



### BRIEF



Indian Information Service officer Sheyphali B Sharan assumes charge as principal Director General of Press Information Bureau (PIB), in New Delhi.

### Divorce

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

### Australian dead

**Indore:** An Australian citizen on a business visit to Madhya Pradesh was found dead in his hotel room in Indore on Tuesday morning, police officials said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Abhinay Vishwakarma said the body of Bailey Gavin Andrew was found in his room in the hotel located in the Lasudia police station area.

### Fire

**Thane:** A fire erupted at a chemical plant in an industrial area of Navi Mumbai on Tuesday, gutting two other factories in the vicinity, a fire brigade official said. No one was injured in the blaze that broke out at a chemical unit in the MIDC in Pawne-Koparkhairne around 10.15 am, the official said. Fire services from the MIDC and 14 fire engines of the fire stations around Koparkhairne rushed to the spot and fought the blaze for four hours, he said.

### Flight delay

**Kozhikode:** Two women in their forties were detained at the Karipur airport here and then handed over to police for allegedly hitting CISF personnel who intervened in the argument between passengers and Indigo staff following grounding of a flight to Bengaluru due to technical reasons.

### EC action

**New Delhi:** The Election Commission on Tuesday issued transfer orders for eight district magistrates and 12 superintendents of police in five states. The decision was taken as part of the "regular review" by the Commission during a meeting chaired by Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar along with Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu, the EC said.

**Weather**  
High 40 Low 25

**MARKET**  
NIFTY 22,453.30  
SENSEX 73,903.91

**BULLION**  
GOLD 68,834  
SILVER 76,800

### MAJOR SUCCESS

## 10 Naxalites killed in encounter

■ Arms seized

Bijapur, Apr 02:

In a major anti-insurgency operation, 10 Naxalites, including a woman, were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Bijapur district on Tuesday, police said.

Bijapur district comes under the Bastar Lok Sabha constituency, which will go to polls in the first phase of the general elections on April 19.

The gunfight occurred around 6 am in a forest between Lendra and Korcholi villages under the Gangaloor police station area, where a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxal operation, Inspector General of Police (Bastar Range) Sundarraj P told PTI. Personnel belonging to the District Reserve Guard (DRG), Special Task Force (STF), Central



Security personnel conducting search operation.

Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and its elite unit Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) were involved in the operation, he said. "After the exchange of fire stopped, bodies of four Naxalites were recovered from the spot, and subsequently, six more bodies were found at the encounter site during the search," the IG said.

A light machine gun (LMG), a .303 rifle, a 12-bore gun, a large number of barrel grenade launchers and shells, and other arms and

ammunition were also seized from the spot, he said. A search operation was still underway in the area, he said.

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

Notably, Naxalites carry out the Tactical Counter Offensive Campaign (TCOC) in summers between March and June

### About the encounter....

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every year and step up their activities. Several attacks have been carried out against security forces in the Bastar region during this period. On March 27, six Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security forces in the Basaguda area of Bijapur, police earlier said.

## SC rejects Ramdev's apology, warns against perjury

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Tuesday tore into Patanjali Ayurved's defence for putting out misleading advertisements, rejecting the apology from yoga guru Ramdev and the firm's managing director Acharya Balkrishna as "lip service" and warning them against perjury.

The bench, headed by Justice Hima Kohli, also questioned the Centre's alleged inaction over Patanjali's tall claims about the efficacy of its products and denigrating allopathy during the Covid peak and asked why the government chose to keep its "eyes shut". Both Ramdev and Balkrishna were present in



Yoga guru Ramdev after appearing before the Supreme Court in connection with the Patanjali misleading advertisement case, in New Delhi, Tuesday.

court in connection with show cause notices on why contempt proceedings should not be initiated against them. The bench,

also comprising Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, posted the matter for hearing on April 10 and said Ramdev and Balkrishna have to appear again.

Giving them a last one week opportunity to file affidavits, it took strong note of their "absolute defiance" in not adhering to the undertaking given before it in the case filed by the Indian Medical Association (IMA).

"You have to abide by undertaking to court and you have broken every barrier," the bench said.

Sternly reprimanding Ramdev and his number two Balkrishna, Justice Kohli said the court was taking their apology with a "sack full of salt".

### PM TO VOTERS

Rudrapur, Apr 02 (PTI):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday launched a blistering attack on Rahul Gandhi for his remark suggesting that there will be a "conflagration" in the country if he gets a third term and asked the people to wipe out the Congress from everywhere.

Addressing his first election rally in Uttarakhnad, Modi said he was being threatened and abused by the corrupt but there will be even bigger action against corruption after his re-election. "The Congress and INDI Alliance have made their intentions clear. Congress's royal family 'shehzada' (prince) has threatened there will be fire if Modi gets another term in

## 'Nat'l security paramount'

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI)

Statehood and constitutional protection under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution will not impact defence and national security-related projects in Ladakh, climate activist Sonam Wangchuk said on Tuesday. Wangchuk said this during an online meeting with climate groups and civil society organisations, convened to review preparations for the planned march to Changthang (in the east of Leh along the border with China) on April 7.

## Three girls abducted, raped; two men held

Jashpur, Apr 02:

Three girls, two of them siblings, were allegedly abducted and raped by three persons in Jashpur district, police said on Tuesday.

One of the girls was also sexually assaulted by her 17-year-old friend whom she had called for help, following the incident that occurred on Monday, an official said. Based on a complaint, the police have registered two cases under

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Accused arrested in the case.

provisions of the IPC and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act for the abduction and rape of the three girls, who are in the age group of 15 to 17 years,

and the rape of one of the victims by her friend, Pathalgaon sub-divisional officer of police Dhruvesh Kumar Jaiswal said.

Two men have been arrested and two boys detained in connection with the cases, he said.

Three persons, including a minor, allegedly abducted the girls and took them in a car to Mainpat, a tourist spot in the neighbouring Surguja district on Monday, the official said.

## 'Wipe out opposition party'

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PM Modi addresses a public rally ahead of upcoming Lok Sabha elections, in Kotputli, Rajasthan, Tuesday.

office. "Staying out of power has made them so desperate that they are now talking about setting the country afire. Would you let them do it? Is this the kind of language used in a democracy? Wouldn't you punish them?" Modi said. At an INDIA bloc rally in Delhi's Ramliya Maidan on Sunday, Rahul Gandhi had said that if the

### 'Corrupt rallying together to stop corruption'

**Jaipur:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday hit out at the opposition INDIA bloc and said this is the first Lok Sabha election in which all the corrupt are rallying together to stop action on corruption. He also said Congress leaders are threatening that if the BJP wins, the country will be on fire. "Modi has been extinguishing such fires for the last 10 years." "This is the first election in which family-based parties are holding rally after rally to save their families," Modi said while addressing a public rally in Rajasthan's Kotputli.

BJP wins the election through "match-fixing" and

changes the Constitution, then the country would be on "fire" and would not survive.

"The Congress, with its Emergency-mindset, no longer has faith in democracy. Therefore, it is busy instigating people against the electoral mandate," the prime minister alleged.

He accused the Congress of pushing the country towards instability and anarchy and asked the people to wipe it out from everywhere. He said a big Congress leader in Karnataka recently spoke of separating south India from the country and dividing it.

But instead of punishing him, the party has given him a ticket to contest the polls, he said, apparently referring to Congress leader D K Suresh.

### EXCISE POLICY SCAM CASE

## AAP's Sanjay Singh gets bail after 6 months in jail

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI):

The Supreme Court on Tuesday granted bail to AAP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh in a money laundering case related to the Delhi excise policy scam after the Enforcement Directorate said it had no objections, in a reprieve to the party whose top leadership is behind bars.

Singh, who has been in jail for six months, was ordered to be released by a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Dipankar Datta and P B Varale.

The bench said the AAP leader can continue with his political activities but



cannot make any statements with regard to the case. His release comes at a time when the AAP is grappling with a leadership vacuum ahead of the Lok Sabha polls which are set to begin on April 19.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his former deputy Manish Sisodia are lodged in Tihar Jail in connection with the case.

## EAM Jaishankar optimistic about permanent UNSC seat for India

Rajkot, Apr 02 (PTI):

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday expressed optimism about India's eventual permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), saying it is inevitable but emphasised the need for heightened efforts in this regard. Addressing intellectuals in Gujarat's Rajkot city, the External Affairs Minister stressed that diligent work is essential to secure this coveted position.

Acknowledging the current dominance of five nations - China, France, Russia, the UK, and the US - as the UN's original per-



manent members, the minister, however, said the international momentum was now favouring India's bid for a permanent seat.

The United Nations was formed around 80 years ago, and these five nations decided among themselves to become permanent members of its security council, Jaishankar said.

He highlighted the historical context of the

UNSC's formation, where five nations secured permanent membership, underscoring the evolving global landscape with around 193 countries today.

"But these five nations have kept their control, and it is strange that you have to ask them to give us their consent for a change. A few agree, a few others put forward their position with honesty, while others do something from behind," he said.

Jaishankar spoke about the collaborative proposals involving India, Japan, Germany, and Egypt which have been submitted to the UN, signalling progress.

## 54 MPs retiring

■ From Rajya Sabha  
New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI):

As many as 54 members of the Rajya Sabha including former prime minister Manmohan Singh and nine union ministers are set to retire on Tuesday and Wednesday with some not returning to the Upper House. Former prime minister Singh ends his 33-year-long parliamentary innings in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday (April 3), just as former party chief Sonia Gandhi will enter the Upper House of Parliament for the first time. Singh, who is known for ushering in several bold reforms in the economy, became a member of the House for the first time in October 1991. He was the finance minister in the Narasimha Rao government from 1991 to 1996 and the prime minister from 2004 to 2014.

## SBI refuses to disclose SOP for sale, redemption of electoral bonds

■ In RTI reply

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI):

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

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

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

### MEDICAL ADVANCEMENT

## Doctors perform combined liver and kidney transplant

■ On critically ill patient from Uzbekistan

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI):

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

Combined organ transplants are rare and challenging and underscore the remarkable feats

achievable in modern medicine, doctors said.

The patient presented with the history of recurrent ascites (water in tummy), needing multiple admission for draining the water. When he visited Max Hospital, Vaishali, upon evaluation it was found that he had a liver cirrhosis as well as a non-functioning kidney, the hospital said in a statement. The patient was suffering from advanced kidney failure and both of his kidneys put together were functioning less than 20 per cent of normal. "The

patient,

Akhrorjon Khaydarov, already knew about his liver condition but he was shocked when he found about his kidney failure as well. He was anxious and worried. However, we counselled and informed him about possibility of combined liver and kidney transplant. A kidney transplant was likely to contribute to better functioning of the liver transplant as well and thereby save his life," said Dr Neeru Aggarwal, Principal Director, Nephrology, Max Hospital, Vaishali.



## Operation Eagle: 572 permanent warrants executed in Durg Range

**Bhilai, Apr 02:**

'Operation Eagle' launched by the Inspector General of Police (Durg Range) Ram Gopal Garg has been very successful in achieving its goal. A total of 572 permanent warrants have been executed under this operation. IGP had classified and scientifically analysed different types of warrants and had directed to execute warrants by adopting modern technology through target based approach.

Through this operation, the Police cracked down on the warranties who have been secretly living in other districts and states including Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, West Bengal and Bihar.

Under Operation Eagle, the accused were arrested with the use of modern technologies and continuous supervision. All the pending warrants were classified and analyzed scientifically. Police of all



the districts of Durg Range were directed to execute the warrants by adopting modern technology through a target based approach.

Under the supervision of gazetted police officers of district Balod, Bemetara, Durg, instructions were given to the po-

fore the court.

Under Operation Eagle, District Durg Police of Durg Range, executed / disposed of 356 permanent warrants in the month of March 2024. District Bemetara Police executed a total of 55 permanent warrants from all the police stations of the district. District Balod Police executed a total of 161 permanent warrants.

It needs to be mentioned here that in Durg Range, the highest number of 204 warrants were served under section 138 (NI Act) and 96 permanent warrants were served under the section related to assault.

Along with this, Durg Range Police has got success in serving 62 warrants of theft / loot. This campaign against warranties will continue. The Cops succeeded in serving warrants of other states including Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, West Bengal, Bihar, Maharashtra etc.

## Notorious thieves of 'King Gang' nabbed

**Bhilai, Apr 02:**

With the arrest of four notorious thieves including two juveniles, police claimed to have busted the "King Gang" of thieves. They targeted locked houses and committed thefts during the night. Rs 5.75 lakh stolen booty has been recovered from them. Two of the accused were earlier arrested in connection with assault and murder cases.

SP Jitendra Shukla informed that they had received information regarding a major theft at a locked house in Sheopara, Durg on the intervening night of March 29. The unknown accused cut the cables of the CCTV cameras installed nearby, trespassed into the house by breaking the door lock, broke the cupboard and stole gold and silver jewellery, music system and CCTV cameras and DVR installed in the house.

A joint team of ACCU and Durg City Kotwali led by Inspector Kapil Dev Pandey (I/c ACCU) and Inspector Mahesh Dhruv (SHO, City Kotwali) launched investigation under the guidance of



Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Abhishek Jha, Additional Superintendent of Police (Crime) Richa Mishra, Deputy Superintendent of Police (Crime) Hem Prakash Nayak and City Superintendent of Police (Durg) Chirag Jain.

The team maintained vigil on the suspects and the network of informers was activated. Former habitual criminals released from jail were also monitored. The ACCU team examined the CCTV cameras installed nearby, in which a person was seen cutting the wire of the camera. Some other boys were also seen in the footage. With

the help of informers, police nabbed the suspects for interrogation. During sustained interrogation, the prime accused Aman, who had earlier been convicted in murder, attempt to murder and assault cases, disclosed that he committed theft with his accomplices Deepesh, and two other juveniles. After committing the theft, they had concealed the stolen booty and spent the stolen cash. 60 grams gold jewellery worth Rs 3,50,000; silver jewellery worth Rs 1,40,000, Music system, Set top box and motorcycle used in the crime were seized from them. The accused Aman Yadav (21) son of Late Pyare Lal Yadav, a

resident of Sheopara Durg; Dipesh Kumar Thakur (21) son of Pardeshi Ram Thakur, a resident of Shivpara Durg and two juveniles were booked under sections 457, 380, 34 of IPC. They were produced before the court and sent to jail on judicial remand. ASI Chandrashekhar Soni, Rajesh Pandey, Head Constable Ruman Sonwani, Chandra Shekhar Banjir; Constable G Ravi, Md Farooq, Dharendra Yadav, Sanat Bharti, Tishwar Rathore, Shaukat Hayat, Narendra Sahare, Vikrant Yadu, Ashwani Yadu, Meghraj Chelak and Khurram Baksh played a vital role.

## 'Bhilai Runs for Vote' Marathon held in Bhilai Township

**Bhilai, Apr 02:**

Durg District Administration, Office of District Election Officer, in association with SAIL- Bhilai Steel Plant and District Education Department organised 'Bhilai Runs for Vote' Marathon as part of 'Chunav Ka Parv- Desh Ka Garv' Campaign, on April 02, 2024. This voter awareness marathon was organised under the guidance of Richa Prakash Choudhary, District Collector, Durg. Ashwani Dewangan, District Panchayat CEO, flagged off the Marathon from Sector-9 Square, at 7:00 hrs, to encourage people, especially youngsters, to strengthen democracy by massive participation in the forthcoming elections. Devendra Dhruv, Bhilai Nagar Nigam Commissioner, Suraj

Kumar Soni, GM (Pers. NW & Mines), SR Jakhar, DGM (SC&CS), officials of the Women Child Development Department and Education Department were present on this occasion, along with other Senior Officials and personnel from the Plant, sportspersons, students, and citizens of Bhilai Township in large numbers. Chief Guest Ashwani Dewangan, in his address, stated that despite several voting awareness initiatives, the Voter turnout is decreasing in the urban areas, especially in Durg and Raipur Districts. Many citizens abstain from stepping out of their houses and workplaces to exercise their Universal Adult Franchise. The right to vote must not be wasted and citizens including youngsters must use this right to strengthen democ-

cracy. We have joined hands with SAIL- Bhilai Steel Plant so that every individual in Bhilai Township must not only vote himself/herself but also encourage their colleagues, friends, neighbours, relatives, and everyone around to duly exercise their vote in the coming elections and mark their valuable contribution in nation building, Dewangan said.

Devendra Dhruv, Nagar Nigam Commissioner, administered an oath for Voter Awareness to everyone present on this occasion. As many as 300 participants from various educational institutions of Bhilai and nearby areas, athletes, BSP Employees, and citizens took part in the Marathon, which commenced from Sec-09 Square at Pt Ravishankar Shukla Path, and passed through Sec-08 Square, and concluded in front of Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital & Research Centre, Sector-09, Bhilai.

Several voting awareness activities are also conducted by SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant from time to time, to encourage people to step ahead to vote and strengthen democracy.

## BSF Jawans donate blood to save life of a tribal woman

**Bhilai, Apr 02:**

The jawans of 133rd Battalion of Border Security Force donated blood to save the life of a tribal woman. The woman hails from village Baihasalhebbhat, Post Kolar, District Kanker. Tribal woman Gitila is being treated in the government hospital of Durg. Due to a wound, her leg was to be amputated.

After surgery, the woman was in need of blood for which the family contacted the Frontier Headquarters, Border Security Force, Bhilai. The Headquarters responded immediately and the jawans of 133rd Battalion of Border Security Force immediately donated blood to save the life of the tribal woman. The family members of the female patient

thanked the Border Security Force for this noble work.

Border Security Force jawans are risking their lives to make the country Naxal free. At the same time, they are delivering the responsibility of social welfare with determination.

Inspector General of Border Security Force, Strategic Headquarters (Special Operations), Chhattisgarh, Anand Pratap Singh, IAS, appreciated the noble work of 133 Battalion Commandant Virendra Kumar Giri and the Jawans and gave the message that the protection and service of the people is the utmost priority of the Border Security Force. "It is of paramount importance and we will continue to do such work in future also", he added.

**Bhilai, Apr 02:**

DSP (Traffic) Satish Thakur conducted a traffic awareness programme at Rungta Dental College on Tuesday. More than 400 students attended the programme. Through video clips, the students were explained the importance of helmets.

The students present were appealed to make their family members, friends, neighbours and relatives aware about the traffic rules. Thakur said that student life is a life of discipline, similarly it is very important for a driver to show discipline to avoid accidents on the road. He urged the students to act as Good Samaritans by helping the injured in road accidents and saving their lives.

On the instructions of Superintendent of Police (Durg) Jitendra Shukla, the traffic awareness programme was organised at Rungta Dental College. Students and teachers were given detailed information about traffic rules. Thakur explained "4-E", the main components of traffic. He said that the



first 'E' stands for Road Engineering. 02-E is Education, under which he explained the rules of walking, road marking, road sign board and driving. 03-E is Enforcement, under which police take action against drivers who do not follow the rules. 04-E stands for Emergency Care, under which treatment is given to a person injured in a road accident. Along with this, he gave information about the Good Samaritan.

At the same time, he appealed to the college students to follow the traffic rules and share the information with their family

members, relatives and friends. Students live their life in a disciplined manner. Similarly, a disciplined driver can avoid road accidents. Deputy Superintendent of Police Traffic said that our aim is to prevent road accidents and deaths due to road accidents, for which it is very important that the drivers are aware of the traffic rules.

College Principal Dr Preeti Agrawal Jain, Dean Dr Preeti Naveen Yadav, teachers, ASI Rajmani Singh, Constable Tilak Sahu, KhilavanMarkande from the Traffic Police were present.

## Certificate Program inaugurated in BBA Department of St Thomas College

**Bhilai, Apr 02:**

Department of Management Studies, St Thomas College, Ruabandha started the 4th session of its Certificate Program on Professional Business Skills from April 01, 2024 onwards.

It is worth mentioning that department of management studies is conducting the certificate program successfully for the last three years and every year students are getting more inputs for work culture of real corporate world.

Administrator of the college Fr Dr Joshi Varghese appreciated the efforts taken by Department of Management Studies.

Principal of the college Dr MG Roymon congratulated Dr Susan R Abraham head Department of management studies for the successful organization of the certificate program and said that St Thomas College organizes the innovative and outcome based learning programs at regular intervals.

In the inaugural day Session Akash Singh, Director Ardent Studies, Bhilai took session on Career after Management Education and preparation for CAT Examination.

The program was successfully conducted by the student council of BBA, Dept of St Thomas College, Bhilai and vote of thanks was given by BBA student Harshit Rai.

### Registers New High In 2023-24

**Bhilai, Apr 02:**

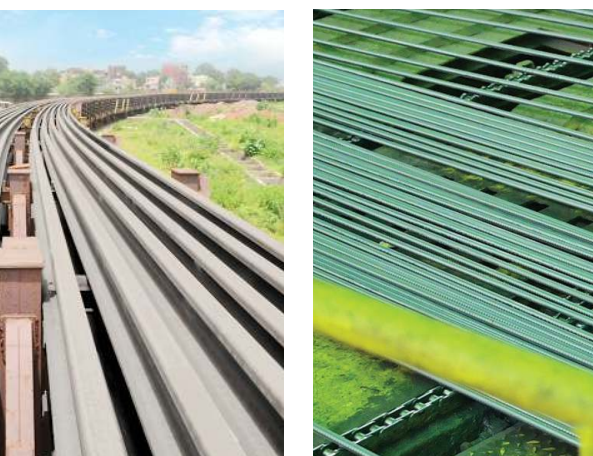
SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant has registered record performances in all major parameters of performance in fiscal year 2023-24. The Plant's blast furnaces recorded highest ever hot metal production of 5.98 million tonnes, surpassing previous best of 5.71 MT achieved in 2010-11. This includes highest ever production of 2.68 MT by the plant's largest blast furnace, Blast Furnace 8, as against previous best of 2.54 MT in previous FY 22-23.

The Plant recorded highest ever crude steel production of 5.67 MT from SMS 2 and SMS 3 in FY 24, surpassing previous best of 5.33 MT recorded in 2010-11. This includes best ever cast steel production of 3.44 MT by Modex unit SMS 3, surpassing previous best production of 3.06 MT in FY 22-23. The Plant recorded highest ever



saleable steel production of 5.23 MT, surpassing previous best of 4.82 MT achieved in 2022-23. Best ever finished steel production of 4.57 MT was also recorded by the Plant, surpassing previous best of 4.43 MT in FY 22-23. Highest ever sinter production of 8.74 MT was recorded by the Sinter Plants, surpassing previous best of 8.03 MT achieved in 2022-23. This included best ever production of 5.93 MT by Sinter Plant 3 as against previous best of 5.43 MT

## Bhilai Steel Plant breaks records in all major Parameters of Production



recorded in previous year 22-23. The Plant's Coke



Ovens recorded its best ever Equivalent Oven

Pushing rate of 784 ovens per day during FY 24, bettering previous best of 769 ovens recorded in 2010-11. In the area of long rail production, Universal Rail Mill recorded its best ever production of 8.53 lakh tonnes of prime rails as against previous best of 7.90 lakh tonnes in previous fiscal 22-23. Rail & Str Mill too recorded best ever figure of 1.71 lakh tonnes of long rails, surpassing previous best of 1.52 lakh tonnes in FY 22-23. The Plant recorded

best ever total long rails production of 10.20 lakh Tonnes in FY 24, surpassing previous best of 9.09 lakh tonnes in FY 22-23. As many as 1082 rakes of long rail were despatched to Indian Railways, as against previous best of 1000 rakes despatched in last FY 22-23.

Modex unit, BRM that crossed its annual rated capacity of 9 lakh tonnes, recorded its best ever production of 9.75 lakh tonnes, as against previous best of 8.40 lakh tonnes in FY 22-23.



# Defeat Cong LS candidate that he forfeits his security deposit: Sai

● Appeals voters to vote in favour of BJP LS candidate and elect Modi for the third time



**Kanker, Apr 02:** Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said that the Congress government in the state openly violated the public mandate for full five years, as they did not fulfilled a single promise made by them properly. State had become a centre of crime and corruption and this party needs to be shown its place and it has to be defeated in such a manner that no one takes even its name, he added.

Rs 508 crore in order to run the Mahadev Satta App regularly and for which an FIR has been lodged against him. The Congress government in the state had put the youth go for easy money and made them habitual to gambling and betting and now is the time to show them the right place. The Congress LS candidate from Kanker LS seat has to be defeated in such a manner that he forfeits his security deposit in the election.

BJP government on coming to power has released the amount for PMAY for

made a record by purchasing 145 lakh MT of paddy in the state and had even

## Chaos in Congress to join BJP: Sai

**Kanker:** CM Sai replying to a statement about statement about condition of Congress party's defeat said that there is literally big chaos in Congress and their party leaders are quitting and joining BJP fold. Wherever the BJP leaders are addressing public meeting or holding rallies, their the Congmen are joining BJP and this time people is all set to make Congress 'bye-bye'. It is notable here that there is

statement by the Leader of Opposition in VS Dr Charandas Mahant there was a mistake by me, former CM Bhupesh Baghel, the then Ministers and Congress workers at that time and its consequences we are facing today and are not in the government and so far there is no atmosphere in favour of Congress so far. CM Sai was responding to a question on this by the media persons there.

18 lakh poor families. The party had promised purchase of paddy at an MSP of Rs 3100 per quintal and

given the difference amount of Rs 13,320 cr to 24.72 lakh farmers. CM informed that the install-

ment of Mahatari Vandan Yojana will be paid to the women on April 3.

Sai further appealed to the heavy gathering said that you all believing in Modi-ki-Guarantee have made the BJP win in the last VS polls and as a result of which the party is fulfilling all the promises made speedily. All the work is being done at a brisk speed and Congress party is going to get 'bye-bye' signal now, he added.

CM Sai said that today it is in the presence of the people of Kanker region that the BJP LS candidate Bhojram Nag has filed his nomination paper and added that this election is for the able Prime Minister of the country, who carried out development in the nation, taking all together, taking the underline 'sabke saath-sabka Vikas- Sabka Prayas' and carried out development of poor; farmers, youth and poor and villagers and therefore he deserves to be made as the PM for the third time and urged all the people to ensure victory of Bhojram Nag from Kanker LS seat.

## NAVRATRI PREPARATIONS



The workers of temples are making preparations for lighting of 'Jyoti Kalash' to be installed for nine-day 'Chatra Navratri' festival beginning on April 9th.

## Ex-CM Baghel files nomination from Rajnandgaon seat

**Raipur, Apr 02:** Congress candidate and former chief minister Bhupesh Baghel on Tuesday filed his nomination from Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha seat in Chhattisgarh and expressed confidence that voters in the constituency will make him emerge victorious. The seat is currently held by Bharatiya Janata Party's Santosh Pandey who defeated Congress' Bholaram Sahu by a margin of 1,11, 966 votes in 2019. The BJP has renominated Pandey from the seat.



Rajnandgaon Collectorate on his X handle and said, "Considering the trust of every citizen of Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha as a witness, I have filed my nomination today. #will\_win\_rajnandgaon."

Elections to the 11 Lok Sabha seats in Chhattisgarh will be held in three phases on April 19, April 26 and May 7 and votes will be counted on June 4. Polling in Rajnandgaon will be held on April 26.

Baghel, 62, posted his pictures of filing the nomination papers at the

the assembly constituencies under Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha seat. The people and party workers are excited. Farmers, labourers and tribals are eagerly waiting for April 26. I hope I will get blessings of everyone," he added.

Rajnandgaon is a semi-urban constituency which shares borders with Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. It is also the home turf of former CM and senior BJP leader Raman Singh. Singh, the MLA from Rajnandgaon and incumbent speaker of the Chhattisgarh assembly, was elected to the Lok Sabha from this seat once in 1999. The BJP has never lost Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha seat since the formation of Chhattisgarh in 2000, except for a parliamentary bypoll in 2007 when it was defeated by the Congress.

## Former AAP chief Komal Hupendi joins BJP

**Raipur, Apr 02:** Komal Hupendi, a former chief of the Aam Aadmi Party's Chhattisgarh unit, joined the ruling BJP along with his supporters on Tuesday.

The tribal leader, who resigned as state AAP chief and quit the party in January, joined the BJP in the presence of Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai

at an event in Kanker district. His supporters also joined the saffron party in large numbers and vowed to ensure victory of Bhojraj Nag, the BJP candidate from Kanker Lok Sabha constituency, the BJP statement said.

In the 2023 assembly elections, Hupendi stood in the third position in

## Game changer progr by SWC

**Raipur, Apr 03:** Sewa Welfare Committee (SWC) is organising one day game changer programme for youth entrepreneurs and working professions. The programme will be addressed by Ujjawal Patni, Motivational Speaker. The function will be organised at Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay auditorium on April 3 from 3 pm to 7 pm.

## Message given to voters to cast their votes

● Lokayukta Justice TP Sharma flags off bike rally



**Raipur, Apr 02:** Voter awareness rally was organized today under the leadership of Collector and District Returning Officer Dr Gaurav Singh in view of Lok Sabha elections 2024. The rally which began at Collectorate, culminated at Anupam Garden. The bike rally was flagged off by Chhattisgarh Lok Ayog chief Lokayukta Justice TP Sharma.



## Voter awareness through Zumba and street play

**Raipur:** AIG Sanjay Sharma and his team staged a street play giving the message of voter awareness in Anupam Garden. Zumba was also organised. Women came out in Bullets and Scooties for voter awareness. They carried placards spreading message of 'power of vote', 'recognize the voter', 'its connection with strong democracy', 'our call', vote and 'become great' and many other messages were given to make the voters aware.

Addressing the citizens in Anupam Garden, Collector Dr Singh said that people of urban areas should vote in maximum numbers. Voting is the right of citizens and voters play a big role in the election festival, he said. May 7 has been declared the date of voting for Raipur Lok Sabha, he said. He said that more and more people should reach their respective polling stations to vote besides motivating their neighbors and their family members to exercise their franchise.

time to make voters aware under the SVEEP program. Collector Dr Gaurav Singh and the district administration team left the Collectorate on bike with voter awareness placards.

voter awareness. Municipal Corporation Commissioner Abinash Mishra, District Panchayat CEO Vishwadeep and other officers, employees and distinguished citizens were present.

As per the instructions of the Election Commission of India, many activities are being organized from time to

## Ganja found in trolley bag during search in bus

**Gariaband, Apr 02:** The special team of district police and Kotwali police arrested two ganja peddlers who were traveling by a bus. SDOP Gopal Vaishya said that Ajmat Khan and Hafuzullah Khan, residents of Shajapur MP were arrested on charge of Ganja peddling.

traveling in a Raipur bound bus from Devbhog, police team conducted search in the said bus near Dongri village and found two trolley bags and an air bag filled with ganja. Total 26 kg 800 grams of ganja was recovered. Preparations are being made to take action against them under the Narcotics Act and send them to jail.

## Dumper hits overbridge wall, hangs in air

**Raipur, Apr 02:** A speeding dumper driver broke the wall of an over bridge and hangs in air in Rajendra Nagar area. Driver of the dumper was said to be under influence of liquor while driving dumper. After hitting the wall of overbridge driver hung in the air with the dumper. According to the

information, the police patrolling team received information late on Monday night that a speeding dumper which was passing through the National Highway met with an accident at Rajendra Nagar overbridge. The dumper collided with the wall of the over bridge. Part of the cabin of the vehicle

hung in the air after hitting the bridge wall. However, no report of any casualty in this accident was received.

Driver of the dumper somehow came down from the dumper while hanging in the air and fled from the spot. It is being told that the driver was drunk.

## ABVP demonstration on exam related issues in Ch'garh College

**Raipur, Apr 02:** Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) today staged demonstration on the issues pertaining to semester examination in Government J Yoganandam Chhattisgarh College. Students led by ABVP recited 'Hanuman Chalisa' praying for wisdom to the college principal. The main reason for the protest was various concerns of the students related to the recently held semester examinations.

Sociology exam have requested for grace marks. During demonstration, ABVP office bearers also raised questions on the education system being adopted by the college administration.

ABVP alleges that despite performing well in examination many students got less marks. ABVP has demanded re-evaluation of the answer sheets. Students appearing for

Chhattisgarh College Secretary Prem Banjare said that "ABVP always works for the interests of students and even today we stand for the same purpose." Another office bearer Bhupesh Baghel, demanded the college administration to fully implement the semester system and adopt the National Education Policy 2020. According to him there are flaws in the current system which should be addressed.

## Swadeshi Khadi Mahotsav kicks off at Chhattisgarh Haat, Pandri

● Special discounts ranging from 10 percent to 20 percent are offered to customers



into the diverse range of products available at the event. The exhibition is showcasing Kashmiri Silk, Malwari Silk, Banarasi Silk, Manipuri Silk, Pashmina Silk, Saree, Bhagalpuri Silk, Kosa silk material sarees from Chhattisgarh and hundreds of other household utility items. The exhibition has a new collection of about 70,000 handloom items. Highlighting the importance of organizing such exhibition-cum-sales regularly. He highlighted how these events offer a

crucial space for experienced artisans to showcase their products, leading to increased sales and employment opportunities. He said that millions of families benefit indirectly, finding sustainable livelihoods through such initiatives. Anurag Mishra said that we have got tremendous response from Raipurians in the Swadeshi Khadi Mahotsav organised in Raipur last year.

also offered at competitive prices, making them accessible to a broader audience, he said. The Swadeshi Khadi Mahotsav is set to run from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm, providing a unique shopping experience for visitors seeking authentic and diverse handcrafted goods.

**Raipur, Apr 02:** The Swadeshi Khadi Mahotsav kicked off at Chhattisgarh Haat, Pandri on April 1. The event will continue till April 15. The event, hosting an extensive exhibition and sale of Khadi and handloom garments, features over 70 stalls,

providing a platform for skilled artisans in the Khadi Village Industry. Addressing the media-persons here on Tuesday, Fair Organiser, Anurag Mishra shared insights

Special discounts ranging from 10 percent to 20 percent are being given on handloom silk and cotton items in the exhibition. Credit and debit card, UPI facilities are available at all the stalls.

**Chronicle APPOINTMENT**

**All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Raipur**  
An Autonomous Institute Under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Go

No. RC/F-R/2024 Dated: 15.03.2024

**FACULTY VACANCY**

AIIMS, Raipur invites online applications from Indian nationals/persons registered as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholder under Section 7A of the Citizenship Act, 1955 for the following Faculty positions on Direct Recruitment basis :- **Total Posts 129, Professor (32, Pay Level-14A), Additional Professor (31, Pay Level-13A2), Associate Professor (43, Pay Level-13A1), Assistant Professor (23, Pay Level-12) + NPA & other allowances applicable as per institution norms.**

1. **Anaesthesiology** :- [04] (Associate Professor - UR-1, OBC-1, ST-1\*, Assistant Professor - OBC-1), 2. **Anatomy** :- [02] (Professor - UR-1, Additional Professor - SC-1), 3. **Biochemistry** :- [01] (Assistant Professor - SC-1), 4. **Burns & Plastic Surgery** :- [06] (Professor - OBC-1\*, Additional Professor - OBC-1\*, Associate Professor - UR-1, OBC-2#, ST-1\*), 5. **Cardiology** :- [03] (Professor - SC-1\*, Additional Professor - UR-1, Associate Professor - OBC-1\*), 6. **Cardiothoracic Surgery** :- [05] (Professor - UR-1, Additional Professor - UR-1, Associate Professor - OBC-1, OBC-1\*, SC-1\*), 7. **Clinical Haematology** :- [04] (Professor - OBC-1, Additional Professor - OBC-1\*, Associate Professor - EWS-1, Assistant Professor - OBC-1\*), 8. **Dermatology** :- [02] (Professor - SC-1, Additional Professor - EWS-1), 9. **Endocrinology & Metabolism** :- [03] (Professor - OBC-1\*, Additional Professor - OBC-1\*, Associate Professor - UR-1), 10. **ENT** :- [01] (Additional Professor - SC-1\*), 11. **Gastroenterology** :- [04] (Professor - ST-1\*, Additional Professor - UR-1, Associate Professor - OBC-1\*, Assistant Professor - OBC-1), 12. **General Medicine** :- [03] (Professor - OBC-1\*, SC-1\*, Associate Professor - SC-1\*), 13. **General Surgery** :- [04] (Professor - UR-1, OBC-1, EWS-1, Additional Professor - UR-1, Associate Professor - SC-1), 14. **Hospital Administration** :- [03] (Professor - OBC-1, Additional Professor - OBC-1\*, Associate Professor - ST-1\*), 15. **Medical Oncology** :- [03] (Professor - SC-1\*, Additional Professor - UR-1, Associate Professor - OBC-1), 16. **Microbiology** :- [02] (Additional Professor - ST-1, Associate Professor - OBC-1\*), 17. **Neonatology** :- [04] (Professor - OBC-1\*, Additional Professor - ST-1\*, Associate Professor - OBC-1\*), 18. **Nephrology** :- [03] (Professor - SC-1, Additional Professor - SC-1\*, Associate Professor - SC-1\*), 19. **Neurology** :- [03] (Professor - ST-1, Additional Professor - OBC-1\*, Associate Professor - OBC-1\*), 20. **Neurosurgery** :- [03] (Professor - OBC-1\*, Additional Professor - UR-1, Associate Professor - ST-1\*), 21. **Nuclear Medicine** :- [04] (Professor - SC-1\*, Additional Professor - UR-1, Associate Professor - SC-1\*, Assistant Professor - OBC-1\*), 22. **Obstetrics & Gynaecology** :- [03] (Professor - ST-1\*, Additional Professor - OBC-1\*, Assistant Professor - ST-1\*), 23. **Ophthalmology** :- [01] (Associate Professor - OBC-1), 24. **Orthopaedics** :- [01] (Additional Professor - ST-1\*), 25. **Paediatric Surgery** :- [04] (Associate Professor - UR-3, OBC-1), 26. **Paediatrics** :- [03] (Professor - OBC-1\*, Additional Professor - SC-1\*, Assistant Professor - OBC-1\*), 27. **Pathology & Lab Medicine** :- [05] (Professor - SC-1\*, Additional Professor - UR-1, OBC-1\*, Assistant Professor - OBC-1\*, ST-1\*), 28. **Pharmacology** :- [02] (Professor - UR-1, Assistant Professor - OBC-1\*), 29. **Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation** :- [01] (Professor - UR-1), 30. **Physiology** :- [01] (Professor - UR-1), 31. **Psychiatry** :- [03] (Professor - OBC-1\*, Assistant Professor - UR-1, OBC-1\*), 32. **Pulmonary Medicine** :- [01] (Additional Professor - UR-1), 33. **Radio Diagnosis** :- [07] (Professor - OBC-1, Additional Professor - OBC-1\*, SC-1\*, Associate Professor - SC-1\*, ST-1\*, Assistant Professor - OBC-1\*, SC-1\*), 34. **Radiation Oncology** :- [02] (Additional Professor - UR-1, Associate Professor - UR-1), 35. **Surgical Gastroenterology** :- [07] (Professor - OBC-1\*, Additional Professor - OBC-1, Associate Professor - UR-1, OBC-2\*, SC-1, Assistant Professor - UR-1), 36. **Surgical Oncology** :- [08] (Professor - SC-1\*, Additional Professor - OBC-1\*, Associate Professor - UR-1, OBC-2#, SC-1\*, Assistant Professor - UR-1, OBC-1\*), 37. **Transfusion Medicine & Blood Bank** :- [02] (Professor - ST-1\*, Additional Professor - UR-1), 38. **Trauma & Emergency** :- [06] (Assistant Professor - UR-1, OBC-3#, SC-1\*, ST-1\*), 39. **Urology** :- [05] (Professor - OBC-1\*, Additional Professor - UR-1, Associate Professor - UR-1, OBC-1\*, EWS-1)

**Note** :- \* = Backlog post, # = Including 1 backlog post, ^ = Including 2 backlog post.

For the details of essential qualification, experience, terms and conditions, last date of receipt of application, all subsequent notices/notifications, amendments, corrigendum etc. related to this advertisement, please visit the website [www.aiimsraipur.edu.in](http://www.aiimsraipur.edu.in).

- Executive Director



## Modi govt is necessary for developed India: Nabin

Raipur/Mahasamund, Apr 02:

BJP state in-charge Nitin Nabin, while addressing the BJP officials and workers of the Lok Sabha Management Committee, said that due to the achievements of Prime Minister Modi's 10-year tenure, India has today stood in the category of good governance and developed nation. During his 10 years of impeccable tenure, Modi has fulfilled the vision of good governance and development, completed public welfare schemes and created a history of development work in the entire country and state. The people of Chhattisgarh state have expressed confidence in the guarantee given by Modi and have given mandate in support of BJP. Nabin was addressing the meeting of officials and



members of the Lok Sabha Management Committee, Mahasamund. BJP in-charge Nitin Nabin said that by fulfilling the promises made by the state BJP government in a very short period of 100 days, it has proved that there is no difference between the words and actions of the BJP government and the BJP government will help the villages, the poor. It is dedicated and determined to the development of sections including labourers, farm-

ers, youth and women. Describing booth management by the workers and the work done at the Shakti Kendra level as the key to winning the elections, he said that our resolve is to get maximum votes for BJP at every booth. It has been our responsibility earlier also to maintain constant public relations with the citizens including the beneficiaries benefited from the schemes of the Central and State Government of BJP. Encouraging the

workers, BJP in-charge Nitin Nabin said that all the BJP workers are present on one stage for Lok Sabha candidate Smt. Rookpamari's victory campaign. With the harmony and unity of all of you, we will achieve a historic victory in the elections. This is the enthusiasm of all of you and the support of Modi. The guarantee of a well-governed government is telling. Giving guidelines to ensure the presence of maximum number of workers during the nomination of BJP candidate on April 3rd, he said that there is no better option than Modi for the unity, integrity and identity of the country. The people of the country know this. The workers were also given detailed information about the upcoming organizational work by the state in-charge.

## BJP will create record victory in Raipur LS elections: Agrawal

Raipur, Apr 01:

State Education Minister and Raipur Lok Sabha candidate Brijmohan Agrawal, chief guest in the general meeting of Bharatiya Janata Party Medical Cell at Atal Bihari Bajpayee Auditorium Medical College, said that today I have come to seek blessings of victory from the Gods'.

For 23 years, BJP has made history of winning from Raipur South assembly constituency with record votes. Now we are going to make history by winning the Lok Sabha elections with record votes with your support.

This will be possible with the public's trust in BJP and PM Narendra Modi. Now only 33 days are left for voting in Raipur Lok Sabha elections and in these days we will have to work with the country as well as to make Chhattisgarh devel-



oped and with a resolve to make Narendra Modi the Prime Minister for the third time. Press the lotus button on May 7th so that only lotus flower is visible on June 4th, he said. Education Minister Agrawal told the doctors who came from different places under Raipur Lok Sabha, that while sitting

in their hospital, they should tell their patients and friends and acquaintances why we should vote for BJP.

Health workers can do this work on social media through mobile. By calling 100 people every day, a doctor can easily change the mindset of 5000 people. Launching scathing attack on the previous

Congress government, he said that the Congress people have looted and ruined Chhattisgarh for five years. As soon as the BJP government was formed in the state, it started fulfilling the guarantees of the Modi government.

In the first cabinet meeting, Chief Minister Vishnudeo Sai gave approval to provide Prime Minister House to 18 lakh people, outstanding bonus to farmers, purchased 21 acres of paddy at Rs 3100 per quintal and released the first installment of Mahtari Vandan Yojana.

The BJP government started working on its manifesto which is for 5 years. 16 medical colleges have been opened, educational institutions like AIIMS, NIT, IIT have been opened. Along with 5 malls, there are many multiplexes and other entertainment facilities in Raipur, he added.

## Manoj Khare of CSPDCL bid touching farewell

Raipur, Apr 02:

Manoj Khar, MD of Chhattisgarh State Power Distribution Company (CSPDCL) Manoj Khare was bid touching farewell from CSPDCL's head office here on Monday. In the programme, MD CSPGCL SK Katiyar and MD CSPDCL Rajesh Shukla presented him with a certificate and memento and honoured him. On this occasion outgoing MD Manoj Khare sharing his work experience passed on the credit of his success to teamwork and expressed gratitude towards all the officers and employees for



the assistance received during his service.

MD duo held the services of Manoj Khare, right from undivided MP to that of Chhattisgarh state as very important from the point of view of power development in the state and

hailed his contribution and wished him best of the post-retirement life.

The programme was conducted by Addl. GM (PR) Umesh Mishra and he also highlighted on the personality and works of Manoj Khare

## 'Branding a sick person with a rod is not a treatment'

Raipur, Apr 02:

Dr. Dinesh Mishra, President of the Anndha Shraddha Nirmoolan Samiti, said that cases of burning children with hot iron rods and incense sticks in the name of treatment have come to light from rural areas, while this is a superstition, action should be taken against such Baiga people.

Dr. Dinesh Mishra said, an incident of branding of an 18-day-old child by a Baiga has come to light in Madapur of Pathalgaon in Jashpur, due to which the girl has been seriously injured. Even before this, for a few days, cases

of branding of children with hot iron rods after falling ill have been reported from rural areas of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, in which some children have even died tragically. Before this, some incidents of branding of newborn babies with hot iron rods due to jaundice had also come to light from Mahasamund and Devbhog districts of Chhattisgarh, in which those children also died tragically.

Dr. Dinesh Mishra said that incidents of branding of newborn babies are often reported. There are frequent reports of branding of rural babies to treat problems like not



drinking milk, excessive crying, fever, diarrhoea, jaundice, etc., due to which the health of the baby worsens further. And many times, due to lack of timely medical help, they even die. Some

time back, there was news from rural and remote tribal areas that Baigas branded more than a hundred children with hot bangles for the treatment of pneumonia and jaundice, in which many children died due to wounds and increasing infection. There are also many cases of branding with iron sickles, but all this is unscientific and not appropriate.

Dr. Dinesh Mishra added that some newborn babies have some problems in the initial days, cold, cough, fever, pneumonia, waking up at night, crying repeatedly, gas, indigestion, stomach ache, jaundice, fever,

vomiting, but for all these, the innocent baby should be properly examined and treated by a trained doctor.

There are different causes of diseases which are treated by examination and testing. How can a sick person be cured of the disease by self-treatment, exorcism, iron rods, burning with hot incense sticks, wearing amulets, removing the evil eye, etc., rather the child can become more ill and his condition can worsen.

Villagers should not fall into any such superstition, rather they should consult a capable person around them.

## BJP leader demands FIR against salesman in ration scam

Writes complaint to Collector Sukma

Sukma/Konta, Apr 02:

A case of ration scam has come to light in Ashrit Para Jaliyaras of Gram Panchayat Jirampal in Sukma district. For the last two years, the ration shop operators there have been weighing 35 kg of rice on the digital scale provided by the government and giving 30 kg to the beneficiaries taking ration there. There is an allegation of tampering with the scale available in the ration shop. The beneficiaries say that the operators there were tampering with the scale and weighing 30 kg of rice on the scale and showing it as 35 kg. This work was being done by the sales-



men for a long time, due to which the beneficiaries coming under the ration shop were complaining for a long time and with the aim of catching them red handed, this month when 35 kg rice was given in the ration shops, the digital scale brought by the public is showing 30 kg. There are many ration card hold-

ers there, when everyone's rice was weighed, only 30 kg was coming instead of 35 kg.

With the aim of corruption, the salesmen did such an act with many people with the aim of looting the rice given to the public, in which the local Congress leaders of the district had full protec-

tion and in this regard a memorandum was given to the Sukma District Collector for information. In which, under the leadership of our Bharatiya Janata Party's District President Dhaniram Barse and the Sarpanch, Deputy Sarpanch, Ward Panch and other ration card holders of Gram Panchayat Jirampal have given a memorandum to Collector Sukma and requested to take appropriate and strict action in this matter by registering an FIR and taking action against those salesmen.

Definitely, action should be taken against such people because the government provides ration to the poor people under PDS with the aim of corruption, those who do such an act should not be spared at all.

## Financial year 23-24 was full of historic results for SECL

Korba, Apr 02:

The company recorded an increase of more than 20 million tonnes in coal production for the second consecutive year. With the highest coal production in its history, OBR and Dispatch, Kusmunda became the second largest coal mine in the country with a production of 50 million tonnes. The financial year 2023-24 brought historic results for SECL. The company produced 187 million tonnes of coal, which is the highest production in any one year since its inception. SECL has registered an annual growth of more than 20 million tonnes for the second consecutive year. In the last financial year, SECL dispatched 180.5 million tonnes of coal to consumers, out of which a maximum of 147.8 million tonnes of coal was sent to the power plants of the country, this is the highest



### Kusmunda becomes the second largest mine in the country with production of 50 million tonnes

Megaprojects contributed significantly to SECL's record production. SECL's Kusmunda mine achieved annual production of 50 million tonnes by surpassing the production target and with this it became the second largest coal mine in the country after Gevra. Gevra crossed 50 million tonnes of coal production for the second consecutive year and the total mine production crossed 59 million tonnes. The company's third mega project Deepka also recorded production of 33.42 million tonnes, surpassing last year's annual production.

dispatch given by the company to the power sector in any one year. The company delivered historic results in Over Burden

Removal (OBR) with a growth of more than 22 per cent, removing 323.2 million cubic meters of OBR.

### 707 land owners got employment, CSR schemes started for social welfare

SECL sanctioned employment to a total of 707 land-displaced persons this year in land acquisition cases, which is the highest in the last decade. SECL achieved the target of CSR expenditure on various social works under CSR in the last financial year. Against the target of 60% expenditure on health and nutrition as per DPE guidelines, 70% of CSR expenditure by SECL was spent on this area. "SECL ke Sushruta" scheme was started under CSR by SECL, under which 30 children from the company's operational areas located in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh are being selected and given free residential NEET-Medical coaching.

## Child Prodigy Aditya Rajee meets Goa CM

Raipur, Apr 02:

10-year-old resident Aditya Rajee Singh, on Tuesday met Dr. Pramod Sawant, Chief Minister Goa on his recent visit to Goa where he went to receive his India Excellence Award'24. Aditya Rajee, who is also a PhD scholar - discussed about environmental issues and global warming where both of them had a deep conversation on making Goa more beautiful, clean and green.



and other social issues. The Chief Minister further asked Aditya Rajee to draft his ideas and implementation plans for the

betterment of Goa and also shared and invited Aditya Rajee for a Kids Talk Show to be organised in future in Goa.

Concluding later, he blessed the 10 year old Paryavaran Mitra for his future endeavours.

Aditya Rajee shared that he felt very glad meeting the Chief Minister of Goa. He is very keen observer and kept listening to him patiently for a long time and he is very down to earth and polite.

He added to always see him as one of his idols, be it in professional field or personality wise. He expressed his gratitude for this opportunity.

## Randomization of polling team held



Raipur, Apr 01:

Randomization of polling team for the Lok Sabha Elections-2024 was done on Monday in the Red Cross meeting room located in the Collectorate

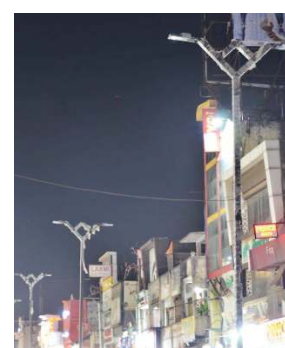
premises. On this occasion, Collector and District Election Officer Dr. Gaurav Kumar Singh, Deputy District Election Officer Mr. Umashankar Bande and related officials were present.

## Malviya Road to be made most attractive and grand: Mishra

Under the instructions and guidance of Collector Dr. Gaurav Singh, Municipal Corporation Commissioner, Abinash Mishra arrived to inspect the progress of underground cabling and street light works.

Raipur, Apr 02:

Under the instructions and guidance of Collector Dr. Gaurav Singh, underground cabling work of their respective roads is being done in Raipur Municipal Corporation and Smart City. It is noteworthy that street lights are being dismantled under underground cabling in many areas of the city by CSPDCL. This evening, after inspection by Corporation



Commissioner, Abinash Mishra, instructions were given to increase the speed and quality of work in progress. Corporation Commissioner, Abinash Mishra said that under this, underground cabling is being done by removing open wires from the roads, which will reduce the

chances of accidental accidents and will increase the beauty of the city. Apart from the local public representatives, there has been full support from the business class and common people in the underground cabling work. During the inspection, Mishra gave instructions to complete the work at a rapid pace and start the street lights. Mishra said that a lot of good work has been done on it due to which Malviya Road will be the most attractive and grand in the entire city. The work here is almost complete and street lights will be started soon. During this, CSPDCL officer Mr. Manoj Verma was present.



## Cong complains to EC against BJP's ad campaign

Attempts to link oppn party to Soros

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTD):

The Congress on Tuesday complained to the Election Commission against BJP's advertisement campaign, alleging it was maligning the opposition party through the use of cropped and distorted videos, and urged the poll body to take immediate action against the authors and issue instructions for recall.

The Congress also filed a complaint against what it called the BJP's "malicious attempts" to link the Congress campaign to billionaire financier George Soros.

AICC General Secretary (Communications) Jairam Ramesh said, "The party lodged a complaint against the BJP's repeated and



Congress leaders Salman Khurshid and Pawan Khera speaks to the media after a meeting with ECI ahead of Lok Sabha polls, at Nirvachan Sadan in New Delhi, Tuesday.

malicious use of cropped and distorted videos to malign the INC. The ECI was requested to take immediate action against the authors of this low-level campaign, as well as issue instructions for its recall."

A delegation of party leaders comprising Salman Khurshid, Pawan Khera and Gurdeep

Sappal on Tuesday met the Election Commission and handed over a memorandum of their complaints to them.

"The Congress Party lodged a complaint against the BJP's malicious attempts to link the Congress campaign to George Soros," Ramesh said.

The Congress submitted its position that no welfare beneficiaries should be de-

nied their benefits during the course of the election in the state of Andhra Pradesh, a position which the Election Commission appreciated, he said.

"In violation of the Model Code of Conduct, state scheme advertisements in Andhra Pradesh still bore the photograph of the Chief Minister until recently. The Congress had demanded an immediate stop to this practice, and the Election Commission acted on it, ordering the withdrawal of all posters. It requested the Congress Party to notify it of any remaining posters in the state," Ramesh said.

He said the Congress Party sought a clarification on the expenditure allocation and division between the candidate and the party for expenses on campaign materials.

## CAMPAIGN FOR LS POLLS



A worker arranges masks of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of Lok Sabha elections, at Balurghat in South Dinajpur district, Tuesday.

## 'TV has always been my primary passion'

Mumbai, Apr 02:

Krip Suri, a familiar face in television, is once again captivating audiences with his versatile portrayal in Star Bharat's "Baghin." Renowned for his knack for portraying diverse characters across various shows, Krip Suri's depiction of Agni in "Baghin" promises to be another compelling addition to his body of work.

Expressing his profound dedication to his craft, Krip Suri reaffirms his enduring affection for television, stating, "Television has always been my primary passion, where I derive immense fulfillment as an artist. I've had the privilege of collaborating with esteemed producers and have



been fortunate to be part of exceptional projects over the years. While I remained engaged in various endeavors such as web shows and other projects, the timing may not have

been conducive to securing significant television roles".

He adds, "I constantly yearn for meaningful roles, and now that I've returned as a strong character with the show 'Baghin' on Star Bharat, I hope wish to convey a message to my colleagues in the industry. I implore them to consider me for roles, as I am fully committed to continuing my television journey. It's the medium that holds the most significance for me, and I am resolute in remaining an integral part of it."

"Baghin" marks a significant milestone in Krip Suri's career, and audiences can anticipate yet another remarkable performance from this talented actor.

## Conch blowers in high demand as election approaches

Berhampur (Odisha), Apr 02 (PTD)

The services of conch blowers are generally required during the auspicious occasions of Hindu marriages, thread ceremonies and other events.

But with the elections to the 147-member Odisha Assembly and 21 Lok Sabha seats in the state approaching they are in high demand as "sankha" (conch) is the symbol of the ruling Biju Janata Dal and the regional party candidates start their campaign by blowing conch across the state.

The conch blowers are hired by BJD candidates during the elections to familiarise the voters with the party symbol 'conch' during their campaigning. The BJD candidates in all



the 168 constituencies (21 Lok Sabha and 147 assembly segments) require conch blowers during the campaign.

There are around 25,000 conch blowers in Odisha's Ganjam district and most of them are engaged in the election campaign for BJD candidates in different

constituencies. "As of now, some candidates have already approached us for their campaign for the state assembly and Lok Sabha elections in the state. Their demands will increase after filing up of the nominations," said Rajendra Prasad Patra, a conch

blower in Narendrapur village of Odisha's Ganjam district.

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

Last time, after campaigning for the candidates in the first phase elections in Ganjam and Rayagada, they moved to Chandabali, Dharamsala, Bhanjangan and some other segments, said Mohapatra.

Attired like the tribal folk dancers wearing yellow or green clothes and

turbans, the team members, each adept at blowing twin conches, lead the way of the candidate on the dusty road.

Poll managers of different candidates want 'jodi sankha' (twin conch blowers), said Tutu Roul of the Roulapalli, near Kabisurya Nagar.

But talking about politics, they did not disclose the inclination of any political party. "We are only rendering our services to anyone who needs our services", said a conch blower.

"We have also rendered our service for a few BJP candidates in the last last election, but not blowing conches. We only beat drums attired in saffron colour dresses," said Mohapatra.

## Azad to contest from Anantnag-Rajouri LS seat



Srinagar, Apr 02 (PTD):

Former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir Ghulam Nabi Azad will contest the Lok Sabha elections from Anantnag-Rajouri constituency, his party DPAP said.

Azad left the Congress in 2022, ending his five-decade-long association with the party, and floated his own political outfit - Democratic

Progressive Azad Party (DPAP).

"Today the core committee of DPAP met and we have decided that (party president) Ghulam Nabi Azad will contest the Anantnag-Rajouri seat," DPAP leader Taj Mohiuddin told reporters here.

This will be the first Lok Sabha election for Azad after he lost from Udhampur constituency in 2014 to BJP leader Jitendra Singh.

On the possibility of an alliance with the Apni Party of Altaf Bukhari, Mohiuddin said no progress has been made on that front.

"We are short of time and there was not much headway in talks. So it is better they do their bit and we do ours. They were not in any case interested in Anantnag seat," he added.

Mohiuddin said candidates for other Lok Sabha Seats in Kashmir will be decided in due course.

## IAF aircraft conducts trial landing, take-off

On emergency landing strip in J-K



A helicopter of the Indian Air Force lands on the Wanpoh-Sangam stretch of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway as part of an Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) drill, in Jammu & Kashmir, Tuesday.

Srinagar, Apr 02 (PTD):

Trial landing and take-off of an IAF aircraft was conducted on the 3.5-kilometre emergency landing strip on the Jammu-

Srinagar National Highway at Bijbehara in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district, officials said on Tuesday.

The exercise began around midnight and con-

cluded at 3.30 am on Tuesday, they said.

Constructed at a cost of Rs 119 crore, work on the emergency landing strip was started in 2020 and completed late last year. It

forms part of a programme initiated by the Indian Air Force (IAF) with the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for the creation of emergency landing facilities at different locations across the country.

The emergency strip is one of 13 projects planned across the country and can be used by fighter jets and other aircraft in case of a war or a natural disaster that requires a war-like mobilisation of resources.

Traffic on the national highway's Wanpoh-Sangam stretch was restored a few hours after the trial exercise was completed, the officials said.

They said vehicular traffic on the stretch was suspended and diverted through alternative roads for the trial.

Security was heightened along the landing strip with additional personnel deployed to ensure that people did not stray inside the area.

Sniffer dogs were pressed into action to ensure that the strip and surrounding areas were free of any kind of explosives.

## 'Cong doubts EVMs only when it faces defeat in polls'

Gwalior, Apr 02 (PTD):

Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Tuesday took a swipe at Congress over the party veteran Digvijaya Singh's demand for holding elections through ballot papers, saying the Grand Old Party raises EVM issue only when it loses the electoral battle.

Scindia wondered why Singh didn't raise the issue of Electronic Voting Machines when they were introduced by Congress in the past.

Singh, the Congress nominee from Rajgarh Lok Sabha constituency, on Monday, said he was trying to get 400 people to file nominations so that polls will be held through ballot papers.



Jyotiraditya Scindia

Singh has been demanding the introduction of ballot papers for conducting elections, raising doubts over the credibility of EVMs.

"He has a problem with everything. Why didn't he raise questions when

Congress introduced EVMs? He has been raising questions on EVMs for the past 10-15 years. No question is asked by Congress (on EVM credibility) when it wins but a lot of doubts are raised when they lose," said Scindia while responding to a query on Singh's demand.

It is a stigma to raise the questions over democracy and voting rights of people, the BJP leader said.

Queried on Rahul Gandhi's critical post on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Scindia questioned Congress' moral rights for speaking about corruption.

A day before, Gandhi alleged that the Prime Minister talked about fighting corruption but he

is distributing the franchise of corruption from Assam to Maharashtra.

"This is the example of the proverbial 'Uta Chor Kotwal Ko Dante' (the pot calling the kettle black). During the 10-year Congress rule, India's identity in the world was a country with corruption and crony capitalism. But they (Congress leaders) are now questioning PM Modi's resolve of 'Na Khaunga, Na Khane Dunga' (won't allow corruption)," Scindia added.

The BJP has fielded Scindia, who belongs to the erstwhile royal family, from the Guna constituency, which he had represented four times in the past before losing in 2019 when he was with Congress.

## MCD removes over 5.20 lakh political advertisements in Delhi

Ahead of LS polls

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTD):

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has removed 5,20,042 political advertisements from across its 12 zones in view of the Model Code of Conduct for the Lok Sabha elections, according to an official document.

The advertisements were in the form of hoardings, posters, banners, wall paintings, signages and flags, it stated. The Model Code of Conduct (MCC) came into force on March 16 with the Election

Commission (EC) announcing the schedule for the general elections. Delhi will vote on May 25 in the sixth phase of the seven-phase polls. Counting of votes is on June 4.

The civic body has taken down 2,57,280 hoardings, 1,92,601 banners or wall paintings and posters, 40,022 removable signages and 30,139 removable flags, the document issued on Monday said.

The action pertains to the EC's directives to take down all political advertisements from government, public and private properties in

view of the MCC being in force till the elections conclude.

According to the EC's order, any kind of poster, hoarding or banner in a public place which promotes any political party or leader has to be removed within 24 hours of the election schedule announcement.

The MCD has 12 zones -- Rohini Zone, City SP Zone, Civil Lines Zone, Karol Bagh Zone, Narela Zone, Keshavpurm Zone, South Zone, West Zone, Najafgarh Zone, Central Zone, Shahadara North Zone and Shahadara South Zone.

## CHANGE OF NAME

It is informed to the General Public that I Sheela Sharma W/o Deep Sharma Resident of Deep Media, Ekta Chowk, Kawardha (C.G.) 491995 have changed my old Name Sheela Sharma W/o Deep Sharma, So in future I should be recognized by my new Name Sheela Rani Thakur W/o Deep Sharma in all Government and other Documents.

**Sheela Rani Thakur Deep Media,ekta Chowk, Kawardha (C.G.) 491995**



## District Minority Morcha conducts Affection Dialogue Program

**Khairagarh, Apr 02:**

Affectionate Dialogue Program of the District Minority Morcha with the slogan that there is no distance and no gap, Modi is everyone's brother, with the aim of bringing the minority community closer to the BJP, on the call of the state leadership, a Sneh Samvad Sammelan of the district minority community was organized by Navneet Jain, District President of Minority Morcha of Bharatiya Janata Party in Pipariya and Turkari Para ward of the city.

State BJP Working Committee member and District Vice President



Vikrant Singh, District BJP President Ghamman Sahu, State Vice President Minority Front Naureen Shamshin, State Minister Rafiq Khan, State Member Raunak Bhatia, District Vice

President TK Chandel and others were also present. In the affectionate dialogue, the people of Muslim community expressed their views from various fronts of life. A Bilateral dialogue was

held by the social people present in the dialogue program including the guests and everyone unanimously appealed for maximum voting for the strength of the country, state, society and family.

In the function, program in-charge Shabana Begum, Ajay Chhajed, Ayub Solanki, Ghaus Mohammad Baig, Sheikh Nizamuddin, Mithlesh Nahta, Mahila Morcha President Neelima Goswami, Preeti Yadav, Girija Chandrakar, Shamsul Hoda Khan, Harshvardhan Verma and a large number of maternal powers of Muslim society were present.

## Honor ceremony held at state level Ramayana conference

**Rajim, Apr 02:**

On the second day of the Chhattisgarh State Level Ramayana Conference held in Chaubebandha, people serving in various sectors of the village were honoured, which included people working in education, health department and other sectors. Prominently present in the program were Shree Ram Darbar Manas Mandali's Patron Sevak Shrivastava, Nakhhera Sahu, Sarpanch Dulichand Ande, Deputy Sarpanch Dhanendra Sahu, litterateur Tukaram Kansari, former Panchayat Inspector and poet Nutan Lal Sahu felicitated the selected guest.



On this occasion, Dikesh Sahu, who secured 467th rank among 3 lakh candidates in the teacher selection examination, while explaining the secret of his success, said that believe in yourself, this is the first rule to

achieve success and planning is a good strategy and one should work hard accordingly. Santosh Kumar Sonkar, President of Shri Ram Darbar Manas Mandali, said that the purpose behind honoring him is to work hard for future

success and competition has increased a lot with time.

Those honoured included Chetan Sonkar, Bhupendra Sahu, Dikesh Sahu, Sudama Pal, Dhaneshwari Sahu, Satyawati Sonkar, Chameli Pal, Kritika Pal, Hemant Sonkar, Horilal Sahu, Hemraj Sahu, Yogmaya Pal, Kavita Patel, Parvati Sahu, Maya Yadav, Kirti Sonkar, Sevati Sonkar, Suraj Sonkar, Kajal Sahu, Savitri Sahu, Purnima Pal, Lata Sahu, Khemraj Pal, Jageshwar Pal, Deepak Sahu, Daharu Sonkar, Devlal Ande, Dilip Sahu, Ajay Pal, Purnima Patel, Roshan Sahu, Durgesh Sahu, Ram Gulal Sahu, Tumesh Sahu etc.

## For all-round development of society make Saroj Pandey victorious: Sao



**Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi, Apr 02:** The Assembly level workers conference of Marwahi Assembly of Bharatiya Janata Party was held in Marwahi and addressing the workers conference, Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao said that the Narendra Modi government at the Center is continuously working for the development of all sections including villages, poor, farmers, labourers, women, youth, through various schemes. He also said that people from

Korba have been included in the mainstream of development, of the State government of Chhattisgarh which has fulfilled almost all its big promises in 100 days, and people of Korba have got a good opportunity that BJP's National Vice President Ms. Saroj Pandey is the Lok Sabha candidate from the area and she should be made victorious for the all round development of the society. BJP's National Vice President and Korba Lok Sabha candidate Ms. Saroj

Pandey said that this election is not mine but for all the workers, I want to connect Marwahi area with National Highway, build 100 beds and will complete the important work like opening a hospital and other developmental aspects in the region. Shyambihari Jaiswal, former minister Bhaiyalal Rajwade, former Surguja MP Kamal Bhan Singh, MLA Pranab Marpacchi, Korba Lok Sabha co-convenor Manoj Sharma also addressed the program. On this occasion, hundreds of Congress leaders including senior Congress leaders Gyanendra Upadhyay, Jeevan Singh Rathore, Ajay Shukla joined the BJP after being impressed by its customs and policies.

In this program, former MLA Ramdayal Uike, Lalji Yadav, Dr. Shivpratap Roy, Neeraj Jain, Kuber Sarrati, Raja Upendra Bahadur Singh, Balkrishna Agarwal, Dwarka Soni, Rakesh Dixit, Dayachand Porte, Tapas Sharma, Shankar Chakradhari, Chhotalal Soni, Lushan Rathore, Sameera Paikra and others were present.

## District police conducts election awareness session



**Goons given strict guidelines for peaceful elections**

**Khairagarh, Apr 02:**

To ensure a peaceful electoral process, the district police conducted an educational session for over 50 monitored individuals in the Khairagarh-Chhuikhadan-Gandai district.

With the Lok Sabha elections on the horizon, the district police gathered more than 50 individuals under surveillance to provide them with clear guidelines. These individuals, known for their previous involvement in unlawful activities, were instructed to refrain from consuming intoxicants,

engaging in violence, gambling, betting, or participating in the sale or transportation of liquor and drugs during the election period.

Representatives from various police stations across the district, including Khairagarh, Gandai, Chhuikhadan, Gatapar, Thelkadih, Salhewar, and Jalbandha, attended the session. Each individual present took an oath to uphold peace and refrain from any activities that could disrupt the electoral process.

Any violations reported against these individuals in the future will be met with the strictest punitive measures, ensuring the integrity of the electoral process.

## Four students selected for National Scholarship

**Meritorious students Reshma, Khushboo, Hina, and Deepthi excel in NMMS examination**

**National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship scheme recognizes academic achievements**

**Khairagarh, Apr 02:**

Poomasha Baihatola, a beacon of academic excellence in the block, celebrates the remarkable achievement of four of its students - Reshma Kunjam, Khushboo Kunjam, Hina Verma, and Deepthi Verma - who have been selected in the prestigious National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship (NMMS) Examination.

Principal Kishore Sharma proudly announced this achievement, underscoring the significance of the NMMS scheme in supporting meritorious students from economically weaker backgrounds. The scheme aims

to prevent dropouts at the 8th-grade level and encourages students to pursue education at the secondary level by providing scholarships.

Under the NMMS scheme, one lakh new scholarships are awarded annually to selected class IX students, which are renewable from classes X to XII for those studying in state government, government-aided, and local body schools. The scheme's integration into the National Scholarship Portal streamlines the application process, providing a centralized platform for scholarship schemes.

Scholarship disbursements are facilitated through the Direct Benefit

Transfer (DBT) mode, with the scholarship amount sent directly to the bank accounts of selected students via the Public Financial Management System (PFMS).

The achievement of these four students has garnered widespread recognition and congratulations from various stakeholders in the education sector: DEO Lalji Dwivedi, BEO Neelam Singh Rajput, BRC Sujit Singh Chauhan, along with community leaders such as Sarpanch Radhelal Uike and School Development Committee Chairman Ghanshyam Verma, have extended their heartfelt congratulations to the students and the school.

## Swachhata didis took out voter awareness rally

**CMO's leadership inspires call for 100% voting**

**Khairagarh, Apr 02:**

In a vibrant display of civic engagement, municipal workers joined forces with Swachhata Didis to organize a voter awareness rally, advocating for 100% voter turnout in the upcoming elections.

Under the guidance of Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Pramod Shukla and District SVEEP Nodal DEO Lalji Dwivedi, residents were urged to exercise their democratic right. Participants solemnly pledged to cast their votes, emphasizing



the importance of civic responsibility. The rally, spearheaded

by sanitation sisters, municipal officers, and employees, traversed the

city's thoroughfares, including the new bus stand and Ambedkar Chowk. At each stop, the message echoed loud and clear: a conscientious society is defined by active participation in the electoral process.

The event culminated in an oath-taking ceremony at the municipal premises, symbolizing a collective commitment to democratic principles. Notable figures such as Assistant SVEEP Nodal KK Verma, Deputy Engineer Deepali Tamboli Mishra, Accountant Dushyant Shrivastava, and Manoj Shukla joined CMO Pramod Shukla in rallying the community towards a brighter democratic future.

## Holi is a symbol of mutual harmony and unity: Yadav

**Bilaspur, Apr 02:**

Holi, the festival of colors, isn't just about splashing hues; it's a celebration of unity and harmony, remarked Divisional President Dhannu Yadav during the Holi Milan function organized by the Yadav Social Welfare Committee at Implipara Krishnadhama Yadav Bhawan. The event, which marked the conclusion of the Holi meet, emphasized the significance of Holi in fostering mutual understanding and erasing enmities. District President Jaswant Yadav highlighted how Holi signifies the onset of spring and expresses gratitude for a bountiful harvest. Holi is



the second biggest festival of our country after Diwali. He underscored the festival's symbolic victory of good over evil and its embodiment of love

and camaraderie.

The Holi Milan ceremony, held at Krishnadhama Yadav Bhawan, Implipara, commenced with prayers to Lord Shri Krishna,

revered by the Yadav community.

Vineeta Ramsharan Yadav, from the women's wing, graced the occasion as the chief guest, along with esteemed dignitaries including Sati Kumar Yadav, Deputy Commissioner Municipal Corporation Bilaspur, and various community leaders. City President Durgesh Yadav emphasized Holi's role in promoting social unity and imparting valuable life lessons. Women's wing president Kiran Yadav echoed similar sentiments, underscoring Holi's significance beyond colors, while members joyously danced to Phag songs and exchanged Holi wishes with colors, gull, and flowers.

## High-stakes showdown: Korba's election saga unfolds

**Battle of local versus outsider candidates**

**Korea/Manendragarh, Apr 02:**

In the bustling political landscape of Korba, anticipation surges as the Lok Sabha elections loom large. With Congress claiming victory twice and BJP once in the past, the upcoming electoral battle promises to be nothing short of riveting.

Amidst the flurry of campaign activities, internal discord simmers within the BJP ranks. The decision to field an external candidate for the Korba Lok Sabha seat has triggered dissent among local leaders, potentially exacerbating challenges

for the party in the electoral fray. Adding to the intrigue, the intervention of the Gondwana Party injects a fresh dynamic into the electoral equation.

After the name of BJP candidate Saroj Pandey was declared, she visited all the Lok Sabha assemblies and met with prominent leaders. However, despite her efforts, many party workers remained dissatisfied. The decision to prioritize an outsider leader over a local one by the BJP may cause internal strife and discontent among party supporters in the Korba Lok Sabha constituency.

In such a scenario, the BJP may face escalating

problems, compounded by unfavorable caste equations. Despite the perceived Modi wave, political analysts believe that Congress

candidate and incumbent MP Jyotsna Mahant holds the advantage in the Korba Lok Sabha race. Benefiting from her status as an OBC candidate and her previous tenure under the Congress government, Mahant stands as a formidable opponent.

With two women candidates vying for the seat, the contest is anticipated to be fiercely competitive. While the BJP relies on the Modi government's track record, Mahant's candidacy underscores her role in the area's development during the previous Congress administration.

Both candidates have commenced their election campaigns after the ticket announcements. Saroj Pandey has en-

**Mahant's mandate prevails**

Jyotsna Mahant won the Korba seat for the first time in the Lok Sabha elections in 2019, securing 46 percent of the total valid votes. She defeated BJP's rival Jyotinand Dubey, who received four lakh 97 thousand 61 votes. In contrast, Jyotsna Mahant garnered support from 5 lakh 23 thousand 310 voters, enabling her to emerge victorious as the elected MP.

gaged with workers in Korba and is actively meeting constituents across various assemblies. Meanwhile, Jyotsna Mahant, the incumbent MP, is familiar with the

**Results till now on Korba Lok Sabha seat**

Korba Lok Sabha seat came into existence in 2009. Dr. Charandas Mahant was elected MP from this seat for the first time in 2009. He also served as Minister of State in the then Mammoan Singh government. In the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, Charan Das Mahant lost, defeated by BJP candidate Dr. Banshilal Mahato. Mahato held this position for five years. In the 2019 elections, BJP fielded Jyotinand Dubey as its candidate for Korba Lok Sabha. His direct contest was with Congress hopeful Jyotsna Mahant. Jyotsna defeated Jyotinand Dubey in this election, and she is now representing this area as MP.

Korba Lok Sabha constituency.

It's worth noting that the Congress Party nominated Jyotsna Mahant as its sole candidate for the Korba Lok Sabha seat,

demonstrating her confidence in securing the ticket. The Korba Lok Sabha constituency encompasses eight assembly seats, including Korba,

**Main election issues in Korba Lok Sabha**

There are 8 assembly seats in Korba Lok Sabha, which also includes three assembly seats in Koriya and MCB district. Despite having sufficient coal mines, there is a lack of better health, education, and employment in these two districts, as well as direct trains to other cities of the state. The former MP did not pay any special attention to providing facilities to the common people, which is a major election issue. There are no facilities and the Centre's schemes like Jal Jeevan Mission also seem to be dying.

Katghora, Pali Tanakhar, Pendra Marwahi of Marwahi district, and B a i k u n t h p u r, Manendragarh, and Bharatpur Sonhat of Koriya district.



## Imran Khan claims wife Bushra Bibi poisoned in sub-jail

Islamabad, Apr 2 (PTI)

Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan on Tuesday said his wife and former first lady Bushra Bibi was poisoned while incarcerated at his private residence here which was turned into a sub-jail, emphasising that the army chief should be held responsible if she is harmed.

"The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader during the hearing of the 190 million pound Toshakhana corruption case in Adiala jail informed Judge Nasir Javed Rana that there had been an attempt to poison the former first lady and added that she had marks on her skin and tongue as a side effect of the "poisoning".

"I know who is behind it," The Express Tribune newspaper quoted the 71-year-old PTI founder as saying.

Khan said that if any harm came to Bushra, the Pakistan Army chief (General Asim Munir)



should be held responsible as members of an intelligence agency were controlling everything at his Bani Gala residence in Islamabad and Adiala jail in Rawalpindi.

Khan further urged the court to order 49-year-old Bushra's medical exami-

Following the former premier's request, the court directed Khan to submit a detailed application about the former first lady's medical examination.

Talking to the media after the hearing, Bushra said rumours regarding her being an "American agent" were circulating in the party and that she was poisoned through a popular toilet cleaner.

She said "three drops" of a popular toilet cleaner were added to her food, claiming that a person's health deteriorates after a month of consumption.

"My eyes swell up, I feel pain and discomfort in my chest and stomach and food and water also taste bitter. Some suspicious substance was mixed in honey earlier and now the toilet cleaner was mixed in my food," claimed the former first lady.

"I was told by someone in jail about what was added to my food. I will not reveal any names," she said.

## NOBEL WINNER



Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus waves as he arrives to appear before a court in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Tuesday.

## Parliamentary speaker faces imminent arrest over graft charges after court bid fails

Pretoria, Apr 2 (AP) :

South Africa's parliamentary speaker faces imminent arrest over corruption charges after a court on Tuesday dismissed her bid to block police and prosecutors from arresting her.

Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, who is a senior member of the ruling African National Congress party, is accused of receiving bribes from a defense contractor while she was defence minister.

According to prosecutors, she received 11 payments totalling USD 135,000 between December 2016 and July 2019. She sought another bribe of USD 105,000 but that wasn't paid, prosecutors said.

Opposition lawmakers have called for her to step down from her position as speaker over the allegations. Mapisa-Nqakula last week launched an urgent court bid to block her arrest, but a judge at the

North Gauteng High Court in Pretoria dismissed her application on Tuesday.

Speaking to reporters after the judgment was delivered, National Prosecuting Authority spokesman Mthunzi Mhaga did not say when the arrest would be made but confirmed the judgment paved the way for it to occur.

"Obviously the wheels of justice will now be in motion, as we were listening to the judgment, which was well reasoned," Mhaga said.

"We have always maintained that this is unprecedented and it was unnecessary for us to be brought to court. We have always maintained that the process of arrest will be done seamlessly," he added. Before launching her court bid, Mapisa-Nqakula was told by prosecutors she should turn herself in to authorities for processing and to appear before a judge.

## Sri Lanka to probe hazardous cargo on vessel Dali: Minister

Colombo, Apr 2 (PTI)

Sri Lanka will investigate reported hazardous materials on board the cargo vessel that collided with a key Baltimore bridge last week, the state minister of environment told Parliament on Tuesday, insisting that the country's authorities have not been informed about the content of the cargo.

The Singapore-flagged container ship vessel, Dali, which was mainly manned by an Indian crew, collided with the 2.6-km-long four-lane Francis Scott Key Bridge over the Patapsco River in Baltimore in the early hours of March 26. The 984-foot cargo ship was bound for Colombo, Sri Lanka. It was reported that the container ship was carrying 764 tonnes of hazardous materials to Colombo.

The Central Environment Authority

has not been informed of any hazardous cargo," Janaka Wakkumbura, the state minister of environment, told Parliament.

He said both Sri Lanka Customs and the Colombo Port have been instructed to carry out a probe.

"They will carry out an investigation," Wakkumbura said.

He was responding to a question from Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa who asked if permission had been granted to unload cargo in the Colombo port.

The port officials said the ship was due to reach Colombo on April 22 and the information on its cargo would only have been known 48 hours before its arrival.

The Central Environment Authority officials said its approval was a must even if unloading in Colombo was limited to transshipment of cargo.

## PM Sunak expands free childcare as 'improving' sign before election

London, Apr 2 (PTI)

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Tuesday marked the expansion of free government-funded childcare to cover two-year-olds as a sign of things "improving" for the economy ahead of a general election expected later this year.

During a round of local radio interviews in north-east England, the 43-year-old British Indian leader was again asked when he plans to call an election and reiterated his previous indication of a timeline in the second half of the year.

While he came under some criticism for laughing off the question during one such exchange, Sunak insisted that the government was heading to a place where the electorate would be able to



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak reacts with a child, during a visit to Aldersyde Day Nursery in Hartlepool as the first parents in England start to benefit from 15 hours of taxpayer-funded care for two-year-olds.

see a "brighter future" ahead.

"Last year we promised the biggest-ever expansion in childcare provision this country has ever seen, and today we are delivering on our plan with 15 hours of free

childcare for parents with two-year-olds," said Sunak.

"We want to give working families the peace of mind that they will be supported and our full expansion will save parents 6,900 pounds a year -

helping to build a brighter future for families and help to grow our economy," he said.

Asked about a general election, he told BBC Radio Newcastle: "I've said repeatedly and clearly that my working assumption would be that we have a general election in the second half of the year. There's been no change to that." "I think people hopefully will increasingly feel that things are improving and that we're heading to a place where, as I said, I want to give people peace of mind that there's a brighter future for them and their families, they can have a renewed sense of pride in our country. That's the direction of travel and so we're now heading in the right way," he told BBC Radio Tees.

## A 12-year-old student opens fire at a school



Police officers at the scene of Viertola comprehensive school, in Vantaa, Finland, Tuesday.

Helsinki, Apr 2 (AP) :

A 12-year-old student opened fire at a secondary school in southern Finland on Tuesday morning, killing one and seriously wounded two other

students, police said. The suspect was later apprehended.

Heavily armed police cordoned off the Viertola school — a large educational institution including lower and upper sec-

ondary schools with a total of about 800 students — in the city of Vantaa, just outside the capital, Helsinki, after receiving a call about a shooting incident at 09:08 am.

Police said both the suspect and the victims were 12 years old.

One of the students had died instantly after being shot, Chief of Police Ilkka Koskimäki from the Eastern Uusimaa Police Department told a news conference. The other two were seriously wounded, he said. The weapon used in the shooting was a registered handgun that was licensed to the suspect's relative, Koskimäki said.

The suspect was detained in the Helsinki area later Tuesday with a handgun in his possession, po-

lice said. He admitted to the shooting in an initial police hearing but there is no immediate word of the motive, police said, adding that the case is being investigated as a murder and two attempted murders. Finnish President Alexander Stubb and Prime Minister Petteri Orpo offered condolences to the families of the victims in postings on X with both saying they were shocked over the shooting.

"What makes it particularly shocking is the age of the victim and the suspect," Orpo said during a news conference later Tuesday. "I can assure you that this (shooting) will be carefully reviewed and conclusions will be drawn that this will not happen again," he said.

## Ukraine aims drones at an oil refinery and a drone factory

Kyiv (Ukraine), Apr 2 (AP)

Ukrainian drones attacked one of Russia's biggest oil refineries and a drone factory in the Russian province of Tatarstan, officials said Tuesday, in what appeared to be Kyiv's deepest strike inside Russian territory since the war began more than two years ago.

The attack on facilities near the cities of Yelabuga and Nizhnekamsk, located some 1,200 kilometers (745 miles) east of Ukraine, injured 12 people, Russian regional authorities said.

In recent months, Russian refineries and oil terminals have become priority targets of Ukrainian drone attacks,

part of stepped-up assaults on Russian territory. Ukrainian drone developers have been extending the weapons' range for months, as Kyiv attempts to compensate for its battlefield disadvantage in weapons and troops. The unmanned aerial vehicles are also an affordable option while Ukraine waits for more US military aid.

Neither side currently has the capacity to make much of a dent on the around 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line.

Ukrainian security and intelligence officials said they targeted a "drone-production site" in Yelabuga, Tatarstan, using Ukrainian-produced long-range drones.

## Nawaz Sharif chairs yet another government meeting despite criticism



Lahore, Apr 2 (PTI)

Unfazed by criticism, Pakistan's former prime minister Nawaz Sharif has chaired yet another administrative meeting with his daughter and Punjab province Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz.

Sharif, who is also the supremo of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-

Nawaz (PML-N) party, on Monday co-chaired a meeting to review issues faced by the province's agriculture sector, a report in Dawn newspaper said on Tuesday.

The veteran leader chairing the administrative meetings raised many questions as he does not hold any official posts in the provincial or federal government and is only a National Assembly member. Since the February 8 general elections marred by allegations of vote rigging, the 74-year-old PML-N supreme leader has generally kept a low profile. However, in the few public appearances since, he has been seen chairing or co-chairing with his 50-year-old daughter administrative meetings of the Punjab provincial government.

## Congo appoints its first female prime minister as violence surges

Kinshasa (Congo), Apr 2 (AP) :

Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi on Monday appointed the country's first female prime minister, fulfilling a campaign promise and taking an important step toward the formation of a new government after his reelection late last year.

Former planning minister Judith Suminwa Tuluka will step into the role at a time of worsening violence in the country's

mineral-rich east, which borders Rwanda. The long-running conflict has displaced more than 7 million people according to the United Nations, making it one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

Tuluka promised to work toward peace and development in her first speech on state television following her appointment. Still, it could be months before a new government is formed as the process requires inten-

sive negotiations with the many political parties.

"My thoughts go out to the east and to all corners of the country, which today are facing conflicts with enemies who are sometimes hidden," she said, referring to the conflict that involves many armed groups, including some believed to be backed by Rwanda's military. "I'm thinking of all these people, and my heart goes out to them."

## Pope exposes confidential details of past conclaves and settles scores with Pope Benedict XVI's aide

Vatican City, Apr 2 (AP)

Pope Francis has exposed the political "maneuvers" used to sway votes during the two most recent elections of popes, while denying he is planning to reform the process for future conclaves, in a book-length interview published on Tuesday.

The revelations are contained in "Pope Francis, Successor: My Memories of Pope Benedict XVI", in

which the Argentine pope reflects on his relationship with the late German pope and settles some scores with Benedict's longtime aide.

The book, written as a conversation with the correspondent for Spain's ABC daily, Javier Martinez-Brocal, comes at a delicate time for the 87-year-old Francis. His frail health has raised questions about how much longer he will remain

pope, whether he might follow in Benedict's footsteps and resign, and who might eventually replace him.

In the book, Francis revealed previously confidential details about the 2005 conclave that elected Benedict pope and the 2013 ballot in which he himself was elected, saying he was allowed to deviate from the cardinals' oath of secrecy because he is pope. In 2005, Francis said, he

was "used" by cardinals who wanted to block the election of Benedict — then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger — and that they managed to sway 40 out of 115 votes. The idea wasn't to elect the Argentine but rather to force a compromise candidate after knocking Ratzinger out of the running, he said.

"They told me afterward that they didn't want a foreign pope," — in other words, a non-Italian one —

Francis said, making clear that the process wasn't so much about the Holy Spirit inspiring cardinals as it was a cold, hard political calculus.

Francis said he put an end to the maneuvering by announcing that he wouldn't accept being pope, after which Ratzinger was elected. "He was the only one who could be pope in that moment," Francis said, adding that he, too, voted for Ratzinger.





## CENTRAL Chronicle

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### India-China Inch Closer Pursuing Peace Amidst Complexity

The meeting between Indian and Chinese diplomats on the simmering Ladakh border tensions has elicited a cautious optimism. Yet, despite the apparent cordiality, tangible progress remains elusive. The 29th meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) underscored the intricacies of the Sino-Indian border dispute, steeped in historical grievances and geopolitical intricacies. The backdrop against which these talks unfolded is fraught with complexities. Decades of territorial disputes, aggravated by the poorly defined Line of Actual Control (LAC), culminated in the 2020 Galwan Valley clashes, igniting fears of a full-scale military conflict. Since then, a series of dialogues and disengagements have aimed at de-escalating tensions, albeit with limited success. The talks in Beijing reflect a cautious approach from both sides. While the commitment to sustained communication is promising, the absence of concrete disengagement plans and timelines raises doubts about the efficacy of these discussions. However, the agreement to maintain regular diplomatic and military contact signifies a shared acknowledgment of the imperative to prevent further escalation. India's stance remains resolute, emphasizing the imperative of "complete disengagement" and the preservation of existing agreements to safeguard territorial integrity. Conversely, China's portrayal of the situation as less critical and its emphasis on progress made suggest a divergence in perspectives, potentially hindering meaningful progress. Underlying strategic concerns further complicate the landscape. China's assertiveness, coupled with its strategic alliance with Pakistan, casts a shadow over India's security calculus. Moreover, the unresolved border dispute impedes economic cooperation and regional stability, necessitating concerted efforts towards resolution. Moving forward, transparency and confidence-building measures (CBMs) are imperative. Detailed disengagement plans, coupled with regular dialogue and joint military exercises, can foster trust and prevent inadvertent escalations. Diplomatic channels must remain the primary avenue for resolution, facilitated by dedicated working groups or special representatives. While incremental progress may lack the allure of immediate breakthroughs, it is these small steps towards dialogue and cooperation that lay the groundwork for lasting peace. Both nations must eschew brinkmanship and unilateral actions, opting instead for statesmanship and foresight in pursuit of a mutually acceptable solution. As stakeholders in regional stability and prosperity, neighboring countries and global powers have a vested interest in promoting dialogue and de-escalation. A peaceful resolution to the border dispute holds the promise of increased economic cooperation and stability, benefiting the entire region. The road ahead is arduous, but not insurmountable. The recent talks offer a glimmer of hope amidst the complexities. However, achieving lasting peace and stability demands unwavering commitment to dialogue, transparency, and creative solutions. It is imperative that both India and China rise above aggressive posturing and demonstrate a genuine willingness to engage constructively in pursuit of peace along this strategically sensitive border.

### Constitutional Conundrum

#### Kejriwal's Judicial Custody

Yash Pal Ralhan

The development of Arvind Kejriwal, Delhi's Chief Minister, being sent to judicial custody for 15 days without tendering his resignation has triggered an unprecedented situation, sparking a potential constitutional crisis. Unlike previous instances where Chief Ministers facing similar circumstances promptly resigned, Kejriwal's decision not to do so has raised pertinent questions regarding the course of action the Lt. Governor might adopt. It is crucial to discern the constitutional implications of this development. While some may argue its unconstitutionality, the fact remains that the Constitution did not anticipate such a scenario, leaving room for interpretation. The silent stance of the Constitution founders underscores the need for prudence and thoughtful consideration rather than hasty decisions. Arvind Kejriwal's adeptness at staying in the limelight, irrespective of the nature of the news, is evident. His recent statements on unrelated matters and theatrical directives to his ministerial colleagues reflect a penchant for garnering attention, albeit at the expense of governance. The public's indifferent response to his arrest further underscores the erosion of sympathy for a leader who has been entangled in numerous controversies, including corruption allegations. The ongoing corruption scandal involving Kejriwal and his associates casts a shadow over his leadership. The diversion of funds for personal gain and the nexus with individuals involved in illicit activities paint a grim picture. Despite attempts to rally opposition parties in his support, the legal consequences of these charges remain imminent. In the absence of explicit constitutional provisions, common sense dictates a pragmatic approach. Kejriwal's reluctance to nominate a successor during his absence only exacerbates the situation. Drawing parallels with past instances, such as Lalu Prasad Yadav naming his wife as his successor, underscores the feasibility of such a course of action. As the wheels of justice turn, the business of governance cannot afford to remain in abeyance indefinitely. The onus falls on the Aam Aadmi Party to navigate this tumultuous period responsibly, ensuring continuity in governance while upholding the principles of democracy and accountability. Kejriwal's judicial custody underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of constitutional principles and a pragmatic approach to governance. While the absence of explicit guidelines poses challenges, it also offers an opportunity to demonstrate resilience and adherence to democratic norms. As the saga unfolds, the true test lies in navigating these uncharted waters with wisdom and integrity.

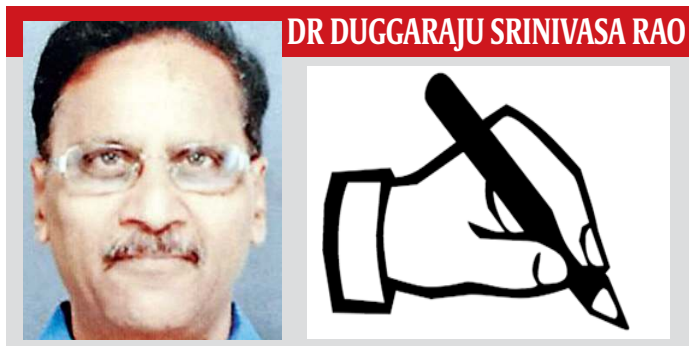
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### VOTING AWARENESS CAMPAIGN



A hot air balloon put up to raise voting awareness, ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, at Chaibasa in West Singhbhum district.

## Silver Screen's Influence on Kerala's Political Sphere



DR DUGGARAJU SRINIVASA RAO

The south Indian cinema and politics are intertwined for over several decades more so in Tamil and Telugu speaking states, where the cine heroes, heroines, script writers became the Chief Ministers. The influence of cinema was minimal despite some attempts by Kannada film fraternity, only few actors or their spouses got elected in Karnataka. The other state of south, the Kerala claimed to be different from other states in many aspects including the cinema influence on politics. This was not so despite the tall claims of LDF leaders as the communist parties also took the help of cine personalities in reaching out to the voters. Though the top actors and actresses are not involved politically there are second rung actors had political connections and this time around the entry of cine actors is more open proving that Kerala is no exception in the south.

Currently at least four artists are legislatures in the Kerala assembly and there are some others who are financially involved in the cinema industry, though there names may not appear on the titles of the Malayalam screens. The current transport minister K.B. Ganesh Kumar, who also held forest and environment ministries in earlier

stints is member of Kerala Congress (B) since last two decades. He was a television host and was a member of both Congress led UDF as well as LDF in different times.

Already four members of film fraternity are in the Kerala assembly representing different political interests. Mani C Kappan is a film actor, producer and director represents NCP from Pala constituency. Daleema Jojo of CPM is a cine singer and also famous for singing religious hymns of Christianity and Hindu. As a member of CPM she got into politics in 2015 through local body elections and then won 2021 assembly election. The fourth one is Mukesh Madhavan, actor and producer for over four decades was associated with the CPM and is currently an MLA in Kerala assembly. He is now picked by CPM as the candidate for Kollam Lok Sabha seat. This is to neutralise the cine glamour of actor G. Krishna Kumar who is trying his luck in Kollam as BJP candidate.

As per Unnikrishnaana, the general secretary of the Film employees Federation of Kerala directors union the cine personalities joining politics is now now and it has history of over two decades but media is highlighting this just because BJP has put up actors for the upcoming Lok Sabha

elections to show that party in low light and project it as a glamour dependent party having no root at the base level. As the Left parties tried to hide its role in putting up actors as candidates in election, now the past being dug out by the media.

It is a fact that Kerala remained unassailable area for BJP where there is no candidate ever got elected form that soil till 2016 when one of its veteran leader Rajagopal created history by entering the assembly. He failed to retain his seat in 2021, thus pushing BJP to the square one. Despite many decades of work by RSS in Kerala and many groups getting attracted to the core ideology of Sangh, it never got transformed into electoral politics to win seats for BJP. Since Modi government taking over Delhi, it made sustained attempt to crack Kerala politics which are well polarised between LDF and Congress lead UDF. In 2019 Lok Sabha elections, despite being in power in the state, LDF could win only one seat while the UDF won 19 seats. LDF withstood that reversal and bounced back by retaining power in 2021 state assembly elections. Now BJP slowly trying to build a third front though its success is not encouraging.

To gain political foothold in Kerala the BJP tried many ways, including the Sabarimala temple entry verdict, Love Jihad issue, where even Christian girls are also victims. Besides them the cine glamour is also injected to wean away the young voters. Suresh Gopi, the actor, was picked up for nominated Rajya Sabha seat, then gave assembly ticket in the last elections and now nominated as the candidate from Thrissur constituency. Thrissur is the temple town and is nerve centre during the agitation against the judicial verdict on Sabarimala entry for women of all ages. Women were in forefront of

that agitation and BJP hopes that Nari-Shakthi and Suresh Gopi's cine glamour will put Thrissur in their kitty this time.

The Kollam seat is also going to be a fight between two actors. Mukesh Madhavan of CPM known for his rib-tickling roles and sitting member of Kollam assembly constituency now candidate for Lok Sabha constituency is challenged by Krishna Kumar of BJP who is through television and cinema characters. He along with his daughters used the social media platforms to become the influencers and then use that popularity in the political arena.

It is not that Malayalam voters are totally against filmy glamour into the elections. In 2014 actor Innocent, who acted over 700 films in different languages, got elected from Chalakudy constituency as an independent candidate. The LDF tactfully supported him to cash cine popularity of Innocent elsewhere. At that time actor Innocent was the Malayalam Movie artists' association president.

Movies artist's interest in politics in Kerala is there even in Prem Nazir time where Congress party encouraged him to some extent and then dropped him. In 1965 itself film personalities contested and won election. LDF fielded director Lenin Rajendran in 1989 elections. There are many unsuccessful attempts some cine artists.

The only difference between Kerala and other southern states is that top heroes never took a plunge unlike in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Current top guns Mammuthy and Mohan Lal are totally detached from politics. But who knows when they will be bitten by political bug and turn Kerala into any other southern state where politics and cinema are happily combined.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Sustainable fertilizer

In order to provide plants with the nutrients they need, nitrogen and phosphorus are essential. Agrosscience has made significant progress in creating the proper nutrition for the plant kingdom, and human waste is now recognized as one of the key components that provides these elements to plants. However, human waste must be properly treated before use, as it can harbor pathogens and parasites that cause disease. According to Franziska Hafner, "they gave similar yields as conventional fertilizer product and did not show any risk regarding transmission of pathogens or pharmaceutical." Many scientists agree, but the remaining task is persuading people of this.

Rina Roy Karmakar, Durgapur, West Bengal

#### Glamourizing Violence

It is true that there are some good Bollywood films. But many Hindi films try to captivate movie audiences by violence. They highlight violence as a panacea for getting justice, even love. When a victim targets a villain for his misfortune instead of targeting the system, he gets a clap from both male and female audiences. In many popular movies, courtship begins with eve-teasing and that helps those movies get box-office success because many men and women are still comfortable with regressive gender models. The addition to machismo is primitive and gender neutral. These movies solely depend on this addition. By pampering machismo, these movies have been doing a great harm to democratic culture where the people are expected to enjoy political power through a ballot, political dissent and peaceful agitation. These movies want to make people believe that primitive, regressive, jungle-raj dictatorship, which is based on the principle that might is right, is a simple solution to their problems.

Sujit De, Kolkata

#### Subsidise RWH

The acute drinking water crisis in Bengaluru, highlighted by a shortage of about 2000 million litres per day, underscores the urgency of adopting sustainable water management practices like rainwater harvesting (RWH). Despite mandates like the BWSB Amendment Bill 2021, RWH adoption remains low. Offering tax incentives for RWH systems could incentivize citizens, aligning with calls for greater awareness of RWH's long-term benefits. Emulating Odisha's subsidy model could further bolster adoption rates statewide, conserving groundwater and enhancing environmental sustainability. With concerted efforts, Bengaluru can mitigate its water crisis by RWH and can contribute to sustainable water management, ensuring a more resilient future.

Dr. Vijaykumar H K, Raichur, Karnataka

## How to make sure your leftovers are safe to eat

Primrose Freestone

Eating leftovers can be a great way to save money, diversify your cooking repertoire and reduce food waste.

But eating leftover food can also be risky as these foods have already been exposed to bacteria in the environment. If you haven't stored and re-heated leftovers correctly, you could be putting yourself at risk of potentially life-threatening food poisoning.

That doesn't mean you should start avoiding leftovers, however. By following the correct food safety practices, you can ensure you avoid harm when eating leftovers.

How quickly should leftovers be refrigerated or frozen?

Bacteria exist everywhere in our world, including in kitchens – and the foods within them. The bacteria that cause food to spoil can grow rapidly with the right nutrients, moisture and temperatures. Some double in numbers in as little as 20 minutes.

It's important that any leftovers are put into the fridge or freezer as quickly as possible and within two hours maximum. This time advice is based on how quickly bacteria

can grow in food at non-refrigerated temperatures, and means leftover food become less safe to eat the longer it is left at more than 5°C. You should also make sure that leftovers are covered. Clingfilm and airtight lids help prevent air from getting at the food. This is important, as most pathogens need oxygen to grow.

How long are refrigerated leftovers safe to eat?

Your fridge should be kept at a temperature of between 0 and 5°C, as this inhibits the growth of food poisoning bacteria on leftovers.

Leftovers must be eaten within two days, as any longer gives harmful bacteria more time to grow. Indeed, pathogens such as Listeria, which can cause flu-like symptoms, can even grow in refrigerated temperatures and are more likely to grow beyond two days – which is why this is the recommended time limit for storing your leftovers.

If you don't think you'll eat your leftovers within that timeframe, consider freezing them. Leftovers can be kept for up to three months if frozen at -18°C.

What is the safest way to re-heat your leftovers?

When you reheat leftovers, you must ensure the food is piping hot all the way through. If not, don't eat it.

Leftover foods should be reheated to an internal temperature of at least 165°F (74°C). For sauces, stews, soups and gravy, it's best to bring them to a full boil, stirring for at least three minutes. These practices will kill most bacteria and inactivate any heat-sensitive bacterial toxins that are present.

If reheating leftovers in the oven, set the oven temperature to at least 325°F (163°C or gas mark 3) and bake long enough to completely heat the food through to at least 74°C. If reheating leftovers in the microwave, you should also make sure they reach an internal temperature of 74°C before eating.

Reheating food using a slow cooker is not a good idea because if foods stay at a temperature less than 165°F for several hours, this can permit bacterial growth – increasing your risk of food poisoning.

Can you reheat leftovers more than once?

You really should not reheat leftovers more than once. Each time a food warms and cools, it provides

the right temperature and amount of time needed for any harmful bacteria to start to re-grow.

This then makes it harder for heat kill all the pathogens present the next time you warm up the leftovers. If you don't think you'll eat all your leftovers within two days, consider freezing them.

Can you reheat a takeaway?

Whether you can safely re-heat takeaway foods depends on how you stored it.

If it was stored warm in the back of your car or left at room temperature in your home for more than two hours, then the meal may be a food poisoning risk – especially if you've already touched or partially eaten it (which introduces bacteria to the food).

But if you didn't handle the food much and refrigerated it within two hours of purchase, then the takeaway is safe to re-heat – provided the next time it's eaten it's first heated to a piping hot temperature of at least 74°C. It also shouldn't be stored in the fridge for more than two days.

There are some takeaway foods that you should be careful about saving as leftovers. Cooked rice dishes are possibly the most risky

to save. Uncooked rice may contain spores of *Bacillus cereus*, a bacterium that causes food poisoning.

While the parent bacterium is killed when rice is cooked, its spores can survive the temperature of boiling water. If rice is not refrigerated within two to three hours of cooking, the spores can grow into bacteria which in turn release the rice toxins which give rise to food poisoning symptoms such as diarrhoea, abdominal pain and vomiting. The longer contaminated cooked rice is left to stand at a non-refrigerated temperature, the more *Bacillus cereus* will be present and the more unsafe the dish becomes.

If cooked rice needs to be saved, it should be covered once cooked and cooled quickly (ideally within 2 hours), then stored and refrigerated for no more than 24 hours. Cooked rice leftovers should be piping hot when reheated, and should never be reheated more than once.

Leftovers can be safe to eat so long as you take the right precautions. But if you're ever in doubt, or don't think you'll eat them within two days, storing them in the freezer will give you more flexibility than storing them in the fridge.



**BRIEF**

**Takes over**



**New Delhi:** Sorin Investment Fund Chairman Sanjay Nayar has taken over as Assocham president for 2024-25, the industry body said on Tuesday. He replaced SpiceJet Chairman and MD Ajay Singh, who completed his tenure as the chamber's president. "Nayar brings experience of four decades in global financial and capital markets, including 25 years at Citi and nearly 14 at KKR, before retiring last year. He established KKR India operations in 2009 after leaving Citigroup.

**Demand notices**

**New Delhi:** Mining giant Vedanta Ltd has received GST demand notices to the tune of Rs 1.86 crore for availing input tax credit, which has been termed "ineligible" by the tax authority. The company said it will file an appeal against the orders. In a regulatory filing on Tuesday, Vedanta Ltd said the Office of the Assistant Commissioner, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, has sent the GST demand notice. "The company has received orders from Office of Assistant Commissioner, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, confirming demand of GST related to Input Tax Credit availed by the company which is regarded as ineligible by such tax authority for the period from FY 2017-18 till FY 2021-22," Vedanta said.

**Appointment**

**Chennai:** Leading global specialist in Low Voltage (LV) power management Socomec India, has appointed Nida Khanam as its Head, Human Resources, the company said on Tuesday. With over two decades of experience, Khanam would be the HR Head for India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives, Bhutan, and Nepal. She succeeds Nisha Gupta Malhotra who would now support the mission of Environmental, Social, and Governance in the Asia Pacific region, a company statement said here on Tuesday. Prior to the new role, Khanam was serving Omega Seiki Mobility Pvt Ltd as its Chief People Officer.

## Transparency most fundamental attribute of trust: Buch

**Mumbai, Apr 02:**

Sebi chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch on Tuesday said the entire edifice of the capital markets rests on trust, and called transparency as the "fundamental attribute" of the same. She said the capital markets regulator acts as a proxy to safeguard the interests of the public shareholders, which account for 56 per cent of the listed companies' holdings as against 44 per cent with the promoters. "Not just the market, but the entire economy rests on the edifice of trust," she said, speaking at an event on corporate governance organized by industry lobby grouping CII here. "To us as a regulator, the most fundamental attribute of trust is transparency," the Sebi chief added. She said trust is a two-way street, where a company has to build trust with the regulator to build trust with the market while the regu-



lator is working to build trust with the industry as a representative of the public shareholders. Bajaj Finserv's head Sanjiv Bajaj, who also chairs the CII council on corporate governance, said the lobby grouping is a frontrunner on corporate governance and advises its members to follow it not only in letter but also in spirit. "Sound corporate governance practices play an important role in building sustainable businesses. But they also contribute towards stability, growth and credibility of the larger economy as a whole," Bajaj said. He said that

later this year, CII will be coming out with a charter on corporate governance in family businesses. On Tuesday, Buch launched two reports at the CII meet, one focusing on the impact of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act on enterprises in India and the second is a CII charter on corporate governance for startups. Meanwhile, Buch said reducing the trade settlement times to one day (T+1) has helped the market as the 'defect rate' or the delivery versus payment ratio has halved to about 0.4 per cent. She said the country now occupies centre stage globally when it comes to discussions on technology and other improvements in the functioning of markets. Sebi chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch on Tuesday said the Indian capital markets are commanding higher valuations because of foreign investors' optimism and trust in the country. She

said at 22.2, the ratio of price to earning multiple in the Indian market is higher than the average of many indices around the world. "Yes, some people say that we are an expensive market but still why is the investment coming? Because this is a reflection of the optimism and the trust and faith that the world has in India today that we are commanding the kind of multiples in our markets," she said at a CII event on corporate governance here. A few weeks ago, Buch had flagged concerns on high valuations in segments of small and midcap stocks, stating that it could be becoming into a bubble. Buch said she meets foreign investors regularly as part of her mandate and has seen an increased interest in India among them because of the velocity which the country's economy has got after years of high speed growth.

**Vistara to temporarily reduce flights on non-availability of crew**



**Mumbai, Apr 02:**

Vistara will temporarily reduce flight operations due to non-availability of pilots that resulted in nearly 50 flight cancellations on Monday, according to sources. More number of flights are expected to be cancelled on Tuesday and the number could go up to 70, the sources in the know said. The full-service carrier has been grappling with the issue of first officers of its A320 fleet reporting sick in the last few weeks to protest against reduction in their emoluments due to new contracts, the sources added. A Vistara spokesperson said the airline had a significant number of flight cancellations and delays in the past few days due to various reasons, including crew unavailability.

## Govt has taken up issue of ban on imports of Russian diamonds by EU, G7: Jaishankar

**Surat, Apr 02:**



The Indian government has taken up on priority the issue of ban on imports of Russian-origin unpolished diamonds by the European Union (EU) and G7 nations as the measure will end up hurting the domestic diamond polishing industry mainly centred in Gujarat's Surat city, said External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. The initial stage of an EU and G7 ban on imports of Russia-origin diamonds via third countries came into effect in early March, a step taken as part of sanctions on Moscow in response to its invasion of Ukraine. "Our effort is to delay (the initial stage of ban), soften it, and best of all, not let this happen at all. For us, this has become a priority issue, and we will try to find out a solution in coming days," Jaishankar said here. He was responding to a question on how the ban is going to hurt the Surat diamond industry,

which polishes 90 per cent of the world's rough diamond. Jaishankar said at an interaction with young business leaders organised by the Disha Foundation in Surat that the 27-member EU has imposed sanctions on imports of Russian diamonds, and G7, the group of the world's wealthiest nations, is also going in that direction. The countries which have banned the imports of Russian rough diamonds via third countries as part of sanctions on Russia in response to its invasion of Ukraine are only consumers and their employment does not depend on it, the minister noted.

## Majority of Adani group stocks rise for 2nd day; Adani Power jumps 5%

**New Delhi, Apr 02:**

Nine of the 10 listed Adani group stocks ended in the positive territory on Tuesday, extending their rally for the second day. Shares of Adani Power jumped 5 per cent, Adani Wilmar soared 4.15 per cent, ACC went up by 4.09 per cent, NDTV advanced 2.81 per cent and Ambuja Cements by 2.09 per cent on the BSE.

The stock of Adani Ports climbed 2.02 per cent, Adani Total Gas (0.65 per cent), Adani Enterprises (0.51 per cent) and Adani Green Energy (0.30 per cent). Adani Energy Solutions emerged as the only laggard, declining 1.25 per cent. All listed Adani group stocks were in the limelight on



Monday also, with Adani Energy climbing over 8 per cent. Adani group opened a USD 1.2 billion copper plant, bought a port in Odisha, raised stakes in a cement company and stitched an alliance with rival Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries, all in a matter of one week in signs that the apples-to-airport conglomerate has shrugged off the Hindenburg effect and is back to rapid expansion spree.

## India's coal and lignite production hits highest level of 1 billion tonnes in FY24: Pralhad Joshi

**New Delhi, Apr 02:**

The country has for the first time crossed the milestone of 1 billion tonnes of coal and lignite production in the financial year 2023-24, Union Coal and Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi said. India's total coal and lignite output was at 937 million tonnes (MT) in the preceding 2022-23 fiscal, as per official figures.

"Proud to share that under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi, we have registered a stellar achievement by crossing 1 billion tonne (BT) coal and lignite production," Joshi said. It is a historic moment for India as the country has achieved the highest-ever production, and it will go a long way in en-



sureing energy security to the nation. The continuous efforts to increase domestic coal production has ensured that going forward the country will never have to face coal shortage, the minister said. Joshi further said, "I thank the officials of the sector, all the coal warriors and private miners for their grit and hard work in helping achieve mission-1BT. Owing to your support we have registered 70 per cent growth

in production over the last 10 years." The country is not very far from its next target to eliminate coal imports by 2025-26, he said. The share of imported coal for blending purposes has gone down this fiscal compared to last financial year, Joshi told PTI last month. In FY24, coal import for blending was around 22.20 million tonnes, while it was at 30.80 million tonnes in the financial year 2022-23. Savings to the tune of Rs 82,264 crore had been made through the reduction of coal imports in just one year, Joshi said. According to the official data, the combined coal and lignite production was at 1,039.57 MT, while the despatch was at 1,016.71 MT during FY24.

## PeepalCo unveils stock investing app Lemonn for new investors

**New Delhi, Apr 02:**

PeepalCo, built by entrepreneurs Ashish Singhal, Govind Soni, and Vimal Sagar Tiwari, has launched a stock investing app, Lemonn, that aims to simplify discovery and decision-making for new investors. Lemonn marks PeepalCo's expansion into stock broking, and will be housed as a separate business division with its own managing and operations teams, according to a release. Devam Sardana will lead the team at Lemonn and assume the role of Business Head. "Expanding its wealth-tech ambitions, PeepalCo, the house of brands built by successful entrepreneurs Ashish Singhal,

Govind Soni, and Vimal Sagar Tiwari, has launched Lemonn, a stock investing app," the release said adding that the app simplifies discovery and decision-making for new investors. "Millions of Indians find stock markets complicated even today. Despite the post-pandemic growth, only about 6 per cent of Indians invest in stock markets. We aim to bridge this gap, by making stock investing engaging, informative, and effortless," Ashish Singhal, Co-Founder and Group CEO of PeepalCo group said. PeepalCo is a house of brands with tailored wealth-tech products, and the Group serves over 20 million Indians through its various offerings.

## Passenger vehicle sales soar to record high in FY24; dispatches cross 42 lakh mark

**New Delhi, Apr 02:**

Driven by robust demand for sports utility vehicles, passenger vehicle sales in India soared to a record high in FY 2023-24 with dispatch of over 42 lakh units. The overall passenger vehicle dispatches from manufacturers to dealers last fiscal rose to 42.3 lakh units, an increase of 9 per cent, as compared with 38.9 lakh units in FY2022-23 on the back of record sales by manufacturers, including Maruti Suzuki India, Hyundai Motor India and Toyota Kirloskar Motor.



The share of sports utility vehicles to the overall passenger vehicle dispatches rose to 50.4 per cent in the last fiscal as compared to 43 per cent in FY 2022-23. "This is the first time that passenger vehicle sales have crossed the 40

lakh sales mark in the country...much of the growth that has happened is in the SUV segment," Maruti Suzuki India Member Executive Committee Shashank Srivastava told reporters here. The SUV (Sports

Utility Vehicle) segment witnessed a year-on-year growth of 28 per cent; hatchbacks by 12 per cent; sedans by 6 per cent while MPVs (Multi Purpose Vehicles) have grown by 19 per cent and vans by 6.5 per cent last fiscal, he said. However, he said the industry is expected to see "single-digit" sales growth in the current fiscal due to the high base effect of the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024. Maruti Suzuki India reported the highest-ever yearly domestic sales of 17,93,644 units and record exports of 2,83,067 units in 2023-24 fiscal.

## Skoda Auto India enhances digitalisation strategy

**To fuel New Era of growth in India**

**Mumbai, Apr 02:**

Skoda Auto India has already ushered in the New Era with the announcement of its all-new compact SUV. Taking a stride further into the New Era with user engagement, customer involvement and digitalisation, the company launched a flurry of 360-degree digital activities that saw it achieve landmark sales and get closer to its customers and fans. Speaking on the occasion, Petr Janeba, Brand Director;

Skoda Auto India, said: "With the ever-changing digital landscape, platforms and mediums, it is imperative to pioneer new ways of enhancing the customer experience and journey. Our digital strategies are designed to ensure our products and services reach out to our customers and fans, in a language of their choice. The Name Your Skoda campaign garnered over 1,50,000 entries till date for our soon-to-be-launched all-new compact SUV. The recently concluded, first-ever, fully digital 24-hour sale celebrating our 24 years in India resulted in 709

Skoda cars being booked in a single day. Besides, we have further enhanced our Skodaverse India NFT umbrella with the roll out of the Skoda Gearheads community. With these we are constantly adapting and evolving to reach out to even more customers to meet their needs and aspirations in this vast and diverse market." Name Your Skoda is a campaign that enabled the involvement and engagement of users, customers and the Fans of Skoda in picking the name for Skoda Auto India's compact SUV that will hit the roads in 2025.

## India's mfg sector growth hits 16-yr high in March

**As new orders jump amid buoyant demand**

**New Delhi, Apr 02:**

India's manufacturing sector growth climbed to a 16-year high in March on the back of the strongest increase in output and new orders since October 2020, amid reports of buoyant demand conditions, a monthly survey said on Tuesday. The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) surged to a 16-year high of 59.1 in March, from 56.9 in February, re-

flecting stronger growth of new orders, output and input stocks as well as renewed job creation. In Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion while a score below 50 denotes contraction. "India's March manufacturing PMI rose to its highest level since 2008. Manufacturing companies expanded hiring in response to strong production and new orders. On the back of strong demand and a slight tightening in capacity, input cost inflation picked up in March," Ines Lam, Economist at HSBC, said. Manufacturing output

rose for the 33rd month running in March, and to the greatest extent since October 2020. Growth quickened across the consumer, intermediate and investment goods sectors. Inflows of new work strengthened from both domestic and export markets. New export orders increased at the fastest pace since May 2022, the survey said. Quantities of purchase increased at the quickest rate since mid-2023, and one that was among the strongest in nearly 13 years, as companies sought to build up stocks in advance of expected improvements in sales.

## Stock markets end 3-day winning run as IT, private bank shares drop on profit-taking

**Mumbai, Apr 02:**

Stock markets snapped the three-day winning run on Tuesday with benchmark Sensex falling by 110 points due to profit-taking in select IT, private bank and auto shares amid weak trends from the US markets and foreign fund outflows. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined by 110.64 points or 0.15 per cent to settle at 73,903.91 with 16 of its components ending lower and 14 settling higher. During the day, the index dropped by 270.78 points or 0.36 per cent to a low of 73,743.77 points. The broader NSE Nifty closed lower by 8.70 points or 0.04 per cent at

22,453.30 despite recovery at the fag-end. Both Sensex and Nifty scaled lifetime high levels in intra-day trade on Monday before settling around 0.5% higher. "The domestic market took a breather today after achieving a fresh record high yesterday. Factors such as a rising dollar, increasing US bond yields, and a notable uptick in crude oil prices collectively dampened investor sentiment," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said. Better-than-expected US manufacturing data raised worries about a potential delay in interest rate cuts by the US Fed, Nair added.

## Western Digital outlines must-have features for CCTV Storage

**Mumbai, Apr 02:**

The evolving landscape of CCTV applications, extending beyond traditional security use cases, emphasizes the significance of smart video in diverse sectors such as retail management and transportation. With an array of cameras, ranging from user-friendly options to advanced artificial intelligence (AI) integrated devices, the CCTV market in India is projected to grow significantly from USD 3.30 billion to USD 8.43 billion by 2028 (source).

Among the crucial components for a smart video setup, specialized storage plays a pivotal role. Efficient CCTV operations require high-capacity storage solutions to accommodate 24/7 video capture. Whether utilizing on-camera micro SD/TM cards or hard disk drives (HDDs), investing in substantial storage is imperative. The WD Purple Pro Smart Video HDD by Western Digital, offering up to 22TB storage capacities, stands out as an ideal companion for CCTV setups. Similarly, the on-camera storage option, WD Purple SC QD101 Ultra Endurance microSD Card, provides storage capacities up to 1TB.

"The WD Purple portfolio is tailored for the evolving needs of CCTV setups, providing high-capacity solutions like the WD Purple Pro Smart Video HDD with up to 22TB. Designed for 24/7 reliability, our WD Purple microSD cards offer robust endurance. The WD Purple™ Pro drives, equipped with AllFrame AI technology, ensure seamless video playback and support deep learning analytics within the system", Khalid Wani, Senior Director, Sales, India, Western Digital. CCTV storage solutions demand higher endurance to endure challenging weather conditions and minimize downtime. Given the often inaccessible placement of cameras, selecting storage solutions with robust endurance becomes essential.



## Mahila Congress rally behind Bhupesh Baghel



Khairagarh, Apr 02:

The District Mahila Congress, propelled by the promise of the Nyay scheme, is fervently mobilizing support to secure victory for Congress candidate Bhupesh Baghel in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Under the leadership of District Mahila Congress President Aarti Mahobia, a meeting convened with zeal as MLA Yashoda Verma and Lok Sabha in-charge Mamta Chandrakar, along with co-in-charge Rajkumari

Sinha and Assembly in-charge State Mahila Congress Secretary Kusum Dubey, rallied Mahila Congress workers to pledge their unwavering support.

Emphasizing the significance of grassroots engagement, MLA Yashoda Verma articulated the importance of reaching out to constituents, ensuring Baghel's triumph with an overwhelming majority of votes, and amplifying the voice of the constituency in Parliament. Echoing Verma's sentiments, Mamta Chandrakar cele-

brated the opportunity to endorse Baghel, hailed as the architect of the district, and urged women Congress workers to channel their energy towards securing victory.

Rajkumari Sinha, emphasizing Congress's commitment to the working class, urged all members to inspire support for the party, highlighting its track record of action over rhetoric. Kusum Dubey underscored Congress's dedication to women's empowerment, citing initiatives such as the Mahalakshmi Nari Nyay

### Commitment to victory in Lok Sabha elections

Yojana as evidence of its commitment to fostering prosperity and empowerment among women.

The meeting also shed light on the plight of women under the Mahtari Vandan Yojana, with participants lamenting the government's failure to deliver on its promises and highlighting the scheme's shortcomings.

The gathering, attended by prominent women Congress officials and workers including Chhuikhadan Nagar Panchayat President Partika Mahobia, Priyanka Janghel, Dhaneshwari Janghel, Kavita Janghel, Kiran Jha, served as a testament to the unwavering resolve of Mahila Congress in championing Bhupesh Baghel and the Congress party's vision for progress and empowerment.

## Rural talents shine in Navodaya selections

Kurud, Apr 02:

The rural hinterlands of Kurud are aglow with pride as talented children from Barna, Katalbod, and Mandrod secure coveted spots in Navodaya Vidyalaya's class 6th.

Six girls and one boy from the region have earned this prestigious opportunity, marking a significant achievement for the local community. BEO Ravindra Nath Mishra and BRCC Kuleshwar Sinha extend their heartfelt congratulations to the selected students, commending their stellar performance in the rural selection examination. They wish them a prosperous future and encourage them to continue their educational journey with zeal.

At Government Primary School Marar Para Barna, Pushpanjali Sahu and Purvansh Raj Sahu stand out as shining examples of excellence. The school's management committee, led by Chairman Laxmi Sahu and Vice President Jhamin Sahu, along with Head Teacher Uma Nirmalkar and other



staff, applaud their remarkable achievement and extend warm wishes for their future endeavors.

Similarly, students from Government Naveen Primary School Katalbod, namely Dimple Sahu, Aditi Sahu, and Ragini Dhruv, have secured seats at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Kurud. Head Teacher Khilleshwar Prasad Sahu, along with the school's dedicated faculty, express pride in their students' success and emphasize

the value of dedication in achieving such milestones.

In Mandrod, Meenakshi Sonkar of Daniel Public School emerges victorious in the Navodaya Selection Examination. School authorities, including President Ramesh Kumar Sahu and Principal Mukesh Kumar Sahu, along with the teaching staff and parent committee members, celebrate her achievement and extend heartfelt wishes for her bright future.

Further, Lavanya of Semra B village, a class 5 student at Government Primary School, Semra B Sankul Donar, secures a place at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, eliciting joyous celebrations from her teachers, parents, and school community.

These success stories exemplify the dedication and hard work of students, teachers, and communities in nurturing talent and fostering educational excellence in rural areas.

## Colorful celebrations of Rang Panchami



Kurud, Apr 02:

The ancient Shri Ram Temple in Kurud reverberated with joyous celebrations as Rang Panchami, the festival of colors, was commemorated with fervor and traditional splendour.

Amidst the rhythmic beats of drums and the melodious strains of Holi songs, devotees gathered to worship Lord Shri Ram and partake in the vibrant festivities. Flowers flew in

the air as revellers delighted in adorning the beloved deity with floral offerings.

As is customary, the festival was observed on March 30th this year, with Akhilesh Vaishnav, the temple's head, affirming its status as a bastion of folk traditions and cultural heritage. The Shri Ram Temple has long been revered for its commitment to upholding customs, including the annual celebration of Annakoot during Diwali and Rang

### At Ancient Shri Ram Temple

Khairagarh, Apr 02:

Panchami during Holi.

The festivities commenced at 7:00 pm, drawing participants from near and far to immerse themselves in the spirit of Rang Panchami. Temple dignitaries, including Mahant Akhilesh Vaishnav, Vedanath Chandrakar, Basant Sahu, Nagar Panchayat President Tapan Chandrakar, and others, added to the jubilant atmosphere by joining in the floral Holi celebrations and singing traditional Phag songs to the rhythm of traditional Nangad beats.

The event was attended by devotees, cultural enthusiasts, and residents from the city and surrounding areas, underscoring the enduring significance of cultural celebrations in fostering community spirit and preserving heritage.

## Development strategy boosts election prospects: Verma

Khairagarh, Apr 02:

Vinod Verma, political advisor to former Chief Minister and Congress candidate for the Lok Sabha elections, Bhupesh Baghel, convened a strategic meeting with party members to galvanize support and outline a roadmap for success.

Addressing Congress officials, workers, and leaders from various sectors, Verma emphasized the importance of unity and adherence to the party's electoral strategy. He underscored that concerted efforts aligned with the party's vision would pave the way for victory in the upcoming elections.

During the meeting, Verma provided a comprehensive overview of the developmental initiatives undertaken at the grassroots level, from booth to ward and zone levels, as well as the ongoing party campaigns.

MLA Yashoda Verma, also in attendance, highlighted

Baghel's contributions to the region, including the establishment of Khairagarh as a district and the provision of essential infrastructure such as Atmanand School, College, and Tehsil Office.

Yashoda Verma expressed confidence that the electorate's awareness of these accomplishments would translate into electoral gains for the Congress party in the assembly constituency.

Encouraging party workers to remain steadfast in their efforts, she asserted that a historic victory in the Lok Sabha elections was assured, buoyed by the unwavering dedication of party members.

The meeting witnessed the participation of key figures such as City President Bhikhamchand Chhajed, Block President Akashdeep Singh, District President Shailendra Verma, Puran Sarathi, Bharat Chandrakar, Ravindra Singh Gudda and others.

## Guaranteed justice if Congress govt is formed: Dr. Dahria

Lavan, Apr 02:

Dr. Shivkumar Dahria, former Cabinet Minister and Congress candidate for Janjgir Champa Lok Sabha constituency, articulated a vision of justice and empowerment during a recent campaign event in Lavan.

Highlighting the Congress party's commitment to justice, Dr. Dahria outlined a series of transformative initiatives aimed at fostering equality and opportunity. Under the proposed Nari Nyay Yojana, economically disadvantaged women will receive an annual assistance of Rs 1 lakh, empowering them to lead a dignified life. Furthermore, he pledged to implement a 50% reservation for women in new recruitments within the Central Government, ensuring their representation and participation in decision-making processes. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Dahria emphasized the importance of com-



prehensive support for women, including doubling the central government's contribution to the salaries of Asha workers, Anganwadi staff, and Mid Day Meal providers. Additionally, he proposed the establishment of a dedicated rights minister in every panchayat to educate women about their legal entitlements, ensuring their access to justice and resources.

During his extensive tour, Dr. Dahria engaged with local communities, underscoring his commitment to farmers' rights, youth empowerment, and social justice.

Accompanied by MLA Sandeep Sahu and district Congress officials, he participated in street meetings, temple visits, and cultural events, receiving warm welcomes from enthusiastic supporters.

In a show of communal harmony and cultural vibrancy, Dr. Dahria joined the ongoing Akhand Navdha Ramayana recitation in village Sabar, where he was greeted by hundreds of Congress workers with floral tributes and musical celebrations.

## Korea police boosts fitness with cricket matches



### SP Suraj Singh Parihar leads initiative for stress relief

Korea, Apr 02:

Superintendent of Police Korea, Suraj Singh Parihar, has spearheaded a commendable initiative to enhance the fitness and morale of Korea Police personnel through cricket matches. Under SP Parihar's guidance, the Korea Police cricket team was formed, marking a

significant step towards promoting wellness and camaraderie among officers. The inaugural practice match, held at Rakshit Center Baikunthpur, showcased the department's commitment to holistic well-being.

In the thrilling encounter, the A team, led by Superintendent of Police Koriya, faced off against the B team, captained by trainee DSP Ravikant. The match witnessed intense competition, with the B team putting up a valiant



effort, scoring 120 runs in 12 overs. However, it was the SP Korea team that emerged victorious, chasing down the target with skillful batting and bowling displays.

Constable Santosh Markandey's impressive batting performance, scoring 49 runs for the B team, showcased the talent and dedication of the police personnel. Additionally, constable Shashi Bhushan Mishra's exceptional bowling, claiming 2 wickets for 21 runs, underscored the

team's all-around prowess.

Recognizing the demanding nature of police work, SP Parihar emphasized the importance of sports activities in fostering physical fitness, discipline, and stress management among officers. Through initiatives like cricket matches, the department aims to create a conducive environment for personnel to unwind and recharge, ensuring their well-being while fulfilling their duty to maintain law and order.

## Allegation of land grab through donation deed

Anwari, Apr 02:

An allegation has surfaced in the dependent village Ravanguda of Gram Panchayat Bakli, raising concerns over the alleged illegal seizure of ancestral land under dubious circumstances.

In a concerning turn of events, an 84-year-old father, ailing both physically and mentally, finds himself embroiled in a land dispute. Exploiting his vulnerable state, Avadharam, son of Rama Bandhe, purportedly orchestrated a donation deed in favour of his sons, Lekhrum and Thaneshwar, on January 18, 2024, in Dhamtari tehsil.

Narayan Bandhe, Kumari Bai, and Meena Bai, all descendants of Rama Bandhe, jointly assert ownership of ancestral land comprising Khasra numbers 21/1, 178, 197, 335, and 498. The total area of this land amounts to 1.84 hectares, as confirmed by official records. This land holds significant sen-



timental and historical value to the complainants, representing an integral part of their family heritage.

Shockingly, neither the villagers nor public representatives were aware of Avadharam's purported acquisition until a month after its execution. The aggrieved parties, discovering the discrepancy through online documentation, promptly lodged a complaint with the Collector's office on March 18, 2024, seeking redressal and justice.

Despite their fervent

appeals for action, ten days have passed without any resolution, leaving the complainants disillusioned and desperate for justice. They now tirelessly traverse the corridors of authority, demanding accountability, restitution, and the rightful restoration of their land.

Acknowledging the seriousness of the matter, Kurud police station in-charge Arun Sahu confirmed an ongoing investigation, promising due diligence and adherence to legal procedures.

## Financial irregularities lead to termination of technical assistant's service

Gaurela Pendra Marwahi, Apr 02: In a decisive move to uphold integrity and accountability, the District Panchayat Pendra has terminated the services of Technical Assistant (Contract) Praveen Goyal, citing financial irregularities.

Following an exhaustive investigation into the allegations of financial misconduct, District Program Coordinator (MNRGA) Leena Kamlesh Mandavi issued the order, effective immediately, based on findings presented in the investigation report.

The investigation revealed breaches of store purchase rules and financial improprieties during Goyal's tenure as Program Officer in charge. Specifically, irregularities in construction works within Gram Panchayat Bacharwar, under Goyal's supervision, were substantiated, prompting swift disciplinary action.

In accordance with Chhattisgarh Civil Services Conduct Rules 1965 and Contract Recruitment Rules, Goyal's termination underscores the district's commitment to upholding ethical standards and ensuring transparent governance.

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## Amitesh Shukla participates in Manasgan Conference

Rajim, Apr 02:

Former MLA Amitesh Shukla graced the Kapsidih Manasgan conference as a distinguished guest, spreading messages of unity, spirituality, and community well-being.

Addressing the gathering, Shukla extended heartfelt prayers for the happiness and prosperity of the local residents, emphasizing the deep familial bond he shares

with the community. Expressing gratitude for their enduring support and affection, Shukla underscored his commitment to their welfare.

Drawing inspiration from the Chaupai of Ramayana, Shukla highlighted the transformative power of devotion in enhancing happiness, prosperity, and resilience. He encouraged attendees to cultivate their inner divine powers, empha-



sizing the importance of spiritual growth in overcoming adversity.

In recognition of his contributions, the organizing committee honored Shukla with a memento, symbolizing the community's appreciation for his presence and wisdom. The event, attended by a large number of villagers, served as a testament to the enduring spirit of unity and camaraderie in the region.



## Ben Stokes pulls out of T20 World Cup

London, Apr 02 (PTI):

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

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

"I'm working hard and focusing on building my bowling fitness back up to fulfil a full role as an all-rounder in all formats of cricket." "Opting out of the



IPL and the World Cup will hopefully be a sacrifice that allows me to be

the all-rounder I want to be for the foreseeable future," Stokes said in a statement issued by the ECB. Stokes, 32, was in charge of the team that suffered a 1-4 Test series loss to India earlier this year and said the tour made him realise that he isn't quite up for it when it comes to bowling.

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

"I'm looking forward to playing for Durham in the County Championship before the start of our Test summer. I wish Jos (Buttler), Motty (Matthew Mott) and all the team the best of luck in defending

our title." England will be defending the title in the Caribbean having triumphed in the last edition of the tournament in Australia in 2022, with Stokes hitting the winning run in the final for a five-wicket victory over Pakistan at the MCG.

However, he has only played two T20 matches since, both at last year's IPL. Having previously retired from ODI cricket in 2022, Stokes reversed his decision in order to play in the 50-over World Cup last year in India, following which he underwent a knee surgery that did not allow him to bowl in the Test series against India.

He was only able to bowl five overs during the five matches in India.

## AIFF suspends EC member Sharma for alleged physical assault of two women players

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI):

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) on Tuesday suspended its executive committee member Deepak Sharma until further notice for his alleged physical assault of two women players in Goa.

Two footballers of Himachal Pradesh-based Khad FC, taking part in the Indian Women's Football (IWL) League second division, had alleged that Sharma, the owner of the club, had barged into their room and physically assaulted them on the night of March 28.

On Saturday, the AIFF asked Sharma to refrain from football-related activities till the conclusion of a probe by a panel into his alleged incident. Sharma was arrested by Goa police after the host state association lodged a complaint and later released on bail.

"The AIFF Executive Committee has decided to suspend Mr. Deepak Sharma from participating in any football-related activities until further notice," the national federation said in a release.

Before that, the Emergency Committee of the AIFF comprising president Kalyan Chaubey, vice-president N A Haris and treasurer Kipa Ajay, on Monday took stock of the complaints received from the players against Sharma.

Thereafter, a meeting of AIFF member associations was held on Monday night and "Sharma was called and heard for a few minutes before he was advised to leave the meeting".

In the complaint sent to the AIFF, the two players said, according to sources, that Sharma was mostly in an inebriated

state and they were "scared for their lives".

Sports Minister Anurag Thakur had also asked the AIFF to take "quick" and "strong legal action" against the official. On Tuesday, the AIFF also dissolved the three-member committee formed on March 30 to probe the incident, and instead referred the matter to its Disciplinary Committee.

"The AIFF is determined to promote women's football in a safe and enabling environment and will take all necessary steps to ensure this. The case has now been referred to the Disciplinary Committee and will be taken up emergently," Chaubey said.

"The AIFF has taken all steps necessary to ensure the safe passage of the complainants to their

hometowns and will continue to provide any support that might be necessary."

He said the AIFF has been at the forefront of development of women's football since he took charge as its president.

"There are currently 27,030 registered women players in the country with 15,293 registered between September 2022 and March 2024. The increase in number of women footballers in various age groups is one of the most encouraging trends," Chaubey said.

"This season, we started the IWL 2 for the first time, and there is a definite plan to introduce promotion and relegation in the IWL from the next season. India made their best-ever finish (runners-up) in Turkish Women's Cup recently and defeated European opponents."

## KKR-RR, GT-DC matches rescheduled: BCCI

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI):

Kolkata Knight Riders' home IPL game against Rajasthan Royals was on Tuesday advanced by a day to April 16, while Gujarat Titans-Delhi Capitals fixture in Ahmedabad was also rescheduled by the BCCI which did not give any reason for the move.

The PTI had on Monday reported that the KKR-RR tie was set to be rescheduled due to Ram Navami, but the Board did not specify any reason for the rescheduling of matches on these two dates.

"The fixture between Kolkata Knight Riders & Rajasthan Royals, which was earlier scheduled to take place on April 17, 2024 at Eden Gardens, Kolkata will now be played a day prior on April 16, 2024.

The Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad was earlier scheduled to host the match between

Gujarat Titans & Delhi Capitals on April 16, 2024. The fixture will now be played on April 17, 2024," the BCCI said in a statement. It was learnt that Kolkata Police expressed its inability to provide adequate security cover for what will be KKR's third home game of the 17th IPL season, just three days after they host the Lucknow Super Giants.

"Since the match is coinciding with Ram Navami and a portion of security is already deployed for elections. Therefore it won't be possible for us to provide adequate security for the match on April 17," Kolkata Police had stated in a letter to Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) president Snehasish Ganguly.

Bengal is also set to vote on April 19 in the first phase of the seven-phase general elections. The voting in Kolkata will take place on June 1.

## Praggnanandhaa enters as India's best bet

Toronto, Apr 02 (PTI):

Teen sensation R Praggnanandhaa will enter as the favourite among the three Indian participants in the Candidates chess tournament that will get underway here from Wednesday to decide the challenger for the next world championship match.

After nearly 35 years as many as three Indians - Praggnanandhaa, D Gukesh and Vidit Gujrathi -- have qualified for the most prestigious event of the year that has just eight participants.

According to an expert, India is the new Russia of the chess world, as in the past such dominance was only shown by Russian players.

Praggnanandhaa, 18, starts as the rating favourite among Indians and also as the favourite of the chess buffs even



though the top bracket of the world feels that all the three Indian youngsters still need time to settle among the world elite.

Fearless and psychologically sound, Praggnanandhaa will likely have the assistance of eight-time Russian champion Peter Svidler for the event. One cannot help but recall that during one of the world championships Indian grandmaster P Harikrishna had assisted Svidler in his quest to be the world champion.

While Svidler could be a

game-changer, it will largely depend on Praggnandhaa's form and how he adapts in this tough event, where the eight players will play each other twice.

At just 17 years, Gukesh is hailed as one of the finest talents around. The Indian is also the youngest participant in the fray and second youngest ever after Robert James Fischer - aka Bobby Fischer - to qualify for the elite event.

That Fischer's record lasted a whopping 65 years, goes to prove what it takes to be one of the candidates and if Gukesh wins it, he will be the youngest ever to compete for the World Championship title.

Vidit Gujrathi will have his task cut out and much will depend on his form. In his last outing, probably training his sights for the candidates, the Nasik-

based player did not do well at the Prague masters and slipped considerably on the rating list also.

Praggnanandhaa was the first to qualify for the tournament by virtue of his silver medal performance in the last World Cup at Baku, Azerbaijan.

The Indian star went down to Magnus Carlsen in the final but since then has picked up a lot and has come around as a fierce.

Gujrathi made it thanks to a remarkable performance in the Grand Swiss tournament at Isle of Man, UK, last year. The Indian had displayed top form in the final stages of the tournament.

For Gukesh it was tough and go but the teenager displayed steely nerves to win a spot through the rating process by winning a GM tournament in Chennai last December.

The field however is diverse with a great mix of youth and experience.

## 'We never give up, we'll keep fighting'

Mumbai, Apr 02 (PTI):

Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya on Tuesday asserted that the former champions will not give up and will continue to fight in the ongoing IPL despite slumping to a hat-trick of defeats.

"If there's one thing you should know about this team, we never give up. We'll keep fighting, we'll keep going," Hardik posted on X.

Hardik has been facing the ire of fans since replacing Rohit Sharma as MI captain. The all-rounder was booed in the team's opening two matches and the crowd hostility was at its peak in MI's first home game of the season on Monday.

To add to the woes, under his captaincy MI's campaign at the 2024 IPL got off to a disastrous start as they sit at the bottom of the table following



three losses on the trot.

However, MI are known to be perennial slow starters. In 2015, they lost the first four games before going on to win the title.

Hardik's poor captaincy calls have also been questioned -- whether it was not giving Bumrah the new ball or sending Tim David ahead of himself against Gujarat Titans.

## Sri Lanka poised to win second test and series in Bangladesh

Chattogram, Apr 02 (API):

Sri Lanka was closing in on victory and another test series sweep in Bangladesh after reducing the host to 268-7 in an improbable chase of a 511-run target on Tuesday.

Pacer Lahiru Kumara, left-arm spinner Prabath Jayasuriya and occasional bowler Kamindu Mendis took two wickets each to put Bangladesh in survival mode on day four of the second and last test.

Bangladesh barely forced a fifth day. At stumps, Mehidy Hasan

was on 44 from 49 balls after hitting seven fours and Tajjul Islam on 10.

They were 243 runs from an unlikely victory, but 511 was never on. Nobody could resist Sri Lanka's bowling.

Mominul Haque's second fifty in the series helped Bangladesh go past 200 for the first time in five test innings dating to December. But he was dismissed on 50 off 56 after hitting eight fours and one six.

Sri Lanka started the day batting and allowed Angelo Mathews to score

his first half-century of the series and 41st in his career. Sri Lanka resumed its second innings on 102-6 and declared at 157-7 shortly after Mathews was bowled by Shakib Al Hasan for 56 after hitting five boundaries.

Prabath Jayasuriya was unbeaten on 28.

Sri Lanka posted 531 in its first innings, the highest total without any batsman scoring a century, and took a 353-run lead without enforcing the follow-on. Sri Lanka has never lost a test in Bangladesh.

## Kohli seems to have evolved again: David Hussey

Mumbai, Apr 02 (PTI):

Virat Kohli seems to have "evolved again" avowed former Australia cricketer David Hussey, who warned against writing off the champion player after a debate ensued on the Indian batter's strike rate.

Despite leading the run chart for Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the ongoing edition of IPL, Kohli faced some criticism for not batting aggressively enough against KKR in their last game.

Kohli is the joint-highest run getter so far with RR's



Riyann Parag, scoring 181 runs in three matches with two fifties at a strike rate of 141.4.

## India, Australia and England cricket boards in talks to revive Champions League T20

Mumbai, Apr 02 (PTI):

About 10 years after its last edition was played, "active conversations" are taking place between cricket boards of India, Australia and England to revive the Champions League, a club-based international T20 competition.

The last edition of the CLT20 was held in India in 2014 with Chennai Super Kings winning the title after defeating Kolkata Knight Riders in the final at Bengaluru, with the edition involving three teams from India, two each from

Australia and South Africa and one team from Pakistan, the West Indies and New Zealand.

As many as six editions of the CLT20 were played between 2009-10 to 2014-15, with four of these being organised in India and two in South Africa. The tournament was won twice each by Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians, while Australia's New South Wales and Sydney Sixers won it one time each.

While the cricket calendar remains jam-packed, the biggest challenge

would be to find a window for reviving such an event, said Cricket Victoria CEO Nick Cummins, who is aware of the conversations taking place between the three biggest boards in international cricket.

"I think the (earlier edition of) Champions League was ahead of its time. The T20 landscape wasn't matured enough at that point. I think it is now," Cummins told the media during the announcement of its partnership with KheloMore to launch the Melbourne Cricket Academy in India.

## Indian men's hockey team heads to Australia for five-Test series

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI):

The Indian men's hockey team has left for Australia to compete in a five-match Test series beginning April 6, a crucial assignment ahead of the Paris Olympics in July-August.

The Harmanpreet Singh-led side left on Monday night.

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

It is essential for the Indian team to enhance their performance, build and check-through the im-



provement areas for the coming Paris Olympics. Hockey India stated in a

press release. "As we embark on this crucial tour to Australia, we are filled

with determination and excitement.

### Olympic build-up

### The Indian Team

**GOALKEEPERS:** Krishan Bahadur Pathak, PR Sreejesh, Suraj Karkera  
**DEFENDERS:** Harmanpreet Singh (C), Jarmanpreet Singh, Amit Rohidas, Jugraj Singh, Sanjay, Sumit, Amir Ali  
**MIDFIELDERS:** Manpreet Singh, Hardik Singh (VC), Vivek Sagar Prasad, Shamsher Singh, Nilakanta Sharma, Rajkumar Pal, Vishnukant Singh.  
**FORWARDS:** Akashdeep Singh, Mandeep Singh, Lalit Kumar Upadhyay, Abhishek, Dilpreet Singh, Sukhjjeet Singh, Gurjant Singh, Mohammed Raheel Mauseen, Bobby Singh Dhami, Arajjeet Singh Hundal.

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## All polling stations in Mahe will be manned exclusively by women staff

Puducherry, Apr 02 (PTI)

All 31 polling stations in Mahe, an enclave of Puducherry in Kerala, would be manned by women in the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls.

A release from the Chief Electoral Officer P Jawahar's office on Tuesday said, it was noticed that the number of women voters was large in Mahe region. It further said as women could conduct the polls in a better manner, hence women staff would exclusively man polling stations. This was part of a plan to have 'model polling stations' in the Union Territory.

The release also said the CEO held a meeting earlier in the day with all 26 contesting candidates, their booth agents and representatives of various political parties to bring to their attention the various arrangements being made in the context of the April 19 Lok Sabha polls for the lone seat

here.

The total voter strength in the Union Territory is 10,23,699 at the end of summary revision of electoral rolls relating to all the 30 Assembly segments which cover the lone LS seat. The Elections department has set up 967 polling stations in the Union Territory.

The release said that voter information slips containing the names of the voters, their age, gender, Assembly segments and polling stations where they would exercise their franchise would be distributed to the voters at their doorstep from April 5 till April 14.

The election authorities will provide dummy Braille ballot papers in all polling stations to enable visually-impaired voters to cast their votes.

Such voters can also have a companion while voting as per rule of the conduct of election rules 1961, the release said.

## India rejects 'senseless attempts' by China to rename places

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI)

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

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

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

"Assigning invented

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

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

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

The first batch of the standardised names of six places in Arunachal Pradesh was released in 2017 while the second batch of 15 places was is-

sued in 2021.

On March 28, India said Beijing may "repeat its baseless claims" over Arunachal Pradesh as many times as it wants but that is not going to change New Delhi's position that the state "was, is and will always remain" an integral and inalienable part of the country.

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

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during his Gujarat visit, asserted on Monday that Arunachal Pradesh was, is, and will remain an Indian state in the future.

Addressing a press conference in Surat, he had said nothing will be gained by changing the names.

"If I change the name of

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

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

The Indian and Chinese troops are locked in an over three-year confrontation in certain friction points in eastern Ladakh even as the two sides completed disengagement from several areas following extensive diplomatic and military talks.

India has been consistently maintaining that peace and tranquillity along the LAC were key for normalisation of over-all ties.

## 'Cong needs to review why leaders deserting party'

Ludhiana, Apr 02 (PTI)

The Congress needs to introspect why its leaders are deserting the party, said three-time MP Ravneet Singh Bittu, who recently joined the BJP after quitting the grand old party.

Bittu, the Ludhiana MP since 2014, will contest the Lok Sabha elections from the constituency on a BJP ticket.

"The party that is being deserted by the best of its leaders and workers needs to introspect why this is happening," he said on Tuesday.

Bittu — the grandson of former chief minister Beant Singh, who was assassinated in a terror attack in 1995 — arrived in Ludhiana by train from Delhi after joining the BJP and was accorded a rousing reception at the station. The Congress, Bittu claimed, is faced with confusion, chaos and contradictions and doesn't know what to do in the current scenario. "Punjab is a border state that is always



Ravneet Singh Bittu

under threat from anti-national forces. We need to take Punjab towards peace, progress and happiness while tackling anti-nationalism. We have lost so many lives fighting against these forces. Only the BJP can take the nationalist agenda forward under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he told reporters.

The same agenda has to be carried out in Punjab so that our state prospers, he stressed.

Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are concerned about Punjab and Punjabis, he stated.

## SC deprecates non-appearance of TN DMs before ED

Terms it 'cavalier approach'

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI)

The Supreme Court on Tuesday strongly deprecated the non-appearance of five district collectors of Tamil Nadu before the Enforcement Directorate in connection with an ongoing money laundering probe related to alleged illegal sand mining, despite the court's order.

It directed the officials to appear before the ED personally on April 25 saying failure to do so will have serious consequences. A bench of justices Bela M Trivedi and Pankaj Mithal said the officials adopted a "cavalier approach" and the action shows they have no respect for the court, law and the Constitution.

"In our opinion, such a cavalier approach will land them in a difficult situation. When the court had passed the order directing them to appear in response to the summons issued by the ED, they

were expected to obey the same order and remain present before the ED.

"This shows that the officers don't have either respect for the court or the law, much less the Constitution of India. Such an approach is strongly deprecated," the bench said.

Senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Amit Anand Tiwari, appearing for the Tamil Nadu government, said the officials were busy in maintaining public order and implementation of the social security scheme.

They said the Lok Sabha elections are scheduled in Tamil Nadu for April 19 and the officials have been looking after the poll-related works. The bench said the officials should have appeared before the probe agency and explained the reasons. It said that one last opportunity is being given to the officials to appear before the ED in connection with the money laundering probe. Sibal said a review application has been filed against the February 27 order of the

apex court by which the court had asked the officials to appear before the probe agency.

"What is the point of sending the officials before the probe agency, when they have said that they do not have the requisite data sought by the ED," the senior lawyer said, adding that even authorised agents of the officer can be sent. He added that ED has not specified whether the officials are being summoned as witnesses or an accused. The bench asked Sibal to read section 50 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and said, "ED can summon anybody as it says 'any person'." Section 50(2) of the PMLA says "The Director, Additional Director, Joint Director, Deputy Director or Assistant Director shall have power to summon any person whose attendance he considers necessary whether to give evidence or to produce any records during the course of any investigation or proceeding under this Act." Justice Trivedi said,

"You were given sufficient time to appear. The order (February 27) was passed a month back. But, they chose not to appear."

On February 27, the top court directed the five district collectors to appear before the ED in connection with an ongoing money laundering probe.

The Madras High Court, on November 28, last year, stayed the summons issued by the central probe agency seeking the presence of district collectors of Vellore, Tiruchirappalli, Karur, Thanjavur and Ariyalur in connection with its ongoing probe. The ED moved the top court against the high court order, saying the non-cooperation would hamper its probe. The top court had stayed the high court order granting relief to the district collectors and said the plea of Tamil Nadu and its officials was "strange and unusual" and may lead to stalling the investigation of ED in money laundering aspect in connection with the FIRs.

## EC launches 'Myth vs Reality Register'

To combat misinformation

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI)

In a bid to check the spread of misinformation during the Lok Sabha polls, the Election Commission on Tuesday launched a "Myth vs Reality Register" that will be updated regularly to include the latest fake news busted.

With the proliferation of misinformation and false narratives, this proactive initiative seeks to ensure that voters have access to accurate and verified information throughout the electoral process, the poll panel said.

The microsite was launched by Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar, along with Election Commissioners C o m m i s s i o n e r s Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu.

The register will be continuously updated to include the latest busted fake information and fresh frequently-asked questions, the EC said.

## As mercury rises in Mumbai, commuters flock to AC trains

Mumbai, Apr 02 (PTI)

With temperatures rising in Mumbai, the Western Railway's (WR) air conditioned local trains are witnessing a surge in ticket sales. On April 1, WR issued 3,561 season passes and 23,623 journey tickets for AC trains which was a significant rise compared to the average daily sales figures for February and March this year, a railway spokesperson said on Tuesday. In February, on average 1,431 season passes and 17,922 journey tickets for AC trains were issued daily, while in March, the numbers rose to 1,452 season passes and 17,981 tickets, he said.

"With the start of the summer, a large number of passengers prefer to travel by AC locals," the WR official said.

## Hindu symbols found during ASI's Bhojshala survey, claims petitioner

Dhar (MP), Apr 02 (PTI)

A petitioner on Tuesday claimed that a basement with Hindu religious symbols and objects has been found during the ongoing survey at the Bhojshala/Kamal Maulla Mosque complex in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district.

The Muslim side, however, alleged that it was a misleading claim.

The survey by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), ordered by the Madhya Pradesh High Court in response to an application filed by a Hindu organisation, started on March 22.

On Monday, the Supreme Court refused to stay the survey at the medieval structure which both Hindus and Muslims claim as their own. No action should be taken without its permission on the outcome of the exercise, the apex court said.

Kuldeep Tiwari, a petitioner on the Hindu side, told reporters here that

things which were not visible earlier were coming to light now.

A basement was found on the right side of the sanctum sanctorum of Goddess Saraswati, he said, adding that vandalised idols were believed to be kept there, and would be found during the survey.

Hindu religious objects and symbols such as 'Ashtavakra Kamal', Sanskrit inscriptions, 'Shankh' and 'Hawan Kund' besides idols including one of Lord Hanuman have been found in the basement and it indicated that Bhojshala was a Hindu temple, Tiwari claimed.

Kamal Mulla Welfare Society's Abdul Samad said the Muslim side was happy with the SC order which stopped excavation. The Hindu litigants were spreading misleading information through the media, he alleged.

Hindus consider Bhojshala, an ASI-protected 11th-century monu-

ment, to be a temple dedicated to Vagdevi (Goddess Saraswati), while the Muslim community calls it Kamal Maulla mosque.

After the dispute began, the ASI formulated an arrangement on April 7, 2003, whereby Hindus perform puja on the premises on Tuesday, and Muslims offer namaz on Friday.

A Supreme Court bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and P K Mishra on Monday issued notices to the Centre, Madhya Pradesh government, ASI and others on a plea filed by Maulana Kamaluddin Welfare Society challenging the March 11 order of the High Court ordering the survey.

"It is made clear that no physical excavation should be taken which will change the character of the premises," the SC said.

In its order, the high court directed the ASI to carry out the survey within six weeks. The order came on an application filed by the Hindu Front for Justice.

## 'Show under which circular or provision lookout circulars can be downgraded'

Mumbai, Apr 02 (PTI) The Bombay High Court on Tuesday sought to know from the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) under which circular or provision it could downgrade a lookout circular issued against a woman being investigated in a 2019 fraud case.

A division bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Manjusha Deshpande was

### HC TO SFIO

hearing a petition filed by one Shikha Kapadia, who was seeking to quash an LOC issued against her in September 2019 after the SFIO launched a probe against her and her employer company.

Advocate S K Halwasia, appearing for the SFIO,

informed the court that the authority was downgrading the LOC issued against Kapadia.

"We are downgrading the LOC to an extent where she (Kapadia) does not have to seek permission whenever she needs to travel. The immigration officers will inform the SFIO every time she travels," Halwasia said.

The court then questioned

under which provision of law, circular or guideline such a downgrade was permitted.

"Can you downgrade an LOC? First time we are hearing about the downgrading of an LOC. Show us under which provision you are doing this. Show us any circular, provision or guideline that permits such a downgrade. We have not come across any such provision," the court said.

## RATH KA MELA



Devotees pull the chariot of Lord Rangnath during the annual 'Rath ka Mela', in Vrindavan, Tuesday.

## DELHI FIRE

### Victims locked themselves inside bathroom

Thick smoke slowed rescue efforts

New Delhi, Apr 02 (PTI)

Firefighters wearing gas masks ran up staircases and in and out of rooms shrouded in thick black smoke as they raced against time on Tuesday to find

Gulashna (14) and Anaya (12) who were trapped inside their burning house in the crowded Sadar Bazar area here.

While the firefighters toiled to find the sisters, they suffocated to death in a bathroom on the second floor of their multi-storey house on Chameliyan Road where

they locked themselves after the fire broke out.

A senior Delhi Fire Services official, who was part of the rescue operation, said, "Thick smoke filled the entire building as it had a central air conditioning system. The building had glass windows and poor ventilation which trapped the smoke."

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