



## Greater Centre-state alignment, policy stability needed for investments: CII chief

**AANCHAL MAGAZINE & PRANAV MUKUL**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

CONFEDERATION OF Indian Industry (CII) president and Tata Steel CEO & MD, T V Narendran, told *The Indian Express* on Monday that “greater alignment” between the Centre and states, and policy stability, are “very important” to encourage investments in the country.

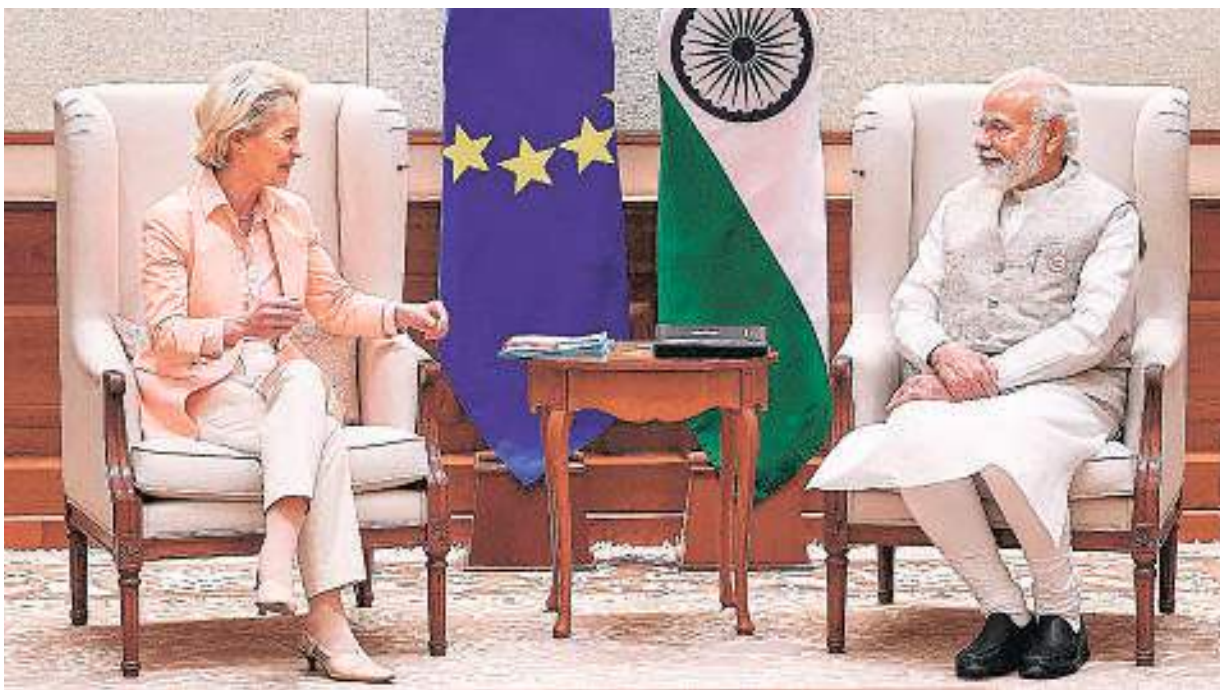
Narendran’s remarks come at a time when Centre-state relations have been strained over revenue and economic issues — the latest point of contention being the demand for the Centre to share revenue from the privatisation of airports with states.

The CII chief also said that the Russia-Ukraine war has presented Indian steel exporters with an opportunity in the light of “space vacated by Russia and Ukraine” in the sector. Russia and Ukraine are the fifth and 12th largest steelmakers in the world, respectively, and cumulatively account for around 10 per cent

**T V NARENDRAN**  
CII PRESIDENT

of the global steel trade.

Speaking about the scenario in India, Narendran said: “Obviously for the industry, greater alignment between Centre and states and policy stability are very important. Particularly when you look at foreign investors, they struggle even more to understand these complexities. At a very broad level, if you want to encourage investments, alignment is very important. But as CII, we operate with 65 offices across the country and engage with the states and the Centre. If there is something that

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2****PM Narendra Modi with President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen in New Delhi on Monday. PTI**

### DEFINING MOMENT, SHE SAYS AT RAISINA DIALOGUE

## War in Ukraine will deeply affect Indo-Pacific region, says EU chief

**Modi listening, von der Leyen urges global community to ‘support our efforts’****SHUBHAJIT ROY**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

WITH PRIME Minister Narendra Modi listening, visiting European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Monday described the killings in Bucha as “severe violations of international law” and said what is happening in Ukraine will impact the Indo-Pacific region.

She said the outcome of the war will not only determine the future of Europe, but also “deeply affect the Indo-Pacific

region and the rest of the world”.

“For the Indo-Pacific region, it is as important as for Europe, that borders are respected, and that spheres of influence are rejected,” she said, while addressing the Raisina Dialogue. The core principles that underpin peace and security across the world, she said, are at stake in Asia as well as in Europe.

The Prime Minister attended the event, but did not speak. Foreign Ministers of Poland, Argentina and several other countries too attended the event. “This is a defining moment.

Our decisions these days will shape decades to come. Our response today will decide the future of both the international system and the global economy. Will the rights of might dominate, or the rule of law? Will there be constant conflict and struggle or will there be a future of common prosperity and lasting peace?” she said.

“This is why we are doing all we can to help Ukraine fight for freedom. This is why we need to impose massive, sharp and effective sanctions. Sanctions are never a standalone solution...

This is why we have designed the sanctions in a way to sustain them over a longer period of time, because this gives us leverage to achieve a diplomatic solution that will bring lasting peace. And we urge all members of the international community to support our efforts for lasting peace,” she said, in an oblique reference to soliciting Delhi’s support.

A former Defence Minister of Germany, President von der Leyen said, “We all see the rising challenges to our open and free

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## Tamil Nadu passes Bills to empower state govt to appoint V-Cs in 13 universities

**ARUN JANARDHANAN**  
CHENNAI, APRIL 25

IN WHAT’s likely to open a new front amid escalating tensions between Governor RN Ravi and the DMK-led state government, the Tamil Nadu Assembly on Monday passed two Bills empowering the government to appoint Vice-Chancellors (V-Cs) to 13 state universities. While the Opposition AIADMK and the BJP opposed the Bills, BJP MLAs walked out of the House.

The Tamil Nadu Universities Laws (Amendment) Act, 2022, which covers 12 universities in the state, substitutes the expression “Chancellor” in the original Act with “government” with regard to both appointment and removal of V-Cs. A separate Bill to amend the Chennai University Act, 1923 [Chennai University (Amend-

**EXPLAINED**  
**E** Opens up new front

THE BILLS, an apparent bid to curtail Governor’s role in V-C appointments, are set to escalate tensions with the Governor. Earlier, the state boycotted events organised by the Governor to protest against alleged delay in clearing Bills.

ment) Act, 2022], with similar intent, was tabled and passed by the House.

The Governor is the Chancellor of 13 universities in the state, with the Higher Education Minister being the Pro-Chancellor.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## Elon Musk reaches agreement to acquire Twitter for \$44 bn

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
SAN FRANCISCO, APRIL 25

BILLIONAIRE ELON Musk has reached an agreement to acquire Twitter for approximately \$44 billion, the company said.

The outspoken Tesla CEO, the world’s wealthiest person, has said he wants to buy Twitter be-

**Musk calls himself a ‘free-speech absolutist’**

cause he thinks it’s not living up to its potential as a platform for “free speech.” He says it needs to

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

### BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNNY



### THE WORLD

**RUSSIA HITS RAIL, FUEL FACILITIES; U.S. SAYS MOSCOW FAILING IN WAR AIMS**  
**PAGE 10**

## Kishor roadmap report in hand, Sonia sets up action group for revival of Cong

**MANOJCGG**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

WITH THE report by an internal panel on the roadmap presented by election strategist Prashant Kishor and various other suggestions from party leaders in hand, Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Monday moved to set up an empowered action group for overseeing the rollout of organisational decisions for the party’s revival in the run-up to the 2024 general elections.

The party also announced that it will hold a brainstorming session — Nav Sankalp Chintan Shivir — on May 13-15 in Udaipur in Congress-ruled Rajasthan, with about 400 leaders expected to attend.

The decision to set up an empowered group is being seen as a classic Sonia Gandhi move, sending many signals.

According to party sources, all the “actionable points” that will flow from Kishor’s presentation

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## LS Speaker asks Maharashtra govt for details of MP Navneet Rana’s arrest

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, MUMBAI, APRIL 25

LOK SABHA Speaker Om Birla has sought details from the Maharashtra government within 24 hours on the arrest of independent MP Navneet Rana in Mumbai, after receiving a letter from the Amravati lawmaker that she had been subjected to “inhuman treatment” by the police following her “illegal” arrest two days ago.

According to sources, the de-

**Navneet Rana, Ravi Rana**

tails of the incident were sought by the Speaker through the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

In her letter to the Lok Sabha Speaker, the MP accused Mumbai Police of not providing her drinking water in custody while allegedly citing her “neechi zaat” (lower caste), and abusing her on the basis of caste.

While there was no official response to the allegations, a senior IPS officer from Mumbai Police told *The Indian Express* that CCTV footage at the Khar station, where Rana was lodged after her arrest, and statements from other inmates in the lock-up “will

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## Granted bail, Mevani re-arrested for ‘assaulting’ woman police officer

**TORA AGARWALA**  
GUWAHATI, APRIL 25

EVEN AS a court in Kokrajhar granted him bail in the case related to a purported tweet against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Gujarat MLA Jignesh Mevani was rearrested on Monday in a fresh case filed in Barpeta district on the basis of a complaint by a woman police of-

**Being targeted, says Jignesh Mevani**

ficer who accused him of “assaulting” her and “outraging her modesty”.

Confirming the arrest, Barpeta Superintendent of Police (SP)

Amitava Sinha said a case (81/2022) was registered on the basis of a complaint filed at the Barpeta Road police station by a woman police inspector from Kokrajhar on April 21 — the morning after Mevani was arrested from Gujarat’s Banaskantha district. “He is currently in police custody in Barpeta Road and will be produced in court within 24 hours,” he said.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## No farmers or dealers at Mamata govt’s flagship mandis, dept rents out space

**PAGE 1 ANCHOR****RAVIK BHATTACHARYA, ATRI MITRA & JOY PRAKASH DAS**  
PURBA BARDHAMAN, HOWRAH, HOOGHLY, APRIL 25

IT WAS a flagship scheme of the Mamata Banerjee government, a year after it came to power in West Bengal in 2011 on the strength of its anti-land acquisition agitation. The Krishak Bazar or farm mandis announced across the state were meant to burnish the Trinamool Congress government’s pro-farmer credentials.

**At the Krishak Bazar in Howrah district. Partha Paul**

Ten years later, the spaces with modern amenities meant to provide a platform for farmers to deal directly with buyers, with

the hope of getting them the proper price for their commodities, house — according to where you visit — a local MLA’s office, an

office of an alleged syndicate in soil supply, automobile repair shops, garment stalls, a dentist’s chamber etc. Rust covers machines such as weigh bridges meant for agricultural produce, and the toilets are broken.

Only twice a year, when the state government procures paddy at these establishments, do the mandis come alive. At many places, officials admit that space has been rented out to shops by the Regulatory Market Committee of the Agriculture Marketing Department.

In most Krishak Bazar, farmers and dealers complain of wrong location. The sites were mostly decided by the Agriculture Marketing Department.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

### Research and Evidence Based Ayurvedic Solution for Eye & Ear problems

**Made with 10 precious herbs**

**Beneficial in:**  
Improving eyesight, Cataract, Glaucoma, Macular Degeneration

**Amla**  
Enriched with Vitamin A

**Bhringraj**  
With carotene & anti-oxidants

**Soyabean**  
Beneficial in dryness of eyes and pain

**Carrot**  
An anti-oxidant & with beta carotene

**Moti Pishti**  
For burning sensation in eyes & eyesight

**Swarn Bhasm**  
Beneficial in macular degeneration

**Made with more than 25 precious herbs**

**Beneficial in:**  
Improving hearing & deafness, Tinnitus, Ear discharge

**Sudarshan**  
Pain reliever

**Apamarg**  
Effective in Bacterial infection

**Garlic**  
Anti-fungal & removes infection

**Shilajeet**  
An immuno modulator

**Swarn Bhasm**  
An anti-bacterial & anti-oxidant

**Swet Sariva**  
Tridosh Shamak ayurvedic herb

Shop Online- [www.patanjaliayurved.net](http://www.patanjaliayurved.net) | Customer Care Number - 18001804108 | Email ID - [feedback@patanjaliayurved.org](mailto:feedback@patanjaliayurved.org) | Website - [www.patanjaliayurved.org](http://www.patanjaliayurved.org)



# Musk

## EU chief

A joint statement said, "Both sides agreed that rapid changes in the geopolitical environment highlight the need for joint in-depth strategic engagement. The Trade and Technology Council will provide the political steer and the necessary structure to operationalise political decisions, coor-

The setting up of the group also seeks to address the main demand of the G 23 leaders who have been arguing that key party decisions were being made in a unilateral manner, in an indirect reference to the Rahul Gandhi-Priyanka Gandhi Vadra duo.

Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Mukul Wasnik will be convenors of two committees, while leaders like Ghulam Nabi Azad, Anand Sharma, Shashi Tharoor, Manish Tewari and Akhilesh Prasad Singh are members of different groups.

She wrote: "Further, when I wanted to use the bathroom in the night, the police staff present paid no heed to my demands. I was again abused in the most filthy language and several abuses on the ground that I belong to Scheduled Caste were hurled at me. I was told that we don't let people from Neechi Zaat Scheduled Castes use our bathrooms."

While appealing to the House to support the Bills, Chief Minister M K Stalin said that even in Gujarat, the home state of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, V-Cs are not appointed by the Governor but by the state.

The Bills cited the Gujarat University Act, 1949, and the Telangana Universities Act, 1991 as laws that allow state governments to appoint V-Cs. It also referred to the Karnataka State Universities Act, 2000, where the V-Cs are appointed by the Chancellor with the state government's concurrence.

In this episode, we discuss the recent rise in EVs catching fire in India and the govt's guidelines regarding the same, the Roorkee violence on Hanuman Jayanti, and PM Modi's promise to the youth of Kashmir

"I do not find reasonable ground to hold the accused in detention for the offence under Section 120 B/153 A of IPC R/W Section 66 of the IT Act only for the sentence that Mr Narendra Modi worships and considers 'Godse as God,'" the order said. "The IO (investigating officer) can proceed with this investigation even if the accused is released on bail," it said.

A senior official of the district agricultural marketing department says the problem is the communication gap. "Farmers and dealers are unwilling (to come) to a majority of the Krishak Bazars in the district. We should make them more aware of the benefits."

About the mandi, Dasgupta says: "We tried to set up a market for bananas, but the farmers found no buyers and left. It is true that the location is not helpful."

### Hooghly district/ Singur

West Bengal Labour Minister and Singur MLA Becharam Manna says it's hard to say what plagues the Krishak Bazars. "In Singur, it is a success, but I do not know why it (the concept) failed in a majority of places."

by 32 per cent in just two quarters. In April 2022, Indian Railways has taken many steps to prioritise the loading of coal to the power sector which has led to increase in supply of coal of more than 10 per cent within one week time," the statement said.

It said that the railway had prioritised movement of coal trains and was conducting intensive monitoring of all trains during the entire cycle from loading to movement and finally unloading leading to a reduction in transit time of coal trains to long distance power houses by 12-36 per cent. The statement also said the railways had prioritised the movement of coal to long distance power houses which was reflected in a 7 per cent increase in average lead (distance travelled) of coal trains between April 18 and April 22 compared to the first 10 days of the month.

"Indian Railways is fully geared up and has mobilised all resources to ensure that sustained high level of coal supply is maintained to powerhouses and is committed to lift all domestic coal that is

The railways also said it was planning to boost the number of rakes used to transport coal from current levels. "To ensure swift supply of coal across power plants, additional trains and rakes by Indian Railways have been initiated to augment transportation of coal through its network," the Ministry of Railways said in a press release last Monday, confirming it was increasing rakes to boost supply of coal to power houses as mentioned in the report.

Geeta Kora and Ajay Kumar  
A committee to draft a  
tion on issues related to  
and empowerment”  
headed by Salman Khurshid  
members are Meira  
Digvijaya Singh, Kumar  
Nabam Tuki, Sukhjinder  
Randhawa, Naranbhai  
Anto Antony and K Raju.

Asked about the allegations, the IPS officer said: "In the course of such allegations concerning the police, there were CCTVs in the police station which could be seen. We were recording statements from the complainants, who were also together along with her, to verify her allegations are not

"He pointed a finger at me, tried to frighten me, pushed me on my knees. He thus assaulted me, the execution of my legal duty, being a public servant, my modesty by touching me inappropriately while I was, as he has said in his letter, 'According to the law, police officers, including Singh Panesar, Addl. Magistrate, Jalandhar, Kokrajhar, were present in the vehicle."

anger towards me, and beat with force. I was during the legal duty of being and outraged me in pushing," she complaint. FIR, two other including Surjeet additional SP (HQ) present in the ve-

mers, godowns, help centres, park facilities.

Express visited six underis in Howrah, Bardhaman, agricultural hubs of all as the nearest for farm products.

**haman**

nk Bazar in Raina

Shank Bazar works as a procurement centre for "Farmer's Market", a state government initiative to provide subsidies and fruits to local households. Through stalls, trucks and vans, member Shankar "Farmers from around the district, Nalikul, Singur, Bilayetpur sell their produce here. We pack and send to the 66 stalls



Kolkata



## JALPAIGURI

# Minor girl who set herself on fire dies

## Victim alleged threat to withdraw rape bid complaint

**EXPRESSNEWSERVICE**  
KOLKATA, APRIL 25

A MINOR girl succumbed to her injuries on Monday after fighting for life for more than 10 days at a hospital following a suicide attempt in the Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal, the police said.

The girl set herself ablaze on April 14 after she was allegedly threatened by some persons to withdraw a complaint alleging molestation and attempt to rape. She was admitted to a hospital in Siliguri.

"The girl died around 5:30am today," said a police official.

The victim's father has demanded a CBI probe into the circumstances leading to her death. "My daughter is no more. Her only mistake was that she had the courage to file a complaint. We want CBI probe into the case," he told mediapersons.

The victim in her complaint to the police had said that the 25-year-old man attempted rape after molesting her when he found her alone at her house in February. When she raised an alarm, he escaped from the spot, she had said.

According to sources, the accused after securing bail allegedly started threatening the

girl to withdraw her complaint. On March 13, two people went to her house and threatened to kill her and her family members following which she set herself on fire the next day, receiving more than 65 per cent burn injuries.

Four persons, including the 25-year-old who allegedly molested the girl and his brother, have been arrested in the case for abetment to suicide charges, it is learnt.

"All the four persons involved in the case have been arrested and are in jail custody," said Jalpaiguri superintendent of police (SP) Debarshi Dutta.

## CATTLE SMUGGLING, POST-POLL VIOLENCE CASES

## TMC's Mondal seeks time to appear before CBI, sparks war of words

**EXPRESSNEWSERVICE**  
KOLKATA, APRIL 25

TRINAMOOL CONGRESS' Birbhum district president and chief minister Mamata Banerjee's close aide Anubrata Mondal has written to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) seeking time till May 21 to appear before the federal agency in connection with cases of cattle smuggling and post-poll violence in West Bengal.

This is the first time that the 61-year-old TMC strongman has agreed to face the agency sleuths who were informed through an email, it is learnt. Mondal's lawyer, who visited his client at his residence on Monday, said his health has deteriorated. "If they (agency) wish, they can record his statement at his residence," the



**TMC leader Anubrata Mondal has sought time till May 21**

lawyer said.

Mondal's repeated evasion of the CBI summons has raised a debate in political circles of West Bengal. On Monday, BJP national vice president Dilip Ghosh said that Mondal will be "safe in jail". He said, "The moment the CBI summons him, he runs to hospital. His name is involved in a lot of cases. Either he will have to live in hospital or in jail. But he will be safer in jail as he might get killed outside as he knows who all in the TMC benefited from the scams."

Taking a strong exception to

Ghosh's statement, TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh said that his party (BJP) should rather concentrate on their internal issues. TMC leader Joy Prakash Majumdar said, "The CBI should call Dilip Ghosh and interrogate him instead. It seems he knows a lot of things." The CBI had summoned Mondal soon after the Calcutta High Court upheld a single-judge bench order in the first week of this month. The court refused to grant him protection from arrest in the cattle smuggling case.

On April 6, Mondal got admitted to the state-run SSKM Medical College and Hospital.

Soon after he was discharged from the hospital on April 22, the CBI sent him two summons — one in connection with the cattle smuggling case and another with post-poll violence probe.

## File affidavit on suspended BJP MLAs' plea: HC to Speaker

Kolkata: The Calcutta High Court on Monday directed the West Bengal Assembly Speaker to file affidavit-in-opposition by May 2 on a petition by Leader of the Opposition Suwendu Adhikari and four other BJP MLAs challenging

their suspension from the House for the remaining period of the session for alleged misconduct.

Two other BJP MLAs, who had also been suspended from the House on an earlier date during the same session, had moved a

separate petition and a similar order directing the Speaker to file affidavit-in-opposition was passed.

Justice Rajasekhara Mantha directed the Speaker to file separate affidavits on two petitions stating his position by May 2. PTI

## MALDA BLAST

## Five arrested; national child rights panel seeks probe

## ENS &amp; PTI

KOLKATA, APRIL 25

FIVE PEOPLE have been arrested in connection with the crude bomb blasts in West Bengal's Malda district in which five children were injured on Sunday, police said on Monday.

The five arrested people are local residents, Superintendent of Police Amitava Maiti said. The condition of two children, who were critically injured and admitted to Malda Medical College and Hospital, is stable, he said.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights has, meanwhile, written to the West Bengal government and sought an investigation into the incident. The Commission has asked the state Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police (DGP) to submit an action-taken report within 10 days.

It also asked the top officials to ensure remedial action to prevent such incidents in future.

On Sunday, five boys aged between 8 and 9 years got injured as some crude bombs exploded at a mango orchard in a village of Malda district. Three of them sustained grievous injuries and were admitted to the Malda Medical College and Hospital, while two were admitted to a health centre.

A bomb disposal squad is defusing the crude bombs discovered underneath a tree beside a local mosque and scanning the area to find out whether there are more such explosives in the vicinity.

**EXPRESS**  
**Careers**

**ONGC VIDESH LIMITED**  
(CIN No. U74899DL1985G0004343)  
8 Wing, Dendayal Uja Bhawan,  
5, Nelson Mandela Marg, New Delhi-110070, India.  
Phone: +91 11 26755349/5399/5357

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANTS**  
Applications are invited from eligible superannuated employees of CPSEs under the administrative control of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Govt of India for engagement of Consultants/Advisors in ONGC Videsh Ltd. purely on contractual basis. For details of the requirement please visit website: [www.ongcvidesh.com](http://www.ongcvidesh.com). **Last date for receipt of application is 15 days from date of publication of this advertisement.**

**State Bank of India**  
Central Recruitment & Promotion Department  
Corporate Centre, Mumbai  
Phone: 022-22820427; Fax: 022-22820411

**RECRUITMENT OF SPECIALIST CADRE OFFICERS IN SBI ON CONTRACT BASIS**  
Applications are invited from Indian Citizens for the following posts on Contract Basis

Sl.	Post	Vacancy
i.	Vice President & Head (Contact Centre Transformation)	1
ii.	Senior Special Executive- Program Manager Contact Centre	4
iii.	Senior Special Executive- Customer Experience, Training & Scripts Manager (Inbound & Outbound)	2
iv.	Senior Special Executive- Command Centre Manager	3
v.	Senior Special Executive- Dialler Operations (Outbound)	1

Eligibility criteria (age, educational qualification, experience etc.), requisite fees and other details are available under Advertisement No. CRPD/SCO/2022-23/05 on Bank's website <https://bank.sbi/web/careers> along with a link for online submission of application as well as online payment of application fee. Candidates are advised to go through the detailed advertisement ensuring their eligibility and other details before applying and remitting fees.

**• DATE FOR FILING ONLINE APPLICATION & PAYMENT OF FEE: 13.04.2022 TO 04.05.2022**

For any query, please write to us through link **"CONTACT US"** → **"Post Your Query"** which is available on Bank's website.

Place: Mumbai  
Date: 13.04.2022

**General Manager (RP & PM)**

# Bengali films best, but lack branding: CM

**EXPRESSNEWSERVICE**  
KOLKATA, APRIL 25

THE BENGALI cinema is the "best in the world" though it lacks a strong branding, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee claimed on Monday.

Inaugurating the 27th edition of the Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF) at the Nazrul Mancha auditorium in the city, the CM appealed for considering the Bengali cinema as an industry and directed the top government officials to call film investors from across the country to the next edition of the Bengal Global Business Summit that concluded recently.

She also asked veteran actor and Trinamool Congress MP Shatrughan Sinha, who was the chief guest at the film festival, to draw investors from Bollywood to invest in the Bengali cinema. Sinha, a former BJP Union minister, was recently elected from the Asansol Lok Sabha constituency.



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Trinamool Congress MP Shatrughan Sinha, MLA Babul Supriyo along with actors Prosenjit Chatterjee, Dev Adhikari and others at the inauguration of the 27th Kolkata International Film Festival on Monday. Partha Paul

Thirty six international movies will be screened at the Nazrul Tirtha centre from April 26 to May 1 as part of the film festival.

"The Bengali cinema has its place of pride. This is the reason why these many foreign filmmakers agreed to come here to participate in the film festival. Finland specially came with a lot of films that we will showcase here," the CM said. Also, a simultaneous ex-

hibition on the life and works of Satyajit Ray will be held at the Nandan and Nazrul Tirtha centres. It will be inaugurated on April 26 by KIFF chairman Raj Chakraborty. This is the concluding year of Ray's birth centenary. The birth centenary programme of Ray could not be held due to the pandemic.

Banerjee said, "We created a film museum which will also help showcase our film culture. The Bengali cinema has a huge talent pool while Bollywood has lots of money and investors. If Bengali films can get that, they will also achieve a certain level. I will request Shatrughan ji to help the Bengali film industry by bringing more investments from Bollywood." The films, she said, have the potential to earn revenues. "Livelihoods of a number of people are directly linked with this industry. We forgot to include film industry in our business summit. Moreover, Bengal is bestowed with scenic landscapes for film shoots," she said.

## ANIS KHAN DEATH

## File objection to SIT report in a week: HC to student leader's kin

**EXPRESSNEWSERVICE**  
KOLKATA, APRIL 25

THE CALCUTTA High Court on Monday directed deceased student leader Anis Khan's father Salem Khan to file within a week an affidavit raising an objection to a report filed by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted by the West Bengal government.

Khan's lawyer Bikash Bhattacharya submitted in the court that the report could at best be described as an "inquiry report" rather than an "investigation report".

On the last date of hearing, the SIT had submitted in the court an



**Anis Khan was found dead on April 13**

82-page "investigation progress report" suggesting that Anis' death was non-homicidal in nature. Anis, a student leader of Aliah University, was found dead in front of his house in Amta in the early hours of February 19 under mysterious circumstances.

His family has alleged that he was murdered by the police. Claiming that four persons had come to their place on February 18 night in police and civic volun-

teer uniforms, Khan's father alleged that Anis was pushed off the third floor of their house. The family has been demanding a CBI investigation into the death.

The court had earlier taken suo moto cognisance of the case and termed the incident as "grave and shocking".

It, however, refused to order a CBI inquiry in the matter and asked the state government-appointed SIT to continue with its probe.

The HC had also maintained that the investigation will be done under the supervision of the Howrah district judge.

The bench of Justice Rajsekhar Mantha adjourned hearing in the matter till May 12.

**AXIS BANK LTD.**  
A. C. Market Building, 3rd Floor  
1, Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata – 700071

**POSSESSION NOTICE**  
(For Immovable Property)

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8 (1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)

Whereas, the undersigned being the **Authorised Officer of the Axis Bank Ltd.**, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the Borrower (s) / Guarantor (s) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice along with contractual rate of interest plus penal interest, charges, costs etc. within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

The Borrower (s) / Guarantor (s), having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower (s) / Guarantor (s), in particular and the public, in general, that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules on the date mentioned herein after.

The Borrower (s) / Guarantor (s), in particular, and the public, in general, are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **Axis Bank Ltd.**, for an amount mentioned in the notice along with interest thereon and penal interest, charges, costs etc. from date of demand notice.

**The Borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of Sub Section (8) of Section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.**

Name & Address of Borrower / Guarantor	Description of the Immovable Property (Secured Assets)	A) Amount Due as of Notice date B) Date of Demand Notice C) Date of Possession
1. Mr. Liton Sil S/o. Paran Krishna Sil 2. Mr. Paran Krishna Sil S/o. Annada Sil Both are at - 157, Satin Sen Pally Sarsuna, Thakurpukur Kolkata - 700071 Also at - 313, Sarsuna Main Road, P. S. Behala, Ward No. 127 Kolkata - 700061	All that piece and parcel of land measuring 1 Cottahs 14 Chittaks be the same a little more or less comprised in Mouza - Dakshin Behala, J. L. No. 16, E. P. No. 157, appertaining to R. S. Dag No. 317(P), lying and situate at Municipal Premises No. 313, Sarsuna Main Road, under P. S. Behala, Ward No. 127, within the local limits of Kolkata Municipal Corporation, District 24 Parganas (South) which is <b>handed and bounded</b> as On the North - Land of E. P. No. 154, On the South - Land of E. P. No. 158, On the East - Road, On the West - Land of E. P. Nos. 156-159.	A) <b>Rs. 9,86,277.00</b> (Rupees Nine Lakhs Eighty Six Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Seven) only under Loan A/c. No. PHR000504839875 due as on 21.05.2021 (this amount includes interest applied till 21.05.2021) and B) <b>Rs. 11,96,505.00</b> (Rupees Eleven Lakhs Ninety Six Thousand Five Hundred Five) only under Loan A/c. No. LTR000504839877 due as on 21.05.2021 (this amount includes interest applied till 21.05.2021) C) <b>21.04.2022</b>
1. Mr. Kanailal Sasmal S/o. Late Pratuljaya Kumar Sasmal 2. Mrs. Shilpi Sasmal W/o. Kanailal Sasmal Both are residing at - 22/18, Mahendra Banerjee Road, Rabindranagar, P. O. and P. S. - Pamashree, Kolkata - 700060 Also at - Premises No. 1950-A, 2nd Floor, Joyrampur Jala Road, Ward No. 129, P. S. - Pamashree Kolkata - 700060.	All that one self-contained residential flat, being the Entire Second Floor, containing of 2 Bed Rooms, 1 Kitchen cum dining room, 1 bath and privy, having a Covered area 505 sqfts more or less of a G.H.II storied building, lying and situated at K.M.C. Premises No. 1950A, Joyrampur Jala Road, under Ward No. 129 of Kolkata Municipal Corporation (S.S. Unit), Police Station Pamashree, Kolkata - 700060.	A) <b>Rs. 8,41,671.00</b> (Rupees Eight Lakhs Forty One Thousand Six Hundred Seventy One) only under Loan A/c. No. PHR00050264538 due as on 19.04.2021 (this amount includes interest applied till 19.04.2021). B) <b>19.04.2021</b> C) <b>21.04.2022</b>
1. Mr. Pawan Gaurishankar Mohatta S/o. Gaurishankar Mohatta 2. Mrs. Sarita Mohatta W/o. Pawan Mohatta Both are residing at - 34, Darpan Rayan Tagore Street 4th Floor, P. O. Beadon Street P. S. - Jora Bagan Kolkata - 700006	All that the unit/flat No. 2A, on the South East side of the 2nd Floor, measuring about an area of 962 Square Feet of the building under premises No. 336A, S. N. Roy Road, KMC Ward No. 118, P. S. - Behala, Kolkata - 700038	A) <b>Rs. 9,90,592.00</b> (Rupees Nine Lakhs Ninety Thousand Five Hundred Ninety Two) only under Loan A/c. No. PHR000500264538 due as on 23.04.2021 (this amount includes interest applied till 23.04.2021) B) <b>24.04.2021</b> C) <b>21.04.2022</b>
1. Mrs. Alladi Kisku W/o. Jiten Kisku 2. Probhat Kisku D/o. Jiten Kisku Both are at - Dakshin Pallashi, Majipara, Palashi, Bijpur, North 24 Parganas, Pin - 743195 Also at - Nabadebia Apartment Flat No. 12, 2nd Floor 86A/2, Maharaja Nanda Kumar Road, Kolkata - 700036	All that piece and parcel of one self-contained flat being No. 12, in the 2nd floor, North East side, lying and situated at premises No. 86A/2, Maharaja Nanda Kumar Road, Kolkata - 700038, consisting of 2 Bed Rooms, one Kitchen, 1 Dining Space, One Balcony and One Bath and Privy having 563 Sq. ft. including super built up area more or less and undivided proportionate share demarcated portion of the property, within the Municipal Limits of Baranagar, P. S. - Baranagar, District - North 24 Parganas, with proportionate undivided right and interest in the land measuring about 3 Cottahs 14 Chittaks 24 Sq. ft. on which the said building is created and built and also rights and obligations in respect of common areas and facilities along with right of easement in all common areas. <b>Boundaries of the Premises:</b> North - By the common passage, South - By the building of Singrai Saren, East - By Masjid & 12 feet Maharaja Nanda Kumar Road, West - By the house of Smt. Bela Debnath & Ashalata Debnath.	A) <b>Rs. 10,24,264.00</b> (Rupees Ten Lakhs Twenty Four Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Four) only under Loan A/c. No. PHR000501790631 due as on 28.04.2021, being the amount due on termination of the agreement (the amount includes interest till 28.04.2021) B) <b>28.04.2021</b> C) <b>25.04.2022</b> (Physical Possession)

Date : 26.04.2022  
Place : Kolkata

Authorised Officer  
Axis Bank Ltd.

**पंजाब नैशनल बैंक**  
**punjab national bank**

**Recall Notice U/S 13(2)**

Circle Sastra Malda, Nazrul Sarani, B.S Road, PO-Malda (WB), Pin-732101, Email: [cs8275@pnb.co.in](mailto:cs8275@pnb.co.in)

Date: 25.04.2022

**RECALL NOTICE U/S 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002**

Sl. No.	(A) Account Name (B) Account Number (Type) (C) Branch Name	Borrower/Guarantor name with address	(A) Limit (B) ₹ Outstanding As On Date (C) NPA Date	Mortgaged Property Details
1.	(A) Asia Begam W/o Motiur Rahaman (B) 0882306921565, 0882306922184 (Housing Loan) (C) Khejuria (088202)	1. <b>Asia Begam W/o Motiur Rahaman (Borrower)</b> Qtr No B9, NTPC, PTS Purban, WB, PIN 732215 2. <b>Motiur Rahaman S/o Hakim Momin (Co-Borrower)</b> Vill & Po - Salabatganj PS - Manikchak Dist- Malda, PIN-732202	(A) ₹ 35,00,000.00 (B) ₹ 22,46,586.98 (C) Further charges and interest as on 15.03.2022 (C) 31.03.2021	Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building in the name of Mrs Asia Begam situated at Mouza Salabatganj, PS Manikchak, Dist Malda, WB, PIN 732202, JL No 77, RS Khatian No 339, LR Khatian No 1082, Plot No 1127/40, measuring total area of 4 decimal of land, Classification Bastu in connection with Deed No I-3438, 3439, 3440, 3445, 3448, 3449, 3450 for the year 1991. <b>Boundary:</b> North: Majed Ali; Sourh: Ataur Rahman, East: Macadam Road; West: Own Land
2.	(A) Sumana Enterprise (Borrower) (B) 0678250306676 (Cash Credit) (C) Netaji Market (067820)	1. <b>Tanuja Roy W/o Sushanta Kumar Roy (Proprietor)</b> 2. <b>Chhoton Mishra (Guarantor)</b> 3. <b>Susanta Roy S/o Lt Samar Ch Roy (Guarantor)</b>  All are resident of At Gokulnagar Kamat, PO Niamatpur, PS English Bazar, Dist Malda, PIN 732101	(A) ₹ 23,50,000.00 (B) ₹ 24,34,351.40 (C) Further charges and interest w.e.f 01.03.2022 (C) 13.01.2022	> Hypo of Plant & Machinery, Stocks > Equitable Mortgage of Land and Building in the name of Tanuja Roy W/o Sushanta Roy situated at Mouza Niamatpur, JL No 23, Khatian No Old 1267, Present LR 3399, Plot No 4798 measuring total area 24.00 Decimal, Classification Bastu, DST Malda, Deed No I-5976 for the year 2010 at Gokulnagar Kamat, PO Niamatpur, PS English Bazar, Dist Malda, PIN 732101 <b>Boundary:</b> North: Jyotish Mandal; Sputh: Suren Mondal; East: PWD Road; West: Naren Mondal
3.	(A) Madhabi Dashakarma Bhandar (Borrower) (B) 0236250201445 (Cash Credit) (C) Gangarampur (023620)	1. <b>Ashim Kumar Sarkar S/o Nirendra Nath Sarkar (Borrower)</b> Vill Biplabi Khudimar Market, PO & PS Gangarampur, Dist Dakshin Dinajpur, 733124 2. <b>Nirendra Nath Sarkar S/o Late Sri Nani Gopal Sarkar (Guarantor)</b> Vill - Rajibpur, PO & PS Gangarampur, Dist Dakshin Dinajpur, 733124	(A) ₹ 22,98,000.00 (B) ₹ 23,94,744.32 (C) Plus Charges and further interest as on 04.03.2022 (C) 31.03.2021	Equitable Mortgage of land and Building in the name of Mr Nirendra Nath Sarkar Mouza Rajibpur, PS Gangarampur, Dist Dakshin Dinajpur, JL No 84, Plot No 973, Khatian No LR 6758, Area 0.035 Acre, Nature Bastu, Deed No 2856 of 1985. <b>Boundary:</b> North: Common Passage; South: Mrinal Kanti Roy ; East: 6 Ft Wide Road; West: Ajit Kundu

(As delivery of Demand Notice sent vide post to all or any one of the above mentioned borrower(s)/guarantor(s) failed, hence this notice is being published)

**Reg: Credit facilities availed by above mentioned borrowers**  
Borrower(s) Mentioned in above table have availed credit facilities (As described above) which was guaranteed by guarantors as mentioned above.

Due to non-payment of instalment/ interest/ principal debt, the account(s) has/have been classified as **Non-Performing Asset** as per Reserve Bank of India guidelines. We demand/recall the entire outstanding together with charges and further interest due under the above facilities. We are also invoking guarantee vide this notice.

To secure the outstanding under the above said facilities, security interest was created in respect properties/assets mentioned against their name(s)/account(s):

We hereby call upon said borrowers/guarantors to pay the outstanding amount with charges and further interest at the contracted rate until payment in full within 60 days (sixty days) from the date of publication of this notice. In default, besides exercising other rights of the Bank as available under Law, the Bank is intending to exercise any or all of the powers as provided under section 13(4) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act"). The details of the secured asset/s intended to be enforced by the Bank, in the event of non payment of secured debt by you are mentioned in above table against respective borrower(s)/guarantor(s) name(s) /account(s).

Your attention is hereby drawn invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act in respect of time available to you redeem the secured assets.

Please take notice that in terms of section 13(13) of the said Act, you shall not, after receipt of this notice, transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise (other than in the ordinary course of business) any of the secured assets above referred to, without prior written consent of the Bank. You are also put on notice that any contravention of this statutory injunction/restraint, as provided under the said Act, is an offence.

If for any reason, the secured assets are sold or leased out in the ordinary course of business, the sale proceeds or income realised shall be deposited/remitted with/to the Bank. You will have to render proper account of such realisation/income.

**"We reserve our rights to enforce other secured assets."**  
Please comply with this demand under this notice and avoid all unpleasantness. In case of non-compliance, further needful action will be resorted to, holding you liable for all costs and consequences.

This notice is issued without prejudice to the bank taking legal action before DRT/Court, as the case may be.

**For Punjab National Bank**  
**AUTHORISED OFFICER**  
**Chief Manager, Circle Sastra Malda**



Kolkata



## Sedition case: Three Kashmiri students walk out of Agra jail

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

THREE KASHMIRI students, who were languishing in a Agra prison for want of guarantors even after being granted bail by the Allahabad High Court in a sedition case about a month ago, finally walked out of the jail on Monday evening.

The students — Arsheed Yusuf, Inayat Altaf Sheikh and Showkat Ahmed Ganai — were arrested on October 26 last year allegedly for raising pro-Pakistan slogans after Indian team's T20 cricket match.

Nasir Khuehami, spokesperson of the J&K Students' Association that has been assisting the students in their legal battle, said: "They have suffered a great deal, from being roughed up at the Agra Sessions Court to facing recurrent delays in hearings. Finally, the students were released on Monday evening. There was delay in their release for want of guarantors. They now return home."

Noting that it was entertaining the bail application directly, which was an "exceptional circumstance", Judge Ajay Bhanot, in his court order had said: "The unity of India is not made of bamboo reeds which will bend to the passing winds of empty slogans. The foundations of our nation are more enduring.

## PSI recruitment scam: Karnataka CID summons Congress MLA

Bengaluru: The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) probing the irregularities in the recruitment of police sub-inspectors (PSIs) has summoned Congress MLA Priyank Kharge to appear before it with evidence, Home Minister Araga Jnanendra said on Monday.

However, the state unit of the Congress has directed Kharge

## Governor seeks reports from Kerala universities over exam goof-ups

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, APRIL 25

KERALA GOVERNOR Arif Mohammad Khan on Monday sought reports from Kerala and Kannur universities on the recent goof-ups in examinations.

At University of Kerala, answer key was distributed instead of the question paper during the BSc Electronics supplementary exam in February this year. At University of Kannur, three exams scheduled last week had to be cancelled after the question papers were found to be a repeat of previous year's. Also, another exam on Monday (April 25) had to be postponed for the same reason.

Raj Bhavan officials said the Governor has sought a report from the V-Cs of the two universities on the goof-ups. "Action will be taken on the basis of the reports. This is a routine intervention of the Raj Bhavan in the university matters," an official said.

Referring to the slips at the University of Kannur, Khan had told the media in Delhi on Sunday: "This is a clear sign of incompetence. Somebody should take the responsibility. The higher education sector in Kerala is in doldrums, even though the school education is the best in the country. Someone should take moral responsibility for the mistakes."

Last week, the University of Kannur conducted two exams of psychology (graduate programme) and the question papers turned out to be a repeat of

the previous year. Adding to the embarrassment, the same mistake resurfaced in Botany exam on Saturday. Subsequently, the university also postponed the April 25 degree exam of philosophy.

Kannur university V-C Prof Gopinath Ravindran said a sub-committee has been tasked to probe the matter. "They will give the report on Tuesday. The report will be discussed by the Syndicate, which will take action against those responsible for the goof-ups. Since question papers are prepared in complete secrecy, we have to look into the entire sequence of events, to find out how this embarrassing situation emerged. All cancelled exams have already been rescheduled for next month," he said.

Earlier, University Controller of Exams Dr P J Vincent had taken moral responsibility for the bungling, saying "the teachers involved in the process will be blacklisted".

At University of Kerala, the answer key was distributed instead of the question paper in the fourth-semester BSc (Electronics) exam in February. However, the blooper came to light only recently when the answer-sheets were sent for evaluation.

Kerala University Controller of Exams Dr N Gopakumar said a probe has been ordered. "The mistake happened for a supplementary exam which was taken only by a single student. However, we are seized of the gravity of the blunder and appropriate action will be taken based on the probe report," said Gopakumar.

## Man beaten to death over suspicion of theft; 9 arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
MUMBAI, APRIL 25

THE AURANGABAD city police have arrested nine persons, including two sons of a former Shiv Sena Corporator, for allegedly beating a man to death over suspicion of stealing decorative lights last week.

According to the police , the incident took place on April 21 in CIDCO area of Aurangabad.

The police said, the victim, 30-year-old Manoj Awhad, worked as a caretaker at the Meghwal Hall in Aurangabad, which was being run by Sagar Kharat, a former Sena corporator's son.

Kharat, his brother, a decorator, and six others assaulted Awhad over the suspicion of stealing a halogen light.

The accused also recorded the assault which got leaked on social media.

As per the FIR registered by the victim's mother, they learnt about the incident after the victim's brother received a video of the assault and they went to look for him at the hall but couldn't find him.

The family then approached the police and showed the video when they learnt that one of the accused had taken Awhad to hospital where he was declared dead.

"Except one, all the accused belong to backward class. We have arrested all the accused," said a police officer.

The Aurangabad city police have clarified that the lynching took place over the suspicion of theft.

## BALLIA PAPER LEAK CASE

# Not enough evidence, journalists get bail

Local journalists to carry on protest unless all charges dropped

ASAD REHMAN  
LUCKNOW, APRIL 25

THE THREE journalists arrested in Ballia in connection with the leak of Class XII English examination paper have been granted bail after police failed to find adequate evidence of their alleged involvement in the crime.

Police have also withdrawn IPC Section 420 (cheating) that the trio had been booked under due to lack of evidence.

While Ajit Ojha was granted bail by the district court on Monday in the last of the three cases he had been booked, a lower court had granted bail to Digvijay Singh and Manoj Gupta on Friday in the two cases against them.

Ojha and Singh are employed with Amar Ujala, and Gupta with Rashtriya Sahara newspaper. Ballia District Inspector Of Schools (DIOS) Brijesh Mishra is among 52 people arrested so far in the case.

The three had told the media that they were arrested for reporting on the paper leak.

Advocate Akhileendra Kumar, who represented the journalists, told *The Indian Express*, "Police had to withdraw the section related to cheating (IPC 420) against Ojha since they didn't have any evidence to prove that he was involved in the paper leak (case). Police had invoked that section in a wrongful manner...and to save them-

selves."

Government counsel (criminal), Ballia district, Sanjiv Singh confirmed that all three journalists have been granted bail.

"Ajit Ojha was granted bail on Monday in the case lodged at Kotwali, while he was already granted bail by a lower court on Friday (in the other cases). The other two were granted bail by a lower court on Friday," he told *The Indian Express*.

Three cases were lodged at Kotwali, Nagra and Ubhaon police stations. While Ojha was booked in all three cases, the other two were booked in the cases lodged at Nagra and Ubhaon police stations.

Superintendent of Police, Ballia, Raj Karan Nayyar said the section for cheating was dropped since there was no evidence to back it.

Nayyar said: "We dropped the section for cheating against Ojha on Monday, as we could not link the school where he was an invigilator to the paper leak. Initially, DIOS (Brijesh Mishra) had indicated that the school where Ojha was an invigilator was involved in the leak, and so was Ojha. We had the school under scanner, but so far we have not got any evidence to link the school to the paper leak."

He said police are still waiting for forensic data on the mobile phone of the other accused persons, and will proceed further once the details are in. "We had earlier withdrawn the sec-

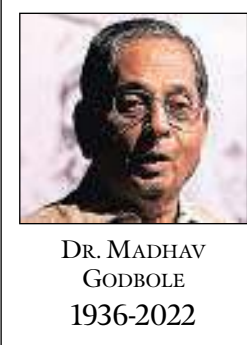
tion for cheating against the other two journalists."

On March 30, the Class XII English paper of Uttar Pradesh Board examination was cancelled in 24 districts after news of the paper leak emerged in Ballia district.

The three journalists were arrested on March 31. While journalists in Ballia began protests against the arrests on April 4 and formed the Sanyukt Patrakar Sangharsh Morcha (united journalists' front) to lead the protest against the administration and police, a journalist, who is part of the Morcha, on Monday said that their agitation will continue until cases against the three are dropped and the DM and SP are removed. On April 15, local journalists started a relay hunger strike outside the DM office, which entered the 11th day on Monday. "Our struggle and hunger strike will continue. The way are colleagues were humiliated and arrested shows badly on the whole fraternity," the journalist quoted above said.

"We will only end the protest once the three are cleared of all charges." The Morcha seeks removal of District Magistrate Indra Vikram Singh and SP Raj Karan Nayyar for "framing the journalists in the paper leak case". After his arrest, Ojha had alleged that he was "framed" after the DM and DIOS had requested him to send the leaked question paper; he was arrested subsequently.

# Former Home Secretary, who quit over Babri demolition, dies at 85



DR. MADHAV GODBOLE  
1936-2022

Godbole aback.  
He had told The Indian

Express: "This, despite the fact that we had placed all facts before the Supreme Court, which was hearing the case even before the Babri Masjid was demolished. The hearing was on a day-to-day basis and we were updating the court regarding what was happening on the ground. The reports of the Intelligence Bureau... placed before the Supreme Court... had said there was a conspiracy to demolish Babri Masjid. Yet, the Special court says there was no conspiracy...This is surprising." He had recalled how even the

Liberhan Commission, set up in 1992 to probe the mosque demolition, had pointed to a conspiracy.

"[The Commission] had submitted its report after a strenuous exercise ... in 2009. It described how the conspiracy was hatched and named the parties and leaders involved in it. The speeches and TV footage were also made available by the commission. But it seems the court has not taken cognisance of the report."

Retired IAS officer Mahesh Zagade described Godbole as "one of the most disciplined and

upright IAS officers."

"I had an opportunity to work closely with him... In the 1990s, he was in the state Finance Ministry and I was in Home Ministry. He was strictly against unnecessary government expenditure and pressed hard for using public money judiciously for development projects," Zagade said.

Godbole, Zagade added, was a "no-nonsense officer" who never buckled under pressure from politicians. "He backed good things and stood all that was in the public interest," the former IAS officer added.

**Punjab State Power Corporation Limited**

Regd Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, (Patiala)  
CIN: U40109PB2010SGC033813, Website: [www.pspcl.in](http://www.pspcl.in)  
(Contact Number: 96461-08405)

Tender Enquiry No. 35/CE/Thermal (D)/2022-23 Dt: 21.04.2022

Dy. CE/Projects under THERMAL DESIGNS ORGANISATION  
PSPCL, Patiala Shed No. T-2, Thermal (D) Shakti Vihar, Patiala  
invites tender notice for Utilization of Dry Fly Ash at GGSSTP, Ropar.

For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to  
<https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 27.04.2022. (11.00 AM onwards).

Note: Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at  
<https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

C-145/22 13711/PB

**CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD**  
(A CHANDIGARH ADMINISTRATION UNDERTAKING)  
8, Jan Marg, Sector 9-D, Chandigarh, 0172-4601812

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice for inviting e-tenders for allotment of Built-up Dwelling Units/Commercial Units in U.T. Chandigarh

It is hereby notified for the information of general public that e-tenders are invited for the sale of Built-up units. All the Commercial Units and Residential Units are being sold on Free-Hold basis. E-tenders are invited individually for each of Built-up Unit.

1. The E-Tender process is open for all the citizens of India as well as NRIs/PIOs above 18 years of age. The persons already having any property (Residential or Commercial) can also participate in the E-Tender.

2. The Built-up Units shall be allotted to the highest eligible bidder, quoting above the reserve price of the Unit. The GST will not be applicable on the consideration/premium of the unit.

3. All willing participants may visit the official website [www.chbonline.in](http://www.chbonline.in) to understand the detailed procedure for submission of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and e-bids. The Terms & Conditions and the detailed List mentioning localities/sectors of Built-up Units and reserve price can be downloaded from the official website of the Chandigarh Housing Board i.e. [www.chbonline.in](http://www.chbonline.in)

4. In order to submit e-bids, every prospective bidder is required to get himself/herself registered at <https://etenders.chd.nic.in>

5. Slickers have been pasted at each of the Built-up Unit for better identification and Site Offices have been provided at different Sectors/Location to facilitate inspection by the prospective bidders. The location of each of the unit on google map, address of the Site Offices and contact details of the officials are available on the official website [www.chbonline.in](http://www.chbonline.in). The days specified for the inspections of the units are as under:-

Sr. No.	Built-up Units	No. of Units	Days for inspections (10.00A.M. to 5.00 P.M.)
I.	Residential Units on Free-Hold Basis	29	Saturday & Sunday
II.	Commercial Units on Free-Hold Basis	06	

6. Schedule of dates for e-Tender of the Units:-

Sr. No.	Event	Date & Time
1.	Starting date and time for bid submission	From 26th April, 2022 (10:00A.M.)
2.	Closing date and time for bid submission	Till to 25th May, 2022 (upto 10:00A.M.)
3.	Opening of e-bids	25th May, 2022 (From 10:15 A.M. onwards)

Chief Accounts Officer  
Chandigarh Housing Board, Chandigarh

WEAR MASK, WASH YOUR HANDS, WATCH YOUR DISTANCE.

**Punjab State Power Corporation Limited**

Regd. Office.: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala  
CIN: U40109PB2010SGC033813; Website: [www.pspcl.in](http://www.pspcl.in)  
(Contact No. 96461-18774)

Tender Enquiry No.: MQP-198/2022-23/PR Dated: 25.04.2022

CE/Meeting, PSPCL, C-3, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for procurement of 400 No. -5 Amp, 11KV/110V, DLMS Compliant AC, 3 Phase, 4 wire CT/PT operated fully Static and AMR compatible HT Tri vector Feeder Energy meters (CATEGORY A) of accuracy class 0.2S and Empalement of technically eligible firms for private sale of above material. For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 25.04.2022. (02.00 PM onwards).

Note: Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

C146/22 13712/PB

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, KENDRAPARA**  
At: Ichhapur, Post: Shree Baladevew,  
Email: [eerwsskendrapara@gmail.com](mailto:eerwsskendrapara@gmail.com)  
Identification No. RWS/ 104 /2021-2022  
Letter No. 3159/ Dated 20.04.22  
**3rd Corrigendum**

This corrigendum has been made from the NIT-104 invited online vide this office letter No. 1525 / Dated. 04.03.2022 with date for selling, closing, clarification and opening which was on dt. 22.04.2022 (selling date), 12.05.2022 (closing date), 25.04.2022 (clarification date) 13.05.2022 (opening date) as per 2nd corrigendum has been amended and to be read as 04.05.2022, 21.05.2022, 06.05.2022 and 23.05.2022 respectively as follows.

Sl No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost(Apprx.) Rs. In Lakhs	EMD to be deposited online	Class of Bidder	Cost of Tender Paper	Period of completion
1.	Execution of New 70 LPCD RPWS Scheme to Derakeshpur, Mantrapada and Nuahat on clubbed up mode under Derabish Block in the District of Kendrapara. (JMM Funds)	₹ 268.27	Nil	"B" & "A"	₹ 10000	330 days
2.	Execution of 40 LPCD Retrofitting RPWS Scheme to Raghudeipur of Derabish Block and Gogua of Mahakalapada on clubbed up mode in the District of Kendrapara. (JMM Funds)	₹ 322.02	Nil	"A" & "Special"	₹ 10000	360 days

Sd/-  
(ER. B.K. NAYAK)  
Executive Engineer,  
RWS&S Division, Kendrapara  
OIPR - 25004/11/0017/2223

**ROURKELA SMART CITY LIMITED, Rourkela**  
Udit Nagar, Rourkela-769012,  
Email: [rourkelasc@ gmail.com](mailto:rourkelasc@ gmail.com)  
C-145  
Letter No. RSCL/873/2022 Date: 22.04.2022  
To,  
Mr. Sudhansu Sekhar Mohapatra  
M/s Brahmani Engicon Pvt. Ltd.  
14/30 (2nd Floor)  
Civil Township  
Rourkela-769004  
Dist- Sundergarh, Odisha Mob No.: 9437116311, 8249769071  
E-Mail: [brahmaniengicon@gmail.com](mailto:brahmaniengicon@gmail.com)

You were informed vide RSCL Notice No. 741 dated 06/04/2022 to implement the project "Redevelopment of road from Panposh Chowk to Ambedkar Chowk including Streetscape, Beautification, Landscaping, Intersection redesign, utility ducting and underground cabling in Rourkela" failing which the award of work of the project will be terminated. The Notice was sent to your postal address through Registered Post but the same has been returned with the observation that the addressee is absent. The Notice was also send to you through your E-mail id: [brahmaniengicon@gmail.com](mailto:brahmaniengicon@gmail.com) and a copy of the notice was also pasted in your office door. However till date you have not yet responded to the Notice. You are hereby informed to attend the final measurement on dt: 29/04/2022 positively for the above work "Smart Road Phase-I" Agreement No. 13/RSCL/2019-20, failing which ex parte measurement will be taken which will be binding on you.

Sd/-  
Chief Executive Officer  
Rourkela Smart City Limited  
OIPR - 13080/11/0003/2223

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER  
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BALASORE**  
No. 1118 /WE, Dt: 20.04.2022  
**e-procurement Notice**

1. Name of the Work :- "Building Works."

2. Estimated Cost :- Rs. 352.05 Lakh and 433.92 Lakh (Approximate)

3. Time for completion :- 15 (Nine) Calendar Months including rainy season

4. No of Work :- 2 (Two) Nos

5. Summary for key dates is provided below

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of opening of Tender	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Balasore	N.C.B. No.- 327	Dt. 30.04.2022 at 11.00 A.M.	Dt. 17.05.2022 up to 5.00 P.M.	Dt. 13.05.2022 Up to 5.00 P.M.	Dt. 18.05.2022 at 11.00 A.M.	Will be intimated latter

Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)  
Any other changes/corrigendums may be seen only in website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)

Sd/- Er. S.K. Mishra  
Chief Construction Engineer,  
Rural Works Circle, Balasore  
OIPR-25105/11/0005/2223

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	UHBVN	ALL-IN-ONE-COMPUTER WITH NIGAM'S TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION	21.04.2022 22.05.2022	EMD 2 LACS	<a href="http://uwbvn.org.in">uwbvn.org.in</a> , <a href="mailto:etenders.hry.nic.in">etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9568779248 <a href="mailto:etenders@uwbvn.org.in">etenders@uwbvn.org.in</a>
2	UHBVN	LT PVC UN- ARMoured CABLE OF SIZE 20X30 SQ. MM AS PER NIGAM'S TECH. SPECIFICATION NO- CSC-193/R-1/DH/UN/P&D/2021-22 AND AS PER RELEVANT IS ALONGWITH ITS AMENDMENT	22.04.2022 13.05.2022	EMD 2 LACS	<a href="http://uwbvn.org.in">uwbvn.org.in</a> , <a href="mailto:etenders.hry.nic.in">etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9517702223 <a href="mailto:etenders@uwbvn.org.in">etenders@uwbvn.org.in</a>
3	UHBVN	ALL-IN-ONE-PRINTERS WITH NIGAM'S TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION.	20.04.2022 11.05.2022	EMD 1.08 LACS	<a href="http://uwbvn.org.in">uwbvn.org.in</a> , <a href="mailto:etenders.hry.nic.in">etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9568779248 <a href="mailto:etenders@uwbvn.org.in">etenders@uwbvn.org.in</a>
4	UHBVN	HEAVY DUTY PRINTERS (ALL-IN ONE) WITH NIGAM'S TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION	21.04.2022 12.05.2022	EMD 1.35 LACS	<a href="http://uwbvn.org.in">uwbvn.org.in</a> , <a href="mailto:etenders.hry.nic.in">etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9568779248 <a href="mailto:etenders@uwbvn.org.in">etenders@uwbvn.org.in</a>
5	UHBVN	ALL-IN ONE UPS WITH NIGAM'S TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION	21.04.2022 12.05.2022	EMD 16000/-	<a href="http://uwbvn.org.in">uwbvn.org.in</a> , <a href="mailto:etenders.hry.nic.in">etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9568779248 <a href="mailto:etenders@uwbvn.org.in">etenders@uwbvn.org.in</a>
6	UHBVN	ALL-IN-ONE-COMPUTERS WITH NIGAM'S TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION	22.04.2022 13.05.2022	EMD 2.02 LACS	<a href="http://uwbvn.org.in">uwbvn.org.in</a> , <a href="mailto:etenders.hry.nic.in">etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9568779248 <a href="mailto:etenders@uwbvn.org.in">etenders@uwbvn.org.in</a>

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)

0167/HRY

**WAREHOUSING FOR EVERYONE**  
केन्द्रीय भण्डारण निगम  
CENTRAL WAREHOUSING CORPORATION  
(A GOVT. OF INDIA UNDERTAKING)  
क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय कोलकाता (REGIONAL OFFICE : KOLKATA)  
AN ISO 9001:2015 & 14001 : 2015 : BS OHSAS : 18001: 2007 ORGANISATION  
CMC BUILDING, PHASE-I, 6TH FLOOR, NEW MARKET COMPLEX,  
15N, NELLIE SENGUPTA SARANI, KOLKATA-700067  
PRESS NOTICE  
INVITING E-TENDER

Sl. No.	Tender NIT No	Date	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs. In Lakhs)	Last date of online submission of tender
1	02/022-23	23.04.2022	Urgent repairs to floors by VDC Flooring along with fencing of boundary wall along with repairs to toilet block at CW-Import Export (W.B.)	75.34	07.05.2022

Detailed tender notice along with conditions of contract and notice inviting e tender may be seen and downloaded from the CWC website : [www.cwacorporation.in](http://www.cwacorporation.in) or e-tender website : [www.cwceprocure.com](http://www.cwceprocure.com) or CPP Portal <http://cpportal.cwceprocure.com> or e-procurement portal <http://eprocure.cwceprocure.com> or e-tender website [www.cwceprocure.com](http://www.cwceprocure.com) or CPP portal <http://cpportal.cwceprocure.com> only.  
Newspaper press advertisement shall not be issued for the same.

Sd/-  
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
CWC-RO KOLKATA

**KONNAGAR MUNICIPALITY  
Konnagar, Hooghly**

E-Tender has been invited by Chairman, Konnagar Municipality from bonafied resourceful Contractors/ Agencies for " Construction of Storm Water brick surface Nikashi drains in different wards under Konnagar Municipality". For details please visit [www.wbtenders.gov.in](http://www.wbtenders.gov.in). E-Tender ID: 2022. MAD 377941-1-6. Bid Submission Start Date : 26/04/2022 at 11 am. Bid Submission Closing Date: 11/05/2022 at 6 pm. Bid Opening Date: 14/05/2022 at 4 pm.

Sd/  
Chairman  
Konnagar Municipality



# 5 GOVT & POLITICS



## DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



### WILL HE, WILL HE NOT?

Will the Congress suspend or expel senior Punjab leader Sunil Jakhar from the party? And what action will it take against K V Thomas, the party veteran from Kerala? The disciplinary action committee of Congress is meeting tomorrow to take a call on violations of party line by these two leaders. While Thomas had replied to a showcause notice issued by the panel, defending his decision to attend a seminar organised by CPI(M) in Kerala, Jakhar has not bothered to reply so far.

### ON THEIR MARK

While the pandemic and the lockdown had cast a shadow over the Narendra Modi government's anniversary celebrations for the last two years, BJP is still contemplating on how it should celebrate the eighth anniversary coming up next month. Senior BJP leaders met at the party headquarters on Monday to decide on that. While the meeting, also attended by Union ministers Anurag Thakur and Rajeev Chandrasekhar, did not take any major decision, it was the first one to discuss the celebrations. The party is learnt to be keen to have "unique" programmes to mark the occasion. The meeting was also attended by senior BJP leaders Arun Singh, Vinay Sahasrabudhe and Anil Baluni, among others. Last year, the party had confined the celebrations to Covid-19 relief campaign and village outreach programmes.

### QUIT TWEET

RJD chief Lalu Prasad's elder son Tej Pratap Yadav on Monday created a flutter by announcing that he will soon submit his "resignation" after meeting his father. "I followed in my father's footsteps and gave respect to all party workers. I will submit my resignation soon after meeting my father," the former Bihar education minister tweeted.

## 16 YouTube channels blocked for spreading 'hate, fake news'

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

THE MINISTRY of Information and Broadcasting on Monday blocked 16 YouTube news channels for allegedly spreading misinformation related to India's national security, foreign relations and public order.

It blocked 10 Indian and six Pakistan-based YouTube channels using emergency powers under the IT Rules, 2021, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2021.

"The blocked social media accounts include six Pakistan-based and 10 India-based YouTube news channels, having a cumulative viewership of over 68 crore. It was observed that these channels were used to spread fake news over social media on matters related to national security, India's foreign relations, communal harmony in the country, and public order. None of the digital news publishers had furnished information to the Ministry as required under

Rule 18 of the IT Rules, 2021," the Ministry said in a statement on Monday.

It said the content published by some of the India-based YouTube channels referred to a community as terrorists, and "incited hatred among the members of various religious communities". "Such content was found to have the potential to create communal disharmony, and disturb public order," it said.

It cited examples, including false claims related to announcement of a pan-India lockdown due to Covid-19, threatening the migrant workers and fabricated claims alleging threats to certain religious communities, etc.

"Such content was observed to be detrimental to public order in the country. YouTube channels based in Pakistan were found to have been used in a co-ordinated manner to post fake news about India on various subjects such as the Indian Army, Jammu and Kashmir, and India's foreign relations in the light of situation in Ukraine, etc," it said.

## Maharashtra urges Centre for law on loudspeakers

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
MUMBAI, APRIL 25

ASSERTING THAT it cannot remove loudspeakers installed at religious places, the Maharashtra government on Monday asked the Centre to come up with rules regarding the use of loudspeakers across the country.

The government stance was conveyed by Home Minister Dilip Walse Patil after an all-party meeting over the issue. BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis and MNS chief gave a skip to the meeting which was attended by deputy CM Ajit Pawar, and Aaditya Thackeray. Addressing the media after the meeting, Walse Patil said, "We request the Centre to come up with a law that will be applicable across the country. It will ensure that situations like these do not arise anywhere in the country."

Thackeray said, "It was also decided at the meeting that a delegation from the state will meet the Centre and hold discussions on

the issue."

Walse said loudspeakers have been operating in the state on the basis of the Supreme Court's circulars, "he said.

Walse Patil added that if they decided to restrict the use of loudspeakers at mosques, they would also have to look at their use during bhajans, kirtans, Ganapati processions, and Navratri. "There cannot be separate rules for people belonging to different communities," he said.

He added, "Maintaining law and order is the responsibility of the state. If anyone tries to disrupt the law and order, we will have to take necessary action. Based on our discussion in the meeting, it was agreed that the priority was to maintain peace and harmony in society."

Fadnavis told the media: "The MVA government's political arrogance has left no room for communication. As a result, the BJP has to take the route of struggle to combat the high-handedness of the arrogant government."

## Cops use drones, fences to block protesting teachers' march to CMO

**REENIVAS JANYALA**  
HYDERABAD, APRIL 25

THE POLICE in Vijayawada and Guntur in Andhra Pradesh have deployed drones to keep a watch on protesting teachers from gathering outside the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) at Tadepalligudem on Monday, officers said. Several leaders and representatives of teachers' unions have been detained ahead of the 'Chalo Tadepalligudem' call given by the unions demanding that the state government withdraw the contributory pension scheme (CPS).

Hundreds of police officers are also checking vehicles going from Vijayawada and Guntur towards Tadepalligudem and allegedly detaining those headed to the protest, according to sources.

An official said they were only preventing potential troublemakers from reaching the protest site. Barricades and razor wire fences have been put up on all roads leading to the CMO.

The Andhra Pradesh Teachers' Federation has called for the protest as the state government has been delaying the repeal of CPS, which, the teachers claim, adds to their financial burden.

## Disturbing state of affairs: HC raps police on attack at Delhi CM house

**SOFI AHSAN**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

THE DELHI High Court Monday rapped the Delhi Police for its "failure" to prevent vandalism outside Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence during the protest held by the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha last month and said that the force needs to seriously look at its efficiency and functioning.

The security arrangements made by the police were inadequate, said the court while terming the lapse serious and asking the Commissioner of Police to ascertain the reasons behind it. "This kind of an incident happening at the residence of any constitutional functionary, whether it is the Chief Minister, it could be a judge of the High Court or Supreme Court, it could be any other union minister or anyone. This is a very disturbing state of affairs that this kind of a thing could in the first place occur or such miscreants should succeed in their endeavour," said the division bench of Acting Chief Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Navin Chawla. It added, "Some responsibility has to be fixed so that there is remedial action taken. It has happened today, it could happen tomorrow. Because this is a very important facet of



On March 30, members of BJP's youth wing staged a protest outside CM Kejriwal's residence. *Archive*

democracy. Irrespective of our ideologies... Just like we say that the Prime Minister is the Prime Minister of the country, nobody can say he is not my Prime Minister. It is the constitutional office we are concerned about. It is not the question of A individual or B individual."

The court made the observations after perusing a sealed-cover status report filed by the police in response to Aam Aadmi Party MLA Saurabh Bhardwaj's petition seeking constitution of a Special Investigation Team for an independent probe into the attack.

On March 30, the members of BJP's youth wing broke through police barricades outside Kejriwal's residence and slammed the main gate. After reading the report, the

court noted that police had prior information about the protest and denied permission for it. It further said police had made security arrangements and put up barricades at three places.

"The first barricade is breached, the second is breached and the third is breached. So what kind of bandobast did you have in place? If people could breach three barricades, then you need to seriously look at your efficiency, your functioning?" said the court.

The court said it was clear "there has been a failure" on part of the force to prevent the incident, and asked the Commissioner of Police to look into the lapse and submit a report. It also asked if any additional force was sought when the barricades were breached.

## SC agrees to hear pleas challenging Art 370 removal after vacation

*New Delhi:* The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to consider listing after summer vacation the pleas challenging the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 which had given special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

A bench comprising Chief Justice N V Ramana and Justice Hima Kohli took note of the submissions of senior advocate Shekhar Naphade, appearing for one of the petitioners, that the plea needed an urgent hearing in view of the delimitation exercise being carried out in the state. "This is the Article 370 matter. The delimitation is also going on," the senior lawyer, appearing for interveners Radha Kumar (academic and author) and Kapil Kak (retired officer of the Indian Air Force), said. "Let me see," CJI Ramana said, adding, "This is a five-judge matter. I will have to reconstitute the bench."

**PTI**

## BJP readies for 2024 polls with booth-level plan

**LIZ MATHEW**  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

ROLLING OUT a blueprint of the party's strategy for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, a team of senior BJP leaders has identified around 74,000 booths across the country for strengthening hold in some, and to gain ground in others it has not been able to win so far.

The majority of these booths are in the southern and eastern states, sources said.

The four-member team headed by BJP vice-president Bajiraj Pandya has already worked on a strategy to cover all the booths spread across 2,300 Assembly constituencies where the party has an MP or an MLA while identifying more booths in 100 Lok Sabha constituencies that the BJP candidates could not win so far, sources said.

"We have identified 73,600-plus booths where the plan will be rolled out. Basically the aim is to strengthen the booths in the constituencies where the party has already won to retain them and to make more strongholds, we will be working on 100 more Lok Sabha seats where the party has not won. The mission is to maximise the party's reach and electoral wins," said a member of the team.

The team, also consisting of BJP general secretaries C T Ravi and Dilip Ghosh and party's Scheduled Castes (SC) cell head Lal Singh Arya, is expected to tour across the country to roll out their strategies in the coming three months. The committee met on Monday at the party headquarters. Once the blueprint is ready, BJP national president J P Nadda is expected to launch the mission officially,



BJP chief J P Nadda is expected to unveil the document next week. *File*

which is likely to be next week.

"The committee will be working with the party MPs and MLAs – 2,300 of them – across the country, state presidents and district presidents in the coming three months. "We have to ensure that the BJP does not lose any of the seats it has already won. There will be training sessions and frequent meetings for those in these booths," said the leader.

Known for its elaborate election preparation much in advance, the BJP had identified around 115 constituencies as "new catchment area" in 2016 that the party had never been able to win ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. The party had worked in those constituencies in six states – Odisha, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala – and the Northeast. Although the party could not make considerable gains in the southern states like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, the party had improved its position in Odisha and West Bengal in 2019 Lok Sabha polls. In Odisha, the party won eight seats, and bagged 18 from West Bengal. The party had only one of the 21 seats from Odisha and two of the 42 from West Bengal in the 16th Lok Sabha. In Telangana, it increased its tally from one to four in the last elections.

## Jharkhand: ex-CM Das alleges Soren got land allotted in wife's name

**ABHISHEK ANGAD**  
RANCHI, APRIL 25

FORMER JHARKHAND Chief Minister (CM) Raghubar Das on Monday alleged that CM Hemant Soren's wife Kalpana Soren got 11 acres of land in Ranchi's Bijupara industrial area, even as the CM himself holds the Industries portfolio.

In a press conference, Das said: "Hemant Soren's wife Kalpana Soren has been given 11 acres of land in an industrial area in Ranchi. This is at a time when Soren is currently the Industries Minister and he has used his position to get his wife the land. He is supposed to give answers."

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha spokesperson Supriyo Bhattacharya said: "We will respond on Tuesday."

Das said that CM's political representative Pankaj Mishra and press advisor Abhishek Prasad used their position to get mining leases, when Soren holds the Mining Department portfolio.

"Abhishek Prasad got the lease in the name of one Shiv Shakti enterprise in Sahebganj district of 11.70 acre land on April 8, 2021. According to the govt papers, Rs 90 lakh investment has also been made in this mining area. Pankaj Mishra had been given lease in the name of Mahakal stone in

Sahebganj area. The government has done it in a haphazard manner," Das alleged.

Calls made to Abhishek Prasad did not elicit any response. Pankaj Mishra could not be contacted.

Das also said that the state government has removed the religion column from the caste certificates – for Schedule Caste and Scheduled Tribe castes – which is proving harmful for the tribals who follow "Sarna religion". Sarna is not an official code in Jharkhand and Soren had written to Home Minister Amit Shah to include Sarna as a religion code in census.

"The BJP government had added a religion column in caste certificates so that Sarna tribals may benefit from it in jobs... Under pressure from Missionaries there seem to have been removed..." he said referring to the previous state government.

Earlier this year, Das had released documents which stated that the CM had obtained a mining lease in Ranchi area and a Letter of Intent had been issued in June last year. It also stated that in September, the CM had obtained environmental clearance for the same.

In February, a petition was filed in the Jharkhand High Court in the matter. On April 8, during the hearing, Advocate General Rajiv Ranjan said the state had committed 'a mistake' and the lease has since been 'surrendered'.



BJP leader Kirit Somaiya outside the Home Ministry on Monday. He was part of a BJP delegation from Maharashtra that met MoS (Home) Nityanand Rai, urging him to form an SIT to probe the alleged assault on him in Maharashtra. *Praveen Khanna*

## SEEKING FAIR PROBE

## No infringement on CUET, Centre tells TN

*New Delhi:* Days after the Tamil Nadu Assembly adopted a resolution against the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) for admission to undergraduate courses taught in central universities, the Centre has tried to allay the state's concerns saying there is "no case for infringing upon the rights of the states and Union Territories" through the test.

The resolution moved by Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin said the state Assembly felt that any entrance exam based on the NCERT syllabus would not provide an equal opportunity to all students who had studied in varied state board syllabus across the country. The Centre's stand was conveyed by Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan through a letter to his Tamil Nadu counterpart K Ponnudiy on Sunday.

## Questions on Cong in Class XII exam: Centre writes to Rajasthan

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, JAIPUR, APRIL 25

AMID THE political row over six questions on the Congress in the Class XII Political Science exam of the Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education (RBSE) held last week, the Union Ministry of Education on Monday sought a response from the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government in the state.

The Centre's Department of School Education and Literacy has written to the Rajasthan Additional Chief Secretary (School Education), attaching a news clipping on the issue. In its communication, the ministry referred to media reports on the question paper, "which is self-explanatory". "Request that the comments/inputs of the state government on the news item

may please be sent to this department," it said.

Pawan Kumar Goyal, Additional Chief Secretary in the Rajasthan government's School Education Department, did not respond to calls or text messages.

An officer in the Union Education Ministry described the intervention as "routine", adding that the Centre has only sought information and "it should not be perceived to be anything more than that". However, such interventions on state board exams, which come under the purview of the state governments, are rare.

After the exam on April 21, the BJP had accused the Congress government of "politicising education". The questions on the Congress included: "Discuss in brief the Congress as a social and ideological alliance"; "Which party dominated the first three

## 'Good listener': Mayawati's likely heir hits ground for Rajasthan poll prep

**LALMANI VERMA**  
LUCKNOW, APRIL 25

SEEN AS someone who may succeed Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati as the party's leader, her nephew Akash Anand is now on a tour of Rajasthan to gain an understanding of the party's organisational strength.

Earlier this month, the 31-year-old participated in a 13-km "Swabhiman Sankalp Yatra" in Alwar on the birth anniversary of BR Ambedkar. Anand, according to party insiders, is supervising the BSP's preparations for the Assembly elections scheduled

for next year. The party won six seats in Rajasthan in 2018.

Last month, after a rout in the Uttar Pradesh elections, the BSP chief had tasked Akash with visiting different parts of the state to collect "truthful progress reports on the activities of the party" and encourage youth workers.

"He is a good listener," said a BSP leader who did not wish to be identified. "He interacts with workers too, apart from office-bearers. During the recent UP Assembly polls, he held some meetings with youths. In other states, he has been meeting senior leaders. Behen ji (Mayawati) is grooming him for the long



**Akash Anand**

term. Whenever he visits any district for a party meeting, he is accompanied by at least two coordinators from the respective state who brief him about the local political scenario and introduce him to the local cadre."

Other insiders said Akash was active in the party's decision-making on issues related to the youth and social media. He was given the responsibility of the BSP

campaign in Punjab and Uttarakhand during the Assembly elections and addressed several rallies. "Under the guidance of Behen ji, Akash is now focusing on Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Recently, he visited Rajasthan thrice and MP once. He is regularly having closed-door meetings and online meetings with youth from across India," said a BSP functionary.

Akash is the son of Mayawati's younger brother and BSP number two Anand Kumar. He completed his schooling in Delhi and his MBA degree in London. He returned to India in 2017 and in May that year accompanied

Mayawati to Saharanpur where a Thakur-Dalit clash had occurred. Four months later, Anand and Akash were officially introduced to BSP workers. It came a few months after the BJP won the state elections and the BSP ended third with 19 seats. A BSP leader recalled that the party president introduced Akash to him and his colleagues, saying, "This is Akash, he has completed his MBA from London and now will look after the party's activities."

In the run-up to the 2019 general elections, Akash received media attention after Mayawati announced that her nephew would join the BSP movement to learn

the ropes of politics. He became more active as the BSP inked an alliance with the Samajwadi Party (SP) for the polls and was seen attending the alliance's political rallies. At the time, Akash was also credited with getting his aunt to Twitter. When the Election Commission banned Mayawati from campaigning for 48 hours, he addressed his first rally in Agra. Akash was joined by SP president Akhilesh Yadav and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) president Ajit Singh, both BSP allies at the time. He was appointed BSP national coordinator in June 2019, officially marking his rise in the party hierarchy.







# The IndianEXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

## CUT AND PASTE BJP

Sedition FIR to police visits, Opposition parties in government are using BJP toolkit to target critics. That’s a big self-goal

REWIND, FORA moment, to this: A few days ago, in a spectacular show of over-reach, Assam Police flew to another state to arrest a legislator over a tweet. The arrest of Gujarat MLA Jignesh Mevani — he has been rearrested since, after a Kokrajhar court gave him bail on Monday — for a tweet critical of Prime Minister Narendra Modi under severe sections of the IPC and the IT Act is theatre of the absurd at its best, or worst. It raises, yet again, serious questions of police excess, and its abject servility to political bosses. It reiterates that BJP governments, at the Centre and in the states, are not above weaponising the harsh law against dissenters and political opponents. It underlines that at risk are constitutionally protected fundamental freedoms, and that playing fast and loose with due process to target some potentially affects everyone. The continuing drama over Mevani is chilling for another reason as well — it shows how supine the Opposition has become.

It may be necessary to cast a wider look to see why the non-BJP parties are looking so effete in the face of transgressions of citizens’ rights and freedoms by the state. When these parties are in power, they are complicit in the very acts they accuse the BJP of. Or, they simply lack the conviction to take a principled stand. The response of the AAP, after the bulldozers rolled into Northwest Delhi’s Jahangirpuri, affected by communal violence only days ago, is illustrative. Senior leaders sought to lay the blame on two groups — Bangladeshi nationals and Rohingyas — that the BJP had also sought to target. They were being settled across India by the BJP to stage riots, they said, mouthing bizarre nonsense with a straight face. It is not just in Delhi, however, that the AAP plays by the BJP’s book. Last heard, its newly elected government in Punjab had sent the Punjab Police to the doorsteps of at least three critics of AAP convenor and Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal — former AAP leader Kumar Vishwas, Congress leader (also formerly AAP) Alka Lamba, and Delhi BJP’s Naveen Jindal.

It’s not just the AAP. In Maharashtra, ruled by the Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Aghadi government, Mumbai Police has arrested and slapped a sedition charge on Ravi and Navneet Rana, MLA and MP respectively, for apparently nothing more than raising the ante against CM Uddhav Thackeray on the Hanuman Chalisa-Azaan row. And in Chhattisgarh, the Supreme Court had to step in last year to reprimand the Congress government for its alleged misuse of the sedition law — it pointed to the “disturbing trend” of sedition cases against officials seen to be loyal to preceding regimes after a change of government. The non-BJP parties may or may not pay an electoral price for this politics. But their many concessions and abdications are taking a wider toll — they are shrinking the space for an alternative politics, they are constricting its possibilities. Framing a counter to intolerance or communalism that also touches a popular nerve needs imagination and courage. By cutting and pasting from the BJP’s toolkit, Opposition parties undermine themselves — and are co-accused in lowering the bar on individual freedoms.

## PARIS REPRIEVE

Macron’s victory has held off the xenophobic, insular right-wing in France. Going ahead, he has large challenges to address

ACROSS EUROPEAN CAPITALS, there is understandable jubilation at Emmanuel Macron’s victory in the French presidential election. Internationally, he has cultivated the image of being a pro-market, pro-Europe centrist under whose leadership the French economy and Paris’s role in geopolitical affairs have become more salient. He has played a prominent role in the Ukraine crisis, and managed the economic fallout of the pandemic — growth returned to France quickly and unemployment is at its lowest in the last few years. The spectre of a Marine Le Pen presidency — with her anti-EU, anti-globalisation, xenophobic politics — no doubt helped Macron consolidate the centre as well as gain votes from the left. Yet, at best, Macron’s victory may be temporary. By all accounts, disillusionment with the government and market economy, and cleavages within the country, have only deepened in this election.

The far-right has made its largest-ever showing and Macron’s voteshare has declined considerably since 2017. In the first round before the run-off between the president and Le Pen, Jean-Luc Melenchon, the primary left candidate, won an impressive 22 per cent of the vote. Between them, Le Pen and Melenchon have captured the disenchanted French vote — framed by the “gilet jaunes” protests that rocked the country in 2018 and 2019. Macron’s retooling of France’s labour laws, the increasing divide between the countryside, working classes and the rest of the population and the steady rise in cost-of-living have taken the sheen off the liberal project he represents, as well as the form of globalisation he has championed.

However, the French president’s victory has, in a time of great flux in Europe and the Indo-Pacific, provided a measure of temporary stability. The Ukraine crisis and China’s rise will require a concerted response from liberal democracies in the region. For Delhi, too, Paris’s outward orientation has been beneficial — France has been a supporter of its position regarding a rules-based order in Asia and strategic and economic ties between the two countries have deepened. The French far-right has risen on a squarely anti-globalisation platform, funneling the anxieties of the disenfranchised outward as well as against the migrants within. And Le Pen and others have expressed admiration and support for authoritarian rulers. For much of his first term, Macron ignored the issues raised by those who have felt victimised by globalisation and pro-market economic policies. For a liberal France and a stable Europe, he must build bridges with those people in his second term.

## THE STORYTELLER

John Paul was an important voice of middle-of-the-road Malayalam cinema in the 1980s

THE 1980S AND 90s were a fertile period for the Malayalam film industry. A new crop of directors and scriptwriters who were willing to experiment with new narrative styles and a middle-class audience had emerged. John Paul, 72, who passed away last week in Kochi, was an important voice of this school of cinema.

Paul wrote close to a hundred screenplays in a four-decade long career, which were directed by a new generation of directors who made their mark in the 1980s and thereafter — Bharathan, Mohan, IV Sasi, Balu Mahendra, Satyan Anthikad, Sibi Malayil, Kamal. A majority of these — among them Chamaram, Marmaram, Ormmakkayi, Palangal, Athiratham, Revathikkoru Pavakkutty, Yatra, Oru Minnaminunginte Nurunguvettam, Unnikale Oru Kathaparayam and Chamayam — were both critical successes and box-office hits. Along with MT Vasudevan Nair and Padmarajan, script writer-directors, Paul wrote some of the best remembered roles in Malayalam cinema in the 1980s — Gopi in Revathikkoru Pavakkutty and Sandhya Mayangum Neram, Nedumudi Venu in Oru Minnaminunginte Nurunguvettam and Vidaparyayam Munpe, Murali in Chamayam, Mammooty in Yatra, Zarina Wahab in Chamaram, Mohan Lal in Unnikale Oru Kathaparayam.

Paul had become a scriptwriter in 1980 by accident. Most of his scripts had a tender love story as their core. They resonated with the moral world of middle-class Malayalis, who embraced these films. In the last few years, Paul had few films and he had turned to writing and TV talks. The world of 1980s Malayalam cinema comes alive in the dozen or so books he wrote. Like most of the heroes he created, Paul was a much loved person in the industry who walked into the sunset with few complaints.



C RAJA MOHAN

THE RE-ELECTION OF Emmanuel Macron as the president of France on Sunday has sent a sigh of relief across Europe and North America. Delhi too is pleased with the return of Macron, who laid a strong foundation for India’s strategic partnership with France.

Victory for Marine Le Pen, Macron’s opponent, would have dramatically complicated the geopolitics of Europe. If the Russian aggression against Ukraine challenges the existing European regional order, Le Pen’s challenge to Macron underlined Moscow’s expansive influence in the internal politics of European nations. Le Pen, like so many other right-wing leaders in Europe, has close ties to Vladimir Putin. Many of them are deeply hostile to the European Union. Le Pen’s victory would have not only altered France’s international trajectory, but also shaken the EU to its political core.

Unlike the Soviet Union, which sought to shape European politics through left-wing parties, Russia today influences European politics through right-wing parties. That Le Pen got nearly 42 per cent of the popular vote reflects the growing challenge to mainstream politics. European establishments now have no choice but to double down on confronting Putin.

Russia’s threat to the regional and domestic order in Europe is among multiple factors shaping Delhi’s intensifying engagement with Brussels. Although India and the EU have talked of a strategic partnership for two decades, they have struggled to realise it. Three major external factors are facilitating the transformation of India’s ties with Europe.

The first is the Russian question. As the war in Ukraine dominates Delhi’s conversations with visiting European leaders this week, India’s reluctance to condemn Putin’s aggression might suggest nothing has really changed — that Delhi is tied inseparably to Moscow and is at best “neutral” in Russia’s conflicts with the West. During the last few weeks, Delhi has insisted that its silence is not an endorsement of Russian aggression. India’s position has continued to evolve. Delhi’s repeated emphasis on respecting the territorial integrity of states is a repudiation of Russia’s unacceptable aggression.

There is no question that the Ukraine invasion has put Delhi in acute strategic discomfort amidst the escalating conflict with China. For India, a normal relationship between Russia and the West would have been ideal.



AYOADE ALAKIJA

THIS WEEK, I will be joining several leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, at the Raisina Dialogue in India to discuss the challenges of our time and how inequity is an exacerbating force. From the ongoing pandemic to the climate catastrophe to the rising conflict that is transforming geopolitics, humanity is locked in a downward spiral, reversing which requires a sense of purpose from leaders. If we don’t tackle inequity and the dangers of greedy nationalism, we’ll be failing to draw lessons from what happened in the last few years.

The greatest wrong of the pandemic is the inequity in the rollout of health tools. In many lower-income countries, a combination of blatant greed, a runaway pandemic and disinformation that undermined a number of excellent vaccines led to more than a million preventable deaths. Waves of the virus have taken a huge toll on our health workers and led to backsliding on virtually every other health challenge.

With more than 80 per cent of adults in India vaccinated, the country is close to meeting WHO’s target of vaccinating 70 per cent of the entire population by summer. Future waves of the virus cannot be ruled out. At the Raisina Dialogue, I will argue that this is the moment to double down on sharing health tools fairly.

In lower-income countries, where the vast

# Delhi & Brussels

After Ukraine, India is recalibrating its great power relations. Europe is ending its long geopolitical holiday

But Russia’s confrontation with the West comes during India’s rapidly expanding economic and political ties to Europe and America. Delhi might be sentimental about India’s historic Russian connection but it is not going to sacrifice its growing ties to the West on that altar. Russia’s declining economic weight and growing international isolation begins to simplify India’s choices.

Meanwhile, geographic proximity and economic complementarity have tied Europe even more deeply to Russia. The EU’s annual trade with Russia at around \$260 billion is massive in comparison to India’s \$10 billion. Unlike India, Europe’s societal connections with Russia are deep-rooted. A range of leaders in Europe, including Macron, have been advocating a historic reconciliation with Russia and Moscow’s integration into the regional security order.

Putin’s reckless invasion of Ukraine has compelled Europe to embark on a costly effort to disconnect from Russia. This is particularly true for Germany, which has cultivated strong commercial ties with Russia. With Putin locked in a long and unwinnable war in Ukraine, Russia is condemned to pay a heavy price for his folly and is bound to emerge as a terribly weakened power.

The war in Ukraine has certainly presented a major near-term problem that needs to be managed by Delhi and Brussels. Yet, they also find themselves in the same policy boat — of trying to reduce reliance on Russia. And over the longer term, a diminished Russia is bound to become less of a complicating factor in India’s engagement with Europe.

For nearly a century, India’s Russian connection had complicated Delhi’s ties to Europe. If the Russian revolution of 1917 inspired large sections of the Indian national movement, the partnership with Moscow dominated India’s international relations during the Cold War. That phase is drawing to a close.

Second is the China question that adds a new imperative to India’s partnership with Europe. Contrary to the mythology in Delhi that Russia has been pushed into China’s arms, Moscow has been deepening ties with Beijing for more than two decades triggering many anxieties in Delhi. In June 2021, Joe Biden had met Putin in Geneva with an offer to explore a productive relationship with Russia. Putin,

however, made a conscious choice to turn to China instead. In February, Putin traveled to Beijing to announce a partnership “without limits”. Whether Russia was pushed or jumped into Chinese arms makes no difference to India. India has no option but to manage the consequences of the Russian decision. In the last two decades, China has emerged as a great power and now presents a generational challenge for Indian policymakers. That challenge has been made harder by Putin’s alliance with Xi Jinping.

As Delhi strives to retain a reasonable relationship with Moscow, Europe emerges as an important partner in letting India cope with the China challenge. This is reinforced by Europe’s own rethinking on China.

For more than two decades, Europe pursued relentless economic engagement with China, without a reference to Beijing’s long-term political ambitions. Thanks to the growing problems of doing business with Xi’s China, Beijing’s geopolitical alliance with Moscow, and the rapid deterioration of Sino-US relations, Brussels is ready to invest serious political capital in building purposeful strategic ties with India. Delhi is ready to reciprocate.

Finally, there is the American question. Until recently it appeared that Europe’s calls for “strategic autonomy” from the US were in sync with India’s own worldview. But the Ukraine crisis has underlined the US’s centrality in securing Europe against Russia. In Asia, Chinese assertiveness has brought back the US as a critical factor in shaping peace and security. The US, however, is not looking for weak allies in Europe and Asia. Washington wants a strong Europe taking greater responsibility for its own security; it would like Delhi to play a larger role in Asia and become a credible provider of regional security. Above all, America wants India and Europe to build stronger ties with each other.

The Ukraine war has persuaded Delhi to recalibrate its great power relations and has compelled Europe to end its long geopolitical holiday. For the first time since independence, India’s interests are now aligning with those of Europe. Together, Delhi and Brussels can help reshape Eurasia as well as the Indo-Pacific.

*The writer is senior fellow, Asia Society Policy Institute, New Delhi and contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express*

## MINDING THE GAP IN PANDEMIC

Inequity in access to vaccines and treatment can compromise fight against Covid

majority of people are still unvaccinated, there’s a real risk of a surge that could knock out health systems and push back efforts to tackle malaria, measles and polio. The push on Covid should now be on vaccinating the vulnerable and wider population to build the wall of immunity that has allowed rich countries to open up their economies and societies. Using India as a model to strengthen manufacturing in lower-income countries is also key to ensuring a more even distribution of health resources and mitigating the risk of rich countries hoarding supplies.

The most effective time to increase vaccine-based immunity is before an outbreak. Therefore, huge effort should go into raising the immunity of the general population starting with vaccination — and boosting — of the most vulnerable. It’s unfair that breakthrough treatments — including antivirals like Paxlovid that was endorsed last week by WHO — are still only available in a handful of countries.

Treatment equity is as important as vaccine equity. It’s also critical that people are allowed access to tests so that their treatment begins early. Some will say it’s not possible to overcome the barriers to access in low-income countries in Africa. But I can assert that it is being done and it’s the only way to protect health systems in the medium- to long-term.

We must also look at the root causes of the challenges we faced in the first place. Manufacturing vaccines and treatments in re-

gional hubs would make a big difference and help get these game-changing health tools to all countries quickly. It’s positive to see WHO’s mRNA hub in South Africa producing its own mRNA vaccine prototype for Covid, but we can’t settle for this.

With pharmaceutical groups unwilling to share technology, it’s clear that new rules are needed to ensure that profit is not prioritised. It is critical that the World Trade Organisation’s discussions on waiving intellectual property rules progress quickly and the outcome actually improves access to Covid-19 tools.

The crisis in sharing health tools that led to millions of preventable deaths is an important background for any new pandemic accord. We need to set in place systems to ensure that life-saving health tools are shared fairly and effectively. If a fourth dose is good enough for people in rich countries, then there shouldn’t even be a debate about vaccinating people in low-income countries with their primary doses. The pandemic is not over and our future response must be based on the principle that a life in New Delhi has equal worth to a life in New York.

The world faces its greatest challenge since the founding of the UN after the Second World War. Historic challenges need historic leadership and time is not on our side.

*The writer is co-chair of Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT)-Accelerator*



## APRIL 26, 1982, FORTY YEARS AGO

### ISRAEL-EGYPT PARLEYS

ISRAEL HAS WITHDRAWN from the Sinai peninsula, which it captured after the 1967 war, after 15 years of occupation. The Israeli flag was lowered at Sharm-al-Sheikh after a brief ceremony. A multinational peacekeeping force has begun monitoring the border area. A detailed agreement on the demarcation of the border in the Taba area in the Gulf of Aqaba in the south has been reached, according to Israeli sources, but its details have not yet been disclosed. Israeli Defence Minister Ariel Sharon, said his country would make no more concessions to Egypt and it would increase the number of its settlements

in the occupied territories. Meanwhile Palestinians in several parts of the occupied West Bank staged demonstrations in protest against the continued negotiations between Israel and Egypt on Palestinian autonomy.

### PUNJAB TALKS

THE TALKS BETWEEN the Centre and the Akali Dal (Longowal) are likely to be resumed following the latter’s decision to defer its agitation against the digging of the Satluj-Yamuna link canal and the Ravi-Beas water accord. Sources indicate that the talks are likely to begin in the third week of May. Intermediaries who were actively associated with bringing the Akalis to the negotiating

table are reported to be optimistic about the response from the leadership.

### UK IN SOUTH GEORGIA

BRITISH MARINES LANDED in South Georgia and recaptured the Falkland dependency from Argentina who ran up the white flag of surrender. Defence Secretary John Nott announced. Flanked by a beaming prime minister Margaret Thatcher outside her 10 Downing Residence, Nott said British forces “have successfully taken control Grytviken” the island’s main port on its northeast coast. He said no British casualty had been reported. “At present, we have no information on Argentine casualties,” he said.









@ieExplained  
#ExpressExplained

If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to [explained@indianexpress.com](mailto:explained@indianexpress.com)

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

# States vs Centre on VC selection: rules, friction

Tamil Nadu has passed two Bills proposing to take away the Governor’s powers to appoint VCs of state universities. Which other states have done this, and why?

SOURAVROY BARMAN  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

THE TAMIL Nadu Assembly passed two Bills on Monday that seek to transfer the Governor’s power in appointing Vice-Chancellors of 13 state universities to the state government, currently led by the DMK. Chief Minister MK Stalin said the Bills were required as the Governor was disregarding the state government’s opinion on the appointments of VCs, an argument also made by states such as Maharashtra and West Bengal in the past.

A look at the rules guiding the appointments of VCs across states reveal wide variations, leaving the field open for dispute, particularly in cases where there are sharp political differences between the state and the Centre, which appoints the Governors.

**What are the highlights of the two Bills?**

The Bills passed in Tamil Nadu stress that “every appointment of the Vice-Chancellor

shall be made by the Government from out of a panel of three names” recommended by a search-cum-selection committee. Currently, the Governor, in his capacity as the Chancellor of state universities, has the power to pick a VC from the shortlisted names. The Bills also seek to empower the state government to have the final word on the removal of VCs, if needed. Removal will be carried out based on inquiries by a retired High Court judge or a bureaucrat who has served at least as a Chief Secretary, according to one of the Bills.

**Are other states trying to curtail the Governor’s role in appointing VCs?**

Yes. In December, the Maharashtra Assembly passed a Bill amending the Maharashtra Public Universities Act, 2016. Under the original Act, the Maharashtra government had no say in appointment of VCs. If the changes take effect, the Governor will be given two names to choose from by the state government, currently ruled by the Shiv Sena-NCP Congress, following a panel’s suggestions.

In 2019, the West Bengal government, led by the Trinamool Congress, took away the Governor’s authority in appointing VCs to state universities. It has also hinted at removing the Governor as the Chancellor of the universities.

In Left-ruled Kerala, the Governor alleged that the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor of Kannur University was done against his wishes. The BJP government in Odisha has also tried to bring appointments to state universities under its control. But it has been challenged by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

**What is at the root of the differences?**

In West Bengal, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, the elected governments have repeatedly accused the Governors of acting at the behest of the Centre on various subjects, including education. The regulations, which differ from state to state, are often open to interpretation and disputes are routine.

In fact, the Tamil Nadu Bills make a case for giving the state government the upper hand in the VC appointment process by citing the

examples of Gujarat and Telangana. “It is considered that in line with the aforesaid (Gujarat, Telangana) State University Laws, the Government of Tamil Nadu should be empowered to appoint the Vice-Chancellors of the State Universities,” both Bills state.

In Karnataka, Jharkhand and Rajasthan, state laws underline the need for concurrence between the state and the Governor. The terms “concurrence” or “consultation” are absent from state legislation in most cases.

**What is the UGC’s role in this?**

Education comes under the Concurrent List, but entry 66 of the Union List — “coordination and determination of standards in institutions for higher education or research and scientific and technical institutions” — gives the Centre substantial authority over higher education. The UGC plays that standard-setting role, even in the case of appointments in universities and colleges. According to the UGC (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and other Academic Staff in

Universities and Colleges and other Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2018, the “Visitor/Chancellor” — mostly the Governor in states — shall appoint the VC out of the panel of names recommended by search-cum-selection committees. Higher educational institutions, particularly those that get UGC funds, are mandated to follow its regulations. These are usually followed without friction in the case of central universities, but are sometimes resisted by the states in the case of state universities.

**What are the rules in Gujarat and Telangana?**

The Gujarat University Act, 1949 states that “the Vice-Chancellor shall be appointed by the State Government from amongst three persons recommended by a (search-cum-selection) committee”. The Telangana Universities Act, 1991 states that the search committee shall “submit a panel of three persons to the Government in alphabetical order and the Government shall appoint the Vice-Chancellor

from out of the said panel”.

Last month, setting aside the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor of Gujarat’s SP University by the state government, the Supreme Court made some key observations.

**What were these observations?**

A Bench of Justices M R Shah and B V Nagarathna said “any appointment as a Vice Chancellor contrary to the provisions of the UGC Regulations can be said to be in violation of the statutory provisions, warranting a writ of quo warranto”. It said every subordinate legislation of the UGC, in this case the one on minimum standards on appointments, flows from the parent UGC Act, 1956. “Therefore, being a subordinate legislation, UGC Regulations become part of the Act. In case of any conflict between state legislation and central legislation, central legislation shall prevail by applying the rule/principle of repugnancy as enunciated in Article 254 of the Constitution as the subject ‘education’ is in the Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution,” it ruled.

## How self-replicating mRNA Covid-19 vaccines work, and what trial results show

A SELF-AMPLIFYING mRNA vaccine — one in which the delivered RNA multiplies inside the body — has shown promising results against Covid-19 in ongoing phase 1/2/3 trials. The vaccine, ARCT-154, has been developed by Arcturus Therapeutics Holdings, based in San Diego, California, and its trials are in progress in Vietnam. It offered 95% protection against severe Covid-19 and death, and 55% against Covid infection, Arcturus said in a press release.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** An mRNA vaccine, such as those from Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna, use messenger RNA that encodes the spike protein of the coronavirus. In other words, the mRNA directs the cell to produce copies of the spike protein, so that the immune system will recognise the spike if and when actual infection takes place, and mount a response. A self-amplifying mRNA vaccine is an improvement on the traditional RNA platform. It encodes four extra proteins in addition to the vaccine antigen, and these enable amplification of the original strand of RNA once inside the cell. The basic advantage is that it requires a smaller dose.

**THE TRIAL:** It enrolled over 19,000 adult subjects in Vietnam, including individuals at higher risk of severe complications of Covid-19 disease. The Phase 3 placebo-controlled vaccine efficacy portion of this study enrolled over 16,000 participants. An analysis between 7 days and 56 days after completion of a two-dose vaccination series demonstrated 55% vaccine efficacy for protection against Covid-19, the release said. These cases were detected during an outbreak in Vietnam when the Delta and Omicron variants were dominant.

The analysis of severe Covid-19 disease (including deaths) included 43 severe cases. Forty-one cases occurred in the placebo group and two in the vaccinated group, demonstrating vaccine efficacy of 95%, the release said. Nine deaths were reported in the placebo group, and one in the vaccinated group, whom the company described as an older age group participant who was also at increased risk of severe Covid-19.

**ADVERSE EVENTS:** The incidence of unsolicited adverse events in the two groups are comparable, the release said. No cases of myocarditis or pericarditis were reported; however, the company conceded that the study is not large enough to reliably observe these events given their extremely rare frequency of occurrence.

Adverse events collected in diaries of study participants (solicited adverse events) for seven days following each vaccination demonstrate that the majority of these events were mild or moderate in severity, it said. The majority of solicited adverse events resolved within the 7-day window of observation.

**IMPLICATIONS:** The Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines against Covid-19 are the only two mRNA vaccines available so far. “The new vaccine may come with significant advantages: easier storage, along with lower cost because its ‘self-amplifying’ design allows for smaller doses”, *Science* magazine said.

However, the magazine noted, much of the world has already been vaccinated, and the Arcturus vaccine may be making its debut too late, at least for primary vaccination.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE



**SHUBHRA RANJAN**  
Always Ahead

**Csat Crash Course For 2022**

**BATCH STARTED: 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022**

For more details: **+91-9910812719, 011-45612719 | [www.shubhrranjan.com](http://www.shubhrranjan.com)**

UDIT MISRA

NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

LAST WEEK, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) released its latest World Economic Outlook (WEO) report. The IMF has rolled back the economic growth prospects for the global economy as well as for India.

**What is the WEO? Why is it significant?**

The IMF was established in 1944 in the wake of the Great Depression of the 1930s. Today its membership covers 190 countries. As an organisation, it provides loans — around \$ 1 trillion is available for lending — to its member countries apart from providing expert guidance and surveillance to ensure economic and financial stability in the world economy. Twice each year — in April and October — the IMF releases the WEO in which it details the state of the global economy and its forecast for the near future; it also provides “updates” to these two WEOs in July and January. The WEO reports are a good way to assess the current state of the global economy as well as to help countries prepare for the threats and opportunities before them. It is for this reason that they are keenly studied across the world.

**What does the latest WEO say about global growth?**

The IMF projects a sharp fall in the global economic growth rate.

“Global growth is projected to slow from an estimated 6.1 per cent in 2021 to 3.6 per cent in 2022 and 2023. This is 0.8 and 0.2 percentage points lower for 2022 and 2023 than in the January World Economic Outlook Update,” it states. Beyond 2023, global growth is forecast to decelerate even more, to about 3.3 per cent.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is the key reason for this gloomy outlook.

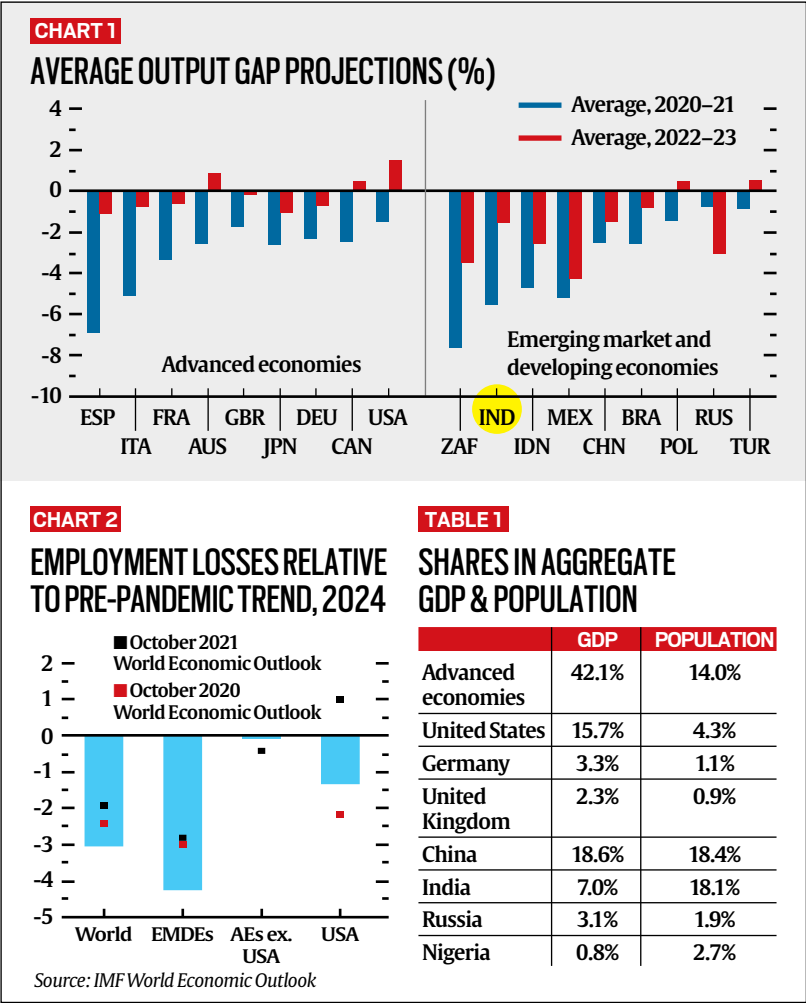
Apart from the fact that growth is decelerating, the IMF has yet again underscored that this “drag on output is expected to be more salient in emerging market and developing economies”.

For instance, the US is expected to reach its pre-pandemic trend output path by 2022. In other advanced economies, the shortfall relative to the pre-pandemic trend will narrow.

To be sure, in the October WEO too, the IMF had pointed to the “dangerous divergence in economic prospects” between advanced economies such as the US and

## IMF’s reduced growth forecast

The International Monetary Fund’s latest World Economic Outlook has rolled back growth prospects for the world and for India. What are the reasons, and how does the outlook differ for advanced and other economies?



per cent in emerging market and developing economies — 1.8 and 2.8 percentage points higher than projected in January”.

The IMF has been less than sanguine about the risks. The report states that “risks are large and to the downside”. These include a worsening of the war, a worsening of geopolitical tensions, a resurgence of the pandemic, increased social tensions, a worsening slowdown in China, higher inflation expectations, higher interest rates etc.

**What does the IMF say about India’s growth prospects?**

When compared to its January update, the IMF has dialled down India’s GDP growth by 0.8 percentage points. This is the second sharpest revision in Asia, and one of the sharpest anywhere in the world. However, despite this revision, IMF expects India to grow at 8.2% in 2022-23, making it the fastest growth rate across all the major economies in the world. It is more than twice the average growth rate of both the advanced economies (3.3%) and the emerging economies (3.8%).

**Does that mean there’s nothing to worry about for India on the growth front?**

When it comes to economic growth, each country faces — to borrow a term from cricket — a different “required run rate”. The pace at which a country must grow depends largely on how well-off an average citizen of that country is. As such, while it appears that different countries are competing with one another, more often than not, each country is competing with its past self.

Table 1 brings out this point more clearly. The columns detail a country’s share of the global GDP and its share of the global population.

Countries that have a much higher share in the global GDP than their share in the global population — for example, all the advanced economies — are the prosperous ones.

Countries whose share of the global population far outstrips their share in global GDP — such as India and Nigeria — are the ones that face the highest required rate of GDP growth.

While India has over 18% of the global population, its share of the global GDP is just 7%. In the real world, this reflects as low levels of per capita income and consumption as well as high levels of unemployment and social unrest. In other words, India not only has to grow at a much faster clip than the rest of the world but also has to do it sustainably for decades.

## Against 91st Amendment: PIL targets Cabinet status for Goa’s Rane

MAYURA JANWALKAR  
PANAJI, APRIL 25

THE HIGH Court of Bombay at Goa on Monday said “arguable issues have been raised” in a PIL challenging the “lifetime status of the rank of Cabinet minister” accorded to Pratapsingh Rane, a six-time Chief Minister of Goa and a legislator for 50 years.

The unprecedented status was conferred on the octogenarian Congress leader this January by the state’s earlier BJP government. Days after the announcement, Rane backed out of the Legislative Assembly election, even though he had already been declared the Congress candidate from his bastion of Poriem. His daughter-in-law Deviya Rane debuted from the seat on a BJP ticket and won by the highest margin in the state.

According to lawyer Aires Rodrigues, who has filed the PIL, this is the first time that any state government has taken such a step. The PIL was admitted on Monday,

and a division bench of Justices M S Sonak and RN Laddha will hear the case on May 2.

**What is the “lifetime status of the rank of Cabinet minister” granted to Rane?**

On January 6, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant announced that the Cabinet had decided to accord this special status to Rane. “Mr Pratapsingh Raoji Rane, former Chief Minister and former Speaker (of the Goa Legislative Assembly) has completed 50 years as a legislator. The Cabinet has decided that in future also, those who complete 50 years and hold posts like CM and Speaker, like Pratapsingh Rane, will be given the Cabinet status even after their retirement,” Sawant said.

The decision was taken a little more than a month before the February 14 Assembly elections. Earlier, a congratulatory motion had been passed in the Assembly for Rane, who first won the Sattari seat in 1972 and never lost an election thereafter.

**What is the basis of the legal challenge?**

Rodrigues has asked the High Court to quash the January 7 notification regarding “lifetime status of the rank of Cabinet minister” to Rane. He has contended that Goa has a 12-member Cabinet, and the Cabinet status on Rane raises the number of Cabinet ranks to 13, which is more than the ceiling mandated by the Constitution.

Stating that the very purpose of the 91st Amendment was to prevent jumbo Cabinets and the resultant drain of public money, Rodrigues has contended that the lifetime status granted to Rane was a “back door entry in wilful disobedience of the mandate of law”.

The Constitution (91st Amendment) Act, 2003 inserted clause 1A in Article 164, which says “the total number of Ministers, including the Chief Minister, in the Council of Ministers in a State shall not exceed fifteen per cent of the total number of members of the Legislative Assembly of that State... provided that the number of Ministers, including the Chief Minister in a State shall not be less than twelve”. There



CM Pramod Sawant felicitates Pratapsingh Rane on completing 50 years as MLA in the Goa House in March 2021. [Twitter @DrPramodPSawant](https://twitter.com/DrPramodPSawant)

are 40 seats in the Goa Assembly.

Rodrigues told the court on Monday that as a Cabinet minister for life, Rane would be entitled to a staff of 12 (including OSDs, support staff, peons, and driver) which would

cost the exchequer Rs 90 lakh a year. The Cabinet rank would also entitle him to government accommodation, vehicle and unlimited free travel for him and his spouse, Rodrigues told *The Indian Express*.

The PIL stated: “Before granting the lifetime Cabinet status, the Cabinet did not obtain financial sanction from the Finance Ministry as required... The resolution was also tailor made to benefit only the Respondent no. 3 (Rane) for obvious reasons.”

**So why did the BJP take this decision?**

In December 2021, the Congress had declared Rane as its candidate from the Poriem seat. Soon afterward, Rane’s son and then state Health Minister Vishwajit Rane (who retains the portfolio in the current government), said that he would contest against his father on the BJP ticket. Vishwajit, an undefeated five-time lawmaker from the neighbouring Valpoi seat, had left the Congress in 2017 to join the BJP.

At a public rally that same month, the

BJP’s Goa election incharge Devendra Fadnavis said that his party would soon receive “blessings” from the senior Rane. Fadnavis had earlier met Rane and sought the “blessing” that he should leave the Poriem seat for Vishwajit and the BJP.

The Ranes, who are among the politically most influential families in Goa, hold sway in the Sattari taluka, of which both the seats of Valpoi and Poriem are part.

There was some speculation initially about a possible father-son poll duel in Poriem. Eventually, Rane’s decision to back out was seen as Vishwajit having prevailed over his father. While Vishwajit himself remained in Valpoi, his wife Deviya made a sensational debut in Poriem, bringing the seat to the BJP for the first time.

The PIL states that Rane, a Congress candidate at the time, was granted lifetime Cabinet status because he “was capable of toppling the ruling party’s apple cart in Poriem, a *mala fide* strategy was adopted...to offer him a carrot not to contest elections”







# 10 THE WORLD

## TOP OF THE WORLD



Vice-foreign minister Kentaro Uesugi (centre)

### JAPAN

#### Amid China pact worry, envoy to visit Solomons

Tokyo: Japan is sending a vice-foreign minister to the Solomon Islands on Monday amid worry over a recent security agreement that South Pacific nation struck with China that could increase Beijing's military influence in the region. Vice-foreign minister Kentaro Uesugi's three-day trip to Solomon Islands comes on the heels of a visit by a senior US delegation, who warned that Washington would take unspecified action against the South Pacific nation should the security deal with China pose a threat to US or allied interests. The security pact, which China and the Solomons confirmed last week, has also alarmed neighbouring countries and Western allies that fear a military buildup in the region. **AP**

### MALI

#### Group linked to Al-Qaida says captured Russians

Bamako: Islamic extremist rebels in Mali linked to al-Qaida said they have captured mercenary fighters from Russia's Wagner Group in fighting earlier this month. It's the first time that Mali's extremist rebels known as JNIM have claimed to capture Russian fighters. The Wagner Group fighters were seized in the first week of April in the mountainous Segou region of central Mali, said the JNIM statement, which called the fighters "criminals." **AP**

### NEPAL

#### Four Indian tourists killed in car crash

Kathmandu: Four Indian tourists were among five people who were killed after their car collided head-on with a bus in Nepal's Dhading district, police said on Monday. The accident occurred on Sunday night along Prithvi Highway in Thakre area, police said. The four were returning to Kathmandu after visiting Pokhara, a scenic city 200km from Kathmandu. The deceased have been identified as Bimalchandra Agrawal, 40, Sandhya Agrawal, 35, Sandhya Agrawal, 40, Rakesh Agrawal, 55, from UP. They died while undergoing treatment in a local hospital. **PTI**

## EXPLOSIONS HIT MOLDOVA'S BREAKAWAY TRANSNISTRIA REGION

# Russia hits rail, fuel facilities; US says Moscow failing in war aims

### AGENCIES

KYIV, APRIL 25

RUSSIA UNLEASHED a string of attacks against Ukrainian rail and fuel facilities Monday, striking crucial infrastructure far from the front line of its eastern offensive, which Britain said has yet to achieve a significant breakthrough. Meanwhile, two fires were reported at oil facilities in western Russia. It was not clear what caused the blazes.

In meetings with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv on Sunday, the American secretaries of state and defence, Antony Blinken and Lloyd Austin said Washington had approved a \$165 million sale of ammunition for Ukraine's war effort.

"The strategy that we've put in place — massive support for Ukraine, massive pressure against Russia, solidarity with more than 30 countries engaged in these efforts — is having real results," US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told reporters in Poland the day after the meeting. "When it comes to Russia's war aims, Russia is failing. Ukraine is succeeding," he added.

In a video address Monday, Zelenskyy described his meeting with Blinken and Austin as "encouraging and effective."

Speaking Monday to top officials at the Prosecutor General's office, Russian President Vladimir Putin said the US and its allies have tried and failed to "split Russian society and to destroy Russia from within."

On Monday, Russia focused its firepower elsewhere, with missiles and war planes striking far behind the front lines, in an apparent bid to slow the movement of Ukrainian supplies toward the east and disrupt the flow of fuel needed by the coun-



(From left) US Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken during their meeting in Kyiv on Sunday. **AP**

try's forces. Oleksandr Kamyshin, the head of the state-run Ukrainian Railways, said five railway facilities in central and western Ukraine were hit. That included a missile attack near the western city of Lviv.

Ukrainian authorities said that at least five people were killed by Russian strikes in the central Vynnytsia region. In Transnistria, a breakaway region of Moldova, several explosions believed to be caused by rocket-propelled grenades hit the Ministry of State Security. There was no immediate claim of responsibility, and no injuries were immediately reported.

Meanwhile, a major fire erupted early Monday at an oil depot in a Russian city about 100 km from the Ukrainian border, Russia's Emergencies Ministry said.

## EXPLAINED Why Russia has eyes on Transnistria

WHILE THE fighting in Ukraine is concentrated in the east, Transnistria, which hosts hundreds of Russian troops and has a large ethnic Russian population, occupies a strategically important spot on Ukraine's western flank, reaching within about 25 miles of Ukraine's chief port city, Odesa. Moldovan and Ukrainian militaries have been concerned whether Transnistria would enter the fighting as a base for attack from the west.



Turkish philanthropist Osman Kavala. **Reuters**

## Turkish philanthropist Kavala gets lifer

Istanbul: Turkish philanthropist Osman Kavala was jailed for life without parole on Monday after he was convicted of trying to overthrow the government by financing protests.

Kavala, 64, has been in jail for 4-1/2 years without a conviction and denies the charges he faced over the Gezi protests, which began as small demonstrations in an Istanbul park in 2013 and snowballed into nationwide anti-government unrest.

The court also sentenced seven others to 18 years in jail each for aiding an attempt to overthrow the government and ordered their arrests. The court said it decided to acquit Kavala of espionage charges due to lack of evidence. **REUTERS**

## Report: Sweden, Finland to apply to NATO

Stockholm: Two newspapers - one Swedish, the other one Finnish - are reporting that the governments of Sweden and Finland have agreed to submit NATO applications at the same time and that it will happen in the middle of next month.

The Finnish newspaper Iltalehti said the Swedish government has expressed a wish to Finland that they apply together in the week starting May 22 and Swedish government sources confirmed the information to Sweden's Expressen tabloid. Russia's invasion has led to growing support in Sweden and Finland for joining NATO. **AP**

## Judge finds Donald Trump in contempt in NY legal fight

New York: A New York judge found former President Donald Trump in contempt of court and set in motion \$10,000 daily fines Monday for failing to adequately respond to a subpoena issued by the state's attorney general as part of a civil investigation into his business dealings.

Judge Arthur Engoron said a contempt finding was appropriate because Trump and his lawyers hadn't shown they had conducted a proper search for

### JAPAN

## WORLD'S OLDEST PERSON DIES AT 119

A Japanese woman believed to have been the world's oldest person has died aged 119, public broadcaster NHK said on Monday, reporting the death of Kane Tanaka. Born on Jan. 2, 1903 - the year of the Wright Brothers' first controlled flight of their motor-driven airplane - Tanaka was confirmed by Guinness World Records in 2019 as the oldest living person. She died of old age at a hospital in Fukuoka city, western Japan, on April 19, NHK said.



## GOTABAYA READY FOR INTERIM GOVT: MONK

# Sri Lanka Opposition says has numbers in Parliament, no-trust vote on cards

Lanka's debt restructuring to have impact on future loans: China



Sri Lanka President Gotabaya Rajapaksa

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

COLOMBO, APRIL 25

A SRI LANKAN dissident lawmaker, fired by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa from the Cabinet for his critical views, claimed on Monday that the Opposition has crossed the 113-mark required to win a no-trust motion against the government in the 225-member Parliament.

President Gotabaya had said he would hand over the government to any group that could muster 113 seats but would not step down from the presidency.

Udaya Gammanpila, who held the energy ministry portfolio before being sacked by Gotabaya Rajapaksa, is advocating an all-party interim government with the resignation of PM Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Gammanpila said with enough numbers of MPs breaking away from the government and with support from the main Opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya, Marxist Janatha Vikramuthi Peramuna and the Tamil National Alliance, they are

assured of winning the no-trust vote. "We told the SJB to wait till we could get 113, now we have 120," he claimed.

Meanwhile, in a letter to the powerful Buddhist clergy, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said, while he respects the advice of the clergy, the changes, if any, in the system of governance must be made in line with the specified constitutional provisions. Rajapaksa expressed his intention to form the interim government in a letter to the powerful Buddhist clergy on Sunday.

China said it has "done its best" to help Sri Lanka not to default on its foreign debt, Chinese ambassador in Colombo Qi Zhenhong said on Monday. "China has done its best to help Sri Lanka not to default but sadly they went to the IMF and decided to default," Qi said. "The debt restructuring definitely will have an impact on future bilateral loans" he said, adding that China was still considering the Sri Lanka request for a \$1.5 billion buyer's credit and another \$1-billion loan.

## SHANGHAI SEES 19,000 NEW CASES



Since Friday, Beijing has reported 70 locally transmitted cases in eight of its 16 districts. **Reuters**

## Panic buying in Beijing as district starts mass testing

### REUTERS & AP

BEIJING, APRIL 25

BEIJING WILL conduct mass testing of most of its 21 million people, authorities announced Monday, as a new Covid-19 outbreak sparked stockpiling of food by residents worried about the possibility of a Shanghai-style lockdown.

Authorities in Chaoyang, home to 3.45 million people, late on Sunday ordered residents and those who work there to be tested three times this week as Beijing warned the virus had "stealthily" spread in the city for about a week before being detected.

"I'm preparing for the worst," said a graduate student in the nearby Haidian district surnamed Zhang, who placed online orders for dozens of snacks and 10 pounds of apples.

Shoppers in the city crowded stores and online platforms to stock up on leafy vegetables,

fresh meat, instant noodles and rolls of toilet paper.

In Shanghai, where most of its 25 million residents have been locked down for weeks, the main food supply bottleneck has been the lack of enough couriers to make deliveries to homes, fuelling anger among residents.

Since Friday, Beijing has reported 70 locally transmitted cases in eight of its 16 districts, with Chaoyang accounting for 46 of the total, said a local health official on Monday.

Shanghai, which has been locked down for more than two weeks, reported more than 19,000 new infections and 51 deaths in the latest 24-hour period, pushing its announced death toll from the ongoing outbreak to 138. On Monday morning, people queued at makeshift testing sites manned by medical workers in protective suits. Under mass testing campaigns in China, multiple samples are tested together.

## AKIHIKO KONDO IS IN A DEVOTED FICTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS, SERVED BY VAST INDUSTRY AIMED AT SATISFYING DESIRES OF FAN CULTURE

# This man married a fictional character and will like you to hear him out

### BENDOOLEY & HISAKO UENO

TOKYO, APRIL 25

IN ALMOST every way, Akihiro Kondo is an ordinary Japanese man. He's pleasant and easy to talk to. He has friends and a steady job and wears a suit and tie to work. There's just one exception: Kondo is married to a fictional character.

His beloved, Hatsune Miku, is a turquoise-haired, computer-synthesised pop singer who has toured with Lady Gaga and starred in video games. After a decadelong relationship, one that Kondo says pulled him out of a

deep depression, he held a small, unofficial wedding ceremony in Tokyo in 2018. Miku, in the form of a plush doll, wore white, and he was in a matching tuxedo.

In Miku, Kondo has found love, inspiration and solace, he says. He and his assortment of Miku dolls eat, sleep and watch movies together.

Kondo, 38, knows that people think it's strange, even harmful. He knows that some — possibly those reading this article — hope he'll grow out of it. And, yes, he knows that Miku isn't real. But his feelings for her are, he says.

Kondo is one of thousands of people in Japan who have entered into unofficial marriages with fic-

tional characters in recent decades, served by a vast industry aimed at satisfying the every whim of a fervent fan culture. Tens of thousands more around the globe have joined online groups in which they discuss their commitment to characters from anime, manga and video games.

Kondo sees himself as part of a growing movement of people who identify as "fictosexuals." That's partly what has motivated him to publicise his wedding and to sit for awkward interviews with news media around the globe.

He wants the world to know that people like him are out there and, with advances in artificial intelligence and robotics allowing



Akihiro Kondo's wedding photo, taken in 2018 when he married a doll of Hatsune Miku in March 17, 2022. **NYT**

for more profound interactions with the inanimate, that their numbers are likely to increase.

It's not a political movement, he said, but a plea to be seen: "It's about respecting other people's

lifestyles." It's not unusual for a work of art to provoke real emotions — anger, sorrow, joy — and the phenomenon of desiring the fictional is not unique to Japan.

But the idea that fictional characters can inspire real affection or even love may well have reached its highest expression in modern Japan, where the sentiment has given rise to a highly visible subculture and become the basis for a thriving industry.

In Tokyo, two districts have become meccas for fulfilling character-based dreams: Akihabara (for men) and Ikebukuro (for women). Specialty shops in the neighbourhoods are packed with mer-

chandise for characters from popular games and anime.

The products for women are especially extensive. Fans can buy love letters from their crushes, reproductions of their clothes and even scents meant to evoke their presence. Hotels offer special packages, featuring spa treatments and elaborate meals, for people celebrating their favourite character's birthday. And on social media, people post photos, art and mash notes promoting their "oshi" — a term widely used by Japanese fans to describe the objects of their affection.

For some, the relationships represent a rejection of the entrenched "breadwinner-house-

wife" model of marriage in Japan, said Agnès Giard, a researcher at the University of Paris Nanterre who has studied such marriages.

"To the general public, it seems indeed foolish to spend money, time and energy on someone who is not even alive," Giard said. "But for character lovers, this practice is seen as essential. It makes them feel alive, happy, useful and part of a movement with higher goals in life."

In her experience, women see the fictional marriages as empowering, "a way to challenge gender, matrimonial norms." In some respects, Kondo's commitment, too, is an example of commercial and social forces at work. **NYT**



AIFF denies molestation allegations against secretary

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

ENTREPRENEUR RANJIT Bajaj, who owned I-League club Minerva Punjab FC, on Monday alleged that All India Football Federation (AIFF) General Secretary Kushal Das had molested employees at workplace, a charge outrightly rejected by the national body and its top official.

Bajaj, who sold off Minerva Punjab FC in 2020 after owning it for seven years, said there were "two cases of molestation of employees at workplace" and the head of the committee which deals with sexual harassment complaints at the AIFF was "forced by president Praful Patel to bury the report".

"...Kushal Das RESIGN Or I will be revealing details about you which have been buried by @praful\_patel #METOO #metoindia enuf is enuf," Bajaj tweeted.

"...two cases of molestation of his employees at the workplace ...head of madatory (mandatory) sexual harassment complaint officer of AIFF & he was forced to bury the report by @praful\_patel." Later, speaking to PTI, Bajaj said, "I am not making any allegations against the federation. This is against an individual and he can go to court, make an affidavit. Let him come up with a denial, he must respond in his personal capacity instead of using the Aiff PR machinery." Das said no such complaint has reached the AIFF committee in the last 10 years. "There is always a women's cell in the AIFF to look into any kind of allegations like these and there are no such allegations in the last 10 years," Das told PTI.

"But let the women's cell look into the allegations he has made and give a report before I say something and before the executive committee takes a decision."

The AIFF, on its part, stood behind its top official and said it will take "appropriate legal action against the concerned individual". "All statements and allegations made are false and fabricated, and made without an iota of evidence in support of the same. Further, no such complaints and/or concerns were received by the Internal Complaints Committee constituted by the AIFF as per the PoSH Act, 2013," the AIFF said in a statement. The AIFF said it will also refer the matter to the Executive Committee, and also to the AGM for appropriate action. Jyotsna Gupta, the current head of the Internal Complaints Committee said she or her panel has not received any complaint against Das or any AIFF official.

"As head of the committee, I have not received any such report (of sexual harassment) against the general secretary or against any official of the AIFF," Gupta said.

Right-handed Rafa or next Novak?

Teenaged Spaniard Carlos Alcaraz, the youngest since compatriot Rafael Nadal in 2005 to break into the top-10, has taken the tennis world by storm with his all-court game and seems the real deal

SANDEEP DWIVEDI  
NEW DELHI, APRIL 25

AFTER HIS straight-sets win in the Barcelona Open final on Sunday, Carlos Alcaraz, 18, eagerly followed an old and delightful local tradition. He, along with the ball boys and girls, jumped into the storied venue's - Real Club de Tenis - swimming pool. It was another spectacular splash for the Spaniard, ranked 133 a year back but now burdened with the weighty tag of 'tennis' future'.

The next day, he became the youngest player to enter the Top 10 since Rafael Nadal in 2005. Men's tennis' perpetual wait for real teenaged prodigies seemed to be over. In the era dominated by the Big Three, many pretenders promised a change of guard but failed. Now, Alcaraz, if the word on the circuit is to be believed, has it in him to shake the foundations of the old firm.

There is a general consensus about Alcaraz's class but an outrageous global divide about his style of play. Earlier this month, when he was crowned the youngest-ever Miami Masters 1000 champion, everyone from the pundits to the meme-makers felt obliged to answer the obvious 'He is the Next Who?' question.

His swiftness around the court, the eagerness to dominate points, the muscular frame and Spain's leap of faith gave him an obvious early nickname - Right-handed Nadal. However, his coach Juan Carlos Ferrero, a former French Open champ who couldn't survive the Big Three march in the mid-noughties, has said that Alcaraz's style is more like Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic. He wasn't making it easy for the boy whose every stride on court was suddenly under surveillance.

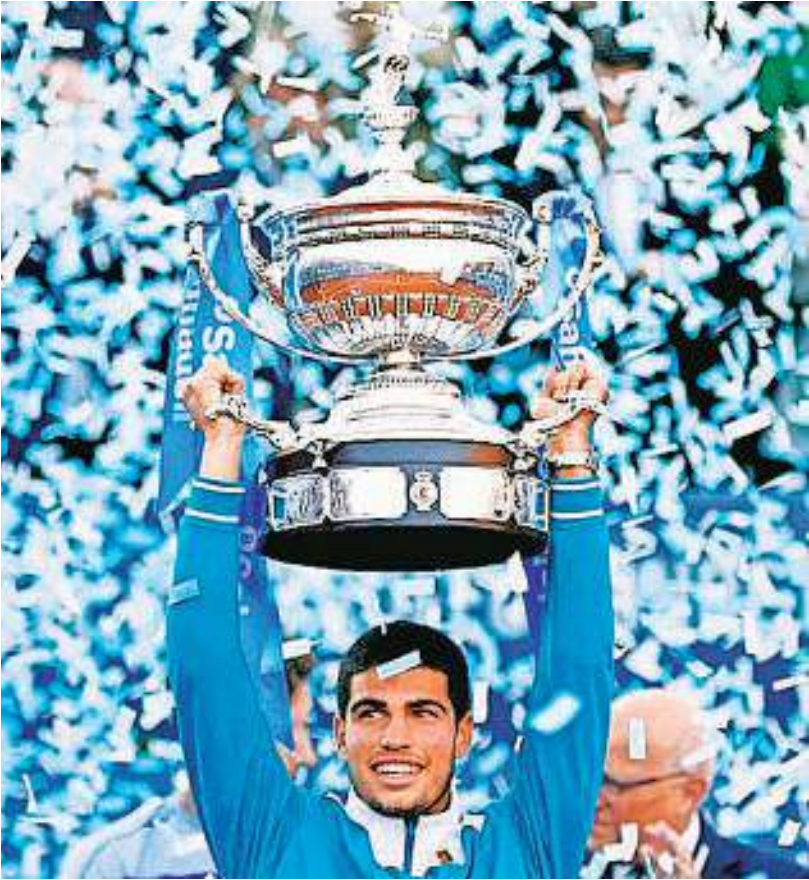
The coach's comments were a cue for the internet to dig out old match videos, slice them and then glue them side by side.

There's this one clip where Alcaraz and Djokovic, in two different frames dominating hard-court rallies, are seen moving on the baseline, swinging their racquets with choreographed synchronicity. Right down to the 'pursed lips and cocky nods' celebration after a sharp-angle cross-court forehand winner, the young Spaniard looked like the Serbian legend's identical tennis twin.

Rafa's fast feet, Djokovic's forehand and, as some observed, Andre Agassi's racquet-speed - Alcaraz was made to look like some Frankenstein programmed to hit monstrous forehands.

Blast from the past

A bit of independent YouTube on forehands throws up Sergi Bruguera, the master clay-courter from the 1990s. His whip-like



18-year-old Carlos Alcaraz of Spain won the Barcelona Open last week. Reuters

forehand would be the result of the racquet taking the trajectory of a plane taking off while hitting the ball. Alcaraz's shot-making shape and racquet path is similar.

More surfing and one bumps into another look alike. The young champion's blank brooding face is a throwback to Pete Sampras from the early days. A highly-imaginative commentator had said Sampras has the face of a shy impressionable teen who is likely to fall for an older woman. But we digress.

Maybe, numbed by the greatness thrust on him, Alcaraz has insisted that he wants to be just Carlos Alcaraz. The trivia about a picture of him with Federer by the bedside adds another layer of intrigue. But that hasn't hurt the Spaniard. Nadal, once during a press conference, looked distracted. He couldn't take his eyes away from the media room television airing one Alcaraz game. When a reporter told him that his countryman was trailing, Nadal smiled and said there are still many games to play. It wasn't too long before Alcaraz justified Nadal's faith and finished the match.

The latest tennis star to emerge from Spain

is in a way an outlier but also represents the legacy of this great tennis nation.

What separates him from Nadal is his press on the court. Since his days on the junior circuit, Alcaraz finishes most rallies from inside the baseline. One can never dismiss him as another Spanish back-court slugger. He is an eager beaver always on his toes to catch the ball early and throw the kitchen sink at it.

Versatile style

Alcaraz's overall game is also a tribute to a system that values wisdom passed down through generations and one that encourages organically-evolved original thinking.

One important weapon that Alcaraz possesses is the drop shot that glides the length of his side of the court and has just enough strength to cross the net and sink. He also has a lob that sails over his 6 feet-plus opponents and kisses the baseline. These two unconventional hard-to-pull-off strokes at crunch moments break the rhythm of his opponents and help him win those points at 40-30.

Alcaraz is a perfect brand ambassador of

MEN'S ATP RANKINGS			
Rank	Player	Age	points
1	Novak Djokovic	34	8400
2	Daniil Medvedev	26	8080
3	Alexander Zverev	25	7465
4	Rafael Nadal	35	6435
5	Stefanos Tsitsipas	23	5770
6	Matteo Berrettini	26	4570
7	Casper Ruud	23	4110
8	Andrey Rublev	24	4025
9	Carlos Alcaraz	18	3827
10	Felix Auger-Aliassime	21	3625

YOUNGEST TOP 10s			
Pos	Player	Age	Year
1	A Krickstein	17 yrs, 11d	1984
2	M Chang	17yrs, 3m, 19d	1989
3	B Becker	17yrs, 7m, 16d	1985
4	M Wilander	17yrs, 10m, 21d	1982
5	B Borg	17yrs, 11m, 27d	1974
6	A Agassi	18yrs, 1m, 7d	1988
7	A Medvedev	18yrs, 9m, 7d	1993
8	R Nadal	18 yrs, 10m, 22d	2005
9	Alcaraz	18 yrs, 11m, 20d	2022
10	J Arias	18yrs, 11m, 23d	1983

the many clay-court academies littered across Spain. For years, these have been assembly lines where kids check in after school in the afternoon and leave late at night.

In a delightful Dan Kiernan podcast Control the Controllables, two old-hand Spanish coaches Bruno Argudo and Juan Beaus paint a vivid picture of these tennis schools while talking about a culture that is very different from the academies around the world where kids pay for 'hourly sessions'.

Between completing their homework, kids get enough time for endless sets. They travel for tournaments in groups. When not playing, they sit next to their coaches, who between sips of coffee talk about strategies for different match situations.

The clay courts too have a role. On the podcast, these slow surfaces are called 'assistant coaches'. They teach patience, hone court craft and never allow one to be complacent. There are no easy points since the ball doesn't fly off the court. It is a tough grind. In a month's time, the latest Spanish sensation will be in Paris and his pedigree makes him one among the favourites.

Alcaraz may be different but it's his grooming that makes him true to the Vamos-yelling tribe that has pitched its tents on many clay courts around the world.

Nataraj breaks meet record on Day 2 of Khelo India Games

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BENGALURU, APRIL 25

TOKYO OLYMPIAN swimmer Srihari Nataraj clinched a gold medal in the 50m freestyle, clocking 23.23 seconds, on day two of the Khelo India University Games here on Monday.

The 21-year-old Nataraj broke Mihir Ambre's meet record timing of 23.78 seconds from the previous edition as he produced his fastest time in an individual race in the event.

Nataraj's win added gloss to a dominant performance from hosts Jain University, which soared to the top of the medal table with the help of four golds in swimming. The swimming events also saw five new KIUG records.

At the end of second day, 17 universities had already won a gold and as many as 41 had marked their presence on the medal table. With 10 medals up for grabs in swimming, the first went to Savitribai Phule Pune University's Shubham Dhaygude in the men's 400m freestyle. Soon, it was time for Jain University to shine as Siva Sridhar not only won gold but also in the process set a new KIUG record time of 2:05.43 in the 200m Individual Medley. Sridhar repeated win-record double in the 100m backstroke later in the day.

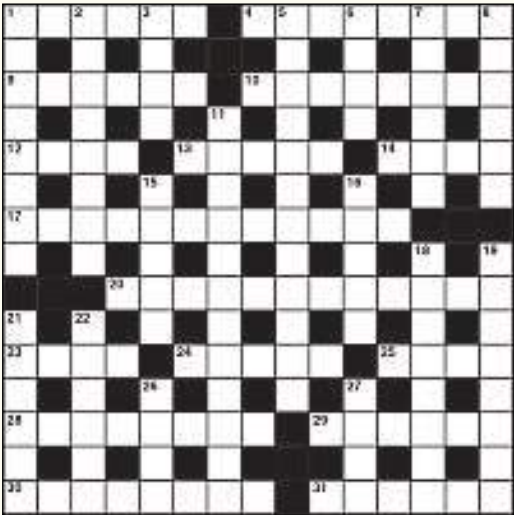
In the day's final event in the pool, Shivaji University's Rujuta Khade broke yet another KIUG record in the women's 50m freestyle, with a time of 27.38.

She broke Sadhvi Dhuri's mark from Bhubaneswar by nearly six-tenths of a second as Shivaji University sat in second place on the medal table with three gold, one silver and one bronze. Punjabi University, the overall winners at the 2020 edition, won their first gold at this edition, via Ishneet Aulakh in the women's 25m individual pistol. Aulakh and her team were beaten to silver in the team event by their state rivals Panjab University.

Following Komal Kohar's win on Sunday, Maharashtra Dayanand University logged another gold in women's weightlifting - Sneha winning the 59kg class.

MEDAL TALLY		
Rank	University	Total
1	Jain University Karnataka	5
2	Shivaji University	5
3	University of Mumbai	5
4	CCU, Meerut	2
5	MDU, Rohtak	2

CROSSWORD 4724



ACROSS

- 1 Three of them make a quarter (6)
- 4 Ten heart operations could signal danger (8)
- 9 Faultless beginner? (6)
- 10 A place of grazing (8)
- 12 Medicine ball? (4)
- 13 Writer from the US (5)
- 14 It becomes inflamed by the lash (4)
- 17 Unable to say why you can't solve a crossword? (4,3,5)
- 20 Last thing an American can bet with? (6,6)
- 23 Just open a grating (4)
- 24 In time some fellows improve (5)
- 25 The French way to get fat (4)
- 28 To each in turn it appears unfinished (8)
- 29 Economic growth? (6)
- 30 Left in error (3,5)
- 31 Seem to be a soft fruit (6)

DOWN

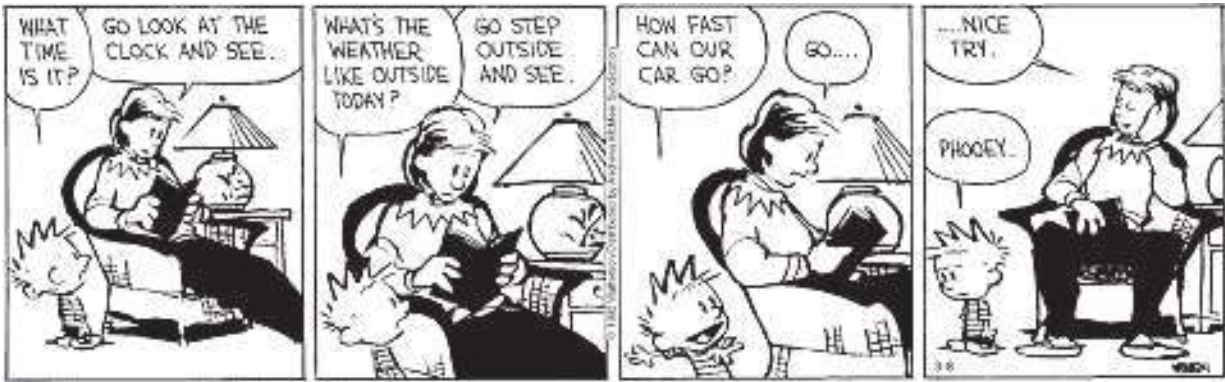
- 1 No other organisation can compete with it (8)
- 2 Love isn't unusual as the theme for her writings (8)
- 3 Kick from a horse (4)
- 5 Are tailors so addictive? (5-7)
- 6 Use a different name for Jacob's brother (4)
- 7 A number of European wars (6)
- 8 Ann set out for French city (6)
- 11 It's played for someone's benefit (7,5)
- 15 A measure in operation (5)
- 16 Being stupid I omit to include a phrase (5)
- 18 Feel a bit upset by a trifling annoyance (8)
- 19 One who hopes to get as good as he gives (8)
- 21 Share it with Nora perhaps (6)
- 22 Charm a number at a fashionable meeting (6)
- 26 Upwards of 101 meeting points (4)
- 27 Cut down on meat (4)

Solutions Crossword 4723: Across: 1 Right, 4 Arbitr, 8 For, 9 Wineglass, 10 Thrifty, 11 Needy, 13 Dealer, 15 Danube, 18 Sheaf, 19 Towpath, 21 Franchise, 23 Ion, 24 Riposte, 25 Tense. Down: 1 Refuted, 2 Germinate, 3 Towns, 4 Annoys, 5 Begonia, 6 Tea, 7 Rusty, 12 Education, 14 Effects, 16 Enhance, 17 Stripe, 18 Safer, 20 Wrest, 22 Asp.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given clue.

When you are \_\_\_\_ about what you do, you feel this positive energy. It's very simple. - Paulo Coelho (12)

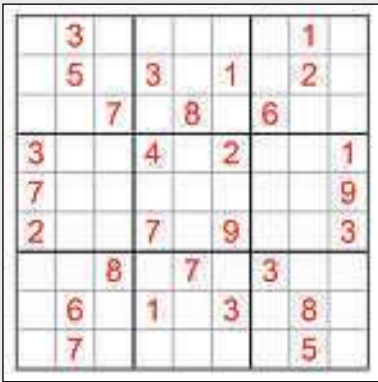
GMAEI	AEXNIT
HUISS	NPYCHU

Answer: When you are enthusiastic about what you do, you feel this positive energy.

SUDOKU 4816

Difficulty Level 5s  
Instructions  
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level  
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4815



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)  
Your sign is not the only sign that is subject to epic astrological configurations as the planets form and re-form their patterns across your chart. Now you have more to learn about personal relationships than almost anyone else, and most to benefit.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)  
There is no real lack of co-operation or consideration on the part of partners, yet it may still be difficult to finalise any long-term plans, largely because the planetary picture is changing so rapidly this week. You're on a long-range cycle of uncertainty, so don't expect instant results.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)  
It's necessary to say a few more words about your financial situation. In particular, you can expect to gain from new partnerships, especially with members of the female sex, or from investments in the arts. Your most dynamic partnership, though, may still be a secret.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)  
This period favours domestic repairs and decorations around the home. The emphasis seems to be on luxury and colour rather than on what is necessary for your security or survival. There is so much to gain from a generous gesture, so don't hold back.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)  
The reason why someone feels that you alone can get them off the hook is that they sense the presence of the wise planet, Jupiter, in a part of your chart that is dedicated to selfless deeds, a truly noble combination. There still seems to be no way to restrict the explosion in your expenses, but a solution will appear soon.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)  
In your solar chart, the signs of Capricorn and Cancer reveal much about your creative desires in the broadest sense - the wish to express your individuality on the highest level. These celestial signs' importance points you to the deeper significance of your current ambitions.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)  
It's strange how a state of uncertainty internationally is reflected in changing arrangements in your life. The key is the stars' tendency to act on many different levels both in your private affairs and in your environment, and in your community.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)  
It now seems without question that your planets are pulling you in two directions. Mars is insisting that you get out and about, mixing widely and making new friends, while Venus is urging you to hide yourself away with a chosen loved one, forgetting the cares of the world.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)  
Take extra care when travelling over the next few days, and allow for last-minute changes of plan, probably prompted by close partners. Delays due to mechanical failure seem to be less likely, but there is some other obstacle in the way, no more than your lack of confidence.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)  
We are now entering another major challenging phase, during which events that took place months ago may be repeated, though not in exactly the same form. The immediate task now is to put new relationships on a firm footing and fulfil your long-term promises.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)  
According to one of the greatest astrologers of the last century, the transits you are now experiencing may operate in one of two ways. One is 'vain and idle', the other is 'reckless and revolutionary'. You clearly have great scope for stirring up your friends and your environment. Use it wisely.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)  
Home, family and property matters do not seem to be causing particular concern at the moment, at least not as much as earlier in the year. You may therefore bring your attention to bear on more wide-ranging ambitions, particularly if an emotional tie is under scrutiny.



BRIEFLY

Badminton Asia Championships: Sen, Sindhu eye medals

*Manila:* Focus will be on two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu and world championships bronze winner Lakshya Sen when they lead India's challenge at the Badminton Asia Championships, beginning here on Tuesday. A lot of hope will ride on Sen and Sindhu as the duo has been in good form in the run-up to the continent championships, which is returning after a gap of two years due to COVID-19.

WTA not returning to China in 2022

*Mumbai:* The WTA is still working to find a resolution to the standoff with China over the Peng Shuai issue but will not return to the country this year, Tour chief Steve Simon said. "We remain dedicated to finding a resolution to this," Simon told The Tennis Podcast. "We want to find a resolution that Peng can be comfortable with, the Chinese government can be comfortable with, and we can be comfortable with. We are not about walking away from China. We have suspended our operations there right now. We will continue to do that until we get to a resolution."

Asian Games will go ahead in Sept: OCA

*Mumbai:* The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) has requested an update from Beijing on the COVID-19 situation in China but remains confident the Asian Games will go ahead in Hangzhou in September, a senior official at the body told Reuters on Monday. The Games are scheduled to take place from Sept. 10-25 in the capital of Zhejiang province, some 175 kilometres south-west of Shanghai. A senior official, speaking under condition of anonymity, said the OCA had been in contact with Chinese officials but there was "as of now" no concern about cancellation or postponement.

Barca lose, Madrid 1 point from title

*Madrid:* Barcelona lost 1-0 to Rayo Vallecano on Sunday, marking the first time it lost three in a row at home in all competitions in the same season, and leaving leader Madrid just a point away from winning its second league title in three seasons. Madrid will have its first chance of lifting the trophy Saturday when it hosts Espanyol. Madrid is 15 points ahead of second-place Barcelona with five rounds to go.

Sharath wins 10th national TT title

*Shillong:* Star paddler A Sharath Kamal secured his 10th national title with a thrilling 4-3 win over G Sathiyian in the men's singles summit clash at the 83rd Senior National and Inter-State Table Tennis Championships here on Monday. The 39-year-old dropped his racquet and ran around the arena to celebrate his triumph after Sathiyian's return went out, giving him the last point for a 7-11, 12-10, 9-11, 7-11, 12-10, 11-9, 11-6 wins.

PTI, AP & REUTERS

The Dhawans show

Rishi in the final over, backed by Rabada and Arshdeep, and Shikhar with the bat, help PK pip CSK



Mayank Agarwal and Rishi Dhawan celebrate after the latter dismissed MS Dhoni in the final over.

All pics: Sportzpics for IPL

**SYNOPSIS:** After Dhawan guided Punjab to 187, Rabada and Arshdeep squeezed CSK at the death despite Rayudu's counter-attack

ABHISHEK PUROHIT

MUMBAI, APRIL 25

IN A near-repeat of Sunday's game at Wankhede Stadium, Shikhar Dhawan's unbeaten 88 lifted Punjab Kings to 187 for 4. Ambati Rayudu's 78 off 39 turned around a misfiring chase but Kagiso Rabada sent him back with two overs left, and MS Dhoni wasn't able to reprise his last-over heroics from Chennai Super Kings' previous game against Mumbai Indians.

Monday follows Sunday

The match was played on the same side pitch on which Lucknow Super Giants defeated Mumbai Indians a day ago. And at the halfway stage of the first innings, both LSG and PK were on the exact score - 72 for 1.

Stroke-making proved to be difficult again, especially at the start, on an already sticky surface that was being used on successive nights. Even the field placings were the same; deep point and deep square leg were the two deep fielders in the powerplay, with both third man and fine leg in the ring. With CSK's three spinners in action in helpful conditions, for a while it looked like they were operating at Chepaak. But PK would go on to take 115 off the last ten overs; LSG had managed 96.

One of the differences was CSK's twin drops of Bhanuka Rajapaksa in successive overs from Ravindra Jadeja right after the powerplay. Rituraj Gaikwad and Mitchell Santner were the culprits on either side of the longer square leg-side boundary. Rajapaksa scored 42 off 32 helped along by misfield and poor deliveries in addition to the drops. He and Dhawan added 110 for the second wicket in 11.3 overs. Rajapaksa departed probably an over or two too late than what PK would have wanted, delaying the arrival of Liam Livingstone until the 18th over. But it also meant the English all-rounder came in with a clear mindset and did not

IPL TABLE

TEAM	M	W	L	PT	NRR
GT	7	6	1	12	0.396
SRH	7	5	2	10	0.691
RR	7	5	2	10	0.432
LSG	8	5	3	10	0.334
RCB	8	5	3	10	-0.472
PBKS	8	4	4	8	-0.419
DC	7	3	4	6	0.715
KKR	8	3	5	6	0.080
CSK	8	2	6	4	-0.538
MI	8	0	8	0	-1.000

have to think about batting longer in tricky conditions. Livingstone and Jonny Bairstow scored a combined 25 off ten balls, helping PK post 19 more than LSG had.

Dhawan takes it deep

Continuing the similarities from Sunday night, Dhawan batted through the first innings, like KL Rahul had, but with not as much late acceleration in an 88 off 59. Rahul had taken on the longer square rope and beaten the boundary riders with deft placement. What Dhawan did instead was make good use of the shorter side. He made sure the offerings on the pads disappeared past short fine leg. He also slogged a couple of sixes over the shorter deep-midwicket boundary.

Dhawan may not be the tallest but all his moving around and arching enables him to have a decent reach. When the longer boundary was in play to his stronger off-side, he ensured CSK's helpful overpitched offerings were lofted over mid-off or driven past him for fours. It was Dhawan who started the PK acceleration with three fours in the 12th over bowled by Mukesh Choudhary, the left-arm seamer's natural incoming angle allowing Dhawan to line him up.

Rayudu steps in

The parallels with Sunday night just kept

coming. CSK's chase was foundering just like Mumbai Indians' had, both top orders failing to get going. And while Tilak Varma had threatened an MI revival for a while, Ambati Rayudu went a step ahead and got CSK close. Rayudu had hurt his left forearm at cover trying to stop a drive off the third ball of the game from Mayank Agarwal, and had spent the rest of the innings off the field.

He walked in at 40 for 3 after seven overs, and smacked his second ball from Rahul Chahar to the extra-cover boundary. The forcing cut, the massive slog-sweep, the charge-and-swish - whenever the asking-rate seemed to be getting out of hand, Rayudu had the boundary waiting.

A 23-run 16th over off Sandeep Sharma, playing his first match in nearly a month, brought the equation back to around two runs a ball. Rayudu swiped and slashed three successive sixes and ended the over with a dash to hammer a four over midwicket. There didn't seem to be much dew given there wasn't much ball-wiping from the PK fielders, but Sandeep still delivered high full tosses. And long boundary or not, Rayudu was not missing out.

But just when it seemed Rayudu's momentum would carry CSK home, Kagiso Rabada intervened, landing one around the blockhole and sending Rayudu back.

Arshdeep, Rishi see off Dhoni

Dhoni arrived with 35 needed off 13 and like Jaydev Unadkat in CSK's previous match, he had another left-armer in his sights - Arshdeep Singh, who bowled the 19th. But the young seamer stuck to the full length and wide angle across Dhoni to the longer boundary. Dhoni got one away past extra cover, but Agarwal there had already prevented one, and Arshdeep denied Dhoni off two other deliveries.

Ravindra Jadeja's inability to find the boundary meant CSK required an improbable 27 off the last over. And in his first IPL game in six years, Rishi Dhawan was good enough to bring up a comfortable victory.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Punjab Kings 187 for 4 in 20 overs (Shikhar Dhawan 88; Dwayne Bravo 2/42) bt Chennai Super Kings: 176 for 6 in 20 overs (Ambati Rayudu 78; Kagiso Rabada 2/23) by 11 runs

EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER



Hot heads, calm minds and everything in between at the game

Livingstone's hips don't lie

From the 14-15h over on, Kings XI Punjab might well have thought about retiring out Bhanuka Rajapaksa. He had done his job and was only delaying the entry of Liam Livingstone. As it turned out after he hit a six in the 13.3, Rajapaksha only faced 7 balls, dealing in singles, over the next four overs before he sacrificed his wicket, going for a slog. Enter Livingstone, the modern-day Nathan Astle with his array of shots, going boom boom in a 7-ball 19 cameo. He is one of the clean hitters, who likes to go in the arc between long-off to long-on. Early on his career, by his own admission, he would obsess over the hitting style of Jos Buttler but re-



alised that Buttler was gifted with a wonderfully mal-leable wrists that powered his shots, and instead strived to be his original self. "I had got too whippy with my wrists". He started to work on having a strong base in his stance ("I used to lose quite bit of power with too wide a base"), move his back hip - which he reckons is his key - and smash through the line. He makes sure he doesn't have too long a front stride which renders the use of his hips a touch ineffective. "At point of contact, I make sure I whip my power through which is where all my power comes from," he once told Sky Sports. He whipped his hips to lift Punjab over a par score.

Jadeja, captain cool

Ravindra Jadeja didn't have too much of the captaincy in the early part of the IPL with MS Dhoni being the conductor-in-chief on the field.



But one characteristic of the former skipper has rubbed off on the new one - the poker face. CSK were using a tried and tested formula of slowing down the ball on a used pitch at the Wankhede. Spinners Mahesh Teekshana and Mitchell Santner bowled four of the six Powerplay overs and along with medium pacer Mukesh Choudhary had kept things tight. The skipper, a dangerous left-arm spinner who gives no room to batsmen to free their arms, came into the attack in the seventh. He would have had two wickets against his name if not for the butter-fingered fielders. Punjab's Banuka Rajapaksa decided to take him on but was dropped by Rituraj Gaikwad in the deep square leg region. In Jadeja's second over, Santner let the ball spill through his hands for a six at deep midwicket. The beneficiary was Rajapaksa again. If Jadeja was losing his cool he didn't show it. No expletives, not a hint of frustration on his face. He just looked away and got back to his bowling mark. A captain with a deadpan face has been one of CSK's success mantras.

Butter.fingers.will.pay

Unless you are Jonty Rhodes, fielding coaches rarely get the spotlight. But that rule changes if a team drops a series of catches and their fielder on the fence turns twos into fours. After Rituraj Gaikwad and Mitch Santner failed to hold on to simple catches and a couple of diving efforts went futile, the question that was begged to be asked was: Who is CSK's fielding coach? He is Rajiv Kumar, a 5000 plus-runs domestic giant who has played for Bihar and Jharkhand. He replaced the reputed Aussie coach Steve Rixon a few years back. Rajiv was Dhoni's captain at Jharkhand and is a go-to man for any MS update for the media. At the next CSK

Channel 9 duck emoji

Mayank Agarwal is almost Justin Langer in his responses to his dismissals. Not quite, as Langer would act as if he were robbed even when his stumps would have gone for a walk. But the disappointment and shake of head is pretty similar with Mayank. He has had a lot of head-shakes to do this IPL, repeatedly getting out cheaply and trudging off with one of the more expressive reactions of sadness in modern-day cricket. He would look to the heavens, shut his eyes, shake his head again and again, and like a true masochist, would catch the replay of his dismissal on the big screen and do it all over again. Then one more time in the dressing room after he catches the replay on the television. There is also another small clue that he isn't batting well. That mad risky suicidal single after tapping to mid-off. Hlt was a pretty short delivery from Maheesh Thikshana and he went too hard with his cut and sent a dolly to point. It triggered his expressive reaction as he walked back. In some ways, he is like that old Channel Nine duck emoji that would accompany the batsman, shaking and quacking under its breath. Hotstar could well do to create an Mayank emoji or even better, a GIF, for such occasions.



nets, expect the old friends to organise a draining fielding session for the team.

‘NO DISCRIMINATION’

Smith cleared of racist decision-making as skipper & Director of Cricket

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

APRIL 25

FORMER SOUTH Africa skipper Graeme Smith has been cleared of charges of racist behaviour during his captaincy tenure and his time as the Board's Director of Cricket. The allegations were parsed by an arbitration panel arising from the earlier Social Justice and Nation Building (SJNB) hearings of Cricket South Africa.

The arbitration stated that Smith's actions could not be proved to constitute unfair racial discrimination or evince racial bias. The SJNB Ombudsman had assessed allegations against Smith, who was captain of the national men's cricket team from 2003 to 2014 and later CSA's first Director of Cricket (DoC) in December 2019.

The issues that came in for scrutiny as mentioned in the 95-page report of the arbitration:

Omission of Thami Tsolekile

**CASE:** The Ombudsman's tentative findings had pointed a finger at Smith who "likely had some influential role in decisions be-

tween 2012 and 2014 not to select Mr Thami Tsolekile for the Proteas."

The controversy concerns SA's series against England and Australia touring, and when hosting New Zealand in 2012-13. "Mr Tsolekile testified that, around the time he was awarded his contract, selector (Andrew) Hudson told him, while he was unlikely to play against England or Australia, he could or would play in the home series against New Zealand. Mr Hudson, in his statement, denies that it was a guarantee, but said he told Mr Tsolekile he was likely to get his shot against New Zealand. Whatever Mr Hudson told Mr Tsolekile, there is no claim that Mr Smith gave any assurances - for or against Mr Tsolekile - at this time. It was not even alleged by CSA that Mr Smith was aware of any promise," the report reads.

**ARGUMENTS:** While the captain is not a member of the selection panel, he "is entitled to freely and strongly indicate his preferences in selection." Tsolekile contended that after Mark Boucher injured his eye and subsequently retired, De Villiers stepped in as the back-up 'keeper, even as Tsolekile was called up. Hudson explained the selectors' thinking as follows: "De Villiers taking the



Graeme Smith wasn't found guilty of discriminating against Thami Tsolekile as captain or of bias against Black leadership at CSA. File

wicketkeeping gloves gave the team the 'X factor' and allowed us, the selectors, to select an extra batter at No. 7." The statement was put to Tsolekile who agreed with the proposition that this was "a strategy."

Smith's evidence pointed that Boucher's injury created "an opportunity to bring in Mr

The arbitration stated Smith's actions could not be proved to constitute unfair racial discrimination or evince racial bias

Jean-Paul Duminy who was a frontline top-order specialist batsman. In turn, that lengthened your batting line up with seven top batting performers."

South Africa's Transformation Policy - the guiding principle - was argued, given there was no Black African in the Proteas team that played the Tests in England. There were, however, five coloured players - Hashim Amla, Alviro Petersen, Vernon Philander, JP Duminy and Imran Tahir - who played all four Tests.

"Again, Mr Smith did not speak against Mr Tsolekile, or in his favour. He accepted the strategy followed by the selectors that had been successful in England. Mr Tsolekile himself did not complain about his treatment at the time, or in his evidence. He appeared to accept that the same "cricketing reasons" that justified selecting Mr De Villiers

in England still applied in Australia."

However, not being picked for the New Zealand series aggravated Tsolekile's unhappiness as it became clear de Kock would be next in line. Selector Linda Zondi testified: "Mr Smith did not influence the decision of the selectors not to select Mr Tsolekile as a wicketkeeper by reason of his race."

**CONCLUSION:** "There is no direct evidence, concerning the England tour, that Mr Smith actively influenced the selectors to exclude Mr Tsolekile from the playing XI. Instead, it appears to be accepted that Mr De Villiers was selected because of his ability, not because of his race." While the arbitration concluded that Smith did wield influence, it could not establish Tsolekile's omission had racist reasons.

Boucher/Nkwe issue

**CASE:** This concerned the appointment of Mark Boucher as Proteas Head Coach and if it amounted to racial discrimination with respect to Enoch Nkwe. The latter, a Black, had obtained a Level 4 coaching certificate - the highest available one - and coached one of South Africa's professional teams - Highveld Lions - winning Coach of the Year

award and served as interim coach of the Proteas on the tour to India in 2019. Boucher had played international cricket for 12 years. Smith was keen on finding a coach who could pick the pieces after the disastrous 2019 World Cup, and went for "international experience" with England due to tour soon. Smith was accused of not following a formal process of gathering CVs and interviewing candidates, and preferring Boucher.

**ARGUMENTS:** Smith testified that CSA was aware of his idea to appoint Boucher and did not object to his preference or insist on a process, but approved of the choice. The report reads: "His given reasoning - a head coach of a national team is an extremely high pressurised position, you are at the cold face of the world media, the world crowds, people don't care about CSA's equity proposition, they care about results, and I felt that CSA and the team at the time needed someone that had extensive experience in dealing with conditions, with the pressures that come with the international game."

**CONCLUSION:** Though the process followed was unsatisfactory, and Nkwe received an unfair deal, this did not amount to "indirect discrimination" by Smith.