Friday. Sixteen hours later, more than 60 people were still stranded in the remaining nine cabins in the air, the ministry said. One hundred and twelve people had been rescued. In a statement on social media platform X, the interior ministry said seven helicopters and more than 500 rescue workers were carrying out rescue efforts. A video released by the interior ministry showed rescue personnel tied to safety ropes climbing into cabins.

Pak Oppn alliance to launch nationwide drive against govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, April 13: Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's party under the umbrella of a "grand opposition alliance" Saturday announced a countrywide movement against the alleged rigging in the February 8 election and the government established by tampering of the mandate.

The launch of the movement indicates that the dream of post-election peace and political stability will be wilting sooner than expected.

The six-party alliance that includes Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, in a late-night meeting that continued till the early hours of Saturday decided to come together under the banner of Tehreek Tahafuz Ayeen-i-Pakistan (TTAP), a movement to protect the Constitution of Pakistan.

PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan told the media after the meeting that the movement aimed to restore the rule of law in the country and it would be launched with a public rally from the Pishin area of Balochistan from Saturday.

"All political parties have joined the opposition alliance of their own will in view of the deteriorating situation in all fields," he said.

TO THE STARS Gopi Thotakura to become first Indian space tourist

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, April 13: Gopi Thotakura, an entrepreneur and a pilot, is set to become the first Indian to venture into space as a tourist on Amazon founder Jeff Bezos's Blue Origin's NS-25 mission.

Thotakura was selected as one of the six crew members for the mission, making him the first Indian space tourist and the second Indian to venture into space after the Indian Army's Wing Commander Rakesh Sharma in 1984.

The flight date is yet to be announced, the aerospace company said.

This mission will be the seventh human flight for the New Shepard programme and the 25th in its history. To date, the programme has flown 31 humans above the Karman line, the proposed conventional boundary between Earth's atmosphere and outer space.

New Shepard is a fully reusable sub-orbital launch vehicle developed for space tourism by Blue Origin.

According to Blue Origin, "Gopi is a pilot and aviator who learned how to fly before he



could drive."

He is the co-founder of Preserve Life Corp, a global centre for holistic wellness and applied health located near Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

In addition to flying jets commercially, he pilots bush, aerobatic, and seaplanes, as well as gliders and hot air balloons, and has served as an international medical jet pilot.

A lifelong traveller, his most recent adventure took him to the summit of Mt Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

Andhra Pradesh-born Thotakura is a graduate of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Other crew members of the flight include Mason Angel, Sylvain Chiron, Kenneth L. Hess, Carol Schaller, and former Air Force Captain Ed Dwight, who was selected by President John F Kennedy in 1961 as the nation's first Black astronaut candidate but was never granted the opportunity to fly to space.

During the flight, each astronaut will carry a postcard to space on behalf of Blue Origin's foundation, Club for the Future.

This programme gives students access to space on Blue Origin's rockets, including an all-digital method to create and send postcards. The Club's mission is to inspire and mobilise future generations to pursue careers in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) for the benefit of Earth.

From an environmental standpoint, nearly 99 per cent of New Shepard's dry mass is reused, including the booster, capsule, engine, landing gear, and parachutes. New Shepard's engine is fuelled by highly efficient liquid oxygen and hydrogen. During the flight, the only byproduct is water vapour with no carbon emissions, the company said.

'China helping Russia in biggest defence buildup since Soviet'

NEARLY 70% OF RUSSIA'S APPROXIMATELY \$900MN IN MACHINE TOOL IMPORTS IN THE LAST QUARTER OF 2023 CAME FROM CHINA, CLAIMS US

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, April 13: China is helping Russia undertake its biggest military expansion since Soviet times, US officials said Friday, stepping up public pressure as concerns rise over Ukraine.

US officials are hoping the release of the intelligence will encourage European allies to press China, as Chancellor Olaf Scholz heads to Beijing this weekend and Group of Seven foreign ministers meet next week in Italy.

Unveiling US findings, officials said China was helping Russia on a range of areas including the joint production of drones, space-based capabilities and machine-tool exports vital for producing ballistic missiles.

China has been the key factor in revitalizing Russia's defense industrial base "which had otherwise suffered significant setbacks" since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a senior US official told reporters on condition of anonymity.

"Russia is undertaking its most ambitious defense expansion since the Soviet era and on a faster timeline than we believed possible early on in this conflict," the official said.

"Our view is that one of the most game-changing moves available to us at this time to support Ukraine is to persuade the PRC to stop helping Russia reconstitute its military industrial base," the official said, referring to the People's Republic of China. "Russia would struggle to sustain its war effort without PRC inputs," he said.

US officials said that China provided more than 70 percent of the \$900 million in machine tools - likely used to build ballistic missiles - imported in the last quarter of 2023 by Russia. US officials also said that 90 percent of Russia's microelectronics imports - used to produce missiles, tanks and aircraft - came from China last year.



CHINA WALKS FINE LINE
The United States has repeatedly warned China against supporting Russia and both Chinese and US officials say

Beijing has stopped short of directly providing weapons to Russia, which has turned to heavily sanctioned North Korea and Iran to replenish arms supply.

US officials believe that China, anxious after its Russian allies' early setbacks on the battlefield, has instead focused on sending material that ostensibly has non-military uses.

President Joe Biden's administration is hoping that European powers can make the difference in persuading China, which is facing economic headwinds and is sensitive about trade pressure.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken is expected to make the case on China's ties with Russia as he meets top diplomats of other industrial democracies at the G7 talks in Capri, Italy.

Blinken is also planning a visit in the coming weeks to

China, on the heels of a trip by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen.

The administration hopes that such dialogue, including a recent telephone call between Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping, can help contain tensions between the world's two largest economies but US officials have stressed they will still press on concerns.

Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell said this week that Europe's stability was the top interest historically of the United States and that it would hold China accountable if Russia makes gains.

Ukraine has suffered its first battlefield setbacks in months as its forces ration ammunition, with the United States failing to authorize new support due to a deadlock in the Republican-led House of Representatives.

of the day quote

Government-run oil companies can utilise our terminal's capacity to improve LPG supplies in the hinterland, optimising logistics and strengthening India's LPG landscape

SUSHEEL RAINA | CEO, PETREGAZ INDIA

For all of you still sitting on the fence but wanting/wishing to start something of your own -- here is a question to answer (for yourself mainly). Would you rather have your first failure or just never ever tried at all

RONNIE SCREWVALA | CO-FOUNDER, UPGRAD

Growth remains a priority, with a focus on innovation and leveraging core business strengths

HARSH GOENKA | CHAIRMAN, RPE ENTERPRISES

SHORT TAKES

FY25 coal target

New Delhi: The government has set the target of producing 170 million tonne of coal from captive and commercial coal blocks in the country during the current financial year. In FY24, captive and commercial coal blocks produced 147.12 million tonne (MT) of dry fuel, 26 per cent higher from 116 MT produced in FY23. According to an official, additional secretary, coal, M Nagaraju this week reviewed the coal production targets for FY25. Representatives of 74 coal mines were present in the review meeting.

HCC plans fundraiser

New Delhi: Hindustan Construction Company (HCC) Saturday said its panel has approved raising ₹350 crore through a rights issue. The rights issue committee approved the allotment of 166,666,666 equity shares at a price of ₹21 each, the civil construction firm said in a filing to the BSE. Accordingly, pursuant to the allotment, the paid-up equity share capital of the company has increased to 167,96,94,910 from 151,30,28,244 equity shares, it said. Hindustan Construction Company (HCC) is into engineering and construction space and serves the infrastructure sectors of transportation, power, and water.



Our new prohibitions on key metals, in coordination with our partners in the United Kingdom, will continue to target the revenue Russia can earn to continue its brutal war against Ukraine

JANET YELLEN | TREASURY SECRETARY, US

PAK INFLATION HIGHEST IN ASIA

Pakistan has the highest living cost in all of Asia with a 25 per cent inflation rate and its economy may grow at the fourth lowest pace of 1.9 per cent in the region, according to a new Asian Development Bank (ADB) report



POWER DEMAND

Firms told to fire-up plants

Govt asks companies to fire-up power plants to meet rising electricity demand



New Delhi, April 13: India has asked companies to operate underutilised gas-based power plants in May and June, and extend operations of imported coal-based plants until October 15 to meet anticipated high demand for electricity, according to two government orders.

The South Asian nation registered an 8% rise in electricity consumption in the financial year that ended last month, and demand is expected to rise in the hot summer months (April to June 2024).

In an order dated Friday, the government for the first time invoked an emergency clause mandating companies to operate underutilised gas-based power plants by importing the fuel.

India has about 24 gigawatts of gas-based power plants that have been idling or underused for decades due to lack of fuel. Power stations will be informed two

weeks in advance about the requirements so they can import gas, the order says.

"Gas-based power plants are required to meet the anticipated surge in power consumption in summer months," the order says.

Torrent and NTPC are among the big gas-based power station companies.

In another order, Saturday, the government invoked an emergency clause directing companies such as Tata Power and Adani Power - which are operating imported coal-fired plants with a capacity of nearly 16 gigawatts - to

India has about 24 gigawatts of gas-based power plants that have been idling or underused for decades due to lack of fuel

continue operations. The plants were initially allowed to operate until June 30. India's electricity demand has been rising rapidly, driven by economic growth, particularly during hot-weather and high-

- THE MINISTRY HAS PROJECTED 260 GW PEAK POWER DEMAND THIS SUMMER
- PEAK POWER DEMAND TOUCHED ALL-TIME HIGH OF 243 GW IN SEPT LAST YEAR

demand periods.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted above-normal maximum temperatures over most parts of the country during the 2024 summer.

A high-level committee headed by Chairperson, the Central Electricity Authority has been constituted to facilitate the implementation of this direction.

The decision to operationalise gas-based generating stations is part of a series of measures taken by the government, to ensure that the electricity demand in the summer season is met.

Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy RK Singh held a series of meetings on this, emphasising the need for ensuring adequate availability of power to meet the load during the hot-weather season, according to an official statement.

Centre warns against forward trade in pulses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: As part of its stepped-up vigil to bring down prices of pulses, the Government has warned traders that anyone found indulging in forward trade of pulses would be dealt with firmly in accordance with the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act.

The message has been clearly conveyed to all traders during a series of interactions held by Secretary, Department of Consumer Affairs, Nidhi Khare with representatives of the pulses industry in the run-up to the operationalisation of online stock monitoring from April 15, 2024, according to an official statement issued Saturday.

At the same time, the Government is also arranging for more imports of pulses from Myanmar to bring down prices in the domestic market through increased availability.

The government has been taking various steps to control food inflation which is reflected in the CPI inflation coming down to a 9-month low of 4.85 per cent in March. However, while the rise



in the prices of pulses has slowed, it is still in double-digit figures at 17.7 per cent.

Department of Consumer Affairs has obtained feedback from the industry and inputs from market intelligence relating to pulses and the stock position with various market players have been collated for further verification.

Nidhi Khare also discussed with the Indian Mission in Yangon on issues relating to pulses imports from Myanmar such as import prices in the wake of revised exchange rates and stocks held by importers in Myanmar. The Indian Mission apprised that the Rupee Kyat Settlement Mechanism has been operationalised from January 25, 2024, to simplify trade transactions and to make them more efficient.

India's GDP to grow 6.1% in 2024: Moody's

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: Moody's Analytics Friday projected India's economy to expand 6.1 per cent in 2024, lower than 7.7 per cent growth clocked in 2023.

It said output in India remains 4 per cent lower than it would have been without the COVID pandemic and its various aftershocks - from supply snags to military conflicts abroad.

"Economies in South and Southeast Asia will see some of the strongest output gains this year, but their performance is flattered by a delayed post-pandemic rebound. We expect India's GDP to grow 6.1 per cent in 2024 after 7.7 per cent last year," Moody's Analytics said. In its report titled 'APAC Outlook: Listening Through the Noise', Moody's Analytics said the region overall is doing better than other parts of the world. The APAC (Asia Pacific) economy will grow 3.8 per cent this year, which compares with a growth of 2.5 per cent for the world economy, it said.

Moody's Analytics said looking at GDP relative to its trajectory prior to the pandemic shows that India and Southeast Asia have seen some of the largest output losses worldwide and are only beginning to recover.

With regard to inflation, it said the outlook for China and



India is more uncertain.

"Inflation in India is at the opposite extreme, with recent consumer price inflation rates hovering around 5 per cent, close to the upper end of the Reserve Bank of India's target range of 2 to 6 per cent and without clear evidence of a trend towards slowing price pressures," said the report authored by Stefan Angrick, Senior Economist, and Jeemin Bang, Associate Economist at Moody's Analytics.

Earlier this month, the Reserve Bank said food price uncertainties continue to weigh on the inflation trajectory going forward, and retained 4.5 per cent retail inflation projection for the current fiscal 2024-25.

Continuing geopolitical tensions also pose upside risk to commodity prices and supply chains, RBI said. RBI forecast June quarter inflation at 4.9 per cent and September quarter at 3.8 per cent.

For December and March quarters, inflation is projected at 4.6 per cent and 4.7 per cent, respectively.

FPIs turn to derivative proxies to gain exposure to Indian debt

FOREIGN INVESTORS HAVE FLOCKED TO INDIAN GOVERNMENT BONDS AHEAD OF THEIR INCLUSION IN THE JPMORGAN EMERGING MARKET DEBT INDEX FROM JUNE

REUTERS

Mumbai, April 13: Overseas investors seeking exposure to India's debt ahead of its inclusion in global benchmark indexes are using proxy instruments such as offshore swaps as they aim to overcome the country's onerous investment regulations.

Foreign investors have flocked to Indian government bonds ahead of their inclusion in the JPMorgan emerging market debt index from June, seeking to front-run the \$20-25 billion from index-tracking funds that is expected to subsequently flow into the market.

Foreign inflows have surged since JPMorgan announced the inclusion in September 2023. Of the \$9.3 billion worth of



net inflows into Indian bonds, a large proportion is expected to have come via offshore derivatives, said Parul Mittal Sinha, India head of financial markets at Standard Chartered Bank.

India is an "important country so it needs to be in a government bond index like this," said Carl Vermassen, a portfolio manager in the emerging markets debt team at Vontobel Asset Management, a Zurich-based firm with \$5.2 billion in assets invested in its emerging markets debt funds.

"On the other hand, they are not making it easy," he said.

To invest directly in Indian debt, foreign investors need to be registered with local regulators and are required to pay a 20%

withholding tax on interest earnings, and a capital gains tax.

To avoid this, foreign investors are using offshore derivatives such as total return swaps (TRS) and offshore interest rate swaps (OIS) as also rupee-denominated bonds issued by supranationals such as the World Bank, six bankers said.

Total return swaps (TRS), in which an offshore investor can exchange some form of fixed payments with an onshore bank and receive the equivalent of bond yields, have emerged as the most popular derivative, particularly those with short tenors of three months to one year, the bankers said. The underlying bond is bought and held by the bank and not the investor.

The non-deliverable version of rupee interest rate swaps is another popular option for investors.

Besides directly purchasing rupee bonds, foreign investors can use interest rate swaps and cross currency swaps to bet on rupee rates, said Rick Cheung, portfolio manager for emerging market debt at BNP Paribas Asset Management.

Other than the JPMorgan debt index, Bloomberg Index Services will include Indian government bonds in its emerging market local currency index from January 2025.

Indri: World's fastest growing single malt whisky

ORIGINATING IN A SMALL SUGAR MILL IN INDRI, HARYANA, THE SINGLE MALT HAS GROWN OVER 500% SINCE LAUNCH AND ASPIRES TO HAVE OVER 30% OF MARKET SHARE IN INDIA

AGENCIES

Mumbai, April 13: Indri, the Indian single malt whisky, has crossed the milestone of 100,000 cases in sales within just two years of its launch to become the fastest-growing such liquor in the world, according to reports.

In 2023, some 675,000 cases (each containing nine litres) of single malts were sold in India. Domestic production contributed approximately 345,000 cases, while Scottish and other producers collectively accounted for sales of around 330,000 cases.

According to credit rating agency ICRA, the Indian alcoholic beverages industry is set for improved profit margins and heightened sales in the fiscal year 2025.

ICRA has predicted a revenue expansion of 8-10 per cent for certain domestic alcohol beverage (alcobev) firms in FY25. Indian made foreign liquor enterprises are eyeing a revenue surge of 11-13 per cent, driven by an escalating demand



for premium offerings and an anticipated volume uptick of around 3-5 per cent.

Despite optimistic forecasts for the industry's future, the alcohol business in India faces challenges from diverse state tax rates and weather-related obstacles.

India's climate poses a distinct challenge for domestic single malt in contrast to

Scottish single malt. Furthermore, the India-UK Free Trade Agreement is expected to reshape the landscape of the alcohol sector in the country.

In addition to reaching a significant milestone, Indri has received numerous recognitions on a global scale. Last year, the Indri Diwali Collector's Edition 2023 was honoured with

In a market once dominated by imported labels, Indri stands tall as a beacon of Indian excellence. It's not just a brand; it's a symbol of national pride, elevating the status of Indian spirits to unparalleled heights

PRAVEEN MALVIYA | CEO, PICCADILY DISTILLERIES

the "Double Gold Best In Show" award at one of the world's largest whisky-tasting competitions. This competition sees participation from over 100 varieties of whiskies worldwide annually.

Indri's single malt Trini has previously claimed victory at events such as the Tokyo Whiskey and Spirits Competition 2023, the Fifty Best World Whiskies 2022 Award, and the International Whisky Competition in Las Vegas. Additionally, it earned a spot on Whisky Advocate's prestigious Top 20 Whiskies of the World list, according to reports.

Foreign funds shy away from realty



FOREIGN INVESTORS PUMP IN ONLY \$11MN IN JAN-MAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: Institutional investments in real estate declined 55 per cent annually in January-March this year to \$552 million as cautious foreign investors stayed away, pumping in only \$11 mn, according to Vestian.

The real estate sector had attracted \$1,238.3 million (\$1.23 billion) in the January-March period of 2023 calendar year, as per the report, which was released Saturday.

The latest data by global property consultant Vestian showed that the institutional inflow from foreign funds in the country's

real estate plunged 99 per cent to just \$11 million in the first quarter of 2024 from \$791.4 million in the year-ago period.

Commercial assets (office, retail, co-working, and hospitality projects) garnered the highest investments of \$231.6 million in the March quarter, as against \$484.8 million in the year-ago period.

Institutional investments in residential assets fell 33 per cent to \$225 million from \$337.7 million. Investments significantly decreased 73 per cent in the industrial and warehousing sector to \$58.9 million in the January-

Domestic investors infuse \$541.1mn in the Indian real estate in Jan-Mar 2024, up 21% from 446.9mn YoY

Domestic investors are bullish about India's growth story, and continue to pour in investments in the real estate sector. On the other hand, foreign investors are cautious due to global macroeconomic uncertainty and geopolitical tensions

SHRINIVAS RAO | CEO, VESTIAN

March period from \$215.8 million a year ago.

Bangalore dominated the institutional investments during the quarter with \$299 million, followed by Delhi-NCR at \$110 million. Both cities together accounted for around 74 per cent of the total investments received in the current quarter.

Edelweiss Capital turned out to be the most active investor during the quarter with over \$300 million worth of investments across the asset classes and geographies, Vestian said.

"The Indian real estate sector is expected to garner increased investments in the coming months on the back of a strengthened economic scenario and robust demand," Vestian CEO Shrinivas Rao said on the investments outlook.

ROYALS REIGN OVER KINGS

Dhoni in spotlight as Wankhede hosts CSK

Rivalry resumes in new era as Indian great likely to appear for one last dance at the iconic venue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 13: The legendary MS Dhoni will be in the spotlight in what could be his final game at the iconic Wankhede Stadium when defending champions Chennai Super Kings take on Mumbai Indians in the IPL here Sunday.

Dhoni returns to the hallowed turf of Wankhede for the first time ever as a non-captain of the CSK, potentially in his last IPL season. It will also be his first appearance as just a player for any team since November 2005.

Even at 42, Dhoni's glove-work remains impeccable and so does his assessment of the game like always. But CSK will hope that his tactical acumen also helps them improve a dismal away record this season, having suffered two defeats on the road.

CSK would also hope their recent record against MI — four wins in last five matches including their seven-wicket win here last season — holds them in good stead.

Two of IPL's most successful teams with five titles each, both sides are witnessing a tectonic shift of leadership change with Hardik Pandya taking over the mantle from Rohit Sharma at MI and Ruturaj Gaikwad succeeding Dhoni at CSK, but there is nothing that suggests their intense rivalry would expect any such shift.

If anything, CSK's bowlers could be put to sword by the rampaging MI batters who have gone hammer and tongs at the flat pitches here, scoring in excess of 230 against Delhi Capitals and chasing down nearly 200 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru with more than four overs to spare.

Pandya's MI have found their footing after a jittery start. Their batters have done well in the

last two outings and Suryakumar Yadav's 17-ball fifty against RCB provides an ominous sign to CSK bowlers, who have shown mastery on slow, turning pitches at the Chepauk but remain untested on flat, batting-friendly surfaces.

Ishan Kishan (161 runs) and Rohit's opening stand would thus be crucial in the scheme of things but CSK would also have a lot of assurance with their own batting.

Skipper Gaikwad may not be a marauder with the bat but he can be the silent enforcer in the CSK line-up, which has the exuberance of Rachin Ravindra at the top, sturdiness of Daryl Mitchell in the middle and explosiveness of Shivam Dube (176 runs), Ravindra Jadeja and Dhoni in the death overs.

CSK would also be aware that seeing off the dexterous Jasprit Bumrah (10 wickets) and going after the rest of the MI bowling would be the key, since the others have given away runs at alarming rate while struggling with their line and lengths on placid surfaces.

Despite Bumrah's five-wicket haul, MI leaked runs at a high rate to allow RCB get closer to the 200-run mark here a few nights ago.

A lot will be riding on Shardul Thakur and Tushar Deshpande for CSK, who both return to their home ground, but Mustafizur Rahman (9 wickets) and the wily Jadeja would be the ones to watch out for given their recent exploits.

MATCHDAY

Indian Premier League

KKR vs LSG

Time: 03:30 pm

MI vs CSK

Time: 07:30 pm

Telecast: Star Sports Network

Stream: Jio Cinema



SHIMRON HETMYER

from Rabada, and the ball pinged his backfoot and even the DRS could not save him.

Earlier, Rajasthan bowlers under Avesh (2/34) and Maharaj

(2/23) exploited a sticky pitch to the hilt to restrict Kings to an underwhelming total.

Ashutosh Sharma (31), Jitesh Sharma (29) and Livingstone

(21) tried to force the pace but Punjab needed more than those pretty little cameos.

But the Kings had a rather quick start to their innings with

26 runs coming in the first three overs as Atharva Taide, who came in for injured skipper Shikhar Dhawan, hammered a couple of fours off pacer Kuldeep Sen. But the brakes were soon applied as Taide's mistimed pull off Avesh ended in the hands of Sen inside the circle.

Thereafter the Punjab batters struggled to muster any sort of momentum on a pitch that gripped a bit, especially for left-arm spinner Maharaj and leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal. However, a slice of credit should also go to veteran pacer Trent Boult who conceded just 15 runs in his three power play overs.

The last three power play overs fetched only 10 runs for Kings as they ended that passage on a modest 38/1. In the next five overs, the hosts struggled to hit even one boundary as they laboured to 53/4 in 10 overs, losing Jonny Bairstow, stand-in skipper Sam Curran and Prabhshimran Singh, all consumed by the combination of a slow deck and accurate spinners.

Their biggest hope could have been the range-hitting ability of in-form Shashank Singh but a feeble pull off Sen could not progress beyond Jurel at mid-wicket. With the cream of top-order failing to contribute anything significant, PBKS required some hefty hand from Livingstone and Jitesh to get to even a par score.

Sharma showed some intent too before getting out to Avesh. Livingstone, who creamed Sen for a six and four off successive balls through mid-wicket, and Ashutosh, who smoked Avesh for two sixes in the 19th over, helped PBKS add 61 runs in the last five overs, but their effort came a wee bit late.

BRIEF SCORES: PBKS 147/8 (Ashutosh Sharma 31, Jitesh Sharma 29; Keshav Maharaj 2/23, Avesh Khan 2/34) lost to RR 152/7 (Yashvi Jaiswal 39, Shimron Hetmyer 27 n o, Tanush Kotian 24; Kagiso Rabada 2/18, Sam Curran 2/25) by 3 wickets.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mullanpur (Chandigarh), April 13: Rajasthan Royals struggled against Punjab Kings bowlers who took the pace off the ball cleverly on a sticky pitch but found enough steam to eke out a hardworking three-wicket win in their IPL match here Saturday.

The target was a rather easy-looking 148 but a set of spot-on Punjab bowlers and a tacky surface made the task of Royals tough before they made 152/7.

The Rajasthan outfit required 49 runs off the last five overs, but they had to wait till the penultimate ball of the match to get over the line despite having power-hitters like Rowman Powell (11, 5b) and Shimron Hetmyer (27 n o, 10b, 1x4, 3x6) in their ranks.

That equation came down to 10 off the final six balls after Hetmyer moussed Harshal Patel for a six and four, which the West Indian left-hander realised through a couple of sixes off pacer Arshdeep Singh in the last over.

The Royals began their chase sedately through Yashvi Jaiswal and Tanush Kotian without any real scoreboard pressure behind them. However, Kotian, who was batting so up in the order in T20s for the first time, did not find his flow but still assisted Jaiswal to add 56 in 8.2 overs. But his effort to hammer Liam Livingstone out of the ground ended up in him losing his leg-stump.

Jaiswal, who played a delectable flick off Kagiso Rabada, looked on course to end a string of low scores in this IPL. But a rather needless uppercut off Rabada was grabbed by Harshal Patel near third man as Rajasthan looked a tad wobbly.

Their woes deepened when skipper Sanju Samson, who had earlier broken the manacles with a six and four off Livingstone, was trapped leg-before by Rabada in his last over. Samson could not connect with a slightly low, incoming delivery

Indians still in hunt at Candidates Chess



D GUKESH

R PRAGGNANANDHA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Toronto, April 13: Indian Grandmasters R Praggnanandhaa and D Gukesh would look to bridge the gap with leader Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia when they restart their campaigns in the eighth round of the Candidates chess tournament here.

Teen sensation Praggnanandhaa will be up against Frenchman Firouzja Alireza, while Gukesh will take on compatriot Vidit Gujrathi when the tournament resumes.

While all three Indians have had a decent outing in the open section so far, it is defending champion Nepomniachtchi who is in prime position to complete a hat-trick of titles at the halfway stage.

With 4.5 points to his credit, Nepomniachtchi would be happy with his performance and stands as the favourite with half point more than nearest rivals Praggnanandhaa, Gukesh and top seed Fabiano Caruana of United States.

Gujrathi on 3.5 points is known to rise towards the end of tournaments and one can expect him to come firing in the second half along with Hikaru Nakamura, who shares the fifth spot with him. Alireza comes next in standings on the seventh spot with 2.5 points, a half point clear of Nijat Abasov of Azerbaijan.

and more misses for the Indian trio. Earlier in the event, Gujrathi had clearly outplayed Caruana and in the previous round to his position looked commanding against Abasov before settling for draws.

Gukesh also enjoyed a great position against Alireza in the previous round and the Frenchman was under tremendous pressure with the clock ticking away too. However, luck did not seem to be on Gukesh's side and it took some serious mistakes on his part to hand the point to Alireza.

Praggnanandhaa has been very solid and has shown tremendous preparation here. His black-piece draw with Caruana in a French defense was a case in point showing his tremendous confidence and his victory over Gujrathi earlier had already shown the risk-taking ability.

Against Alireza, the previous outing was a draw and Praggnanandhaa will try to use his white pieces well in the return game. Gukesh will have black pieces against Gujrathi in a game that is likely to draw many eyeballs in the live telecast.

For the record, Nepomniachtchi and Caruana are the only two unbeaten players at the half-way stage. In the last two attempts that he won, Nepomniachtchi had been leading the event after fifty per cent game which is no different from this time.

India fail to avoid whitewash against Oz

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Perth, April 13: The Indian men's hockey team failed to avoid a 0-5 series whitewash after going down 2-3 in the fifth Test against Australia, completing a nightmare of a tour here Saturday.

The Indians entered the final game of the series after losing their previous four matches 1-5, 2-4, 1-2 and 1-3. The rubber was significant as far as preparation is concerned ahead of the upcoming Paris Olympics.

Skipper Harmanpreet Singh (fourth minute) and Bobby Singh Dhami (53rd) were the goal scorers for India, while Australia sounded the board through Jeremy Hayward (20th), Ky Willott (38th) and Tim Brand (39th).

The Indians started the game with an attacking mindset. Jugraj Singh lobbed the ball up to Jarmanpreet Singh in the Aussie half but failed to connect with the forward line.

India took the lead in the fourth minute through Harmanpreet from a penalty corner as he registered his third goal of the series. Australia restored parity in the 20th minute through Hayward, who scored his



Indian team captain Harmanpreet Singh points skyward in celebration after scoring against Australia, Saturday

seventh goal of the series from a set piece.

India's reserve custodian Suraj Karkera made a fine save to deny Nathan Ephraums. Seconds from

the half time, Australia secured a penalty corner but Suraj Karkera kept India in the hunt by making an excellent save with his right leg to deny Hayward.

Panghal returns to Indian squad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 13: World Championships silver medallist Amit Panghal has returned to the Indian squad, which saw wholesale changes for the final Olympic qualifying event, set to be held in Bangkok from May 25 to June 2.

After Indian boxers' horrid run at the Olympic qualifiers in Italy last month, when not even one boxer could secure a quota, as many as five pugilists have lost their spot in the team for the second World Qualification Tournament.

None of the Indian male boxers has won a quota till now. The dismal show also led India's High Performance Director Bernard Dunne to step down from his post.

In the latest assessment, 2023 World Championships bronze medallist duo of Deepak Bhoria (51kg) and Mohammad Hussamudin (57kg), the six-time Asian Championships medallist



Shiva Thapa (63.5kg), reigning national champion Lakshya Chahar (80kg) and 2022 Commonwealth games bronze medallist Jaisimine Lamboria (60kg) have lost their spot in the Indian team.

Panghal, who won gold at the 2022 Commonwealth Games and the 2024 Strandja Memorial tournament, will get his first and final chance to seal his passage to his second Olympic Games, having competed in the Tokyo edition.

Another Strandja gold medallist and national champion Sachin Siwach (57kg) has also returned to the squad, replacing

Hussamudin. Himachal Pradesh's Abhinash Jamwal, who has dropped down from 67kg, scored more than the seasoned Shiva to earn a chance to compete in the 63.5kg category, while Abhimanyu Loura replaced Lakshya in 80kg.

Worlds bronze medallist Nishan Dev (71Kg), the lone boxer to go beyond his opening round in Italy, Sanjeet (92kg), and Hangzhou Asian Games bronze medallist Narender Beral (+92kg) have retained their spots.

In the women's category, Ankushita Boro has dropped to the 60kg category from 66kg. She replaces Jaisimine. Arundhati Choudhary emerged as the top performer in the 66kg weight class.

India started brightly after the change of ends and secured a penalty in the 37th minute but Harmanpreet's flick missed the target.

The Kookaburras stunned the visitors once again by taking the lead a minute later through Willot, who deflected the ball in front of the Indian goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak from Nathan Ephraums's inch-perfect pass. Australia added salt to India's wounds by extending the lead through an unmarked Brand who shot home from Eddie Ockenden's assist.

The Indians had chances and secured another penalty corner in the 42nd minute but Amit Rohidas shot wide. The hosts too got two more penalty corners but the Indians defended well. India meant business and looked to put pressure on the Australian defence in the final quarter.

Their efforts bore fruit when Dhami scored his first international goal with a reverse hit past Andrew Charter seven minutes from the hooter. But that was all India could manage as the Australian defence didn't commit any more mistakes, even though the visitors pressed hard.

Radhika settles for silver, Shivane secures bronze

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), April 13: Radhika settled for a silver, her second at the senior Asian Championships, while Shivane Pawar won a bronze medal here Saturday as top of podium finish continued to elude Indian wrestlers in the tournament.

Radhika put up a dominant show in her weight category. She won the first bout by technical superiority against Kazakhstan's Albina Kairgeldinova and then pinned Kyrgyzstan's Gulnura Tashtanbekova. She lost to Japan's Nonoka Ozaki in the gold medal bout by technical superiority.

Shivane (50kg) lost her quarterfinal 'by fall' to Ziqi Feng but made it to the bronze medal round after the Chinese entered the final. She edged past Mongolia's Otgonjargal Dolgojrav 9-7 to earn a podium finish.

Odisha FC suffer 0-3 loss against NorthEast United

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, April 13: NorthEast United FC ended their Indian Super League campaign with a resounding 3-0 victory over Odisha FC here Saturday. Though the Highlanders were unable to qualify for the playoffs, they gave a good account of themselves against the Juggernauts, who succumbed to their third loss in their last five games.

The Juggernauts hence finished the league season with 39 points and will be battling in the playoffs for a place in the semifinal. The Highlanders rounded off this campaign in the seventh spot with 26 points from 22 matches to their name.

It was a clinical outing by the Highlanders, and young attacker Parthib Gogoi opened the scoring in the 12th minute. Four minutes later, the home team doubled their lead through their Spanish talisman Nestor Albiach. Phalguni Singh got his name on the scoresheet in the added time of the first half after Roy Krishna failed to score from the penalty spot in the 25th minute.



WRESTLING ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

In 55kg, Tamanna lost her qualification round by a comprehensive 0-9 margin to Moe Kiyooka but since the Japanese reached the final, the Indian bounced back into medal contention. However, she lost the repechage round 0-4 to China's Min Zhang.

Pushpa Yadav (59kg) lost her bronze playoff 8-11 to Kazakhstan's Diana Kayumova, while Priya (76kg) suffered a defeat 'by fall' in her bronze medal bout against Kazakhstan's Elmira Syzdykova.