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# Central Chronicle

Bilaspur | SATURDAY, April 20, 2024 Fastest Growing English Daily Of Chhattisgarh www.centralchronicle.in Price : Rs. 4.00

## 63.41 percent turnout till 5 pm in Naxal-hit Bastar

Newly married couple, Devesh Thakur and Gangotri Thakur, caught all eyes as they came to vote

Press Trust Of India

**JAGDALPUR:** A voter turnout of more than 63 per cent was recorded till 5 pm on Friday in Chhattisgarh's Naxal-affected BastarLok Sabha constituency, which saw the death of a CRPF constable after a grenade accidentally went off and injury to an officer in an IED blast, officials said.

Polling in the Bastar seat started at 7 am and was held in different time slots amid tight security in the first phase of elections. A voter turnout of 63.41 per cent turnout was registered till 5 pm, an election official said.

The voter turnout in the vast constituency stood at 66.04 per cent in 2019. Polling in booths of Kondagaon, Narayanpur, Chitrakot, Dantewada, Bijapur and Konta assembly constituencies and 72 centres in the Jagdalpur assembly segment under the BastarLok Sabha seat



People wait in queue to cast their votes. | Photo: PTI

ended at 3 pm, he said.

In booths of the Bastar assembly constituency and 175 centres of the Jagdalpur assembly constituency, polling was held from 7 am to 5 pm, the official said.

**HIGHLIGHT**

● Defying a poll boycott call by Naxalites villagers were seen queuing up to cast their votes



**In 'ballot versus bullet' fight, ballot will win**  
 P Sundarraj  
 IG Bastar

**| LEGAL |**

## Medical examination of minor seeking termination of 28-week pregnancy, says SC

Press Trust Of India

**Court said the medical superintendent of the hosp will constitute a medical board and its report be placed before the court on April 22**

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court on Friday ordered a medical examination of a 14-year-old alleged rape victim who has sought termination of her 28-week pregnancy.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice J B Pardiwala assembled at around 4:30 pm to hear the matter urgently, after perusing an e-mail sent on behalf of the rape survivor seeking urgent



Supreme Court of India in New Delhi | Photo: PTI

judicial intervention. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati represented the government in the matter.

The court sought a report from Mumbai's Sion hospital about the girl's possible physical

**FACTFILE**

● Under the MTP Act, the upper limit for termination of pregnancy is 24 weeks for married women

report be placed before the court on April 22, the next date of hearing. The matter will be taken up at 10:30 am on Monday. The apex court was hearing a petition filed by the girl's mother, challenging an order of the Bombay High Court that had declined to allow termination of pregnancy. The counsel appearing in the court on behalf of the petitioner said the minor is 28-week pregnant and is presently in Mumbai.

### DU to start PG admissions from Apr 25

**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi University will start admissions for the post graduation (PG) courses for the academic session 2024-25 from April 25, varsity officials said on Friday. The registration for admissions into the PG courses will remain open till May 25, they said.

Addressing a press conference, Dean Admissions Haneet Gandhi said the Delhi University (DU) will start the admissions for undergraduate (UG) courses in the second phase after the CUET-UG examinations are over. According to the officials, this year admissions will be done on a total of 13,500 seats for post graduate (including Non Collegiate Women's Education Board), 120 seats each for three B.Tech and 60 seats each for BA LLB and BBA LLB courses.

The PG admissions this time will also include courses on MA Hindu Studies, MA Public Health, MA Chinese Studies, MA Korean Studies and Master in Fine Arts.

**New opportunities for youths**



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**Phir Ek Baar Modi Sarkar**

**Press the lotus button Make BJP win**

## Court closes case against former PS to Chh'garh CM

Press Trust Of India

**The BilaspurHC two years back quashed the FIR, but the SC in March 2023 set aside the order**

**RAIPUR:** A trial court in Raipur has accepted the closure report filed by EOW-ACB after no case of disproportionate assets was made against Aman Singh, who was principal secretary to former Chhattisgarh chief minister Raman Singh.

The court in an order dated April 16 accepted the closure report filed by the state EOW-ACB after finding that no case of disproportionate assets could be made out against Aman Singh and his wife Yasmin Singh.

An FIR No 09/2020

was lodged when the previous Congress government under chief minister Bhupesh Baghel was in power in the state, based on claims by an RTI activist.

Three years of investigation by the state EOW-ACB failed to substantiate the allegations of disproportionate assets against Singh and his wife, according to the court order.

The closure report was filed by the economic offences wing (EOW) of the state government in December last year before the current BJP government took office.

The trial court has now accepted the closure report and quashed the FIR. Singh, a former Indian Revenue Service officer, was a powerful bureaucrat in the Raman

Singh-led BJP government in Chhattisgarh and the principal secretary to the chief minister. He resigned from service and joined the Adani group in November 2022.

In February 2020, the EOW of Chhattisgarh registered an FIR against Singh and his wife Yasmeen in an alleged disproportionate assets case.

The Bilaspur High Court had two years back quashed the FIR, but the Supreme Court in March 2023 set aside the order, saying it was desirable that the High Courts do not quash corruption case FIRs at the investigation stage, even if it is suspected that the case has been registered by a new government against officers of the previous government.

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**| POLL SCENARIO |**

## 60 percent polling in biggest phase of Lok Sabha polls

**NEW DELHI:** Nearly 60 per cent polling was reported till 5 pm in the first phase of Lok Sabha elections covering 102 seats across 21 states and Union territories amid sporadic incidents of violence in West Bengal while an accidental explosion of a grenade launcher shell in Chhattisgarh left a CRPF jawan dead. An Election Commission spokesperson said the turnout figure was only approximate and polling was held "smoothly and peacefully".

While voting for the first and biggest phase of the seven-phased elections began at 7 am in all constituencies, it ended at 6 pm in most of the seats. Assembly elections

are also being held simultaneously in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim.

While the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) under Prime Minister Modi is seeking a stronger majority for a third consecutive term, the constituents of the opposition INDIA bloc are hoping for a rebound after facing reverses in the 2014 and 2019 elections. Among the voters were first-timers, many newly-wed couples who came in their traditional attires, physically-challenged people and some elderly persons carried on stretchers and wheelchairs.

**NUMBER**

### 21 states

● Election Commission had deployed over 18 lakh polling personnel across 1.87 lakh polling stations



# Raipur



Raipur LS candidate Vikas Upadhyay filed his nomination today  
**Vikas Upadhyay**  
 LS Candidate Raipur LS seat

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### WEATHER

**Mercury crosses 44 degrees in CG, heat waves becoming severe**

Due to the increase in maximum temperatures, heat waves in many states, including Raipur, have been becoming more severe. For example, in Raipur, the maximum temperature recently reached 40.8 degrees Celsius on a Friday, which was one degree higher than the usual average temperature. Meteorologists have predicted a change in the weather pattern in the state starting from Saturday, with a likelihood of thunderstorms and rainfall. Despite this forecast, there may not be a significant decrease in the maximum temperature in the upcoming days due to this weather pattern shift. The weather in Raipur and across the state remained dry on Friday, with temperatures rising above normal levels. In Raipur, the maximum temperature was one degree higher than usual, reaching above normal levels. The minimum temperature in Raipur was recorded at 28 degrees.

### CRICKET

**Kosle claims 7 for Kawardha in U-19 tournament**



Om Kosle claimed 7 wickets for Kawardha to restrict the opposition Sarguja to just 66 runs in the Under 19 Plate Group cricket tournament being organized under the aegis of Chhattisgarh State Cricket Sangh (CSCS) here on Friday. At close of play Kawardha had scored 20 runs without any loss. In another match, Jashpur scored 214 runs in second innings against Koriya with the help of Prateek Tirkey who scored maximum 79 runs for the team. Chasing the target, the Korea team had scored 42 runs for 2 wickets.



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# Commissioner, IG, Collector, SP exercised their franchise

All voters of Bastar division were urged to participate in the festival of democracy by using their franchise.

### Central Chronicle News

**JAGDALPUR:** Commissioner Bastar Division Shyam Dhavde and IG Bastar Range Sundarraaj P. under the Lok Sabha Elections 2024, on Friday, 19 April, in polling center number 75 established in Shaheed Bhagat Singh High School of Jagdalpur city and Collector Vijay Dayaram K. and Superintendent of Police Shalabh Sinha queued up with their family at polling station 104 located at Bhairamganj School and exercised their franchise. During this, he also took a selfie in the selfie zone created in the Model polling center premises. He

encouraged the voters who came to the polling station to cast their vote. On this occasion, Commissioner, IG, Bastar Collector urged all the voters of Bastar Lok Sabha to participate extensively in this festival of democracy. On this occasion, Commissioner Shyam Dhavde appealed to the voters of Bastar division and said that today is the great festival of democracy and as voters we all have got a valuable right, we must use it. 'I make a humble appeal to all the voters of Bastar to go to the polling booth and participate in strengthening democracy by using their voting

### HIGHLIGHT

- 'I make a humble appeal to all the voters of Bastar to go to the polling
- It is the joint responsibility of all of us to strengthen the democracy

rights. Once again, all voters are requested to come out of their homes, vote and be a responsible citizen', he added. On this occasion, IG Bastar Range Sundarraaj P. appealed to all the voters of Bastar region and said that it is the joint responsibility of all of us to strengthen the democracy. To fulfill this

responsibility, all the voters should come out of their homes and reached the polling booth fearlessly. Use your franchise to strengthen the foundation of democracy and make your invaluable contribution to the development of Bastar region, peace and security. Again, there is an appeal to the citizens and voters of Bastar region to reach the polling booth in maximum numbers today and cast their vote. CEO District Panchayat Prakash Sarve also queued up at this polling center and exercised his franchise. Collector-SP along with Commissioner-IG clicked selfie in the selfie

booth of Adarsh polling station. Four polling stations, polling station number 75, 76, 146 and 148, in the premises of local Shaheed Bhagat Singh Higher Secondary School, Pathraguda, have been made model polling stations and where the traditional folk culture of Bastar has been highlighted. Folk dancers wearing attire along with thatched huts and rural women have been displayed well. In the selfie booth of this model polling station, Commissioner Bastar Shyam Dhavde, IG Sundarraaj P. and other voters were motivated to use their franchise.

### From around the city

**Mega Bike rally for voting awareness by Youth Chamber today**



The Chhattisgarh Chamber of Commerce and Industries Youth Chamber, led by Jai Nanwani as the in-charge, Nilesh Mundhara as the co-in-charge, and Kanti Patel as the State General Secretary, organized a meeting at the Chamber Office on Thursday. During this meeting, it was decided to host a large bike rally as part of a voter awareness program scheduled for April 20. To promote voter participation among the trader community for the Lok Sabha elections to be held on May 7th, 2024, the Youth Chamber General

Secretary, Kanti Patel, announced a significant initiative. A bike rally will be organized by the Youth Chamber on Saturday, April 20, 2024, starting at 7:30 am. The rally will commence from Marine Drive, pass through Devendranagar, Fafadih, Station Road, Budhatalab, Sadar Bazaar, and culminate at Jaistambh Chowk. The goal of this rally is to encourage 100% voter turnout from the trader community, emphasizing the importance of participating in elections as a prideful act benefiting the country.

## Munat inspects preparations for Yogi's rally

**RAIPUR:** Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath would be addressing a public meeting in favour of the party's Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha candidate Santosh Pandey on April 21 at Khujji Legislative constituency. Cluster in-charge and senior BJP Legislator Rajesh Munat on Friday inspected the arrangements and preparations for his the scheduled rally during which senior party leaders were also present. UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is very popular in the region as he had been a frequent campaigner for the saffron brigade in the recently held Legislative Assembly polls. Yogi would also hold rally at Bilaspur.

### | LS ELECTION |

# 'Huge enthusiasm among voters to ensure BJP victory'

**BJP government did a lot of work in 100 days. Most of Modi's guarantees have been fulfilled.**

**RAIPUR:** Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao on Friday claimed that the huge enthusiasm among the voters in Bastar Lok Sabha segment, has made it clear that the party candidate Mahesh Kashyap will win with record votes. Sao said that the Election Commission has made people aware about voting, the effect of which is visible. Democracy will once again triumph in Bastar. Sao said that there will be voting in favor of BJP on a large scale in Bas-



Arun Sao, Deputy Chief Minister

### FACTFILE

- Most of Modi's guarantees have been fulfilled. Therefore the environment is in favor of BJP. BJP will win all the seats

tar. On Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi's visit to Chhattisgarh,

Sao said that Congress is a family party. There is an atmosphere against Congress in the entire country including Chhattisgarh. There is panic in Congress. Congress is not going to get any benefit from Priyanka Gandhi's arrival in Chhattisgarh. Congress had made big claims in 2018. But not a

single promise was fulfilled and added that it had also claimed to win 75 seats in the 2023 elections but the claim evaporate, he added. He further stated that the BJP government did a lot of work in 100 days. Most of Modi's guarantees have been fulfilled. Therefore the environment is in favor of BJP. BJP will win all the seats, he added.

Sao said about Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath that Yogi has changed the condition and direction of Uttar Pradesh. He has developed an image as an efficient administrator. People want to listen to Yogi. There will be enthusiasm among the workers and people with the arrival of Yogi.

### The Day's NUMBERS

For various competitive exams of Vyapam

### NUMBER OF SEATS AVAILABLE

B.ed-D.El Ed	21000
Engineering	10,500
Pharmacy	8,923
Polytechnic	7,615
B.Sc Nursing	7026
Agriculture	2500

### ELECTION

**Disabled employees to handle one booth each in 7 constituencies**

Disabled employees will handle one booth each in all the assembly constituencies of the district in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections-2024, in which P-01, P-02 and P-03 including the presiding officer will be all disabled employees. In this way, a total of 28 disabled employees are being given training in the Red Cross meeting room. Addressing them, Collector Dr. Gaurav Singh said that it is a matter of great pride that disabled employees will handle the election work in each booth in all the assembly of the district. He said to understand closely the training being given. Collector Dr. Singh said that special assistants should be provided to these employees at the time of material distribution and collection and at the polling station, so that they do not face any kind of problem. Arrangements for small vehicles should be made for their movement.

### HEALTH

**Huge free health care camp at Jain Dadabari today**

A free one-day health camp will be conducted on Saturday, April 20, at MG Road, Jain Dadabari, Raipur, under the joint aegis of Bhagwan Mahavir Janam Kalyanak Mahotsav Committee 2024 and Dr. Hemraj Bardia Memorial Trust. This initiative has been a long-standing tradition of the Jain community in Dadabadi, where a significant healthcare camp has been organized for many years. The chief guest for this program will be Dr. Purnendu Saxena, the Managing Director of VY Hospital and the Kshretiya SanghChalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak. CA Kishore Bardia mentioned that Dr. Hemraj Bardia Memorial Trust has been established to carry forward the tradition of providing healthcare services to the underprivileged. The trust recognizes that many people cannot afford timely treatment for minor diseases due to lack of financial resources, which can lead to bigger health problems and financial losses in the future.

### | ELECTION |

# 63.41 percent voting took place in Bastar Lok Sabha

### Central Chronicle News

**JAGDALPUR:** Voting for the first phase of Bastar Lok Sabha elections ended at 5 pm at centers number 85 of Bastar and number 86 of Jagdalpur assembly constituency. Whereas in six Naxal-affected assembly constituencies, voting was completed at 3 pm itself. Till 05 pm, 63.41 percent

voting took place in Bastar Lok Sabha seat, even after this, voting was going on at some polling stations, in such a situation the voting percentage may increase. Polling parties have returned from the highly sensitive Kadenar and Becha of Kondagaon district and Silger of Bijapur district, the process of return of remaining

**Return of polling parties from highly sensitive areas has started. The return process will continue for one or two days.**

polling parties is going on, possibly the process of withdrawal will continue for one or two days. According to the information received till 05 pm, the assembly wise voting percentage was as follows: Bastar 72.81 percent, Bijapur 41.62 percent, Chitrakot 73.49 percent, Dantewada 67.02 percent, Jagdalpur 65.04 percent,

Kondagaon 72.01 percent, Kanta 51.19 percent, Narayanpur 62.28 percent, total voting 63.41 percent. Percentage was. Apart from this, the highest turnout till 3 pm was 70.93 percent in Kondagaon assembly constituency. The lowest voting percentage was 35.06 percent in Bijapur assembly constituency.

## Raipur News

# Cong LS candidate of Jangir deep in corruption: Sai

Sai said that there is hardly any house in the state which has not benefitted from various schemes.

Central Chronicle News

**JANJIR-CHAMPA:** Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said that when he was the State President BJP at that time I came to know about the massive corruption by the then Urban Administration Minister and currently the Congress LS candidate from Jangir. He charged that they have done the illegal work of selling 152% of the urban land and done lot of corruption and met with huge protest from BJP. CM Vishnu Deo Sai was addressing at the nomination rally in Jangir here on Friday and came down heavily against the then Urban Administration Minister Dr Shiv Kumar Daharia. CM Sai further charged that Shiv Daharai had cancelled the land-lease of two-three poor families in Arang and by claiming himself as poor, did lot of corruption in it. He charged that Daharia has done the work only that of illegally acquiring land. The benefit of pro-people schemes of Modi government has been availed by poor, farmers, labourers and all other sections of the society. In 15 years of ex-CM Raman Singh's government's schemes and 3 months work of his government are benefitted all.



CM Vishnu Deo Sai addressing huge nomination rally in Janjir-Champa.

all the land in Janjir and need to be taught a lesson. CM Vishnu Deo Sai said that there is hardly any house in the state which has not benefitted from various schemes of PM Narendra Modi.

The benefit of pro-people schemes of Modi government has been availed by poor, farmers, labourers and all other sections of the society. In 15 years of ex-CM Raman Singh's government's schemes and 3 months work of his government are benefitted all.

## PM Modi can make India as well-developed nation, Chief Minister

**JANJIR:** CM Vishnu Deo Sai said that this no ordinary election, but it is a very important one. This election is to elect Narendra Modi as the PM of the Nation for the third time. A tea- and seller and son a poor is working day & night for welfare and upliftment of 140 Indians. He is concerned about the poor, farmers, labourers, youth and women

### HIGHLIGHT

- Sai sought vote for the BJP LS Candidate Kamlesh Jangade from Jangir-Champa LS constituency.
- He appealed all to campaign and promote the schemes of BJP govt and seek votes.

and believes in carrying out 'sabka vikas, sabke saath'. He has brought laurels and respect to India all over the world and created a different and strong image of India developing as world guru. It is due to farsightedness of PM Modi that it has come down to 5th place from the 11th place in term of its economic condition.

## Rs 6.84 lakh cash recovered from passenger's bag

Central Chronicle News

While conducting checking of platforms and trains at Raipur Railway Station noticed a person in suspicious state

**RAIPUR:** Cash of Rs 6.84 lakh has been recovered from a passenger's bag at Raipur railway station by the CIB of Railway Protection Force (RPF). With recovery the cash has been handed over to Lok Sabha Election Flying Squad Executive Magistrate Deepti Tiwari after paperwork.

According to RPF, in view of the Lok Sabha elections, Deputy Inspector of CIB (D Wing) Raipur at Railway Station Raipur BR Sahu, Deputy Sub Inspector SK Rathore, Head Constable Dubey and Constable NK Mahana while conducting checking of platforms and trains at Raipur Railway Station noticed a person in suspicious state alighting from 12069 (Janshat-Abdi Express) at around 11:10 am at Platform No-1. On suspicion they stopped the said person with a bag and asked his name and address. The said passenger revealed his identity as Narendra Sharma, son of Ghan-

shyam Sharma, aged 44 years and resident-Balhadra Ward Bhatapara police station-Bhatapara urban district-Balhadabazar (Chhattisgarh). When asked for documents regarding carrying the cash, he could not present valid documents on the spot.

While giving the above information to the senior officers immediately, as per the order, Lok Sabha

### EASTFACTS

- Action taken by crime wing of Railway Protection Force
- With recovery the cash has been handed over to Lok Sabha Election Flying Squad Executive Magistrate Deepti Tiwari after paperwork

Election Flying Squad (North) Raipur Nagar was called over phone. After the flying squad team reached the spot and opened the said bag in front of the witnesses and checked it. The bag contained a bundle of notes worth Rs 500×1103 = 5,51,500, 200×633 = 1,26,600, 100×63 = 6300, totaling Rs 6,84,400 (Rupees six lakh eighty four thousand four hundred).

### NEWSLINE

#### FIRE INCIDENT

**Fire breaks out in Ganpati Ispat, gutting transformer**

Scorching heat that continued to wreak havoc in the capital Raipur led to eruption of fire in the power transformer installed in the Ganpati Ispat complex in Urla, falling under jurisdiction of Urla Police Station. Fire brigade team reached the spot and brought the fire under control. Flames were visible far and wide.

According to Urla police station in-charge BL Chandrakar after receipt of information about fire in the transformer installed in Ganpati Ispat at around 9 am on Friday morning the police team immediately reached the spot. The fire brigade team also reached there. Laborers working inside the complex were immediately rescued.

#### ATHLETICS

**Chhattisgarh Athletics Selection tournament from April 27**

Chhattisgarh level Senior and Youth Athletics selection competition would be held at Raipur on April 27 and 28.

According to the information received, the above selection would be held at Kota-based Vivekananda Stadium. AFI guidelines would be followed during the selection process and the selected players would be representing Chhattisgarh in the 27th National Federation Athletics championship to be held soon. Chhattisgarh Athletics Association President GS Bamba would be present during the tournament whereas Ravishanker Dhangar would be the Organizing Secretary. Joint Secretary and spokesperson of Association Hemant Singh Parihar provided the above information.

#### LABOUR LAWS

**Cong promises to restore MNREGA in its original form**

The BJP led government at the Centre formulated amendments in 12 labour laws keeping the Opposition out of the Parliament and changed it into anti-labourer laws and all these laws would be reviewed when Congress government will come to power and would grant justice to labourers.

Spokesman PCC Surendra Verma said that when there was Congress government in the country at that time Rojgar Guarantee was given by Congress and Mahatma Gandhi Rojgar Guarantee (MNREGA) was formed. Under this every labourer was given 100 man-days of working and they got legal rights for it.

Verma charged that the Modi government every year is carrying out massive reduction in the MNREGA budget from 15-25 per cent and due to which the labourers are not even getting 100 man-days of working and are just left with 20 man-days.

## Survey to find out quantity of water at specific place

Central Chronicle News

An MOU was signed today between Raipur Municipal Corporation (RMC) and a New Delhi based company.

**RAIPUR:** To conserve and improve the underground water sources and surface water sources of Raipur Municipal Corporation area, a survey will be carried out with the use of modern techniques like space and AI. For this, an MOU was signed today between Raipur Municipal Corporation (RMC) and a New Delhi based company. The MoU was signed between Jagriti Dabas, Director, CEO and Founder of Arms 4 AI Limited, New Delhi and Raipur Municipal Corporation Commissioner Abinash Mishra at the RMC Headquarters Building, White House. A detailed discussion was

also held regarding this work.

Arms 4 AI Limited is a startup company. The examination for such works was conducted by the Ministry of Urban Housing of the Government of India in which Jagriti Dabas's Arms 4 AI Company was chosen the winner. The company will survey ground water sources and surface water sources throughout the year with the help of satellite and artificial sources to find out how much water is there at which place and how to improve it and other related things. All this work will be done at the expense of the Government of India. Hyderabad based Administrative Staff Corporation ASCI will also be associated with this work. In this way, a second mission for drinking water is being started in the corporation which has been named Amrit Mission Point 2.

## Rly Coupon Centre for former MLAs established

**RAIPUR:** Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Secretariat has established a Railway Coupon Centre for former Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs).

According to the information received, the Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Speaker Dr Raman Singh had directed the officials to ensure smooth availability of Railway Coupons to former MLAs in view of the inconvenience faced by them. Subsequently, the Assembly Secretariat has made arrangements for the distribution of Railway Coupons to them from April 22 on every government working days from 11 o'clock in the morning till 5 in the evening. A press release issued here stated that the former MLAs can avail the above facility at the Assembly Office (Sangwari) situated near Ayodhya Apartment in the city.

Central Chronicle News

Congress needs to be eliminated first to end Naxalism in Chhattisgarh.

**RAIPUR:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and Cabinet Minister OP Choudhary on Friday claimed that Congress needs to be eliminated first to end Naxalism in Chhattisgarh.

Talking to media persons at party office here, the Cabinet Minister Choudhary said that the people of Bastar have now started making Chhattisgarh a Congress-free state with the first phase of voting from Bastar. He further added that the people of Bastar now want complete freedom from Naxalite violence and claimed that they have voted in favour of BJP on Friday polls.

### PRESS CONFERENCE

## 'Elimination of Congress essential to end naxalism'



Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and Cabinet Minister OP Choudhary addressing the press conference.

### EASTFACTS

- People of Bastar have now started making Chhattisgarh a Congress-free state with the first phase of voting from Bastar
- Naxalism is the biggest obstacle on the path of development of Bastar

He said that it is a clear inclination of the public, angry with the incompetence of the previous Congress government on the development of Bastar and the Naxalite front, in favor of the BJP.

He alleged that the Congress had been patronizing the naxalism during the last five years in Chhattisgarh and added that the entire

development process was kept on silence during the above mentioned period. He further claimed that naxalism is the biggest obstacle on the path of development of Bastar and added that several steps have been taken by the Sai government under the guidance of Union Home Minister Amit Shah on this direction.

### LS POLLING

## Enthusiasm of Bastarians shows that Modi is winning : Kiran Deo

Central Chronicle News

**JAGDALPUR/RAIPUR:** Kiran Singh Deo, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) State President, cast his vote at polling booth number 130, Danteshwari Primary School in Shantinagar, Jagdalpur. He encouraged the public to participate in the democratic process and emphasized the importance of voting for the progress and prosperity of Bastar. Deo expressed confidence in the BJP can-

didate, Mahesh Kashyap, highlighting the substantial support Kashyap received throughout the campaign. He praised the efforts of BJP workers, from booth-level workers to top leaders, for their dedicated work in Bastar. Deo expressed optimism about a significant victory, affirming the trust of the people in the BJP government and Prime Minister Modi.

State Forest Minister Kedar Kashyap, during



the recent election, highlighted the importance of voting by casting his vote in his home village Farasguda and encouraging people in Bastar to participate in large numbers. He emphasized the profound impact of voting as the most significant power citizens hold in a democracy. Minister Kashyap expressed confidence in the BJP's success, attributing it to the extensive efforts made by their workers who tirelessly visited



**Expressed optimism about a significant victory, affirming the trust of the people in the BJP government and Prime Minister Modi**

**Kiran Singh Deo**  
State President, BJP

every household in Bastar despite the challenging weather conditions. His optimism about the party's victory underscored the belief that their hard work would yield favorable results. Mahesh Kashyap, the BJP candidate, cast his vote at booth number 30 in his home village Kalcha. He expressed eagerness and energy, emphasizing the importance of voting for the happiness, prosperity, and peace of the people of Bastar.



Eight candidates submitted nomination papers for contesting elections from Durg Constituency.

# Appeal to vote through a friendly football match "Matdaan ke Naam"

Players moved around the ground showing placards and posters and appealed to vote on May 07

Central chronicle news

The friendly match was organised as a part of SVEEP voter awareness campaign

**BHILAI:** Under the guidance of Collector and District Election Officer Richa Prakash Chaudhary, a friendly football match "Maydaan ke Naam" was organised at Sector 02 football ground April 18. In the exciting match played under floodlights for voter awareness, the spectators kept cheering the IG, SP and Durg Municipal Commissioner, District Panchayat CEO playing football like professionals in the field. At the end of the match, the Collector honoured the team captain and members by presenting them a bunch of flowers.

It was on the instructions of District Election Officer Choudhary, under the SVEEP voter awareness program, that this one day friendly match was organised with the help of District Administration and Bhilai Municipal Corporation at Sector 02 Rajesh Patel Memorial Football



Players showing banners and posters of voter awareness

Ground. The match began with the Collector Richa Prakash Chaudhary kicking the football. Prior to this, she was introduced to the players of both the teams -Bhilai Corporation Officer XI and District Administration Officer XI- standing in the queue in the middle of the field. This was followed by the toss. For 20 minutes, both the teams kept teasing each other with the football thereafter the district administration team scored the first goal, winning loud applause from the spectators sitting around the field who kept clapping and cheering the players.

## Sportsmanship and civic engagement shine in Bhilai's inter-departmental matches

In the match, IG Ramgopal Garg, SP Jitendra Shukla, Bhilai Municipal Commissioner Devesh Kumar Dhruv, District Panchayat CEO Ashwani Kumar Dewangan, Durg Municipal Commissioner Lokesh Chandrakar, Additional Commissioner Ashok Dwivedi were playing in the field.

The second match was played between BMY Charoda and Adhikari XI. To make the program

### HIGHLIGHT

● IG, SP and Durg Municipal Commissioner, District Panchayat CEO played football like professionals

● Bhilai's civic leaders, athletes, and youth unite for voter awareness and sportsmanship.

successful, along with the officers and employees of Bhilai Municipal Corporation, Assistant Director Sports Youth Welfare Department, coaches and referees of Durg, and a team from District Health Department were present. Young players and children kept showing banners and posters of voter awareness campaign around the ground and appealed to vote on May 07.

## Man held for giving surety with forged documents and misusing Court seal

Central chronicle news

The accused tampered and forged the pages of the Kisan Kitab, removed some pages and misused the seal of Tehsildar Durg

**BHILAI:** Police arrested a man on charges of tampering the property documents (Rin Pustika) and misusing the Court Seal to give surety for bail of an accused. The Reader of the Magistrate remembered that the same person had given surety for another person but the entry of this surety was not there in the property documents. Later, it was discovered that the surety had produced tampered documents before the Court. Ajay Kumar Sahu, Reader at the Court of Judicial Magistrate Payal Topno, had filed a complaint at the police station.

He complained that one Bhukhanchand Deshle produced Kisan Kitab for bail of the accused Shrawan Mandal before the court of Judicial Magistrate Payal Topno. Ajay remembered that Bhukhanchand Deshle had given surety for bail through the same Kisan Kitab in another case in the same court, but there is no mention of previous



bail in the property document. When enquired from the Tehsildar Office,

### FASTFACTS

● Same person had given surety for another person but the entry of this surety was not there in the property documents

● Tehsildar Office had not issued any duplicate or new Kisan Kitab to the accused

it was discovered that the office has not issued any duplicate or new Kisan Kitab to Bhukhanchand Deshle. City Kotwali Police Station lodged a complaint under Section 420 of IPC. During investigation, it was discovered that the accused tampered and forged the pages of the Kisan Kitab, removed some pages and misused the seal of Tehsildar Durg.

### LS ELECTION

Eight candidates file nomination on the last day

**BHILAI:** A total of eight candidates submitted nomination papers for contesting elections from Durg Parliamentary Constituency on the last day of nomination filing in the third phase of Lok Sabha elections 2024. Sheetkaran Mahilwar (Azad Samaj Party), Vikas Sharma (Lokshahi Ekta Party), Bhagbali Siware (Independent), Santosh Kumar Markande (Independent), Dhruv Kumar Soni (Independent),



Harishchand Thakur (Independent), Manoj Dhruv (Chhattisgarh Vikas Ganga Party) and Pradeep Titus (India Prajambandhu Party). So far, 27 candidates have submitted their nomination papers.

### EDUCATION

Army recruitment online examination (CEE) schedule announced

**BHILAI:** The dates of the online examination (CEE) for the candidates, who registered for army recruitment on the Indian Army website till 22 March 2024, have been announced. Online examinations for various categories were scheduled on April 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30 and May 02, 03 will be organised at 5 places Bilaspur, Raipur, Bhilai, Durg and Jagdalpur. According to the information received from the Deputy Director of District Employment and Self-Employment Guidance Center, Durg, the examination will be conducted in a total of 11 examination centers in the state, in which 4 examination centers have been established in Bhilai and 2 in Durg in Durg district. The typing test of the candidates applying for Agniveer Office Assistant / SKT will be conducted at the online examination center only. Candidates can download the admit card from the Indian Army website (www.joinindianarmy.nic.in).

### LS ELECTION

Observers appointed for Durg district

**BHILAI:** Election Commission of India, New Delhi, has appointed General Observer, Expenditure Observer and Police Observer for the elections in Durg district. Additional Collector and Deputy District Election Officer BK Dubey informed that the expenditure observer appointed for Durg District is Prasanna V Pattanashetty (IRS) and his mobile number is 7647046173. Anupam Sharma (IPS) has been appointed as Police Observer. His mobile number is 7647046209. General Observers will be SB Shettannavar (IAS) (Mobile number 7647046210) and Latakar Shrikesh Balajirao (IAS) (mobile number 7647046325).

## Atul greets G Kishan Reddy before nomination



Central chronicle new

**BHILAI:** The people of Telangana (Secunderabad) understand Prime Minister Modi's vision of a developed India. Hence, they are going to choose the path of development once again. The common people have complete faith in "Modi Ki Guarantee". President of BhilaiCanDo Parvat Foundation and BJP worker Atul Parvat reached Telangana

to meet the popular leader Kishan Reddy Gangapuram before his nomination rally. On the occasion, Atul extended best wishes and wished him a historical victory. Parvat said that the entire Telangana is now supporting BJP as the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has settled in the hearts of the people. The public has decided to elect Narendra Modi as their Prime Minister for the third term.

## Mock Poll training from April 22

**BHILAI:** For the Lok Sabha Elections 2024, the commissioning work of EVM and VVPAT machines to be used in Assembly 62-Patan under Durg Parliamentary constituency is to be done at Manas Bhawan from 10:00 hrs on April 26. The nodal officer for Assembly 62-Patan will be Deepak Kumar Nikunj (Assistant Returning Officer). For mock poll work, a training session has been organized at Bhilai Institute of Technology College (BIT), Durg from 11:00 hrs on April 22. Further, the commissioning work of EVM and VVPAT machines to be used in Assembly 63-Durg Rural under Durg Parliamentary Constituency is to be done from 10:00 hrs on April 26 at Government Polytechnic College. The nodal officer for Assembly 63-Durg Rural, Mukesh Raote will be the Assistant Returning Officer. Training of officers and employees appointed for Mock Poll has been organized on April 22 from 11 am at Bhilai Institute of Technology College (BIT), Durg.

## SAIL emerges champion in All India PS Volleyball Tourney

Central chronicle new

SAIL also won All India Public Sector Hockey Tournament

**BHILAI:** Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) won the All India Public Sector Volleyball Tournament 2024 held at Bhopal from organized by All India Public Sector Sports Control Board (AIPSSCB). Earlier, SAIL had also emerged the champion in the All India Public Sector Hockey Tournament also organized by AIPSSCB, beating Food Corporation of India in Bhubaneswar recently, informed a press communique from local unit of SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant. In the Tournament, SAIL beat OIL India (3-0) to become the champion of this tournament. Total nine public sectors viz.



### FASTFACTS

● Company runs and operates multiple sports academies at various locations in the country to nurture budding sporting talents of the nation

● SAIL beat OIL India (3-0) to become the champion

SAIL, LIC, BSNL, Coal India, Nyveli Lignite Corporation, OIL India, ESIC, BHEL and NALCO participated in the tournament. The back-to-back trophies won by SAIL are a testament to its unwavering dedication to foster and advance sports and athletic talents continuously. The company runs and operates multiple sports academies at

various locations in the country to nurture budding sporting talents of the nation. Apart from upgrading and developing sporting infrastructure and nurturing talents on a sustained basis, the company also organizes inter-SAIL sports championships across its plants and units to offer opportunities to hone sporting talents.

### ACHIEVEMENT

## Abhishek Sharma honoured for winning accolades in National Yuva Utsav

Central chronicle new

**BHILAI:** Abhishek Sharma, representing Hemchand Yadav University in the National Yuva Utsav organised at Panjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana, stood third in collage making competition and second in the country in on the spot painting competition among the participants from 62 different universities of the country. A final year BA student of Shri Shankaracharya



Mahavidyalaya, Junwani, he was a participant in the National Yuva Utsav 2024 team of Hemchand Yadav University, Durg. For this success he

was honoured by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Dr Aruna Palta in the presence of Registrar, Bhupendra Kuldeep and other officials. Giving

this information, the Dean of Student Welfare, Dr Prashant Srivastava revealed that Abhishek Sharma while participating in the South East

Zonal Level Youth Utsav 2024 organized in Mysore, secured third place in Collage Making and On the Spot Painting and won the opportunity to participate in the National Youth Utsav 2024. Dr Srivastava further said now Abhishek will now represent the Indian team in the South East Asian Youth Festival 2024. Vice Chancellor, while presenting the silver and bronze medal and trophy received in Ludhiana to Abhishek in the university



"The entire university family is proud of Abhishek's achievement"

Dr Aruna Palta  
Vice Chancellor, Hemchand Yadav University

said that the entire university family is proud of Abhishek's achievement. As per the decision of the executive council of the university, the university will honour Abhishek with a cash prize of Rs 10,000 for achieving success at the national level in a ceremony later. Dr Assistant Professor of Sri Shankaracharya Mahavidyalaya, Junwani, Dr Anil Menon accompanied Abhishek to Ludhiana as team manager.

# Battle-2024



Kerala CM says Left leaders not afraid of jail, unlike Congress leaders

**Pinarayi Vijayan**  
Kerala Chief Minister

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### ASSAM

#### Vehicle carrying EVM sinks in river

**NORTH LAKHIMPUR:** An SUV carrying an electronic voting machine partially sank into a river after water level rose suddenly washing away a mechanised boat that was ferrying the vehicle in Assam's Lakhimpur constituency on Friday, officials said.

The driver and the polling officer of the vehicle managed to get out before water gushed into the vehicle, an official said. It was on its way to Amarapur area in Sadiya to replace an EVM after a technical glitch was detected in it as polling commenced in the morning, the official said.

A quick response team stationed at Sadiya dispatched the SUV with the EVM, accompanied by the driver and an official.

"As the vehicle was being carried by a mechanised boat across the Deopani river, its water level and current suddenly increased. The boat sank under the force of the water, and the vehicle also partially sank," the official said.

### CONG JABS PM MODI

#### 'Why crime rate against Dalits increasing in MP'



**NEW DELHI:** The Congress accused PM Narendra Modi on Friday of protecting those responsible for the paper-leak and recruitment "scams" in Madhya Pradesh and asked him why the crime rate against Dalits is "increasing" in the state. Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh hit out at the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre ahead of Modi's rally in Damoh in Madhya Pradesh. "Today's questions for PM Modi as he heads to MP: Who is the PM protecting in MP's paper leak and recruitment scams? Why has the BJP let.



An elderly voter being assisted as he arrives to cast his vote for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections, in Dausa. Photo PTI

# Rajasthan: Over 53 pc polling recorded in 12 LS seats

Highest voter turnout of 50.14 per cent has been recorded in the Ganganagar Lok Sabha seat while Karauli-Dholpur saw the lowest turnout of 33.86 per cent.

### Press Trust of India

**JAIPUR:** Over 41 per cent voter turnout was recorded in the first eight hours of polling on Friday in 12 parliamentary constituencies of Rajasthan where voting is underway in the first phase of the Lok Sabha election, officials said.

According to the Election Commission, polling began at 7 am amid tight security arrangements and 41.51 per cent voting took place till 3 pm.

Jaipur so far recorded a poll percentage of 49.48. There are 25 Lok Sabha seats in Rajas-

than. In the first phase, voting is being held in Churu, Nagaur, Ganganagar, Jhunjhunu, Bikaner, Sikar, Jaipur Rural, Jaipur, Alwar, Bharatpur, Karauli-Dholpur and Dausa Lok Sabha seats, and 114 candidates are in the fray.

Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra, Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma, former deputy chief minister Sachin Pilot and other leaders cast their votes in the initial hours. Mishra and his wife Satyawati Mishra cast their votes at a polling booth in C Scheme.

"Voting is not only a

constitutional right but also the duty of every citizen of India. This strengthens democracy,"

### HIGHLIGHT

● Deputy Chief Minister Diya Kumari also cast her vote in this phase.

● Former BJP state president Satish Poonia cast his vote at a polling booth in Rani Sati Nagar in Jaipur

the governor said later. The chief minister exercised his franchise at a polling station of Patnik

Jagatpura and expressed confidence that the NDA will win over 400 seats across the country in this general election. He said people of the state were voting for 'guarantees' of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. On the other hand, Pilot said people want change and this election was going to be for change in the country. "The BJP had a long tenure of 10 years. Now people are bored and I am convinced that the Congress will win more seats than the BJP in Rajasthan. We will win across the country and the INDIA bloc will

get a majority," he told reporters after casting his vote.

While voting did not appear to be picking up well in several pockets during initial hours, elderly citizens as well as newlyweds were seen arriving at polling booths to exercise their franchise.

Shivani, a resident of Dampura village in Dholpur district, reached her polling booth before entering the wedlock. Dressed in bridal attire, she also took a selfie at a 'selfie point' after casting her vote.

### Shompen tribal community poses for a photo

#### Andaman and Nicobar Islands records 45.4 per cent polling till 3 pm



**PORT BLAIR:** An estimated 45.48 per cent of the total 3,15,148 voters in Andaman and Nicobar Islands have exercised their franchise till 3 pm on Friday for the lone Lok Sabha seat in the union territory, an official said. Chief Electoral Officer B S Jaglan said so far voting is going on peacefully. "So far the voting is going on peacefully. There were some minor EVM glitches but it was addressed immediately. It did not hamper the poll process," the CEO told PTI. Seven members of the Shompen tribe, a particularly vulnerable tribal group

(PVTGs) of the Great Nicobar Islands on Friday exercised their voting rights for the first time, an official said. The CEO said, "It's good to see that primitive tribes are also exercising their voting rights. Every ballot is a testament to unity and participation. So far the voting is going on peacefully in the entire archipelago. "Other two primitive tribes like Onge and Great Andamanese too exercised their voting rights like in 2019 Lok Sabha election but seven Shompen did it for the first time out of 98 Shompen voters," the CEO said.

## Congress losing relevance: Rajnath

**HYDERABAD:** Criticising the Congress for becoming 'outdated' and losing its relevance in the country's political spectrum, senior BJP leader Rajnath Singh on Friday said BJP does politics for the sake of the nation building and not merely for coming to power. Addressing a party gathering before Union Minister Kishan Reddy filed his nomination for Lok Sabha polls, Singh also attacked the Congress party alleging that former Reserve Bank Governor D Subbarao in his book wrote that there was pressure to present a "rosy picture" with regards to the economy during UPA rule. He claimed that due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's intervention the war between Russia and Ukraine was stopped for over four hours to facilitate India to evacuate its citizens.

### MODI TAKES DIG AT RAHUL, AKHILESH

# 'Film of 'do shehzade' already rejected by people'

### Press Trust of India

"Every time these people seek votes from the people of Uttar Pradesh, they carry a basket of dynasty, corruption and appeasement. They do not leave any chance to attack our faith," Modi said.

**AMROHA (UP):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a veiled dig at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Friday, saying the shooting of the film "do shehzade ki jodi" is on but it has already been rejected by people. "Every time these peo-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a public meeting in Amroha.

ple seek votes from the people of Uttar Pradesh, they carry a basket of dynasty, corruption and appeasement. They do not leave any chance to attack our faith," Modi said, addressing a rally

here. In a veiled attack on Gandhi and Yadav, he said, "The shooting of the film 'do shehzade ki jodi (a pair of princes)' is going on. But their film has already been

### FACTFILE

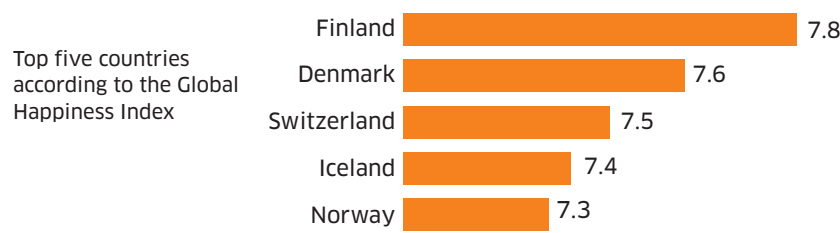
● "Will a person, who cannot accept Bharat Mata Ki j'ai, look good in the Indian Parliament? Should such a person be allowed entry into the Indian Parliament?" he asked the gathering while hitting out at Danish Ali.

rejected by people." Hitting out at Danish Ali, the Congress candidate from Amroha, Modi alleged that he has objections in saying "Bharat Mata ki jai".

"Will a person, who cannot accept Bharat Mata ki jai, look good in the Indian Parliament? Should such a person be allowed entry into the Indian Parliament?" he asked the gathering.

### The Day's NUMBERS

#### GLOBAL HAPPINESS INDEX BY COUNTRY (2024)



### VIOLATING MCC

#### Tripura CEO serves notice to Tipra Motha chief

**AGARTALA:** The Tripura Chief Electoral Officer on Friday served a notice to Tipra Motha chief Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma for violating the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) by making a statement during 'silence period' through a social media post.

On Thursday, Pradyot Debbarma made an appeal through live Facebook to a particular community to vote for a particular party.

"You have delivered a statement in a live Facebook post last evening violating the provision of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) under the Representatives of People Act.

The electors tend to believe whatever is being said from the public forum by their leaders and in that sense, the statement made by them affect the campaign discourse", Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Puneet Agarwal, wrote to the Tipra Motha chief.

### LS SEAT

#### DPAP leader Parray files nomination from Anantnag-Rajouri

**SRINAGAR:** Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) leader Mohammad Saleem Parray on Friday filed nomination papers from the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha constituency in Jammu and Kashmir which is going to polls in the third phase of elections on May 7.

Accompanied by DPAP chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad and other leaders of the party, Parray filed the nomination papers before Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Syed Fakhruddin, who is the returning officer of the constituency.

Talking to reporters after filing nomination papers, Azad expressed hope that Parray would win from the seat and represent Jammu and Kashmir and its people in the Lok Sabha.

"This 40-year-old youth, an advocate, who used to fight individual cases in high court, lower court and district court, will now represent our state and its people in India's highest seat of democracy, the Lok Sabha," he said.

### MAMATA SPEAKS

# 'BJP instigated violence during Ram Navami

### Press Trust of India

**HARIHARPARA (WB):** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday accused the BJP of inciting violence during Ram Navami celebrations in the state and said the saffron camp only believes in bloodshed and violence to serve its political interests. Addressing a rally at

Hariharpara in minority-dominated Murshidabad district, Banerjee said the 2024 Lok Sabha polls are nothing less than a "second battle for the country's independence," as BJP's return to power for the third consecutive term would endanger the existence of the constitution and democracy. She claimed that Ram Navami violence

● **BJP only believes in bloodshed and violence to serve its political purpose**

**Mamata Banerjee**  
West Bengal CM



in Murshidabad district was "pre-planned" and accused the saffron party of orchestrating it ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

A blast occurred near a procession in Murshidabad's Shaktipur area on Wednesday, injuring a woman, police said. In Rejinagar area of the district, the BJP alleged that a Ram Navami procession was pelted with stones.

BJP committed for welfare of poor, youth, women

Brijmohan Agrawal  
MLA Raipur (South)



# Chhattisgarh



Sai addressing at Vijay Sankalp public meeting organized at Surguja district | Photo: Central Chronicle

## Do not fall into trap of 'frustrated' Congress: CM Sai asks people

Congress is cheating the people by getting forms filled at various places with the promise of giving Rs 8,000 to women every month

Central Chronicle News

**SURGUJA:** Charging Congress with misleading people on different issues Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai today asked people not to fall into the trap of frustrated and disappointed Congressmen. 'Reservation will never end, as long as we are in government, Mahtari Vandan Yojana will also not stop. Women will continue to benefit from this', Sai said at the Vijay Sankalp public meeting organized at Sur-

guja district headquarters Ambikapur. Congress is cheating the people by getting forms filled at various places with the promise of giving Rs 8,000 to women every month and Rs 1 lakh in a year, Sai said adding that the people of the state have already handed over the power of Chhattisgarh to BJP and there is no possibility of Congress coming to the center. Despite knowing all this, Congress has come up with a new trick to cheat the public, for which the public will

### HIGHLIGHT

● Says its time to wipe out Congress in LS polls too in Surguja

● Addresses 'Vijay Sankalp' public meeting organized at Surguja district headquarters Ambikapur

give a befitting reply, he said.

The Chief Minister said that out of 36 promises made by the Congress

government, not a single promise was properly fulfilled. Under the leadership of Bhupesh Baghel, Chhattisgarh had become a den of crime and corruption, he said and added that Congress committed scam in liquor, coal, sand, government land, DMF amount etc. The state was made poor by looting. He said that Bhupesh Baghel's government had made the youth addicted to gambling. He said that the accused of the scam that took place during the

Congress rule were in jail today. Enumerating the achievements of his government, Sai said that ever since it came to power in the state his government fulfilled the big promises of Modi's guarantee. On the very second day of taking oath, he gave approval for Rs 18 lakh PM Awas and 2 years outstanding bonus was given to 12 lakh farmers. He also said that his government procured paddy at 21 quintals per acre and gave a price of Rs 3100 per quintal.

## CM Yogi to address public meeting

**DONGARGAON:** The Chief Minister of UP Yogi Adityanath will be holding a massive public meeting in Garm Sagar (Kumarda) of Dongargaon region on April 21 at 11:00 AM. In this regard BJP Kumarda Mandal President Bodhan Sahu informed that in the earlier speeches by CM Yogi Adityanath in the region during VS Polls had created unrest among the ruling party of Congress. Now in the Lok Sabha polls 2024, he will be coming here to campaign in favour of the BJP's Rajnandgaon LS candidate Santosh Pandey and would be holding this public meeting and for which all necessary arrangements are being made. It is notable here that in the name of CM Yogi Adityanath, the people reach the meeting venue on their own.

## SECR ranks first in UTS app use to book tickets

Central Chronicle News

Passengers can download this app on their mobile phones and easily book unreserved tickets and issue and renew season tickets (MST) from the comfort of their homes

**BILASPUR:** South East Central Railway (SECR) is continuously striving for passenger facilities. In this series, after online ticketing, the facility of purchasing general tickets through the app has been provided to passengers. With this facility, passengers no longer need to stand in line at the ticket counter upon arriving at the station. In the financial year 2023-



24, the South East Central Railway has booked approximately 52.1 million unreserved tickets through the UTS app. In the month of March 2024, the South East

### FACTFILE

● SECR booked 4.3 million passengers thru app

● 13 % of unreserved tickets purchased thru app

Central Railway booked more than 4.3 million, i.e., more than 20.72% of passengers booked unreserved tickets through the UTS app, which was the highest in Indian Railways.

To alleviate the lines at ticket counters and facilitate quick ticket availability, the facility of booking unreserved tickets and issuing and renewing season tickets (MST) has been provided through the UTS mobile app. Passengers can download

this app on their mobile phones and easily book unreserved tickets and issue and renew season tickets (MST) from the comfort of their homes. Platform tickets can also be obtained through this mobile app.

It is worth noting that keeping in mind the convenience of passengers staying away from the station, the scope has been increased by 25 kilometers.

In this regard, from April 2023 to March 2024, more than 13% of unreserved tickets were purchased through the UTS on Mobile app, i.e., more than 67 million railway passengers purchased unreserved tickets through the UTS on Mobile app and traveled.

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### SCHEMES

#### Villages deprived of benefits of central, state schemes

**CHURRIKALA:** The villagers in few villages of Korba Lok Sabha seat are far-away from getting the benefits of the central and state government schemes, set aside the basic amenities as well. On carrying out survey in few villages of Korba LS area by a team of villages, it was found that work on basic amenities like electricity, roads and other was done in last five years, but majority of it was either left incomplete or it was left completed only in papers. Due to this many parts of the region is lacking in getting benefit of the schemes. Even today, in many remote villages of the LS area, the beneficiaries are anxiously waiting to avail benefit of the schemes like 'Amrut Sarovar Yojana' and Gramin PM Aawas Yojana and others. In addition to this no cleaning of ponds could be carried out under 'Amrut Sarovar Yojana' and the ponds in which was done, it was left half-way through.

### WebPortal

#### Web portal of PDS launched, and its demonstration held



**ANWARI:** The Pradesh Dewangan Samaj (PDS) (CG) Registration No. 2338, the employees/ Officer cell with objective to organise the officers and employees from the Samaj has launched this campaign. For expansion of this Cell, virtual meetings too are being organised. Regional President Manoj Dewangan informed that in order to ensure proper contact of all the officers and employees of the Dewangan Samaj with each other, the energetic ITT expert of Samaj Hemchand Yadav has prepared a portal for registration of the members.

### From around the region

#### Fire prevention training and awareness program held at HTPS



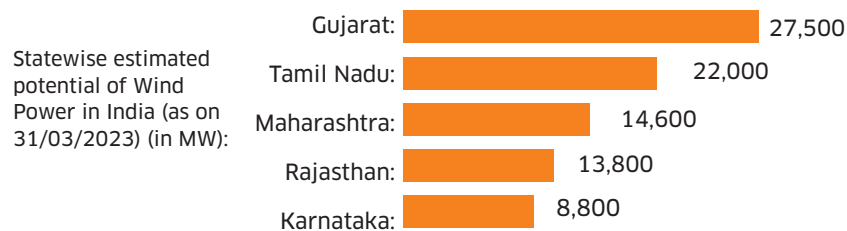
**KORBA:** On the occasion of National Fire Service Week, in a series of programs being organized under the aegis of Fire Service Department, Hasdev Thermal Power Station (HTPS), Korba West, on April 17 and 18, the plant's Garage, Store, Workshop and Coal Transfer Branch-(Internal) and (External) employed officers and employees and contract workers were trained regarding the efficient application of fire extinguishers in emergency

situations, after which a quiz competition was organized to measure the level of alertness and awareness of the plant workers, in which The participants who performed excellently were encouraged by giving rewards.

A large number of plant employees are enthusiastically participating in these weekly awareness and training programs being organized under the leadership and guidance of Deputy Fire Officer of the plant, G.P. Kaithwas.

### The Day's NUMBERS

#### WHAT IS ESTIMATED POTENTIAL OF WIND POWER



### CAMPAIGNING

#### Elect the person who can bring a change and development: Yadav

**CHURRIKALA:** The bugle for the Lok Sabha polls has been blown and there are series of public and nomination rallies being addressed in different cities and regions. There is change in the election campaigning compared to what was done few years back. For strengthening of the democracy, everybody should compulsory vote in this election and should also create awareness among the people. The above are the words of Yadav Adarsh Seaw Sansthan District President Dr PL Yadav while speaking at the Ramnavami Utsav and added that exercising one's franchise is one's fundamental right and it should be used without any hesitance and without falling prey to any allurements or becoming biased. He said that the people of rural areas are more aware than that of the urban areas and still many villages are lacking basic amenities and therefore there is need to elect such person who holds positive thinking towards development.

### LACK OF ACTION

#### Villagers planning to boycott the elections if problem not solved



**PANDARIA:** The lack of amenities in Gram Panchayat Mainpura near the city is not being solved and at present there is no system to clear the waste or clear the clogged drains either. Even after filing of complaint, there is hardly any action taken. The drain near the Lord Hanuman temple in Gram Panchayat Mainpura is keeping clogged for last two years and still no public representative is taking any concern about it. Many a times phones, whatsapp complaint have been lodged with demand for cleaning of drains.

### POLLING AWARENESS

## District admn is motivating to increase voting %

Central Chronicle News

**JANGIR-CHAMPA:** Under the direction of District Election Officer Akash Chhikara and guidance of District Panchayat CEO Gokul Raote, various activities are being organized under the well-organized Voter Education and Electoral Participation Program (SWEEP). In this context, many inno-

ventions are being made by the district administration to increase the voting percentage in the Lok Sabha elections. Under this, the district administration and trade association have taken initiative and will give 5 to 40 percent discount in shopping at major establishments of the district to those who vote on May 7. This initiative of traders

Every citizen's vote matters, hence it is necessary to encourage citizens to use their democratic rights.

Manoj Aggarwal,  
President, CCI-Naila-Janjgir Unit

is being praised everywhere.

Mr. Manoj Aggarwal, President of Chamber of Commerce and Industry Unit Naila-Janjgir said that every citizen's vote matters, hence it is necessary to encourage citizens to use their democratic rights. By offering this special discount, we are encouraging more people to vote.

The shopkeepers in the district who will give discount on goods on the day of voting include 15 percent by Thakurdas Nebhandas Textile Shop Murari Tehlani, 10 percent by Sharda Agro (manufacturer of agricultural equipment), 5 percent by Shivansh Foods Netaji Chowk Janjgir Subhi Ice Cream Parlour, Anand Auto Hero Motors.

# Agri centre selling medicines without principal certificate

The agriculture centres providing local handmade bills instead of the GST provisioned bills and are selling medicines without principal certificate

Central Chronicle News

**KHAIRAGARH:** Agricultural centre operators are selling medicines without principal certificate; while on the other hand, shopkeepers are giving medicines to farmers at higher prices. In such a situation, farmers of Bazaar Ataria, Thelkadih, Mudhipar are forced to go to agricultural shops and buy fertilizers and seeds at higher prices and agricultural centre operators are taking full advantage of the scenario. As per reports, there are more than 50 agricultural centres operating in the surrounding areas including Bazaar Ataria, Panda Daha, Thelkadihi, where the agricultural centres are being run bypassing the rules. Here it takes a special mention that in order to sell medicines, fertilizers, seeds, hybrid seeds, research seeds and vegetable seeds in the agriculture centre, principal certificate are given to the company and agriculture centre operators. But the operators are not enlisting the quantity and rates are not mentioned on the stock register, information board, neither is the original GST bill being given to the customers. Thereby by handing over local bills to the farmers, they are extracting huge amount of



Krishi Sewa Kendra, Chanda, Ahmednagar

money from the farmers by selling the medicines of the local company at higher prices.

On the other hand the Department is not inspecting, the shops resulting in open market black marketing. Interestingly most of the farmers still do not want to complain about these centres as they are not keen to be noticed, while there are hundreds of agricultural centres in the district where only the work of looting the farmers is being done by ignoring the rules openly.

## Schedule of operation of heavy vehicles fixed to curb accidents

**KORBA:** Collector and District Magistrate Ajit Vasant has issued an order regarding operation of heavy vehicles from Balco's Parsabhatha Chowk to Bajrang Chowk. According to the order issued, there will be a ban on heavy vehicle movement on this route from 7 to 9 in the morning and 5 to 7 in the evening. The speed limit on this route

### HIGHLIGHT

● Movement of heavy vehicles banned from 7 to 9 in the morning and 5 to 7 in the evening

has been set at 30 kilometers per hour.

It is noteworthy that to curb the accidents of children near Parsabhatha Chowk, a joint meeting

was organized by the district administration on 14 April 2024, in which, after consultation with the district administration, children management and local residents, a unanimous decision was taken time period for movement of all types of heavy vehicles from Balco Parsabhatha Chowk to Bajrang Chowk is from 07:00 AM to 9:00 AM.

## Husband strangulates wife over petty dispute and sent to jail

Central Chronicle News

Constant nagging forced the accused to take this action

**BEMETARA:** Bemetara police has nabbed two accused on murder of wife of one of them and produced both in the Court, from where both were sent to jail. The two accused nabbed are Moh. Shahzada Shekhani, S/o Moh. Arif Shekhani (26), R/o ward No. 18, Bazar para, Bemetara thana and Moh Mustakim Shekhani, alias S/o Moh. Aslam Shekhani (21), R/o ward No.18 Bazar para, Dheemara para, Bemetara thana.

On interrogation with the police, the murder accused Shahzada Shekhani, who is also the husband of the victim informed that it was getting irritated with his wife's behaviour and lack of respect of her towards him and constant nagging that he was forced to take this action. So he along with his friend Musakim Shekhani, who was having a good amount outstanding as loan in the market and taking the same as contract killing to settle the issue, that both decided to teach her a lesson and kill her. So it was on the night of Eid, when

Shahzada's wife reached late to her house from her father's house, both strangulated her using a cloth, while she was asleep and then called her family member citing all sorts of reasons behind her death. It was after the her final rites that they decided to throw the clothes used in strangulation in the river, so as to make it appear that it was part of the final rites and

### FASTFACTS

● Accused used contract killing to settle the issue

● Wife's behaviour and lack of respect of her towards husband led to murder

then the police will also not be doubtful about them. It was based upon the evidence and acceptance of crime by both that two were taken into arrest and sent to jail.

In this action Inspector Thana City Kotwali Bemetara Chandradev Verma, DSI Jitendra Kashyap, Head constable Nohar Yadav, Raghuraj Singh Yadav, Hemant Sahu, Chhatrapal Daharia, Pawan Rajput, constable Devendra Sahu, Manish Mishra and others played remarkable role in solving the crime.

### NEWSLINE

#### HOME VOTING

*Nine polling teams formed for home voting*



**KHAIRAGARH:** As per the instructions of the Election Commission of India, under the guidance of Collector and District Election Officer Chandrakant Verma, nine polling teams have been formed for home voting in the district under the Lok Sabha General Election-2024. After distributing the material to the team, Collector Verma flagged off the team formed for home voting and sent it on the fixed route chart. It is noteworthy that home voting will be conducted from 8 am to 6 pm on April 18 and 19 by the formed polling parties by visiting the homes of voters of 85+ age group and disabled category who submit the application form within 12 hours.

#### RELIGIOUS

*Procession organised on Mahavir Jayanti*

**NAVAPARA-RAJIM:** In the series of programs organized on the occasion of birth anniversary of Lord Mahavir Swami, an interesting presentation in the form of program, "Humhai Jain - Sab Hai Hamare Fan" was held under the direction of Vivek Bhabak in the local Shwetambar Jain temple premises here. The main objective of the program was to bring out the hidden talents in the Sangh society, under the genre of singing, speech style, special talent, pure sutra recitation and stage management etc. The winners were honored by Ashok Gangwal, Ramesh Pahariya, Rajendraparkh, Gianchand Bangani. Thereafter a morning procession was taken out by the Nipoona Jain Pathshala Committee from Shwetambar Jain Temple premises for Kushal Vihar to the Samadhi place.

#### TRAINING

*Two-day first phase training of polling parties commences*

**BALRAMPUR:** Under the direction and guidance of Collector and District Election Officer Remijius Ekka, two-day development block level training of polling parties started in the district, in which the officers and employees of the polling team were given training by master trainers to conduct the voting process with complete fairness and transparency. Detailed information about all aspects related to voting was given by the master trainer and along with this, the use of EVM and Whippet machine was explained. Master trainers explained the precautions to be taken while handling EVMs and Whippets and provided detailed training about the voting process including the use of EVMs and Whippets through computer power point presentation and also resolved the doubts of the officers and employees of the polling parties.

## SI Suresh Dhruv of Cyber Cell declared 'Cop of the Month'



Central Chronicle News

Collector asked the sector officers to visit polling stations associated with them and ensure all the basic facilities

**GAURELA - PEN - DRA-MARWAHI:** To create healthier competition among the police officers and employees and to motivate them to do more of hard work with dedication and commitment, S Bhavana Gupta has launched the practice of awarding 'Cop of the Month' to a deserving police officer or employee.

For doing remarkable works in the month of March, SI Suresh Dhruv of Cyber cell in-Charge was awarded. SP Bhavana Gupta has presented the title of 'Cop of the Month' and citation certificate and trophy to SI Cyber Cell Suresh Dhruv for seizure of stolen material in theft and nabbing the sandalwood smugglers and disclosure about banned cough syrup and psychotropic drugs. The pamphlet carrying details of the title 'Cop of the Month' has been flashed in all the offices of the district and in thanas for next one month, so that all officers and employees of police can take inspiration from it.

## Child marriage stopped by joint team of WCD

**KHAIRAGARH:** BALRAM-PUR: In a bid to stop child marriages on the occasion of, Akshaya Tritiya, on the instructions of District Collector Remijius Ekka in village Piprahi under Balrampur development block, a joint team of supervisor of Women and Child Development Department, Auganwadi workers and Child Line reached village Piprahi and counselled the parents and relatives of the child and prevented the marriage from taking place. As per information, the wedding was called off and the villagers and relatives were informed about the legal action to be taken pertaining child marriages as per law. District Program Officer, Women and Child Development Department has appealed to the people to contact mobile number 9826278915 or toll free number 1098 to stop child marriages.

## Wood smugglers are hacking down forest belt

Central Chronicle News

It is reported that wood smugglers are active in the forest areas of Khairagarh and Chhuikhadan blocks of the district.

**KHAIRAGARH:** Lush timber trees are being cut illegally in the district, resulting in the continuous decrease of the forest belt of the region famous for its forest reserves. Surprisingly, there is little administrative action in this direction and the responsible administrative departments are maintaining silence, in all possible ways allegedly. It is reported that wood smugglers are active in the forest areas of Khairagarh and Chhuikhadan blocks of the district and smugglers are also taking full advantage of the ongoing election duty of



An outside view of the factory in Janjgir-Champa district.

### FASTFACTS

● Wood smugglers active in the forest areas of, Khairagarh and Chhuikhadan blocks, from Salhewara-Bakarkatta to Gatapar-Mudhipar

● Due to administrative laxity, indiscriminate cutting of timber trees taking place rapidly

the employees.

If confirmed sources are to be believed, the forests from Salhewara-Bakarkatta to Gatapar-Mudhipar in the district are becoming unsafe due to cutting of trees and even the protected forest areas adjacent to the district headquarters are not safe and due to administrative laxity, timber trees are being cut indiscriminately in the dis-

trict and thereafter are transported to big cities to brick-kiln operators in rural areas.

Along with teak, other timber trees including Riya, Kauha, Khamhar are being cut indiscriminately especially in the protected forest areas of Munhadbari, Pandadah, Katangi Kala, Ghoghedabari and Baihatola areas. Here it takes a mention that Acacia and Khamhar wood has been given exemption by the government for the use of farmers, but taking advantage of this exemption, some wood smugglers active in illegal tree cutting are arbitrarily cutting non exempted wood trees too and the very specific silence of the Forest Department is emboldening these illegal timber smugglers and illegal timber cutting is increasing day by day.

### ILLEGAL BUSINESS

## Illegal brick kilns running rampant and unabated

Central Chronicle News

**KHAIRAGARH:** Illegal brick kilns is going on in full swing in the area and rural areas of the belt are suffocating owing to the operations of these kilns. Found in almost every second village of the region, these kilns are operated without licence and a large chunk of pollution both air and water is disturbing the ecosystem of the village. Many kilns are

operational on the pretext of making bricks for non commercial use, but are sold openly, due to the backing of the administration too.

According to the information, more than 100 illegal brick kilns are being operated in the district itself, whereas at the level of Khairagarh assembly constituency, this figure is more than fifty. Many brick kilns are also operating in the surrounding areas includ-



ing Khairagarh, Chhuikhadan and Gandai and most these operating illegal brick kilns are not

only creating problems by cutting trees but are also using pure drinking water in large quantities

for manufacturing bricks, which in a way is inviting big problems in the near future.

These kilns are also playing havoc with the fertile bed of the river as mining of humus laid soil is being done to be used in the kilns, which is a threatening impact on the environment. If no major action is taken against these illegal brick kiln operators in time, then they can cause huge harm to the environment for which the government and administration will be responsible both.

Officer Mineral Dept



## QUOTE FROM THE QUOTABLE

Live as if you were to die tomorrow.  
Learn as if you were to live forever.

[ Mahatma Gandhi ]

## Comment

## Indian libraries pioneering open access initiatives

Scholars and researchers should take advantage of libraries' support of and expertise around open access publishing. Asking a librarian for help could protect your work and save you money.

In the realm of academic publishing, the concept of open access has emerged as both a challenge and an opportunity. At the forefront of this movement are institutions like Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University of Social Sciences (BRAUSS) in Madhya Pradesh, where the library's core mission aligns seamlessly with the principles of open access.

Under the guidance of Professor Sunil Goyal and the leadership of Dr. Ramdas G. Atram, BRAUSS embarked on a qualitative research study to delve into the nuances of open access publishing. Their investigation aimed to uncover the complexities of sustaining academic publishing amidst a rapidly evolving landscape while highlighting the pivotal role of the BRAUSS library as an agent of change.

The findings revealed a multifaceted approach

adopted by BRAUSS to champion open access initiatives. Firstly, the institution's library has established an institutional repository (IR) dedicated to collecting and preserving scholarly output. This repository serves as a digital archive, ensuring that research findings are accessible to all stakeholders without financial barriers. By leveraging open access policies, BRAUSS empowers scholars to retain copyright ownership of their work while complying with government funding requirements, thus amplifying the reach and impact of their scholarship.

Moreover, BRAUSS library has taken a commendable steps to negotiate transformative agreements with publishers, shifting the financial burden of open access publishing from individual scholars to the institution. This strategic approach not only promotes equitable access to information but also fosters a sustainable publishing model that benefits the academic community at large.

In addition to infrastructure

and policy initiatives, BRAUSS library offers consultation services facilitated by senior academicians. These services provide researchers with invaluable guidance on copyright compliance, open-access publishing options, and repository utilization. Through workshops and training sessions, BRAUSS empowers scholars to navigate the intricacies of open access effectively, fostering a culture of transparency and collaboration within the academic community.

The significance of libraries as champions of the open access movement cannot be overstated. Over the years, libraries have evolved to meet the changing needs of scholars and researchers, leveraging their expertise and resources to advance the cause of open access. As recent changes to Indian grant funding guidelines rejuvenate discussions surrounding sustainable publishing models, libraries like BRAUSS remain steadfast in their commitment to free access to information.

In many ways, libraries serve as beacons of openness

and collaboration, advocating for equitable access to knowledge and fostering innovation within the academic ecosystem. By embracing the principles of open access, libraries empower researchers to disseminate their findings widely, driving progress and discovery across disciplines.

In conclusion, the groundbreaking efforts of institutions like BRAUSS underscore the crucial role of libraries in promoting open access publishing. Through strategic initiatives, infrastructure development, and expert consultation services, BRAUSS exemplifies a commitment to equitable knowledge dissemination.

As the open access movement gains momentum, libraries stand poised to lead the charge, advocating for a future where knowledge knows no boundaries. By continuing to champion open access initiatives and support scholarly communication, libraries like BRAUSS play a pivotal role in shaping the future of academic publishing, ensuring that knowledge remains accessible to all.



Prof. Sunil Goyal

Author is an eminent social scientist, columnist, and professor in the Department of Higher Education, Government of Madhya Pradesh.

## OUR VIEW |

## Sugar in Baby Food: Disparity by Nestle Sparks Concern

The revelations regarding the sugar content in Nestle's baby-food brands across different nations have sparked global concern. Public Eye, alongside the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), shed light on a disconcerting reality: while countries like the UK, Germany, and Switzerland enjoy sugar-free variants of Nestle's products, India and several other nations face a concerning excess of added sugar in their infant cereals. The findings paint a distressing picture: an average of nearly three grams of sugar per serving in Cerelac baby products in India, a stark contrast to the sugar-free versions available elsewhere. This disparity extends beyond India's borders, with similar patterns observed in countries like Ethiopia, Thailand, and the Philippines. Nestle's practices seem to defy international guidelines aimed at curbing obesity and promoting healthier dietary habits among infants. Nestle India Ltd's response, citing a reduction in added sugar content over the past five years and ongoing efforts to further reformulate products, does little to assuage concerns. While the company emphasizes its commitment to nutritional quality and the use of high-quality ingredients, the glaring inconsistency in sugar levels across regions raises questions about corporate responsibility and ethics. The Guardian's report further underscores the gravity of the situation, highlighting the discrepancies in Nestle's practices between affluent and economically disadvantaged markets. Such a double standard is indefensible, as emphasized by WHO expert Nigel Rollins. The presence of added sugar in products targeted at infants as young as six months not only contradicts nutritional recommendations but also poses potential health risks in the long term. As consumers, regulators, and advocates, we must demand accountability from multinational corporations like Nestle. Access to safe, nutritious food is a fundamental right, especially for the most vulnerable members of society. It is imperative that companies prioritize the well-being of consumers over profit margins and address the systemic inequalities perpetuated by their practices. The findings of this investigation serve as a wake-up call for the health and future of our children depend on it.

## GUEST VIEW |

## Monsoon Hope: A Silver Lining for India's Future

As the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasts an "above normal" monsoon season, anticipation builds across the nation. Global climate modeling suggests a promising scenario, with expectations of rainfall reaching approximately 106% of the long-term average, fueled by a decline in El Nino followed by the emergence of La Nina. The prospect of a bountiful monsoon brings with it a plethora of opportunities and benefits. Firstly, it serves as a lifeline for the country's agricultural sector, which supports nearly half of the workforce. A robust monsoon is poised to relieve pressure on the fragile rural economy, ensuring a steady livelihood for millions of farmers and laborers. Moreover, the monsoon's timely arrival heralds relief for urban areas grappling with dwindling groundwater levels. By replenishing water bodies and reservoirs, it offers a respite from water scarcity, vital for sustaining urban life and economic activities. In West Bengal, where agriculture plays a pivotal role in the state's economy, the anticipation of a favorable monsoon is met with eager anticipation. As farmers prepare their fields and communities gear up for the planting season, the promise of abundant rainfall offers hope for a prosperous future.



Arka Goswami

Facebook parent Meta Platforms unveiled a new set of artificial intelligence systems Thursday that are powering what CEO Mark Zuckerberg calls "the most intelligent AI assistant that you can freely use". But as Zuckerberg's crew of amped-up Meta AI agents started venturing into social media this week to engage with real people, their bizarre exchanges exposed the ongoing limitations of even the best generative AI technology. One joined a Facebook moms' group to talk about its gifted child. Another tried to give away nonexistent items to confused members of a Buy Nothing forum.

Meta, along with leading AI developers Google and OpenAI, and startups such as Anthropic, Cohere and France's Mistral, have been churning out new AI language models and hoping to persuade customers they've got the smartest, handiest or most efficient chatbots.

While Meta is saving the most powerful of its AI models, called Llama 3, for later, on Thursday it publicly released two smaller versions of the same Llama 3 system and said it's now baked into

the Meta AI assistant feature in Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp. AI language models are trained on vast pools of data that help them predict the most plausible next word in a sentence, with newer versions typically smarter and more capable than their predecessors. Meta's newest models were built with 8 billion and 70 billion parameters - a measurement of how much data the system is trained on. A bigger, roughly 400 billion-parameter model

is still in training.

"The vast majority of consumers don't candidly know or care too much about the underlying base model, but the way they will experience it is just as a much more useful, fun and versatile AI assistant," said Nick Clegg, Meta's president of global affairs, in an interview.

He added that Meta's AI agent is loosening up a bit. Some people found the earlier Llama 2 model - released less than a year ago - to be "a

little stiff and sanctimonious sometimes in not responding to what were often perfectly innocuous or innocent prompts and questions," he said. But in letting down their guard, Meta's AI agents also were spotted this week posing as humans with made-up real world experiences.

A chatbot with the official Meta AI label inserted itself into a conversation in a private Facebook group for Manhattan moms, claiming that it, too, had a child in the

New York City school district. Confronted by group members, it later apologized before the comments disappeared, according to a series of screenshots shown to The Associated Press.

"Apologies for the mistake! I'm just a large language model, I don't have experiences or children," the chatbot told the moms' group.

Clegg said Wednesday he wasn't aware of the exchange. Facebook's online help page says the Meta AI agent will join a group conversation if invited, or if someone "asks a question in a post and no one responds within an hour". The group's administrators have the ability to turn it off.

In another example shown to the AP on Thursday, the agent confused members of a forum for swapping unwanted items near Boston. The agent offered a "gently used" digital camera and an "almost new-portable air conditioning unit that I never ended up using".

Meta said in a written statement Thursday that "this is new technology and it may not always return the response we intend, which is the same for all generative AI systems."

## Meta's newest AI model beats some peers

Meta unveils new Artificial Intelligence, yet bizarre exchanges highlight ongoing limitations, as AI agents struggle in social media interactions and engagement. by Press Trust of India



A panel, moderated by Dr Anne-Marie Imafidon, left, with Meta's Nick Clegg, President Global Affairs, second left, Yann LeCun, Chief AI Scientist, center, Joelle Pineau, VP AI Research, second right, and Chris Cox, Chief Product Officer, right, is held at the Meta AI Day in London. Photo: AP

## YOUR LETTERS

## Kashmir electoral dynamics

In Jammu & Kashmir, the call to reject "dynastic parties" like PDP surfaces. Yet, why did BJP form a post-electoral alliance with "dynastic" PDP in 2015? Despite claims of peace and development after 2019, with hartals and terrorism supposedly at an "absolute end", why hasn't BJP nominated any saffron candidates for the three Valley seats? These queries linger, challenging the political dynamics of Kashmir. The electorate awaits clarifications, seeking coherence in political actions and rhetoric.

Kajal Chatterjee, Kolkata

## Citizenship proof: Voter ID validity

As the 2024 Lok Sabha election approaches, candidates humbly seek votes from those holding voter IDs. Yet, post-election, they question the sufficiency of a voter ID for citizenship. This contradiction casts doubt on elected representatives. A voter, with an EPIC number, is integral to India's governance. Thus, a Voter ID must be deemed adequate proof of citizenship. Denying this undermines democratic principles and erodes trust in the electoral process. Let's acknowledge the legitimacy of Voter IDs in affirming citizenship rights.

Sujit De, Kolkata

Send your articles (550-600 words) and letters (70-80 words) for this page on: editorcentralchronicle@gmail.com  
The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity.



# Business



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**Vinay Malhotra**  
IndiGo Head of Global Sales

## BizBriefs

BEST OF THE REST

### EDUCATION

#### VIT Engineering Entrance Exam begins in 125 cities in India and 6 cities broad

**VELLORE:** The VIT Engineering Entrance Exam (VITEEE), the entrance examination conducted by Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) for admission to B.Tech. programmes of VIT Group of Institutions-VIT-Vellore, VIT-Chennai, VIT-AP (Amaravati) and VIT-Bhopal, is scheduled from April 19th to 30th, 2024 as Proctored Computer Based Test at 125 cities in India and six cities abroad - Dubai, Muscat, Qatar, Kuwait, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. Applicants from all states and union territories of India will participate in VITEEE-2024. The results will be available tentatively on May 3rd, 2024 in [www.vit.ac.in](http://www.vit.ac.in) and on the same day online counselling process will begin. Applicants within 1 lakh ranks are eligible to participate in the counselling for admission to B.Tech. programmes of all campuses of VIT-Vellore, Chennai, VIT-AP and VIT-Bhopal.

### INDICATORS

#### Share MARKETS

Market	Close	%chg
Sensex:	73,088.33	+0.83
Nifty:	22,147.00	+0.69
Nifty Midcap:	48,696.95	-0.61
Nifty Smallcap:	16,270.40	-0.10
Nifty Bank:	47,574.15	+1.07

Closing rates as on Apr 19, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. (IST)

#### Forex RATES

Foreign currency Vs Rupee	Rate	%chg
US Dollar	83.48	↓
Euro	88.87	↓
Chinese Yuan	11.52	↓
UAE Dirham	22.72	↓
Pakistan Rupee	0.29	↓
Sri Lanka Rupee	0.27	↑

On Apr 18, 2024

#### World INDICES

Stock	Value	% chg
Dow Jones (US)	37,753.38	+0.06
FTSE 100 Index	7,823.73	-0.68
Nikkei 225 (JPN)	37,068.35	-2.66
CSI 300 (CHN)	3,541.66	-0.79

Index at 05:30 p.m. (IST, Apr 19, 2024)

### How markets behaved today?

#### Stock markets stage strong rebound after 4 days of slump; Sensex rallies 599 pts



**MUMBAI:** Stock markets rebounded from early lows to close higher on Friday, snapping the four-day losing streak on heavy value buying in banking and auto shares. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 599.34 points or 0.83 per cent to settle at 73,088.33. The index opened lower and tanked further 672.53 points or 0.92 per cent to hit a low of 71,816.46 in early trade. However, the index rebounded in the second half on value-buying in banking shares. The NSE Nifty jumped 151.15 points or 0.69 per cent to close at 22,147. The broader index dropped to a low of 21,777.65 in early trade before paring its losses to end in the green. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai, and Hong Kong settled in the neg-

ative territory. European markets were trading in the red. Wall Street ended mostly lower on Thursday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.55 per cent to USD 87.62 a barrel. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 4,260.33 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. Despite global weakness, Indian markets staged a strong recovery driven by large-cap stocks.

**Major Gainers:** Bajaj Finance, M&M, HDFC Bank, JSW Steel, Maruti, Wipro, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finserv, ICICI Bank and ITC.

**Major Losers:** Nestle India, HCL Tech, L&T, TCS, Tata Motors and Infosys.



Infosys CEO Salil Parekh (L) with newly appointed Infosys CFO Jayesh Sanghrajka during the announcement of Q4 results at Bangalore.

## IMF applauds India for maintaining fiscal discipline in election year

India, has successfully navigated multiple shocks over the last several years. It's emerging to be one of the fastest major economies in the world.

### Press Trust of India

**WASHINGTON:** The International Monetary Fund has applauded India for maintaining fiscal discipline in an election year, saying that the Indian economy is doing well and continues to be the world's bright spot. "At this point in time, India's economy is doing well. Growth at 6.8 per cent is very good. Inflation's coming down. We have to

make sure that inflation comes down to target and it is there on a durable basis. Macro fundamentals look pretty good," Krishna Srinivasan, Director, Asia and Pacific Department, at the IMF told PTI in an interview. "One thing I would say is that maintaining fiscal discipline, especially in the election year, for me, has been quite a highlight because countries do embark on fiscal adven-

### NUMBER

# 6.8%

• If you look at the macro fundamentals, they're pretty solid, despite this being an election year.

• Indian economy is doing well and continues to be the world's bright spot

tures in the election year. "This government has maintained a discipline, I think, is very important because at the end of the day, sound macro fundamentals are the basis on which countries prosper and have durable growth. So that's very important to maintain that," Srinivasan said. India, he said, has successfully navigated multiple shocks over the last several years. It's emerging to be

one of the fastest major economies in the world. "In fact, for this year, for 2024-25, we project growth at 6.8 per cent led by private consumption and public investment. Inflation is coming down gradually. It's now below 5 per cent," he said. "If you look at the macro fundamentals, they're pretty solid, despite this being an election year, the government has adhered to fiscal discipline.

### DIGITAL PLATFORM

## Aditya Birla Capital aims to nearly double customers

### Press Trust of India

To add 3 crore new customers in the next three years through a digital platform launched



Kumar Mangalam Birla, Chairman of Aditya Birla Group, speaks at the launch of the fintech platform app 'ABCD'.

### FASTFACT

- It will also tap into the 1.87 lakh-strong employees of the USD 65 billion Aditya Birla Group
- Aiming for a 19-21 per cent per annum growth in insurance, credit and asset management businesses

the last year to build the platform, aimed at acquiring new customers. At present, Aditya Birla Capital serves over 3.5 crore customers across businesses, including lending, insurance, and asset management, she added.

Hinting at the potential customers that can be tapped into, Birla said the wider group has a 2.5-lakh

strong small business ecosystem and serves over 25 crore customers through products and services like telecom, fashion, and retail.

It will also tap into the 1.87 lakh-strong employees of the USD 65 billion Aditya Birla Group, ABC officials said, adding that this cohort can alone yield up to 10 lakh customers.

## Infosys profit jumps 30 pc to Rs 7,969 crore

**NEW DELHI:** IT company Infosys on Thursday said its consolidated profit jumped 30 per cent to Rs 7,969 crore in the March 2024 quarter.

The company posted a profit of Rs 6,128 crore in the year-ago period, according to a regulatory filing.

### INFOSYS' BUMPER DIVIDEND

## 5-month-old Ekagrah Murthy to earn Rs 4.2 crore

### Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Ekagrah Rohan Murthy, NR Narayana Murthy's five-month-old grandson who was gifted a whopping 15 lakh shares by the Infosys founder recently, is set to earn Rs 4.20 crore, thanks to the Bengaluru-IT company declaring a bumper final and special dividend totaling Rs 28 per share. Murthy



had gifted 15 lakh shares to Ekagrah valued at a staggering Rs 240 crore at that time, making the five-month-old the youngest millionaire

shareholder of India's second-largest IT company. On Thursday, the Infosys board recommended a final dividend of Rs 20 per share

and additionally a special dividend of Rs 8 per share for the financial year 2024. "With this, the total payout over FY20-FY24 will be 85 per cent of free cash flow, in line with our capital allocation policy announced earlier," Infosys said in its Q4 earnings release. Ekagrah - the third grandchild of Narayana Murthy - is the son of Rohan Murthy and his wife Aparna Krishnan.

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Double engine keeps derailing in Bihar  
Mallikarjun Kharge  
Congress president



PM Modi being felicitated by UP CM Yogi Adityanath. PTI PHOTO

## Over 80 crore people get free ration in India while Pakistan fights hunger

Adityanath spoke before PM Modi at the rally that was organised in support of Kanwar Singh Tanwar, the BJP candidate from the Amroha constituency in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls.

Press Trust of India

**AMROHA:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath invoked Pakistan at a political rally on Friday and said while those in the neighbouring country are fighting hunger, “80 crore people in India are getting free ration”.

Addressing a poll rally in Amroha in western Uttar Pradesh, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader also said the

“phir ek baar Modi sarkar” slogan of the saffron party is reverberating across the country. Adityanath spoke before Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the rally that was organised in support of Kanwar Singh Tanwar, the BJP candidate from the Amroha constituency in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls.

“Pakistan, which has a population of hardly 23-24 crore, was formed after the partition in 1947 and

### HIGHLIGHT

- Pak formed after partition is suffering from hunger

- India gives free ration to more than 80 cr people

is suffering from hunger today. This is also an example – on one side, there is Pakistan, and on the other side, there is the promise of free ration to more than

80 crore people,” the chief minister said.

The BJP, in its Lok Sabha poll manifesto, has promised to continue to provide free ration to more than 80 crore people in the country for the next five years. Adityanath said “only one slogan is being heard from every direction – phir ek baar Modi sarkar”. Welcoming Modi to Amroha, he hailed him for bringing transformative changes in the coun-

try. Adityanath addressed the rally as polling was underway in eight western Uttar Pradesh constituencies in the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls. Amroha will go to polls in the second phase on April 26. Tanwar won the Amroha seat in 2014, but was defeated in 2019 by Danish Ali, who was with the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) then. Ali is again in the fray from Amroha on a Congress ticket.

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### APPOINTMENT

#### Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi is new Navy Chief

**NEW DELHI:** Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi will be the new Navy Chief by the end of this month succeeding incumbent Admiral R Hari Kumar. Admiral Kumar will retire from service on April 30. Vice Admiral Tripathi is currently serving as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff. “The government has appointed Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, presently serving as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff as the next Chief of the Naval Staff with effect from the afternoon of April 30,” the defence ministry said. Born on May 15, 1964, Vice Admiral Tripathi was commissioned into the executive branch of the Indian Navy on July 1, 1985. A communication and electronic warfare specialist, he has had a long and distinguished service spanning nearly 30 years. Prior to taking over as Vice Chief of Navy, he had served as Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Western Naval Command.

### MISHAP

#### Four of family found murdered in Karnataka on Friday

**GADAG:** Four people of a family were allegedly found murdered in the district head-quarter town of Gadag early on Friday. The incident occurred at around 2.30 am today at Dasara Oni in Gadag town, police said. The deceased have been identified as Karthik Prakash Bakale (27), Parashuram Hadimani (55), Lakshmi Hadimani (45), Akanksha Hadimani (16). Karthik is the son of BJP leader Prakash Hadimani. His mother Sunanda is the Gadag-Betageri City Municipal Council vice president. It is said that Karthik’s marriage was fixed on April 17 and Hadimani’s family had come to attend the event. “Investigation is on. We will soon nab the culprits. Probably the criminals gained entry through the open terrace of the building and perpetrated the crime,” Gadag Superintendent of Police Babasaheb Nemgoud told reporters. Karnataka Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H K Patil visited the bereaved family members and offered his condolence.

From around the web on India

### Indian-origin men arrested in Canada’s biggest ever heist, first time in history



**NEW DELHI:** Canada on Thursday cracked one of the most audacious heists in its history, unravelling a web of criminal activity that intertwined gold, cash, and firearms. The plot, reminiscent of a script straight out of a crime thriller, unfolded at Toronto’s Pearson International Airport, leaving investigators grappling with a multimillion-dollar puzzle.

The heist, which took place on April 17 in 2023, saw an unexplained disappearance of a staggering cache of riches: over 22 million Canadian

dollars’ worth of gold bars and foreign currency stolen away from a secure storage facility within the airport’s premises. The modus operandi to carry out the heist involved forged paperwork to gain access to the precious cargo. On April 17 last year, cargo container arrived at Pearson International Airport from Zurich, Switzerland, aboard an Air Canada flight. Inside were 6,600 bars of .9999% pure gold, weighing 400 kilograms, along with 2.5 million Canadian dollars’ worth in foreign currency.

## White tigress Sneha dies at Zoo

**BHUBANESWAR:** A 14-year-old white tigress Sneha died at her enclosure in Nandankanan Zoological Park on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar city on Friday, officials said.

The white tigress fell ill on Thursday and was under medication. She was administered saline and medicines but died this morning. According to the official, apart from her old age ailments, she could have been afflicted with the prevailing intense heat wave. Born to Royal Bengal tiger Nishan and white tigress Kusum on March 1, 2010, Sneha delivered three cubs, Mousumi (female), Chinu (male) and rare melanistic Vicky (male), on August 5, 2016, and Luv and Kush during her second pregnancy. On March 28, 2021, she gave birth to three normal male tiger cubs, Rakesh, Rocky and Banshi.

| HERITAGE |

## ECoR commemorated World Heritage Day with enthusiasm

Press Trust of India

Chief Guest Behera in his speech, reiterated the paramount importance of safeguarding railway heritage

**BHUBANESWAR:** East Coast Railway celebrated World Heritage Day with fervor and enthusiasm, underscoring the significance of preserving and honoring rich railway heritage. The event, graced by Mohes Kumar Behera, General Manager (I/C), East Coast Railway, witnessed a blend of insightful discussions, artistic expressions, and a shared commitment to safeguarding our cultural legacy. The highlight of the commemoration was the engaging discourse by Shri Dillip Kumar Samantray, Managing Director of Angul Sukinda Railway Limited, who eloquently shared



GM Mohes Kumar Behera distributing prizes. RAILWAY PHOTO

### FACTFILE

- Function organized at Rail museum was conducted by DGM(G)/ECoR

his perspectives on the essence and importance of railway heritage and its preservation. Adding a vibrant touch to the occasion, prizes were awarded to the winners of an art

competition held on the occasion. Mohes Kumar Behera, GM (I/C) and Mrs Sharmila Behera, President of ECoRWWO distributed Prizes to the winners of the Art competition.

| POLITICAL PULSE |

## People not excited about polls, then why need for elections

Press Trust of India

**MUZAFFARNAGAR:** Farmer leader Naresh Tikait on Friday expressed skepticism about the BJP’s claim of the NDA crossing the 400-mark and claimed “there is no excitement among people” about the polls. “If



they are saying 400, then what is the need for them to contest elections? It

There is no excitement among people, they feel cheated

Naresh Tikait  
Farmer leader

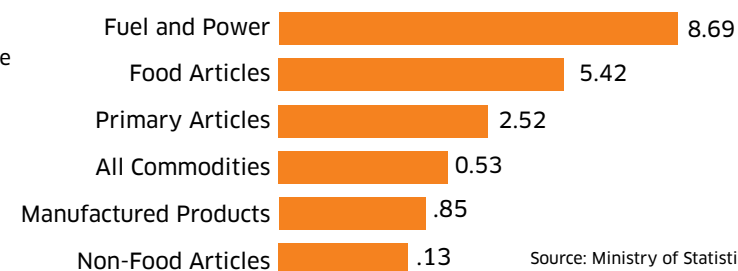
is special that they can perceive this in advance. Do they have any astrologer who has predicted that this is going to happen?” said Tikait, national president of the Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) while speaking to ‘PTI Videos’. Polling in eight Lok Sabha constituencies of western

Uttar Pradesh, including Muzaffarnagar, are underway on Friday in the first phase. “People express their feelings through their votes. However, the voting is slow, and it will be like this till evening. There is no excitement among people, they are disillusioned now.

### The Day's NUMBERS

Inflation Rate  
0.53 % MAR  
0.20% FEB

### INFLATION FOR MARCH 2024



### NEW ROLE

#### Senior IPS officer Nalin Prabhat to head India’s National Security Guard

**NEW DELHI:** Senior IPS officer Nalin Prabhat has been appointed as the chief of National Security Guard (NSG), the country’s counter-terrorism force, according to a Personnel Ministry order. Prabhat, a 1992 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of Andhra Pradesh cadre, is presently working as Additional Director General in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved his appointment as the Director General, NSG for a period up to August 31, 2028 i.e. the date of his superannuation, the order said. Popularly known as the “black cats”, the federal contingency force NSG was raised in 1984. Sashtra Seema Bal (SSB) chief Daljit Singh Chawdhary was holding the additional charge of the NSG. The ACC has also approved appointment of Sapna Tewari as the Special Director in the Intelligence Bureau (IB). Tewari, a 1992 batch IPS officer of Odisha cadre, is currently working as Additional Director in the IB.

### MISHAP

#### Three labourers killed in house collapse incident in Preet Colony

**RUPNAGAR:** Three labourers were killed when a two-storey house collapsed in Preet Colony here while one remains trapped under the debris as rescue efforts continue, police said on Friday. The incident took place on Thursday when the labourers were engaged in the process of raising the lintel of the house, they said.

“Of the five labourers who got trapped under the debris, three died in the incident. Two were already dead when pulled out of the debris while one passed away in a hospital,” Senior Superintendent of Police, Rupnagar, Gulneet Singh Khurana said.

He added that one labourer, who was pulled out alive, is being treated at a hospital while efforts are on to rescue the one who is still trapped under the debris. The police said a loud explosion was heard when the building caved-in.

# Businessman, schoolboy set to embrace monkhood in Gujarat

A five-day initiation ceremony for community members from Guj and Maha began on Apr 18

Press Trust Of India

**AHMEDABAD:** As many as 35 persons from the Jain community, including an 11-year-old boy and a wealthy couple, will embrace monkhood in Gujarat on April 22, a religious trust said on Friday. A five-day initiation ceremony for community members from Gujarat and Maharashtra began on Thursday at "Adhyatma Nagri" (spiritual city) on the Sabarmati Riverfront and will conclude on April 22.

According to a release by Shree Adhyatma Pariwar, a Surat-based trust, 35 persons will receive 'diksha' from revered Jain monk Acharya Vijay Yogtilakurishvarji Maharaja. Of the 35 persons, ten are under the age of 18 years, with the youngest being an 11-year-old boy, the release stated. One of the children embracing monkhood is 13-year-old Surat resident Het Shah. Het left his studies nearly two years ago to perform 'Updhan Tap', where one has to live like a monk away from home for 47 days. "Het found it difficult to balance school and spiritual activities and left his studies nearly two years ago to be with our gurus. He then expressed his desire to shun worldly



Jain couple renounces Rs 100 cr property to embrace monkhood. PTI PHOTO

life. Though he is our only child, we accepted his wish, as we were also convinced there is nothing better than a monk's life," Het's mother Rimpal Shah said. Also renouncing worldly possessions are five couples who will shut their business and lock their homes after receiving 'diksha'. Ahmedabad-based businessman Bhavesh Bhandari (46) and his wife Jinal (43), who ran a real estate and finance business, are following their children into monkhood.

## WBCHSE notifies semester system in state-run schools

**KOLKATA:** The West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE) has issued a notice announcing the adoption of a semester system of education for classes 11 and 12 in all state-run and state-aided schools. In the notification dated April 18, addressed to school heads and teachers, WBCHSE president

### HIGHLIGHT

• Semester system for class 11 from the academic session 2024-25

• The draft of the new state education policy was unveiled in August

Chiranjib Bhattacharya said the council is introducing the semester

system for class 11 starting from the academic session 2024-25, and for class 12 from the 2025-26 session. Under the new system, the higher secondary or 10+2 course now comprises four parts - semester 1, 2, 3, and 4. Class 11 has been redesigned as semester 1 and 2, while class 12 has been restructured as semester 3 and 4, the notice said.

## IISc launches project to extend human 'healthspan'

Press Trust Of India

**MS Ramaiah Hospital and Bangalore Medical College & Research Institute have officially partnered to conduct a clinical study for identifying biomarkers of ageing**

**BENGALURU:** The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has announced the launch of the 'Longevity India Initiative', a project focused on efforts to extend human 'healthspan' and tackle ageing-related challenges.

The initiative has also started a large-scale clinical study that will involve researchers from multiple IISc departments, clinicians, industry, philanthropists and civil society. This initiative seeks to enhance the understanding of ageing through both fundamental and applied research, and to develop solutions that can improve quality of life, Bengaluru-based IISc said in a statement.

The initiative has received initial grant funding support from Prashanth Prakash, Founding Partner, Accel India, it was stated. The initiative was formally launched at an event held on Thursday at the Institute. The initiative brings together a multidisciplinary team of experts from

academia, industry, and healthcare to address complex challenges related to ageing.

It will leverage advanced research to develop interventions that can help manage age-related diseases more effectively, with an emphasis on promoting healthy ageing across India. "As we study the complexities of ageing, we recognise the importance of considering

### FASTFACTS

• India's elderly population to surge to 347 million by 2050

• Lifestyle, culture, genetics, and environment need to be studied in detail

diverse factors that shape it, including lifestyle, culture, genetics, and environment. With India's unique demographic landscape, existing longevity research may not suffice. This initiative is an attempt to bring together multiple stakeholders working in the space, and explore the subject factoring in India's specific and diverse needs," he said.

"Advancing ageing-related scientific research is key and we believe research-based interventions can pave the way for healthy ageing in India," added Prakash.

### NEWSLINE

#### AMBALA

**JJP GS Harpal Kamboj quits party**



In a setback to the JJP, its state general secretary Harpal Kamboj on Friday resigned from the primary membership of the party. Kamboj sent his resignation to Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) president Ajay Singh Chautala.

He said he quit the party due to "personal reasons". Earlier, Kamboj was the urban district president of JJP's Ambala unit and had unsuccessfully contested the 2019 assembly elections on a JJP ticket from Ambala City. JJP's state unit president Nishan Singh and the party's general secretary Kamlesh Saini had also quit the party earlier this month.

PTI

#### AMBALA

**40 trains on Ambala-Amritsar route cancelled**

Rail traffic on the Ambala-Amritsar route was hit as farmers squatted on rail tracks in Shambhu near the Punjab-Haryana border for the third day on Friday, demanding the release of three farmers arrested by the Haryana Police, officials said. About 40 trains have been cancelled, while the routes of 54 trains have been diverted, they said. The farmers have been protesting under the banner of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) in Patiala district's Shambhu. They squatted on the tracks on the Ambala-Ludhiana-Amritsar route on Wednesday, demanding the release of three fellow farmers who were arrested by the Haryana Police during the ongoing stir.

PTI

#### MUMBAI

**Rana Kapoor gets bail in bank fraud case**



A special court here on Friday granted bail to Yes Bank co-founder Rana Kapoor in the Rs 466.51 crore bank fraud case, paving the way for him to walk out of jail after four years. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) arrested Kapoor in March 2020 in a money laundering case, and he has been booked in eight cases related to fraud at the bank. Kapoor's lawyer Rahul Agarwal said they were trying to complete the bail formalities to facilitate his release as early as possible.

UNI

## IR operates additional trains in summer season

Press Trust Of India

**Indian Railways remain committed to providing a convenient and comfortable travel experience for all passengers**

**BHUBANESWAR:** To ensure the convenience of passengers and manage the anticipated surge in travel demand during summers, Indian Railways is operating a record-breaking 9111 trips during summer season.

This marks a substantial rise compared to the summer of 2023, where a total of 6369 trips were offered. This translates to an increase of 2742 trips, demonstrating Indian Railways' commitment to meeting passenger demands effectively.

The additional trains have been meticulously planned to connect key

destinations across the country, ensuring seamless travel on major railway routes.

All zonal railways spread across India have geared up to operate these additional trips, catering to the summer travel rush from states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi.

Planning and running of additional trains is a continuous process for which inputs are taken from all the communication channels 24x7 like media reports, Social media platforms, Railway Integrated helpline number 139, apart from details of waitlist passengers in PRS system, to assess demand of trains on a particular route.

## Nita Ambani pays obeisance at Golden

**AMRITSAR:** Nita Ambani, founder and chairperson of Reliance Foundation, paid obeisance at the Golden Temple here. Nita Ambani visited the Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) on Thursday evening. She arrived at around 7.30 p.m and undertook 'parikrama' of the holy shrine before paying obeisance in the sanctum sanctorum of the Golden temple, Manager of the Golden Temple, Iqbal Singh Mukhi said on Friday. After paying obeisance, she took "karah prasad". Ambani later sat in the marbled periphery around the holy 'sarovar' and listened to "Gurbani Kirtan". "She remained in the Golden Temple complex till 11.30 p.m during which she also took meals at the 'langar' (community kitchen)," he said. Mukhi said Nita Ambani comes to Golden Temple every year to pay obeisance.

## In MP, officials honour voters with garlands, tilak

| WELCOME MOVE |

Press Trust Of India

**Kavita cast her vote in her wedding attire, a kin said, adding her parents and in-laws were happy with her decision.**

**BHOPAL:** Poll officials in Madhya Pradesh on Friday put their best foot forward to ensure high voting in the Lok Sabha elections with initiatives like offering flowers and applying 'tilak' on the foreheads of those exercise their franchise. Voting is underway in Balaghat, Chhindwara, Jabalpur, Mandla, Shahdol and Sidhi Lok Sabha seats in the state. Till 5pm, a voter turnout of 63.25 per cent was recorded, officials said. In Shahdol, poll staff welcomed elderly voters



Poll officials welcoming voters at the booth. PTI PHOTO

### FASTFACTS

• Till 5pm, a voter turnout of 63.25 % was recorded

• A bunch of transgender persons voted in the afternoon

with flowers and garlands and applied tilak, leaving several of those who braved the heat to exer-

cise their franchise very happy, eyewitnesses said.

Kavita, who got married on Thursday night in Bemhori village in Shahdol's Budhar tehsil, ensured she voted before leaving for her marital home in Padmania village. Kavita cast her vote in her wedding attire, a kin said, adding her parents and in-laws were happy with her decision.

In tribal Mandla district's Nainpur's Makke booth no. 55, youth Durgesh Bhanvre came to vote with turmeric smeared on his face and clothes after taking part in pre-wedding rituals. A bunch of transgender persons voted in the afternoon in booth number 161 in Kohalya in Junnardeo, which is part of Chhindwara Lok Sabha seat.

### | RARE FINDINGS |

## Fossil of 'largest snake to have ever existed' found in Gujarat

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Fossils recovered from Kutch in Gujarat may have belonged to the spine of one of the largest snakes to have ever lived, according to new research from the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee.

From the Panandhro Lignite Mine, researchers discovered 27 "mostly well-preserved" bones forming the snake's spinal column, or vertebra,

with some connections still intact. They said the vertebrae appeared to be from a fully-grown animal.

The snake is estimated to be between roughly 11 and 15 metres long, comparable in size only to the extinct Titanoboa, known to be the longest snake to have ever lived, the researchers said.

Owing to its size, it may have been a "slow-moving ambush predator," similar to an



anaconda, they said. The findings are published in the journal Scientific Reports.

The researchers have named this newly discovered snake species 'Vasuki Indicus' (V. Indicus) after the mythical snake round the neck of the Hindu deity Shiva and in reference to its country of discovery, India. V. Indicus is part of the now extinct madtsoiidae family, known to have lived across



**The researchers have named this newly discovered snake species 'Vasuki Indicus'**

V. Indicus

IIT Roorkee Researchers

a broad geography, including Africa, Europe and India, they added.

# World



Send rockets to stars, not each other

Elon Musk  
Tesla CEO

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

### SANCTIONS

#### G7 foreign ministers warn of new sanctions on Iran

**CAPRI (ITALY):** Group of Seven foreign ministers warned of new sanctions against Iran on Friday for its drone and missile attack on Israel, and urged both sides to avoid an escalation of the conflict. Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani, who chaired the meeting of ministers of industrialised countries, said the agenda of the three-day meeting was changed on Friday to address the latest developments. Early Friday, Iran fired air defences at a major air base and a nuclear site near the central city of Isfahan after spotting drones. They were suspected to be part of an Israeli attack in retaliation for Tehran's unprecedented drone-and-missile assault on the country last weekend. Tajani didn't immediately address the incident, but said that G7 ministers condemned Iran's weekend attack on Israel and urged both sides to exercise restraint. **PTI**

### TERRORIST ATTACK

#### Five Japanese escape unhurt in a suicide bombing attempt



**KARACHI:** Five Japanese nationals working for Suzuki Motors had a lucky escape when their van was targeted by a suicide bomber and a gunman in a suicide attack here in Pakistan's port city on Friday, police said, in the latest terrorist attack on foreign nationals in the country. Deputy Inspector General (DIG) East Azfar Mahesar said the terrorists, who were already waiting for the van on the road near Murtaza Chorangi in Landhi, attempted to hit the vehicle carrying Japanese nationals working with Pakistan Suzuki Motors. **PTI**



Five Eyes Finance Ministers meet in Washington.

# US determined to monitor N-Korean nukes through UN

Russia last month vetoed a UN resolution in a move that effectively abolished monitoring by UN experts of Security Council sanctions against North Korea

Press Trust of India

**SEOUL:** The United States and its allies are discussing options "both inside and outside the UN system" to create a new mechanism for monitoring North Korea over its nuclear weapons programme, the American ambassador to the United Nations said on Wednesday.

Russia last month vetoed a UN resolution in a move that effectively abolished monitoring by UN experts of Security Council sanctions against

North Korea, which prompted Western accusations that Moscow was acting to shield its arms purchases from North Korea to fuel its war in Ukraine. "I look forward to engaging with both the Republic of Korea and Japan, but like-minded (countries) as well, on trying to develop options both inside the UN as well as outside the UN."

The point here is that we cannot allow the work that the panel of experts were doing to lapse," US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Green-

### HIGHLIGHT

- Moscow was acting to shield its arms purchases from North Korea to fuel its war in Ukraine

- Moscow and Beijing have thwarted US-led efforts to tighten UN sanctions on North Korea

field told a news conference in Seoul, using the formal name for South Korea. Thomas-Greenfield didn't provide spe-

cific details about US discussions with allies and other partners, including whether an alternative monitoring regime would more likely be established through the UN General Assembly or with an independent entity outside of the UN.

Thomas-Greenfield met with South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul on Monday and they discussed unspecified "next steps to ensure a continuation of independent and accurate reporting" of North Korea's illicit weapons

development activities, according to her office.

Thomas-Greenfield said it was clear that Russia and China, which abstained from voting on the UN resolution vetoed by Moscow, will continue to try to block international efforts to maintain monitoring of UN sanctions against North Korea. She criticised Russia for violating those sanctions with its alleged arms purchases from North Korea, and China for protecting the North from being held accountable.

### NATURAL DISASTER

# Evacuation after eruption of volcano

Press Trust of India

More than 11,000 people were told to leave their homes and at least 1,000 have done so.

**MANADO (INDONESIA):** More people living near an erupting volcano on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island were evacuated on Friday due to the dangers of spreading ash, falling rocks, hot volcanic clouds and the possibility of a tsunami.

An international airport in Manado city, which is located less than 100 kilometers (62 miles) from the erupting Mount Ruang, is still temporarily closed as volcanic ash was spewed into the air.

Satellite imagery from the Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency showed that the



Search and rescue boat is docked on the port of Tagulandang as Mount Ruang volcano spews volcanic ash in Indonesia.

ash has spread to the west, northwest, northeast and southeast, covering Manado and North Minahasa, according to a statement from Indonesia's Transportation Ministry.

"We are still monitoring developments in the eruption of Mount Ruang and coordinating with relevant stake-

### HIGHLIGHT

- Ash has spread to the west, northwest, northeast and southeast, covering Manado and North Minahasa

holders ... to anticipate the necessary actions to ensure flight safety, secu-

city and comfort," said Ambar Suryoko, head of the regional airport authority. More than 11,000 people were told to leave their homes and at least 1,000 have done so. A joint team from the local authorities is still combing the villages surrounding the volcano and evacuating the residents to safer areas by

boat. Officials worry that part of the volcano could collapse into the sea and cause a tsunami, as happened in an eruption there in 1871 eruption.

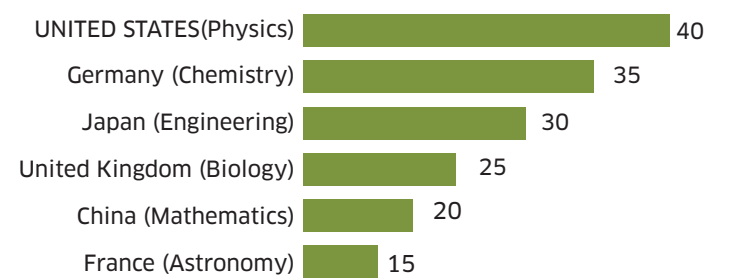
Houses, roads and other buildings in the affected areas were covered by gray volcanic ash. Many house roofs were also broken by the materials spewed from the eruption.

Mount Ruang saw at least five large eruptions Wednesday, causing the Centre for Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation to issue its highest level of alert. People were ordered to stay at least 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) from the 725-metre (2,378-foot) mountain.

The observation from the agency on Friday said that white smoke is rising from the main crater with medium to thick intensity.

### The Day's NUMBERS

### COUNTRY DOMINANCE IN VARIOUS FIELDS OF SCIENCE (%)



### WAR

#### Ukraine claims it shot down a Russian strategic bomber

**KYIV (UKRAINE):** Ukraine's air force claimed Friday it shot down a Russian strategic bomber, but Moscow officials said the plane crashed in a sparsely populated area due to a malfunction after a combat mission. Neither claim could be independently verified.

Previous Ukrainian claims of shooting down Russian warplanes during their more than two-year war have met with silence or denials from Moscow.

Meanwhile, Russian missiles struck cities in the central Dnipro region of Ukraine, killing eight people, including an 8-year-old girl, and injuring 25, local officials said. Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy repeated Kyiv officials' almost daily appeals for more Western air defense systems, again drawing a parallel with how Israel blunted a recent Iranian attack.

### TECHNOLOGY

#### Bringing up baby with robots- impact of technology on children



**SYDNEY:** More and more children are growing up with robots at home, but their impact on early learning and development is still largely unknown and unregulated. Technology has a profound impact on children. From the humble pencil to the touch-screen tablet, the information that infants absorb from these tools shapes their behaviour and development. Generation of kids born today, a companion might be at home that none of their parents grew up with: robots.

UN

# US vetoes Palestinian bid to gain statehood

Press Trust of India

**UNITED NATIONS:** The US has vetoed a resolution in the UN Security Council on the latest Palestinian bid to be granted full membership of the United Nations, an outcome lauded by Israel but criticised by Palestine as "unfair, immoral, and unjustified". The 15-nation Council voted on a draft

resolution Thursday that would have recommended to the 193-member UN General Assembly "that the State of Palestine be admitted to membership in the United Nations." The resolution got 12 votes in its favour, with Switzerland and the UK abstaining and the US casting its veto. To be adopted, the draft resolution required at least nine Council mem-



bers voting in its favour, with no vetoes by any of its five permanent members - China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Palestinian attempts for recognition as a full member state began in 2011. Palestine is currently a non-member observer state, a status that was granted in November 2012 by the UN General Assembly.



# Lifestyle

INTERIORS

## Summer Style: Vibrant Interior Trends

Curate Your Space with Eclectic Styles, Vibrant Colours, Breezy Fabrics, Tropical Prints, and Maximalist Flair



Embrace summer's vibrant energy with eclectic decor, vibrant hues, and breezy fabrics in your home.

ton, and rattan to create an atmosphere of cool comfort and relaxation. Let these natural materials bring effortless elegance to your space, from lightweight curtains to airy throws and rattan furniture.

**Tropical Prints:** Transport yourself to a tropical paradise with bold prints and botanical motifs celebrating the lush beauty of the season. Incorporate vibrant patterns like palm leaves and exotic florals into your decor for a dose of island-inspired charm.

**Maximalist:** Embrace maximalism by layering plush rugs, textured throws, and decorative accents to create a space rich in visual interest and personality. In 2024, maximalism reigns supreme, urging us to embrace abundance in textures, patterns, and colours.

### HIGHLIGHT

• 2024's interior design trends invite an eclectic fusion of styles, vibrant colors, breezy fabrics, tropical prints, and maximalist elements, encouraging creativity and self-expression in every corner of your home.

## GadgetPick

TRENDING PERSONAL-TECH

### Mudra Band

**About:** Wearable device interpreting hand gestures, revolutionizing tech interaction, offering intuitive control for gadgets.

#### Key Features:

**Gesture Control:** Mudra Band utilizes gestures neural signals to recognize hand and finger gestures, allowing users to control their devices effortlessly. **Versatile Applications:** Enhancing virtual reality experiences to assisting individuals with disabilities in controlling robotic arms.



### Samsung Ballie

**About:** Compact, smart home companion with surveillance, assistance, projector.

#### Key Features:

Centralizes smart home control, automates devices, patrols for surveillance, responds to voice commands, enhances security, offers assistance, and projects, ensuring convenience, safety, and seamless integration into daily life.



### Free Telly TV

**About:** Free Telly TV disrupts with ad-supported secondary screen, offering cost-free entertainment, challenging subscription-based models in smart TV market.

#### Key Features:

Offers free entertainment, ad-supported, attracts budget-conscious consumers, monetizes through targeted ads and widgets, revolutionizing smart TV landscape.



### Samsung Galaxy S24

**About:** Pinnacle of smartphone innovation, advanced AI enhances user experience across functionalities.

#### Key Features:

**AI-Driven Camera:** The Galaxy S24's camera system utilizes artificial intelligence to optimize image quality, resulting in stunning photos and videos in any environment. **Real-Time Translation:** With built-in AI translation technology, the Galaxy S24 facilitates seamless communication by providing instant translation during calls and text conversations.



### Rabbit R1

**About:** Cutting-edge AI assistant simplifies tasks through voice commands, seamlessly integrates with smartphone apps for streamlined activities.

#### Key Features:

Rabbit R1 empowers users with hands-free multitasking through voice commands. Seamlessly integrated with smartphone apps, it extends its capabilities across a wide array of tasks, providing comprehensive daily assistance, thereby enhancing convenience and efficiency in various aspects of life.



### Sevvy Smart Cooker:

**About:** Revolutionizes cooking with innovative technology, offering healthier, energy-efficient meals.

#### Key Features:

Its revolutionary design harnesses the power of advanced Pulsed Electric Field and Ohmic heating methods, ensuring that nutrients are preserved while drastically reducing energy consumption by a staggering 90%. This innovative combination not only results in delicious meals but also contributes to sustainable living practices.



As summer's warmth envelops our surroundings, it's time to infuse our homes with the vibrant energy and effortless charm of the season. The interior design trends of 2024 invite us on an aesthetic journey where every corner becomes a canvas for creativity and self-expression.

**Eclectic Styles:** Embrace an eclectic fusion of styles, blending modern minimalism with vintage charm and global influences seamlessly. From bohemian chic to coastal cool, curate a space reflecting your unique personality and passions.

**Vibrant Colours:** Channel the spirit of summer with a palette of vibrant hues evoking sun-drenched landscapes and azure skies. Infuse your home with colours radiating warmth, joy, and vitality, from sunny yellows to tropical greens and ocean blues.

**Breezy Fabrics:** With rising temperatures, turn to breezy fabrics like linen, cot-



## The Salvator Mundi: A Glimpse into the World's Most Expensive Painting

Renowned as the world's priciest artwork, Salvator Mundi portrays Jesus Christ as the Savior of the World. Lost for years, its journey included mistaken identity, extensive restoration, and eventual authentication as a masterpiece by da Vinci. The sale for \$450.3 million sparked controversy, igniting debates over its authenticity, while the anonymous buyer only deepened its mystique.

**Artist:** Leonardo da Vinci  
**Price:** \$450.3 million

TRAVEL

## Exploring the Sanctuary: Historic Summer Resort Of Indian President



In Shimla, The Retreat, once the British Viceroys' abode, is now the summer residence for the President of India. This distinguished establishment seamlessly blends colonial elegance with Indian charm. Beyond ornate gates lie lush gardens, picturesque landscapes, and a strong commitment to environmental conservation. It offers guests a serene haven amidst nature's beauty, where history and tranquility converge for an unforgettable retreat experience.

GROUP THERAPY-MARRIAGE

## Join Our Support Group for Newly Engaged and Married Women!

NEW DELHI

Embark on a transformative journey with Inner Canvas' new venture: Group Therapy - Marriage. Tailored for women navigating life after marriage, our sessions offer invaluable insights, support, and community. Join us to thrive in this exciting chapter together.

Mehra, this group offers a safe space for individuals to connect, learn, and grow together. In a society where therapy is often stigmatized, we believe in the power of community support. By coming together with others facing similar challenges, we can uplift each other and gain valuable insights that will help us navigate this new chapter of life. Our support group is tailored for women who are adjusting to new family dynamics, settling into a different city, or building new friendships. Whether you are engaged or have been married for up to



Vidhi Maheshwari



Devna Mehra

three years, we invite you to join us on this transformative journey. **\*\*Key Details:\*\*** - Commitment: 1.5 hours per week for 4 weeks - Topics Covered: Navigating married

life, communication skills, budgeting, coping strategies, and more - Session Fee: Rs 2500 per session - Payment Method: UPI transfer (payment due 24 hours before

session) - Contact: Vidhi Maheshwari at +918329622105 or Devna Mehra at +91 98188 22896 (WhatsApp, text, or call) Don't miss this opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals and empower yourself to thrive in your new chapter of life. Join us at Inner Canvas and Speakeasy for a supportive and enriching experience. Note: this group is not equipped to provide 24-hour crisis responsive service or services to individuals who are actively suicidal or homicidal, have an untreated severe mental illness, and are court-mandated to therapy.

## Sports



Unbelievable, playing the way he (Ashutosh) did and hitting the ball off the middle. (It is) great for his future.

Hardik Pandya  
MI cricketer

# Gukesh crushes Abasov to be back in joint lead



Grandmaster D. Gukesh during the round 12 match at the FIDE Candidates 2024 chess tournament. | Photo: PTI

Gukesh shines, Nepomniachtchi steady, and Vaishali triumphs; Chinese dominance in women's section; youngsters impress; surprises and upsets mark the rounds.

Press Trust Of India

**TORONTO:** Teenaged Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh produced another fantastic performance to crash through the defences of Azerbaijan's Nijat Abasov and regain a share of the lead but R Praggnanandhaa and Vidit Gujrathi bowed out of contention after the 12th round

of the Candidates chess tournament here. With American Hikaru Nakamura scoring a victory over Firouzja Alireza of France, it is now a three-way lead at the top. Gukesh and Nakamura joined overnight top-placed Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia, who drew with Praggnanandhaa, on 7.5 points and these three are now fol-

## HIGHLIGHT

● R Praggnanandhaa and Vidit Gujrathi bowed out of contention after the 12th round of the Candidates chess tournament here.

● Nakamura's strategic prowess shines as he secures a pivotal

lowed by Fabiano Caruana of United States who is on seven points. Praggnanandhaa is still fifth with six points with Gujrathi following him on five points. However, with just two rounds to come in the eight-player double round-robin tournament, it is almost impossible for the duo to finish on the podium. Alireza and

Abasov fill up the rear of the table with 4.5 and three points respectively. In the women's section, the Chinese domination was cemented by Zhongyi Tan, who played out a draw with Nurgul Salimova of Bulgaria. Russian Kateryna Lagno was only able to squeeze half a point against another Chinese Tingjie Lei.

## Wrestlers Punia, Sujeet to miss Asian

**NEW DELHI:** In a huge setback for the Indian wrestling contingent at the Asia Olympic Qualifiers in Bishkek, two of the country's best wrestlers, Deepak Punia and Sujeet Kalakal, will miss the continental event as they could not report for the weigh-in on time as their flight arrived late in the Kyrgyzstan capital owing to bad weather in Dubai. While both Punia and Sujeet eventually managed to reach Bishkek after being stranded at the Dubai international airport due to incessant rain and flooding, they could not report for the mandatory weigh-in on time, according to sources. The sources added that the organisers did not allow late weigh-in despite request from the Indian coaches.

# Ashutosh Sharma was unbelievable: Hardik

Press Trust of India

Punjab Kings' Ashutosh Sharma showcased a stellar performance with the bat, earning high praise from Mumbai Indians' skipper Hardik Pandya.

**MULLANPUR:** Punjab Kings' cricketer Ashutosh Sharma's exploits with the willow drew enormous praise from Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya as well as his team's stand-in captain Sam Curran, with the former terming it an "unbelievable" display. On Thursday, Ashutosh virtually took the game away from Mumbai Indians with his 28-ball 61 before PBKS lost by nine



Hardik Pandya and Sam Curran applaud Ashutosh Sharma's outstanding batting display | Photo: PTI

## FACTFILE

● Punjab Kings' Ashutosh Sharma impresses with a remarkable 61-run knock, earning praise from Mumbai Indians' Pandya and Curran."

runs chasing 193. Ashutosh also executed a stunning sweep shot against pacer Jasprit Bumrah, something which has not been done quite often against India's pace spearhead. "Unbelievable, playing

the way he (Ashutosh) did and hitting the ball off the middle. (It is) great for his future. We did speak in the timeout about it, not about how we look, we will keep fighting and make sure (that) we don't bowl the soft balls.

| WOMEN CRICKET |

## Bharat Chetri commends HI's talent initiatives

Press Trust of India

**MELBOURNE:** Former India goalkeeper Bharat Chetri on Friday praised Hockey India (HI) for laying emphasis on nurturing drag-flickers and goalkeepers at the grassroots level. In that regard, former India goalkeepers and drag-flickers, including Chetri, have been selected to lead a three-day training

sessions at national academies across the country. The trainers include Adrian D'Souza, Yogita Bali, Helen Mary, Dipika Murty, Akash Chikte and PT Rao. Among the drag-flickers are Rupinder Pal Singh, Gurjinder Singh, VR Raghunath and Jaspreet Kaur. "Investing in grassroots development is paramount for the future of

**I am honoured to be a part of this initiative and am confident that it will yield remarkable results.**

Bharat Chetri  
Former goal keeper



Indian hockey. By focusing on specialized training for goalkeepers and drag-flickers, Hockey India is laying a solid foundation for the emergence of world-class talent in these critical roles," Chetri was quoted as saying by HI. "I am honoured to be a part of this initiative and am confident that it will yield remarkable results for the sport."

## Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

CRICKET

### Imad Wasim's omission from Pakistan team questioned by ex players

**RAWALPINDI:** Imad Wasim's omission has been questioned by former players after the all-rounder was left out of Pakistan team for the first T20I against New Zealand, having come out of retirement to play international cricket again. Wasim and left-arm seamer Mohammad Amir came out of retirement ahead of the T20 World Cup in June this year after much convincing, but the spin bowling all-rounder did not find a place in the eleven on Thursday. Only two balls were bowled as incessant rains washed out the first T20I here, with Pakistan handing debuts to UAE-based off-spinner Usman Khan, middle-order batter and seamer Irfan Khan and mystery spinner Abrar Ahmed. Former Test player Iqbal Qasim said, "(It) makes no sense to me, honestly, Imad should have played in place of Shadab Khan." **PTI**

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

### Taking Bumrah out of attack after 2 overs helped PBKS claw back: Moody

**MUMBAI:** Former Australian all-rounder Tom Moody feels Mumbai Indians did not use pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah optimally during the IPL clash against Punjab Kings which allowed them to fight back from a difficult position and come within touching distance of MI's total. Bumrah was matchless in the game in Mullanpur on Thursday, taking the wickets of opener Sam Curran, Rilee Rossouw and the dangerous Shashank Singh to help MI win by nine runs. MI had set PBKS a target of 193. The India mainstay bagged two wickets in the second over, dismissing Curran and Rossouw, but just when PBKS looked down and out, he was taken out of the attack, allowing the home team to claw back. "Again, Mumbai leaning on him so much to turn their fortunes around. He bowled two overs early on and had the Punjab Kings on their back." **PTI**

IPL battle

### It was my dream to play sweep shot against Jasprit Bumrah: Ashutosh Sharma



**MULLANPUR:** Punjab Kings' batting sensation Ashutosh Sharma said he lived a "dream" when he swept "world's best fast bowler" Jasprit Bumrah during his team's IPL clash against Mumbai Indians here.

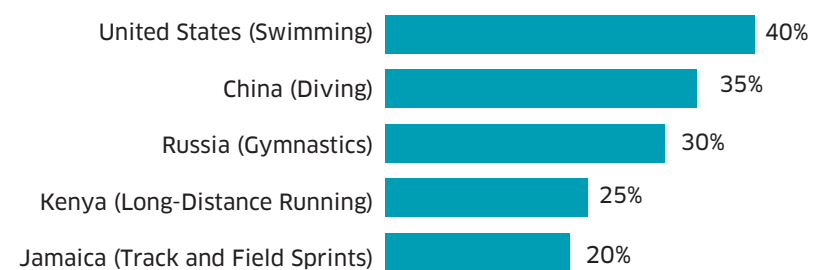
The 25-year-old Ashutosh put the Bumrah-led Mumbai Indians' bowling to sword here on Thursday when he hammered seven sixes and two fours to make 61 off a mere 28 balls, a knock which brought PBKS back from the

brink after an early collapse. PBKS were 17/4 inside the powerplay but courtesy the stunning fightback from Ashutosh and Shashank Singh (41), they were able to get close to MI's 193-run target before losing by nine runs.

It was in the 13th over of Punjab's chase when Ashutosh got down low on his front to convert an attempted yorker from Bumrah into a full toss and smack it for a six over backward square leg.

## The Day's NUMBERS

### COUNTRY DOMINANCE IN OLYMPIC EVENTS (%)



DOPING

### Shalu Chaudhary cleared of doping after DNA test reveals contamination

**NEW DELHI:** The National Anti-Doping Agency's appeals' panel has exonerated middle-distance runner Shalu Chaudhary of doping charges and lifted her four-year ban after DNA testing revealed that her urine sample had either been tampered with or contaminated at the time of collection. The 30-year-old Chaudhary was banned last year after she lost her appeal to NADA's disciplinary panel. She was suspended for the alleged use of two substances including a stimulant and peptide hormones. The runner, who is a national-level medallist in 800m, subsequently sought a DNA testing of her urine sample, a plea that was rejected by the disciplinary committee but accepted by the appeals panel. The DNA testing was eventually conducted at the Forensics department of King's College, London. "The A and B samples from the previously analysed urine sample produced extremely poor partial DNA profiles." **PTI**

T20 MATCH

### Amir's comeback on hold after Pakistan-NZ 1st T20 abandoned

**RAWALPINDI:** Fast bowler Mohammad Amir's return to international cricket was put on hold after the first Twenty20 between Pakistan and New Zealand was a washout on Thursday. Shaheen Shah Afridi clean-bowled debutant Tim Robinson for a duck and New Zealand was 2-1 after two balls before rain denied further play in a reduced five-over-a-side game. The toss was delayed for half an hour because of light drizzle in Rawalpindi, and just when Afridi was due to bowl the first ball, rain held up play for more than two hours." **PTI**



# Shri Khату Shyam jyotish



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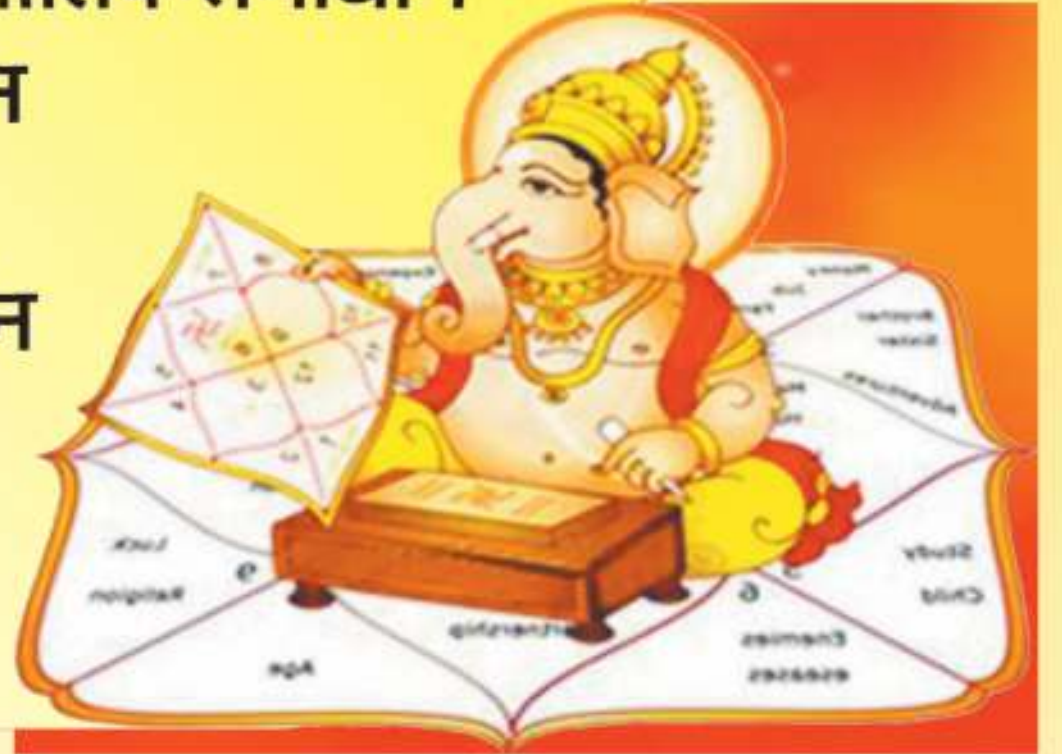
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Being selected in Cannes' Competition is truly thrilling and humbling, especially considering how much I admire many directors.

Payal Kapadia  
Filmmaker



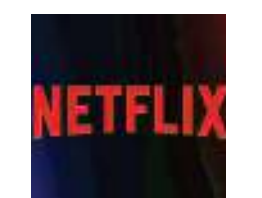
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OTT Watch



**Netflix Scores Big with 2024 Sports Documentaries**

Netflix emerges as a top OTT streaming hub with a vast array of compelling sports documentaries. Tennis, rugby, football, or golf, the platform promises a diverse selection. Anticipate major releases in 2024 and beyond.



**Dream Scenario: Nicolas Cage's Adventure**

In "Dream Scenario," Cage stars as a biology prof who invades strangers' dreams, thrusting him into the limelight. As dreams intensify, his reality mirrors nightmarish experiences.

CLOSE UP

## Sonakshi Sinha's enchanting red lehenga: A tale of timeless elegance

Bollywood icon Sonakshi Sinha mesmerizes in a crimson masterpiece by designer Payal Singhal, showcasing the timeless allure of red lehengas.

Central Chronicle News

At the trailer launch of "Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar," Sonakshi Sinha captivates in a crimson masterpiece, embodying timeless elegance and contemporary allure.

In the whirlwind of fashion trends, one hue reigns supreme: red. And when Bollywood royalty Sonakshi Sinha stepped out in a crimson confection by designer Payal Singhal, the fashion world took notice. But this wasn't just any lehenga; it was a masterpiece, meticulously crafted over 1,000 hours. The trailer launch of Sinha's highly anticipated Netflix series, "Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar." As Sinha graced the event, the air buzzed with excitement, not just for the series but for her sartorial choice that stole the spotlight. Payal Singhal, the creative genius behind the ensemble, shared exclusive insights into its creation. Inspired by the opulence of the Mughal era, the lehenga featured intricate zardozi and pita work, seamlessly blended with modern elements like leather accents.



**Resurgence of Red Lehengas: Sonakshi Sinha's Iconic Ensemble**

In 2024, red lehengas are staging a remarkable comeback, transcending their traditional bridal wear status to become a staple in every fashionista's wardrobe. Sonakshi Sinha's red lehenga at the "Heeramandi" trailer launch signifies this resurgence, blending traditional craftsmanship with contemporary design. From high-profile

events to opulent weddings, the vibrant hue commands attention, symbolizing a larger movement in ethnic fashion. Sinha's ensemble, complemented by chandbaali earrings and rings by Sangeeta Boochra, embodies timeless elegance. With understated makeup and matching red nails from her label Soezi™, she epitomizes the enduring allure of ethnic fashion, transcending temporal and seasonal constraints.

HOLLYWOOD

## Tarantino Scraps 'The Movie Critic' Plans

Press Trust of India

Hollywood filmmaker Quentin Tarantino is no longer working on "The Movie Critic", which was touted to be his 10th and final film as a director. Brad Pitt, who won his maiden Oscar trophy for Tarantino's previous film "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood", was in talks to headline the movie, which was reportedly set in southern California during the 1970s.

According to entertainment news outlet Deadline, sources close to Tarantino told the publication that Tarantino had "simply changed his mind" about making "The Movie Critic".

The filmmaker would now be "going back to the drawing board to figure out what that final movie will be", they added. In an earlier interview with Deadline, Tarantino had teased that "The Movie Critic" was based on a "porno rag" journalist, inspired by a real person whom Tarantino read growing up. "He wrote about mainstream movies and he was the second-string critic.

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