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China poll meddling

Canada says it tried to impact 2019, 2021 polls



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Sindhu, Prannoy crash out



**ENTERTAINMENT PAGE 12**

Nervous on red carpet

Jennifer Aniston also talks about her acting bug



**CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD**

Farm	Rs. 146
Retail live	Rs. 168
With skin	Rs. 244
Skinless	Rs. 277
Egg Rates (12 eggs)	Rs. 51

## 2 defected Odisha MLAs disqualified

Speaker terminates membership for switching from BJD to BJP

AGENCIES  
 BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Assembly Speaker Pramila Mallik has terminated the membership of legislators Arabinda Dhali and Premananda Nayak, who quit the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), on the ground of defection.

Dhali, elected from the Jayadev Assembly segment of the Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha constituency, and former Minister Nayak, representing the Telkoi Assembly seat under the Keonjhar Lok Sabha constituency, joined the opposition BJP after resigning from the primary membership of the BJD in March 2024.

Their disqualification came on a petition filed by Jagatsinghpur MLA Prasanta Kumar Muduli under the Members of Odisha Legislative Assembly (Disqualification on Ground of Defection) Rules, 1987, on March 18, demanding that their membership be terminated under the Tenth Schedule to

## BRS moves HC for disqualifying MLAs who joined Congress

**HYDERABAD:** Upping the ante against MLAs, who defected from the party, the BRS has decided to intensify its fight for their immediate disqualification from the House.

The party, which has approached the Telangana High Court for their disqualification, will stage protests with funeral drum beats in front of the residences of all three BRS MLAs who defected to the ruling Congress recently. Party leaders demanded that the defected MLAs resign from their posts immediately.

the Constitution, following their voluntary resignation from the BJD on which ticket they were elected to the State Assembly.

Speaking to media persons at Telangana Bhavan on Thursday, MLA KP Vivekananda and Padi Kaushik Reddy said the BRS had lodged a complaint with Speaker Gadadam Prasad seeking the immediate disqualification of MLAs Danam Nagender, Kadiyam Srihari and Telam Venkat Rao, who switched to the Congress. They advised the Telangana Assembly Speaker to follow the path of his Himachal Pradesh counterpart, who disqualified Congress MLAs for defecting from the party.

"Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is trying to influence the office of the Assembly Speaker. He should be ashamed to release the Congress Lok Sabha election manifesto proposing for automatic disqualification of elected representatives defecting from their original parties, with BRS MLAs who defected to the Congress standing next to him. With its double standards, the Congress is losing its credibility in Telangana," Vivekananda said at the press conference. (SEE PAGE 2)

Speaker announced the disqualification of Dhali and Nayak, who will cease to be members of the Assembly immediately. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Apple users warned of Pegasus-like spyware

Journalists, activists, diplomats at risk

NEW DELHI

iPhone maker Apple has warned its users about ongoing Pegasus-like sophisticated spyware attacks that target a very small number of individuals often journalists, activists, politicians and diplomats.

Though deployed against a small number of individuals and often involve exceptional costs, mercenary spyware attacks are "ongoing and global", according to an Apple threat notification.

Apple, in the threat notification issued on April 10, indicated that such attacks have been associated with state actors as per past research and reports.

"Apple threat notifications are designed to inform and assist users who may have been individually targeted by mercenary spyware attacks, likely because of who they are or what they do. Such attacks are vastly more complex than regular cybercriminal activity and consumer malware, as mercenary spyware attackers apply exceptional resources to target a very small number of individuals and their devices," it said.



The notification has come at a time when around 60 countries, including India, are going for elections this year. The Cupertino-based firm said mercenary spyware attacks cost millions of dollars and often have a short shelf life, making them much harder to detect and prevent. Besides, the vast majority of users will never be targeted by such attacks.

"According to public reporting and research by civil society organisations, technology firms and journalists, individually targeted attacks of such exceptional cost and complexity have historically been associated with state actors, including

private companies developing mercenary spyware on their behalf, such as Pegasus from the NSO Group," the notification said.

The Pegasus spyware took control of mobile phones just by giving a missed call on WhatsApp. "Though deployed against a very small number of individuals 'often journalists, activists, politicians and diplomats' mercenary spyware attacks are ongoing and global," the notification said. Apple said the extreme cost, sophistication and worldwide nature of mercenary spyware attacks makes them some of the most advanced digital threats. PTI

## Instagram begins to blur nudity in DMs

LONDON

Instagram said it's deploying new tools to protect young people and combat sexual extortion, including a feature that will automatically blur nudity in direct messages (DMs).

The social media platform said in a blog post on Thursday that it's testing out the features as part of its campaign to fight sexual scams and other forms of "image abuse" and to make it tougher for criminals to contact teens.

Sexual extortion or sextortion involves persuading a person to send explicit photos online and threatening to make the images public unless the victim pays money or engages in sexual favours. Meta also owns



Facebook and WhatsApp but the nudity blur feature won't be added to messages sent on those platforms. Instagram said scammers often use DMs to ask for "intimate images." The feature will be turned on by default globally for teens under 18. Adult users will get a notification encouraging them to activate it. Images with nudity will be blurred with a warning. PTI

## CBI arrests Kavitha from Tihar jail

NEW DELHI

The CBI on Thursday arrested BRS leader K Kavitha in connection with a corruption case linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam, officials said.

Kavitha (46) was held in Tihar jail where she was lodged after her arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case linked to the excise 'scam' on March 15, they said.

The Central Bureau of Investigation questioned Kavitha inside the prison on Saturday after obtaining permission from a special court. She was questioned on WhatsApp chats recovered from co-accused Buchi Babu's phone and documents related to a land deal. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Celebrating Eid



**ANNUAL FESTIVAL:** Participants prepare to fly hot air balloons during the traditional hot air balloon festival, an annual event since 1950, on Eid ul-Fitr in Wonosobo, Central Java. — Photo: AFP

## Indian film enters Cannes list after 40 yrs

NEW DELHI

Indian filmmaker Payal Kapadia's *All We Imagine As Light* on Thursday scripted history by becoming the first Indian title in over 40 years to feature in the prestigious Competition section of the Cannes Film Festival, where it will vie for the top prize — Palme d'Or.

Besides Kapadia, British-Indian filmmaker Sandhya Suri's *Santosh* will also be showcased at the 77th edition of the film gala. The movie will be screened under the Un Certain Regard section.

*All We Imagine As Light* will be presented under the main segment alongside 19 other highly anticipated titles, including films from master directors Francis Ford Coppola (*Megalopolis*) and Yorgos Lanthimos (*Kinds of Kindness*), the organisers said. PTI

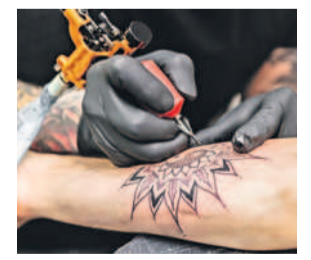
## Cops make beeline to remove tattoos!

BHUBANESWAR

Tattoo parlours in Odisha capital saw a surge in activity on Thursday as policemen sought to remove tattoos from their bodies.

The rush was prompted by an official order requiring police personnel engaged in the Special Security Battalion (SSB) to eliminate visible tattoos to maintain the image of the Odisha police at national and international levels. They were given 15-20 days to completely remove tattoos that were visible beyond their uniforms.

According to Subham Kumar Padhi, owner of WWE Tattoo Studio in Bhubaneswar, removing a permanent tattoo is a challenging and time-consuming process compared to getting one. "The cost of removal is four times higher than the



cost of getting a tattoo, with laser treatment requiring four sessions at intervals of 15-20 days," he said.

Padhi mentioned that several police personnel visited his studio to begin the removal process. He said, "The removal cost is Rs 2,000 per square inch, while we charge around Rs 350 to Rs 500 per square inch for putting up a tattoo."

The Special Security Battalion (SSB), consisting of over 1,000 personnel, is responsible for providing security to important installations in the State. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Woman told to pay maintenance to ex-husband

MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court has directed a working woman to pay a monthly maintenance of Rs 10,000 to her former husband, who is unable to earn due to his ailments.

A single Bench of Justice Sharmila Deshmukh in the order of April 2 noted that the provisions of the Hindu Marriage Act uses the term 'spouse' and this would include both husband and wife.

The HC noted that the woman has not disputed the fact that her former husband was not in a position to earn a living due to his medical ailments. "As the husband is unable to maintain himself, the wife, who has a source of income, is liable to pay interim maintenance," the Bench said. PTI

## TS universities to offer new biomedical science course

YUVRAJ AKULA  
 Hyderabad

Aspiring to become a forensic scientist, crime scene investigator or genetic counsellor? Here is a new programme that will help you realise your career goal.

The State universities are set to roll out a new three-year Biomedical Science programme at the undergraduate level from the forthcoming academic year.

The Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TSCHE), along with State universities, has embarked on the job of formulating a curriculum for the BSc Biomedical Science programme that opens up job avenues for undergraduates as forensic expert, crime scene investigator, genetic coun-

sellor, medical sales representative and science writer, among other fields.

The programme is being designed to impart students with a comprehensive understanding of the biological, chemical and computational aspects of human health-care with a focus on the practical training component.

Currently, the Osmania University College of Engineering is offering a Biomedical Engineering programme, which deals

with creating technology and medical devices.

Services of doctors from the Nizam Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) and Gandhi Hospital, among other private hospitals, scientists from the CCMB and IICT, and OU life sciences faculty have been roped in to design the course curriculum.

"We anticipate a good demand among students for the BSc Biomedical Science programme, which will aid students land jobs after course completion and students can also set up their diagnostic centres. Some part of the curriculum can be taught by doctors and scientists," TSCHE Vice Chairman and in-charge for developing programme Prof SK Mahamood said. (SEE PAGE 2)