

# Central Chronicle

Raipur | THURSDAY, April 18, 2024

Fastest Growing English Daily Of Chhattisgarh

www.centralchronicle.in

Price : Rs. 4.00

## Ram Lalla honoured with 'Surya Tilak'

This is the first Ram Navami since the consecration of the Ram idol at the new temple at Ayodhya at noon on Wednesday

Press Trust Of India

**AYODHYA:** The 'Surya tilak' of Ram Lalla in Ayodhya was done at noon on Wednesday on the occasion of Ram Navami using an elaborate mechanism involving mirrors and lenses by which sunbeams were directed on the forehead of the Ram idol.

This is the first Ram Navami since the consecration of the Ram idol at the new temple, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 22.

Prakash Gupta the spokesperson of the temple told PTI, "The Surya Tilak was done for around 4-5 minutes when the sun rays were directly focused on the forehead of the Ram Lalla idol."

"The temple administration prevented the devotees from entering the sanctum at the time of the Surya Tilak



Ritual of 'Surya Tilak' being performed on the idol of 'Ram Lalla'. | Photo: PTI to avoid overcrowding," Dr DP Kanungo, the Gupta said. Chief Scientist at CSIR-C-

### HIGHLIGHT

● Sunlight was brought on the forehead of Lord Ram

● Surya Tilak of Ram Lalla was executed at 12:00 pm

BRI, Roorkee, told PTI, "As planned, the Surya Tilak of Ram Lalla was perfectly executed at 12:00 pm". The system was tested by the scientists on Tuesday.

Dr S K Panigrahi, a scientist at CSIR-CBRI Roorkee, who was also associated with the project said that the basic objective of the Surya Tilak project is to focus on the 'tilak' on the forehead of Shri Ram idol on every Shri Ram Navami day. Under the project, sunlight will be brought on the forehead of Lord Ram in the Chaitra month every year.

### MAJOR SUCCESS |

## Kanker encounter huge blow to Maoist outfit's supply network in CG

Press Trust of India

A huge cache of weapons, including AK-47, SLR, Insas and .303 rifles, were recovered

**KANKER:** Police on Wednesday claimed the anti-insurgency operation in Kanker district has dealt a huge blow to Maoists' north Bastar division committee which handles illegal money collection and supply network of the outlawed outfit. A lot more still needs to be done and the police are heading in the right direction, Inspector General of Police (Bastar Range) Sundarraj P told PTI.



IG Bastar Range check the weapons and other items recovered. | Photo: PTI

## 10 killed as car rams into parked truck

**NADIAD:** Ten persons travelling in a car, including a child, died after their speeding vehicle crashed into a stationary truck on the Ahmedabad-Vadodara Expressway near Nadiad town of Gujarat's Kheda district on Wednesday, police officials said. Preliminary probe revealed the Maharashtra-registered truck was parked on the extreme left lane of the busy expressway after it developed a mechanical fault and the car rammed into it from the rear side, said Kheda Superintendent of Police Rajesh Gadhia. He said all the ten occupants of the car, including the driver and a five-year-old child, died in the crash. "The Gujarat-registered car was going towards Ahmedabad from Vadodara when it rammed into the rear side of the parked truck on the expressway near Nadiad.

### POLLING SCENARIO |

## Campaign ends for Bastar LS seat

Press Trust of India

**JAGDALPUR:** Acrimonious exchanges between main rivals Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress over issues like corruption, poverty and

pre-poll promises made by them dominated the high-decibel campaign for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections in Chhattisgarh covering the Bastar seat that ended on Wednesday evening.

Naxal-affected Bastar is the only seat among the 11 Lok Sabha constituencies in the state that will vote in the first phase on April 19, an exercise that will take place in shadow

of the major counter-insurgency operation in Kanker district on April 16 in which 29 Maoists, including senior cadres, were gunned down by security forces. Kanker is part of the Bastar region.

## Hope in 2014, trust in 2019, guarantee in 2024

Press Trust of India

**NALBARI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday asserted that he went to people with hope in 2014, trust in 2019 and guarantee in 2024.

Addressing an election rally at the Borkura

ground here, he said that the birth celebrations of Lord Ram were being held in the temple at Ayodhya after 500 years with a 'Surya Tilak' ceremony. Earlier in the day, Modi greeted people on the occasion of Ram Navami on Wednesday.



### Last 10 years

✓ Miniscule mobile manufacturing to the world's second largest mobile manufacturer

✓ From Fragile 5 to the world's top-5 economic power

✓ 4+ crore pucca houses made

✓ 10+ crore housewives were given LPG cylinders

✓ 2.8+ crore families were given free electricity connection

✓ Mangalyaan, Chandrayaan and Aditya L-1 mission proved Bharat's strength

✓ Indian Railways became world class with 100+ cities connected through Vande Bharat trains

✓ Introduced free treatment scheme up to ₹5 lakhs for 50+ crore citizens

### Next 5 years

✓ Will make Bharat a global hub of manufacturing

✓ Will make Bharat the third largest economy in the world

✓ 3+ crore more pucca houses will be made

✓ Will deliver affordable cooking gas through pipelines to every home

✓ PM Surya Ghar Yojana will bring electricity bill to zero

✓ Will create a new benchmark in space technology with the success of Gaganyaan

✓ Will introduce bullet train

✓ Senior citizens will also get free treatment up to ₹5 lakh



## Right Intent Right Results



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Modi Sarkar

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# Raipur



Bhupesh Baghel should apologize for his statement on encounter or people would teach him lesson.

Vijay Sharma  
Deputy CM

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### Politics

#### BJP's manifesto has been prepared keeping in mind people's choice: Sai

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said that the BJP's election manifesto has been prepared keeping in mind the people's interest and choice of the people's is Modiji's choice. PM Modi has sought suggestions for it from all over the country and this included letters from public and online messages and it is based upon the choices and likes of the people that BJP's election manifesto has been prepared. CM Sai said that there is internal strife among the leaders of the Congress and it was just yesterday itself that in the Durg's rally, ex-CM Bhupesh Baghel's sister-in-law joined BJP fold. So we can easily say that there is lot of unrest and internal strife among Congmen. CM Sai said that people have lost faith in Congress and irrespective of what all they may try, but the people are not going to believe in them. There is hardly any effect of hollow declarations being made by Congress on the people.

### Election

#### Walkathon organised by SVEEP team of district administration Raipur



As per the instructions of District Election Officer and Collector Dr. Gaurav Singh, a walkathon was organized on Tuesday under the SVEEP voter awareness program. The above walkathon started in the form of a human chain from Collector Complex and ended at Subhash Stadium via Akashvani Chowk. SVEEP's Nodal Officer and District Panchayat CEO, Vishwadeep administered the oath to the walkathon participants by standing in a human chain at Subhash Stadium. On this occasion, all the district level officers and employees of the district administration participated enthusiastically.

### From around the tech

#### NIT signs MoU for Blockchain network



RAIPUR: Information Data Systems (IDS) and NIT Raipur signed MoU on Wednesday for on boarding to Bharat Blockchain Network supported by AICTE and also establishing Applied Blockchain Centre in campus as part of Bharat Blockchain University Industry Cluster aligned to guidelines of UGC UI Linkages.

Prof. NV Ramana Rao, Director - NIT Raipur shared his vision of making this Applied Blockchain Centre (ABC) a Hub-spot of Blockchain Research & Innovation, Student Upskilling, Intellectual

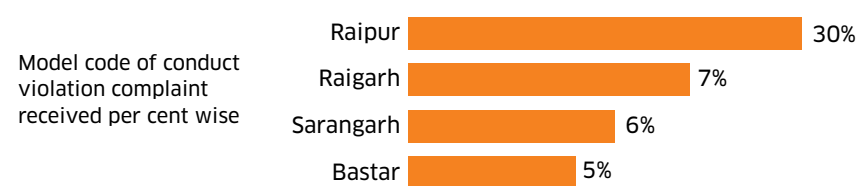
Property Development & Commercializing IP developed for the benefit of state of Chhattisgarh.

Aravind Voruganti, Global Vice President - Blockchain & Emerging Technologies and Sunil Yadavalli, Global Business Head at IDS, emphasized the significance of this partnership in bringing Institutions of National Importance to take part in Bharat Blockchain Network.

This ABC focuses on Blockchain for sustainable mining and energy sector, aiming to drive innovation and practical applications in these critical industries of Chhattisgarh.

### The Day's NUMBERS

#### WHERE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION COMPLAINT RECEIVED



Source: MoS&PS

### Sports

#### CSTA to organize Tennis Premier League

Chhattisgarh State Tennis Association (CSTA) is organising Chhattisgarh Tennis Premier League from April 24 to 26 at Union Club and Chhattisgarh Club Tennis Courts. Providing the above information, the CSTA Joint Secretary Rupendra Singh Chouhan said that junior players would get an opportunity to be part of the competitive Tennis tournament. He said that Players Auction would be carried out for the Premier League scheduled to be held later this month. Vishnu Sports Academy and Tennis Familia have taken the above initiative in association with CSTA for the players.



### LS Polls

#### Dispatch of polling teams begins for 1st phase of voting



Polling parties were today sent by helicopter to the polling centers in Bastar Lok Sabha constituency for the first phase of voting under the Lok Sabha Elections-2024 in Chhattisgarh. Today 56 polling parties were sent by helicopter to Bijapur, Sukma and Narayanpur districts under Bastar Lok Sabha constituency. On April 17, 100 polling parties will be sent by helicopter to districts Bijapur, Sukma, Kondagaon, Dantewada and Narayanpur. Under the first phase of Lok Sabha elections 2024, the date of voting in Bastar Lok Sabha constituency is 19 April 2024 and the counting date is 4 June 2024.



Procession with girls resembling Goddess Durga took part in the procession taken out as part of rituals with 'Jawara' atop their head.

## Braving hot sun women with 'Kalash' on their heads

People provided relief by spraying water through pipes from their homes to protect them from burning and Tankers were arranged behind many of 'Kalash Yatra'

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

RAIPUR: On the last day of Chaitra Navratri, women enthusiastically participated in 'Jyot Janwara Visarjan' with devotion. They came out holding Jawara Kalash on their heads. Sevadars (attendants) were spraying water on the feet of women walking barefoot holding Kalash (urn) in the hot sun to protect them from burning. Tankers were arranged behind many of 'Kalash Yatra'. The sight of 'Jyot Jawara Visarjan Yatra' was seen in Badhaipara, Tatyapara, Satti Bazar, Purani Basti area. Jyot Jawara Visarjan was held in Kankali Talab. The tradition of

immersing 'Ghat Kalash' and 'Jyot-Jawara' installed in every house was followed. Many devotees with sharp metal arrows piercing through their cheeks, chest, hands, lips and tongue were seen moving in procession at several localities. The Visarjan (immersion) of Jyot Janwara in the Kankali Talab situated in front of the Kankali temple continued till evening. Worship of girls on Navami 'Bhandara Prasad' was organized amid worship of girls in Devi temples. Kanya puja took place at 10 am in various temples. After this the girls were served food. After Kanya Bhoj, Prasad was distrib-

### HIGHLIGHT

- The tradition of immersing 'Ghat Kalash' and 'Jyot-Jawara' installed in every house was followed
- The Visarjan (immersion) of Jyot Janwara in the Kankali Talab situated in front of the Kankali temple continued till evening

uted in Mahabhandara (Community feast). On the ninth and final day of Navratri, devotees worship Maa Siddhidatri, the primordial form of goddess Parvati. The

ninth day is also marked by Rama Navami, celebrating the birth of Lord Rama, the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Maa Siddhidatri is worshipped as the Goddess of Supernatural Powers. Devotees engage in spiritual activities on this day, seek divine blessings, and worship Goddess Siddhidatri and Lord Rama. The word "Siddhi" refers to supernatural powers, and "Datri" means provider. Maa Siddhidatri is particularly worshipped by those seeking spirituality and enlightenment. Maa Siddhidatri has eight forms of Siddhis "Anima, Mahima, Garima, Laghima, Prapti,

Prakamya, Ishitva and Vashitva. It is believed that the goddess offered these siddhis to Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva to help them carry out their duties. She additionally allowed them nine treasures and ten types of supernatural powers.

Jawara puja was observed in Raipur during the Navratri celebration. The puja which started on the first day of Navratri concluded with the immersion procession on the occasion of Navami on Wednesday. The devotees had pierced their body and mouth and proceeded towards temples to worship Goddess Durga.

### | CG RANK HOLDERS |

## Anusha ranked 202nd, Abhishek 452nd in UPSC

### BJP's claim of building Rs 4 cr houses under PMAY is false

RAIPUR: Senior State Congress spokesperson Dhananjay Singh Thakur said that claim made by the BJP regarding building 4 crore houses through the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, as stated in posters and advertisements featuring Modi's photo, appears to be inaccurate according to the data released by the Central Government. The data suggests that a target of approximately 2 crore 95 lakh houses was set, with approvals granted for around 2 crore 94 lakh 68 thousand 272 houses. Of these, only about 2 crore 55 lakh 17 thousand 812 houses have been completed, leaving approximately 39 lakh 50 thousand 460 houses yet to be constructed.

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

#### Four aspirants from Chhattisgarh secured ranks in the Civil Services exams

RAIPUR: Talented girl from Raipur, Purva Agrawal secured 189th rank in the UPSC exam. If the last year's trend is to be seen, then Purva Agrawal would definitely get IPS.

Purva achieved this success in mere two years of hard work and after leaving a job of Rs 30 lakh, she made a commitment to crack UPSC for IAS or IPS only. Collector Dr. Gaurav Singh today congratulated Anusha Pillay and Abhishek Dange who



(From L-R) Anusha, Abhishek and Purva Agrawal.

### FACTFILE

- Relatives of bureaucrats were among successful candidates.

cracked UPSC examination. Anusha Pillai has secured 202nd rank in the result 2024 declared

missioner Abinash Mishra and District Panchayat CEO Vishwadeep, ADM Devendra Patel were present. Abhishek Dange gave credit to Nalanda campus library for UPSC preparation.

Abhishek completed his UPSC preparation in Nalanda campus library. Purva Agrawal is R/o Raipur and her father ML Agrawal is Additional Director in CG Technical Education and her mother Dr. Anita Agrawal is working as Professor in Engineering College. Purva Agrawal sharing her success in UPSC exams informed that in the first attempt she could not clear it and could clear only the prelims.

by UPSC. Anusha is the daughter of retired DGP Sanjay Pillay and Additional Chief Secretary Renu Pillay.

Collector Dr. Gaurav Singh reached houses of Ms Anusha Pillay and Abhishek to congratulate them on their achievements. Municipal Corporation Com-

### | TRAVEL |

## Quick solution of passenger through RailMadad App

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

RAIPUR: About 62777 problems/complaints of railway passengers received on Rail Madad App were resolved with 100% prompt solution under South East Central Railway, during the current financial year 2023-24, from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024. In line with the digital initia-

tives, Indian Railways has launched an app named 'RailMadad' to improve and speed up the process of redressal of complaints of railway passengers by completely digitizing the complaint management system. RailMadad App registers the complaints of passengers and provides them with continuous updates on the status of redressal of complaints.

More than 62777 cases resolved quickly through this app this financial year in South East Central Railway

Officer Railway dept.



After registration on this app, the passenger is immediately provided with the complaint number through SMS and information about the steps taken by the Rail-

ways is also given through SMS. All the helpline numbers that were previously used by the Railways have been included in the 'RailMadad' app. By calling the helpline number 139, the problems of the passengers are being resolved by 'RailMadad'.

The RailMadad app provides numbers for various safety and support services.

# 'Women are only used as vote bank in Congress'

Congress government had promised to provide 4 free cylinders to every rural family

CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

**RAIPUR:** Women leaders who left Congress and joined BJP today fiercely attacked Congress on the issue of women's safety. Congress did not fulfill its promise of establishing women's cell in every police station for independent investigation related to crime against women, said former mayor of Bilaspur Vani Rao, Mahasamund Municipal Council President Anita Raote, Jagdalpur Mayor Safira Sahu and Mahasamund District Panchayat President Usha Patel and Aruna Shukla in a press conference at BJP office in Ekatma Parisar here today.

While Congress had talked about strictly following the law for the protection of women and taking the cases of crime against women seriously besides taking strict action against the criminals, yet during the entire five-year tenure of the Congress in Chhattisgarh abuse and violence against women continued and the Congress government turned a blind eye on crime against women, they said.

The Congress government had promised to provide 4 free cylinders to every rural family



Women leaders who left Congress and joined BJP talking to media. Photo Chronicle

every year and accordingly a total of 20 cylinders were to be given but no one got anything, they said.

Former Bilaspur Mayor Vani Rao said that Congress had always cheated women and used them only as vote banks. She said that Congress had betrayed women in the 2018 elections by swearing on 'Maa Ganga'. Women are feeling suffocated in Congress, she said.

At the same time, under the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Vishnu Deo Sai in the state, many schemes are being run for the respect and empowerment of women, she said.

The BJP leaders said

## Radhika hits back at allegations of leaders who left Congress

Reacting to allegations made against Congress by leaders who left Congress and joined BJP Congress national spokesperson Radhika Kheda said that one should not lie on a holy day like 'Ram Navami'. Such leaders left Congress on BJP's Chinese guarantee, she said.

Congress party gave the identity, the one who

that Congress had a track record of deceit and betrayal of women at every step. Of all the promises made for

### HIGHLIGHT

● Congress party gave the identity, the one who gives the identity is the mother, and even God does not forgive the one who betrays the mother, Kheda said

gives the identity is the mother, and even God does not forgive the one

women, not even a single promise has been fulfilled and those who could not give Rs 500 to women are making big announce-

ments today, they said, adding that Congress is once again making a joke with women with its hollow promises.

Such women leaders who are talking about insult and abuse should tell who gave them posts like District Panchayat President, Municipal Council President and Mayor, Radhika Kheda said. No one is given any help or ticket to reach such a position, she said.

who betrays the mother, Kheda said in her reaction.

## Public will vote in favour of Cong this time: Shukla

CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

The Congress government did the re-construction and industrialization of the country. In the last 10 years, Modi has only done the work of selling the public sector undertakings created by the Congress governments.

CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

**RAIPUR:** State Congress Communication Department Chairman, Sushil Anand Shukla said that the prevailing sentiment of anger among the public towards the Modi government in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Specifically, the people in Bastar and Chhattisgarh seem determined to bring about a change by supporting the Congress party's bid to form the government at the Centre. The election campaign for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections ended on Wednesday. The general public's frustration with the Modi government appears to stem from their disillusionment with what they perceive as empty speeches and rhetoric, without substantive action to address their concerns or fulfill promises. This sentiment is particularly strong in Chhattisgarh, where the dissatisfaction with the Modi gov-

ernment and the state administration seems to be a prominent issue. The central government's flagship housing scheme Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) aimed to provide affordable housing to the urban and rural poor by 2022, but has faced delays and missed targets in several states. Similarly, the Mahtari Vandan Yojana that promised 1,000 to women in the state has seen patchy

CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

implementation across states. The farm loan waivers promised by the BJP in state have also not been fully realized, causing anger among farmers. He said that Narendra Modi should study what Congress has done in 70 years. Congress party played a significant role in shaping India's development post-independence. When the Congress government was formed in the country for the first time after 1947, the literacy rate of the country was 18 percent.

CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

● Clear from the conclusion of the first phase of election campaign

● There is an atmosphere against Modi government in the state due to BJP's breach of promise.

## 'Providing better facility to patients is our priority'

CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

**Dr Vivek Pandey expressed gratitude to all the people of Chhattisgarh for this immense affection. Providing better health facility to the patients is our highest priority.**

**RAIPUR:** V Care Superspecialty Hospital, located at Telibandha Ring Road No. 1, which is counted at the forefront of the medical field in Chhattisgarh, successfully completed eight years and entered its ninth year.

Giving information, Chief Director of V Care Hospital, Dr. Vivek Pandey said that with the immense support and trust of the people of Chhattisgarh and the cooperation of all the fellow doctors, nurses and employees of the hospital, his hospital has successfully completed 8

years and has entered the ninth year. He expressed gratitude to all the people of Chhattisgarh for this immense affection. Providing better health facility to the patients is our highest priority, said Dr Vivek Pandey

We Care Hospital has been awarded excellent rating by the Chhattisgarh Government for the excellent work done during Covid, which is an example of our dedication and resolve towards the patients.

Giving further information, he said that in the last 8 years, V Care Hospital has gained the trust of the people, which is a proud achievement in itself.

Referring to the achievements, he said that in the last years, more than 40 thousand OPDs, 15 thousand surgeries, 20 thousand IPDs and other complex surgeries were successfully completed.

## Naxalites causing harm through democratic actions: CM

**RAIPUR:** Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai has expressed grief over killing of BJP leader by Naxalites in Dandvan village of Narayanpur. Describing killing of BJP leader as cowardly act of Naxalites Chief Minister said that Naxalites were causing harm to the society through undemocratic actions. Fight against Naxalites will continue, he said.

Sai has posted on X and wrote, 'sad news was received of the murder of Deputy Sarpanch of Dandvan village of Narayanpur and BJP worker Panoram Das Manikpuri ji due to the cowardly act of Naxalites. I pray to God to give peace to the departed soul and strength to the bereaved family. My condolences are with the victim's family. Maoists are causing harm to the society through undemocratic actions.'

## BJP chalks out strategy for Raipur Lok Sabha seat

EDUCATION

CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

**Core Committee members from Raipur South, North, West, Rural and Abhanpur were present during the meeting.**

**RAIPUR:** Bharatiya Janata Party Core Committee and Lok Sabha Management Committee has chalked out strategy for five Legislative Assembly segments falling under the Raipur Lok Sabha constituency. Regional Organisational General Secretary Ajay Jamwal issued directives to the members of the Core Committee as part of the strategy to ensure victory. Congratulating the Core Committee members over victory in recently held Legislative Assembly polls, Jamwal urged them to further improve the performance



Organisational General Secretary Pawan Sai addressing the Core Committee members.

CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

● Pawan Deo asked them to motivate people from every section of society to cast their vote during polling day.

● To discuss various schemes with people including Traders and Social Workers.

in the Lok Sabha elections. He added that the responsibility of senior members from Raipur is crucial as they create election atmosphere in favour of the saffron brigade.

Jamwal urged them to pay special attention towards the polling booth which had registered relatively lesser voting in the last Legislative Assembly polls. He also stressed

on the need for grading of the booths and added that social and service groups should be created for effective management. Significance of victory of BJP in more than 370 Lok Sabha seat is essential for the nation, he said adding that victory of party in all the 11 Lok Sabha seats from Chhattisgarh is important.

NAXALITES

## Silence in air, bullet marks on trees at encounter site stands testimony

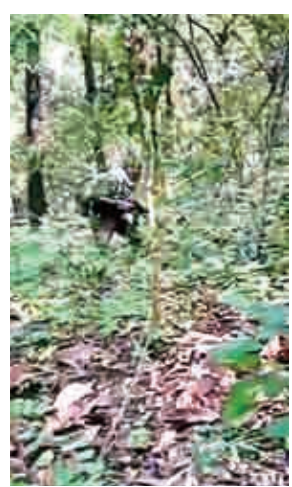
By Tikeshwar Patel

**KANKER:** Silence hangs over the hillocks adjoining Hidur and Kalpar villages in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district where 29 naxalites were gunned down by security forces in an encounter.

Hours after the biggest encounter ever in the state ended, bullet marks could be seen on the trees at the site on Wednesday. Bloodstains were also visible on the

ground which is covered by a thick carpet of fallen bamboo leaves. In the nearby villages, local tribals, most of them women, could be seen outside, but they were reluctant to speak about what they saw or heard during the encounter on Tuesday.

Lingaram, a resident of Akameta village in the area, claimed that his cousin Sukku, an active Naxalite, was killed in the encounter. He came to know about it only on



Wednesday, he said, talking to reporters at Kalpar village.

Sukku had joined the outlawed CPI (Maoist) as a child and despite the family members trying to persuade him to quit, he stayed with the Maoist movement, Lingaram said.

The family was yet to contact the police to claim Sukku's body, he added. The route to the encounter site, mostly dirt roads or forest paths,

was dug up at multiple locations. Naxalite posters appealing locals to boycott the Lok Sabha elections and crude memorials of slain Maoists could be seen nearby.

To reach the area, considered as a stronghold of the North Bastar Division Committee of Naxalites, one has to cross the Kotri river which runs dry in summer.

The local administration has been trying to construct a bridge on the

river for a long time, but the work did not make any progress as villagers are opposed to it, an official claimed.

On climbing the hill, which has thick bamboo vegetation, blood stains and bullet marks on trees could be seen in places. Empty syringes and bottles of soft drinks and a makeshift stretcher used by the security personnel to ferry their injured colleagues were lying in a dry rivulet.

NEWSLINE

Crime

**Two peddlers caught with ganja worth Rs 4 lakh**

Two youth were arrested with Ganja worth Rs 4 lakh at Mandir Hasoud Chowk after a raid carried out by RPF task team and police. The raid was carried out on the basis of tip off received from an informer about two youths carrying huge quantity of illegal drug Ganja from Odisha to Surat. On interrogation they revealed their identity as Santosh alias Hadu Bandhu Behera (25), son of Daco Behera and Sagar Jena (19), son of Bakuni Jena. Both are residents of Ganjam Orissa. It was told that both of them had a total of 15 packets of narcotic ganja in two trolley bags and a pitthu bag. On enquiry, they told that they were transporting the narcotic ganja from Orissa to Surat for the purpose of selling it illegally. A total of 15 packets were found in their possession. Fifteen packets of intoxicating substance Ganja with total weight 30.909 kg, worth Rs 4,63,635 and two Android mobiles worth Rs 20,000.

CRIME

**Farmer robbed of mobile during his visit to Kali temple**

An incident of robbery took place in Raipur from a farmer who had come to visit the Kali temple on the occasion of Navratri. It is being told that the robbers were traveling in an auto. When the person reached the road after having darshan, they snatched the mobile and ran away. Robbers also snatched the purse and mobile phone of another person. The entire matter took place in Civil Line police station area. Farmer Devendra Kumar Sahu, resident of Ranitarai Patan, has lodged a complaint in the police station. He had reached Kali Mata temple located on Civil Line around 7.30 pm on Tuesday evening and performed puja in the Kali temple with his nephew.

BANK

**PNB celebrates 130th Foundation Day**



The 130th foundation day of the bank was celebrated on Friday, April 12, 2024 at Punjab National Bank Zonal and Divisional Office, Raipur. First of all, Zonal Head, V Srinivas paid homage to the statue of the bank's co-founder Lala Lajpat Rai ji by garlanding it. On this occasion, as part of the Bank's social responsibility, JNMC Raipur branch provided wheelchairs to Mekahara Hospital for the convenience of the patients. On this occasion, Zonal Chief, V Srinivas, Deputy Zonal Chief, P Arun Rao, Sub Divisional Chief, Lingaraj Luha, and other staff of the bank were present.

# Bhilai



The talented from Chhattisgarh have proven their worth in UPSC -2023  
**Vishnu Deo Sai**  
 Chief Minister Chhattisgarh

## Yuvodaya promotes creativity and concern for environment

Activities to promote arts and recycling among young children were organised by 'Yuvodaya - Durg Ke Doot' at village Kargadih

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

Objective of this programme was not only to encourage the imagination and creativity of children but also to make them understand the values of recycling.

**BHILAI:** Volunteers from 'Yuvodaya - Durg Ke Doot' organized an exciting session for children in Village Kargadih, which especially focused on creative activities like painting and handicrafts. The objective of this programme was not only to encourage the imagination and creativity of children but also to make them understand the values of recycling. During the session, the children enthusiastically participated in various activities, showcasing their artistic abilities and eagerness to learn. They created wonderful works of art and handicrafts using recycled materials, revealing their deep understanding towards the importance of recycling wastes. Expressing happiness



Volunteers conducting extracurricular activities with students

over the enthusiasm and creativity of the children, the volunteers stated that they were delighted to witness the children embracing both art and recycling. Their innovative ideas and dedication are clearly visible. The children, across different age groups, participated in different activities, showcasing their unique arts and imaginations. Parents and community members also appreciated the initiative, recognizing the positive impact it made on children.

## Yuvodaya volunteers empower communities & young talent

Yuvodaya Nodal Officer Ajay Sharma and District Coordinator Shashank Sharma informed that through such initiatives, Yuvodaya volunteers continuously empower communities and encourage young talent, creating a brighter and more affordable future for all. At Kargadih, some students showed interest and joined Yuvodaya as vol-

### HIGHLIGHT

• Children enthusiastically participated in various activities, showcasing their artistic abilities and eagerness to learn

• The volunteers are planning to organise sessions for all the social issues

unteers. The volunteers are planning to organise sessions for all the social issues prevailing in the village. With permission and support from Sarpanch Ghanshyam Gajpal, the volunteers have started organising extra-curricular activities for the children. The volunteers showed the children every aspect of art and craft.

## Bank worker opens fake accounts; sells it for illegal transactions

With the arrest of two persons, police claimed to have busted a gang involved in opening bank accounts with fraudulently acquired documents and selling the same for illegal transactions.

**BHILAI:** Durg Police recently received a complaint from one Priyanshu Nile of Kosanagar regarding a bank account, which was opened to his name without his knowledge. Further, huge transactions were done from this illegally opened account.

The victim further stated that he was misled by Gurusharan and Kunal Soni to acquire the documents of his ID and Address proof. He asserted that using these documents, the accused acquired sim cards and opened bank accounts, without his knowledge.

SP Jitendra Shukla informed that Supela Police Station conducted investigation on this case and found merits in the complaint. Police rounded up the accused Santosh Kumar Kosre and Kunal alias Kunal Soni.

During interrogation,

the accused confessed to cheating the complaint Priyanshu and several others.

They disclosed that they misled the innocent people by paying Rs 2000-4000 to obtain their documents. Using these documents, they opened fake bank accounts and acquired SIM cards in the names

### EASTFACTS

• Transactions worth Rs 9 crore done through fake accounts

• Accused lured and paid a petty person to obtain their documents.

of innocent people. Later, the accused sold these sim cards and bank accounts to other people for Rs 40000 - Rs 50000.

Police examined the transactions of all the illegal bank accounts and found transactions worth around Rs 9 crore.

It is suspected the bank accounts were used for transactions of online cricket betting. The Accused Santosh Kumar Kosare was a contract employee in Canara Bank Vaishali Nagar.

### BHILAI:

**BoB organises official language motivation programme**



Official language motivation programme was organized under the chairmanship of BoB Regional Head Anant Madhav at Bank of Baroda, Regional Office, Durg on April 15. Soumik Dey, Member Secretary, Town Official Language Implementation Committee (TOLIC), Bhilai, was invited as the chief guest in this program. The winners of various competitions organized under the aegis of TOLIC Bhilai and the competition organized at Bank of Baroda, Regional Office Durg were awarded. The program concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by the Deputy Regional Head.

### BHILAI:

**Female satta bookie arrested**

In view of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, SP Jitendra Shukla has directed his subordinates to curb the illegal activities of betting and gambling. ASP Sukhmandan Rathore informed that as per the SP's instructions, the teams of various police stations are maintaining vigil on the activities of suspects and criminal record holders. The network of informers has also been activated. In this sequel, Chhawani Police received a tip off regarding a woman who was accepting bets of Satta-Patti. Acting on this tip off, a police team swung into action and conducted a raid in Chhawani. The cops caught a woman red handed while accepting bets of Satta Patti. The accused identified as Rita Choudhary, wife of Sanjay Choudhary was taken into custody.

### Drugs

**Peddler nabbed with psychotropic drugs**



**BHILAI:** Durg Police arrested a drug peddler and recovered a huge cache of psychotropic drugs from his possession. ASP Sukhmandan Rathore informed that they are conducting a special campaign against drug smugglers and peddlers. Acting on a tip off, Police nabbed a suspect Mohammad Armaan, who was peddling drugs behind Dena Bank in Baikunthdham. 328 tablets of scheduled psychotropic drug (Samfax Plus) worth Rs 9840 and a bike worth Rs 8000 were seized from him.

## Sri Ram Navami celebrated with religious fervour

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

More than thousand devotees celebrate divine appearance of Lord Ram in Ayodhya at Hare Krishna Mandir, Sector-06. Sri Ram Darbar set up in a grand Mandap decorated with elegant flowers at the temple was a special feature of the festival

**BHILAI:** More than a thousand devotees participated in 'Sri Ram Navami Mahotsav' organized at Hare Krishna Mandir, Sector 6 commemorating the divine appearance of Lord Ram in Ayodhya as the son of King Dasharatha and his wife Kausalya on this auspicious day.

Devotees fasted throughout the day and remembered Sri Ram, by chanting His holy names or listening to the Ramayana. Sri Sri Radha

Krishna Chandra, the presiding Deities of Hare Krishna Mandir, Bhilai were bedecked in a special Alankar on this occasion. Sri Ram Darbar was set up in a grand Mandap decorated with elegant flowers at the temple was a special feature of the festival.

Devotees performed 'Sri Ram Taraka Homa' by chanting the 'Sri Rama Ashtottara Shata Nama'. A Grand Shayana Arati was performed accompanied by Devotees singing 'Sri Nama Ramayana' - a song which narrates the entire Ramayana. After the Shayana Arati, Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha Krishna Chandra was offered a majestic ride on a Grand Palaki within the temple premises accompanied by devotees performing "Sankirtana" - chanting of holy names of Lord Ramachandra. In the end, all the devotees were served with delicious mahaprasadam of lord Ramchandra.

## Woman arrested for cannabis peddling



**BHILAI:** Durg Police conducted a special campaign against the people involved in drug peddling. SP Jitendra Shukla informed that under the special campaign, they collected information regarding the people involved in illegal trade of cannabis and thereafter conducted simultaneous raids. Cops raided a house near a public toilet in Vrinda Nagar of Vaishali Nagar Police Station area and nabbed a woman identified as Manmeet Kaur (23) wife of Lakhwinder Singh with 1.4 kg cannabis worth Rs 8500 and sale amount 65000. The cannabis was packed in 152 paper sachets. After she confessed to peddling cannabis, police lodged an FIR against her under section 20 (B) of Narcotics Act.

## CSVТУ students can now get internship at IIT Mandi

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

The technical students can now get internships as well as world class facilities for research as the state's technical varsity has signed a MoU with a prestigious IIT.

**BHILAI:** Chhattisgarh Swami Vivekananda Technical University has signed a MoU with IIT Mandi. According to this agreement, the students and professors of Chhattisgarh Swami Vivekananda Technical University can get world class facilities and guidance from teachers of IIT Mandi. Apart from this, IIT Mandi will provide a six months internship to the students of Chhattisgarh Swami Vivekananda Technical University. The students will be able to get knowledge of international level research



CSVТУ VC Prof MK Verma welcoming IIT Mandi Director Dr Behera

### EASTFACTS

• Hard work done during student life determines a person's future

• Academic excellence earns good money

and technology. Professor Dr. Lakshmi Dhar Behera, Director of IIT

Mandi, addressed the research students and professors of B Tech, M Tech and PhD at Chhattisgarh Swami Vivekananda Technical University. Professor Dr Lakshmi Dhar Behera said that the student life is the most important period for every person. The hard work done by them during this period determines their future. Dur-

ing this period, students should concentrate only on acquiring knowledge and developing new skills and should concentrate on developing some new research and thinking. Professor Behera asked the students to follow a regular routine for excellent studies. He added that our ancient Gurukuls practiced such discipline and regular routine.

### COMMEMORATION

## Former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar remembered on birth anniversary

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

**BHILAI:** The 97th birth anniversary of the country's former Prime Minister, Late Chandrashekhar, was celebrated in a dignified manner on Wednesday.

To mark the occasion a talk was organized under the joint aegis of Loknayak Jaiprakash Narayan Memorial Foundation, Acharya Narendra Dev Smriti Jan Adhikar Abhiyan Samiti

and Chandrashekhar Foundation Chhattisgarh at JP Pratishthan, Ruabandha HSCL Colony.

Tributes were paid by garlanding the portrait of Chandrashekhar. Chief guest, former Minister of State of Chhattisgarh Badruddin Qureshi in his address mentioned that Late Chandrashekhar was known as the "Young Turk" and he also gave meaning to this name.



Chandrashekhar united the youth of the country and led the movements on the national issue.

Chandrashekhar was of revolutionary attitude and the country was paramount for him, he added. Expressing concern about the danger on the soul of the Constitution, he said that we will have to give a befitting reply to such anti-democrats in this election. Only then will

**"Chandrashekhar united the youth of the country and led movements on national issues"**

**Badruddin Qureshi**  
 Former Minister  
 Chhattisgarh

our democracy remain safe. Earlier in the welcome address, JP Pratishthan President RP Sharma mentioned that in the election temperament, the topic of the talks has been kept as 'Current Democracy and Constitution'.

Elaborating further he said that today an environment is being created in the country to change the Constitution, which is dangerous for our democracy.

# Battle-2024



'Congress doesn't want certificate of being religious from anyone'

Jai Prakash Agarwal  
Lok Sabha candidate



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated during a public rally ahead of Lok Sabha elections. Photo PTI

## Came with hope in 2014, trust in 2019 and guarantee in 2024: Narendra Modi

"A new atmosphere is prevailing as we celebrate the birth celebrations of Lord Ram after 500 years and this is a culmination of centuries of devotion and generations of sacrifice".

Press Trust of India

**NALBARI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday asserted that he went to people with hope in 2014, trust in 2019 and guarantee in 2024. Addressing an election rally at Borkura ground here, the Prime Minister said there is "Modi's guarantee across the country and I am giving the guarantee of fulfilling all these guarantees". "The North East is a witness to Modi's guarantee as the Congress

had only given problems to the region but the BJP has made it a source of possibilities," the Prime Minister said. "Congress fuelled insurgency but Modi embraced people and brought peace in the region.

What could not be achieved in 60 years of Congress rule, Modi achieved it in ten years", he added. He said that birth celebrations of Lord Ram are being held in Ayodhya after 500 years with a 'Surya Tilak' ceremony.

### HIGHLIGHT

● "The NDA government believes in 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' and ensures that each citizen gets the benefits they are entitled to without any discrimination".

● "Congress for its own benefit had deliberately neglected the region so that they could indulge in corruption and loot"

"We cannot join the celebrations in Ayodhya, but let us participate in the event by switching on our mobile flashlights and sending light and prayers to Lord Ram", he said.

The Prime Minister said free ration will continue to be provided to all without discrimination for the next five years. Free treatment of up to Rs five lakh under Ayushman Bharat for people aged 70 and above will be also given so that it doesn't become a burden for the family but

"this son of yours (Modi) will take care of your medical costs". During the next five years, three crore new houses will also be constructed for the poor, he said. Referring to the abolition of 'triple talaq', Modi said this has freed the Muslim women. "We made a law against it which benefitted not only the Muslim sisters, but their entire family as triple talaq had destroyed the lives of many women and their families," he added.

## Rajnath seeks Cong stand on CPI(M) manifesto

**KASARAGOD (KERALA):** Senior BJP leader Rajnath Singh on Wednesday questioned the intention behind the CPI(M)'s poll manifesto promise to dismantle nuclear weapons in the country and demanded to know the stand of the Congress on this issue. Singh alleged talk of dismantling India's nuclear weapons amounted to playing with national security and that there was a "deep-rooted conspiracy to weaken the country". He accused the Left and the Congress, both allies in the anti-BJP INDIA bloc, of apparently trying to weaken the country. Speaking at a public meeting, Singh demanded that the Congress should clarify its stand on the CPI(M)'s promise in the manifesto to dismantle nuclear.

"If the INDIA bloc wins, there will not be the NRC, Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and Uniform Civil Code. We will repeal all discriminatory laws," Mamata Banerjee said.

**KOLKATA:** The TMC on Wednesday released its Lok Sabha poll manifesto promising several social welfare measures and repeal of the CAA if the opposition INDIA bloc comes to power at the Centre. Releasing the manifesto at the party headquarters here, TMC's Rajya Sabha party

### POLL MANIFESTO |

## TMC manifesto promises several welfare measures



TMC leaders address the media after releasing the party's election manifesto. Photo PTI

### FACTFILE

● The party also promised to provide ration at doorstep and 10 free cooking cylinders for BPL families.

leader Derek O' Brien said, "these are the promises which we will fulfill as part of INDIA bloc, when it forms the next government." "We promise to control petrol and diesel prices through the formulation

of a price stabilisation fund. We also promise to repeal the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and stop the National Register of Citizens (NRC) exercise in the country," senior TMC leader Amit Mitra said.

### VIEW |

## 'Lok Sabha election a fight between two ideologies'

Press Trust of India

**MANDYA (KARNATAKA):** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday termed the upcoming Lok Sabha elections as a battle between two ideologies - INDIA bloc "fighting for the Constitution" on one hand and BJP, which wants to "abolish constitution and democracy", on the other.

"This is the fight between two ideologies. There is Congress and INDIA bloc on one hand, which fought for the Constitution and democracy to the country. On the other hand there is BJP, which wants to abolish the Constitution and democracy and is placing their people in all the institutions," Gandhi said, addressing

**If the INDIA bloc is voted to power, it will be a "government of ordinary citizens, farmers, labourers and traders"**  
Rahul Gandhi  
Congress leader



an election rally here. While the BJP-government "belonged to 22 to 25 rich people", Congress will give a government which will work for the ordinary citizens, farmers, labourers and traders, he said. This is his first visit to the Congress-governed Karnataka after the election schedule was announced a month ago.

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### LOK SABHA

#### RJD fields Mamta Bhuiyan from Palamu

**RANCHI:** The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) Jharkhand unit on Wednesday announced that Mamata Bhuiyan will be its candidate for the Palamu Lok Sabha constituency in the state. As per a seat-sharing formula among the JMM-led alliance partners in the state, the RJD was allotted only the Palamu Lok Sabha constituency out of the 14 seats in the state. Jharkhand RJD general secretary Kailash Yadav said that the party has declared Mamata Bhuiyan as its official candidate for the Palamu Lok Sabha seat. Bhuiyan has recently switched to RJD from the BJP. She will contest against the BJP's V D Ram in the seat. Ram a former Director General of Police, Jharkhand had won the seat in 2019 defeating RJD's Ghuran Ram by a margin of 4.77 lakh votes. According to the seat-sharing agreement, Congress will contest on seven seats and JMM on five. RJD and CPI (ML) were allotted one seat each. The RJD was also bargaining for the Chatra seat till recently. PTI

### ELECTIONS

#### Priyanka holds roadshow in Saharanpur



**SAHARANPUR (UP):** Hours before the campaigning for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections comes to an end, Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi on Wednesday held a road show here in support of INDIA bloc candidate Imran Masood. The roadshow covered a distance of about 2 kilometres in areas with a sizeable Muslim population. It started from the Jain Bagh area, passed through Raiwala, JBS Inter College, Kamboh Bridge and ended at the Qutub Sher police station area. PTI

### Lok Sabha polls

#### AAP launches 'AAP Ka RamRajya' website

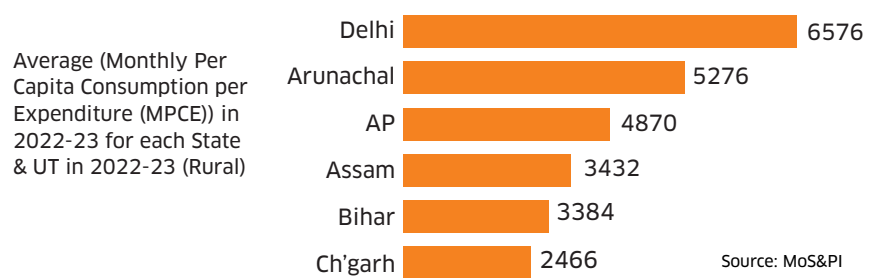


**NEW DELHI:** AAP on Wednesday launched its "AAP Ka RamRajya" website for the Lok Sabha polls campaign to showcase the party's concept of "Ram Rajya", saying Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tried to realise the ideals of Lord Ram in the national capital. The launch of the website -- aapkaramrajya.com -- came ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, the first phase of which will be held on Friday, and coincided with the Ram Navami festival being celebrated in several parts of the country. During a joint press conference, Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said the website will showcase AAP's

concept of "Ram Rajya" as well as the work done by the party's governments. "Chief Minister Kejriwal accomplished wonderful things -- good schools, mohalla clinics, free water and electricity and free bus rides for women -- in the last 10 years for realising 'Ram Rajya'," Singh said. This is the first time that Kejriwal is not among his people on Ram Navami, Singh said and alleged that the Delhi chief minister was sent to jail in a "baseless" case on the basis of statements from "false" witnesses. "In Arvind Kejriwal's concept of 'Ram Rajya', no one is big or small and the idea is to work in the interest of all.

### The Day's NUMBERS

#### WHAT WAS AVERAGE MPCE FOR EACH STATE/UT IN 2022-23 (IN RS)



### ELECTIONS

#### PM Modi and CM Vijayan one and the same: Congress

**KANNUR:** The political ripples created by the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi are yet to die down in Kerala, with the Congress on Wednesday alleging that the BJP leader and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan were trying to convince people that they were not similar.

But the people of the state are well aware that they are one and the same, the Leader of Opposition in the State Assembly, V D Satheesan, told reporters here in Panur near Kannur.

Hitting hard at CM Vijayan, the leader said that for the past one month, he had been constantly criticising the Congress and senior leader Rahul Gandhi without uttering a word against Modi.

Satheesan alleged that the CM was humble and careful even while replying to Modi's allegations against the state government during his recent election rallies in Kerala.

### MEDIA

#### Returning officer warns Congress's Garhwal candidate

**NEW DELHI:** A State Election Commission has issued a warning to the Congress candidate from Uttarakhand's Garhwal constituency over his "baseless" allegations against his rival Anil Baluni from the BJP, asking him not to repeat such an incident. Official sources said the constituency's returning officer issued the warning to Ganesh Godiyal after the local administration in a probe found the charge baseless that the excise department had colluded with Baluni in transporting liquor for free distribution to help him in the poll. The hilly constituency goes to the polls on Friday. The BJP had earlier complained to the Election Commission against Godiyal, accusing him of making "unverified and distorted" allegations against its candidate. It had cited Godiyal's allegation that the local excise department had overseen the supply of 9,000 crates of liquor to help the ruling party's candidate win the election.

MLA Kurud appealed voters to ensure victory of BJP LS candidate

Ajay Chandrakar  
MLA Kurud



# Chhattisgarh

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### LOK SABHA

**Polling teams departed thru bus and helicopter to remote areas**

**BIJAPUR:** In the first leg of Lok Sabha polls 2024, the polling in the Parliamentary Area No. 10 of Bastar will be held on April 19 from 7:00 am to 3:00 pm and for which all the preparations for the elections have been completed as per instructions by the Election Commission of India. Sufficient security force and police has been deployed in the district, so as to ensure peaceful polls. Under the Parliamentary Area Bastar No. 10, the preparations for the elections in Vidhan Sabha area No. 89 in Bijapur has been completed. The departure of the polling teams to remote and hyper sensitive 76 polling centres of Bijapur district has started from Tuesday morning through helicopter. Collector and DRO Anurag Pandey dispatched a team of polling officers and employees by breaking the coconut fruit in front of the bus they boarded and to others in the helicopter from the helipad.

### MEDIA

**Ashutosh Pandey appointed media in-charge of SBSS**



**BILASPUR:** The social organization meeting of Raj Kishore Nagar Sarayari Brahmin Seva Samiti (SBSS) was held under the leadership of President Anand Pandey. The program was presided over by Beltara MLA Sushant Shukla. First of all, garland was offered on the photograph of Lord Parshuram, lighting the lamp and applying tilak to the Brahmins. The main agenda of the program was based on a special discussion on celebrating Parashuram Janmotsav with due pomp and show.



Fire Safety Department of HTPS organized demonstration of fire extinguishers on Fire Safety Week.

## HTPS workers were taught how to deal with fire under NFSW

An attractive exhibition of fire extinguishers was organized and demonstration related to their operation at HTPS Korba (W)

### Central Chronicle News

**KORBA:** On the occasion of National Fire Service Week (NFSW), under the auspices of the Fire Safety Department of Hasdev Thermal Power Station (HTPS), Korba West, on April 15, an attractive exhibition of fire extinguishers was organized and demonstration related to their operation was provided,

after which quick relief was provided in case of fire incident. And while performing rescue operations, the fire damaged casualty was rescued and safely taken to the hospital through ambulance.

In this sequence, on March 16, 2024, Motor Control Room No. of Coal Transfer Branch (Outer) of the plant, under the leadership of

### HIGHLIGHT

● Ash Handling Plant of 11 and 1500 MW units were informed about the method of safe use of fire extinguishers

● They were trained regarding effective prevention of potential hazards

Assistant Fire Officer GP Panaria and Deputy Fire Officer GP Kaithwas, the officers, employees and contract workers posted in the Ash Handling Plant of 11 and 1500 MW units were informed about the method of safe use of fire extinguishers and the problems arising out of fire in the plant.

They were trained regarding effective prevention of potential haz-

ards. On this occasion, Executive Director (Production) of the plant, Sanjay Sharma encouraged the organizers of the program and gave the message of spreading awareness about fire incidents. Special enthusiasm and attraction is being seen among the plant employees towards the programs of National Fire Service Week starting from 14th April 2024.

### From around the region

**Awareness being created about polling thru hoardings**



**BALRAMPUR:** To ensure cent percent polling during the next LS polls 2024 and to create awareness among the citizens, variety of programmes are being organised by the district administration. It is by installing hoardings and flexes at different chowks, 'chourahas' (squares: Triangle) and (whereabouts), and at the Bus Stand and other public places, awareness is being created about exercising

one's franchise. It is as per instructions by the Collector and DRO R Ekka, variety of programmes are being organised for awareness among the voters under SVEEP. Under guidance of CEO District Panchayat, awareness is being created among the voters regularly. In this women and youth took part enthusiastically and were given message about importance of polling.

## All voters of district should exercise their franchise on April 19

**BIJAPUR:** The polling in the Bastar parliamentary area No. 10 for the LS polls 2024 will be held on April 19 and all the preparations for polling in the Vidhan Sabha No. 89 of Bijapur district under it has been completed under guidance of DRO Anurag Pandey. Collector and DRO Anurag Pandey has appealed the voters to take part in this large festival of democracy in large number and exercise their franchise to strengthen the democracy. He has also asked the authorities to ensure basic amenities in all the polling centres, so that the voters do not face any problems and there should be sufficient security arrangements in all the polling centres. It is without any fear and terror, the voters have been asked to exercise their franchise in the district and ensure cent percent polling on April 19.

### | FLOODLIGHT FACILITY BY SECRRWO |

## SECRRWO makes available floodlights facility at NEI

### Central Chronicle News

Formal inauguration of Floodlights facility was done by President Shraddha Pandey

**BILASPUR:** The availability of floodlights at the North East Institute football field has been made possible through the initiative of SECRRWO Bilaspur Division. The formal inauguration of the floodlight facility was conducted by SECRRWO Bilaspur Division President Mrs. Shraddha Pandey.

SECRRWO has always been dedicated to the welfare activities of the employees and their families of Bilaspur Railway. It is noteworthy that the need for floodlights at the North East Institute



The formal inauguration of the floodlight facility was conducted by SECRRWO Bilaspur Division President at NEI.

### FACTFILE

● The availability of floodlight facilities will provide many conveniences to the players

● SECRRWO makes available floodlights facility at NEI

field had been felt for a long time. As soon as this need was recognized,

Divisional SECRRWO President Mrs. Shraddha Pandey took immediate action to provide better playing facilities for players and high mast floodlights facility through SECRRWO Bilaspur for organizing various night sports events. The formal inauguration of this facility was done by President Mrs. Shraddha Pandey on April 15, 2024, at 07:00 PM. During the inaugu-

ration event, SECRRWO Vice President Mrs. Meenakshi Raj, Secretary Mrs. Shipra Patel, Treasurer Mrs. Sandhya Rangarav, DRM Praveen Pandey, ADRM Devaraj Sri Yogesh Devangan, officers, members of SECRRWO, Secretary of the North East Institute C Navin Kumar, other officials and members, and a large number of players were present.

### | ILLEGAL BUSINESS |

## Illegal brick Kilns operating without any fear?

### Central Chronicle News

**MUNGELI:** The illegal business of brick kilns in the region is going on unabated and this is posing loss worth lakhs in terms of royalty to the Mineral department. But with lack of action from the Mineral Department, the morale of the Brick Kiln owners is increasing every day.

In the Mungeli Vidhan Sabha area, the people from the urban and rural areas involved in illegal brick kiln manufacturing are causing loss to the government in terms of royalty revenue and the Mineral department by taking action in the name of mere formality, are just trying to run away from their responsibility and this indirectly proves

**Brick kiln operators are operating the brick kilns without obtaining mineral licence, and action against soon**

Officer, Mineral Dept, Mungeli



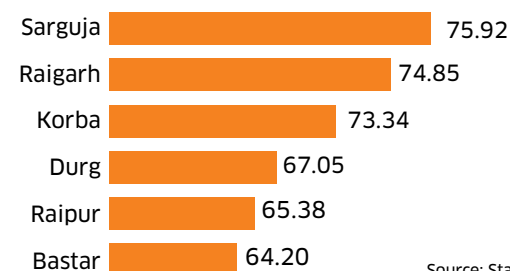
File photo

that they are also working hands-n-gloves with them. It is for this reason that this illegal business in the region is flourishing for last few months, both in the urban and rural areas. Those involved in illegal brick kiln business are charging Rs 12000 to Rs 13000 per tractor and there is hardly any firm action by the Mineral Department.

### The Day's NUMBERS

Voting percentage in LS Election in Ch'garh in 2014

### WHERE WAS HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF POLLING IN 2014



Source: Statista

### Voting Appeal

**Chandrakar appeals voters for victory of BJP LS candidate**

**KURUD:** A BJP's senior party leader and MLA Kurud Ajay Chandrakar met the villagers of Gram Parsatti, Badekareli, Katalbod under Kurud VS and held talks with them and their family members over 'Chai-par-Charcha'. During this Chandrakar apprised people about the public welfare schemes of the central and state government and appealed them to ensure victory of party's Mahasamund LS candidate Roopkumari Choudhary with huge margin and ensure hat-trick of PM Narendra Modi as the PM for the third time in a row. On Tuesday, Ajay Chandrakar visited Gram Parsatti and Badekareli in Kurud LS and campaign in favour of BJP Mahasamund LS candidate Roopkumari Choudhary. Holding talks with female villagers and party workers, Chandrakar gave them election tips and said that PM Narendra Modi has selected Roopkumari Choudhary as the LS candidate for women empowerment and therefore he appealed all present to press the button opposite 'Lotus' and ensure her victory with thumping majority.

### Voters Awareness

**Participation of all necessary to make polls successful: BMO**



**ARANG:** To make the biggest festival of democracy successful, the local district administration has folded up its sleeves. Under this in the direction of the Asst. Returning Officer (ARO) Pushpendra Sharma, variety of activities are being organised in the Schools, Gram Panchayats, health centres to create awareness among the voters. This included administration of pledge, Mehandi lagaon, Rangoli, Banners, posters, slogan writing, awareness songs, Akashdeep, 'Matadan Khichadi', 'Ek deep Desh ke Naam' and others.

# Final two-day meet of G-20 Framework Working Group

A legion of rituals and mantras adorned the skies as chants were recited in the Mahamaya Temple

## CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

The extravaganza of the Havan continued till evening with scores of devotees lining up for Darshan and continuing till late evening.

**RAJIM:** Havan rituals were performed here in the famous Goddess Adi Shakti Maa Mahamaya Temple of Kamalkshetra and the city saw an upsurge in devotees on the auspicious day of Asthimi Tithi. The rituals were led by Manish Sharma with Chief Priest Baldau Singh Thakur, Nagar Panchayat President Rekha Sonkar, Maa Shitala Mahamaya Management Committee President Lileshwar Yadu, Jitendra Sonkar, Mahesh Yadav, Lala Sahu, Pushpa Goswami, Arvind Yadu, Uttam Nishad, Faguram Nishad, Valmiki Dhivar and a large number of other devotees including Pawan Soni, Raju Sahu, Narayan Dhiwar, Rakesh Gupta, Ram Narayan Sahu, and Ramnarayan Mishra were present. The extravaganza of the Havan continued till evening with scores of devotees lining up for Darshan and continuing till late evening.



Reverence galore in the courtyard of Goddess Mahamaya of Kamalkshetra

This season one and a half quintal chain was prepared along with the Prasadam, and people all over the region thronged to pay their reverence on the day, which had an auspicious and rare meeting of Sarvartha Siddhi Yoga and Ravi Yoga, of which Sarvartha Siddhi Yoga will last from 5:16 am to 5:53 am on 17th April. Here it takes a mention that all dates of Navratri have special significance and Nav Kanya Puja is performed on Ashtami or Navami Tithi.

## The importance of Nav Kanya Puja removes sorrow and poverty

Non menstruating girls are invited for the nine girls feast and as per tradition, along with worshipping them, a feast is organized and they are given gifts. It is said that worshipping a 2 year old girl Kumari removes sorrow and poverty, while a 3 year old girl is considered as Trimurti and worshipping them brings wealth, happiness and

### HIGHLIGHT

● Canada is a top destination for tens of thousands of Indian international students each year.

● Canada have given no indication that they intend to stop granting visas to Indian citizens.

prosperity. Similarly worshipping a 4 year old girl Kalyani brings prosperity to the family, whereas by worshipping 5 year old girl Rohini, a person becomes free from diseases. A 6 year old girl is called Kalika and Vidya Vijay Raj Yoga is achieved in Kalika form. Aishwarya or greatness is born through worshipping 7 year old girl called the Chandika.

## MNREGA workers paid Rs 200 a week instead of Rs 243 a day

**CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS**  
Around 250 villagers of village are getting employment and are paid a mere sum of Rs 200 a week.

**KHAIRAGARH:** Hundreds of villagers of Pachpedi Panchayat working under MNREGA scheme are facing the arbitrariness of the officials as they are allegedly being paid Rs 200 a week instead of the fixed pay norm of Rs. 243 a day. Demanding justice the effected villages particularly women here reached the Collectorate and submitted a memorandum to ADM Premkumar Patel citing the arbitrariness of the MNREGA officers in paying only Rs 200 a week.

While submitting the memorandum to the ADM, the villagers alleged that the villagers of the Gram Panchayat have been working under MNREGA for the last eight weeks and the work of pond deepening is underway. The villagers also informed that approximately 250 villagers of the village are getting employment, via the employment scheme, but were let off the benefits when a mere sum of Rs 200 a week in total was paid to them. Despite the fixed wage of Rs 243 per day the wages when

calculated are coming to only Rs 20 to 30 per day, they attributed.

Women workers namely, Seema, Lakshmi, Khileshwari, Manisha, Kiran, Sangeeta, Maneka, Rameshwari, Revati, Ashabai, Lokeshwari, Satrupa, Sunita, Malti, Naina, Triveni, Shashibai, Gayatri, Sunita Jangade, Jethiyabai and many others who arrived to hand over the memorandum, also said that a 13 by 13 pit

### EASTFACTS

● Actual Pay of MNREGA workers is Rs 243 a day

● ADM assures the villagers of remittance and investigation both

was being dug citing lack of depth for the actual depth of 10 by 10 pit.

In this case, as per information when the women workers talked to the Panchayat Sarpanch and raised questions about cutting the wages without any reason the Sarpanch postponed the matter saying that it will be completely rectified during the future work. The women further informed that even after referring the complaint to the Collector, the Panchayat Sarpanch kept stopping the villagers particularly women from complaining.

## NEWSLINE

### Korea

## Action against illegal coal transporters



The Mineral Department is continuously taking action against those illegally mining and transporting ballast, coal, bricks in the district, by conducting raids and sudden inspection. A heavy transport vehicle was seized in Baikunthpur tehsil area and three tonnes of illegal coal was found to be transported by driver Rameshwar Rajwade. According to information received the owner of the said vehicle is said to be Naresh Kumar and the vehicle was confiscated and handed over to Charcha police station and a fine of Rs 34 thousand 396 was also recovered from the vehicle owner. The Mineral Officers informed that continuous action is being taken against illegal mineral excavator.

### KHAIRAGARH

## District Scout Guide Association running voter

The District Scout Guide Association is running voter awareness campaign in the district in the form of rallies, posters and banners under the instructions of Collector and District Election Officer Chandrakant Verma, Additional Collector and Nodal Officer Training Prem Kumar Patel, Joint Collector and Deputy District Election Officer Surendra Kumar Thakur and District Education Officer and Nodal Sweep Lalji Dwivedi. Under the series a SVEEP awareness program in the form of a voter rally by Scout Guide girl students is running a unique awareness campaign, under the leadership of District Union Secretary Krishna Kumar Verma.

### SUKMA

## Voting is the most important right: Collector

Under the SVEEP program for the Lok Sabha elections 2024, a district level awareness program was organized at the district headquarters, in which Rangoli, painting and human chain on the theme of "My Vote, My Right" was organised. Voter awareness was created through cultural programs like street drama, presentations and posters with messages like "100% voting, Sukma ka Abhiman" and various others.

Collector Haris. S and SP Kiran Gangaram Chavan observed and appreciated the rangoli and painting made by the students to create voter awareness and in his address, the Collector said that voting is the most important right and everyone should notably cast their votes. Collector started the signature campaign and a message for voter awareness was given by signing by citizens.

## Child marriage called off by WCD Department

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

Women and Child Development Department, Anganwadi workers and Child Line are putting stringent efforts to stop child marriage

**BALRAMPUR:** In a bid to stop child marriages on the instructions of Collector Remijus Ekka, the officials of Women and Child Development Department, Anganwadi workers and Child Line are putting stringent efforts to stop child marriage in the district. In the same series a joint action was taken by a joint team of WCD, Anganwadi workers and Child Line in village Kanakpur under development block Ramchandrapur.

As per information, the wedding was called off by counseling the child and the parents and

the villagers and relatives were informed about the legal action to be taken pertaining child marriages as per law. Also, the people present there were told that child marriage is not only a social evil but also a legal crime and due to child marriage, there is an increase in child malnutrition, infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate as well as domestic violence.

The age of a boy for marriage is fixed at 21 years and the age of a girl is fixed at 18 years and under the Child Marriage Prohibition Act, legal action can be taken against the parents of the bride and groom who perform a child marriage, relatives, wedding guests and even the priest who conducts the marriage. District Program Officer has appealed to the people to contact mobile number 9826278915 or toll free number 1098.

## High school principal falls prey to road mishap

**KHAIRAGARH:** Speeding heavy transport vehicles, has once again become the cause of human death in the region, questioning the safety concern while travelling on National Highways falling in the topography of the district. As per information, the latest victim is Vijaylal Rajak, 55 years, posted as principle in the high school of Village Dhaba and he was in the Khairagarh district headquarters to attend the election training. While on his way back home to village Penderwani, he was hit by a speeding trailer between village Narmada and Chaknar on Kawardha State Highway, which led to his death. Rajak was later shifted to Gandaika Government Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries. The sudden death of the Educationist has caused distress and grief in the family and there is mourning in the home village of the deceased.

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

Havan-worship was done throughout the day, and Prasad was distributed along with Bhog-Bhandara

**KHAIRAGARH:** There is an atmosphere of devotion throughout the district on the auspicious festival of Navratri. On Tuesday, on Durgashtami, havan-puja and distribution of prasada along with bhog-bhandara continued throughout the day.

There was a rush of devotees in the goddess temples across the district since morning and the worship of Shakti continued throughout the day in the ancient Danteshwari temple of the district headquarters, Shitala temple, Mahamaya temple, Bamleshwari temple, Shani Dham in Dharampur along with the Kali

## Durgashtami celebrated with reverence in Town



Durgashtami celebrated with reverence

### EASTFACTS

● There was a rush of devotees in the goddess temples across the district

● Jyot-Janwara will be immersed on Ram Navami

temple of Chhuikhadan, Durga temple along with the goddess temples of

Gandai and Salhewara as well as in big villages and towns.

After Ashtami Havan, devotees kept organizing special Bhog Bhandaras by setting up pandals and in temples and roadsides in Chhuikhadan, Gandai, Salhewara, Mudhipar, Bazar Ataria, Jalbandha and small and big towns of the district including district headquarters

## LOK SABHA ELECTIONS 2024

## Elections yet to paint the city blue as campaigning goes dull

### CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

**RAJIM:** The city of temples Rajim, is a mute spectator to the upcoming Lok Sabha Election 2024, wherein as per ground reports not much is seen in the region in rounds of campaigning and canvassing alike. The scenario is all different this season, as voters are all decked to cast their votes on April 26 th, but it is the political parties and the candidates who

are loosing the gold in the ground. The local public much vocal about the elections have opined in a different note that the city is amiss of banners posters loudspeakers and even party representatives going off field this elections, which according to them is a sign of a war with no adequate means. The region coming under the prestigious Mahasamund Lok Sabha constituency has different talks going rounds



in tea stalls, local Addas, city and village squares. Many in the city are though vehemently supporting the silent genre of elections, while the youth population is a disclaimer to this school of thought.

Here they have strongly supported an election full of sound and vibes, while some have complained of newspapers coming sans of election reports and TV channels talking only on the national scenario, dis-



“City on silent mode as public and party both have decided to face the dance of democracy noiselessly”

carding the Chhattisgarh chapter. 17 candidates in total are trying their luck in the election fray from Mahasamund Lok Sabha constituency, and the main tug of war is between new candidate Roop Kumari Choudhary of BJP and former Chhattisgarh Home Minister and former MP Tamradhwaj Sahu of the INC. Meanwhile there are also reports that the Congress is yet to open its election office in the region.



## QUOTE FROM THE QUOTABLE

In a conflict between the heart and the brain, follow your heart.  
[ Swami Vivekananda ]

# Comment

## Uphold values of Inclusivity and vote for development

## OUR VIEW |

### Turning the Tide: Naxalites on the Retreat in CG

In the labyrinthine landscape of Chhattisgarh's Naxalite insurgency, the recent clash in Kanker district stands as a pivotal chapter in the ongoing saga of conflict and resolution. Led by the elusive Shankar Rao, the demise of at least 29 Naxalites in a single encounter serves as a poignant reminder of the enduring struggle for peace and stability in the region. This watershed moment is part of a broader narrative of resilience and resistance, where security forces tirelessly confront the specter of Naxalite extremism. With a mounting toll of 79 insurgents neutralized across the Bastar region this year alone, the battle lines are drawn, and the stakes are higher than ever. The recovery of a substantial cache of weaponry serves as a tangible testament to the gravity of the security threat posed by Naxalite militants. From AK-47s to .303 rifles, these instruments of destruction embody the stark realities faced by those on the front lines of the conflict. Timed just days before the Lok Sabha elections, the reverberations of this encounter extend far beyond its immediate aftermath. As polling day looms, the imperative of ensuring the safety and security of citizens takes center stage, underscoring the delicate balance between democracy and discord. Yet, amidst the turmoil, there is a glimmer of hope—a testament to the indomitable spirit of the human endeavour. The success of this operation is a testament to the dedication and coordination of joint forces, including the Border Security Force (BSF) and the state police's District Reserve Guard. Their unwavering commitment to combating Naxalite extremism reflects the government's steadfast resolve to protect its citizens and restore normalcy to the region. As Chhattisgarh continues its journey towards peace and prosperity, need to address socio-economic disparities, political marginalization, and ideological grievances must be addressed through holistic and inclusive strategies that prioritize dialogue, development, and reconciliation. Only through a comprehensive approach can we hope to break the cycle of violence and forge a path towards lasting peace and prosperity in Chhattisgarh.

## GUEST VIEW |

### Remembering Peter Higgs: Pioneer of Modern Physics

Peter Higgs, a towering figure in modern physics, bid farewell on April 8, 2024. His groundbreaking prediction of the Higgs boson, famously termed the "God Particle," reshaped our comprehension of the cosmos. Born in 1929, Higgs embarked on a scientific journey after graduating from King's College, University of London. Alongside fellow scientists in the 1960s, he proposed the existence of the Higgs boson, later confirmed by its discovery in 2012 at the CERN research center near Geneva. This monumental revelation revolutionized our understanding of particle physics, elucidating the origins of mass and validating the Standard Model. Despite receiving the Nobel Prize in 2013, Higgs remained modest, prioritizing the pursuit of knowledge over personal accolades. His legacy extends beyond scientific breakthroughs; Higgs mentored countless young scientists, inspiring future generations with his passion for exploration. While uncomfortable with fame, his enduring influence as a titan of modern physics persists. His invaluable contributions continue to propel scientific inquiry, ensuring his brilliance remains immortalized in the annals of physics history.



Dr. Krishna Kumar vepakomma

India's electoral process epitomizes the essence of democracy, where every vote carries the weight of aspirations and concerns. As the nation gears up for the 2024 National Elections, the stage is set for a profound exercise in democracy, reaffirming India's commitment to the democratic ideals it cherishes. The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) initiative to invite representatives from various countries to witness India's electoral process underscores the significance of this momentous occasion. It is a testament to India's democratic ethos and its unwavering dedication to transparency and inclusivity in governance.

Having experienced the electoral fervor firsthand as a polling officer in a remote area, I am acutely aware of the complexities and challenges inherent in the electoral process. Despite the festivities and jubilation surrounding elections, there exists a palpable undercurrent of discord and animosity fueled by political rivalries and vested inter-

ests. Instances of coercion, bribery, and disenfranchisement continue to mar the electoral landscape, particularly in regions where dominant caste factions and disruptive elements hold sway. The indiscriminate manipulation of the electoral process undermines the very foundation of democracy, depriving citizens of their fundamental right to choose their representatives freely and fairly.

As we embark on the electoral journey from April 19 to June 1, there is an overwhelming sense of anticipation for change and progress. Every election presents an opportunity for citizens to voice their aspirations and demand accountability from their elected leaders. It is a time for reflection and renewal, where the electorate evaluates the performance of incumbent governments and seeks alternatives that promise a brighter future.

The upcoming elections, characterized by a direct contest between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the opposition united under

the I.N.D.I.A umbrella, are poised to shape the trajectory of India's future. While the government's performance remains a central theme, the electorate's evolving priorities and expectations demand a nuanced approach from political parties.

Despite India's remarkable progress as a vibrant democracy, voter apathy remains a pressing concern. The staggering statistic of almost 33 percent of eligible voters abstaining from voting in the 2019 National Elections underscores the disconnect between citizens and the political process. It is imperative to recognize that India's electoral democracy transcends mere development agendas. While development undoubtedly remains a crucial factor, electoral dynamics are influenced by a myriad of factors, including familial ties, social identities, ideological affiliations, and media presence.

In this electoral landscape, every candidate embodies a unique narrative that resonates with different segments of society. Whether it is familial

prominence, caste affiliations, ideological fervor, or social media influence, candidates are chosen not solely based on their developmental promises but also on their ability to connect with voters on a personal and emotional level.

Ultimately, every vote cast is a solemn pledge to the nation—a declaration of faith in India's democratic ideals and a commitment to shaping its future. As voters stand before the electronic voting machine (EVM), they carry with them the hopes and aspirations of generations past and future. Their decision—whether to uphold the status quo or embrace change—will reverberate across the corridors of power, shaping the destiny of the nation for years to come.

In the tapestry of India's electoral democracy, each vote is a thread weaving together the fabric of our collective destiny. Let us embrace this privilege with humility and conviction, for in the exercise of our democratic rights lies the promise of a brighter tomorrow.



M.R.Lalu

Author is a freelance journalist Pathanamthitta District, Kerala

## India ranks number 10 in cybercrime

A new study, the 'World Cybercrime Index,' surveyed 100 countries, identifying top-ranking nations like Russia, Ukraine, and China. | by *Press Trust of India*



Cybercrime is a modern menace with potential long-term implications Photo: AP

India ranked number 10 in cybercrime, with frauds involving people to make advance fee payment being the most common type, according to a new research that surveyed cybercrime experts around the world.

An international team of researchers has compiled the 'World Cybercrime Index' that ranks roughly 100 countries and identifies key hotspots according to various categories of cybercrime, including ransomware, credit card theft and scams.

Russia topped the list, and was followed by Ukraine, China, the US, Nigeria and Romania. North Korea was at the seventh position, while the UK and Brazil were at the eighth and ninth positions, respectively, according to the research published in the journal PLoS ONE.

Through the survey, the researchers asked the experts to consider major types of crime in the virtual world and nominate countries that they thought contributed significantly to each of them.

The major categories that the researchers identified were - technical products

and services such as malware and compromising systems; attacks and extortion including ransomware; data and identity theft including hacking, compromising accounts and credit cards; scams such as advance fee fraud; and cashing out or money laundering involving illegitimate virtual currency.

Invites to respond to the survey were sent out from March to October 2021. The team received 92 complete survey responses.

The top six countries appeared among the top ten countries under each cybercrime category, the researchers found. They further found that countries that are cybercrime hubs "specialise" in particular categories. "Russia and Ukraine are highly technical cybercrime hubs, whereas Nigerian cybercriminals are engaged in less technical forms of cybercrime," the authors wrote in the study.

Among the top ranking

countries, while some may "specialise" in cybercrime types with middling technical complexity - such as those involved in data and identity theft - others may "specialise" in both high-tech and low-tech crimes, they said.

India was found to "specialise" in scams. Further, while Romania and the US were found to "specialise" in both high-tech and low-tech crimes, India was found to be a "balanced hub", "specialising" in mid-tech crimes.

"In short, each country has a distinct profile, indicating a unique local dimension," the authors wrote.

"We now have a deeper understanding of the geography of cybercrime, and how different countries specialise in different types of cybercrime," said study co-author Miranda Bruce from the University of Oxford, UK.

The "intensive" three-year-long research "will help remove the veil of anonymity around cybercriminal offenders, and we hope that it will aid the fight against the growing threat of profit-driven cybercrime," said Bruce. The experts contacted by the researchers were professionals engaged in cybercrime intelligence, investigation and attribution for at least five years, were "not actively involved in tracking offenders" and had an "excellent" reputation among peers.

The World Cybercrime Index reveals global cybercrime trends, with India ranking 10th. Specialized hubs exist, highlighting the need for targeted intervention in combating evolving cyber threats worldwide.

## YOUR LETTERS

## ISL league shield: MBSG triumphs

The drone and missile attack by Iran on Israel late on Saturday night has sparked fears of the six-month-old Israel-Hamas war spilling over. The big question now is: How will Israel respond to the attack? Iran has described its move as an act of self-defence and just a response to the attack on its consulate in Damascus. Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, on the other hand, has warned: "Whoever harms us, we will harm them". It is very unlikely that Israel will take the attack lying down. But it would be in the best interest of the world to ensure a de-escalation of the situation.

BK Chatterjee, Faridabad

## Rahul Gandhi's stand vs dictatorship

Rahul Gandhi deserves praise for staunchly opposing the undemocratic concept of "One Nation One People One Language One Leader," which reeks of authoritarianism. A united nation's strength lies in embracing diversity, allowing languages, cultures, and religions to flourish. The notion of "One Leader" contradicts democratic principles. All languages are equal, intertwined with their civilizations. Let Rabindranath Tagore's vision of inclusivity resonate, ensuring nobody feels alienated in the vast sea of Bharata's humanity.

Kajal Chatterjee, Kolkata

Send your articles (800-900 words) and letters (50-60 words) for this page on: [editorcentralchronicle@gmail.com](mailto:editorcentralchronicle@gmail.com)  
The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity.



# Business



Current financial year will be a transformative year for Vedanta  
**Sanil Agarwal**  
 Mining tycoon

## BizBriefs

BEST OF THE REST

### Demographic dividends

#### India not reaping benefits of demographic dividend: Raghuram

**WASHINGTON:** India is not reaping the benefits of demographic dividends, former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan said on Tuesday, emphasising that there is a need to focus on improving the human capital and enhancing their skill sets. "I think we are in the midst of it (demographic dividend), but the problem is we are not reaping the benefits," Rajan said at a conference on "Making India an Advanced Economy by 2047: What Will it Take" at the George Washington University here.

"That's why I said 6 per cent growth. If you think that's about what we are right now, take away the fluff in the GDP numbers. That 6 per cent is in the midst of a demographic dividend. It is much below where China and Korea were when they reaped their demographic dividend. "And that's why I'm saying we are being overly complacent when we say this is great.

### Crisis advisory

#### Civil aviation ministry asks airlines to carry out risk assessment

**NEW DELHI:** Amid escalating tensions in the Middle East, the civil aviation ministry has asked airlines to carry out their own risk assessment on international flight operations. Air India, Vistara, IndiGo and various international airlines have opted for alternative flight paths to the West and are avoiding the Iranian airspace against the backdrop of tensions flaring up between Iran and Israel.

Civil Aviation Secretary Vumlunmang Vualnam told PTI that airlines have been asked to make their own risk assessment with respect to their flight operations. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is handholding and interacting with the airlines, and also in touch with the external affairs ministry, he added. The secretary was responding to a query on whether there is an advisory by the ministry or the DGCA to airlines amid the crisis in the Middle East.

### How markets behaved today?

#### Middle East conflict, US inflation, foreign fund outflows drag mkts lower

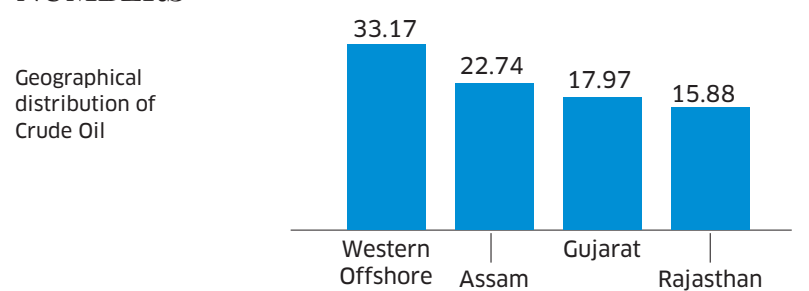


**NEW DELHI:** Global uncertainties, mainly escalating tensions between Iran and Israel, have led to a massive correction in the equity markets in the last three days after a record-shattering rally that saw the BSE Sensex crossing the historic 75,000 mark last week. Hotter-than-expected US inflation data fuelled concerns that the Federal Reserve will hold back on delivering the cuts to interest rates. Also, foreign fund outflows and profit-taking contributed to the correc-

tion in the equity markets. In the past three days, the BSE benchmark tanked 2,094.47 points or 2.79 per cent. Investors' wealth tumbled Rs 7.93 lakh crore in the three days of the market crash amid simmering tensions in the Middle East and weak global trends. "The heavy correction in the market can be attributed to several factors, including the escalating tensions between Iran and Israel, which have heightened geopolitical uncertainties and prompted risk aversion among investors.

### The Day's NUMBERS

#### ESTIMATED RESERVES OF CRUDE OIL IN INDIA



### Corporate

#### Zomato introduces 'large order fleet' for serving groups of up to 50 people

**NEW DELHI:** Online food delivery platform Zomato on Tuesday introduced India's first large order fleet, designed to serve orders for a gathering of up to 50 people for group events like parties. The company's CEO Deepinder Goyal shared the announcement in a series of posts on microblogging site X, formerly Twitter, saying that an "all-electric fleet" will be used to deliver the large orders, which were earlier served by multiple regular fleet delivery partners, leading to a less than ideal customer experience. "Today, we are excited to introduce India's first large order fleet, designed to handle all your large (group/party/event) orders with ease. This is an all electric fleet, designed specifically to serve orders for a gathering of upto 50 people. "Such large orders were earlier served by multiple regular fleet delivery partners, and the customer experience wasn't what we really aspired for," Goyal said.

### Banking

#### Reserve Bank issues draft guidelines on payment aggregators



**MUMBAI:** The Reserve Bank came out with draft guidelines to further strengthen regulations on payment aggregators, a move aimed at boosting the payment ecosystem. The draft also covers the physical point-of-sale activities of payment aggregators (PAs). The RBI said that given the growth in digital transactions and the significant role that PAs play in this space, the current directions on PAs are proposed to be updated and cover, inter alia, KYC and due diligence of merchants and operations in Escrow accounts.



Hero MotoCorp Executive Chairman Pawan Munjal hands over bike to a customer of Hero Mavrick 440 in Gurugram. Photo : PTI

# Indian economy projected to grow 6.5 per cent in 2024: UNCTAD

Report also noted the increasing focus by multinationals on India as a manufacturing base as they diversify their supply chains, a reference to China

### Press Trust of India

**UNITED NATIONS:** India's economy is projected to grow by 6.5 per cent in 2024, according to a report by the UN which noted that multinationals extending their manufacturing processes into the country to diversify their supply chains will have a positive impact on Indian exports. UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its report released on Tues-

day said that India grew by 6.7 per cent in 2023 and is expected to expand by 6.5 per cent in 2024, continuing to be the fastest-growing major economy in the world. "The expansion in 2023 was driven by strong public investment outlays as well as the vitality of the services sector which benefited from robust local demand for consumer services and firm external demand for the country's business services

### NUMBER

## 6.7%

• India grew by 6.7 per cent in 2023 and is expected to expand by 6.5 per cent in 2024

• Investment in South Asia, particularly in India, remains strong

exports," the report said, adding that these factors are expected to continue to support growth in India in 2024. The report also noted the increasing focus by multinationals on India as a manufacturing base as they diversify their supply chains, a reference to China. "In the outlook, an increasing trend of multinationals extending their manufacturing processes into India to diversify their

supply chains will also have a positive impact on Indian exports, while moderating commodity prices will be beneficial to the country's import bill," it said. Last week, the flagship '2024 Financing for Sustainable Development Report: Financing for Development at a Crossroads' launched at the world body said that investment in South Asia, particularly in India, remains strong.

### | NEW LAUNCH |

## MG Motor India launches Hector Blackstorm edition

### Press Trust of India

Loaded with a host of tech and connected features, the Hector Blackstorm, with its distinctive looks, offers an exceptional package of power and luxury for SUV buyers



Satinder Kumar Bajwa, Chief Commercial Officer, MG Motor India.

### FASTFACT

• MG Hector has enjoyed popularity among Indian SUV enthusiasts since its launch in 2019

• Hector Blackstorm edition is available in 5,6 and 7-seater configurations and price of Rs 21.24 lakh

with its distinctive looks, offers an exceptional package of power and luxury for SUV buyers. With best-in-segment offerings and unique design elements, the Hector Blackstorm edition is available in 5,6 and 7-seater configurations. MG Hector Blackstorm comes at an introductory price of Rs. 21.24 lakh. Comment-

ing on the launch, Satinder Singh Bajwa, Chief Commercial Officer, MG Motor India, said, "The MG Hector has enjoyed popularity among Indian SUV enthusiasts since its launch in 2019. Today marks yet another significant milestone for us as we introduce the Blackstorm edition of the Hector.

### | INDIA'S GROWTH |

## India is 'one of the strong performers', says IMF

### Press Trust of India

**WASHINGTON:** India is "one of the strong performers", the International Monetary Fund, which in a report projected a 6.5 per cent growth rate for the country for the year 2024, said. With this, India continues to be the fastest growing economies of the world and ahead of China's growth projection of 4.6

per cent during the same period, it said. "Indeed, India is one of the strong performers. We had a fairly sharp revision in the Fiscal Year 2023 to 2024, the one that is ending, and that has just ended. Then we have 0.3 percentage point upgrade for Fiscal Year 2024 to 2025. So India is doing quite well," Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, chief economist of the IMF,



told reporters at a news conference here. Growth in India is projected to remain strong at 6.8 per cent in 2024 and 6.5 per cent in 2025, with the robustness reflecting continuing strength in domestic demand and a rising working-age population, according to the latest edition of the World Economic Outlook released by the IMF.



Govt divided farmers, orchestrated split  
Rakesh Tikait  
Farmer Leader, SKM



PM Modi waves to supporters upon his arrival for a public meeting. | Photo: PTI

# Lord Ram's 'Surya tilak' will inspire India to scale new heights of glory

Modi said that the birth anniversary celebrations of Lord Ram were being held in the temple at Ayodhya after 500 years with a 'Surya tilak' ceremony.

Press Trust of India

**NALBARI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday expressed hope that 'Surya tilak' of Lord Ram in the Ayodhya temple will bring energy to the lives of people and inspire the country to scale new heights of glory. Addressing an election rally here, the prime minister said that the birth anniversary celebrations of Lord Ram were being held in the temple at Ayodhya after 500 years with a 'Surya tilak' ceremony.

"A new atmosphere is prevailing in the entire country as we celebrate the birth anniversary of Lord Ram in his own home after 500 years and this is a culmination of centuries of devotion and generations of sacrifice," he said at the rally.

The 'Surya tilak' of Ram Lalla in Ayodhya was done at noon on Wednesday on the occasion of Ram Navami,

## HIGHLIGHT

- New atmosphere prevailing everywhere
- Surya Tilak done by special mechanism

using an elaborate mechanism involving mirrors and lenses by which sunbeams were directed on the forehead of Ram idol.

"After my Nalbari rally, I had the privilege of witnessing the wonderful and incomparable moment of

Surya Tilak of Ram Lalla in Ayodhya. Like crores of Indians, this is a very emotional moment for me," the prime minister posted on 'X' along with two photographs of him watching the ceremony on a tablet.

He said the grand Ram Navami celebrations in Ayodhya are historic.

"May this Surya Tilak bring energy to our lives and may it inspire our nation to scale new heights of glory," he said.

"This much-awaited moment at the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi is a moment of bliss for everyone. This 'Surya tilak' will illuminate every resolution of developed India with its divine energy in the same way," he said on the microblogging site.

The prime minister urged people to chant 'Jai Shri Ram' several times on the occasion of Ram Navami and hoped Indians across the world witnessed the ceremony.

## Shoma Sen walks out of Mumbai prison

**MUMBAI:** Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case accused and former Nagpur University professor Shoma Sen was released from a prison here on Wednesday afternoon, an official said.

The 66-year-old professor of English literature had obtained bail from the Supreme Court on April 5. Sen, arrested in the case on June 6, 2018, walked out of the Byculla jail in central Mumbai after the completion of all formalities, the senior prison official told PTI. Her lawyer Indira Jaising tweeted about her release on X, saying, "She is finally out, Shoma Sen with her daughter outside Byculla jail." Sen was one of the 16 persons including activists and academics arrested in the case, related to the Elgar Parishad conclave held in Pune on December 31, 2017.

CENTRAL CHRONICLE NEWS

Last August, Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft made a soft landing on the south pole of the lunar surface, making India the first country to achieve the feat.

**AHMEDABAD:** The Indian Space Research Organisation will continue its Chandrayaan series of lunar probes until an astronaut from the country lands on the Moon, said ISRO Chairman Somanath on Wednesday.

Last August, the premier space agency's Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft made a soft landing on the south pole of the lunar surface, making India the first country to achieve the feat. "Chandrayaan 3 has done very well. Data has been collected and

| SUCCESS STORY |

# Lunar mission to continue until an Indian lands on Moon



'Pragyan' moon rover exits lander to explore lunar surface. | Photo: File photo

## FACTFILE

- Airdrop test will happen on April 24
- Breakthrough in rocket engine technology

scientific publication has just started. Now, we want to continue

the Chandrayaan series till an Indian lands on the Moon. Before that, we have to master many technologies, such as going there and coming back. That we are trying to do in the next mission," he told reporters on the sidelines of an event.

Somanath was in

Ahmedabad as the chief guest of a programme organised by the Astronautical Society of India.

About India's first-ever human space flight mission, Gaganyaan, Somanath said ISRO will carry out an uncrewed mission, a test vehicle flight mission and an airdrop test this year.

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### LEGAL

#### YSRCP MLC Thota Trimurthulu convicted in Dalits atrocity case

**VISAKHAPATNAM:** A court here has convicted YSRCP candidate for Mandapeta Assembly seat, Thota Trimurthulu and eight others for tongsuring and assaulting a group of Dalits in East Godavari district in 1996, and sentenced them to 18 months simple imprisonment, along with a penalty.

The XI Additional District and SC/ST Court delivered the verdict in the case on Tuesday. The incident took place on December 29, 1996 at Venkatayapalem village in undivided East Godavari district. The Court convicted Trimurthulu and others under various sections under IPC, CrPC and SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989 for beating, tongsuring and shaving the eyebrows of K Chinna Raju and D Venkata Ratnam. Besides those two, three others were also assaulted. Expressing dissatisfaction over the punishment meted out to Trimurthulu, Ramayya, one of the victims, told PTI.

### SMART MOVE

#### Smart cards to 650 prison inmates in Harsul Central Jail

**SAMBHAJINAGAR:** Authorities have distributed smart cards to nearly 650 inmates from the Harsul Central Jail in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar city to help them stay in touch with their family members and lawyers, an official said on Wednesday. The smart cards will allow the inmates to make three free calls, each for six minutes, a week, a district official said in a release. "Many families cannot come to meet their prisoner relatives in jail due to financial conditions. Therefore, to connect the prisoners with their families (and lawyers), smart cards have been provided to 650 prisoners at Harsul jail," the release said. However, the release did not specify if the inmates can call only those numbers shared in advance with the jail authorities or any number they choose. The facility - calling booth - has been made available on the prison premises for the prisoners as well as those under judicial custody, it said. PTI

From around the web on India

### Indian woman in Pakistan refuses to leave the country without her kids



**VISAKHAPATNAM:** Farzana Begum, an Indian national hailing from Mumbai, is currently in Pakistan fighting for the custody of her children, has refused to return to her native country, stating that her children's lives are in danger.

Farzana Begum married a Pakistani citizen, Mirza Mubin Elahi, in Abu Dhabi in 2015. Later, the couple came to Pakistan in 2018 and have two sons aged seven and six. Farzana's case gained public limelight after she allegedly tortured her husband over a dispute regarding the custody of her sons

and some properties in the name of her sons. Farzana rejects her husband's claims that he had divorced her, stating: "If he has divorced me, then there must be a certificate." "Me and my children's lives are in danger in Pakistan over a property dispute. I am confined to my house in Rehman Gardens, Lahore, and my children are enduring hunger," she said. Farzana called on the government of Pakistan to provide her with protection until the case was resolved, refusing to leave to her native country without her sons. PTI

## The Day's NUMBERS

Import varies in different months of the last financial year

### IMPORT OF VEGETABLE OIL (IN LAKH TONNES)

Month	Import (Lakh Tonnes)
AUG 2023	18.66
JUL 2023	59.1
SEP 2023	15.52
DEC 2023	13.12
MAR 2023	11.72
NOV 2023	11.60

Source: PTI

### COWARDLY ACT

#### BJP worker killed by Naxalites in Narayanpur ahead of the LS elections

**NARAYANPUR:** A worker of the ruling BJP was killed by Naxalites in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district, police said on Wednesday. The incident, which took place at Dandvan village on late Tuesday night, came three days ahead of the Lok Sabha elections in the area. The district falls in the Bastar constituency which will go to polls on April 19.

This was the ninth killing of a local BJP worker by the Naxalites in a Maoist-affected region of the state since February 2023. Panchamdas, the victim of the latest incident, was the deputy sarpanch of his village, a police official said. While the body was sent for autopsy, security forces have launched an operation in the area to trace the assailants, the official added.

Talking to reporters in Narayanpur town, Chhattisgarh forest minister Kedar Kashyap condemned the incident. A probe will be conducted and those found guilty will face stern action, he said.

### SURVEY REPORT

#### Unseasonal rains claim ten lives and 150 animals in Marathwada region

**NARAYANPUR:** Unseasonal rains have claimed the lives of 10 persons and 150 animals in Marathwada region of Maharashtra in a week's time since April 9, a primary survey report prepared by the state revenue department said. The Marathwada region comprises eight districts - Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Jalna, Beed, Parbhani, Latur, Nanded, Dharashiv and Hingoli.

The report said that spells of unseasonal rains lashed parts of Marathwada since April 9, causing loss of human and animal lives. The rainfall and hailstorms also damaged over 450 houses in 481 villages across the region. Crops standing on over 5,256.86 hectares of land belonging to 9,127 farmers were affected by unseasonal rains and hailstorms, it said. "Since April 9, unseasonal rains and hailstorms claimed the lives of 10 people, while as many others were injured. The highest number of three deaths occurred in Beed, followed by two more," the report added.

## Classifieds

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| VALID DEMAND |

## Change dept if can't improve work culture

Jeevan Prakash Sharma

**NEW DELHI:** Women train drivers have urged the Railway Board to either improve their "pitiable" working conditions or allow them to shift to other departments.

A group of female loco pilots, who are members of the All India Railwaymen Fed-



eration, recently gave a representation to the Railway Board chairperson Jaya Varma.

**Female loco pilots have a very valid plea and need to get resolved**

Shiva Gopal Mishra  
GS AIRF

# Centre will eliminate Naxals in very short period of time

Since the start of 2024, as many as 79 Naxalites have been killed in the Bastar region

Press Trust of India

**AHMEDABAD:** The Narendra Modi government will eliminate Naxals from the country in a very short period of time, Union Home Minister Amit Shah asserted on Wednesday.

The central government has been conducting incessant operations against terrorism and Naxals, he said in a statement, a day after security forces gunned down 29 Maoists in Chhattisgarh.

"I can say with conviction that operations against Naxals will continue in the times to come, and under the leadership of Modi, we will uproot Naxalism from our nation in a very short period of time," Shah said.

The home minister said since the formation of a BJP government in Chhattisgarh three months ago, more than 80 Naxals have been eliminated, more than 125 arrested and more than 150 have surrendered.

Shah said a large number of camps of security forces have been set up in Maoist-affected areas since 2014. Since 2019, as many as 250 such camps have been set up, ending the security vacuum, he said.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah during a road show. PTI PHOTO

In the biggest ever encounter in Chhattisgarh, security personnel on Tuesday gunned down 29 Naxalites, including some senior members, in Kanker district.

This was the highest fatalities suffered by Maoists in a single encounter in the history of the state's fight against Left Wing Extremism. Since the start of 2024, as many as 79 Naxalites have been killed in separate gun-battles with security forces in the Bastar region, a Maoist stronghold.

## Kerala woman with cerebral palsy clears civil services

Surpassing the challenges posed by cerebral palsy, a congenital disorder that affects movement, muscle tone and posture, Sarika A K, hailing from this north Kerala district, has cleared the civil services exam. Sarika, who is unable to use her right hand and uses her left to control the motorised wheel-chair she moved around in, cleared the exam in her second

### HIGHLIGHT

- Unable to use her right hand and uses her left to control wheel-chair
- Her parents were her biggest support

attempt and secured a rank of 922, according to the results announced by the Union Public Service

Commission on Tuesday. She said she was initially shocked by the result. "I had hoped to clear it. I am happy that I have. I do not have the words to express my joy," she said. Sarika said that she decided to opt for the civil services only after graduating and was able to achieve the feat of clearing it thanks to the support of her family, friends and teachers.

## Would take admin closer to people, says Donuru Ananya Reddy

Press Trust of India

'Reddy said most important is to have a strategy of breaking down the syllabus into parts and completing it in a timeframe'

**HYDERABAD:** Civil services examination 2023 third ranker Donuru Ananya Reddy, who hails from the backward Mahabubnagar district of Telangana, on Tuesday said she would like to take the administration closer to people.

Reddy said she feels "extremely grateful" and happy on securing the third position in the prestigious test, results of which were announced on Tuesday by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

Disagreeing with the view that the civil services examination is a hard one to crack, she said it is, however, a challenging exam and it is important to have a strategy for the preparation.

Reddy said she used to study for 6-8 hours a day for the exams but increased the study hours to 12-14 a day when the tests were round the corner.

"Most important is to have a strategy. If we have a strategy of breaking down the syllabus into parts and completing it in

a timeframe, it (cracking the exam) becomes easy," she told PTI videos.

"The only plan (after becoming a civil servant) I have is to take the administration closer to people and work in a people-centric manner," she said.

On tips for civil services aspirants, Reddy said every exam takers should prepare their plan as per their strengths and weaknesses, without

### FASTFACTS

- Reddy used to study for 6-8 hours a day for the exams but increased the study hours to 12-14
- Every candidate should prepare their plan as per their strengths and weaknesses

blindly following others.

"Also, don't ever give up. This examination is full of challenges, mentally or otherwise also. So, keep your calm and don't give up," she said.

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy congratulated the civil services exam rankers from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

Revanth Reddy is delighted that more than 50 candidates from the two states got selected for the civil services, an official release said.

### NEWSLINE

#### WEST BENGAL

## Kolkata Metro services disrupted



Kolkata Metro services along the North-South corridor were briefly disrupted on two occasions during rush hours on Tuesday due to a minor fire and a mechanical snag, a spokesperson said. Services between Mahanayak Uttam Kumar and Kavi Subhash stations were suspended for 25 minutes from 6.40 pm as a precautionary measure after a minor fire was spotted at a pillar of a metro viaduct near a hospital in Tollygunge area. The fire was doused immediately, he said. Earlier in the day, a Kavi Subhash-bound coach developed a mechanical snag at Sovabazar station at 11.30 am, following which truncated services were run between Dum Dum and Dakshineswar, and Central and Kavi Subhash stations for 48 minutes, the spokesperson added.

## Tribal paintings adorn polling booths

Press Trust of India

**BERHAMPUR:** In a bid to promote the elections as a festival of democracy among tribal people, the Gajapati district administration has adorned polling booths with idyllic, a unique painting of the Souras, a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG) in Odisha.

"When people to go polling booths on May 13 to cast their votes, they will find their own painting in polling stations," a senior official said.

Saura and Lanjia Saura communities traditionally embellish their homes and villages with murals during festivals and ceremonies, including marriages.

Polling booths have been primarily set up in schools in PVTG-inhabited areas. Additionally, the administration has also roped Soura people to create awareness about voting through the tribal language.

This initiative is part of the SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) programme aimed at attracting voters to booths and increasing



the turnout, an official said.

"The aim of setting up ethnic booths is to attract tribals, who seldom exercise their franchise and remain busy with their routine work, to vote", said Birendra Kumar Das, additional district magistrate-cum-returning officer, Mohana assembly segment in the district.

Most of the Soura and its sub-group Lanjia Saura people live in Mohana and Gumma blocks of Gajapati district. Their population is over 33,000 (Soura-18,600 and Lanjia Soura-14,670), spread over

two assembly segments - Mohana, reserved for the Scheduled Caste, and Paralakhemundi under Berhampur Lok Sabha constituency.

"The administration has decided to set up 33 ethnic booths, which will be managed by the polling personnel of tribal communities," he said. Meanwhile, a team of officers is raising awareness in remote villages to enhance voter turnout. According to sources, the polling percentages in Mohana and Paralakhemundi were 75.65 per cent and 69.31 per cent, respectively, in the 2019 elections.

## Flights to be halted for 5 hours at airport for religious procession

Press Trust of India

It said the updated timings of the flights are available with the respective airlines.

### THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:

Flight services from the international airport here will be suspended for five hours on April 21 for the smooth continuation of the holy 'Painkuni Arattu' procession of Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple across the runway, TIAL said on Wednesday.

## Two B'deshi held for illegal stay

**PALGHAR:** Police have arrested two Bangladeshi nationals from Vasai in Maharashtra's Palghar district for staying in the country without valid documents, an official said. The anti-human trafficking cell of the police picked up the duo, including a woman, from Pragati Nagar locality of Nalasopara in Vasai on Monday evening based on a tip-off, Assistant Commissioner of Police (Crime) Madan Ballal told PTI. The accused were identified as Aakash Arif Khan (26) and Laboni Poridin Mandal (22).

ing that path to reach the Shangumugham beach for the holy bath of the idols began centuries ago and it has been continuing even after the establishment of the airport in 1932.

When the airport was constructed at the particular place, the then Travancore King Sree Chithira Thirunal had made it clear that facility would be open for public for 363 days in a year and for two days for Lord Padmanabha, the titular deity of the royal family, according to historians.

The practice of the temple procession tak-

### JHARKHAND

## Drunk man hacks wife to death

A woman and her two minor daughters were axed to death allegedly by her husband in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district, police said on Tuesday. The accused man, who was reportedly drunk during the killing, was arrested. The incident happened in Ludrabasa village under Muffasil police station on the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday. Police said Gurucharan Padiya and his wife Jano used to quarrel frequently over his habit of drinking.

### AFFIDAVIT

I, Mahendra Singh Khanuja S/o Late Gurcharan Singh Khanuja, Resident of-61 Ward No. 9, Near Jeet Medical Khuroa Tehsil Tilda District Raipur (C.G.) The following statement-  
1. That Flat Number A-313 of Ashok Impression, at Motwa, P.H.No. 108/39 tehsil and district Raipur (Chhattisgarh), is a flat of my ownership and possession, which I have purchased from Mr. Ashok Kumar Goinka father Mr. Mangaram Agrawal, resident of Villa No. 150 Sapphine Green, Vishansabha Road, Raipur (C.G.), whose sale registration has been finalized on 04/12/2020 in the Sub-Registrar Office, Raipur.  
2. That Mr. Ashok Kumar Goinka has sold the said flat to M/s Aarti Infrastructure and Bldg. Limited Director Reobhraj Agarwal, father Mr. Rajeev Kumar Agarwal, Address-Aarti House, Ashoka Ran Shankar Nagar through registered sale deed worth Rs. 17,50,700/- which is registered at Sub-Registrar Office Raipur. On 30/03/2016, at Postak. No.-A, Growth No. 70124, on pages 1 to 25. Serial No. 11532. The said registered sale deed was given to me by the Original Registry Mr. Ashok Kumar Goinka. Which has gone missing from my house. Can't find it even after searching a lot.  
3. That I am executing this affidavit for the loss of registry. It has not been misused by me anywhere.  
I, Mahendra Singh Khanuja S/o Late Gurcharan Singh Khanuja, Resident of-61 Ward No. 9, Near Jeet Medical Khuroa Tehsil Tilda District Raipur (C.G.) I verify the statements written in paragraphs 1 to 4. This declaration is true and correct.  
DEPONENT

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**POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)**  
(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002) Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the TATA Capital Limited, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 8 & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a Demand Notice dated 17th January 2024 as below calling upon the Borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of the said notice.  
The borrowers, having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers, in particular and the public, in general, that the undersigned has taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 9 of the said Rules.  
The borrower, in particular, and the public, in general, are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the TATA Capital Limited, for an amount referred to below along with interest thereon and penal interest, charges, costs etc. from date of demand notice.

Loan Account No.	Name of Obligor(s) (Legal Heir(s)) (Legal Representative(s))	Amount & Date of Demand Notice	Date of Possession	Description of Secured Assets/ Immovable Properties
7453882 and new	(1) POONAM DEVI KUKREJA W/O NARESH KUKREJA, 9/5, VIDYUT NAGAR, SAHYOG MARG, INFRONT OF SAI MANGALAM, VIDYUT NAGAR, DURG, CHHATTISGARH, PIN CODE - 491001, (2) SRINARESH KUMAR KUKREJA S/O MANAK LAL KUKREJA, 9/5, VIDYUT NAGAR, SAHYOG MARG, INFRONT OF SAI MANGALAM, VIDYUT NAGAR, DURG, CHHATTISGARH, PIN CODE - 491001, (3) MAYUR KUKREJA S/O NARESH KUKREJA, 9/5, VIDYUT NAGAR, SAHYOG MARG, INFRONT OF SAI MANGALAM, VIDYUT NAGAR, DURG, CHHATTISGARH, PIN CODE - 491001, ALSO AT NARESH TRADING COMPANY NEW MARKET ROAD, MOTIPARA, NEAR MARWARI SCHOOL, DURG, CHHATTISGARH, PIN CODE - 491001, (4) MAYUR KUKREJA S/O NARESH KUKREJA, 9/5, VIDYUT NAGAR, SAHYOG MARG, INFRONT OF SAI MANGALAM, VIDYUT NAGAR, DURG, CHHATTISGARH, PIN CODE - 491001, ALSO AT MARWADI SCHOOL KASTURBA BAL MANDIR, DURG, CHHATTISGARH, PIN CODE - 491001	Rs. 78,49,601.00/- (Rupees Seventy-Eight Lakh Forty Thousand Six Hundred One Only) and 16th January 2024	15th April 2024	PART OF KH. NO. 9/5, AREA 2925-SO, FT. SITUATED AT BARSIL, VIDYUT NAGAR, WARD NO - 49, P.H. NO. 19, DURG 1, TEHSIL & DISTRICT-DURG, CHATTISGARH, PIN CODE - 491001 BUTTED AND BOUNDED BY-NORTH: LAND OF S M T G E E T A KHORIYAD SOUTH: LAND OF DUBEY EAST: LAND OF SHASHI DUBEY AND UPADHYAY WEST: 20' ROAD

Date: 18th April 2024  
Place: Raipur  
For Tata Capital Limited Sd/-  
Authorized Officer

## Schools in Odisha to remain closed from April 18-20 for heatwave

Press Trust of India

**BHUBANESWAR:** The Odisha government on Wednesday announced the closure of all schools in the state from April 18 to 20 in view of the India Meteorological Department's (IMD) heatwave forecast. In a press statement, the School and Mass Education Depart-



Women covers her baby to protect from heat. PTI PHOTO

ment said the government has decided to close down

all schools including those run by the government, government-aided and private for three days in view of prevailing heatwave conditions and rise in day temperature. As per IMD's forecast, the temperature is likely to rise gradually by 2 to 4 degrees Celsius at many places during the next two days.

**SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE**  
E-Tender Notice No. - WRSR-23-24-Calibration Dt: 12/04/2024  
Name of the Work: Consultancy contract for calibration of gauges through outside agency for a period of 3-years. Approximate Tender Value: Rs. 12,65,105.19/- (Rupees twelve lakhs sixty five thousand one hundred five and nineteen paise only) including GST @ 18%. Quantity and Contractual Period: As per annexure enclosed for a period of 03 (three) years. Earnest Money (Rs.): Rs. 25,300/- (Rupees twenty five thousand three hundred only). Tender Closing Date and Time: 03/05/2024 at 15:30 hrs. Bidding Start Date: 19/04/2024. Eligibility criteria: Can be seen on website.  
Manual tender shall not be accepted. The details of the tender are available on website: www.ircps.gov.in.  
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State Bank of India, Regional Business Office-II, Bhilai invites sealed bid for their various branches: 1.Chhuria, 2.Murmunda, 3.Dongargarh, 4. SME Durg for commercial purpose on lease basis from proprietary owners/ Power of attorney holders. For other details and to download the tender documents, kindly login at Bank's website www.sbi.co.in under the link procurement news between 18.04.2024 to 04.05.2024. The last date of submission of tender documents at this office is 04.05.2024 till 3.00 pm. Further notice/ clarifications in this regards will be published on the above website of the Bank.  
Regional Manager  
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Regional Business Office - II Bhilai

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# World



Israel "is making a decision to act" in response to Iran's missile and drone attack

David Cameron  
British Foreign Secretary

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### ELECTION

#### Croatia votes in a parliamentary poll in president-PM showdown

**ZAGREB:** Croatia is voting Wednesday in a parliamentary election after a campaign that centred on a bitter rivalry between the president and prime minister of the country.

The ballot pits the ruling conservative Croatian Democratic Union, or HDZ, led by Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic, against an alliance of centrist and left-wing parties informally led by populist President Zoran Milanovic and his Social Democratic Party, or SDP. The election is being held as Croatia, a European Union and NATO member, struggles with the highest inflation rate in the eurozone, a labour shortage, illegal migration and reports of widespread corruption. At stake in the race for Croatia's 151-seat parliament isn't just the Adriatic Sea country's future domestic policies, but also the EU's unity as it grapples with the instability from Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. **PTI**

### ENTERTAINMENT

#### 'It's beyond me': Zendaya expresses uncertainty over 'Euphoria' Season 3



**LOS ANGELES:** Hollywood star Zendaya says she has no idea when the third season of her popular HBO series "Euphoria" will begin production. The "Dune" actor, who played Rue in the first two seasons of the Sam Levinson-created series and also executive produced the series, said she is "not in charge" of the show's development when asked about the much-awaited season three. "If it's right for the characters and everything turns out the way it should, of course. **PTI**

### From around the web

#### Ten arrested in raid against an international human smuggling gang in Germany



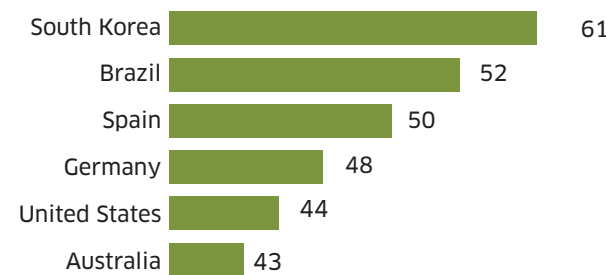
**BERLIN:** German authorities conducted a large-scale raid against an international human smuggling gang early Wednesday, police said in a statement. More than 1,000 police officers searched dozens of homes, stores and offices across western and southern Germany and arrested 10 suspects, including two lawyers. The suspects are accused of having illegally taken advantage of special German immigration rules reserved only for skilled foreign workers to procure residency

permits for around 350 mostly Chinese nationals – who don't meet the needed criteria – in exchange for hundreds of thousands of euros (dollars). According to the daily Bild newspaper, several employees of immigration offices were bribed in the scam. Raids were carried out in the states of North Rhine-Westphalia, Schleswig-Holstein, Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, Baden-Wuerttemberg and Bavaria, Hamburg and Berlin where police seized assets and collected evidence.

### The Day's NUMBERS

2,000-10,000 respondents (18-64 y/o) per country surveyed Jan-Dec 2023.

### COUNTRIES PLEDGING MOST MILITARY AID TO UKRAINE



### G-7

#### Italy seeks G7 message to de-escalate Mideast tensions

**ROME:** Group of Seven foreign ministers are meeting on the Italian resort island of Capri, with soaring tensions in the Mideast and Russia's continuing war in Ukraine topping the agenda. Under Italy's rotating stewardship, the G7 leaders are expected to issue a united call for Israel to exercise restraint after Iran's unprecedented weekend attack involving hundreds of drones, ballistic missiles and cruise missiles fired toward the Jewish state.

Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said he had spoken to his Israeli counterpart, Israel Katz, on Tuesday and urged Israel to not only de-escalate any reaction to Iran's attack but to stave off a planned offensive into the southern Gaza city of Rafah. "I reiterated this message and I believe that on the occasion of the G7 foreign ministers in Capri, tomorrow and Friday morning, a similar message will be sent," Tajani told state-run RAI. **PTI**

### EVICION

#### French police evict hundreds from abandoned Paris warehouse



**PARIS:** With the Paris Olympic Games 100 days away, police carried out a large-scale eviction at France's biggest squat in the south of the capital. Authorities, including dozens of gendarmes, cleared out the makeshift camp at an abandoned bus company headquarters in Vitry-sur-Seine on Wednesday. The camp had become home to about 450 migrants, with images of the eviction spreading rapidly across social media. Aid workers are concerned that the broader effort by Paris authorities to clear out migrants. **PTI**



A Saar-6 corvette, the latest-generation warship which Israel is using for its naval defense system amid maritime threats from Yemen's Houthi rebels.

# Sunak to Netanyahu: Exercise restraint after Iran's attacks

UK PM says significant escalation was in no one's interest and would only deepen insecurity in the Middle East. This was a moment for calm heads to prevail

Press Trust of India

**LONDON:** British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has called on his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu to exercise restraint and let "calm heads" prevail in the wake of Iran's missile attacks as his Foreign Secretary David Cameron landed in Tel Aviv for talks on Wednesday. In a phone call, Sunak reiterated the UK's "steadfast support" for regional stability and told the Israeli leader that Iran had miscalculated its move, being isolated

on the global stage as a result. Netanyahu is said to have thanked Britain for its "rapid and robust" support in the face of Iran's unprecedented direct attack on Israel on Saturday. "The Prime Minister [Sunak] said Iran had badly miscalculated and was increasingly isolated on the global stage, with the G7 coordinating a diplomatic response," Downing Street said in a readout of the call on Tuesday evening. "He stressed that significant escalation was in no one's

### HIGHLIGHT

● It was deeply disappointing that Hamas blocked a deal at the weekend that would have saved Palestinian lives

● Iran had miscalculated its move, being isolated on the global stage as a result

interest and would only deepen insecurity in the Middle East. This was a moment for calm heads

to prevail," the statement said. On the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza, Sunak told Netanyahu that he remained gravely concerned about the deepening humanitarian crisis. "The UK wanted to see a massive step change in aid access to flood Gaza with vital supplies, including Israel opening up new aid routes as quickly as possible. The Prime Minister said it was deeply disappointing that Hamas blocked a deal at the weekend that would have saved Palestinian

lives and secured the safe release of hostages," Downing Street added.

The call will form the backdrop for Cameron's discussions in Israel, where he is expected to meet Netanyahu and senior Israeli officials and attempt to talk the country out of retaliating to Iran's assault. The visit will include meetings in the occupied West Bank, after which Cameron will travel to a gathering of Group of Seven (G7) ministers in Italy to discuss further sanctions on Iran.

### WEATHER'S FURY

# Floodwater covers major roads in UAE

Press Trust of India

One reason may have been "cloud seeding," in which small planes flown by the government go through clouds burning special salt flares.



Vehicles sit abandoned in floodwater covering a major road in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

That's before the discovery of crude oil in this energy-rich nation, then part of a British protectorate known as the Trucial States. Rain also fell in Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. However, the rains were acute across the UAE. One reason may have been "cloud seeding," in which small

### HIGHLIGHT

● A historic weather event that surpassed anything documented since the start of data collection in 1949

● Six or seven cloud-seeding flights flown before the rains

planes flown by the government go through clouds burning special salt flares. Those flares can increase precipitation. Several reports quoted meteorologists at the National Center for Meteorology as saying they flew six or seven cloud-seeding flights before the rains. The center did not

immediately respond to questions Wednesday, though flight-tracking data analyzed by The Associated Press showed one aircraft affiliated with the UAE's cloud-seeding efforts flew around the country Sunday.

The UAE, which heavily relies on energy-hungry desalination plants to provide water, conducts cloud seeding in part to increase its dwindling, limited groundwater.

The rains began late Monday, soaking the sands and roadways of Dubai with some 20 millimeters (0.79 inches) of rain, according to meteorological data collected at Dubai International Airport. The storms intensified around 9 am local Tuesday and continued throughout the day, dumping more rain and hail onto the overwhelmed city.

### MISSILE STRIKE

# Russian missiles slam into a Ukrainian city

Press Trust of India

**KYIV:** Three Russian missiles slammed into a downtown area of the northern Ukrainian city of Chernihiv on Wednesday, hitting an eight-floor apartment building and killing at least eight people, local officials said.

The latest Russian bombardment came as the war stretched into its third year and approached what could



Rescuers work at the site of a Russian missile strike in Chernihiv, Ukraine.

be a critical juncture as a lack of further military support from Ukraine's Western partners increasingly leaves it at the mercy of the Kremlin's bigger forces.

Through the winter months, Russia made no dramatic advance along the 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line, focusing instead on attritional warfare.



# Art & Culture

INTERIORS

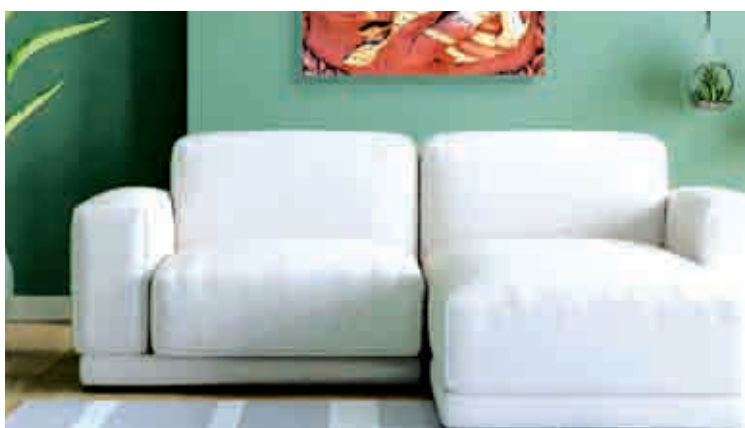
## The Dynamic Influence of Art on Interiors

Discover how art transcends decoration, shaping atmospheres, nurturing well-being, and infusing homes with personality and creativity.



Art transcends mere decoration, becoming the soul of interior spaces, weaving narratives, and stirring emotions. In this exploration, we uncover how art transforms rooms, shaping atmospheres, and sparking creativity.

Beyond Decoration: Crafting Atmospheres and Eliciting Emotions, Art infuses spaces with vitality, evoking feelings of excitement, serenity, or contemplation. Dive into the therapeutic benefits of art and discover its power to nurture mental well-being and inspire creative thinking. Anchoring Visual Landscapes: The Focal Point of Design and art serves as the anchor of interior compositions, drawing the eye and defining the essence of a space. Whether a captivating painting or a thought-provoking sculpture, art creates moments of intrigue, transforming



Artful elegance: Transforming spaces with curated art, evoking emotions and infusing personality.

ordinary rooms into extraordinary sanctuaries. Expressing Identity and Style: The Artistic Essence of Design can curate your space with carefully chosen pieces that express your personality and passions. From minimalist marvels to eclectic ensembles, art defines the aesthetic, infusing warmth, sophistication, or whimsy. Crafting Your Artful Abode: Finding Harmony in Diversity with each art medium from paintings to sculptures, photographs to textile art adds its unique melody to the design symphony. Harmonize these diverse elements to create a space that resonates with your soul, transforming your home into a sanctuary of inspiration and beauty. Embrace the Power of Art: Elevating Interiors into Living Masterpieces in which art is the thread that weaves together the fabric of your living space, enhancing aesthetics, evoking emotions, and expressing personal style.

### HIGHLIGHT

- Art transforms interiors, shaping atmospheres and sparking creativity. From anchoring visual landscapes to expressing identity, it crafts abodes into vibrant sanctuaries, elevating living spaces into living masterpieces.

## Cultural Hues

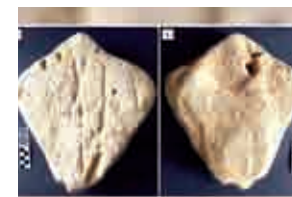
### Most Challenged Books

The American Library Association reports a surge in challenges against books centered on LGBTQ+ and people of color in 2023. Maia Kobabe's *Gender Queer: A Memoir* and George M. Johnson's *All Boys Aren't Blue* were among the most targeted. Attacks often cited LGBTQ+ themes, marking a 65 percent increase in censorship attempts from 2022. Despite controversy, *Gender Queer* remains popular, with author Kobabe receiving frequent messages of appreciation from readers.



### Ancient Stingray-Shaped Rock

Researchers suggest a symmetrical rock found near Still Bay, South Africa, resembling a stingray, could be 130,000 years old art. Made of aeolinite, it might be an ammglyph, a sand-carved pattern. The artifact's proportions and detail suggest human creation, potentially tracing an actual stingray. Study co-authors, Charles Helm and Alan Whitfield, note its remarkable resemblance to the aquatic creature. Helm is a paleontologist, while Whitfield is a scientist in aquatic biodiversity.



### Unveiling Renaissance Secrets

A new exhibition at the Met reveals Renaissance portraits' hidden layer: many were once concealed by covers or featured dual-faced formats. Curated by Alison Manges Nogueira, "Hidden Faces: Covered Portraits of the Renaissance" showcases 60 works by artists like Hans Memling and Titian. These interactive portraits were often stored away, adding another dimension to the viewer's experience.



### Walters' Parisian Tray Race

In Paris, 200 waiters revived the "Course des Cafés," a 110-year-old tradition. Competitors balanced trays with water, coffee, and croissants while walking a 1.2-mile loop. Running was prohibited, and they could use only one hand. Judges penalized spills or missing items. Revived after 12 years due to budget constraints, the race celebrates the skill of Parisian waitstaff. The first race, "Course des Garçons de Café," dates back to 1914, remaining a beloved tradition ever since.



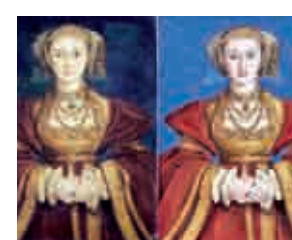
### Ancient Panama Tomb Discovery

Archaeologists in Panama's El Caño Archaeological Park recently unearthed a 1,200-year-old tomb, presumed to belong to an esteemed Coclé lord and possibly containing up to 32 individuals. The tomb, the ninth discovered in the park since 2008, revealed an array of ceramic, bone, and gold artifacts, including jewelry and musical instruments like flutes. Believed to be a religious leader due to the absence of weaponry and the presence of musical instruments, the lord has been affectionately dubbed the "Lord of the Flutes," shedding light on the vibrant cultural practices of the Coclé people.



### Henry VIII's Ill-Fated Love

Restored by the Louvre, Hans Holbein the Younger's portrait of Anne of Cleves reveals the Tudor queen as Henry VIII first beheld her, adorned in red velvet against a blue backdrop. Though the painting convinced Henry to marry her, their union ended in annulment. Recent conservation efforts illuminate the portrait's persuasive power and unveil intricate details, offering insight into Holbein's mastery and the tumultuous history of Henry's marriages.



## Superman #1 Now World's Most Valuable Comic Book

In 1938, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster introduced Superman. Now, a copy of their debut comic, *Action Comics No. 1*, sold for \$6 million, becoming the world's most valuable. The sale, on April 4 by Heritage Auctions, saw an unidentified buyer secure the iconic piece. Barry Sandoval, VP at Heritage Auctions, hailed the event as historic. Superman's enduring legacy in films, novels, TV, and games cements his status as a beloved cultural icon.

**Title:** Action Comics No. 1  
**Details:** Oil on Canvas, 41 x 18 in. sold during new york Summer auction by Sothiy's.



### LOST ART

## Artist Revives Velazquez's Painting Lost in Fire Using AI Technology



In 1734, a fire at the Royal Alcázar of Madrid destroyed Velázquez's *Expulsion of the Moriscos*. Now, artist Fernando Sánchez Castillo uses AI to digitally recreate the masterpiece, blending historical descriptions and Velázquez's preliminary sketch.

The four-minute video debuted at Castillo's solo exhibition in Madrid, offering a glimpse into the lost painting's revival after nearly three centuries.

### LEGACY

## Tintin: 95 Years of Adventure and Cultural Legacy

Explore the timeless allure of Tintin and Hergé's iconic legacy, inspiring adventure and imagination for generations.



As Tintin commemorates his 95th birthday, we delve into the enduring allure of Hergé's iconic creation. Since his inception in 1929 with "Tin-

tin in the Land of the Soviets," Tintin has enthralled audiences worldwide with his exhilarating escapades alongside companions like Captain Haddock and Snowy. Hergé, born Georges Remi, infused Tintin's universe with his own experiences and imagination, crafting a vibrant world replete with memorable characters and exotic locales. From the bustling streets of Brussels to the distant corners of the globe, Tintin's adventures have ignited imaginations and inspired readers of all ages to embrace curiosity and exploration. Yet, behind the scenes, Hergé grappled with personal struggles, from bouts of depression to the weight of his own success, lending depth and nuance to Tintin's narrative. As we reflect on 95 years



From Brussels to the farthest corners of the globe, join the iconic adventurer on a timeless journey of courage, friendship, and boundless exploration. Photo: AP

of Tintin, we honor not merely a comic book character, but a timeless symbol of courage, friendship, and the enduring spirit of adventure. From his humble origins in the pages of a Belgian newspaper to his status as a global cultural icon, Tintin's legacy continues to resonate, encouraging readers to embark on their own journeys of discovery and embrace the boundless possibilities of the world around them. Tintin's adventures stand as a testament to the power of storytelling and the enduring appeal of characters that capture the imagination and inspire generations to come.

# Sports



Keep believing, that was the real key today. I was struggling a bit for rhythm. At times you feel frustrated.

**Jos Buttler**  
Cricket player

## Para-Archer Sheetal claims silver in able-bodied meet



Armless archer Sheetal Devi (Jammu & Kashmir) poses for photos. | Photo: PTI

Sheetal Devi secures silver at Khelo India NTPC National Ranking archery meet, competing against able-bodied juniors. Despite being born without arms.

**Press Trust Of India**  
**NEW DELHI:** Asian Para Games gold-winner Sheetal Devi grabbed a silver in the Khelo India NTPC National Ranking archery meet, finishing second behind Haryana's Ekta Rani, who is able-bodied and a junior world champion. In the competition held at the DDA Yamuna Sports Complex, the

17-year-old Sheetal competed with able-bodied junior archers and lost 138-140 to Ekta in the individual compound event final. Sheetal, who was bestowed the Arjuna award earlier this year for her two gold and a silver medal winning performance in the Hangzhou Asian Para Games, was born with a rare condi-

**HIGHLIGHT**  
● Sheetal's performance sets stage for international success for more players.  
● Coach praises Sheetal's participation as crucial preparation for Paralympics.

tion called phocomelia which makes her the first and the only international para-archery champion without arms. Sheetal believes her performance in the Khelo India event will help her prepare for the challenges ahead. "This result will help me more going ahead in the international platforms and the Olympics," Sheetal was quoted as

saying in a media release from the Sports Authority of India. Her coach Abhilasha said the competition was much-needed for the teenager before the Paralympics. "Taking part in the national ranking tournament, alongside able-bodied competitors, is giving training and competition exposure which is much-needed prior to the Olympics," she said.

## Zheng eases past Cirstea in Stuttgart opener

**STUTT GART:** Zheng Qinwen eased past Sorana Cirstea 6-2, 6-3 in the first round of the Porsche Grand Prix despite a long journey from China to reach the clay-court tournament. The seventh-ranked Zheng traveled from Changsha to Beijing and then on to Frankfurt before a final leg to Stuttgart, but showed little sign of jet lag as she wrapped up her win in 76 minutes. Zheng will play either Marta Kostyuk or former champion Laura Siegemund. Belgium's Elise Mertens finished strongly to beat Tatjana Maria 6-1, 4-6, 6-0 to set up a match against two-time defending champion Iga Swiatek in the second round. Swiatek is bidding to become the first three-time champion in Stuttgart since Sharapova won between 2012-14.

## Praggnanandhaa takes on Hikaru Nakamura

**Press Trust of India**  
As the Candidates chess tournament approaches its climax, Indian talents Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa shine.

**TORONTO:** Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh will have his task cut out when he takes on top seed Fabiano Caruana in the 11th round, hoping to consolidate his position at the top as the Candidates chess tournament heads towards its final phase here. The 17-year-old Gukesh is in joint lead with Russia's Ian Nepomniachtchi. Among other Indians, 18-year-old R Praggnanandhaa will be up against resurgent Amer-



Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa during Round 6 match against Grandmaster Nijat Abasov. | Photo: PTI

**FACTFILE**  
● Indian prodigies Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa aim high in decisive matches at Candidates Chess.

ican Hikaru Nakamura after a rest day. With just four rounds remaining, it is a level-playing field for the two Indian teenagers while Vidit Gujrathi has kept himself in reckoning and only needs to finish well.

Nepomniachtchi, the only unbeaten player so far, is playing under the FIDE flag and has a tough opposition to tackle in the next two rounds. Gujrathi meets Nepomniachtchi in the next round followed by Praggnanandhaa.

## OLYMPICS HOCKEY

### Every practice, drill will count : Harmanpreet Kaur

**Press Trust of India**  
**NEW DELHI:** Indian men's hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh on Wednesday said with 100 days left for the Paris Olympics, every day, every practice and every drill will count towards building momentum to shine at the biggest sporting stage. Last edition's bronze

medallist India are currently placed sixth in the world, but Harmanpreet said they are hungry to improve upon their Tokyo result in Paris. The star drag-flicker's comments came following India's dismal show in the recent tour of Australia, where they were whitewashed 0-5 by the hosts. "We just returned from the intense Australia



**As a team, our unwavering focus remains on aiming for gold at the Paris Olympics.**

**Harmanpreet Singh**  
Indian team captain

tour. After a short break, we will hit the grind again. With only 100 days to go until the Paris Olympics, the excitement in the team is growing," Harmanpreet said in a Hockey India release. "The unity of our team continues to grow, fuelled by our shared goal to clinch the gold medal. Craig Fulton, our chief coach, keeps us on track.

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### Cricket

#### Pakistan targets right T20 combination against understrength Kiwis

**RAWALPINDI:** Rawalpindi: The 2009 champion Pakistan is aiming to tick all the right boxes in its preparation phase ahead of the Twenty20 World Cup as it gears up for the five-match series under comeback captain Babar Azam against an understrength New Zealand. Rawalpindi will host the first three games from Thursday. The remaining two games will be staged at Lahore on April 25 and 27 as both squads build up to the world tournament being staged in the United States and Caribbean in June. Babar returns as white-ball captain and will lead the squad for the third successive T20 World Cup. He replaces Shaheen Shah Afridi, who lost to the Black Caps 4-1 earlier this year in his maiden series as Pakistan's T20 skipper. Babar led Pakistan to the semifinals of the T20 World Cup in 2021 in the United Arab Emirates, where it lost to eventual champion Australia. **PTI**

### IPL

#### Jos Buttler's ton highlights players' need to be elite athletes: Tom Moody

**KOLKATA:** Jos Buttler's match-winning century against Kolkata Knight Riders highlights the need for professional cricketers to be elite athletes as well, said former Australian all-rounder Tom Moody after the Rajasthan batter smashed his second ton this IPL. Buttler (107 not out off 60 balls) fought his way through a slow start and rapidly rising asking rate to be there till the end for Rajasthan Royals, dwarfing Sunil Narine's (109) century in the first half to hit the winning runs on the final ball. "Well, he kept going because he's an elite athlete and it just shows, in today's world of T20 cricket or any form of cricket, you need to be an elite athlete. You can't just get away with just being a skilful player." Moody said in a Star Sports release. Buttler, who missed Rajasthan's previous game against Punjab Kings due to an injury, kept battling for the Royals despite running out of partners on a regular basis. **PTI**

### Indian Premier League

#### Rinku Singh credits Gautam Gambhir for Narine's transformation as 'specialist opener'



**BENGALURU :** A crestfallen Royal Challengers Bengaluru skipper Faf du Plessis conceded that a string of defeats had taken a toll on the team and the confidence had hit an all-time low after losing by 25 runs to Sunrisers Hyderabad in a match where a plethora of batting records were eclipsed. SRH posted an all-time IPL record total of 287 for 3 and then restricted RCB to 262 for 7 as 38 maximums were hit across two innings. The match also entered the record books for the highest cumulative match total of

549 scored by both teams. "It's crazy the amount of runs scored today, a world record. I wouldn't say 270 is par, Danny. It's tough (to bowl on a day like this), we tried a few things and they weren't quite working," Du Plessis said at the post-match presentation ceremony. Just like winning provides a lot of confidence, back-to-back defeat can also rob teams off it, feels the former Proteas skipper. "There's no way to hide when your confidence is low. The fast bowlers found it quite difficult out there." **PTI**

### The Day's NUMBERS

### WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP 2024 POINTS TABLE

INDIA	74   68.51
AUSTRALIA	90   62.50
NEW ZEALAND	36   50.00
SRI LANKA	24   50.00
PAKISTAN	22   36.66

### India

#### WI skipper Powell trying to convince Narine to come out of retirement

**KOLKATA:** West Indies captain Rovman Powell says efforts are on to convince the in-form Sunil Narine to come out of international retirement for this year's T20 World Cup but the Kolkata Knight Riders star has so far "blocked everyone" who has tried to talk to him. Narine, who will turn 36 next month, last played for the West Indies in a T20 International in August 2019 before retiring from international cricket in November last year to focus on franchise T20 leagues around the world. But owing to his sensational form with both bat and ball this IPL season, attempts have been made to convince Narine to reverse his decision for the T20 World Cup in the Caribbean and the USA in June. "For the last 12 months, I've been whispering in his ears, he's blocked out everyone. Asked (Kieron) Pollard, (Dwayne) Bravo, (Nicolas) Pooran, hopefully before they select the team, they can crack his code," Powell said. **PTI**

### India

#### Shreyas Iyer fined Rs 12 lakh for first slow over-rate offence

**KOLKATA:** Kolkata Knight Riders captain Shreyas Iyer has been fined Rs 12 lakh for maintaining a slow over-rate during their IPL game against Rajasthan Royals here. KKR lost to Royals by two wickets here on Tuesday with Jos Buttler smashing an unbeaten 107 off 60 balls. "As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over rate offences, Iyer was fined Rs 12 lakhs," said the IPL in a release. It was the Royals' sixth win in seven matches while KKR suffered their second loss in six games. **PTI**



# Sports News



Mumbai players in action | Photo: PTI



Punjab Kings in action | Photo: PTI

## Faltering Punjab, MI desperate for wins

**Press Trust of India**  
Australia has issued a record number of over 90,000 visas to Indian students this summer.

**MULLANPUR:** Punjab Kings and Mumbai Indians will be desperate to resurrect their faltering campaigns in the Indian Premier League when the two bottom-rung teams face-off here on Thursday. Only a few decimal points separate the two teams after six matches each with Punjab's mar-

ginally better Net Run Rate of -0.218 keeping them at the seventh spot in the IPL points table, one above Mumbai Indians (-0.234). Both Punjab and Mumbai have lost four matches each and are coming off defeats in their respective last outings, which mean pressure will be high on both the camps to get their act together. For Punjab, the challenge of getting the best out of their top order has compounded with regular skipper Dhawan being sidelined for 'seven to 10 days' due to a shoulder injury. The only bright

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Teams</b></p> <p><b>Punjab Kings</b><br/>Shikhar Dhawan (c), Matthew Short, Prabhshinran Singh, Jitesh Sharma, Sikandar Raza, Rishi Dhawan, Liam Livingstone, Atharva Taide, Arshdeep Singh, Nathan Ellis, Sam Curran, Kagiso Rabada, Harpreet Brar, Rahul Chahar, Harpreet Bhatia, Vidwath Kaverappa, Shivam Singh, Harshal Patel, Chris Woakes, Ashutosh Sharma, Vishwanath Pratap Singh, Shashank Singh, Tanay Thyagarajan, Prince Choudhary, Rilee Rossouw.</p> | <p><b>Mumbai Indians</b><br/>Hardik Pandya (c), Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Dewald Brevis, Jasprit Bumrah, Piyush Chawla, Gerald Coetzee, Tim David, Shreyas Gopal, Ishan Kishan (wk), Anshul Kamboj, Kumar Kartikeya, Akash Madhwal, Kwen Maphaka, Mohammad Nabi, Shams Mulani, Naman Dhir, Shivalik Sharma, Romario Shepherd, Arjun Tendulkar, Nuwan Thushara, Tilak Varma, Harvik Desai, Nehal Wadhwa, Luke Wood.</p> |
|---|--|

spot for PBKS this season has been resolute displays from their unsung Indian players Shashank Singh and Ashutosh Sharma, who both bat

lower in the order and have had to make up for the shortcomings at the top more than once. The form of Prabhshinran Singh - 119 runs in six matches at 19.83 - is a concern and the same can be said for India wicketkeeper-batter Jitesh Sharma. With selection for the World Cup squad on the horizon, Jitesh, who has managed a mere 106 runs in six outings at 17.66, would be under the pump too. PBKS will have to find more support for their overseas bowling duo of Sam Curran (126 runs and 8 wickets) and Kagiso Rabada (9). The Indian pair of Arshdeep Singh (9) and Harshal Patel (7) have both been easy targets for batters.

## I always keep believing, that was key: Rajasthan Royals Buttler

**KOLKATTA:** Rajasthan Royals' star Jos Buttler on Tuesday said he never lost self belief during his match-winning hundred here and took a leaf out of Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Virat Kohli's books on how to achieve targets from adverse situations. Buttler, who missed RR's last game against Punjab Kings due to an injury, single-handedly pulled off IPL's biggest chase while overwhelming Kolkata Knight Riders' 223 for 6 in the last ball



He was struggling to even walk towards the end but didn't give up.

## India's T20 WC Squad: No fresh faces likely possible

**Kushan Sarkar**  
All those who have played for India and have done well consistently in T20 Internationals.

**NEW DELHI:** The national selection committee is unlikely to blood any rookie

IPL performer during the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Americas but a couple of tried-and-tested faces might have to brace up for disappointment when the squad is finalised by the end of this month. With the ICC making it mandatory to announce the provisional 15-member squad by May 1 cut-off date, Ajit

Agarkar and his colleagues have some straightforward choices to make if every member of the team is fit. "There would not be any experimentation or left-field selections. All those who have played for India and have done well consistently in T20 Internationals and the IPL will be rewarded," a BCCI source told PTI on

## Nadal returns to action with easy win over Cobolli in first round of Barcelona Open

**Press Trust of India**  
Brandon Nakashima stuns Andrey Rublev in Barcelona Open, claiming his second top-10 victory and first on clay, igniting celebrations.

**BARCELONA:** Rafael Nadal looked good in a comfortable 6-2 6-3 win over Flavio Cobolli at the Barcelona Open in his

first competitive match in more than three months on Tuesday. The victory after him allowed Nadal to advance to the second round at the clay-court tournament that the Spaniard has won a record 12 times. He will next face Alex de Minaur, who had a first-round bye. Nadal converted on his second match point to seal the victory over the 21-year-old Italian ranked 62nd in

the world. Nadal was returning from yet another injury layoff and hadn't played since an exhibition match against Carlos Alcaraz in March. The 22-time Grand Slam champion had last played a tournament in Brisbane in January, when he played only three matches before skipping the Australian Open. Nadal said it will likely be his last time playing the Barcelona Open. The 37-year-old

Spaniard had hip surgery last summer and said 2024 will probably be his last year playing on tour. World No. 8 Andrey Rublev smashed his racket to the ground several times after a 6-4 7-6(6) loss to American Brandon Nakashima. It was the third consecutive first-round defeat for the second-seeded Rublev, who also lost in straight sets in Monte Carlo and Miami.

## Mbappe scores twice as PSG beats Barcelona to reverse 1st-leg loss

**Press Trust of India**

**BARCELONA:** Playing with an extra man for more than an hour, Paris Saint-Germain rallied against Barcelona to reach the Champions League semi-finals.

Kylian Mbappé scored twice as PSG reversed its first-leg loss at home with a 4-1 win at Barcelona on Tuesday to advance 6-4 on aggregate and keep alive its hopes of a first European title in what is the France star's final season with the club.

Former Barcelona forward Ousmane Dembélé and Vitorino Pereira also scored for PSG, which took advantage of a 29th-minute red card to Barcelona defender Ronald Araujo after he fouled Bradley Barcola while trying to stop a breakaway.

"When it was 11 against 11 we were well organized. The sending off changes everything. The match changed completely," said Barcelona coach Xavi Hernández,



### HIGHLIGHT

● When it was 11 against 11 we were well organized. The sending off changes everything. The match changed completely.

who was later sent off himself for complaining. "We would have liked to play PSG 11 against 11. That should not have been a red card."

laid defender when he fouled Barcola.

PSG is back in the semifinals after two consecutive eliminations in the round of 16. "I feel very proud," said PSG coach Luis Enrique, a former Barcelona player and coach. "We showed what we wanted to do here today. We conceded a goal, but we stayed intact mentally. We continued to play, to attack. We did everything we could to be better than Barcelona. My players showed a lot of character, a lot of enthusiasm, a lot of desire."

The Catalan side, which won the first leg 3-2 in Paris last week, made it to the knockout stage of Europe's top club competition after back-to-back eliminations in the group stage. In the other quarterfinal on Tuesday, Borussia Dortmund defeated Atletico Madrid 4-2 at home to advance 5-4 on aggregate. PSG and Dortmund will meet in one of the semifinals.

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I want to be the voice of the voiceless; I want to represent that common man.  
**Vikrant Massey**  
 Actor



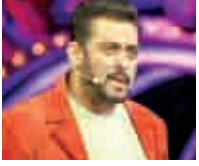
# & Finally

## OTT Watch



**Virgin River**  
 Season 6: Netflix Release

Netflix confirms 'Virgin River' Season 6, filming since February, set to wrap by May 30. Meanwhile, Zack Snyder's 'Rebel Moon - Part Two' premieres April 19, heightening anticipation for streaming enthusiasts.



**Bigg Boss OTT Season 3**  
 Postponed

Bigg Boss OTT won't return for a third season this year due to audience saturation, disappointing fans. Launched in 2021, the digital version faces postponement, with no confirmed airing plans despite rumors.



**Panchayat Season 3**

Jitendra Kumar revives 'Panchayat' for Season 3, promising more rural warmth. Director Mishra confirms development.



**Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives Season 3 Returns**

Netflix's hit reality show, 'Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives,' is back, offering a glimpse into the glamorous lives of Seema Sajdeh, Maheep Kapoor, Neelam Kothari Soni, and Bhavna Pandey. Expect more lavishness, friendships, and adventures in this season



**HanuMan Goes Multilingual on Disney+ Hotstar**

HanuMan extends its OTT journey; Teja Sajja's hit to stream in Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam on Disney+Hotstar. Following its Hindi success on ZEE5, the blockbuster spreads its wings.

## CLOSE UP

# Janhvi Kapoor's 'Ulajh' to release in theatres on July 5

A gripping patriotic thriller directed by Sudhanshu Saria. With a talented cast and an intriguing narrative, it's set to dazzle theaters nationwide.

### Central Chronicle News

**Ranveer Singh, Janhvi Kapoor's IFS officer faces danger and conspiracy, far from home, in "Ulajh," a suspenseful tale of patriotism and peril.**

The eagerly awaited Janhvi Kapoor-starrer "Ulajh" is set to captivate audiences nationwide as it hits theaters on July 5. Directed by the acclaimed Sudhanshu Saria, known for his National Award-winning work, and produced by Jungle Pictures, the film promises to be a gripping patriotic thriller. Alongside Kapoor's compelling performance, "Ulajh" also boasts stellar talents like Gulshan Devaiah and Roshan Mathew in pivotal roles, ensuring an engaging cinematic experience.

The film's teaser, shared on Instagram by the production banner, teases audiences with glimpses into a world rife with lies, deceit, and betrayals, hinting at the intense narrative that awaits viewers. With its intriguing premise and talented cast, "Ulajh" appears poised to make a significant impact upon its theatrical release.



Janhvi Kapoor shines bright, captivating hearts with her radiant presence.



A patriotic thriller set to captivate theaters nationwide

"Ulajh" intricately weaves the story of a young IFS officer, portrayed by Janhvi Kapoor, navigating a perilous personal conspiracy while stationed far from her home turf. Set against the prestigious backdrop of the Indian Foreign Services, the film delves into themes of duty, loyalty, and deception. With a talented ensemble cast including Adil Hussain, Rajesh Tailang, Meiyang Chang, Rajendra Gupta, and Jitendra Joshi, the narrative promises a gripping exploration of patriotism and the human condition. Penned by Parveez Shaikh and Sudhanshu Saria, with dialogues by Atika Chauhan, "Ulajh" emerges as a captivating cinematic journey, inviting audiences into a world of intrigue and suspense.

## HOLLYWOOD

# The Idea of You: Love Amidst Paparazzi Storm

### Radhika Sharma

How do you know you have a perfect romantic comedy at hand? For Hollywood star Anne Hathaway, it's when there is a "pleasurable conflict" between two characters, much like one of her favorites "It Happened One Night".

In her upcoming film "The Idea of You", the Oscar winner plays Solene Marchand, a 40-year-old single mother who begins an unexpected romance with 24-year-old Hayes Campbell, played by Nicholas Galitzine, the lead singer of August Moon, the hottest boy band on the planet. "It Happened One Night", a 1934 love story

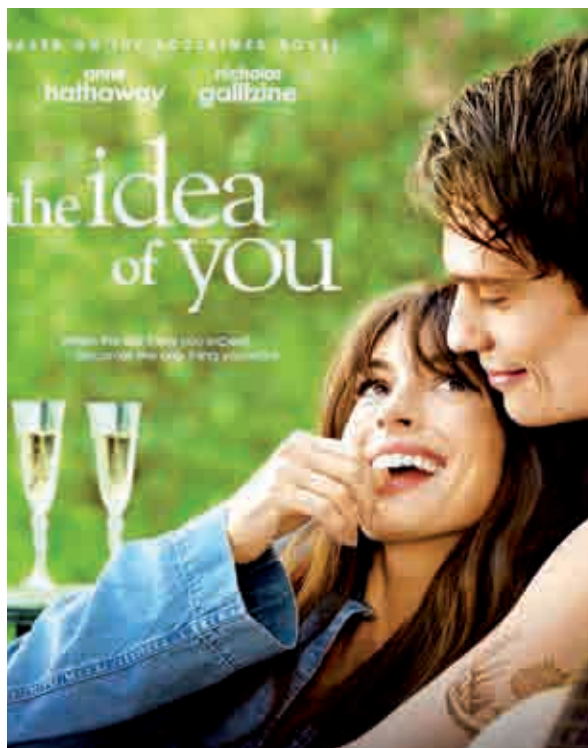
featuring Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert, starts with some friction between lead characters. It follows Ellie, a pampered socialite seeking liberation from her father, who falls in love

### HIGHLIGHT

● Age-defying romance navigates societal scrutiny in upcoming new

with a roguish reporter, Peter. This conflict, Hathaway said, was also present in "The Idea of You", set to premiere on Prime Video globally on May 2.

"One of my favourite rom-coms is one with Clark Gable and Claudette



Colbert called 'It Happened One Night' and so any time you can get believable tension and conflict between the two characters, that's very juicy. Conflict is really important but it has to be a pleasurable conflict," the actor told PTI in an international roundtable interview.

Popular in India for her performances in "The Princess Diaries" films, "The Devil Wears Prada", "Interstellar", "Love & Other Drugs" and "One Day", Hathaway said unlike other movies in the rom-com genre, the conflict in "The Idea of You" is not between her and Galitzine's characters but the couple and the world.

## CineBriefs

BEST OF THE REST

Mumbai concert

### Diljit Dosanjh's Mumbai Concert: A Star-Studded Affair!

Diljit Dosanjh's Mumbai concert drew Bollywood's elite, including Varun Dhawan, Kriti Sanon, Tamanna Bhatia, and Taapsee Pannu. Maniesh Paul shared lively Instagram Stories, featuring him dancing with Varun. Another clip showed Paul and Kriti Sanon enjoying Diljit's Punjabi hit "Born To Shine." Also, Angad Bedi's bhangra with daughter Mehr melted hearts. Sachin Tendulkar's daughter Sara attended too. Karan Kundrra and Tejaswi Prakash grooved to Diljit's "Jeep," and Kareena Kapoor, though absent, showed support on Instagram. Diljit, as always, charmed with his famous line: "Hoyegi Rihanna, hoyegi Beyonce, saadi ta Kareena e aa."

### Love that keeps growing

### Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor celebrate 2nd wedding Anniversary with heartfelt posts



Celebrity power couple Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor marked their second year of marital bliss on Sunday. Alia, currently prepping for her upcoming film "Jigra," delighted fans by sharing two unseen photos on Instagram. The first, a monochrome snapshot from what appears to be their post-wedding reception, showcases the duo looking elegant. The second, a still from the animated movie "Up," depicts characters Carl and Ellie dancing under the stars. Alia's caption reads, "Happy 2. Here's to us my love... today & many many years from today." Well-wishes poured in from the likes of Kareena and Karisma Kapoor, Akansha Ranjan Kapoor, Ayushmann Khurrana, Karan Johar, and Zoya Akhtar, among others, underscoring the couple's widespread adoration.



### Bollywood

### Parineeti Chopra's Tribute Amid Amar Singh Chamkila Success

Amidst the acclaim for her role in "Amar Singh Chamkila," Parineeti Chopra shares a heartfelt message with fans. Overwhelmed by their support, she declares, "Yes, I am back, and not going anywhere!" This moment marks her triumphant comeback, reaffirming her dedication to delivering captivating performances and leaving an indelible mark on the industry. With passion and talent, Chopra's resurgence promises an exciting journey ahead, resonating deeply with audiences worldwide. As she basks in the success, anticipation mounts for her next captivating performances, igniting enthusiasm among fans and industry insiders alike.

## Trending on Insta

@Jhanvikapoor\_hottest

### Radhika Merchant's Bachelorette: Janhvi Kapoor Hosts



Janhvi Kapoor recently hosted a bachelorette for Radhika Merchant, Anant Ambani's fiancée, before their upcoming wedding.

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आर.के.सी.के.समन, सोम कालजी एंव पंचमंगी मार्ग, धम्मारी रोड, कानपुर नगर के पास, कानपुर  
 फोन : 9827143060/8871003060