

## PRESIDENT OF INDIA GRACES 7th CONVOCATION OF BJD govt's expire date is June 4: PM Modi in Odisha

New Delhi, (KCN): The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu graced and addressed the 7th convocation of Central University of Himachal Pradesh at Dharamshala today (May 6, 2024).

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that change is the law of nature. But, the pace of change was not so rapid in the past. Today we are in the era of the 4th Industrial Revolution. New areas like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning are emerging rapidly. Both the speed and magnitude of change are very high, due to which technology and required skills are changing very quickly. At the beginning of the 21st century no one knew what kind of skills people would need in the next 20 or 25 years. Similarly, many current skills will



no longer be useful in the future. Therefore, we have to continuously adopt new skills. Our focus should be on developing flexible minds so that the young generation can keep pace with the rapid changes taking place. We have to strengthen the curiosity and the desire to learn in the students to prepare them for facing the challenges of the 21st century.

Addressing the teachers, the President said that education should be such

that along with educating the students, it makes them self-reliant and builds their character and personality. The aim of education is also to bring awareness among the students about their culture, tradition and civilization. She stressed that the role of teachers is very important in this regard. Their scope of work is not limited to teaching only, and they have the huge responsibility of building

the future of the nation. The President said that our focus should be on 'what to learn' as well as 'how to learn'. She underlined that when students learn independently, without any stress, their creativity and imagination take flight. In that case they do not consider education as just a synonym for livelihood. Rather, they innovate, find solutions to problems, and learn with curiosity. Addressing the students, the President said that every person has the

potential for both good and evil. She advised them to keep in mind that no matter how difficult the situation they are in, they should never let evil dominate them. They should always take the side of good. She urged them to make human values ??like compassion, conscientiousness and sensitivity their ideals. She said that based on these values, they can live a successful and meaningful life.

The President said that the youth have immense potential for growth. They are the most important link to fulfil the resolve of a developed India. Therefore, they should dedicate themselves to the nation. This is not only their human, social and moral duty but also their duty as citizens.

**Berhampur (KCN):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday asserted that the expiry date of the BJD government in Odisha is June 4, the day the assembly election results will be announced. Addressing his first election rally in the state, Modi urged people to give a chance to the BJP to make Odisha the number one state in the country.



Yojana as the "BJD government did not implement" it in the state.

The Centre gave Rs 10,000 crore under the 'Jal Jeevan Mission' scheme to Odisha but the BJD dispensation could not spend the money properly.

"You have given 50 years to Congress and 25 years to BJD. Just give five years to the BJP. We will make Odisha the number one state in the country," Modi said at the rally. Odisha has fertile land, mineral resources, and sea coasts, but people are still poor, he claimed.

"We released a visionary manifesto for Odisha promising jobs for youths and women and health facilities for senior citizens. BJP fulfills what it says: Modi added.

The assembly and Lok Sabha elections in Odisha will be held simultaneously.

## Odisha weather: Mercury breaches 43 degree C mark at seven places; thunderstorms likely over next four days



**Bhubaneswar (KCN):** At least seven places in Odisha Monday recorded a maximum temperature of 43 degree Celsius or above.

However, thunderstorms along with rain brought respite from the heatwave in some places, including Bhubaneswar city. According to the evening bulletin of Bhubaneswar meteorological centre, Bolangir town in western Odisha recorded a temperature of 44.5 degree Celsius and became the hottest place in the state for the day.

It was followed by Titlagarh, another town of the Bolangir district, which registered a temperature of 44 degree Celsius.

The maximum temperature at Boudh was 43.5 degree Celsius, while it was 43.4 degree Celsius each at Jharsuguda and Sambalpur and 43 degree Celsius each at Bhawanipatna and Bargarh.

Meanwhile, thunderstorms with gusty wind and rain lashed the capital city Bhubaneswar. Due to the strong wind flow, tree branches fell in several places in the city

leading to road blockades. Fire services, Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) and forest personnel engaged to clear the roads, an official said. The IMD said that thunderstorms with rain would continue in the state for another four days.

Thunderstorm with lightning accompanied with gusty wind of speed 40-50 kmph would occur in the districts of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Balasore, Ganjam, Gajapati, Kandhamal, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Kalahandi, Nayagarh, Rayagada and Koraput. According to the IMD, Rayagada and Koraput will go for voting on the 13th of May in the first phase elections.

## Odisha CM Naveen Slams Opposition At Kalahandi Meeting

**Bhawanipatna (KCN):** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's today slammed the opposition parties during his election campaigning at Bhawanipatna in Kalahandi district. He said that the opposition leaders are telling lies and are shedding crocodile tears.

He appealed the people to bless the Biju Janata Dal. The Chief Minister appealed the people to vote for the party candidates for the development of Kalahandi and Odisha. Kalahandi Lok Sabha candidate Labmodar Nial, MLA Candidates Rajendra Dhoklia, Adhiraj Panigrahy, Pradeep Disari, Dibyashankar Mishra, Pushpendra Seinghdeo, Lalita Nayak, Manorama Mohanty were present during the public meeting.

Kalahandi will go for voting on the 13th of May in the first phase elections. "After so many years, the BJP is

daydreaming," said the BJD president.

In another video, Pandian also declared the exact time frame in which Naveen will take oath as the CM again.

A day before yesterday, CM Naveen Patnaik held campaigns at Koraput, Nabarangpur, Rayagada and Paralakhemundi. The campaign was also joined by star campaigner Karthik Pandian.

The party supremo and star campaigner began the campaign at Koraput. After this, they visited Nabarangpur. After completing the campaign

at Nabarangpur, the BJD supremo visited Rayagada. Likewise, CM Naveen Patnaik and Karthik Pandian continued their campaign at Paralakhemundi.

It is worth mentioning here that the state is gearing up for the upcoming election which will be commences in four phases and is set to begin on May 13. For the elections, all the parties are doing their best to appeal to people to vote for them.

Odisha Chief Minister and BJD supremo Naveen Patnaik has urged people to vote for 'double conch' in the simultaneous Lok Sabha and assembly elections in the state.

The term was coined to take on the BJD's call for forming a 'double engine' government at the Centre and the state. In a video released by the BJD, Patnaik is seen holding two conch symbols, the party's logo, on both hands, appealing to people to vote for 'double conch' while exercising their franchise.

"This time, vote for double conch, one for MLA and one for MP," Patnaik said.

## Congress, the only party poised to tackle the pervasive challenges: Raja Warring

**Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), May 6:** Punjab State Congress president, Amarinder Singh Raja Warring has asserted, "The electoral environment favours the Congress, the only party poised to tackle the pervasive challenges plaguing our state and country." He highlighted the failure of the Aam Aadmi Party to deliver on its promises, citing rampant insecurity among businessmen and the neglect of development initiatives despite holding 92 seats.

In a fervent campaign held on Monday in Faridkot, Raja Warring, alongside S. Parminder Singh Dimple, rallied voters to reject turncoats

Lok Sabha candidate, Bibi Amarjit Kaur Sahoo, emphasizing the party's commitment to addressing pressing issues facing Punjab and the nation.

Expressing confidence in the selection of candidates, Warring underscored the importance of women's representation, lauding Sahoo's experience and grassroots connectivity. He also commended S. Parminder Singh Dimple for his steadfast dedication to the party's principles, promising him an MLA ticket for Faridkot in 2027.

Addressing constituents in Vidhan Sabha constituency Jagraon, Raja Warring invoked the spirit of resilience in the face of betrayal, urging voters to reject turncoats

and uphold the values of loyalty and integrity. Drawing parallels to India's freedom struggle, he urged support for Congress as the vanguard against empty promises and the erosion of democracy. Highlighting Congress's tangible achievements, Raja Warring noted

significant increases in old age pensions from the Shagun scheme, contrasting this with AAP's failures and their insensitive handling of tragic incidents. In a passionate appeal, Warring implored voters to choose Congress over hollow assurances, asserting that the future of

Punjab and India's democratic fabric hangs in the balance. Speaking about the betrayal of Ravneet Bittu, he said, "When Congress's contender from Ludhiana deserted the party at an inopportune time, I was asked by Rahul Gandhi ji to stand against the

turncoat in this fight of 'Vafadari' and 'Gaddari'." He cited the example of India's freedom fight, which had to go on for years because of some traitors within Indians. He added, "People who love Punjab will vote for Congress as against the AAP, which promised to bring 'Badlaav' but just gave empty promises."

Punjab Congress president and party's candidate from Ludhiana parliamentary constituency Raja Warring said that the BJP candidate Ravneet Singh Bittu was neither a patriot nor a nationalist, but just an opportunist. "Once a traitor, always a traitor", he remarked about Bittu, while adding, "if he can betray the Congress that gave him everything,

he can betray the BJP also, which cannot give him anything". Addressing a series of public meetings today, Warring told the people of Ludhiana not to get carried away by Bittu's false and fake claims as he had joined the BJP after deserting the Congress only for his personal ambitions. The PCC president observed that Bittu mistakenly assumed that the BJP was returning to power at the centre and by joining the party he may become a minister. "Bittu's misplaced ambitions will come crashing down as neither the BJP is returning to power, nor is he going to win from here", he claimed, while emphasizing that he had deserted the Congress just with a selfish interest and not for anything else. Warring said, if Bittu was truly an honest person, a patriot and a nationalist, he would never have deserted the Congress party to join the BJP. He observed, it will take BJP another hundred years or more to match the Congress on patriotic and nationalistic credentials and the number of sacrifices it has given, first for getting freedom for the country and then protecting and safeguarding it.

"If for the ambition of a ministerial berth he can leave the party that picked him from ground and made him an MP thrice, tomorrow he can repeat this act of betrayal with the BJP as well", he said.



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## KIIT-DU & KPIT Technologies Announce Strategic Partnership with Launch of Co-Branded M.Tech Programme

**Bhubaneswar, May 6(KCN):** KIIT-DU and KPIT Technologies Ltd., a global leader in automotive software, have announced the signing of an MoU that will foster a groundbreaking partnership in the mobility sector. This collaboration marks the launch of a new co-branded M.Tech programme focused on Automotive Electronics & Software, aimed at preparing the next generation of technology experts.

The partnership combines KPIT's industry-leading

capabilities in automotive technology with KIIT's advanced educational framework. This initiative not only aims to enhance the quality of the talent pool but also ensures that graduates are immediately employable and capable of contributing to innovative research and advancements in the field.

The Founder of KIIT and KISS Dr. Achyuta Samanta expressed his delight about the collaboration, stating, "We have a strong intellectual capital and



talent base to partner with industry in bridging the talent gap and nurturing future-ready digital professionals."

Echoing the sentiment, Co-founder, CEO, and MD of KPIT Technologies Ltd Kishor Patil highlighted the uniqueness of the partnership. "The tie-up with KIIT-DU is novel and unique of its kind for KPIT in India. We are focused on developing the next generation of automotive technology professionals

and are excited to impart training among the KIIT-DU students."

Vice Chancellor of KIIT-DU Prof. Saranjit Singh also remarked on the significance of the industry-academia collaboration. "The Automotive Industry and Software Technology is changing the face of the world. There is a fast-growing demand for a market-ready workforce, and industry and academia must work closely together to develop quality tech talents," he said.

## Paita Lagi Ritual At Puri Srimandir: Darshan Of Holy Trinity Restricted From 6 To 10 PM Today

**Puri(KCN):** Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri will remain closed for public darshan of the Holy Trinity on Monday from 6 pm to 10 pm for the conduct of the 'Paita Lagi' ritual.

According to the temple administration, the darshan of the deities at the 12th century shrine will be restricted for the devotees from 6 PM to 10 PM today owing to the ritual which is performed on 'Baisakha-Krushna Trayodashi tithi'.

This will be the last 'Paita Lagi' ritual of the deities before Rath Yatra. The



secret ritual is performed every year before the Chandana Yatra, sources informed.

As 'Paita Lagi' is a

closed-door ritual, Daitapati servitors will be allowed inside the 'Garba Gruha' or sanctum sanctorum to perform

the special service. Daitapati servitors will cover the body of the Trinity with a special silk cloth called 'basunga patta', which is later rubbed with sandalwood paste. Though the devotees cannot enter the sanctum sanctorum of the temple during the ritual, they can have darshan of other deities on the temple premises. According to Srimandir servitors, the ritual is performed twice a year. If required, it is carried out for another time. The Daitapati servitors get divided into three

## Odisha CM's Chopper Fails To Land In Bhubaneswar Due To Bad Weather; Diverted To Jharsuguda



**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's helicopter was unable to make a landing in

Bhubaneswar due to bad weather and was forced to make an emergency landing at Jharsuguda airport today.

According to sources, the CM and 5T chairman V K Pandian boarded the aircraft at Khariai. His chopper, however, hovered for around 30 minutes but failed to land in Bhubaneswar due to bad weather conditions around 3:00-3:30 pm. It was then diverted to Veer Surendra Sai Airport in Jharsuguda, from where it took off after around 20 minutes.

"A helicopter carrying the CM was coming

from Utkela airstrip to Bhubaneswar. It couldn't land here due to strong wind caused by Nor'wester activity. So they diverted to Jharsuguda. However, the weather situation in Bhubaneswar has improved and they have taken off from the Jharsuguda and may land here anytime soon," said Prasanna Pradhan, director of Bhubaneswar airport.

## Odisha Elections 2024: Candidate with 46 criminal cases in fray in 1st phase

**Bhubaneswar(KCN):** As many as 234 candidates of various political parties are in the fray for the first phase of Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in Odisha, scheduled on May 13. Of them, 65 contestants have criminal cases pending against them.

This was stated in a report which was compiled by ADR and the Odisha Election Watch, based on the affidavits of the candidates.

The report pointed out that former mayor Shiba Shankar Das who is contesting as an Independent in the Berhampur Assembly Assembly constituency has the highest 46 criminal cases against him.

In terms of educational qualifications, four of the candidates are illiterate, the report said, adding that only 32 women



candidates are in the fray in the first phase polls. Moreover, the richest among the 234 candidates is BJD's MLA nominee Biplab Patra from the Digaphandi Assembly seat. He has declared total assets of Rs 33.36 crore. However, two candidates have declared that they have no assets at all while the nominee of the Republican Party

Ramesh Jani, who is contesting from the Laxmipur Assembly seat in Koraput, owns property worth Rs 1000 only. Addressing a presser, Ranjan Mohanty, state coordinator of the Odisha Election Watch said, "As many as 65 out of a total of 234 candidates facing elections on May 13 have various criminal cases. They constitute 27 per cent of the

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# The changing dynamics of forests, natural resources, tribals and our shared future



India has a rich diversity of various ethnic groups and tribal communities; along the length and breadth of the nation. They have been a part of India's rich heritage of her unique socio-cultural diversity and richness, history, indigenous art and technology, ethnography and cultural connectivity. Unfortunately, both in pre and post independent India, our tribal communities have been kept isolated, neglected and heavily marginalized. We have grossly neglected their socio-cultural heritage and economic upliftment over centuries. While today, as the world's largest democracy with highest global population; several indigenous tribes across India have been pushed towards extinction. Many of the constitutionally recognized primitive tribes are almost slowly becoming non-existent. Very little effort has been taken to protect their unique cultures, vanishing languages, life style and habits, indigenous knowledge and experiences as well as their livelihood.

Tribal communities across India have been the protector of our vast forest resources and yet for this monumental ecological service they have been rewarded only with abject poverty, ruthless exploitation,

complete isolation and subsequent marginalization of the tribal communities across the nation. As fellow citizens of this country we should be ashamed of the fact that tribals have been denied of their ancestral rights of the local forest and natural resources, displaced from their ancestral habitats due to various infrastructural projects and ruthlessly discriminated and exploited for commercial expansion of agriculture and industry. Today many of them live below the poverty line, suffer from malnourishment, poor immunity and several communicable diseases and unimaginably poor income for survival. There are extreme challenges of increasing illiteracy, failing birth and maternity rates, life expectancy much below the national average, zero accessibility to electricity, safe drinking water, immunization and health camps, primary health and education centres, ration shops as well as access to any government projects for economic support and development. While India is occupying a global central stage, our fellow tribal citizens are forced towards a painful life with very little hope, opportunity and security constitutionally granted to them. It's a great shame for all of us. Not just the Government of India, but we as fellow citizens have collectively failed them over centuries and decades. However, this is simply not just the case of India; but a picture

portrayed for the entire world. We have turned loyalists to establishment and turned blind eye to the degradation of the forest ecosystem which was not only the basis of our life support system but also provided social recognition. The recent Global Forest Watch report reveals that the great country which we call India has lost 4,14,000 hectares of humid primary forest (6%) from 2002 to 2023, making up 18% of its total tree cover loss in the same period. Is this not shocking that it all happened under the vigilant eyes of our great grand service called "Indian Forest Service"? The data is very clear in itself which speaks that 95% of the tree cover loss in India from 2013 to 2023 occurred within natural forests. The maximum tree cover loss of 189,000 hectares occurred in the year 2017. The country lost 175,000 hectares of tree cover in 2016 and 144,000 hectares in 2023, the highest in the last six years and shockingly five states accounted for 60% of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2023. Can't we foresters be held responsible for the loss of forest cover? Can't we be held responsible for prostrating before the political bosses or aligning with a policy change which led to the great decline of irretrievable national treasure? This has also been estimated that on an average, 51 million tons of CO2 equivalents per year

were released into the atmosphere as a result of tree cover loss in India. It is a matter of great concern. It's also not known as to why the rulers didn't take any corrective action to save the forest and nature as a whole. Of course the officers and other officials are also responsible. Yes it's also true that because of loss of trees, carbon dioxide to the maximum degree is being released which is not good for the universe. Mother Nature should be protected at any cost. Environmental degradation is also a matter of great concern. We experience the temperature crossing 41-45 degrees at many places. Planting trees and maintaining water bodies are the only solution and also the need of the hour. Awareness among our people particularly with youths must be created. Awareness amongst the masses is the only

solution; and every individual will have to reduce the consumption and try to live frugally. We can still be hopeful, if young people are made aware that we all are in danger. The tribals not only live with nature but also worship nature. Even now they try to protect nature but the people with power do all the damage. Awareness among the masses is the only powerful solution. Most importantly the government has to implement and enforce conservation of nature. Natural and age old forests are very important and manmade/cultivated forests cannot replace them. Also blindly planting trees in arid zones and Aravalli range will deplete the water table and could be disastrous. In democracy human centric development to appease voters will play a role. Awareness amongst the masses might help! Green credit policy is the back door entry to give away

huge forest land to industrial houses. The biggest scam ever Recently, the Telangana High court reversed its own order and gave away 106.3 acres of forest land to some Mr Qasim. Fortunately, the Supreme Court on Thursday not only set aside the high court verdict declaring 106.34 acre forest land in Warangal district as private but also reprimanded HC for "graciously gifting" it to a private person who could not prove his title. Some of the forest officers were also named to be equally complicit in the process. I often reiterate during my lectures that Forests don't need us but we need them for our survival. Today SC also said the same but in a different way. The court observed, "There is a crying need for a change in the approach towards forests. The need of the hour is to transform from an anthropocentric (believing humans are

most important) approach to an eco-centric approach which will encompass a wider perspective in the interest of the environment. A right to enjoy cannot be restricted to any specific group, and so also to human beings. The time has come for mankind to live sustainably and respect the rights of rivers, lakes, beaches, estuaries, ridges, trees, mountains, seas and air. It is imperative to do so as there is always a constant threat to forests due to the ever increasing population." Have we ever thought that why does the Government of India not take green accounting into its budget formulation? Various estimates show that global land use changes between 1997-2011 have resulted in a loss of ecosystem services worth US\$ 4.3 trillion to US\$ 20.2 trillion per year. In 2016, WWF, India published a study on valuing the ecosystem

services at the Terai region of Uttarakhand. It gives an objective approach towards valuation of relevant ecosystem services at a landscape level. The study reveals that the total value of the nine ecosystem services is 19% higher than the total income of the region, as per Census 2001. It means that if these services are used for economic benefit, the local community should be compensated by at least 19% of the total economic output value of the landscape. The growth rate may also come down substantially on account of environmental degradation despite our lofty claims of growing at a rate of more than 8% per annum. Now the situation has gone from bad to worse. Maximum destruction of natural resources has taken place in the last ten years. The US government is imposing carbon tax on our upcoming rather faster growing steel industry through Europe. Americans are using Europe to put embargo on our fastest growing economy. We both have to drink deep. They are doing many things in the garb of something that is understood by the innocent mass of people as philanthropic work. If you calculate GDP with green accounting at the current inflation rate, this must be around 1-2%.

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# Linguistic dominance in the digital world



old, the policies made on the ground all revolved around English. Therefore, the dominance of English increased in areas like policy-making, compliance mentality, teaching, research and employment. Indian languages ??have had to become secondary. The harm it caused in general contexts was yet to be evaluated, but due to the same reasons, the harm that Indian languages ??and their variants are causing to their native speakers in digital contexts today, and it is more frightening than before. If sensitivity towards the languages ??of the country had been shown in the process of nation-building, Indian languages ??would have been in a better position in the fight against English and the new threats looming on them in today's era of artificial intelligence. The sheer number of users, their internet consumption and the presence of citizens as content creators on social media is

conscious of this and to protect the interests of linguistic minorities, the right of citizens living in any part of India to preserve their distinct language, script or culture is guaranteed through Article 29(1). Article 29(2) provides for the right to admission to any educational institution receiving aid from State funds and Article 30(1) provides for the right of all minorities, including language minorities, to establish and maintain educational institutions of their choice. Went. It was also assured through Article 1(3) of the United Nations Charter that human rights and fundamental freedoms and dignity will be promoted without any linguistic discrimination in global affairs. Today India's huge population, it includes smartphones. The sheer number of users, their internet consumption and the presence of citizens as content creators on social media is

Vijay Garg

unprecedented and numerically decisive at the global level, but despite all this, the digital potential of Indian languages ??is secondary. That is why we have made it our priority to keep languages ??secondary. That is why despite having the highest position in the global population, our languages ??are not seen in digital products in that quantity. Internet Society Foundation's May 2023 According to statistics, English is the language of fifty-five percent of the websites as medium of web pages, followed by Spanish, which is only five percent. There is no mention of any Indian language in the top ten languages ??of this list. The matter does not end here, because on this foundation linguistic ability develops in artificial intelligence. Here it is important to understand the pace of acceptance of artificial intelligence. It took only two months for artificial

intelligence tool 'ChatGPT' to reach its 100 million subscribers, whereas it took only two months to reach this number. Other Internet products, such as Twitter, took five years and five months, Facebook four years and six months, WhatsApp three years and six months, Instagram two years and six months, Google one year and two months and TikTok nine months. Were engaged. It is worth noting that in this situation, Indian languages ??are secondary, but being the largest in numbers, Indian consumers are the primary ones, who have to accept the priority of English over their own languages. In such a situation, our situation is like that of laborers without any wages. this global When there are no languages ??listed in the Eighth Schedule of our Constitution in competition, then what will be the status of minority languages ??can be easily guessed. As

such, they should not be expected to be a priority even in the emerging market unless the government effectively intervenes in the process of free exploitation of personal digital data. Interestingly, artificial intelligence companies have increased their capabilities due to the digital activities of Indian consumers and now when the products are made, their customers also do the same. These are being made. Many companies have even started selling their products based on artificial intelligence. The other side of this is that due to English being the natural language of the digital facilities available, the possibility of exploitation of the common man in the country, who only knows his own language, is increasing. For example, money transaction through UPI is like a revolution in the country and it has become popular even in remote rural markets. On the other hand, under Jan Dhan Yojana, a very large section of the society has been connected to the banking system, which was hardly possible before this. Have you ever gone to the bank? Use of both 'UPI' and smartphone is a new thing for these people. In such a situation, the dominance of English in mobile operating systems and the absence of minority languages ??is also becoming a factor in the expansion of cyber crime. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 65,893 cases of cyber crime were registered in the year 2022, which is 24.4 percent more than in 2021. Most of these cases are related to online shopping, ATM and OTP based banking frauds. In this way the digital absence of Indian languages This has further increased the morale of vicious criminals. Now language is being used not only for communication with family and society, but also for giving

instructions to machines. All these are undoubtedly dominated by English, but now the market has started adding many Indian languages ??in its second phase of expansion. On the other hand, the Government of India has started work on a plan to develop the digital potential of Indian languages ??through artificial intelligence based language processing tool 'Bhasin'. But there is a need for this that its speed and both the quantities should be increased, so that maximum Indian languages ??can be connected to artificial intelligence in time. Also, people can be made aware, otherwise thousands of languages ??of the country will face untimely extinction. Also, their cultural heritage, the many shades of diversity of the country and most importantly, the right of an individual to live a digital life in his own language will also be lost forever.

Educational  
Columnist Malout

# Resolving Disability Discrimination: Innovations in Law and Society



The inaccessibility of education, health, and employment services poses significant challenges for persons with disabilities, impacting their lives in multifaceted ways. Mere sentiments of equality are insufficient to foster a just and equitable society. The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) in India strives for inclusive and equitable learning opportunities for all, aligning with Goal 4 (SDG14) of the 2030 Global Agenda for Sustainable Development. Recognizing education as a fundamental tool for social justice and equality, the NEP 2020 underscores the importance of inclusive education as the cornerstone of an inclusive community and society.

Unlike previous decades, where disability issues were often neglected, the NEP 2020 advocates for the inclusion of persons with disabilities by the provisions outlined in the

Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016. It integrates aspects of disability inclusion throughout the policy, with a dedicated chapter addressing the challenges and recommendations for ensuring equitable and inclusive education.

Under the policy, Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SDGs) encompass various identities, including disabilities, aiming to reduce disparities in access and participation among all learners.

Disabilities can significantly hinder access to educational opportunities and the realization of learners' full potential. The policy advocates for a barrier-free teaching and learning environment that accommodates diverse learning styles and abilities. It emphasizes the importance of resourcing educational institutions, engaging special educators, and providing modifications and accommodations in curricula, teaching methods, assessments, and co-curricular activities. By prioritizing equitable, inclusive, and quality education, the policy aims to enhance learning outcomes for learners with disabilities. However, despite its intentions, the NEP

Moreover, it's crucial to acknowledge the stigma faced by individuals with

2020 presents a somewhat contradictory stance. While promoting the creation of an inclusive educational system, it fails to critically examine existing practices that perpetuate the exclusion of learners with disabilities. Rigid curricula, inaccessible learning resources, and attitudinal barriers persist, limiting the achievements of learners with disabilities.

The policy appears to address disability within the framework of medical models and rehabilitative approaches, neglecting systemic inequalities and intersectional identities that contribute to exclusion.

There is an urgent need to reconceptualize disability as an identity and form of diversity rather than a deficit. Policies must move beyond superficial modifications and address entrenched ableist practices that marginalize persons with disabilities. In the Indian context, inclusion should extend beyond assimilation to embrace multiculturalism and pluralism. However, as long as policies remain rooted in medical notions of normality, true inclusion will remain elusive.

In 2016, with the enactment of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, the Indian Parliament explicitly recognized leprosy as one of the specified disabilities. Alongside prohibiting discrimination, the Act also mandated affirmative action in favour of leprosy-cured persons. Despite this legislative mandate,

invisible disabilities. Their plight is often exacerbated by the lack of visible impairments, making it challenging to garner recognition and support. Conditions like Multiple Sclerosis not only present physical challenges but also affect individuals mentally and intellectually, compounding their struggles for acceptance and accommodation.

On an international level, advocacy against discrimination based on conditions like leprosy has gained momentum. The adoption of the U.N. General Assembly Resolution on the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their families underscores the global commitment to combating stigma and ensuring equal rights for all individuals, regardless of their health status.

In 2016, with the enactment of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, the Indian Parliament explicitly recognized leprosy as one of the specified disabilities. Alongside prohibiting discrimination, the Act also mandated affirmative action in favour of leprosy-cured persons. Despite this legislative mandate,

many states persist in enforcing disqualifications against leprosy patients, including those who have been cured, from holding public offices and engaging in effective socio-political interactions.

However, it is imperative to acknowledge the limitations of conventional legal frameworks in addressing deeply entrenched structural discrimination, stereotypes, and stigma against vulnerable groups like leprosy patients. With its doctrines, standards, and principles, the traditional law model often falls short in probing into the complexities of socio-political discrimination. Thus, relying solely on conventional legal reasoning is insufficient to combat systemic discrimination.

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# Mega "Bhagwat Gita path" session with 20000 plus people's participation organised at famed Sri Krishna (Kantajiu ) Temple of Bangladesh

**Kolkata (PARTHA ROY):** First ever mega "Bhagwat Gita path" session was organised in Kantjiu temple premises in Bangladesh on Saturday, 27th April 2024 where more than 20000 people participated to read and recite Holy scripture of Hindus "Bhagwat Gita" together.

Historically important Kantjiu temple is in Kaharol upazila of Dinajpur district, in Northern part of Bangladesh. The temple is dedicated to Bhagwan Sri Krishna and his consort Rukmini devi. The program "Shrimad Bhagavad Gita Path" in 2024 A.D. was organized by the Rangpur Division Holy Vedas and Srimad Bhagavad Gita Shikhadan Sangh.

Bangladesh's Minister of Land Shri Narayan Chandra Chanda was Chief Guest of the program and inaugurated

the program" Shrimad Bhagavad Gita Path" in 2024 A.D. The Land Minister Shri Narayan Chandra Chanda hoisted national flag of Bangladesh in presence of Mukti Yodha and Ekushey Padak awardee Shri Monoranjan Ghosal and others.

This was followed up by Lamp lighting and installation of Srimad Bhagavad Gita .It was followed up by Dhvaja ( Hindu religious flag ) hoisting and Veda Mantra reading, Surya Namaskar and Holy Veda Mantra reading session . Then the Sankhadhvani and U l u d h v a n i (congregational) phase followed by the main phase of Srimad Bhagavadgita reading in collective voice. Earlier, the Land Minister visited the temple complex and visited the Kanjiu temple



building. Bangladesh's Lands Minister Shri Narayan Chandra Chanda said "Bangladesh is a country which has tradition of communal harmony. Bangladesh gained independence under the leadership of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Our constitution is the flag bearer of secularism." Bangladesh Land Minister Shri Narayan

Chandra Chanda highlighted that after the formation of the government, Sheikh Hasina is taking the country forward by maintaining communal harmony. He emphasized that Sheikh Hasina's government had taken measures in 2013 to enact the Transfer of Assigned Property (Second Amendment) Act. Recently, two related circulars have also been issued. Apart

from this, the draft of the Inheritance Law is being prepared to protect the inheritance property - said the minister. Narayan Chandra Chanda mentioned the importance of preservation and development of the religious and cultural heritage of Bangladesh and appreciated the efforts of the organizers and participants for upholding the values ??of tolerance, understanding and

program has immense cultural and religious importance for the traditional Bengali Hindu community of Bangladesh. It was a wonderful experience to witness such a large gathering peacefully reciting the venerable Gita in this traditional Sanatan Hindu temple. The Land Minister, also thanked the people of Kaharol for their cooperation in organizing the program .

In the program, the Land Minister emphasized on the importance of preservation and development of the religious and cultural heritage of Bangladesh and appreciated the efforts of the organizers and participants for upholding the values ??of tolerance, understanding and

mutual respect. Mukti Yodha and Ekushey Padak awardee Shri Manoranjan Ghoshal said this is the first time in the history of Bangladesh that 20,000 voices recited the Gita together in a single location. He also said that it is a unique experience for them to read the holy book in 20 thousand voices in this holy temple. Shri Manoranjan Ghoshal thanked the government for extending all support in organizing this historic event and for creating an atmosphere of religious harmony.

The program was attended by Member of Parliament Draupadi Devi Agarwala, former Member of Parliament of Bangladesh and Senior Vice President of Hindu Kalyan Trust, Manoranjan Sheel Gopal, Project Director of Local Government Engineering Department Sushanta Roy, Awami League Youth and Sports Sub-Committee Member Shipankar Sheel, industrialist and Politician Kalipad Majumder, Director of Vivekananda Mission in India Manas Bhattacharya. Dinajpur Superintendent of Police Shah Iftekhar Ahmed, Additional Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Noor-e-Alam, Kaharol Upazila UNO Md Aminul Islam and local dignitaries were also present at the venue. The program inculcated joyous spirit as well as spirit of bonhomie amongst the participants. The program saw multi-generational and intergenerational participation and facilitated promotion of understanding of Santan Dharma and its practices .

**Spread Happiness Foundation Hosts Thrilling Tennis Ball Cricket Tournament in Pune on the Occasion of the Maharashtra State Formation Day and Labour Day**

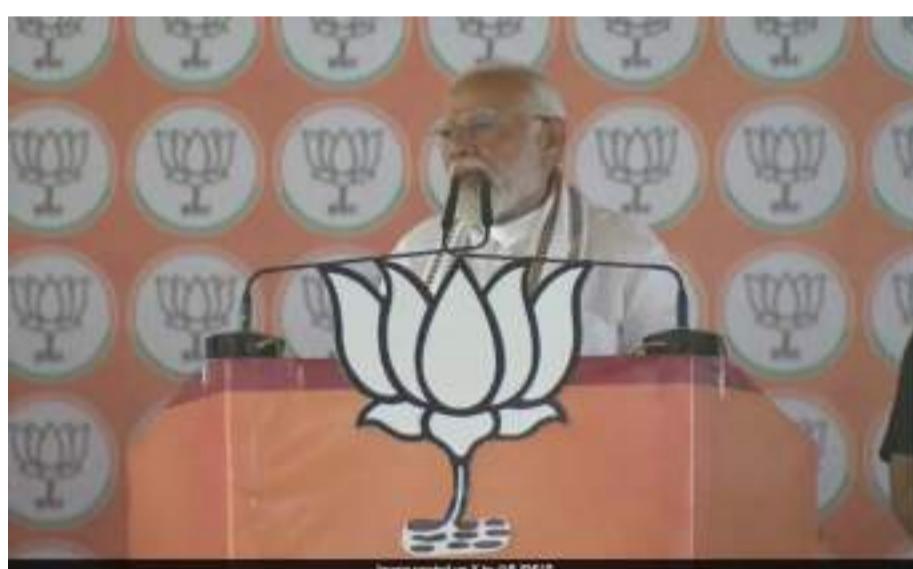


**Pune, (KCN)-** The Spread Happiness Foundation proudly announces the successful completion of its tennis ball cricket tournament, held at the picturesque Ahilya Ashram School Ground in Pune. The event witnessed spirited participation from 12 teams hailing from various parts of Pune, making it a memorable and exciting affair for all involved. Amidst cheers and applause, teams showcased their cricketing prowess, displaying remarkable skill and sportsmanship throughout the tournament. From nail-biting finishes to breathtaking performances, each

match captivated the audience and showcased the true spirit of cricket. Mr. Soumya Ranjan Mahapatro, Founder - Chairman of Spread Happiness Foundation, expressed his gratitude to all the participating teams, sponsors, volunteers, and spectators for making the event a grand success. He emphasized the Foundation's commitment to promoting sportsmanship, camaraderie, and community engagement through such initiatives. The tournament not only provided a platform for cricket enthusiasts to showcase their talent but

also fostered a sense of unity and camaraderie among the participants. It served as a reminder of the joy and camaraderie that sports bring to communities, transcending boundaries and fostering friendships. As we celebrate the success of this tournament, Spread Happiness Foundation looks forward to organizing more such events in the future, nurturing the spirit of sportsmanship and spreading joy in our communities. Organizing community of Spread Happiness Foundation Indrajit Sakat, Vicky Bhave, Vishal Pawar, Asif Shaikh and Anand Kumar Mohapatra.

"Why is that those, from



whom mounds of cash are recovered, are close to the Congress' first family? Was the seized cash meant for supply somewhere, is it that Congress' first family has created warehouses of black money? The country wants to know from Congress shehzada," he said in an apparent jibe at Rahul Gandhi.

Prime Minister Modi

alleged the Congress and INDIA bloc people

'abuse' him whenever he 'catches' their black money. However, he was worried not about the abuses, but about the poor, "whose money these corrupt have looted." He further said, "Modi is taking legal advice".

So far, the ED alone has attached property worth ? 1.25 lakh crore and "if others" (central agencies) are included it may be more. "I am taking legal advice on how the money can be returned to those from whom it has been looted," he noted.

Rs 17,000 crore has already been returned to the rightful owners. "No poor person's right will be affected, this is Modi's guarantee," he added.

Recalling the legendary actor-politician from the state, N T Ramarao,

Prime Minister Modi said the former had taken

Lord Ram to every

household.

However, the Congress, due to appeasement, boycotted the Ayodhya Shri Ram temple consecration and was sacking those party leaders from the organisation, who visited the shrine.

Lashing out at the Congress and the ruling YSR Congress in the state, he said while the former has accepted defeat ahead of the polls, the latter has been rejected by people.

Corruption and land and liquor mafia reign supreme in the YSRCP rule, he alleged.

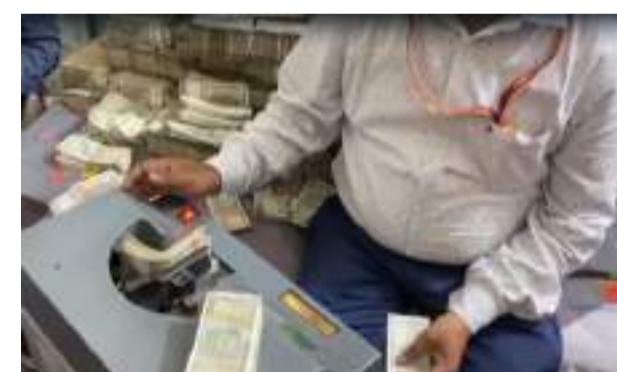
NDA will not only create a record in Lok Sabha polls but will also form government in Andhra Pradesh. He said the NDA will come to power in all states where Assembly elections are happening.

Elections to 25 Lok Sabha seats and 175 Assembly segments in Andhra Pradesh will be held on May 13.

## 12 Hours, 6 Machines, 30 Crore: Big Haul In Ranchi Raids Linked To Minister

**Ranchi:** At least six cash counting machines are working non-stop to give a number to the mountain of cash recovered from a room in Jharkhand capital Ranchi during a raid in a money laundering case. Cash worth ? 30 crore has been counted over the past 12 hours, sources said, and several officials are at work to reach a final number. Multiple cash counting machines, officials said, have broken down and new ones brought in.

The room where the cash mountain has been unearthed belongs to Jahangir, house help of Sanjiv Lal, a personal secretary to Jharkhand Rural Development minister and Congress leader Alamgir Alam.



campaign, referred to the cash haul. "Today, mountains of currency notes are being found in the neighbouring state Jharkhand. Now tell me, if I stop their theft, their earning, their loot, won't they abuse Modi or not? Despite abuses, Shouldn't I be doing this work? Shouldn't I be saving your money," he asked, countering the Opposition's charge on the Centre's alleged misuse of probe agencies.

Soren is former Chief Minister Hemant Soren's wife and has entered active politics after his arrest in a money laundering case.

Mr Alam has said no one should reach conclusions before the ED completes its investigation. He has also pointed out that Sanjiv Lal had served as a secretary to two former ministers. "Sanjiv Lal is a government employee. He is my personal secretary. Sanjiv Lal has already been a personal secretary of two former ministers. We usually appoint personal secretaries based on experience. It is not right to comment on the raids before the ED investigation is completed," he said. Ms

## Air Force Chopper Joins Effort To Douse Forest Fires In Uttarakhand

**New Delhi, (KCN):** An Indian Air Force helicopter was pressed into service to extinguish the raging forest fires in villages of Srikot in Pauri Garhwal district of Uttarakhand on Monday. An M-17 helicopter was deployed to assist in the firefighting operations.

State's Chief Secretary, Radha Raturi, announced today a series of measures aimed at controlling the spread of the flames and mitigating further damage.

Ms Raturi said that the Air Force has been called in to aid firefighting efforts, and plans are underway to implement a pilot cloud seeding project to induce rainfall in the

affected regions. "The Chief Minister held a meeting the day before. For compliance with those directions, the Forest Department has been informed. The Forest Department has given responsibility for each district to its senior officials. Pauri Garhwal is facing the worst. For that, DM Pauri has also spoken with the Air Force. IAF choppers are now carrying water from Srinagar and sprinkling it on the affected area," Ms Raturi said told news agency ANI.

To prevent further incidents, the state government has banned the burning of

# Pollution wreaking havoc in Kendrapara

**Kendrapara(KCN):** This coastal district lacks a major industry with most of the residents earning their livelihood from agriculture. However, toxic effluents discharged by companies spread across four neighbouring districts, have made it living hell for people residing here. These chemicals have turned the waters of the seven rivers flowing through this district toxic. Sources pointed out Sunday that the water is not fit for consumption by either human beings or animals. It also cannot be used for agricultural

purposes. Most of these industrial units are located in Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Jajpur and Bhadrak districts. These companies are polluting the water as well as the atmosphere, locals informed. The chemicals are also harming marine life and the green cover in this district, they added. Residents here pointed out that the administration in this district is not making any effort to prevent or control pollution. They said that they have approached officials time and again to take steps to prevent pollution, but to no avail. Some of



them stated that the only way left is to approach the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

Environmentalist Samarendra Mahali pointed out that the toxic effluents and fumes emitted by the industrial

units are also causing various forms of diseases including cancer. "The district administration has been informed a number of times on this issue, but it has not taken any steps," Mahali alleged. He

threatened that he will soon file a case on this issue, he informed. Mahali stated that 16 mega industries in Jagatsinghpur district lie close to Mahakalpara block. Toxic chemicals and gases like ammonia, and that too more than

nitrogen, hydrogen, sulphur dioxide and chlorine are regularly being discharged by these units. He stated that not only the rivers have been polluted, but those 27 other water bodies have been affected.

Social activist Pratap Chandra Padhi said that the Central Ground Water Board had conducted a survey of the water samples collected from several parts of this district in 2011, 2017 and 2021. It was found that the samples had toxic chemicals content like nitrate, iron and fluoride and that too more than

the permissible limits. A team of experts comprising Biotechnology Reader, BC Behera of North Odisha University at Baripada, SK Dutta from IRS in Bangalore and RR Mishra from the School of Biotechnology at MITS in Bhubaneswar had also filed a report on pollution and how it is affecting this district. They stated in the report that the industrial units in the four neighbouring districts are responsible for the alarming pollution level. They have said that industries in Talcher and Angul are discharging effluents in the Brahmani

River while those in Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur are responsible in polluting the Mahanadi. Social activist Subhasis Sarangi said that pollution has deprived the 'Bhitarkanika National Park' from finding a place in the 'World Heritage List'. He pointed out that if this situation persists it will lead to the extinction of many animals and marine creatures. When contacted, ADM Pitambar Samal said that the district administration has written a letter to state Environment department urging it to take action against the industries responsible for pollution.

## Mahanadi riverbed turns breeding ground for Indian skimmers

**Khuntuni(KCN):** The sand bed of the Mahanadi river near Kakhadi under Khuntuni range in Athagarh forest division in Cuttack district has turned into a safe breeding ground for the endangered Indian skimmer or Indian scissors-bill. The birds are also known as 'Panichiri' in local parlance. Thirty five of the eggs have hatched and Forest Department officials are making every effort to keep the newborn birds safe. The Indian skimmer is a rare species.

According to a bird census conducted worldwide, there are only 4,000 such birds left. The decreasing population of the bird has prompted the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to classify skimmers as 'endangered'.

According to a rough estimate, there are approximately 2,900 adult skimmers left on the face



of the earth. In this situation, the Indian skimmers have turned up to lay eggs for the first time on the Mahanadi riverbed. Forest department officials said Sunday at a press conference that approximately 165 birds have arrived. The Indian skimmer plays an important role in protecting the environment. It sucks out oily material floating on water bodies. Hence the preservation of the birds is very important, officials said. Khuntuni forest ranger Nilamadhab Sahu

informed that in the days to come, many more baby skimmers are expected as the birds have laid 85 eggs. Ornithologists and bird watchers are happy with the development. They said that if the Forest department starts working in a proper manner, the Khuntuni range can turn into a hub of Indian skimmers. "We will try our level best to protect the species," Sahu stated. Forest department personnel have been deployed at the site to keep watch round the clock to prevent dogs, jackals or wild animals from eating the eggs. The department is also involving local villagers and fishermen for the protection of the eggs and the birds. Awareness programmes are also being conducted regarding the importance of the birds. The birds also have breeding colonies on the bed of the Chambal river which flows through both Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Various measures have been taken for their protection and increase in their population.

## Cops, villagers clash during anti-drug drive



**Baliguda(KCN):** In a bizarre incident, police had to face the wrath of some locals during an antidrug crackdown at Barikia under Midiakia panchayat and this police station limits in Ganjam district in the wee hours of Sunday. Police were tipped off that a huge stock of marijuana has been stored in some of the houses at Barikia

village. A police team led by Baliguda SDPO Rahul Goyal raided various places and seized the ganja. However, when the police team was about to leave the village with the seized ganja, irate villagers besieged the police vehicle loaded with the contraband. Police tried to pacify the villagers but the villagers

argued with them and detained the van along with the police team. There was a four-hour-long clash between the villagers with the cops that ended early morning. The villagers, including Jhunu Malik, ward member of Barikia village, have alleged that the police conducted a door-to-door search in the village in the absence

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# Shreyas Iyer hails KKR's 'splendid' opening pair

**New Delhi:** In the IPL, getting one opener who aggregates over 400 runs at a stunning strike-rate of 180-plus is a massive boost to the batting line-up. Kolkata Knight Riders have two of them this season and it isn't surprising that the team is now sitting at the top of the points table. It isn't also surprising that their overall net run rate is miles above the next best side. Narine and Salt have been ruthless against varied attacks in varying conditions, setting up incredible momentum for their side. On Sunday in Lucknow, even the huge dimensions of the ground couldn't deter them as the duo set out to destroy LSG's potent bowling unit. In the process, they brought up their sixth fifty-plus opening stand in 11 games, the most by any opening pair this season.

When you factor in their style of play with these numbers, they are phenomenal to say the least. Understandably, skipper Shreyas Iyer was in awe of the opening duo after the game. "They have been splendid for us, the way they are playing their shots is pure bliss. They are setting us up and giving momentum and no matter what the situation is, we are playing with a positive mindset," said Iyer at the post-match presentation ceremony. "A lefty-righty combination makes things difficult for the opposition, the bowlers have to change their plans and that makes a difference. It's all about the freedom, to go out and express themselves. We want to go out and be positive whatever the situation is, sometimes it doesn't work out but sometimes it does."

It's been a roller-coaster campaign for the Knight Riders so far. After starting the season with three straight wins, they then lost three of their next five games including a thriller to Rajasthan Royals and the highest T20 chase to Punjab Kings. Amidst all this, the brand of cricket played by KKR has been laudable and they are now on a three-match winning streak again as they surge towards a playoffs berth and a potential top-two finish. Iyer echoed the drastic momentum shifts in his side's campaign. "The last six matches in the dressing room there has been havoc, teammates are coming in and asking 'skip what's happening! We are losing tosses, but we are winning games... that's what matters.'

"A lefty-righty combination makes things difficult for the opposition, the bowlers have to change their plans and that makes a difference. It's all about the freedom, to go out and express themselves. We want to go out and be positive whatever the situation is, sometimes it doesn't work out but sometimes it does."

At the heart of KKR's dominance has been their eternal matchwinner Sunil Narine. He has done it with the ball plenty of times, he has also shown glimpses of his batting in yesteryear but seldom has he packed the all-round punch like he has this season. The West Indian sits at third



spot in the Orange Cap race with over 450 runs at a strike-rate of 180-plus and his unreal consistency has been the x-factor for KKR, when you factor in his typically strong defensive skills with the ball. Narine, credited his stunning transformation to the immense backing received from the team management.

"The most important thing is starting well and it's good to have the backing of the support staff," said Narine after winning yet another Player-of-the-Match award for the franchise. "I think you have to pick your spots, sometimes it works out and sometimes it doesn't. It's going very well, Varun is picking up wickets, it's making my job easier to keep things tight. He is a hard worker and it's good to see him do well. The boys are anxious and eager to play, so no matter what the situation is they are up for the challenge and they are contributing for us."

KKR's win in Lucknow was a huge confidence booster for the team, given the generally testing batting conditions at the venue. LSG's bowling unit has traditionally kept opposition batters under check but KL Rahul's men had no answers to the 'Narine and Salt show' as the openers put Lucknow's bowling to the sword. Not only did the hosts struggle to manage to assess the surface very early.

## CSK unfazed by middle-order blip



**New Delhi:** Even as Chennai Super Kings got off to a hot-and-cold start in this IPL, one thing that seemed to be working for them was their middle-order. And a large part of that was down to Shivam Dube, who arrived at the scene with an amped-up game against pace and left the opposition teams searching for answers. In a way, Dube's tremendous form helped make up for Ruturaj's slow start to the season but as CSK's newly-appointed captain found his mojo back, Dube seems to have lost some of his. Two first-ball ducks clearly don't make it a bad season for him but it's an area clearly that CSK would want to get back to their best at. Against Punjab Kings, CSK got off to a good start and looked set for a 200+ total but a middle-order misfire kept them to 167/9. Speaking after the game, Ravindra Jadeja, the Player of the Match, conceded that they were "15-20 runs short" but an all-round bowling performance, which included Jadeja's three-wicket haul, helped CSK offset the middle-order falling through. "It was a day game, so the wicket was slow, which we expected,"

Jadeja said. "We did well in the powerplay [with the ball] but then we could not build partnerships. We wanted to build partnerships, so in the last 4-5 overs, we could score quickly. Partnerships didn't happen, but as a bowling group, we did well. Tushar Deshpande got important wickets in the powerplay. Then Mitch Santner and I did well in the middle overs. "During the powerplay, the wicket always looks flat. But as the ball gets a little old, the ball doesn't come on to the bat. Especially at a new venue, you don't know what to

expect. That's why we felt we were 15-20 runs short but we bowled well in the powerplay and middle overs, didn't bowl loose balls."

CSK's bowling coach isn't too concerned about Dube's dip in form either. "I don't think that's a problem when you have a blip once or twice," Eric Simons said after CSK beat PBKS by 28 runs. That [middle-order] has been our strength. Dube has been incredible but he got out early twice now and that happens. The guys fought hard on the other side and got us to a decent total that we could defend.

"I think we won't be over concerned about the middle-order. We know the quality is there and it might not have happened in this game. But as we move forward, we hope to fire again."

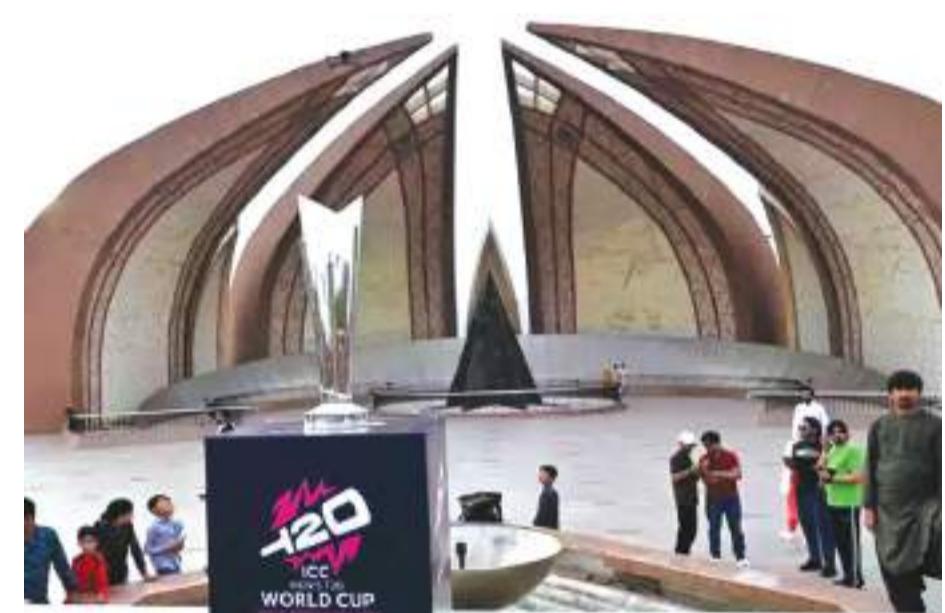
CSK now have a good four-day break to recalibrate and assess before they take on Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad. They then play the high-flying Rajasthan Royals on May 12 at home before travelling west again to take on the Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

The Caribbean media reported that the

## CWI assures safety as T20 WC receives terror threat

**New Delhi:** The Cricket West Indies (CWI) has sought to allay fears of security threat to the Twenty20 World Cup in the West Indies even as the Caribbean islands have received terror alerts to the global event from North Pakistan. "We work closely with authorities in the host countries and cities, and continually monitor and evaluate the global landscape to ensure appropriate plans are in place to mitigate any risks identified to our event," Jonny Graves, the CEO of the CWI told Cricbuzz on Sunday evening. The security alert states that, "Pro-Islamic State (IS) media sources have launched campaigns inciting violence against sporting events, which included video messages from the Afghanistan-Pakistan branch, ISKhorasan (IS-K) which highlighted assaults in numerous countries and urged supporters to join the battlefield in their countries."

The Caribbean media reported that the



authorities are tracking potential threats to the World Cup. "We want to assure all stakeholders that safety and security of everyone at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup is our number one priority and we have a comprehensive and robust security plan in place," Graves further told this website. The Twenty20 World Cup is scheduled to take place in the West Indies and the US from June 1 to 29. A report in Trinidad's Daily Express quoted that island's Prime Minister Keith Rowley as saying that the Caricom and security agencies are working to combat the threat to the World Cup. It has been further reported that the Barbados regional security officials are monitoring potential threats to the ICC event. It has been reported that intelligence of a potential threat to the World Cup has been received through Pro-Islamic State (Daesh) through the media group "Nashir Pakistan". According to Daily Express, Nashir-e Pakistan is an Islamic State group-affiliated propaganda channel. In the West Indies, the World Cup matches will be held in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago. There are matches in the US cities of Florida, New York and Texas too but there is no indication of any threat to the games in the USA. The two semifinals will be played in Trinidad and Guyana with the final slated for Barbados. When contacted, the ICC said its statement is the same as that of the CWI.

## Until something changes, that will remain the situation' - ICC chief on Afghanistan not having a women's team

**New Delhi:** Geoff Aldrice, the ICC chief, said that it was difficult for the Afghanistan cricket board to develop women's cricket in the country and unless there is some change to the situation, the status quo will remain.

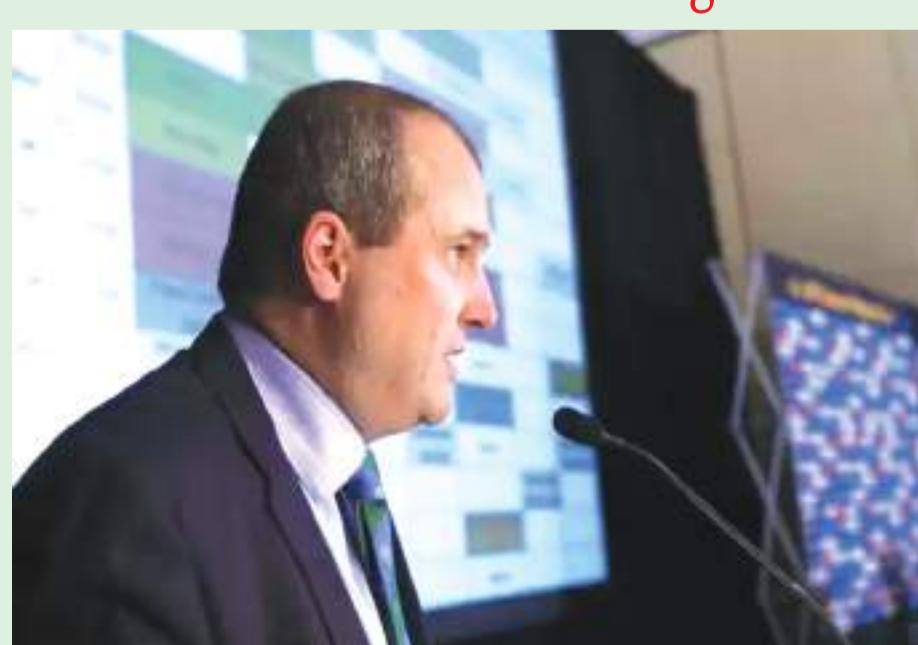
"I think at the moment, the Afghanistan Cricket Board who is our member is unable to fill the team," Aldrice told the media in Dhaka on Sunday during an event for the forthcoming ICC T20 World Cup. "Until something changes, that

will remain the situation. It isn't that the Afghanistan Cricket Board wasn't developing women's cricket previously, it is just that they are not able to do at the moment.

Afghanistan are currently the only full member nation without a women's team and as a result Afghanistan Cricket Board could not send their women's team in the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup. The teams are divided into two groups of five

each with Group A including Australia, India, New Zealand, Pakistan and Qualifier 1 while Group B has South Africa, England, West Indies, Bangladesh and Qualifier 2.

In March 2024, Cricket Australia, which had already cancelled the historic one-off Test against Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover and withdrawn from the ODI series last year, postponed their scheduled T20I series against Afghanistan citing no improvements in



Taliban's stance on women. The three-match series was scheduled to be held in August 2024 in the UAE. Aldrice added that the ICC is eyeing to expand women's cricket by increasing the number of teams in the global tournaments, starting with the next ICC Women's World Cup being played by 10 teams.

"Expanding the opportunities in a tournament, so I know the event that's coming up here in October is a 10-