

were successfully recovered. Similarly, 26 drones have been recovered in 2024 so far.

Sharing details on security arrangements for the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections, Spl DGP Arpit Shukla said that security has been beefed up across the state and Punjab Police has mobilised 75 percent from district police and 50% police force from other units for deployment during elections.

He said that the Punjab Police have already laid well-coordinated strong interstate nakas at all the sealing points of 10 border districts in the state to stop the menace of liquor and drug smuggling. The 10 interstate border districts include Pathankot, Sri Muktsar Sahib, Fazilka, Ropar, SAS Nagar, Patiala, Sangrur, Mansa, Hoshiarpur and Bathinda.

He said that the 25 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) have been deployed in vulnerable districts of the state to instil confidence among the general public as well as to dominate sensitive and hyper-sensitive areas in the state. The 25 companies include five coys of Central Reserve Police Forces (CRPF), 15 coys of Border Security Force (BSF) and five coys of Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).

Heat wave in Odisha to continue, IMD advises precautions during election rallies

Odisha Elections 2024: Bapi Sarkhel quits Congress, says 'not interested in ticket'

Bhubaneswar,(KCN): The grueling heat wave, which is presently sweeping many parts of the state, is expected to continue for three more days with day temperature very likely to increase up to three degrees Celsius. It being the election season, the weather department has advised people to avoid exposure to the sun during gatherings, political rallies and meetings. The regional centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has



issued a yellow warning to six districts. The warning will remain in force till April 6. The districts that have been issued yellow warnings are Bolangir, Keonjhar,

Boudh, Malkangiri, Nayagarh and Angul. Similarly, a yellow warning on account of an expected rise in night temperature has been issued to four districts till April 6.

The IMD has cautioned people against exposing themselves to the sun for extended hours. People have been advised to stay indoors. However, people may heave a sigh of relief

after April 6 when the temperature is expected to plummet by two to four degrees Celsius, informed IMD. "The ongoing heat wave conditions are expected to continue for three more days. It will continue till April 6. Thereafter, it is likely that the temperature will decrease by two to four degrees Celsius. During these three days, people are advised to stay indoors and avoid exposing themselves to the sun," said IMD's regional director, Manorama Mohanty.

Bhubaneswar,(KCN):In a setback to the Congress, senior leader of Paradip, Bapi Sarkhel left the party just a few days after his wife Monideepa crossed over to the BJD. Now, his next move is under close watch of political observers amid speculations that he may land in the ruling party after parting ways with Congress. Sarkhel said, "I have resigned from Congress this morning. I had distanced myself from the party. Many of our candidates affiliated with



our outfit 'Ama Paradip Ama Pragati' won some seats in the civic body polls. Now I want to focus on serving the labourers and the trade unions" "I will decide my next course of action after taking advice from my supporters. There is

no chance to keep myself away from politics," he said. However, he denied reports about contesting polls in Paradip. "Neither I nor my wife have any inclination toward Paradip ticket," he said. On the other hand, Odisha Congress chief, Sarat Pattanayak said, "It is the Congress party and it produces leaders. His leaving will have no impact on our electoral politics. We lost elections in 1977 and came back to power in 1980." He sounded confident about the Congress's electoral success.

Gensol Engineering Ltd.'s subsidiary, Scorpius Trackers, achieves milestone of 1000 MW + contracted orders globally

Bhubaneswar(KCN) : Scorpius Trackers, a leading solar tracking technology company and subsidiary of Gensol Engineering Ltd. (BSE: 542851, NSE: GENSOL), proudly announces the achievement of reaching a significant milestone of 1000 MW + in contracted orders across India, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Uganda solidifying its position as a key player in the global solar tracking industry. With a steadfast commitment to

excellence, Scorpius Trackers has established itself as a frontrunner in delivering reliable and bankable single-axis trackers. The company's cutting-edge solar tracking technology featuring maintenance-free bearings, real-time GPS-enabled tracking, IoT (Internet of Things), Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA), has set new benchmarks for efficiency and performance in solar power generation.

Commenting on reaching this significant milestone, Shailesh Vaidya, CEO, Scorpius Trackers, "Crossing the 1000 MW + mark of contracted orders is not just a milestone but a testament to our unwavering dedication to providing best-in-class solar tracking solutions that enhance efficiency, reliability, and cost-effectiveness for our clients. This achievement is a result of the hard work and dedication of our team over the years. We remain committed to collaborating

with global and local partners to accelerate the world's energy transition journey." The company's client portfolio includes ReNew, Hero Future, Shapoorji, Tata Power, Engine, Sterling Wilson, Azure Power, Kosol Energy and many others. Notably, the company achieved the highest performing tracker generation at a Commercial and Industrial (C&I) site with the client Ajanta Clocks, Gujarat with more than 21L units per MWp using mono facial modules.

No democracy & principles in BJD: Ex-deputy Speaker Ramchandra Panda after quitting party

Bhubaneswar,(KCN):The political equation is reportedly fast changing in Ganjam district as one BJD leader after another is deserting the party. Former deputy Speaker of the Odisha Assembly Ramachandra Panda quit the party on Thursday, alleging that the party lacks democracy and has deviated from its ideals. State secretary of the BJD, T Gopi also left the party. Both leaders sent their resignation letters to the BJD president Naveen Patnaik. Panda took this step a day after BJP leader Bhruhu Baxipatra joined



the BJD and was named the party's MP nominee for the Berhampur Lok Sabha seat. Expressing his unhappiness, Panda alleged that the BJD lacks democracy and deviated from its principles. He also said that the party gives tickets to people just

two hours after their joining even though leaders like him have been in the party for many years. He said, "I didn't like the rude behaviour of some leaders. The party could not repose faith in my leadership. I was not allowed to take part in party meetings. I was

keen to contest for the Lok Sabha seat. I felt the party just wanted to bind me by keeping me in a position. The party had been telling me that my political standing in the polls was being assessed. But nothing happened finally." He pointed out that a leader in Bhubaneswar joined the BJD and was immediately given a ticket while Bhruhu Babu was given a ticket just a few minutes after joining. However, Panda did not mention about his next course of action. No comments were received from the BJD.

BJP demands immediate expulsion of VK Pandian as 5T chairman

Bhubaneswar,(KCN): Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday demanded immediate expulsion of VK Pandian as Odisha 5T chairman. As per the saffron party, Pandian has been enlisted as the number one officer on the website of the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). However, he is participating in all the party meetings, distributing tickets among the candidates and managing the party affairs, the BJP alleged. The Opposition party in the State questioned whether Pandian is a BJD leader or an officer. The party has sought



clarification from the State government whether BJD leader Pandian can remain in the list of the officers when the model code of conduct for the upcoming 2024 General Elections has already been announced. The party has also sought an answer from the Chief Secretary in

this regard. "We are utterly surprised that Pandian's name is still there in the list of officers on the CMO website? When he is still in the officers' list, will he be able to take part in BJD's meetings, distribute tickets among the candidates and manage the party affairs as the

model code of conduct is effective?" BJP spokesperson Anil Biswal questioned. "Under similar circumstances, emergency was announced in the country. Same kind of situation has happened in Odisha. I feel election of CM Naveen Patnaik and BJD will be challenged in the court in future. We request the Chief Secretary of Odisha for immediate expulsion of the 5T Chairman," he added. No comment in response to the BJP's allegations could be obtained from the ruling BJD.



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'Crew' box office Day 6: Kareena Kapoor film remains steady, earns Rs 41 crore



The box office collection of 'Crew' has stabilised after a good opening weekend in the theatres. As per an industry tracker's early estimates, the film added another Rs 3.25 crore on Wednesday, April 3, bringing the total net domestic collection to Rs 40.70 crore.

The makers of 'Crew' shared on Wednesday that after five days, the Kareena Kapoor, Tabu and Kriti Sanon-led film amassed a total of Rs 77.33 crore globally. They are yet to update the film's sixth-day worldwide collection. In India, the film's gross box

office collection is Rs 44.25 crore.

On Wednesday, the film had an overall 11.60 per cent Hindi occupancy, with night shows registering the maximum footfall. 'Crew' began its run at the ticket windows on March 29 (Friday) with an earning of Rs 9.25 crore. The number grew over the next two days as it earned Rs 9.75 crore on Saturday and Rs 10.5 crore on Sunday. It also passed the crucial first Monday test by adding Rs 4.2 crore to its total collection.

'Crew' is Kareena's first hit since 2019. Her last release, 'Laal Singh

Chaddha' couldn't perform well at the box office and ended its run with a collection of Rs 58.73 crore. However, for Kriti, 'Crew' is her second hit of the year after 'Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya' minted Rs 80.76 crore. Tabu delivered her last hit, 'Drishyam 2' in 2022. Also starring Ajay Devgn, it earned Rs 240.54 crore. Helmed by Rajesh Krishnan, 'Crew' also starred Diljit Dosanjh and Kapil Sharma, in extended cameos. It is produced by Balaji Telefilms and Anil Kapoor Film & Communications Network.

Ali Abbas says Katrina Kaif was offered 'Bade Miyan...' : She is always on my mind

Bade Miyan Chote Miyan director Ali Abbas Zafar recently disclosed that he had initially offered the Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff film to Katrina Kaif as one of the female leads. Apart from Akshay and Tiger, the film features Alaya F and Manushi Chhillar in lead roles. Zafar said he always thinks of Katrina first when casting his film.

Speaking to News18, the director said, "Katrina is always on my mind when it comes to making

any film. If I don't cast her, she calls and tells me, 'Why aren't you taking me in your film?' She said the same this time around too. Whenever I've worked with her, we've always shared a great bond as a director-actor duo. Katrina couldn't do our film because she was busy with something else. I just hope that she keeps her dates free for my next film."

Heaping praise on Katrina's acting skills, Zafar added, "I feel

there's a lot of potential in her as an actor. Be it Bharat, Mere Brother Ki Dulhan or Tiger Zinda Hai, she has done some really good work with me. Every time I make a film, the first call I get is from Katrina where she complains about me not casting her. She often asks, 'Why am I not being offered this film?'"

Ali Abbas Zafar is currently awaiting the release of Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, which will arrive in theatres on April 10.



Govind Padmasoorya and Gopika Anil tie the knot in traditional ceremony

Malayalam actor and TV host Govind Padmasoorya, popularly known by his initials GP, tied the knot with actor Gopika Anil at Vadakkumathan Temple in Thrissur district, Kerala, on Sunday. Now, social media is flooded with photos and videos from the ceremony, with many fans sending them warm wishes.

During the traditional ceremony, GP wore a traditional mundu (dhoti) while Gopika looked elegant in a Kerala saree. According to reports, only their close relatives attended the wedding.

GP and Gopika got engaged in October last year at a private ceremony with their family members and



close friends in attendance. GP mentioned on Instagram that it was an arranged marriage initiated by their families.

Leading up to the

wedding, the couple shared photos and videos from the Ayinnoon and Haldi ceremonies with their fans.

Before the wedding, the couple also had the

opportunity to meet Malayalam superstar Mohanlal, with whom Gopika had worked in the blockbuster film Balettan (2003) as a child artiste.

GP, who began his acting career with the lead role in MG Sasi's Atayalungal (2008), has appeared in movies such as Daddy Cool (2009), IG (2009), Natholi Oru Cheriya

Meenalla (2013), Varsham (2014), Pretham 1 and 2 (2016, 2018), Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo (2020), Bangarraju (2022) and Neeraja (2023) as well. He, however, became a household name when he began appearing as the host of the TV dance show D 4 Dance.

Gopika, on the other hand, started her career as a child artist in Shaji Kailas' Shivam (2002). Apart from Shivam and Balettan, she has appeared in movies such as Mayilattam (2004) and Akale (2004). She gained fame through her roles in TV serials like Kabani (2019-20) and Santhwanam (2020-24). Gopika, who hails from Kozhikode, is also an Ayurveda doctor.

Will there be a Fighter 2? Siddharth Anand opens up about plans for sequel to Hrithik Roshan, Deepika Padukone film



Siddharth Anand's Hrithik Roshan and Deepika Padukone-starrer Fighter has surpassed the Rs 100 crore mark in the domestic market within just four days of its release. According to industry tracker Sacnilk's early estimates, the film earned Rs 28.50 crore

on Sunday, bringing its India nett collection to Rs 118 crore. Currently, the movie's worldwide gross stands at Rs 137.5 crore. Meanwhile, amid the massive success of the movie, director Siddharth Anand has opened up about his plans for the movie's sequel. "Yeah, that audience will decide. Abhi dekhte hain abhi 3

hi din hue hain (We'll see. It's been just three days since the film release). I think audience ka pyaar (love) will decide what we will do, and we would love to make Fighter 2 a larger story. We have some great ideas that we want to put it down to," he said during a chat with Pinkvilla.



Laxman Utekar's Chhaava, a historical drama based on the life of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, the son of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, marks the first collaboration between actors Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna. While Kaushal plays the role of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, Mandanna takes on the role of his wife, Yesubai Bhonsale, in the much-anticipated film. Meanwhile, Mandanna on Saturday announced that she has completed filming her parts for the movie, while also heaping praise on director Utekar and Kaushal.

'Chirag' : Bearer of Immense Possibilities of Bihar Politics

-Lalit Garg-



Chirag Paswan calls himself Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Hanuman.' During the electioneering, he is in the limelight in Bihar politics. By rapidly strengthening his political base through political acumen and effective strategy, 'Chirag' of Bihar politics is becoming a carrier of immense possibilities. Chirag Paswan is a capable public representative, as well as a symbol of original thinking and sensitivities. He has great experience at a young age in making a distinction between relevant and irrelevant by being microscopic, far-sighted and making his presence felt in Indian politics. The true representative of democracy is the one who strengthens the country along with strengthening his caste, class and society. Chirag, who is fighting the battle of 'Bihar First, Bihari First', is committed to connecting 14 crore Biharis with the

mainstream of development. It would be no surprise if the upcoming Lok Sabha elections-2024 brings forth Chirag's strong and hopeful political future, and leads him to the top of Bihar leadership. Such indications have already started emerging in Bihar politics. Recently, Vinod Tawde from the BJP headquarters made public his formula of seat sharing in the NDA alliance of Bihar, in which BJP got 17 seats, JDU 16 seats and Chirag Paswan led LJP (Ram Vilas) five seats. Whereas, the parties of Upendra Kushwaha and Jitan Ram Manjhi were given one seat each. A big picture of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's residence surfaced, in which Nitish is seen in a blessing posture with his hand on Chirag's shoulder. A similar picture became popular earlier in which Prime Minister Narendra Modi is also seen patting Chirag's back. Big things are often said about the participation of youth in Indian politics from every platform, but no party gives them a chance to lead, because in their eyes, youths are just vote-banks. Political parties keep using them

for mobbing and trolling. However, Chirag broke this pattern, he had won Jamui parliamentary seat by more than 80,000 votes in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, and in a single parliamentary term, he won the trust of

in Bihar, NDA is going to achieve the target of more than 400 seats in the entire country. Chirag Paswan is the son of Ram Vilas Paswan, the top leader of Dalits in Bihar who garnered massive votes in Indian

of an original thinking and Chirag is emerging as a leader symbolizing an original thinking in Indian politics and originality is a strength in itself, which is a person's own creation. The world salutes the one who

someone else to do the thinking for them. If Chirag has thought something new for the young generation in Indian politics, has thought something original, then success is the dead cert. There is no

well as central politics. However, the biggest challenge before him will be to become the next flag bearer of Dalit politics and gain acceptance amongst his target voter group. Chirag is adept at drawing new lines, he will not just be a shadow of his father, but will set some new paradigms and create new definitions of politics; because they are adept at creating an environment of trust and confidence by creating harmony in adverse situations.

Finding a solution to widely prevalent despair amongst youths is a big challenge for an aspiring, strong and powerful nation. Chirag has experienced this situation; it is the result of his positive politics and humanitarian thinking. Chirag is a little different from other leader's sons in this matter, because his outlook and style appear to be future-oriented and evolutionary. This is why Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also deeply understood the political possibilities in Chirag. Despite all this, the question remains whether Chirag will be able to give a new dimension to his father's

legacy of Dalit politics. Or will he show his ability in mainstream politics apart from this legacy? Chirag is an expert in understanding the nuances of politics. In understanding the meteorology of politics, Chirag has well sensed Modi's storm; about which he is in no doubt. He also has strong acceptance among his voter group. In recent times, many leaders and sons of the new generation in Indian politics have not yet raised much hope. Be it Rahul Gandhi or Tejashwi Yadav, at present their political stars are rising and falling. At the same time, they are failing somewhere in maintaining continuity in their influence. Although Chirag does not own a huge political legacy in comparison to these names, yet he has proved his sense of belonging, the ability to do something unique and win the hearts of the people.

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the public to such an extent that in the 2019 elections, Chirag got more than 5 lakh votes, achieving victory for the second consecutive term. Chirag, who has a charismatic personality, has claimed that NDA will get 40 out of 40 seats in Bihar in the upcoming elections. However, there is no doubt about this claim, because in 2019 when there were 3 parties in NDA, 39 out of 40 seats were won, while currently there are 5 parties in NDA and the enthusiasm of the people shows that with 40 seats

politics under the banner of Lok Janshakti Party (LJP). Chirag has created a buzz in highlighting the youth possibilities not only in the politics of Bihar, but also in the entire country. This is the voice that will give a new direction and vision to Indian politics, because of the policy of social upliftment. By running an NGO in the name of employment, he has made possible the political campaign to provide employment to the youth of Bihar on a large scale. 'Chirag's employment' is the result

dares to raise his head above the crowd, who makes his existence known. Originality is as valuable today as it always has been. If a person has got an original idea or program, the world moves aside to make way for him and allows him to move forward. The person who invents original ideas and new ways of working is the great creative power of the society and nation, otherwise the world is full of such ordinary people who want to follow behind, and want

doubt that with this thinking, he will prove capable of providing successful leadership by moving from state politics to central politics. LJP is now completely in the hands of the youth. Chirag is young, capable, a strong speaker, a skilled organizer and manager, and he has proved his decisiveness along with these abilities on many occasions in the past. It has come to light on many occasions that he has come to understand very well the intricacies and equations of Bihar as

Botox for Hair

Shahnaz Husain



Hair Botox, this non-invasive treatment has gained popularity in recent years due to its ability to treat a variety of hair concerns such as frizziness, split ends, and lack of shine.

Hair botox' is a term used to describe a hair treatment that aims to rejuvenate and restore damaged and broken hair fibres.

The hair on your head loses fullness and elasticity as it ages, just like your skin due to pollution, lifestyle, stress and heat on strands. It's perfect for those with dry, brittle, and color-damaged hair.

Hair Botox acts as the ultimate deep conditioning treatment that coats

hair fibres with a filler, such as keratin making it a safe and painless process.

. It helps people who are seeking solutions for Split ends, Damaged hair, Frizz and dryness, Hair lacking volume or sheen, and Naturally wavy or curly hair. Hair Botox treatment doesn't require any surgery or a significant amount of downtime

Besides taming the frizz, the treatment also adds moisture and shine to the hair. It suits everyone regardless of hair type. It works equally well on any type of hair, from fine and straight to thick and curly.

The procedure involves a specialised formula containing proteins, amino acids, vitamins, antioxidants, and, in some cases, hyaluronic acid is used. These ingredients penetrate

the hair shaft and repair damage while also providing hydration and improving hair health. The treatment allows the ingredients to penetrate deep into the hair shaft, infuses the hair with intense hydration while replacing/filling in the lost cuticle layers, creating a protective barrier, coating the hair shaft in essence, gluing the cuticle layers down, and temporarily filling in/ replacing lost cuticles.

Your hair first will be needed to be given a thorough wash to get rid of the excess oil, dirt and chemicals. A post-hair botox shampoo should be mild, gentle and free of sulfates, sodium chloride, silicones, and parabens that will keep hair cuticles closed and smooth. Besides, a moisturizing conditioner should be formulated with natural seed oils,

hydrolyzed proteins, and other plant extracts. You can Apply a hair mask once a week to moisturize the hair.



Your hair will then be dried in sections and the botox treatment will be applied thoroughly through your hair, from the roots to the tips. The treatment is then left on for about 60 minutes, after which a soft hair cleanser is used to wash the botox off.

Your hair will be dried first, then heat-straightened to help seal in the treatment

in the fibers of your hair.

The infusion of nourishing ingredients restores the natural hydration

balance, leaving the hair noticeably softer and more manageable. It rejuvenates hair by infusing it with powerful nutrients, proteins, and moisture, revitalising even the most damaged strands.

This results in stronger, smoother, and more manageable hair that looks healthy and vibrant.

Botox hair treatment

provides long-lasting results. Botox is supposed to last around 4 months making it a cost-effective and



preferred choice for those seeking sustained improvements in hair texture although the exact time frame will vary from person to person.

However, results can differ based on the person's hair type, the product used, and the professional applying it. Always discuss it with your health care professional or dermatologist beforehand.

The treatment fills in any broken or thin areas on each hair strand to make the hair appear more full and lustrous.

Hair Botox is considered safe for use, although as with any hair treatment, there is a risk for skin irritation, burns or an allergic reaction.

To reduce the risk of damaging side effects, the treatment shouldn't come in contact with your skin.

Always choose a reputed salon and professional to do the procedure. Be sure to share any allergies or sensitivities you may have with them. Use a patch test to check for allergies or adverse reactions before using the product all over your head.

The author is an international fame beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India

properties. These ingredients can increase hydration, improve texture, reduce frizz, and make styling an easier feat.

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The Chief of the Royal Australian Navy Vice Admiral Mark Hammond calling on the Defence Secretary, Shri Girdhar Aramane, in New Delhi

Encourage People From Manipur Living Outside To Vote In State: Delhi Meitei Forum

New Delhi(KCN): A civil society group based in Delhi and run by working professionals from Manipur has appealed to people from the crisis-hit state who are living across the country to return home, if they can, to participate in the electoral process in the world's largest democracy. Manipur has two Lok Sabha seats - Inner Manipur, and a reserved seat, Outer Manipur. The Lok Sabha elections will be held in the state that's recovering from ethnic clashes between the Kuki-Zo tribes and the Meiteis, and where over 45,000 people are still living in relief camps. "We would like to appeal to everyone from Manipur, from all communities, who are living outside the state to go to Manipur and cast their vote in this Lok

Sabha election," the civil society group Delhi Meitei Forum (DMF) said in a statement. "Travel to Manipur is expensive, so we understand that's a roadblock. However, whoever can afford to go to Manipur should participate in the electoral process in the world's largest democracy," said the DMF, which has been proving aid and other humanitarian relief to internally displaced people in Manipur. "Choosing a good leader is the need of the hour more than ever, a leader who can solve the Manipur crisis and bring peace for all communities," a key member of the DMF said. The DMF said it is a "completely independent group" working for the well-being of the Meitei community, and asked



other civil society groups not to include its name as a partner or a member in their activities. DMF sources said they have seen some groups using the DMF name as a partner in their communication to the authorities, which should not be done to avoid legal issues. Another group, the Delhi Meitei Coordinating Committee (DMCC), had in a statement said it has written to the Chief Justice of India, the Chief Election Commissioner, and other

constitutional authorities to defer the Lok Sabha elections in Manipur. The DMCC had mentioned the DMF is part of the D M C C "conglomeration", which DMF sources said is simply wrong. The Inner Manipur constituency will see a massive electoral battle among candidates who all have wide acceptance among the public, leaving voters spoilt for choices. The BJP has fielded Manipur Education Minister and former Indian Police Service

officer Thounaojam Basanta Kumar Singh, and the Congress has fielded Angomcha Bimol Akoijam, who is a professor in Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University. This would be Mr Akoijam's first electoral contest. Maheshwar Thounaojam of the Republican Party of India (Athawale) is also giving a spirited fight. The BJP is not contesting in Outer Manipur, but supporting Kachui Timothy Zimik, a candidate of the BJP's ally Naga People's Front (NPF). The Congress has fielded Alfred Kanngam S Arthur in this constituency. The entire Inner Manipur constituency and some areas under Outer Manipur will vote on April 19. The remaining areas under Outer Manipur will vote on April 26. Votes will be counted on June 4.

PM Modi Sets Ambitious India Economic Goals For Probable 3rd Term

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, confident of winning the national election starting this month, has set an ambitious target of roughly doubling the economy and exports this decade, according to a government document seen by news agency

Reuters. PM Modi has highlighted economic growth as one of his biggest achievements in election rallies and has "guaranteed" making the economy the third-largest in the world from fifth now if he wins a third term in a row as

polls predict. He has already asked officials to finalise plans by around May to expand the economy to \$6.69 trillion in nominal terms by 2030, from around \$3.51 trillion currently, according to the October document. Though short on concrete details of

how to achieve that, it has been a basis for officials' meetings. When he took office for a second term five years ago, PM Modi promised to take the economy to \$5 trillion by the current fiscal year, but partly due to COVID-19 related disruptions, meeting that

target is virtually impossible now. For the next six years, PM Modi's goal is to raise per capita income to \$4,418 from around \$2,500, the document says, without specifying the spending or reforms needed to achieve that.

Sunita Kejriwal Reads Out Jailed Husband's Statement, Background Raises Eyebrows

New Delhi(KCN): When Arvind Kejriwal's wife, Sunita, delivered another message from the jailed chief minister to the people of Delhi on Thursday, what stood out was the background in her video statement. In all her addresses so far, the backdrop had portraits of legendary freedom fighter Bhagat Singh and the Father of the Indian Constitution, BR Ambedkar, but there was a new addition between them in the latest video - a picture of Arvind Kejriwal with bars in front of him to

signify his imprisonment. "Mr Kejriwal has sent a message to all of you from jail: 'I am in prison but no person in Delhi should have to suffer because of that. Every MLA should visit their constituencies every day and ask people if they are facing any problems. They should sort those problems out. I am not just talking about solving problems related to the government, we should attempt to solve their other problems too. The 2 crore people of Delhi are my family. No one should be unhappy. God

bless them all. Jai Hind,'" Ms Kejriwal said in Hindi. The photo of the AAP chief in the message was also noted by the BJP, which accused Mr Kejriwal of attempting to mislead the people of Delhi. "It is very regrettable that the portrait of a corrupt person, Arvind Kejriwal, was hanging between those of Bhagat Singh ji and Babasaheb Ambedkar ji. Earlier, the husband used to lie in front of the camera. Now that he is in jail, he is making his wife lie. The



public is not going to be misled by the AAP," BJP Delhi President Virendra Sachdeva posted in

Hindi on X. After Mr Kejriwal's arrest by the Enforcement Directorate

Metro Railway, Sealdah & Kolkata Railway Stations with Circular Railway, Kolkata North Join Hands with Election Commission to Expand Voter Awareness Efforts

Kolkata, (KCN): The Election Commission has captured election festivities under its umbrella theme "Chunav ka Parv, Desh ka Garv" (Elections: The Biggest Festival and Pride of the Nation). Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) is also leveraging the celebrities and influencers' reach in disseminating voter awareness, another such effort is a production of short film "My Vote, My Duty." In this short film, the National Icon of Election Commission and ace cricketer Sachin Tendulkar along with actors Amitabh Bachchan, R Madhavan, Boman Irani, Arshad Awasi, Sanya Malhotra, Vicky Kaushal, Mona Singh, Bhumi Pednekar and Raveena Tandon

campaigned to encourage first-time voters to participate in the electoral process.

which the Railway authority has taken resort to in the voter awareness drive.



This short film along with the District Election Office, Kolkata North's effort to increase voter awareness took resort to eminent litterateur N a r a y a n G a n g o p a d h y a y 's immortal creation 'Tenida' (Bhajahari Mukherjee) like 'common Man' of R K Laxman. 'Tenida' has been identified as District Mascot for voter awareness purposes,

It is to be mentioned that the real-life Tenida resided at 20, Pataldanga Street of North Kolkata Parliamentary Constituency. The District Mascot 'Tenida' says-The Ballot is stronger than bullet/ Every Vote Counts/ Nothing like Voting/ I Vote for Sure and so on. The video footage of Tenida awaring voters to ensure his/her voting rights on June 1 is now shown in all the station platforms of Metro Railway in Blue and Green Lines as well as found a place in Sealdah and Kolkata Railway stations of Eastern Railway including Circular Railway, Kolkata North.

Jailed Jharkhand Ex-Chief Minister Hemant Soren Not To Contest From Dumka

Ranchi(KCN): The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) on Thursday nominated its Shikaripada legislator Nalin Soren from the Dumka Lok Sabha seat, making it clear that jailed former chief minister Hemant Soren will not contest from the constituency as speculated earlier. The party also fielded its Tundi MLA Mathura Prasad Mahto from Giridih Lok Sabha seat. "The party has decided to field Nalin Soren from Dumka seat and Mathura Prasad Mahto from Giridih," a JMM leader said. The BJP has already nominated Sita Soren, former JMM MLA and sister-in-law of Hemant Soren, from the Dumka constituency, reserved for Scheduled Tribes. Notably, the saffron party had on March 2 renominated sitting MP Sunil Soren from Dumka but later withdrew his candidature in order to field Sita Soren from the seat. Sunil Soren had defeated JMM president Shibu



Soren in the 2019 polls by a margin of 47,590 votes. Sita Soren, a three-term MLA and elder daughter-in-law of JMM patriarch Shibu Soren, joined the BJP last month. She alleged that she was "neglected by the JMM" and was in "isolation" after the death of her husband Durga Soren in 2009. The Congress on March 27 announced the names of candidates for three Lok Sabha constituencies -- Lohardaga, Khunti and Hazaribag. Kalicharan Munda, Sukhdeo Bhagat and Jai Prakashbhai Patel will contest the polls in Khunti (ST), Lohardaga (ST) and Hazaribagh seats respectively.

As per the INDIA bloc leaders, an initial seat-sharing agreement has been finalised for all the 14 Lok Sabha constituencies in the state. According to the initial understanding, the Congress would contest from seven seats and the JMM from five. The RJD and CPI (ML) Liberation would field candidates in one seat each, they said. The CPI (ML) Liberation on March 30 named three-time MLA from the Bagodar seat, Vinod Kumar Singh, for the Koderma Lok Sabha constituency in Jharkhand. The BJP has announced candidates for 13 seats and left Giridih for the AJSU Party.

people of Delhi and also during the 'Save Democracy' rally on Sunday, which was a show of strength by the opposition INDIA bloc. In his first message two days after his arrest, Mr Kejriwal had said, "There are several forces within and outside India that are weakening the country. There is no jail that can keep him behind bars for long. I will come out soon and keep my promises." During Sunday's rally, the chief minister's wife had read out his six guarantees to the people of Delhi ahead of the

Lok Sabha polls and said the people of India were standing with her jailed husband. The AAP chief has been sent to judicial custody till April 15, and the Delhi High Court is hearing a petition filed by him against his arrest. The court had reserved its judgment in the case on Wednesday. In a separate hearing seeking Mr Kejriwal's removal as the chief minister after his arrest, a bench of the high court dismissed the petition on Thursday and said that democracy should take its own course.

Labourers suffer as crusher units flourish

Jajpur(KCN): Lives of the labourers working at the various crusher units (registered and majority unregistered) are full of uncertainty. Not only do they suffer financial losses, in terms of wages, but they are also deprived of other benefits. This is because the owners of the crusher units have tacit understanding with officials of the district administration and the police, sources said. Labourers work in the most hazardous and pitiable conditions in these crusher units without having any insurance coverage for their lives.

As a result, while owners fill up their coffers, the labourers go home almost empty-handed, sources alleged. Sources informed that over 50 crusher units are operating in the district of which only 12 are registered. Even registered ones flout rules with impunity and do not follow any labour laws. Most of the

crusher units and black stone quarries operate in areas under Jenapur police limits in this district. Most of them violate Sections 21, 22, 23, 24, 30, 31, 36 and 85 of the Factory Act.

BJD, BJP submit memorandums to EC over Model Code of Conduct violations Bhubaneswar: The ruling BJD and the principal opposition BJP in Odisha have traded allegations of election Model Code of Conduct (MCC) violations and submitted memorandums to the state's chief electoral officer (CEO) against each other. The BJD accused BJP's Bargarh MP candidate Pradeep Purohit and Bijepur MLA nominee Sanat Gadtia of violating the MCC by attending the golden jubilee celebration of Balitkra Government School under Barpali block of Bargarh district on April 1. Both leaders allegedly addressed the gathering, which the BJD claims is against MCC norms. The party



demanding strict action against the leaders and officials involved in the act. In response, the BJD alleged that BJD MLA Nrusingha Sahu distributed sarees to women voters during a joining programme in Dhenkanal district. Additionally, the BJP claimed that the BJD government distributed Nabin Magic Cards featuring the party symbol, which the saffron party sees as a violation. Furthermore,

the BJP accused the ruling party of distributing money to youths and college students out of fear of losing the election and urged the Election Commission to intervene in the matter. PTI BJD, BJP, EC, Model Code of Conduct

BJD, BJP submit memorandums to EC over Model Code of Conduct violations Sources said that if any labourer dies while working in the crusher

units, the owners usually hush up the matter with the help of the administration and the police. At the most, a meagre sum of Rs 50,000 to Rs 1,00,000 is paid to the family of the worker as compensation. Sources

pointed out that labourers working at the illegal crusher units are deprived of government benefits in case of mishaps. According to a recent report of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) there are around 372 registered

crusher units in Odisha. These units have been permitted to employ a maximum of 7,108 labourers. However, in reality those employed at the registered and unregistered crusher units far exceed the permissible numbers. The crusher units in this district are a case in point. According to a report dated January 30, 2024, there are 12 registered units employing 227 people. However, in reality this is not the case. The district alone has 30 mega crushers while the number of small units is more than 40. Hence one can easily imagine the number of labourers working in these units. All units must provide personal protective equipment (PPE) to the labourers as per Section 62-H of the Odisha Factory Rules-1950. However, most of the crusher units do not provide any protective equipment to labourers. If a complaint is lodged, police tend to look the other way. Recently, a labourer from West Bengal died and another sustained injuries while working at the 'Shiba Shakti Stone Crusher Unit' near a black stone quarry March 17. It has been alleged that the owner hushed up the matter by paying a meagre compensation to both families. Police also did not initiate any action against the errant owner as no official complaint was lodged. Sources also pointed out that despite repeated complaints to the district administration about illegal crusher units, no action has been taken till date.

Biramitrapur bandh peaceful



Rourkela(KCN): The call for a dawn-to-dusk bandh in Biramitrapur town passed off peacefully Wednesday with no untoward incidents being reported. Even though most of the shops remained closed, other commercial establishments remained open. Educational institutions also remained open, but most of the

students stayed away. The bandh was called as a mark of protest against the violence that erupted Monday night in Biramitrapur. During the clash, two persons, identified as Mahabir Sharma and Deepak Sharma, were stabbed and suffered injuries. Both are undergoing treatment at the Rourkela General

Hospital here and their condition is stated to be stable, officials said. The clash could have escalated, but did not do so because of prompt intervention by the police. The main accused in the stabbing incident is still absconding, police said. However, two people have so far been arrested and a few others

have been detained for questioning, police informed. They added that some more arrests will be made in the next couple of days. It should be stated here that there was no formal call given for the bandh by any party. It was word of mouth passed on by people protesting against the stabbing of the two youths. Biramitrapur police station IIC Bandana Patra affirmed that the bandh had gone off peacefully. "This was a suo motto bandh call and it was peaceful," Patra said. "Even though the bandh was called for 12 hours, normalcy returned by around 1.00pm. However, we are maintaining continuous vigil over the situation," Patra added.

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distributed sarees to women voters during a joining programme in Dhenkanal district. Additionally, the BJP claimed that the BJD government distributed

Nabin Magic Cards featuring the party symbol, which the saffron party sees as a violation. Furthermore, the BJP accused the ruling party

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Balasore School triumphs as State Champions in Intach's National Heritage Quiz.

Bhubaneswar (KCN): The Indian National Trust for Art and Culture Heritage (INTACH), Odisha Chapter, held the Finals of the State level inter-school quiz competition on 15th Oct 2023 at the Blossoms School, Bhubaneswar. The INTACH National Heritage Quiz is the biggest event of its type held on a pan-India level. It is an effort to raise awareness and cultivate affection for cultural and architectural heritage. The Quiz was based on the heritage and culture of India, and aimed to increase awareness about our glorious nation among

school children. Students from classes 7th to 10th were eligible to participate in teams of two. In an exciting showcase of knowledge and heritage, the State Final Round saw the emergence of St. Thomas Convent, Balasore as the victor, securing their place in the next round which is the National Level Quiz. The questions asked during the quiz comprised from various topics like India's heritage, history, crafts, art forms, architecture, wildlife sanctuaries, National parks, cultural heritage, art-forms, dances etc. with a special focus

on Odisha's legacy and famous personalities. Altogether it was a passionate approach which was put forward as a learning experience for the students. Quizmaster Bivash Rath Attreya conducted the quiz. Four teams from different districts participated in the final round. The teams were from the St. Thomas Convent, Balasore; Odisha Adarsh Vidyayala, Baripada; Odisha Adarsh Vidyayala, Balangir and Blossoms School, Bhubaneswar. The team of Aryashree Das and Adhikari and



Dibyajoti Das from St. Thomas Convent Balasore were the first and the team from Odisha Adarsh Vidyalaya were runners up. They will go to New Delhi for the National Finals to be held in November. Anil Dhir, Convener of I N T A C H 's Bhubaneswar Chapter, said that the Heritage Quiz was a part of INTACH's initiative for heritage awareness among School children. Amiya Bhushan Tripathy IPS (Retd), State Convener of Intach gave away the prizes and certificates to the participants.

CM Naveen Launches 32 Industrial Projects Worth Rs 6,993 Cr, To Generate 24,508 Jobs

Bhubaneswar(KCN): In a significant milestone in the journey of Odisha's economic advancement, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today inaugurated nine industrial projects and performed a ground-breaking ceremony of 23 industrial units. These Inaugurations & Groundbreaking are statements of the Chief Minister's vision for faster conversion of investment intents to grounding. These projects with a total investment of Rs 6,992.94 Crore and employment potential of 24,508 are spread over

14 districts i.e., Bolangir, Boudh, Cuttack, Ganjam, Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Khurda, Puri, Rayagada, Sambalpur, Subarnapur & Sundergarh. Speaking on this occasion, the Chief Minister said, "Our industrial portfolio is expanding with the inclusion of new age and employment-intensive sectors such as green energy equipment manufacturing, textiles, tourism, etc. The continuous improvement in the Ease of Doing Business ranking of the state, coupled with a

business-friendly environment, world-class industrial infrastructure, and highly sought-after skill development initiatives, has been instrumental in attracting investments to Odisha. Highlighting the fact that the 32 projects are spread across 14 districts, the Chief Minister expressed his pleasure in the broad-basing of industrialization in the state. The ceremony was held through Video conferencing in the presence of the Minister Industries, MSME & Energy, senior government officials and representatives of these Industries.

An alltime record cargo handling in 2023-24 at Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata since 1870

Kolkata (AMBAR MUKHERJEE): In its 154-year history, Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata (SMP Kolkata) including Kolkata Dock System (KDS) and Haldia Dock Complex (HDC), achieved a milestone in the fiscal year 2023-24 by handling 66.4 million metric tonnes (MMT) of cargo, marking a 1.11% increase from the previous record of 65.66 million tonnes moved in 2022-23. Chairman of the SMP Rathendra Raman attributed this unprecedented throughput to a series of strategic initiatives implemented by the port to enhance productivity, safety measures, business development, and overall capacity

utilization. Highlighting HDC's significant contribution, Raman said that the complex handled 49.54 MMT in FY 2023-24, marking its highest cargo volume ever since its inception and surpassing the previous record of 48.608 MMT in FY 2022-23, representing an increase of 1.91%. Meanwhile, KDS managed 16.856 MMT of cargo in 2023-24 compared to 17.052 MMT in 2022-23. He emphasized the port's robust financial performance in 2023-24, achieving a net surplus of Rs. 501.73 crores as well, a significant 65% growth over the previous year's net surplus of Rs. 304.07 crores, marking a remarkable accomplishment.

To augment capacity of the port, SMP Kolkata is stressing on the PPP Projects in a big way. Concession awarded by SMPK for 2 PPP projects costing Rs 480 crores by Century Ports Ltd. on 24.06.2023 and M/s Adani Port & SEZ on 14.07.2023 respectively for rejuvenation of KPD-I West (Cost Rs. 181.81 crores) and mechanization of berth no. 2 at HDC (Cost 298.28 crore) which could lead to Incremental Capacity Addition of 6.78 MMT (approx.) Three more projects (berth No 5) for HDC, strengthening and mechanization of Berth no. 7 and 8 NSD and Floating Crane at Diamond Harbour at a cost of Rs 1160 crore, incremental capacity of

4.5 MMT) are likely to reach award stage by 2024-25. The chairman said development of drainage network (Phase-IIA) on eastern side of dock basin at Haldia dock complex, Haldia under master drainage plan (Cost Rs.26.79 Cr.) Regarding implementation of energy efficient/smart fittings and outdoor purpose along-with roof top solar power plant at KDS, Lol issued for smart lght to Schnell Energy Equipment's Pvt. Ltd. on 20.12.23 (Value: 4.76 cr. excluding GST). 4 Major Projects costing Rs. 201.23 cr. completed during FY 2023-24: Procurement of 1 no. 40 tonne Rail Mounted Quay Crane (RMQC) at HDC, (Cost Rs.52.82 Cr. and

0.25 MMTPA capacity addition). Raman thanked Indian Railways, Department of Customs, Government of West Bengal, NHAI and other organizations for their continued support. Furthermore, the Chairman attributed the achievement for the growth in diverse cargo types, the influx of new and additional cargo, and the multi-faceted user-friendly measures, such as better services, improved facilities, cost-effective and customer-friendly charges and all-out efforts of the workers of the port. He congratulated all the officers, staff and unions, PPP Operators, Stevedores, Stakeholders, etc. for working like a team to produce the spectacular performance.

Dalmia Bharat Celebrates Empowerment of 18000 women on International Day of Rural Women

Bhubaneshwar,(KCN): Dalmia Bharat Group, India's leading conglomerate with businesses in cement and sugar, announces the successful empowerment of 18000 women on International Day of Rural Women. Through the establishment of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), these women are provided essential skill training and access to vital resources for sustainable livelihood development. In collaboration with various organisations like NRLM, NABARD, etc. Dalmia Bharat organizes various training initiatives like micro-enterprise development, handicraft production and others in both farming and non-farming sectors. All these activities are conducted in communities settled around their regions of operation across 12 states in India. These initiatives aim to upskill rural women to empower them, diversify their income sources and provide access to formal credit systems. Two notable initiatives in Odisha include Project Hastakala – upskilling women artisans and enterprise development via mushroom cultivation in communities surrounding its facilities in

Cuttack, Rajgangpur, and Lanjiberna Mines. Dalmia Bharat has enabled over 10,000 women in Odisha to become financially independent earning a monthly income ranging from Rs.4000 to Rs8000, significantly improving their individual well-being and the ability to support their families. Commenting on the company's initiatives on International Day of Rural Women Mr. Ashok K. Gupta, CEO, Dalmia Bharat Foundation said, "Rural women in developing countries play a vital role in food security and economic development but face severe marginalization, including limited land ownership, higher illiteracy rates and unequal earnings compared to men. Dalmia Bharat is dedicated to uplifting marginalized rural women through holistic programs that bolster their income while managing household responsibilities. Our commitment aligns with UN Sustainable Goals, promoting self-reliance and gender equality for an inclusive and sustainable India, where empowered women drive community and national development." Project Hastakala is an 'earning with joy' skill

development programme where women are trained in the unique tie & dye batik products. This project is conducted in tribal areas of Jhagarpur & Katang panchayat in Odisha. After witnessing immense success at national exhibitions, Dalmia Bharat introduced the SADRIe brand for promoting the handmade batik products like bedsheets, handkerchiefs, scarves etc. through multiple marketing platforms. Another successful initiative includes enterprise development through mushroom cultivation. Dalmia Bharat actively facilitates training programs and market linkage support for SHG women, equipping them to earn an additional monthly income of Rs. 5000 by establishing their own cultivation units. International Day of Rural Women, observed annually on 15th October, celebrates the vital role of rural women in agriculture, food security, and rural development. It highlights the need to empower them, address inequalities, and aligns with global goals for gender equality and sustainable development.

Airtel Xstream Fiber unlocks its NEW All-in-One plans

Bhubaneswar: To serve the needs of premium households who want the next generational connectivity and entertainment experience, Bharti Airtel ("Airtel"), India's premier communications solutions provider, has once again raised the bar in the home broadband segment with the launch of three new all-in-one plans built for the evolving entertainment needs of today's connected homes. Vir Inder Nath, CEO – Homes, Bharti Airtel had this to say: "Our new plans are built for India's emerging entertainment needs. Through these bundle offers we plan to offer our discerning customers great value, convenience and unlock a multi-faceted digital experience."

Increased broadband consumption in Indian homes has given rise to the phenomena of hybrid viewing, where families are looking to consume OTT content on the TV screen along with linear TV without the hassle of managing multiple subscriptions and devices. Airtel's plans are the first of their kind in terms of catering to the evolving entertainment needs of the whole family and come with: Subscription to 17 premium OTTs to go with unlimited data. This includes Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+ Hotstar and Airtel Xstream Premium (SonyLiv, Lionsgate, Hoichoi and 11 more OTTs). 350+ TV channels covering the best of linear TV. Airtel 4K Xstream TV Box* that allows you to enjoy OTT and linear TV content with a single device and single remote.

EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES AWAIT SINGAPORE AIRLINES CUSTOMERS

Singapore: Airlines (SIA) today unveiled its all-new flagship SilverKris and KrisFlyer Gold lounges at Singapore Changi Airport Terminal 3, following a \$550 million re-design, upgrade, and expansion project. This will further enhance the on-ground customer experience at the Airline's main hub, and comes as the demand for international air travel from and through Singapore takes off once again.

The Private Room, the First Class section of the SilverKris Lounge, the Business Class section of the SilverKris Lounge, and the KrisFlyer Gold Lounge can collectively accommodate around 1,150 customers within

their 6,100 square-metres, translating to 30% more seats and space. This also doubles the capacity that was available during the pandemic while the upgrading works were going on. The Airline has created a sanctuary that has been thoughtfully designed to enhance the comfort and convenience of diverse groups of travellers, and meet their evolving needs in the coming years. Customers will be able to enjoy world-class products and services, as well as enticing food and beverage options, around the clock at the lounges before their flight.

Mr Goh Choon Phong, Chief Executive Officer, Singapore Airlines, said: "Extensive customer

engagement and research have gone into the design of the new SilverKris and KrisFlyer Gold lounges. Customers will enjoy a thoughtfully curated product offerings and experience the signature Singapore Airlines hospitality, all within a comfortable and restful environment, ensuring that they are refreshed and ready for their journey.

"Opening these lounges at this time signals our commitment to SIA's premium brand and growth strategy. It reinforces our position as Changi Airport's anchor airline, and reflects our confidence in Singapore's future as a pre-eminent global air hub."

WHEC recognizes Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham as excellence worldwide in Gender Equality

Barcelona: Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham was invited to the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference (WHEC), which recently took place in Barcelona, Spain. UNESCO recognized Amrita as one of five universities of excellence worldwide for its performance in gender equality. The WHEC aims to reshape ideas and practices in higher

education to ensure sustainable development for the planet and humanity, as well as to define and prepare a roadmap for a new era of higher education. As the world comes out of COVID-19, the WHEC's goals and strategic scope remain, and the new timeframe represents an opportunity to deepen and expand common efforts of knowledge production,

policy dialogue, exchange, and networking. Swami Amritaswarupananda Puri, President of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, participated in a round table called "Universities' Contribution to Gender Equality: A global perspective". Adding to his views Swami Amritaswarupananda expressed how Amrita is

making a difference in terms of gender equality and which policies have been put into place at the university level. Gender equality is number five in the United Nations' list of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He explained how the culture of gender equality is not implemented only in terms of policies within Amrita, but also practiced in spirit.

The round table included Dr. Gloria Bonder, UNESCO Chair on Women, Science and Technology; Dr. Ricardo Vilanueva Lomeli, Rector General, University of Guadalajara; Ms. Elizabeth Shepherd, Leader of the Consultancy team, Times Higher Education; and Dr. Victoria Galan-Muros, Chief of Research and Analysis,

"I was almost embarrassed with our first half of the game today" - Ponting

NewDelhi:Unacceptable and embarrassed were the words Ricky Ponting chose to use to describe their bowling performance following Delhi Capitals' 106-run loss to Kolkata Knight Riders in Visakhapatnam. On a day where the Knight Riders registered the second highest total in the IPL - 272/7 - Rishabh Pant ended up being fined INR 24 Lakhs for the Capitals' second over-rate offence this season and head coach Ponting sought to quickly fix their shortcomings. "It's pretty hard to assess right now. I mean I was almost embarrassed with

our first half of the game today," said Ponting at the post-match press conference. "To concede that many runs...we bowled 17 wides and it took us two hours to bowl our overs as well, so we were two overs behind again, which means the guys bowling last two overs only get to bowl with four fieldsmen outside the circle. "Lot of things happened in this game that were unacceptable and a lot of things we will talk as a group tonight that we have to fix immediately to go forward in the competition. There will be some good open discussions in the

changing room for sure." It didn't help the Capitals that skipper Pant did not take the review on a couple of occasions. The first time was in the fourth over, off the fourth ball from Ishant Sharma who was confident that Narine (batting on 24 at that stage) had edged the ball. But Pant was very late to signal to the umpire as the time had run out by then. Narine scored 26 in that over and went on to hit a 39-ball 85 that set the platform for the Knight Riders' massive total. Shreyas Iyer was batting on 3 when Rasikh Salam thought he had dismissed him caught-behind in the



15th over but Pant again did not opt for the review. "I haven't had a chance to talk to Rishabh about

those. I mean, obviously, Rishabh hasn't heard them, other fielders and bowlers did hear

something on both occasions. But look, at the end of the day, they are little things. There are other bigger concerns for us with the way we bowled, some of the field placings we had set and just how long it's taking us to get around," said Ponting, who was more critical of the over-rate. "We can't afford to do that, no other team is doing that. We have been two overs down two games in a row, that's more than 10 minutes down going into the last couple of overs of a bowling innings. It probably didn't cost us today because they'd have gotten 250 anyway

but going forward in the tournament, it will definitely cost us something if we can't fix it."As many as 88 runs were scored in the powerplay which set the base for the Knight Riders. Ponting said after the kind of start they got, it was only about trying to minimise the damage for the remainder of the innings, which the Capitals failed to do."The start didn't help. Even thinking about the first ball of the game. They got off to a flying start in the powerplay, they were 90 maybe at the end of first six overs. So that phase is not ideal. If that happens at the start of a

game, you are always trying to fight your way back into the game. They didn't allow us to do that today. They were relentless, the way they kept going at us after that start."I thought the youngster at No.3 (Angkrish Raghuvanshi) played really well and that allowed Russ (Andre Russell) and all those guys to play the way they always play. And they had wickets in hand, so they can keep going hard. They did lots of things really well but we got to be really critical of ourselves, on our own performances, and we got to look at ways to get better for the next game," Ponting said.

Dhananjaya lauds fast bowlers after series win



NewDelhi:Sri Lankan skipper Dhananjaya de Silva said on Wednesday that he is very satisfied with the performances of his pace unit as they proved they can be successful even on dead wickets. Sri Lanka swept away the hosts in the two-match series after earning a 192-run win in the series concluding second Test and their fast bowlers played a big part in it grabbing 37 wickets altogether. "As a captain I think more than going with a spinner on a dead wicket, I like to play a more aggressive brand of cricket, and go with fast bowlers. That's why we went with three quicks. Our bowlers don't need to have grass on the track to get wickets, and they proved that," Dhananjaya told

reporters on Wednesday after the win. "To get a wicket is really hard here. It's very hot with the sun, and there was not a lot of life in the pitch, so we had to work very hard. Because of our batters' talents, we were able to have a massive first-innings lead. That was very advantageous for our bowlers. "To have a series like this where the fast bowlers win for us is a big morale boost for the team. There are areas in which we have to improve, and we will touch those up. But we will fix these and as that tour gets close, we'll be 100% ready. We're very satisfied with the win. There are many areas for us to improve, and I've talked about those with the team and the

coaches are working towards that. If we can learn day by day and raise our game by 1%, we can make winning a habit." The skipper once again stressed on the need to be aggressive in these conditions to keep pushing for wickets. "Sometimes you have to be a little aggressive. In a country like this where you're playing in heat, sometimes some players get lethargic. But if in the field me or someone else dives around a little bit and makes a good stop, everyone gets a little boost. I'm trying to keep the other 10 players in the game. I'm not saying I need to be harsh, but I do think you need to have a bit of aggression when you lead." Dhananjaya added that there is no rivalry between them following the in-famous timed out incident involving Angelo Mathews. "I don't think so. There's no rivalry. It's just a match between two nations. The game should be with the spirit, and should play hard. It happens in every match, not just against Bangladesh," he concluded.

AIFF closes investigation into alleged physical assault of women players by EC member

NewDelhi:The All India Football Federation (AIFF) on Wednesday said it has closed the investigation into its suspended executive committee member Deepak Sharma for his alleged physical assault of two women players in Goa as the victims "do not wish to pursue the matter any further". The development comes only a day after the AIFF suspended Sharma until further notice. In a statement, the AIFF said its Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), which

investigated the alleged harassment case recently, was "not in a position to continue the investigation as the alleged victim and the other party do not wish to pursue the matter any further." "The ICC would not be in a position to continue the investigation as any complaint and/or further information regarding the alleged incident has been denied by the concerned individuals. "In view of the above, the investigation was concluded as withdrawn," the AIFF

said in the statement. Two footballers of Himachal Pradesh-based Khad FC, taking part in the Indian Women's Football (IWL) League second division, had alleged that Sharma, the owner of the club, had barged into their room and physically assaulted them on the night of March 28. On Saturday, the AIFF asked Sharma to refrain from football-related activities till the conclusion of a probe by a panel into his alleged incident. Sharma was arrested by Goa police

after the host state association lodged a complaint and later released on bail. Before that, the Emergency Committee of the AIFF comprising president Kalyan Chaubey, vice-president N A Haris and treasurer Kipa Ajay, on Monday took stock of the complaints received from the players against Sharma. Thereafter, a meeting of AIFF member associations was held on Monday night and "Sharma was called and heard for a few minutes before he was advised to

leave the meeting." In the complaint sent to the AIFF, the two players said, according to sources, that Sharma was mostly in an inebriated state and they were "scared for their lives." Sports Minister Anurag Thakur had also asked the AIFF to take "quick" and "strong legal action" against the official. On Tuesday, the AIFF also dissolved the three-member committee formed on March 30 to probe the incident, and instead referred the matter to its Disciplinary Committee.

IPL 2024: Rishabh Pant fined Rs 24 Lakh for 2nd consecutive over-rate offence

NewDelhi:DC skipper Rishabh Pant has been fined 24 Lakh rupees for maintaining a slow-over rate for the second consecutive time in IPL 2024 during their loss to KKR on April 3, Wednesday in Vizag. Pant wasn't the only one fined as the rest of the playing XI was also given penalties for the offence during the match. The game saw DC suffer their third loss of the season. While Pant shone with the bat for Delhi along

with Tristan Stubbs, the rest of the side failed to deliver as KKR scored 272 for 7 in 20 overs. This was the second highest score in the history of the IPL and set up a tough chase for DC. The home side would eventually have their innings come to an end at 166, thus handing KKR a 106-run win. The BCCI released a statement after the game revealing that Pant was penalised as DC



maintained a slow over-rate. Since DC were penalised for the same offence in their win over CSK, Pant was fined 24 Lakh rupees. The rest of the side,

including the Impact Player were each fined 6 Lakh rupees or 25 percent of their match fees individually. "Rishabh Pant, the Delhi Capitals captain, has been fined after his team maintained a slow over rate during their TATA Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 match against Kolkata Knight Riders at the Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA

Cricket Stadium, Visakhapatnam on April 3," said BCCI in an official release. "As it was his team's second offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over rate offences, Pant was fined INR 24 lakhs. The rest of the members of the Playing XI, including the Impact Player, were each individually fined either INR 6 lakhs or 25 percent of their respective match fees, whichever is lesser," read the statement.

The curious case of Shaheen's captaincy ouster

NewDelhi:Babar Azam is back in the saddle but leading the white-ball side is unlikely to be a smooth ride for the star Pakistan batsman. Complicating matters is the discontent of his spearhead, Shaheen Afridi. Having previously led Pakistan in the T20I series against New Zealand, Afridi was expected to retain the captaincy. However, the reins have now been curiously handed over to Babar for the upcoming Twenty20 World Cup in the US and West Indies. Shaheen had captained Pakistan in merely five T20Is at a time when the selectors were trying out a few players. The

unfavourable 1-4 result that went against Pakistan notwithstanding, he was evicted after just one series at the helm. The transfer of leadership is never smooth and seamless in Pakistan cricket and it is no different this time. Speculations abound that Shaheen's removal from the Twenty20 captaincy may have political undertones. With the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) under the stewardship of new chairman Mohsin Naqvi, who is purportedly having the backing of the country's new administration, Afridi's allegiance to the previous regime may have

become the last straw. Whispers suggest that Afridi's proximity to the previous political regime may have played a role in the decision, highlighting the inherent connections between politics and cricket in Pakistan. "It is always the case in Pakistan cricket. When a new chairman comes, he changes the captain. Since the days of Imran it has been like this. After Imran, Javed Miandad came," Rashid Latif told Cricbuzz, discussing the topic. "Then came Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Saeed Anwar, Salim Malik, Ramiz Raja, Amir Sohail and Moeen Khan.



In between I was there too. Then came Inzamam Ul Haq, Mohammad Yusuf, Younus Khan, Shoaib Malik, Shahid Afridi and the list goes on. It is unfair on Shaheen to be stripped of captaincy but that is the

reality here. When a new chairman comes, more often than not the captaincy is changed." Former Pakistan captain and prime minister Imran Khan had earlier praised Lahore Qalandars for appointing Shaheen as

the captain of the franchise, and the pacer had even gone to meet the then Prime Minister. "Yes, Imran Khan actually appreciated our decision to appoint Shaheen as captain of Lahore Qalandars and said he believes that the fast bowlers are better cricket captains than batsmen as they are more aggressive by nature and results oriented," Sameen Rana, the owner of the Qalandars told Cricbuzz, recalling their meeting with Imran. "He also told Shaheen to continue doing what he is doing and never change. He believed that Shaheen had the potential to

become a great of the game." If the controversy has played out in full public view, the PCB cannot be free of blame. The board put out a statement without apparently consulting the player. "It was an absolute honour to captain Pakistan's national cricket team. As a team player, it is my duty to back our captain, Babar Azam. I have played under his captaincy and have nothing but respect for him," Shaheen was quoted as saying by the PCB. The player has reportedly denied making such a statement. It has been suggested that he wanted

to take up the matter with the PCB chief. After both met at Kakul, where the team is undergoing fitness camp under the vigil of the Pakistan army, the PCB released a picture of them shaking hands. But it could only be an uneasy truce. The PCB chairman also met Babar and the newly-appointed selectors. The next step is the selection of the squad for the upcoming five-match home series against New Zealand followed by the World Cup in the run-up to which the Pakistan side has a couple of engagements in Ireland and England. Where Shaheen features in all this will be a point of immense interest.