



Bebo's stance

Actor Kareena Kapoor Khan opens up about her decision to avoid intimate scenes on screen

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Peace process

High-stakes talks between delegations from Ukraine and the US on how to end Kyiv's war with Moscow open in Saudi Arabia

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Starlink to enter India

Bharti Airtel partners with Elon Musk's SpaceX for providing Starlink's high-speed internet services to its customers in India

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Major relief

The Sports Ministry revokes the suspension imposed on the WFI, ending months of uncertainty surrounding the sport

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Rebels hijack train in Balochistan, kill 6

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, March 11: Members of Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) in Pakistan claimed to have taken custody of an express train with 100 passengers on board and killed six security personnel, according to a report.

Several passengers were injured when gunmen attacked a train in Pakistan's troubled Balochistan Tuesday, prompting the provincial government to direct authorities to take 'emergency measures.'

Jaffar Express, with around 500 passengers on board in nine coaches, was on its way from Quetta to Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa when it was fired on between Gudalaar and Piru Koneri areas, according to officials.

The BLA claimed that it seized control of the train by derailing it, killed six security personnel and took over 100 passengers, including active duty personnel, into custody. However, there was no independent confirmation of their claim.

In a statement, the BLA warned that if the Pakistani military launches an operation,

"all hostages will be executed". The group is banned in Pakistan, the UK and the US.

Official data on casualties was not available, but security sources said that the train driver and several passengers were injured in the gunfire.

"There are reports of intense firing at a Jaffar Express, which was heading from Quetta to Peshawar, between Pehro Kunri and Gadalar," Balochistan government spokesperson Shahid Rind said.

Rescue teams and security forces have reached the scene, and an operation is underway to track down the assailants. Emergency has been declared in the local hospitals.

Security sources said that the operation will continue till the elimination of the last terrorist. Railway officials confirmed that the train's driver sustained serious injuries, and an emergency relief train has been dispatched to assist. Meanwhile, government spokesperson Shahid Rind said, the security forces have managed to rescue 80 passengers from a bogie. Many are still trapped inside the tunnel as security forces engaged in a gun battle with the militants, he added.



FOR A CAUSE: Former Union minister and DMK MP Thiru Dayanidhi Maran and Tamil Nadu Industries minister TRB Raaja meeting Leader of Opposition Naveen patnaik at Naveen Niwas, Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

DMK reaches out to BJD, Congress over delimitation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 11: A two-member delegation of Tamil Nadu's ruling DMK Tuesday met Odisha's Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik here and deliberated on the issue of delimitation. DMK leaders TRB Rajaa and Dayanidhi Maran met Patnaik at Naveen Niwas, the BJD president's residence.

The delegation urged Patnaik to make the BJD a part of the Joint Action Committee (JAC) against the Centre's proposal for redrawing of constituencies solely on the basis of population.

"The DMK leaders also invited the BJD president to the meeting (over the issue) at Chennai on March 22. Patnaik has also expressed BJD's concern about the matter," senior leader of the Odisha regional party, Debi Prasad Mishra, told this agency.

The delegation is also likely to meet Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Bhakta Charan Das during their two-day visit to Odisha. The DMK has been reaching out to leaders of different parties to discuss the delimitation issue.

Mauritius' highest honour for PM Modi

PORT LOUIS: Mauritian Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam Tuesday announced that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be conferred with the nation's highest honour, The Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean.

Modi is the first Indian to receive this prestigious award, which recognises his contributions to strengthening ties between India and Mauritius.

Delhi world's most polluted capital City

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: Thirteen of the world's top 20 most polluted cities are in India, with Byrnhat in Assam topping the list, according to a new report published on Tuesday.

The World Air Quality Report 2024 by Swiss air quality technology company IQAir said Delhi remains the most polluted capital city globally, while India ranked as the world's fifth most polluted country in 2024, down from third in 2023.

Four cities in neighbouring Pakistan and one in China are among the world's top 20 polluted cities. Air pollution in Delhi worsened, with the annual average PM2.5 concentration rising from 102.4 micrograms per cubic metre in 2023 to 108.3 micrograms per cubic metre in 2024.

State turning jumbo graveyard

Despite the government's claims of taking all possible measures to curb the alarming rise in unnatural elephant deaths, these efforts have so far failed to yield any visible results, if data tabled in Assembly is any indication. The current year has witnessed the highest number of such deaths in the past 11 years. Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia told the House Tuesday. Last November, the Orissa High Court took cognizance of a PIL over the death of three elephants in Sambalpur district, seeking the government's measures to prevent such incidents. In response, the Forest department launched an investigation and filed an affidavit detailing its 'comprehensive action plan for the conservation of elephants and the mitigation of human-elephant conflict. However, these measures have proven ineffective, with no letup in elephant mortality. Significantly, among the 582 unnatural deaths, most have been caused by electrocution, indicating negligence on the part of the Energy department



Diseases, accidents, poaching and electrocution were some of the reasons for elephant deaths in the state

158 elephants were electrocuted to death between 2014-15 and 2024-25

97 pachyderms died in 11 months of the current financial year (Till February)

29 elephants perished after being hit by speeding trains

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The state has reported the death of 888 elephants in the last 11 years, with the maximum number of 97 cases being registered in the current financial year till February, the state Assembly was informed Tuesday.

Diseases, accidents, poaching and electrocution were some of the reasons for elephant deaths in the state, Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Ga-

nesh Ram Singkhuntia said in response to a query from BJP legislator Prasanta Kumar Jagadev.

According to the statistics furnished by the minister, 158 elephants were electrocuted to death between 2014-15 and 2024-25 (till February, 2025) while poachers killed 33 pachyderms.

Similarly, 29 elephants perished after being hit by speeding trains, eight died in road accidents, two due to poisoning and 16 were killed in a pre-planned manner, he said.

Chaos in Assembly; Tara barred for week

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The state Assembly Tuesday plunged into chaos when members of the ruling BJP and opposition Congress scuffled in the well of the House leading to adjournment of the proceedings several times.

Tension erupted in the House during Question Hour when senior BJP lawmaker Jaynarayan Mishra rushed towards Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati, who was standing in front of Urban Development Minister KC Mohapatra when the minister was replying to a question. The minister was giving the reply amid ruckus by opposition BJD and the Congress members.

Earlier, Bahinipati attempted to climb the Speaker's podium in order to stall the proceedings but failed, with Speaker Surama Padhy allowing Question Hour amid the din.

Thereafter, he approached the minister asking him to stop giving the reply as the opposition members were protesting in the well.

"Mishra caught hold of my shirt collar and pushed me. I was requesting minister Mohapatra to stop giving a reply when the House was not in order. I requested him with folding hands. But, Mishra suddenly came up to me and caught hold of my collar," Bahinipati told reporters outside the House.

Soon, other members of the Treasury Bench rushed to the well of the House and scuffled with the Congress members who were present there and raised anti-government slogans.

As the chaos prevailed Speaker Padhy first adjourned the proceedings till noon and, later three more times.

Meanwhile, Padhy suspended senior Congress member Taraprasad Bahinipati for seven days for "misconduct and unruly behavior."

Jayanarayan objects to Bande Utkala Janani

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 11: Senior BJP MLA Jayanarayan Mishra Tuesday raised objection to the state song Bande Utkala Janani, amid the row over his comment that the erstwhile Koshala made a 'historical mistake' by joining Odisha as the region has remained neglected.

Speaking to reporters outside the Assembly, which has been paralysed by opposition protests over his statement, Mishra said Odisha was formed with the merger of three regions - Kalinga (southern), Koshala (western) and Utkala (coastal), in 1936.

"I have no objection to Odisha as a state, but to the song Bande Utkala Janani (glorify mother Utkala). I will have no objection if it is changed to Bande Odisha Janani," said the Sambalpur MLA.

"The state song glorifies one



region, and there is no mention of the two other regions. Therefore, I am against it," he added.

Mishra's latest comment added fuel to the fire ignited by his earlier statement.

Opening up on the issue, Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan said the govt doesn't subscribe to the comments of Mishra, which he aired outside the House. "It is his personal opinion. The government is committed to the unity and integrity of Odisha and there shouldn't be any doubt over it," added Harichandan.

Noah's Ark has been found in Turkey!

AGENCIES

Ankara, March 11: According to the Bible, Noah's Ark saved humanity and all the animals from certain annihilation during an ancient flood.

Now, 5,000 years after those floodwaters supposedly receded, scientists claim to have discovered the location of the famous boat.

An international team of researchers claims that a boat-shaped mound 18 miles (30km) south of Mount Ararat in Turkey is actually the fossilised remains of a wooden vessel.

The Durupinar Formation is a 163-metre (538ft) geological structure made of a type of iron ore called limonite. It has long captivated researchers due to the fact that its shape and structure almost match those given for the Ark in the Bible.

New evidence shows that the mound really did experience a devastating flood 5,000 years ago. This supports the biblical ac-



count of a flood covering the region between 3000 and 5500 BC.

"Our studies show that this region harboured life in that period and that, at some point, it was covered by water, which reinforces the possibility that a catastrophic event of great magnitude occurred," the researchers said.

Since 2021, a collaboration between Istanbul Technical University, Agri Ibrahim Cecen University, and Andrews

University in the United States has been studying the site under the banner of the Mount Ararat and Noah's Ark Research Team.

During the 7th International Symposium on Mount Ararat and Noah's Ark, researchers presented new evidence that could support their theory that the structure is an ancient ship.

Researchers took 30 samples of soil and rock from around the Durupinar Formation and sent these to the Istanbul Tech-

University for analysis.

The tests showed that the soil contains traces of clay-like materials, marine deposits, and even the remnants of marine life such as molluscs.

Dating these samples showed that they were between 3,500 and 5,000 years old.

This suggests that the Durupinar Formation and surrounding area were covered by water in a time period consistent with the biblical account.

Lead researcher, Professor Faruk Kaya, said: "According to the initial results, it's believed there were human activities in this region since the Chalcolithic period."

If true, this would strengthen the claim that the Durupinar Formation is the exact boat used by the Biblical figure Noah to survive the ancient flood.

Besides this new evidence, the main arguments in favour of the Noah's Ark theory are the shape and location of the Durupinar formation.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



What should I tell him? Which state are you from? Civilised or uncivilised?

leisure



JLO, GOLDSTEIN SPARK DATING RUMOURS
Jennifer Lopez and Brett Goldstein have caught everyone's attention after being seen together at a Broadway show. Their outing has led to speculation about a possible romance. Fans are wondering if something is happening between the two stars.

DION SLAMS UNAUTHORISED AI-GENERATED MUSIC
Celine Dion has alerted fans about unauthorized AI-generated music that uses her name and likeness, condemning such creation as fake and unapproved. Dion's team has urged fans to verify authenticity when consuming music online.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Your attractive personality is always at the disposal of others, and today you could benefit immensely through it. However, there is room for improvement and you could be drawn towards charity work. Ganesh says you will surely feel satisfied by helping the needy.

TAURUS
Ganesh finds this an excellent day for managers and administrators. If you are one, the results you will achieve by the end of the day will far exceed the efforts you put in. This is mainly because your subordinates will be enthusiastic, compliant and cooperative. You will be focusing on the elements of leadership and team work and will use them resourcefully.

GEMINI
You will want some change in your daily routine today. You are likely to be fed up of the rut of daily life and are looking for a refreshing change. You need to apply your inherent creativity to your work to get more satisfaction out of it and to ease the boredom of your daily schedule, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Your social prestige will go up. People will praise your personality traits and try to emulate you. You will be a role model, too. Ganesh feels that this will be highly profitable day for you.

LEO
You will try to take up new projects to the best of your abilities today. You will be able to successfully tackle all your tasks today. You will face a little instability in your personal relationships, but will be able to solve all issues successfully, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Today there will be a tug-of-war between your work and personal affairs. But being a Leo, you know how to keep both well balanced. Ganesh says you may have loads of fun in whatever way you choose to make merry. Your will to succeed will be boosted today even as you enjoy yourself.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that you shall soon be able to travel or plan a trip, not for family or business matters, but for getting away from the mundane life. You will pay more importance to your professional matters as opposed to your personal matters. Today you will be able to attain success in every thing you do with the blessings of Ganesh.

SCORPIO
An electric wire of 440 volts is apt to describe you today. According to Ganesh, you are in a belligerent mood today and can burst like a fireball. Meditation and yoga is likely to improve the situation. Remember, treat others the way you want to be treated by them.

SAGITTARIUS
Keeping all the work aside, you may be painting the town red today. Falling in love is exciting, isn't it? However, for all those who are already in a relationship, Ganesh shows a red signal. Avoid arguments with your loved one, He suggests.

CAPRICORN
Your interests are guarded by the Almighty, so don't worry about them. Not that you are not ambitious, but you are satisfied with what you have and gained. You have set some realistic goals for yourself and you are making sincere efforts to achieve them. You are a simple person and you like your life to be uncomplicated.

AQUARIUS
You have changed your approach towards life from materialism to mysticism. Your friends and family members are pleasantly surprised to see this change. Later on the day, you may plan to visit a temple or other religious places, foresees Ganesh.

PISCES
You will display kindness and generosity today and will do your best to help anyone in need. At work you will receive praise for the efforts that you've put in and your dedication will be validated. Even though you intend to give utmost importance to your family, this intention will trail in the shadow of pending work which will require long hours.

CURTAINS ON ASIM UTSAV-2025



Member of Uttar Purush, one of the oldest theatre troupes of Odisha, performed Odia play *Panchanana Upakhya* on the concluding day of 8th Asim Utsav at Bhanjakala Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Tuesday. Adapted from a Bengali work by Amit Maitra and Shambhu Mitra, the drama was directed by Prasanna Kumar Mishra. The three-day event was organised by Asim Basu Foundation in collaboration with Government of India and Odia Language, Literature and Culture department, Government of Odisha.

Janhvi's fun anecdotes



Mumbai: Janhvi Kapoor made everyone droll over her sizzling moves in the *Nadiyon Paar* song from her 2021 film *Roohi*. As the horror comedy completed 4 years of release March 11, Janhvi took to social media and shared a couple of fun anecdotes from the dance number. She revealed that she rehearsed the song for 3 days between the shoot of her movie *Goodluck Jerry* before filming *Nadiyon Paar*. The diva penned on her IG, "4 yrs of #Roohi and my first solo dance number. I was such a kid. So nervous about this song. Hadn't even learnt how to keep my eyes open without squinting under harsh lights...Rehearsed for 3 days between *Goodluck Jerry*'s shoot, shot in Patiala all night for GLJ, flew out post-pack up in the morning, shot *Nadiyon Paar* that night, and finished the song in 7 hours with no sleep and flew back immediately to resume Jerry that day. A 3 day no sleep marathon, just excitement that I get to be in front of the camera." Janhvi further disclosed that the outfit she wore in the song was made in just one day, "Fun fact this outfit was made in one day after a last-minute desperate call to my knight in shining armour @manishmalhotra05...Hair make up dance wardrobe everything inspo was iconic @katrinakaif everything", she added. IANS

Bebo opens up on sexuality



Mumbai: Kareena Kapoor Khan, known for her versatile roles, recently opened up about her decision to avoid intimate scenes on screen. In a candid conversation with Gillian Anderson on her podcast, Kareena explained that she doesn't find such scenes necessary to advance a storyline and emphasised the importance of respecting sexuality before portraying it on screen. "We don't look at sex or sexuality as a natural human experience. We need to respect it more before putting it out there," she said. She added that she personally doesn't feel comfortable with such scenes and believes they're not essential for storytelling. Kareena also acknowledged the cultural differences, saying, "We're still not as open as the West in expressing female desire." Reflecting on her role in *Chameli*, where she portrayed a sex worker, the actress described it as a turning point in her career. The role helped her connect with her inner confidence and taught her she didn't have to conform to traditional beauty standards. Bebo added, "I kind of realised a lot of things. The fact that I didn't have to conform to the traditional notions like looking a particular way of femininity, or being beautiful, because she was so brash and unapologetic. I think that was a form of beauty which I really appreciate. I am happy that I got to play that part. It pushed me to be more fearless."

Deepika exudes vintage elegance

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone turned heads in a breathtaking white ensemble exuding vintage glamour with a modern Parisian flair, leaving her actor-husband, Ranveer Singh, utterly smitten. Deepika took to Instagram and dropped several looks of herself ahead of attending the Louis Vuitton Fashion Week in the fashion capital. In the first image, the *Gehraiyaan* actress posed in front of the Eiffel Tower in Paris. She is seen leaning over a stone railing with the iconic tower in the background, wearing a white oversized coat, black gloves, and a wide-brimmed white hat with a black ribbon. Then there's a close-up portrait of Deepika with a confident expression, showing her bold red lips, well-defined makeup.

For the caption, she simply wrote: "#LVFW25 @louisvuitton." However, it was the comment by her husband Ranveer, which caught the eyes of many. The actor's reaction to the picture was pure admiration as he wrote, "Lord have mercy on me," after seeing his wife's photographs. Deepika and Ranveer started dating while shooting for the film *Gollyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela*. Later they got married in the year 2018. IANS



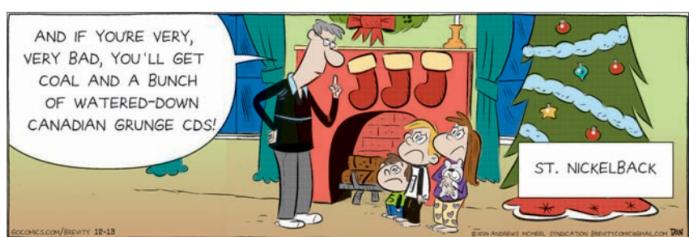
PEANUTS



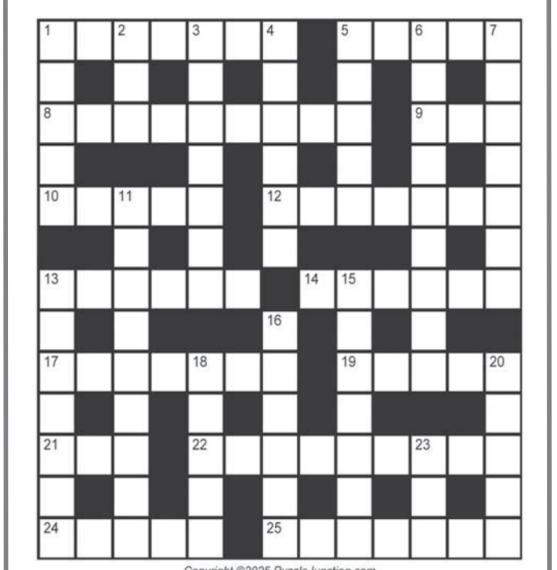
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



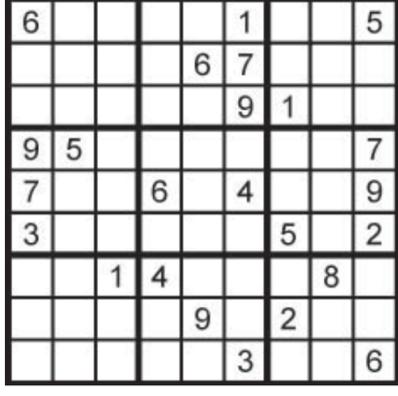
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Martial art
 - 5 Subject
 - 8 Music director
 - 9 Vat
 - 10 Pre-entree course
 - 12 Scribble artist?
 - 13 Lean
 - 14 Small piano
 - 17 Sea captain
 - 19 Ledge
 - 21 Waikiki wear
 - 22 Cemetery
 - 24 Up and down toys (2-3)
 - 25 Personal computer
- Down**
- 1 Child's game
 - 2 Calendar abbr.
 - 3 Type of storm
 - 4 Disheveled
 - 5 Trunk
 - 6 Irritability
 - 7 Night club
 - 11 Indebtedness
 - 13 Error
 - 15 Own
 - 16 Gofer's job
 - 18 Book ingredients
 - 20 Sick and tired (3,2)
 - 23 Away from the bow

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

Cong: Odisha may lose 3 LS seats in delimitation

States with successful family planning to lose seats in delimitation: Jairam Ramesh

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 11: The Congress Tuesday said that states like Tamil Nadu and Odisha – that have successfully implemented family planning and reduced total fertility rates in line with the national objective – will be ‘penalised’ as they are likely to lose eight and three Lok Sabha seats, respectively, if the delimitation exercise is undertaken.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary (in-charge communications) Jairam Ramesh highlighted that nine states may lose anywhere between one to eight Lok Sabha seats each, while states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are going to gain 11 and 10 seats, respectively, if the delimitation comes into effect.

“The states that lose seats are Tamil Nadu (8), Kerala (8), Andhra Pradesh and Telangana (8), Odisha (3), West Bengal (4), Karnataka (2), Himachal Pradesh (1), Punjab (1), and Uttarakhand (1). Assam, J&K, and Maharashtra don’t lose or gain any seat,” he said.

“The states that gain are Uttar Pradesh (11), Bihar (10), Rajasthan (6), Madhya Pradesh (4), Jharkhand (1), Haryana (1),



Gujarat (1), Delhi (1), and Chhattisgarh (1),” Ramesh pointed out.

To back his claim, Ramesh cited an analysis by two scholars – Milan Vaishnav and Jamie Hinton – in March 2019 using data from the 2001 and 2011 Census. It revealed that would happen to the distribution of seats if the estimated population of 2026 was used.

“The states that lose seats will do so simply because of their early success in family planning and reducing total fertility rates which has been the national objective. They will be penalised for it,” the senior Congress leader wrote on X.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK leader MK Stalin last Friday wrote to his counterparts in Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana, West Bengal, Punjab,

Odisha and party heads as well, inviting them to join hands with Tamil Nadu and be part of a Joint Action Committee (JAC) for an ‘uncompromising fight,’ over delimitation of Lok Sabha seats, which he termed an unfair exercise.

Stalin proposed the inaugural JAC meeting in Chennai March 22 and urged the leaders to join forces to chart a ‘collective course forward.’

Writing to CMs and leaders, Stalin said reports suggest that the delimitation exercise is being considered based on population, with two potential approaches.

“In the first case, the existing 543 seats could be redistributed among the states, and in the second case, the total number of seats could be increased beyond 800,” Stalin wrote in the letter.

As mandated by the Constitution, the delimitation process must be carried out after every Census to redraw the territorial boundaries and determine the number of seats in Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies.

However, the exercise was paused in 1976 until 2001 to encourage population control measures. The exercise was again put on hold in 2001 until the first Census after 2026.

COMBATING CANCER

Doctors release a souvenir during a workshop on 15th World Cancer Cervix Eradication Day 2025 at Acharya Harihar Post Graduate Institute of Cancer in Cuttack Tuesday



JUDICIAL PROBE ENDS: Justice CR Dash (retired), who headed the judicial commission of inquiry into Bharatpur police station case, hands over the 282-page probe report to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Mahji at Lok Seva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday. The case pertains to the alleged torture of an Army officer and sexual harassment of his female friend at the police station in the City in September last year

Orissa HC relief for Raja Chakra in ‘₹50 crore scam’

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, March 11: The Orissa High Court Tuesday granted interim protection to BJD leader Raja Chakra and four others while hearing a case pertaining to Rs 50-crore alleged scam in

Gandhamardan Loading Agency, which was transporting ores mined by Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC), at Suakati in Keonjhar.

The single-judge bench of Justice V Narasingh made it clear that interim relief will

remain in force until further orders. No coercive measures can be taken against the five during the period, the HC maintained.

Notably, Chakra and others have approached the HC seeking anticipatory bail in connection with the alleged scam.

Meanwhile, Economic Offences Wing and Special Task Force officials carried out searches at three locations - Bona, Gopalpur Port and Keonjhar – in connection with the alleged scam.

Stir over Bahinipati’s suspension

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 11: Congress MLAs Tuesday sat on a dharna near the Mahatma Gandhi statue on the Assembly premises protesting party leader Taraprasad Bahinipati’s suspension from the House for seven days. They vowed to continue their stir till the suspension order is withdrawn.

Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Rama Chandra Kadam alleged that some members of the BJP including Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mukesh Mahaling, senior MLAs Jayanarayan Mishra, Babu Singh, Raghuram Machha and many other members of BJP rushed to the well as if well planned and started violence and physically assaulted Congress legislators who were protesting before the Speaker.

“We have no intention to disrespect the Speaker except express our democratic rights,” Kadam said while expressing regret for the incident that



happened in the House.

BJD member Arun Kumar Sahoo condemned the suspension and asked: “How can a BJP member hold the collar of a senior Congress MLA in the Well of the House? The BJP members also attacked the Congress MLAs. We have never seen such an incident in the House. What would the opposition do in the Assembly? Will they not protest the government’s inaction?”

Stating that a delegation of BJD MLAs will meet the Speaker on Wednesday, Sahoo alleged that they will urge her to remain neutral. “You (Speaker) heard 17 BJP MLAs before giving the ruling on the suspension of Bahinipati but did not listen to any opposition member. This is gross injustice,” Sahoo said.

BJP member Ashok Mohanty said the Speaker took action after the concerned Congress member crossed the limit.

“The Congress MLA climbed the Speaker’s podium, rushed to the minister’s seat and disturbed him while replying to the House,” Mohanty said.

Urban Development Minister KC Mohapatra said: “I told Bahinipati that you are a senior member and I am giving reply in the House as per the direction of the Speaker. I cannot defy the Speaker’s direction. He instead attempted to break my microphone.” Meanwhile, Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan in a statement in the House, said that Sambalpur MLA Jayanarayan Mishra’s remarks on the merger of ‘Koshala’ with Odisha was his ‘personal opinion and the government does not subscribe to his views.’

BJD leader Arun Kumar Sahoo rejected the Law minister’s statement and said that they had demanded a statement from the CM. “If not CM, the Deputy Chief Minister should make a statement in the House on Mishra’s controversial remarks,” Sahoo said.

DGP: Over 300 held over illegal mining in 5 days

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 11: Over 300 people were arrested in the drive against illegal mining and transportation of minor minerals like sand, stones and laterite in Odisha, Director General of Police (DGP) Yogesh Bahadur Khurania said Tuesday.

Speaking to reporters, he said a state-wide special drive was started March 7 to check the illegal mining of minor minerals.

“We have registered 456 cases in different police stations till today, seized 524 vehicles used in illegal mining and transportation, and arrested 360 people,” he said.

“We have also issued notices to more than 100 people during the drive,” he added.

2 ARRESTED IN BALIANTA

Bhubaneswar: Baliaanta police arrested two persons near Rangabazar area for allegedly transporting illegally-mined sand from Daya River in the wee hours of Tuesday.

The truck used for the illicit act has been seized following the arrest, said Baliaanta inspector-in-charge (IIC) Anil Kumar Parida.

The IIC said the arrested have been identified as Niranjan Mallick alias Dangu, 37, and Prakash Kumar Dash alias Ni-

lu, 52 - both locals. Acting on a tip-off, a little past lam, the patrol team intercepted the sand-laden truck at a check post near Rangabazar market.

On enquiry, driver Niranjan and his associate Prakash failed to produce relevant documents, and were taken into custody. They were booked under Sections 303 (2), 317 (2), and 3 (5) of BNS, along with Section 12 of Orissa Mines and Minerals Act. The duo was produced before a local court for remand.

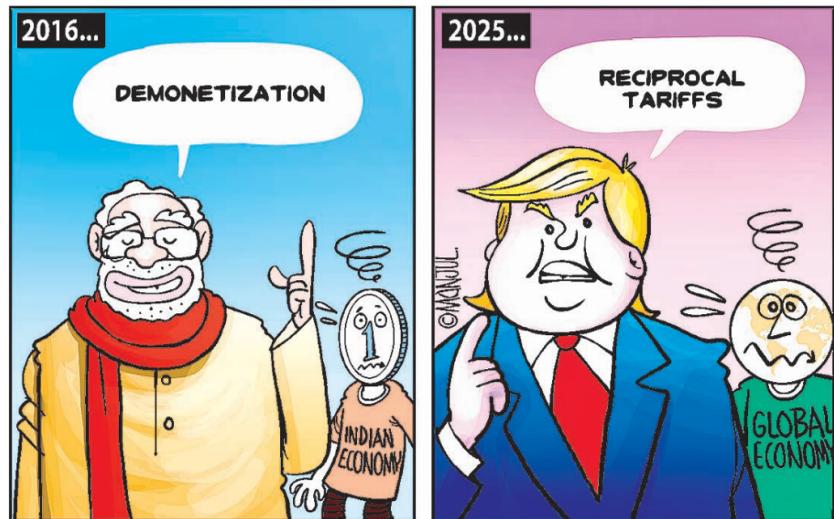
Khurania said the special drive, undertaken jointly by the district administrations, the Mines Department and the police, would continue.

“We hope that the action would help curb illegal min-

ing of minor minerals in the state,” he said.

The public can also provide information to the police regarding the illegal mining of sand, stones, laterite and morrum, he said.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Poll irregularities: HC junks pleas of BJD MLAs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, March 11: In what came as a blow to BJD MLAs Aswini Kumar Patra and Manorama Mohanty, the Orissa High Court Tuesday rejected their petitions against cases of irregularities by them during the 2024 elections.

According to sources, BJP’s Braj Mohan Pradhan, who lost to Patra in Balasore’s Jaleswar in the last election, approached the HC alleging irregularities in the conduct of the poll. Subsequently, Patra also filed a petition in the state’s apex court to reject Pradhan’s plea, claiming that allegations against

him were baseless. Similarly, Congress’s Bhakta Charan Das, who lost to Mohanty in Kalahandi’s Narla in the last Assembly election, moved the HC against Mohanty alleging irregularities in the election process. In response, Mohanty had urged the HC to reject the petition without hearing it.

BJD seeks independent audit of poll process

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 11: A delegation of Biju Janata Dal (BJD), which had last year complained about “unusual variances” in the votes cast in 2024 Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the state, Tuesday met the Election Commission (EC) and suggested an independent audit of the poll process.

In its second memorandum on the issue to the poll panel, the BJD leaders said the EC should conduct a periodic “process audit” of the entire election exercise by independent auditors or Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India and make its report public as is being done in several countries where ‘democratic’ elections are held.

They also urged the poll panel to develop a mechanism for involving citizen groups to co-monitor the election process from inception to the end, and formulate a mechanism for conducting a concurrent audit during polling at the booth level as well as during counting to ensure trust in election process.

The regional party, which faced a drubbing in the last elections, suggested tallying all VVPAT slips with the EVM count in every booth using advanced counting machines

The BJD, which suffered defeat in the last elections, also suggested tallying all VVPAT slips with the EVM count in every booth using advanced counting machines.

While complaining that they have not received copies of Form 17C from all booths in Odisha, BJD suggested that a 30-day time limit should be put in place for District Election Officers to furnish copies of Forms 17C Part I & II as well as all VVPATS to any citizen on payment of prescribed fees.

The memorandum, which sought to follow up on the memorandum submitted to the EC in December last year, said they

had not received any reply from the Commission on the issue.

Party leader Amar Patnaik, however, told reporters that a response from the EC was received by them Monday night, and the party has not gone through it in details.

“A cursory glance suggested a mechanical reply to a very grave concern raised by us,” he said. With the issue of duplicate voter ID cards being raised in Parliament by the Congress and the TMC, BJD leaders said they are in agreement with the concerns of the opposition parties, adding that the suggestions given by them may be helpful in this regard as well.

The party had first raised the issue in December last year and had also approached the poll panel raising concerns over “unexplainable” variances in the votes cast in recent polls in the state.

The BJD had claimed that serious discrepancies had been found between Form 17-C filled by presiding officers, and Form-20 filled by returning officers during the Assembly and Lok Sabha polls last year.

Cong demands spl law to tackle farm distress

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The Congress Tuesday demanded enactment of a special law for the protection of the farmers’ rights and interests in the backdrop of alleged exploitative practices at mandis, and agrarian distress in the state.

The demand was made at the ‘Kisan Chintan Baithak’ organised by Odisha Pradesh Kisan Congress at Congress Bhawan here Tuesday. The meeting was attended by OPCC president Bhakta Charan Das, state Congress Farmer Cell chief Amiya Patnaik and other party leaders.

Das said, “The increase in Minimum Support Price (MSP) to Rs 3,100 per quintal by the government does not seem to be benefiting the farmers as Rs 300 is being deducted from it. Share croppers are also affected due to lack of tokens and they are forced to sell paddy for Rs 1,800/1,900 per quintal.”

State Congress Farmer Cell Chief Amiya Patnaik said, “Our party is devoted to the cause of the farmers. They are facing huge losses due to unavailability of cold storages in the state. We demand legislation of a special law that would protect the farmers’ interests. We will keep fighting for their rights.”

Odisha creates 8L 'Lakhpati Didis': Deputy CM Parida



Bhubaneswar, March 11: Odisha has successfully created over eight lakh 'Lakhpati Didis,' with 1.66 lakh of them hailing from aspirational and tribal districts, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida announced in a video message Tuesday. She was addressing participants at a district-level workshop on the Lakhpati Didi

Initiative, held across the state. The Lakhpati Didi scheme, launched by the Union government in 2023, aims to empower women self-help group (SHG) members by enabling them to earn an annual income of at least ₹1 lakh through agriculture, animal husbandry, and small-scale industries. To further strengthen the initiative, the state government has introduced the 'Lakhpati Didi Sahayika Yojana', under which community support staff (CSS) will play a crucial role in identifying and supporting potential beneficiaries at the household level. Parida emphasised that capacity-building programs are being conducted to enhance the efficiency and outreach of CSS in driving the initiative forward. As part of the initiative, 16.44 lakh Potential Lakhpati Didis (PLDs) have already been trained, and 11 lakh Business Development Plans (BDPs) have been prepared for the 2024-25 financial year. To ensure smooth execution, state and district-level steering committees have been formed for monitoring and implementation. The Lakhpati Didi Initiative is expected to significantly boost rural women's financial independence and economic empowerment across Odisha.



MUSICAL SHOW: Artistes perform on the concluding day of 3rd Nabanuraag Festival organised by Nrutyaja, an Odissi dance institution, at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, K Jaya Laxmi, aged about 48 years, W/o. Kalipe Dillip Kumar Rao, Resident of Plot No. 762, Bariksahi, Ratha Road, Old Town, Bhubaneswar - 751002, Dist.: Khordha, Odisha declare by this affidavit No. 45, Dtd.10.03.2025 that now onwards I shall be known as Kalipe Jaya Lakshmi for all future purposes.

LOST

I, Raseda Begum have with declare that one of the chain RSD linked to my property 1: Khata No.- 179/744, Plot No.- 211/2398 area Ac 0.038 dec and Property 2: Khata No.- 179/743, Plot No.- 211/2480 area Ac- 0.0052 dec below were being lost details of the same is (1) RSD No.- 10391212630, dated 18.12.2012 excuted by Mirajul Hussainy and Naveed Hussainy in favour of Md. Mustakim Raja. If any person found this, kindly inform me, in the following number Raseda Begum. Mob- 8328922676, 9438856909.

We, Dillip Kumar Nayak and Neelambar Nayak, S/o-Ullash Nayak, resident of Pipili-752104 lost Sale Deed document No.- 793/1995 on 07.02.2025 while travelling from Bharatipur to Pipili. If anyone find can contact:7008793929.

I, Damodar Sahoo, S/o-Arakhit Sahoo, resident of Begunia-752061 lost Sale Deed document No.- 1/2002 on 27.02.2025 while travelling from Kalapathar to Raj sunakhala. If anyone find can contact:8917688764.

CLASSICAL ODISIA LANGUAGE DAY

'Odia's classical status reflects its rich legacy'

Governor Kambhampati emphasises the need for digital advancements, linguistic preservation, and education reforms to keep classical languages relevant

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The recognition of Odia as a classical language is not just a formal honour but a tribute to its vast literary and philosophical richness, which has significantly shaped India's intellectual and cultural fabric, said Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati at the inauguration of a national seminar on 'Classical Language of Bharat: A New Perspective' here Tuesday.

The seminar, organised by the Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Odia (CES-CO) in collaboration with the Central Institute of Indian Languages, marked the celebration of Classical Odia Language Day and brought together scholars and experts to discuss the language's enduring significance. Wishing the audience in Odia, Governor Kambhampati lauded Odisha's deep-rooted literary traditions and acknowledged the contributions of legendary writers and poets, including Jayadeva, whose Gita Govinda has influenced Indian classical dance, music, and literature for centuries. He also highlighted Odia literature's role in preserving historical chronicles, religious scriptures, and scholarly texts, all of which have enriched In-



dia's intellectual heritage. The Governor noted that India's classical languages—Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, and the recently recognised Pali, Prakrit, Marathi, Bengali, and Assamese—form the foundation of the nation's cultural identity. He also underscored the Jagannath tradition, which has played a vital role in making sacred texts accessible to the masses, further strengthening Odisha's literary and spiritual legacy. Drawing attention to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Kambhampati stressed the importance of mother tongue-based education in fostering a strong cultural identity. He advocated for the three-language formula, which encourages stu-

dents to learn regional languages, thereby preserving India's linguistic diversity. As part of the seminar, three eminent personalities were felicitated for their outstanding contributions to the promotion and preservation of the Odia language. In his concluding remarks, the Governor called upon scholars and institutions to leverage digital tools, artificial intelligence, and research innovations to keep classical languages relevant in the modern era. "This seminar is an excellent platform to explore new perspectives on classical languages. I hope it inspires fresh efforts to celebrate, preserve, and sustain Odia and other classical languages for future generations," he said.

NAI observes 135th Foundation Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The National Archives of India (NAI) commemorated its 135th Foundation Day at its Record Centre in Bhubaneswar Tuesday, bringing together historians, researchers, and academicians to discuss the pivotal role of archives in preserving history. Addressing the gathering, former AIIMS-Bhubaneswar director Ashok Mohapatra underscored the significance of accurate data in research. "If the data is flawed, the entire system collapses. Archives function as laboratories of knowledge, and we must utilise them effectively," he said. Renowned historian and researcher Anil Dhir delivered a lecture on The Relevance of Archives in Odishan Studies in India and abroad, stressing the importance of reconnecting the

past with the present. "Odisha's historical records are dispersed across India and overseas. Their restoration and accessibility are crucial for high-quality research," he noted. Welcoming the attendees, assistant director of Archives Satyanarayana Mishra highlighted the institution's role in governance, administration, and historical research. "Archives provide a systematic collection of records that offer deep insights into a nation's economic, political, and social evolution," he remarked. Established in 1891 in Kolkata as the Imperial Records Department, NAI relocated to Delhi in 1911. The Bhubaneswar branch, which oversees 12 eastern states, preserves rare and invaluable documents, making it a crucial resource for researchers.

WEATHER table with columns BBSR, CTC, Max Temp, Min Temp, Humidity, Rainfall, and FORECAST.

MARKET WATCH table with columns INDEX, VARIATION, and values for SENSEX, NIFTY, DOLLAR, EURO, GOLD, SILVER.

10.3 tonne of ganja seized

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: In a major crackdown on illegal marijuana trade, Odisha Police seized a staggering 10.3 tonne of ganja during a series of raids across Kandhamal and Gajapati districts Tuesday. However, no arrests have been made so far, a senior police official confirmed. Acting on intelligence inputs, police teams carried out operations at multiple locations under the jurisdiction of four police stations in Kandhamal district—Gochhapada, Phulbani Sadar, Tumudibandha, and Brahmanigaon. The seizures included 3,675 kg of ganja from Budhenipanka village forest under Katringia Gram Panchayat, 1,440 kg from Nikininda village forest under Bilbadi Gram Panchayat, 615

kg from Banimila forest under Kurthaguda Gram Panchayat, and 2,555 kg from Rajanagar forest near Padikia. In a separate operation, police seized 2,000 kg (20 quintals) of ganja from Rihima village under the R Udaygiri police station limits in Gajapati district. According to officials, traffickers had been concealing large quantities of ganja in remote forested areas to evade law enforcement before smuggling it out. Police have intensified surveillance and launched further raids to apprehend those involved in the trade. Earlier in January, Director General of Police (DGP) Yogesh Bahadur Khurania announced a special enforcement drive to curb ganja cultivation and trafficking at the grassroots level, with operations set to continue until March 31.

BMC lists tax defaulters, warns of action

POST NEWS NETWORK

Defaulters face strict action as civic body cracks down on unpaid property dues, stressing the need for timely payments to support City development

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has released a list of holding tax defaulters, identifying property owners who continue to avail municipal services but have failed to clear their outstanding dues. In a strong move to ensure tax compliance, BMC has issued notices to these defaulters, stressing that timely

payments are essential for the city's growth and improved civic infrastructure. BMC Commissioner Rajesh Prabhakar Patil emphasized that tax revenue plays a crucial role in maintaining urban infrastructure, sanitation, and other essential services. However, tax evasion not only affects city development but also places an additional burden on responsible taxpayers. The commissioner also noted that non-payment of holding taxes significantly impacts communities like Nerasya Janab, which rely on municipal resources for basic amenities. Despite multiple reminders, several property owners have remained non-compliant, prompting BMC to deploy teams for delivering notices directly to defaulters. Offi-



cial revealed that many tax evaders have occupied their properties for years without making payments, even during adverse weather conditions. In response, BMC has intensified its enforcement efforts, particularly targeting commercial

establishments that have long overdue tax payments. Notices sent to certain business entities have already led to a shift in their payment behavior. As of last week, BMC identified three defaulters from the southeast zone, five from the southwest, and seven from the north zone with arrears ranging between ₹50 lakh and ₹1 crore. Additionally, five individuals from the southeast, five from the southwest, and six from the inner zone owe over ₹1 crore in unpaid taxes. Authorities have warned of strict action, including legal proceedings, if they fail to clear dues. To facilitate easy payments, BMC has introduced an online payment system for house tax and trade license fees, ensuring transparency and efficiency in tax collection.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS. Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-909090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

WATER DISPUTE TURNS BRUTAL

Man battered to death in front of children; 2 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, March 11: In a horrific crime that put humanity to shame, a 50-year-old man was battered to death with sticks, wooden planks and axe in front of his children- two daughters and a son- by three miscreants in a village in the district Monday night, following a dispute over opening a water outlet in a canal.

The killers didn't even spare the victim's teen-aged son who is suffered critical injuries after he was attacked in a similar way while trying to save his father.

Police Tuesday claimed that they have arrested two of the perpetrators - Daitari Pradhan and Shukru Bhue - on a complaint lodged by Shiba Bariha, son of the deceased, Kartik Bariha. Shukru's son Ram Bhue is still to be traced.

The incident occurred at Lupursingha village, under Lachhipur police station. Kartik was at loggerheads with the accused since a long time over sharing of canal water. Both the victim and the accused used water from a nearby canal to cultivate paddy, gram and vegetables.

On Monday evening Kartik was returning home with his cow after working in the fields when Daitari appeared from nowhere and attacked him with a wooden plank. Shukru joined Daitari and struck Kartik with an axe, while Ram hit him with a stick. Kartik suffered severe injuries to his head and body in the attack.

Kartik's son Shiba was near



a water pump in the vicinity, while his daughters, Padmini and Shira, were collecting gram. Upon hearing his father's cries, Shiba rushed to his help, but was also attacked by Daitari with a wooden plank, while Shukru assaulted him with an axe. Shiba collapsed on the spot, while his sisters watched in horror as their father was assaulted.

A profusely bleeding Kartik died on the spot.

Upon receiving the information, Lachhipur Inspector-In-Charge Bhojaraj Sa and a police team arrived at the scene and guarded the body overnight. Side by side, they arrested Shukru and Daitari from their homes.

Sonepur Sub-Divisional Police Officer Pratap Chandra Tripathi, along with a forensic team, conducted further investigations Tuesday. Police

claimed to have recovered the blood-stained wooden plank and sticks.

Kartik's body was handed over to his family members for conducting his last rites, even as a hunt has been launched for Ram.



SPREADING AWARENESS: An awareness cyclothon on coastal security comprising Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel arrives at Netaji Square in Rajkanika of Kendrapara district Tuesday. Two teams participating in this cyclothon started from Bakhli in West Bengal and Lakhat port in Gujarat and will conclude at Kanyakumari

40 villagers held in Ganjam group clash

POST NEWS NETWORK

Digapahandi/Chikiti, March 11: The police Tuesday arrested 40 persons in connection with the group clashes that broke out between the residents of Katuru and Rameyapatna villages under Chikiti block in Ganjam over excavation of river mouth at Katuru village Monday in which 10 persons were injured.

According to reports, the clashes took place in the presence of Executive Magistrate-cum-Chikiti tehsildar Biswa Ranjan Kanhar, BDO Lakshman Soren and Golanthara IIC Bibekananda Swain. Five of the critically injured were admitted to the MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur for further treatment. Police have registered two separate cases on the basis of the complaints filed by the two rival groups.

During the crackdown in



the aftermath of the violence Tuesday, police arrested 19 residents of Katuru village, and 21 from Rameyapatna village and produced them in a court. Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M visited the spot and took stock of the situation. Moreover, police clamped prohibitory order and deployed three platoon of force to avoid any flare ups.

Sources said that tension had been brewing in both the villages over excavation of the river mouth. Police and administrative officials called a meeting

Sources added that Katuru villagers earn their living by fishing from Bada nullah. They feared that the river mouth will affect their living for which they tried to fill up the river mouth. On the other hand, Rameyapatna villagers travel to the sea via the river mouth to catch fish. The clash occurred when the Katuru villagers tried to excavate and bury the river mouth Monday. When contacted, Golanthara IIC Bibekananda Swain said that despite palpable tension in the locality, the situation remains under control in both the villages following arrest of the accused persons.

Hundreds of villagers from these two villages attended the meeting and aired their grievances over the issue. However, tension prevailed in the meeting when both sides started trading barbs and hurled abuses against each other. Later, they started assaulting each other with lathis and sharp-edged weapons.

Residents wondered why the police failed to deploy extra force at the meeting venue despite being aware of the tension brewing between the rival villagers.

Man gets 10-yr RI for raping minor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Phulbani, March 11: A teenage girl was raped in Kandhamal district when she went out of her home looking better mobile network and reached a secluded spot.

The incident happened in April 2016, when the girl was 13, and nine years later, a court sentenced the accused to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment.

The court of Special POCSCO Judge Rajesh Kumar Das in Phulbani also imposed a fine of ₹11,000 on the convict, who is now 29. If the convict fails to pay the fine, he will remain in jail for another five months, the court ordered Tuesday.

The verdict was delivered after examining 11 witnesses, said



Special Public Prosecutor Asim Praharaj.

The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) was directed by the court to pay ₹7 lakh to the survivor as compensation.

The girl was trying to speak to her sister, who lived in Chennai, and in search of a better network, she reached a secluded spot near her village in the Daringbadi police station area. Finding her alone, the convict dragged her behind a bush and raped her.

2 cattle smugglers hurt in encounter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sambalpur, March 11: At least two suspected cattle smugglers were injured in an encounter with police in Sambalpur Tuesday morning, officials said.

The duo, who suffered bullet injuries, have been admitted to VIMSAR in Burla. They hail from Howrah district in West Bengal, a police statement said.

The incident took place when police intercepted a Bengal-bound truck carrying cattle, while the two accused were escorting the vehicle in a car.

"When the police intercepted the truck, the smugglers opened fire on the personnel. They fired in retaliation, injuring the two of them," the statement said.

Man killed in jumbo attack

POST NEWS NETWORK



Bantala, March 11: A man was killed by a jumbo during a Forest department operation to drive away a herd of elephants that had strayed into Sankhapur village under Angul forest division, late Monday night.

The deceased was identified as Bijay Nayak, 50, a resident of Harijan Sahi in Dhokuta village. The wild elephant picked him in its trunk and battered him to the ground, before trampling him to death. The incident occurred when Forest personnel arrived

to drive away the herd after it tried to stray into the village. While they were trying to shoo away the giants, one of them charged at the onlookers. Bijay, who was among the crowd, ran out of luck and was grabbed by the elephant before being trampled to death.

The death of the villager sparked tension in the area as residents detained the Forest personnel holding them responsible for the incident. They resented in the wee hours of Tuesday after higher departmental authorities agreed to appoint the deceased's son as 'Gaja Sathi' and provide his family with all compensation as per government norms. Later, Banatala police registered a case and sent the body for post-mortem.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. SBP-ELECT-2025-T-238
NAME OF WORK : ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT OF DA SETS i.e. B-CHECK, C-CHECK AND D2 SCHEDULE MAINTENANCE OF KOEL MAKE DA SET EQUIPPED IN POWER CARS AT SAMBALPUR COACHING DEPOT FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.
Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 1,04,93,614.53, EMD : ₹ 2,02,500/-
Completion Period of the Work : Three years from the date of issue of LOA.
Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1530 hrs. of 04.04.2025.
 No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website fifteen (15) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/ bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G)/ PR-1067/P/24-25 Sambalpur

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Letter No. ST-OT-TSR-TRR-WORK/KUR/458
 Date: 05.03.2025
NAME OF WORK : S&T WORK FOR TRACK RENEWAL AND REHABILITATION WORKS ON VARIOUS SECTIONS OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION (KHURDA ROAD-PALASA, TOMKA-JAROLI, BHADRAK-KHURDA ROAD, NERGUNDI-TALCHER, JAKHAPURA-JAROLI, BHADRAK-KHURDA ROAD, AND KHURDA ROAD-PURI).
Tender Value : ₹ 52,86,521.42, EMD : ₹ 1,05,700/-, Bidding Start Date : 12.03.2025.
Date of closing of Tender : At 1100 Hrs. of 26.03.2025.
 No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against the e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and receipt in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (S&T), PR-1063/P/24-25 Khurda Road

Gahirmatha: Over 6L turtles turn up as mass nesting ends

AGENCIES

Kendrapara, March 11: The annual mass nesting of endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles at Gahirmatha beach in Kendrapara district has culminated with over six lakh turtles turning up to lay eggs at the idyllic nesting ground, officials said Tuesday.

A total of 6,06,933 turtles emerged from the seawaters to crawl and dig pits on the beaches to lay eggs, a phenomenon otherwise described as 'arribada' (a Spanish term) in a five-day span. The arribada that commenced March 5, came to an end March 9, said Manas Das, Assistant Conservator of Forest, Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary.

Gahirmatha beach is regarded as world's largest-known nesting ground of Olive Ridley turtles.

The perfect topography and profile of the beach, largely free from sea erosion, proved to be conducive for turtles to virtually invade the beach, he said.

After the mass nesting, female turtles undertook seaward journey unhindered and undisturbed as the nesting beach in the island is unmanned and free from human interference, said the official.

The turtles turned up on the beach in the dead of the night to lay eggs. After indulging in instinctive egg-laying, the turtles left the nesting ground to stride into the deep seawater. Hatchlings emerge from the nests after 45-60 days. It is a rare natural phenomenon where the babies grow without their mother, added the official.

An Olive Ridley usually lays about 120 to 150 eggs from which hatchlings emerge after about 45 to 50 days. But not all eggs remain intact as predators devour it. Besides, eggs are also washed away by sea waves during high tide. The eggs are incubated in the nest and grow, sans mother, to emerge as hatchlings.

The major highlight of this year's mass nesting was the reemergence of turtles at Eakakulanasi Island of Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary after a gap of 33 years. Around three lakh turtles laid eggs at island beach after playing truant for more than three decades.

The idyllic beach was hit by sea erosion, leading to the beach profile getting truncated. However, the beach is currently elongated as it has started accreting since 2020. This proved conducive for female turtles to turn up en masse to lay eggs. The marine species had appeared at the beach in 1992 when as many as three lakh turtles had laid eggs.

ଦି ପୁରୀ ଅର୍ବାନ କୋ-ଅପରେଟିଭ ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କ ଲି., ପୁରୀ  **The Puri Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd.**
 Puri, Kacheri Road, Puri - 1 **e-auction Sale Notice**

E-Auction Sale Notice (Sale through e-bidding only)

email- puriucb.ltd@gmail.com, Phone No. 06752 223309, Auction Office Mob.: 94383 63401

E-Auction Sale Notice

Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and / Guarantor (s) indicated in Column (1) that the below described immovable property (ties) described in column (3) Mortgaged / charged to the secured creditor the constructive / physical possession of which has been taken as described in column (4) by the Authorised officer of The Puri Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd, Puri will be sold on "As is where is" "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" as per the details mentioned below.

Notice is hereby given to Borrower / Mortgage (s) / legal heirs legal representatives (whether known or unknown) executor (s), administrator (s) successor (s) and assign (s) of the respective Borrowers (s) / Mortgagor (s) (Since deceased) as the indicated in Column (1) under Rule 8 (6) of the Security interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

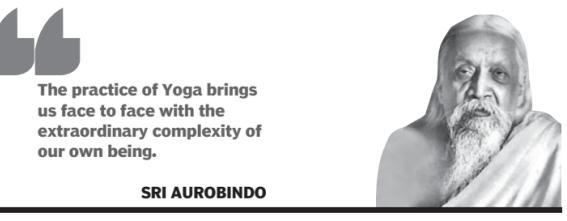
For detailed terms and conditions of the Sale, please refer to the link provided in <https://sarfaesi.auctiontiger.net> Secured Creditors.

Name (s) of Borrowers / Mortgager (s) / Guarantors / Legal Heirs and legal Representatives (whethers known or unknown) Executors (s) Administrators (S) Successor (s) and Assigns (s) of the respective Borrowers (s) / Mortgagors (s) Guarantor (S) (Since deceased) as the case may be	Outstanding Dues to be Secured Dent) Rs.	Description of the Immovable Property / Secured Asset	Type of Possession	Date & Time of Inspection	Reserve Price (Rs)	Last date of Submission of bids	Earnest Money deposit	Bid Incremental Rate	Date of Auction and time
1. Subhalaxmi Samartha 2. Bhagyalaxmi Samartha 3. Swadip Samartha D/o - Late Harihara Samartha Address - Markandeswar Sahi, Bhawani Club Puri	Rs. 38,07,835.00 as on 24.04.2023	In the Name of Nilakantha Raut S/o. Lt Rama Ch. Rout Plot No. 25 Mouza Baselli Sahi Khata No. 29 Area A0.017	Physical Possession	24.03.2025 From 11 AM to 3 PM	Rs.23,22,000.00	27.03.2025	10% of the Bid Rs.2,32,200/-	Rs.10,000.00	28.03.2025 From 11 AM to 03 PM
Smt. Smati Parida W/o Lt. Kanhu Charan Parida At: Harachandi Sahi, Barabati Jaga, Puri- 752001	Rs. 24,27,395.00 as on 30.05.2024	In the Name of Smt. Smati Parida, W/o Lt. Kanhu Charan Parida Mouza Harachandi Sahi Khata No. 45,Plot No.190 Area A0.001Dec, Plot No. 191 Area A.0.016 Dec.Total Area. A0.0017 Decemil. Post/Dist Puri	Physical Possession	24.03.2025 From 11 AM to 3 PM	Rs.13,30,000.00	27.03.2025	10% of the Bid Rs.1,33,000/-	Rs.10,000.00	28.03.2025 From 11 AM to 03 PM

- Together with further interest @ 18% p.a as applicable, incidental expenses, costs charges etc incurred up to the date of payment and / or realization thereof.
- In respect of the Property at Serial No. 1 the outstanding due to the Builder / society or any other statutory /electricity /water/property tax other dues has to be cleared /paid by the successful purchasers /bidders and The Puri Urban co-operative Bank Ltd will not be liability to make any payment whatsoever.
- <https://sarfaesi.auctiontiger.net> would be assisting the authorised officer in conducting the auction through an e-bidding process. For any assistance related to inspection of the property or for obtaining the Bid documents and for any other queries, please get in touch with M/s e-procurement Technologies Limited-Auction Tiger Mr. Praveenkumar Thevar, Mob.-: 9722778828. (praveen.thevar@auctiontiger.net and support@auctiontiger.net)
- Authorised officer The Puri Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd., Puri. Sri Kanhu Charan Dash, Mob.-: 9438363401.
- The Bid Document can be collected/ obtained from the Authorized officer of The Puri Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd., having his officer at Kacheri Road, Puri-1 Odisha.
- The secured asset is being sold on "As is where is" and "As is what is" basis.
- To the best of knowledge and Information of the Authorised officer of The Puri Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd., there are no encumbrances in respect of the above immovable properties / Secured Assets.

Dated: 12.03.2025
Place: Puri

Sd./- Authorised Officer



The practice of Yoga brings us face to face with the extraordinary complexity of our own being.

SRI AUROBINDO

Two Individuals

Germany's Chancellor-in-waiting Friedrich Merz has proposed what is being interpreted as a seismic shift in his country's government spending that seeks to bypass legal restrictions on government debt. All this is intended to allow change in defence spending for years to come. The aim is to put Germany in a leadership position as Europe is desperately trying to get strategic autonomy from the United States. Significantly, this would not be done at the expense of vital investments in other areas. The proposed deal, if passed by the outgoing Bundestag this week, would also accommodate the Social Democratic party's (SPD) demands for spending on economic and social infrastructure. This would be channelled through a 500bn special fund, also to be financed by borrowing.

This is in a way a revolutionary step since Merz, a former investment banker, has been a deficit hawk and economic liberal throughout his career. It is, indeed, an irony of history that he has to pilot a proposal to challenge the debt-aversion that has crippled Germany's ability to respond to new geopolitical realities. But the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) leader has decided to rise to the occasion admirably and show the political courage to read the writings on the wall.

The proposal has come at a time when poorly performing economies across Europe and a lack of investment have caused an erosion of people's faith in mainstream politics and facilitated the dangerous rise of Far-Right forces getting further strengthened by the Trumpian version of the supremacist politics. Germany enshrined in its constitution "debt brake" as a legal requirement to balance budgets for protecting younger generations from the consequences of risky borrowing. However, by rigidly and mechanically following the mechanism in the current tumultuous times faced with costly challenges, Germany has instead stifled investment for its future generations.

The EU summit scheduled to meet in the middle of this week in Brussels is likely to give the green light for greater national spending on defence. This is, as experts point out, the need of the hour considering threats at home and abroad by Far-Right forces. The formula agreed by Merz and the SPD changing the overall approach to debt and deficits could be a model for the EU too. Merz pledged recently to do "whatever it takes" to protect freedom and peace. He will need the support of the Greens, as well as the SPD, to push his game changing proposals through.

In fact, it was the outgoing German Chancellor Olaf Scholz who created a 100bn special fund to modernise Germany's armed forces three days after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Russian President Vladimir Putin's aggression, he told a shocked Bundestag, meant that Europe was living through a *Zeitenwende*, or turning point.

However, it has taken the return of Donald Trump to the White House to understand the enormity of the emerging threat to European values, security and economic interests. What is important now is the fact that Scholz's Centre-Right successor-in-waiting seems ready to act accordingly. His election manifesto for February's snap poll pledged reduced spending on both defence and a stagnating economy. His U-turn now is being appreciated as a proposal to change Germany's Basic Law to permit huge debt-financed investment in the military and the economy. The measure removes a German political taboo and goes hand in hand with the creation of a special fund of 500 billion over 10 years to modernise infrastructure such as roads, trains and schools.

The two-pronged policy aims at reviving German economic growth, which has been in recession for two years following the shock of the war in Ukraine and enabling Berlin to regain the leadership role on the European stage that the country lost because of the weakness of Merz's predecessor.

The decision must still be approved by a two-thirds majority in the Bundestag on 18 March. For this the new Chancellor has to muster the numbers as his majority in the future parliament is too small to reach the two-thirds mark. His hope stems from the fact that he has chosen to submit his plan to the outgoing Bundestag, where his Social Democrat partners still have large numbers.

The gamble may pay off and in that event Trump and his aggressive team with Far-Right leanings will face the challenge of implementing policies threatening to overturn well established norms of diplomacy and international economic order. That is most needed now.

The other critical learning from all that is happening in Europe today is how individuals impact international politics and economy. Germany's economic and military growth has a frightening past as seen both in the 19th and 20th centuries. The re-emergence of that situation per force has been necessitated by the acts of two individuals. First, Putin leading Russia into a long drawn war against Ukraine made the whole of Europe shaky. The presence of the American forces and NATO was viewed as a balm on the wounds. Second, the return of Donald Trump as PoTUS upset all previous calculations of most European politicians. Both Putin and Trump being together at one time could be the harbingers of great change that would have long term effect on Europe and the world.

WISDOM CORNER

- No one succeeds without effort... Those who succeed owe their success to perseverance.** RAMANA MAHARSHI
- Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young.** HENRY FORD
- In the long run, the sharpest weapon of all is a kind and gentle spirit.** ANNE FRANK

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1918:** Moscow becomes Russia's capital city. St. Petersburg lost its status as the Russian capital following the Revolution of 1917, which dismantled the Tsarist autocracy.
- 1930:** Mahatma Gandhi embarks on his Salt March. The 240-mile march was an act of civil disobedience to protest the British monopoly on salt. It was one of the most significant events during the Indian Independence Movement.
- 1938:** Hitler invades Austria. The occupation of Hitler's homeland is known as Anschluss, which is the German word for annexation.
- 1940:** Finland agreed to Soviet peace terms, including the cession of western Karelia and the construction of a Soviet naval base on the Hanko Peninsula, to end the Russo-Finnish War.
- 1947:** The Truman doctrine is proclaimed. In his speech before Congress, U.S. President Harry S. Truman defined his foreign relations priorities, which included military and economic support to Turkey and Greece to prevent the spread of communism there.

FOCUS MULTILATERALISM

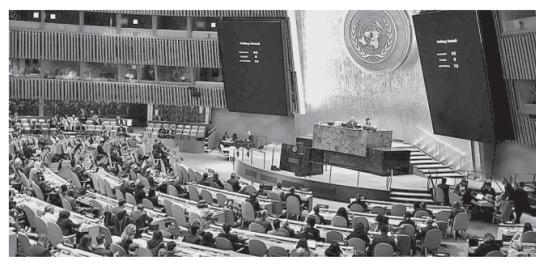
SOLIDARITY IMPERATIVE

Of all the geopolitical stunts Donald Trump has pulled since returning to the White House, the United States' votes at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on 4 March stand out as some of the most revealing.

First, the US opposed a seemingly innocuous resolution establishing an "International Day of Peaceful Coexistence" and reaffirming the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Despite its symbolic nature, the US voted against the resolution, with representative Edward Hearnery explaining that the US "rejects and denounces the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, and it will no longer reaffirm them as a matter of course." "Simply put," he added, "globalist endeavors like Agenda 2030 and the SDGs lost at the ballot box." Despite US opposition, the resolution ultimately passed with 162 countries voting in favor, two abstaining, and only three – the US, Israel, and Argentina – voting against.

Later that day, the US doubled down by opposing UNGA resolutions calling for the establishment of an "International Day of Hope" and an "International Day for Judicial Well-Being." It was also the sole vote against a resolution reaffirming "the right of everyone to education," which highlighted "the importance of equal opportunities for young people, including young women," likely because it conflicted with a pillar of the Trump administration's domestic agenda: dismantling diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs.

These moves may well foreshadow America's withdrawal from the UN – something Elon Musk and other Trump supporters have urged. Trump has already pulled the US out of the WHO and, as he did during his first term, abandoned the Paris climate agreement. His administration has also withdrawn the US from several UN bodies,



To be sure, the Trump administration has made its preference for unilateralism and coercion abundantly clear, using its power to bully individual countries rather than work through international institutions

including the Human Rights Council and the Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and is now reassessing its involvement in the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. It has also exited the ongoing UN Tax Convention negotiations. These actions by the US – along with its recent opposition to a resolution condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine – show that the Trump administration is not merely unhappy with certain international institutions. Rather, it is fundamentally opposed to any multilateral framework that even suggests equality among countries.

Some analysts argue that a complete US withdrawal from the UN is unlikely, given the disproportionate influence America wields through its Security Council veto. But given Trump's law-of-the-jungle approach to geopolitics – where raw power, not diplomacy, dictates action – even that advantage may no longer seem essential.

Should the US leave the UN, the financial consequences could be immediate and severe. Even if it stays, the Trump administration has made no secret of its intention to slash contributions. As the UN's largest financial backer, the US contributed a record \$18.1 billion in 2022, accounting for roughly 20% of the or-

ganization's total funding. Notably, more than 70% of US contributions went to just four UN entities: 40% to the World Food Programme, 12% to the High Commissioner for Refugees, 10% to UNICEF, and another 10% to the Department of Peace Operations. And since much of this funding was channeled through USAID – an agency Trump has shut down – it may have already vanished.

This represents yet another blow to the already underfunded UN system. Given the current geopolitical climate, it would take nothing short of a miracle for other governments to step in immediately to fill the gap. As a result, many critical – and even life-saving – UN programs are now at risk.

But the paradigm shift in US foreign policy does not necessarily signal the impending decline – if not outright collapse – of multilateralism and the UN system. To be sure, the Trump administration has made its preference for unilateralism and coercion abundantly clear, using its power to bully individual countries rather than work through international institutions. As the world's leading superpower turns its back on global cooperation, the system of multilateral governance that the US helped establish nearly eight decades

ago could begin to unravel.

Paradoxically, however, Trump's actions could also serve as a catalyst for greater international cooperation, impelling other countries to work together more closely. The reason is simple: no matter how vehemently the White House denies it, humanity's most pressing challenges are global in nature. They will not go away simply because Trump refuses to acknowledge them.

After all, climate change, environmental degradation, extreme inequality, emerging health threats, the rise of disruptive new technologies, and the erosion of stable employment all transcend national borders. These forces are fuelling social and political polarization around the world, underscoring the need for collective solutions.

Global solidarity is thus not just a moral imperative but an existential one. Encouragingly, many political leaders seem to understand this and remain committed to multilateralism despite the influence of what John Maynard Keynes once called "madmen in authority."

International negotiations on taxation, climate action, and development financing are moving forward, even without US participation. In fact, the absence of the US – which has all too often acted as a spoiler, even under previous administrations – could pave the way for more ambitious and effective global agreements.

Ironically, the multilateral order that Trump seeks to destroy has largely served the interests of global elites and powerful countries like the US, often at the expense of the vast majority of the world's population. In this sense, the current climate of uncertainty and upheaval could represent a unique opportunity to build a truly international movement for progressive change.

The writer is Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

PROJECT SYNDICATE



Jayati Ghosh

SHOULD THE US LEAVE THE UN, THE FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES COULD BE IMMEDIATE AND SEVERE

IN JEST THIS

Civic sense: How do we cultivate it?



Melvin Durai

WHEN THERE'S A PUBLIC TOILET AVAILABLE, YOU'LL BE LESS INCLINED TO RELIEVE YOURSELF IN PUBLIC. AND FOR EVERYONE ELSE, THAT WOULD BE QUITE A RELIEF

An Instagram user named Ankush recently posted a video complaining about a fellow Indian traveller who was speaking loudly into a phone while sitting in a lounge at Abu Dhabi Airport. According to Ankush, a bartender had repeatedly asked the man to lower his voice but to no avail. The man is visible in the background of the video, continuing his loud conversation while Ankush complains about the "zero civic sense" that he attributes to Indians in general.

Many Indians put their phones on speaker mode while having conversations or watching videos, showing no consideration for people around them, he said.

In Seoul, South Korea, where Ankush currently works (after spending a decade in America), it's rare to find people speaking on their phones in public spaces, he said. "It's almost common decorum to not speak loudly in public spaces," he said.

Ankush is not the first person, of course, to complain about the lack of civic sense

among Indians. It's a topic that's been thoroughly explored in numerous discussion threads online, mostly started by Indians.

Pankaj: "Why do Indians lack civic sense?"

Javed: "Are you an Indian?"

Pankaj: "Yes, 100 per cent."

Javed: "Then tell me, why do you lack civic sense?"

Pankaj: "What do you mean? I have civic sense."

Javed: "But you just said that Indians lack civic sense."

Pankaj: "I mean other Indians. Not me."

I'm always reluctant to make generalisations about people, whether it's Indians, Americans or South Africans. India is a large country and the amount of civic sense that people possess can vary considerably. But India would certainly benefit greatly if we could give everyone a CSI (civic sense injection). Some people would have an overabundance of civic sense, while others would have just the right amount. This would be evident in a number of ways, including these:

- 1.No spitting in public.

There would be no gutka stains on walls and pavements. Anyone caught spitting would be sent to a clinic for a second dose of CSI.

2.Drivers would start following traffic rules and be courteous to others. Infractions would be so rare that traffic police would be able to take afternoon naps.

3.Standing in a queue would involve no pushing or cutting in. Everyone would wait their turn. Even the wrestler would stand calmly behind the chess player.

4.Roads would be clean, with no garbage visible. Anyone caught littering would be required to clean public toilets for a day.

5.Hardly anyone, except perhaps politicians, would speak loudly in public. Loud music would be limited to wedding processions and perhaps an occasional divorce celebration.

Aside from giving everyone a civic sense injection, what can be done to improve civic sense? Education is extremely important, writes Mohd Ziyauallah Khan on the site Countercurrents.org. "Teaching students to clean

classrooms or segregate waste can instill responsibility from a young age," he writes. "The key to building a civic-conscious society lies in ingraining these values both at home and school."

I'm glad he mentioned "home" because parents play a key role. If I caught my children littering on a public road, I would inject some civic sense into them instantly with a stern lecture that would cause onlookers to ask, "Why do Indians speak so loudly in public?"

Two other factors, enforcement and infrastructure, are also important, Khan writes. Enforcement means having consequences for people who break rules. If I'm able to drive through a red light with no risk of getting a hefty fine, I'll be tempted to do it, especially if I'm late for work.

Infrastructure means having waste bins, toilets, and public seating to make it easier for people to be civic-minded. When there's a public toilet available, you'll be less inclined to relieve yourself in public. And for everyone else, that would be quite a relief.

Letters TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com



Alarming issue

Sir, This refers to "Political slugfest erupts," **Orissa POST**, March 11. The arrest of Kannada actress Ranya Rao by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has exposed the alarming issue of gold smuggling into the country, while raising questions about bureaucratic influence and systemic failures in curbing such crimes. Ranya found carrying 14.8 kg of foreign-origin gold worth ₹12.56 crore was arrested in Bangalore airport. Over the past year, she reportedly travelled to Dubai more than 20 times, smuggling gold on each trip and earning between ₹1 lakh and ₹4 lakh per kg. What makes this case particularly troubling is the failure of Central agencies at the airport to detect her activities, despite her frequent travels and suspicious patterns. It was DRI's Delhi unit, acting on specific intelligence, that ultimately intercepted her. As the stepdaughter of K Ramachandra Rao, a senior police officer, Ranya allegedly exploited her family's influence to bypass standard security protocols in a glaring example of the VIP culture that undermines India's security systems. The ongoing investigation should scrutinise the complicity of officers who may have enabled her activities, as well as the rumoured involvement of politicians. **N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE**

Quit smoking

Sir, Smoking remains a major cause of preventable deaths, with over 26 crore tobacco users in India and 10 lakh deaths annually. Despite the WHO's efforts, smoking rates decline by just 1% each year, contributing to over 1.3 million deaths across seven countries, including India. Smoking severely impacts health, increasing the risk of cancer, heart disease, and lung infections. It elevates blood pressure, narrows blood vessels, and reduces oxygen supply to the brain. Research indicates each cigarette shortens life expectancy by 17 minutes for men and 22 for women. Additionally, smoking-related diseases like COPD and cardiovascular issues lead to significant health and financial burdens. However, quitting brings immediate benefits—blood pressure stabilizes within hours, breathing improves in weeks, and long-term disease risks decline. No Smoking Day, observed on 12 March, encourages smokers to quit and embrace a healthier future. **Vepakomma Krishna Kumar, HYDERABAD**

U'khand: 4 underpasses planned for wildlife safety

At present there is a two-lane road from Rishikesh to Jheelwala, which the National Highway Authority will make four-lane in the next two years at a cost of ₹600 crore



four-lane road. He said that a 10-km long part of the proposed road will pass through Rishikesh and Barkot range of the Dehradun Forest Division.

According to Sharma, four underpasses will be built in the 3-kilometre stretch of this road for the safe movement of elephants and other wild animals without human interference.

He said that for the construction of underpasses, the Dehradun Forest Division has done a scientific study and identified the traditional forest routes frequently used by wild elephants.

According to Sharma, the construction of underpasses will greatly reduce human-wildlife conflict in these forest areas.

A decade ago, at this very place, a male elephant had trampled and killed about 18 people in a period of one and a half years.

Sharma said that after the

construction of underpasses on the proposed road, the movement of both elephants and other wild animals and humans will become safe.

He said that the remaining 10-kilometre stretch of the road would pass through private properties.

According to Sharma, the Forest Department will transfer 40 hectares of non-forest area to the Mussoorie Forest Division, in which afforestation and maintenance will be done for ten years, which will ultimately help in increasing the forest cover.

Rajesh Sharma, Head and Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department (PWD) of Uttarakhand said that wherever elevated roads are built, underpasses are constructed there.

He said that when underpasses are built in populated areas, the public uses them and when they are built in forest areas, they are used by wild animals.

For this four-lane road project from Rishikesh to Jheelwala, about three thousand trees will be cut in the Rishikesh and Barkot range of Dehradun Forest Division.

Gujarat govt begins cotton procurement

Farmers in Gujarat who wish to sell their produce at this rate must register on the Cotton Corporation of India's e-market portal through designated procurement centers by March 15

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gandhinagar, March 11: To ensure fair prices for farmers, the Gujarat government has initiated the procurement of cotton at the Minimum Support Price (MSP). The Cotton Corporation of India Ltd (CCI), a government enterprise, will purchase cotton at the support price until September 2025. The Government of India has set the MSP for cotton at Rs 7,471 per quintal.

Farmers in Gujarat who wish to sell their produce at this rate must register on the Cotton Corporation of India's e-market portal through designated procurement centers by March 15. Only registered farmers will be eligible to sell their cotton at the support price.

For the convenience of farmers, CCI has established multiple procurement centres across the state. In the Ahmedabad zone, centres have been set up in locations including Bahadrapur, Bavla, Bodeli, Chanasma, Dabhoi, Dahegam, Dhandhuka, Dholka, Handod, Harij, Himmatnagar, Idar, Jadar, Kaledia, Kapadvanj, Karjan, Kosindra, Kukarmunda, Mansa, Naswadi, Nizar, Palej, Pavijetpur, Samalaya, Sathamba, Talod, Wadali,



Walia, Vijapur, and Visnagar. Similarly, in the Rajkot zone, procurement centres have been established in Amreli, Babra, Bagasara, Rajula, Savarkundla, Damnagar, Timbi, Khambha, Gariyadhar, Mahuva, Palitana, Umralla, Talaja, Botad, Dhasa, Ranpur, Gadhada, Bhanvad, Una, Dhrol, Jam-Jodhpur, Jamnagar, Kalavad, Manavadar, Anjar, Bhuj, Mandvi, Halvad, Morbi, Wankaner,

Porbandar, Dhoraji, Gondal, Jasan, Jamkandorana, Jetpur, Kotda-Sangani, Rajkot, Upleta, Chotila, Dhrangadhra, Limbdi, Wadhwan, and Lakhtar. Farmers facing any issues related to registration or procurement can reach out to the CCI's dedicated WhatsApp helpline at +91 7718955728.

As of October 2024, the state's cotton cultivation area expanded to 26.8 lakh hectares,

marking an increase of 9 lakh hectares over the past two decades. This expansion has propelled Gujarat to the second-highest rank in the country for cotton cultivation. In terms of production, Gujarat's output reached 87.95 lakh bales in the 2022-23 season, which further increased to 90.57 lakh bales in 2023-24. This consistent growth underlines the state's pivotal role in national cotton production.

The state's cotton productivity has also seen a notable rise. In 2023, the yield was reported at 602 kg per hectare, up from 559 kg per hectare in 2022. This improvement reflects advancements in agricultural practices and the adoption of high-yielding cotton varieties. Gujarat's contribution to India's cotton industry is substantial.

The state accounts for approximately 27 per cent of the country's total cotton production, making it the largest cotton-producing state in India. The state's commitment to enhancing cotton production is evident from its historical data. In 2012, Gujarat achieved an all-time high production of 12 million tonnes, reflecting the effectiveness of its agricultural strategies.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rishikesh, March 11: Four underpasses will be constructed in the four-lane road that is to be built from Rishikesh to Jheelwala of Ranipokhari to provide safe movement to wildlife in the forest area without human interference, according to an official statement.

Officials said that at present there is a two-lane road from Rishikesh to Jheelwala, which the National Highway Authority will make four-lane in the next two years at a cost of Rs 600 crore.

Divisional Forest Officer of Dehradun, Neeraj Sharma said that the Center has given permission for the construction of the first phase of the 20 km long

DEHRADUN, HALDWANI ROUTES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, March 11: Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami launched four new helicopter services Tuesday to further improve air connectivity from here, an official statement said.

These four helicopter services started under the 'Udaan' scheme will connect Dehradun to Nainital, Dehradun to Bageshwar, Dehradun to Mussoorie and Haldwani to Bageshwar.

After flagging off these helicopter services, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said that these heli services will give a boost to tourism and economic development in the state and better connectivity will bring positive changes in the lives of locals.

Describing Bageshwar, Nainital and Mussoorie as culturally and spiritually important, the chief minister said that the natural beauty, serene

U'khand CM launches 4 new helicopter services

valleys, lush green mountains, historical temples and rich culture of these areas attract tourists from the country and the world.

He said, "With the introduction of heli services, tourists will now be able to reach these areas more easily to enjoy the natural and cultural heritage."

Dhami said that heli services will not only facilitate transportation in the state but will also act as a lifeline for the remote and inaccessible areas of the state in times of natural disaster.

He said, "Earlier it used to take several hours to travel to the mountains, but now air service will save time. Also, this facility will prove to be a boon in emergency situations."

Dhami said that under the 'Udaan' scheme launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to enable the common man to travel by air, airstrips and heliports have been developed in many



parts of the state. He said that work is being done towards operating heli services from 18 heliports in the state, out of which services have been successfully started at 12 heliports so far.

So far, important areas like Gauchar, Srinagar, Chinyal-isaar, Haldwani, Munsiyari, Pithoragarh, Pantnagar, Champawat and Almora have been successfully connected with these heli services.

On this occasion, Dhami also interacted with the passengers travelling by heli services through online mediums.

further based on the number of passengers.

Heli service between Dehradun to Nainital, Bageshwar and Haldwani to Bageshwar will be operated by Heritage Aviation Private Limited while services between Dehradun to Mussoorie will be provided by Rajas Airport and Adventure Private Limited.

The fare from Dehradun to Nainital is Rs 4500 per passenger, the fare from Dehradun to Bageshwar is Rs 4000 per passenger, the fare from Haldwani to Bageshwar is Rs 3500 per passenger while the fare from Dehradun to Mussoorie has been fixed at Rs 2578 per passenger, as per the official statement.

These heli services will operate seven days a week. The service between Dehradun-Mussoorie will have a seating facility for five passengers, while the services started for the remaining places will have a seating facility for seven people.

Heli services from Dehradun to Bageshwar, Nainital and Haldwani to Bageshwar will operate seven days a week and twice a day, while the Dehradun-Mussoorie service will operate one flight per day in the first month, which will be decided to be extended

Legislators, sanitation workers join hands for a cleaner future

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gandhinagar, March 11: Under the Swachhata Abhiyan (Cleanliness Campaign), Gujarat Legislative Assembly Speaker Shankar Chaudhary, along with several MLAs, participated in a cleanliness drive at the MLA residential complex in Gandhinagar.

This initiative was part of the nationwide Swachhata Hi Seva Abhiyan 3.0.

The drive commenced with shramdaan (voluntary labor), where the Speaker and MLAs actively cleaned the premises. Following the cleanup, Speaker Chaudhary interacted with the sanitation workers and shared a light breakfast with them as a token of appreciation for their efforts. Speaking on the occasion, Speaker Shankar Chaudhary emphasised how Prime Minister Narendra Modi has transformed Mahatma Gandhi's vision of a Clean India into a mass movement.

He highlighted that the campaign has successfully instilled cleanliness as a national priority, with public spaces across the country reflecting this change.

Modasa takes steps for cleanliness

THE MUNICIPALITY HAS TAKEN PROACTIVE STEPS TO TRANSFORM THE CITY'S POLLUTED AREAS BY INSTALLING PAVER BLOCKS AND CREATING VIBRANT WALL PAINTINGS AT IDENTIFIED GARBAGE POINTS



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Aravalli, March 11: In an inspiring move under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Swachh Bharat Mission, Gujarat's Modasa Municipality in Aravalli district is leading the charge in promoting cleanliness through creative initiatives.

The municipality has taken proactive steps to transform the city's polluted areas by installing paver blocks and creating vibrant wall paintings at identified garbage points.

As part of this mission, 13 pollution hotspots across the city have been targeted, with the goal of both beautifying and raising

awareness about the importance of cleanliness. Beautiful murals now grace the main roads and areas with heavy pollution, acting as a visual reminder of the necessity for a cleaner environment.

These artistic efforts aim to instil a sense of responsibility among residents while highlighting the role they can play in maintaining a tidy and hygienic city.

Local resident Nileshbhai Joshi spoke to IANS about the success of the campaign, saying, "Prime Minister Modi's vision has always been about a clean and healthy nation. Here in Gujarat, the state government has embraced this mission, and in Modasa, we've seen significant improvements.

The municipality's efforts to paint walls and address dirt have been widely praised. However, there are still areas that require attention. It's important for everyone involved to keep working towards fulfilling the Prime Minister's vision of cleanliness."

Neeraj Sheth, Chief of Modasa Municipality, shared insights into the project's development.

"We've identified high-garbage points like the GBP area and worked to improve them. In these locations, we're not just painting walls, but also adding sitting areas, planting trees, and laying down paver blocks. This is just the beginning—we plan to continue this initiative and develop more areas as needed," Sheth added.

The Swachh Bharat Mission represents a transformative phase in India's sanitation narrative, driven by a history enriched with ancient innovations and bolstered by contemporary governmental efforts. Initiated in 2014 by the Prime Minister, the mission targeted making India clean.

This massive undertaking successfully mobilised nationwide participation, marking it as the largest behavioural change movement globally. By 2019, the mission celebrated the construction of over 100 million individual household toilets, declaring more than 6 lakh villages ODF, a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary and aligning with SDG Target 6.2.

DIRECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE & FOOD PRODUCTION, ODISHA

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

SELECTION OF BIDDERS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, DESING, FINANCE, CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION, MAINTENANCE AND TRANSFER OF AGRI-TECH SMART FARM (ATSF) AT DESIGNATE SITE(S) ON PPP BASIS

No. L-189: RFP No. 9676 Dated 10.03.2025: The Director of Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha, Bhubaneswar of Department of Agriculture & Farmers Empowerment, Odisha invites proposal through e-procurement mode from the interested bidders for the development, design, finance, construction, operation, maintenance and transfer of Agri-Tech Smart Farm (ATSF) at designate site(s) on PPP basis.
The RFP document is available and can be downloaded from the tendersodisha.gov.in from 11.03.2025. Last date for submission of proposals is 10.04.2025 at 16.00 hrs. (IST). Further updates on this tender will be available on this website only.
The proposals received beyond the scheduled last date & time will be rejected outright. The Director of Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha, Bhubaneswar reserves the right to reject any/all proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd./ Director of Agriculture & Food Production, Odisha
OIPR-01102/11/0019/2425

GOVT. OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, ANANDAPUR

E-Mail: eerw_anandapur@yahoo.co.in Date: 11.03.25

1st Corrigendum Notice

No. O-1602: Under unavoidable circumstances, the availability of tender online for Construction of Garage, approach road of Staff Quarter at Division Office, Salapada of the tender invited vide e-Procurement Notice No. 12 Dtd.03.03.2025/Bid Identification No. NCB-Online-12/ACE/RW/AND/2024-25 of Additional Chief Engineer, Rural Works Division, Anandapur is hereby rescheduled as below.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender Online for Bidding		Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & time of Opening of Tender in O/o. S.E., R.W. Division, Anandapur
		From	To		
1	2	3	4	5	6
Additional Chief Engineer, Rural Works Division, Anandapur	NCB-Online-12/ACE/RW/AND/2024-25	Dt.15.03.25 at 10.00 A.M.	Dt.22.03.25 upto 5.30 P.M.	Dt.21.03.25 upto 5.30 P.M.	Dt.24.03.25 at 11.30 A.M.

All other contents remain unchanged. Sd./ Additional Chief Engineer R.W. Division, Anandapur

OIPR-25055/11/0017/2425

DEPUTY DIRECTOR NANDANKANAN ZOOLOGICAL PARK

P.O-BARANG, DIST-KHURDA, PIN-754005
PHONE-(M) 9437022023
Email: deputydirector.kanan@gmail.com
No.MM-532 Notice No.67/PMU/NKZP/2024-25, Dated 10.03.2025

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sl. No.	Particulars	Details
1	Name of the Work	Supplying & Installation of Stainless Steel 304 Ferrule Mesh for Nandankanan Zoological Park
2	Period time of Completion	15 days from the date of issue of orders
3	Date & time of availability of the bid document in the portal	11.03.2025 to 17.03.2025
4	Last date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal	Upto 5.00 PM of 17.03.2025
5	Date & Time of bid Opening	11.00 AM on Dated 18.03.2025
6	Name & Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Nandankanan Zoological Park, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Others can see the details from Notice inviting Tenders, available in website- <https://tendersodisha.gov.in/> Corrigendum if any, shall only be published in the above website.

Sd./ Deputy Director Nandankanan Zoological Park
OIPR-08070/11/0056/2425

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, RAYAGADA

e-mail ID: rw_rayagada@yahoo.co.in Date: 11.03.2025

1st Corrigendum

No. O-1601: In continuation to this office Bid Identification No. EERWRGD-Online-08/2024-25 invited vide this office letter No. 1089 dated 03.03.25 partial modification of TCN has been made as follows:

Sl. No.	Item	Time Schedule as per Original TCN	Time Schedule as per Corrigendum Notice
1	Availability of Tender online for bidding from Sl. No. 01 to 13	07.03.25 at 11.00 A.M. to 13.03.25 upto 5.00 P.M.	Extended from 12.03.25 at 11.00 A.M. to 20.03.25 upto 5.00 P.M.
2	Date & time of opening of tender	13.03.25 at 5.30 P.M.	20.03.25 upto 5.30 P.M.

The approximate value of work from Sl. No. 1 is 9.13 lakhs instead of 10.87 lakhs, Sl. No. 2 is 9.18 lakhs instead of 10.92 lakhs, Sl. No. 3 is 5.86 Lakhs instead of 6.98 Lakhs, Sl. No. 4 is 6.02 Lakhs instead of 7.17 lakhs, Sl.No. 5 is 6.02 lakhs instead of 7.17 Lakhs, Sl.No. 6 is 6.76 Lakhs instead of 8.04 Lakhs, Sl. No. 7 is 8.85 lakhs instead of 10.53 lakhs, Sl. No. 8 is 6.02 Lakhs instead of 7.17 lakhs, Sl. No. 9 is 5.27 Lakhs instead of 6.27 Lakhs, Sl. No. 10 is 5.42 Lakhs instead of 6.45 Lakhs, Sl. No. 11 is 5.42 lakhs instead of 6.45 lakhs, Sl. No. 12 is 7.51 Lakhs instead of 8.94 lakhs, Sl.No.13 is 6.02 Lakhs instead of 7.17 Lakhs respectively. The cost of tender paper for all work is 4000.00/-. Similarly the cost of Bid Security (EMD) for Sl. No.1 is 9130.00 instead of 10870.00/-. Sl. No. 2 is 9180.00 instead of 10920.00/-. Sl. No.3 is 5860.00/- instead of 6980.00/-. Sl.No. 4 is 6020.00 instead of 7170.00/-. Sl. No.5 is 6020.00 instead of 7170.00/-. Sl. No. 6 is 6760.00 instead of 8040.00/-. Sl. No.7 is 8850.00 instead of 10530.00/-. Sl. No. 8 is 6020.00 instead of 7170.00/-. Sl. No. 9 is 5270.00 instead of 6270.00/-. Sl. No.10 is 5420.00 instead of 6450.00/-. Sl. No. 11 is 5420.00 instead of 6450.00/-. Sl. No.12 is 7510.00 instead of 8940.00/-. Sl. No.13 is 6020.00 instead of 7170.00/- respectively. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

OIPR-25072/11/0020/2425 Sd./ Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Rayagada

national

of the day quote

I am very clear. I never engaged in politics with vengeance. Even now I will not do it. At the same time, those who violate law and order will be dealt with severely. I am warning again, whoever it may be



CHANDRABABU NAIDU | AP CM

A major milestone for Kerala's maritime sector as the @PortOfVizhinjam gets environmental clearance from @moefcc for the next 2 phases of development. This will ensure that the port is completed by 2028, way ahead of its schedule, unlocking new opportunities for maritime trade and industrial growth



PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CM

There was a time when Uttar Pradesh was not considered a safe place. Women faced security issues, and youths and traders were forced to leave the state



YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

SHORT TAKES

Minor Dalit girl gangraped

Ballia (UP): A 17-year-old Dalit girl was allegedly kidnapped by four people in Uttar Pradesh's Ballia district who took her to Mathura and raped her, police said Tuesday. The accused have been identified as Bihari Saini, Ashok Yadav, Jiut Verma, and Arvind Sharma, police said. The girl, a resident of the Sukhpura police station area in Ballia district, was kidnapped by the accused March 6.

Cong MLAs stage protest

Bhopal: Congress MLAs Tuesday staged a protest by carrying plastic snakes in the Madhya Pradesh assembly complex, alleging that the ruling BJP was sitting on government job vacancies "like a serpent". A state minister later called the Congress' act "shameful" and said the opposition was misusing the Vidhan Sabha premises for a "photo-op". Before the state budget session proceedings for the day commenced, Congress MLAs, led by Leader of Opposition Umang Singh, gathered in front of Mahatma Gandhi's statue in the assembly building while carrying plastic snakes in baskets and placards.

Wanted gangster killed in gunfight

Ranchi: Gangster Aman Sao, accused in about 150 cases, was shot dead when members of his gang tried to free him from police custody in Jharkhand's Palamu district Tuesday, officials said. The incident took place a day after Director General of Police Anurag Gupta said most crime plots in the state are being hatched inside jails and executed with the help of criminal gangs. The shootout happened Tuesday morning when the gangster, convicted in several cases, was being brought to Ranchi from Raipur jail in neighbouring Chhattisgarh.

Tremors hit Kutch

Ahmedabad: Two tremors of 3.0 and 2.8 magnitude hit Gujarat's Kutch district Tuesday, the Institute of Seismological Research (ISR) stated. According to the district authorities, there was no report of any casualty or property damage. A tremor of 3.0 magnitude was recorded at 11.12 am, with its epicentre 16 km west-south-west (WSW) from Rapar in the district, the Gandhinagar-based institute said. It was recorded a minute after a tremor of 2.8 magnitude with its epicentre north-north-east (NNE) from Bhachau, it stated.

DMK MPs stage protest in Parl complex against NEP

Wearing black outfits, the DMK MPs raised slogans outside the House and showed posters saying "Tamil Nadu educates, BJP manipulates"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

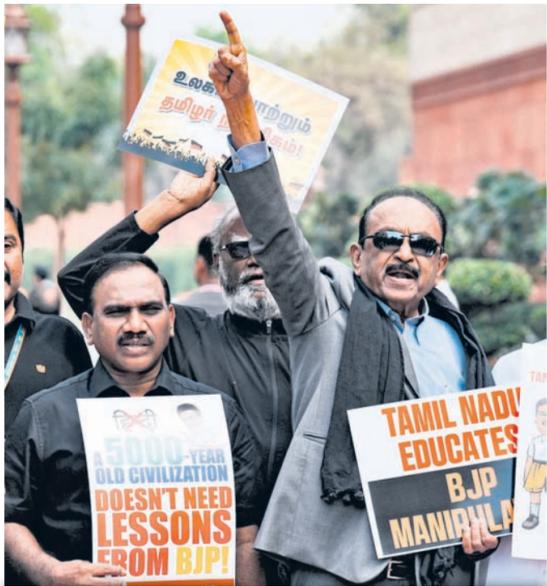
New Delhi, March 11: DMK MPs Tuesday staged a protest on the Parliament complex against the three-language formula under the new National Education Policy (NEP) and demanded that Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan apologise for his remarks against the Tamil Nadu government.

Wearing black outfits, the DMK MPs raised slogans outside the House and showed posters

saying "Tamil Nadu educates, BJP manipulates". MD-MK MP Vaiko (80) alleged the three-language policy is aimed at destroying states.

"Thousands have given their lives during the anti-Hindi agitation. I am also among them who fought in 1965, whole Tamil Nadu is against Hindi imposition...he (Dharmendra Pradhan) is trying to thrust it upon us and when we objected he made inappropriate comments... he should tender an apology," the MP told reporters.

The Tamil Nadu government and the Centre have been at loggerheads over implementation of the new National Education Policy and three-language formula proposed in the policy. Lok Sabha proceedings were adjourned for about 30 minutes Monday after DMK members protested over Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's remarks that the state government was "dishonest" on the issue of implementing the PM Schools for Rising India



Dharmendra Pradhan in attack mode against DMK over NEP

Chennai: Unfazed by criticism from the Opposition, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Tuesday again attacked the Tamil Nadu government over its stand on the new National Education Policy (NEP), accusing it of creating "fear psychosis" about the three-language formula while doing little to promote Tamil in the state. Tamil language is declining and colonial language is increasing in Tamil Nadu government schools, he said and asserted the central government is not trying to impose any language on any state. Pradhan said 67 per cent of students are now in English medium schools in the state, while Tamil medium enrolment has dropped from 54 per cent (2018-19) to 36 per cent (2023-24). Tamil enrolment fell by 7.3 lakh in government-aided schools, reflecting a deep shift in preference.

(PM SHRI) scheme.

Replying to a question on the PM SHRI scheme, Pradhan said on Monday the Tamil Nadu government has changed its stand on implementing the centrally-sponsored scheme which envisaged strengthening the schools managed by central, state or local bodies.

The state concerned has to sign an MoU with the central government that it would implement the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and in return the central government provides the fund.

Delhi court orders FIR against Kejriwal, others over illegal banners

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: A Delhi court Tuesday ordered Delhi Police to file an FIR against former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and others in a defacement of public property case.

Additional chief judicial magistrate Neha Mittal said one Shiv Kumar Saxena submitted visual evidence with the date and time indicating the illegal banners bore the names and photos of the accused persons, including Kejriwal.

Aside from Kejriwal, the court ordered the FIR against former MLA Gulab Singh and then Dwarka councillor Nitika Sharma, for installing "large-sized" banners.

"The seriousness of the offence...can be gauged from the fact that it is not only an eyesore and public nuisance thereby destroying the aesthetic sense of the city but is also hazardous and dangerous to the smooth flow of traffic by distracting traffic and poses a safety challenge to the pedestrians and vehicles. Deaths caused by collapse of illegal hoardings are not new in India," the court said. The court, taking note of the evidence, said that "hanging a banner board or affixing hoardings" amounted to defacement of property under Section 3 of the Act. "The application under Section 156 (3) of (erstwhile) Code of Criminal Procedure (power of magistrate to order police investigation in a cognisable offence) deserves to be allowed," it held.

The station house officer (SHO) concerned was therefore directed to register the FIR "immediately under Section 3 of Delhi Prevention of Defacement of Property Act, 2007" and any other offence perhaps was committed in the case.

The court said Section 5 of the Act prescribed an offence under the law to be cognisable. The court said it would be unfair to expect the complainant to gather evidence against the persons responsible and only

LS, RS CANCEL HOUSE SITTINGS MARCH 13

The Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha will not have their sitting March 13, the eve of Holi, following a decision taken by the business advisory committees of both Houses on the matter. The two houses have already declared a holiday March 14, 2025, for Holi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 11: With Maharashtra recording an average death of over 40 people per day in road accidents, the state government Tuesday said it plans to introduce testing kits to assess if a driver has consumed drugs. This was informed by state Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik in the state assembly in reply to a question.

Admitting that the number of deaths due to road accidents is increasing, Sarnaik said the state has not been able to implement the highway Intelligent Traffic Management System.

Under this system, technology like CCTV cameras, sensors, and Artificial Intelligence is used to monitor and manage traffic flow on highways in real-time, aiming to reduce congestion, improve safety, and provide drivers with essential information about road conditions.

Giving details, Sarnaik said that the number of accidents in 2022 was 33,383 (91 per day), in 2023 it was 35,243 (96 per day) and rose to 36,084 in 2024 (98 per day).

The figures of deaths in these road accidents were 15,224 in 2022 (41 per day), 15,366 in 2023 (approximately 42 per day) and 15,225 (approximately 42 per day).

The minister said while there have been many cases registered for drunken driving by the police, there have also been cases where drivers have consumed drugs. "The traffic department is procuring machines that can also assess whether a driver has consumed drugs, apart from running an alcohol test," Sarnaik said.

Madras University cancels lecture on spreading Christianity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, March 11: A lecture titled "How to spread Christianity in India" scheduled for March 14 at University of Madras has been cancelled following protest by the ABVP, Hindu organisations and outrage in the social media.

Flagging the issue, BJP state secretary S G Suryah condemned the university authorities for organising the event.

The formal announcement by the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Madras on holding the Sir S Subramania Ayyar Endowment Lecture 2024-2025 by K Siva Kumar, Chief Engineer, Hyderabad on the topics: "How to spread Christianity in India" and "Why need this margam" kicked up a controversy.

The invite which went viral on the social media drew flak from several quarters. Shortly after the announcement of the event, several persons took to 'X' to flay the University of Madras accusing it of converting the temple of learning into a propaganda vehicle for Christianity.

MISHAP CORNER

Bus accident claims 5 in AP

Kurnool (Andhra Pradesh): The number of deaths involving a Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) bus and two motorcycles in this district rose to five, said a police official Tuesday. The accident occurred at Jalimanchi Cross near Pandavagallu village in Adoni mandal at around 11 AM. Four people died on the spot, while another seriously injured died while undergoing treatment at a local hospital, said the official.

Road mishaps leave 7 dead in Rajasthan

Jaipur: Seven persons, including three students of the National Law University-Jodhpur, were killed while 10 others injured in two separate road accidents in Rajasthan's Nagaur district Tuesday, police said. Circle Officer Jayal Khema Ram Bijarniya said the students were returning to Jodhpur from Patiala in Punjab from an event when the accident occurred. They were rushed to a nearby hospital.

4 killed as vehicle falls into gorge

Jammu: Four persons were killed and eight others injured Tuesday when a vehicle they were travelling in skidded off the road and rolled down into a deep gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, officials said. The accident took place near Gangoode area in the district when the driver reportedly lost control over the tempo traveller, causing it to roll into the deep gorge.



Artists dressed as Lord Krishna and Goddess Radha perform during the 'Faag Mahotsav' ahead of the Holi festival in Jaipur

Bureaucrats can't be allowed to frustrate grassroots democracy: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: The Supreme Court has said bureaucrats couldn't be allowed to "frustrate grassroots democracy" and upheld a Bombay High Court order reinstating a woman as the sarpanch of a Maharashtra village.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh said it noticed several recent instances from the state where bureaucrats misbehaved with the elected representatives of Panchayats.

"We have given judgements in two-three cases where babus were found to be misbehaving with the elected representatives. This is happening typically in Maharashtra. These babus should be under the elected representatives. These bureaucrats cannot be allowed

to frustrate the grass root democracy," it said.

The court also came across bureaucrats trying to open old cases to disqualify elected representatives especially at grassroots level. "They (bureaucrats) try to open old cases like your grandfather has encroached upon government land and hence you are disqualified," Justice Surya Kant told the counsel for Archana Sachin Bhosale, whose election as the sarpanch was set aside by the high court in January 29.

Reinstating Kalavati Rajendra Kokale as the sarpanch, the top court upheld the high court quashing the June 7, 2024 order of the collector of Raigad district declaring a vacancy for the post of sarpanch in village Ainghar, Taluka-Roha and appointing a returning officer to conduct the election.



"We are inclined to agree with the view taken by the high court... we uphold and affirm the continuation of respondent number 1 (Kokale) as the duly elected pradhan of the Gram Panchayat, Ainghar Taluka-Roha, district Raigad," the bench said in its March 7 order. Kokale was aggrieved with the June 7, 2024 order of the collector confirming her resignation from sarpanch's post under Section 29 of the Maharashtra Village Panchayats Act despite her withdrawing the resignation. The high court held her resignation "did not take effect" owing to her withdrawing it during a meeting

The court came across bureaucrats trying to open old cases to disqualify elected representatives especially at grassroots level

held March 15, 2024.

"The collector has erroneously arrived at a conclusion that the post of the sarpanch had fallen vacant without appreciating the position that resignation was already withdrawn," it said.

The high court, therefore, found the collector's order "illegal" and "liable to be set aside". Bhosale's election, as

a result, was held to be "ab initio void".

It noted though there was no specific provision in Section 29 of the Village Panchayats Act for withdrawal of resignation, a member, upa sarpanch or sarpanch tendering resignation had an inherent right to withdraw the same.

Election for the Gram Panchayat, Ainghar was conducted in February, 2021, and Kokale was elected as sarpanch, a post reserved for the backward class women. Kokale withdrawing her resignation was intimated to the authorities concerned including the block development officer and the tehsildar. The Raigad district collector, however, June 7, 2024 said her resignation had been accepted by the chairperson, Pachayat Samiti, Roha, and Bhosale was subsequently elected June 13, 2024.

national



“We all know that the habit of drug addiction not only harms an individual, a family and society, but also the country and its economy”
DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT

PEOPLE LIVING BY RIVER DRAINS MORE PRONE TO CANCER: ICMR

A study conducted in 2024 revealed that people dwelling near river drains were highly prone to cancer, with several hazard quotients observed to be above the threshold limit, the ICMR informed Rajya Sabha Tuesday



of the day quote

We seek that our neighbouring state take action against polluters in their area of jurisdiction. We are hopeful of improving the situation

Yes, it is a love letter to the BJP. It is a love letter to the Congress. It is a love letter to the National Conference, PDP, the People's Conference, CPIM, and independents. Most importantly, it is a love letter to the people of Jammu and Kashmir

Of the Rs 10,000 crore, the state needs to provide 25 per cent to Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) and 10 per cent to urban local bodies

India achieves a historic milestone in solar energy! Under the visionary leadership of PM @narendramodi ji, the @PMSuryaGhar Muft Bijli Yojana has empowered 10 lakh homes with solar energy, driving a new era of sustainability, affordability, and self-reliance

POST OF THE DAY

India achieves a historic milestone in solar energy! Under the visionary leadership of PM @narendramodi ji, the @PMSuryaGhar Muft Bijli Yojana has empowered 10 lakh homes with solar energy, driving a new era of sustainability, affordability, and self-reliance

SHORT TAKES

Fire in makeshift hut kills 3 in Anand Vihar

New Delhi: A fire in a makeshift hut near in East Delhi's Anand Vihar triggered a cylinder blast early Tuesday, killing three occupants, two of them brothers, while one managed to escape, an official said Tuesday. The Delhi Fire Services received a distress call at 2:22 am and dispatched three fire tenders to the scene near the AGCR Enclave. A fire official said the flames were brought under control by 2:50 am but by that time Jaggi (30), his brother Shyam Singh (40) and another person Kanta Prasad (37) were charred to death, a fire official said, adding they are all residents of Auraiya in Uttar Pradesh.

Tigri: Biker dies hitting pothole

New Delhi: A 37-year-old biker was killed in a crash when he hit the divider and his head the road, possibly swerving to avoid a pothole, in south Delhi's Tigri area, police said Tuesday. Police found Rashid Khan lying on MB Road near the Hamdard Hospital crossing with over an inch-deep gash to his head. "The area is not under CCTV coverage. Initial investigation suggested that the motorist was riding at a speed, holding his helmet in his hand and pressing brakes to avoid sewage-filled water at another location. "He lost his balance and fell into another sewage water-filled pothole which was six inches deep. He was unconscious, which may have proved fatal," the policeman investigating the incident said.

MLA Azmi gets pre-arrest bail

Mumbai: A Mumbai court Tuesday granted anticipatory bail to Samajwadi Party MLA Abu Azmi in a case filed against him for remarks praising Mughal emperor Aurangzeb after he submitted the comments were not made to insult any personality or hurt religious sentiments.

Top global intelligence czars to converge in India this weekend

New Delhi, March 11: The US Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, Canadian spy chief Daniel Rogers and Britain's MI6 boss Richard Moore will be among top global intelligence czars converging in India this weekend to attend a security conclave, people familiar with the matter said Tuesday. India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval is set to chair

the India-hosted conclave March 16 which is expected to deliberate on ways to enhance intelligence-sharing to combat terrorism and various transnational crimes. Intelligence chiefs of Australia, Germany, New Zealand and several other friendly countries of India are also expected to join the deliberations to be held in New Delhi. Gabbard is visiting India as part of a multi-nation tour of Japan,

Thailand and France. It will be the first high-level visit to India by a top official of the Donald Trump administration. Besides attending the intelligence chiefs' conclave, Gabbard is likely to address the Raisina Dialogue and hold a one-on-one meeting with NSA Doval. It is learnt that the US Director of National Intelligence (DNI) will arrive in India on March 15. Last month, Gabbard met Prime Minister

Narendra Modi during his visit to Washington DC. The conclave of the security and intelligence chiefs is expected to bring together heads and deputy heads of the intelligence and security organisations of around 20 nations. In their deliberations, the intelligence chiefs are also expected to focus on various global challenges including implications of the Russia-Ukraine war and the conflict in the Middle East.

The security and intelligence chiefs are also likely to discuss ways to deal with terror financing as well as crimes in the digital space, the people cited above said. The visit to India by Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) chief Rogers is taking place amid frosty ties between the two countries over the Hardeep Singh Nijjar case. The relations between India and Canada came under severe

strain following Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations in September 2023 of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Nijjar on Canadian soil. New Delhi rejected Trudeau's charges as "absurd". The relations nosedived further in the second half of last year after Ottawa linked several Indian diplomats including High Commissioner Sanjay Verma to the murder of Nijjar.

Govt bans Mirwaiz-led AAC, Ansari's JKIM under UAPA

New Delhi/Srinagar, March 11: The Centre Tuesday banned the Awami Action Committee, headed by Kashmir's influential cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, and Shia leader Masroor Abbas Ansari-led Jammu and Kashmir Ittihadul Muslimeen for five years due to their alleged anti-national activities, supporting terrorism and fuelling secessionist activities.



With this, barring the People's Conference led by Bilal Lone, all other constituents of moderate Hurriyat Conference have been banned by the government under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). The two organisations -- Awami Action Committee (AAC) and Jammu and Kashmir Ittihadul Muslimeen (JKIM) -- have been banned for a period of five years and the same could be contested after a Tribunal is constituted by the government.

The AAC led by the Mirwaiz condemned the government's action and said "this move seems part of the continuation of the policy of intimidation and disempowerment that has been followed viz a viz J&K since August 2019. The voice of truth may be suppressed through force but will not be silenced".

In a post on X, the Mirwaiz said the AAC has unwaveringly stood by the people of Jammu and Kashmir advocating their aspirations and rights through completely non-violent and democratic methods and calling for peaceful resolution of the Kashmir conflict through dialogue and deliberation. The Mirwaiz is the chairman of the Hurriyat Conference and the head cleric of Srinagar's Jamia Masjid, Kashmir's grandest and most influential mosque, where he delivers sermons.

In a post on X, Union Home Minister Amit Shah wrote about the banning of these two organisations saying they were found inciting people to cause law and order situations, posing a threat to the unity and integrity of Bharat. "Anyone found involved in activities against the nation's peace, order, and sovereignty is bound to face the crushing blow of the Modi govt," he said.

The Centre's move drew sharp reactions from the ruling National Conference and the PDP who condemned the action. Former chief minister and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti termed the banning of AAC and JKIM as "another blow to Kashmir's social and political landscape".

National Conference general secretary and MLA Ali M Sagar said he was "disappointed" to know about the banning of AAC and JKIM. Sagar said the Centre must follow the path of reconciliation rather than alienation and added "the Mirwaiz has always been a keen facilitator for peace, he and others like him must be made stakeholders of peace rather than victims of an Iron fist policy".

Manipur MPs urge Centre to address budget inequality

New Delhi, March 11: Lok Sabha MPs from Manipur Tuesday urged the Centre to address the structural inequalities in the allocation of resources to the state. The plea was raised by Alfred Kanngam S Arthur, Congress MP from Outer Manipur, and Angomcha Bimol Akoijam, MP from Inner Manipur.

He said a disproportionate allocation of resources has exacerbated systemic inequities, leading to unrest and marginalisation. "The hills are lush and fertile, yet they remain neglected." He said the state's agrarian economy, which sustains the majority of its people, has seen no increase in budgetary allocations for agriculture or horticulture. "Ninety-eight per cent of Manipur is hills, but there is no income, no growth, and no development. How can we sustain ourselves when the very foundation of our livelihood is ignored?" Arthur wondered.

"Building this nation includes the building of Manipur, and if you do not want to build my state, then you have no right to govern it," Arthur said during the discussion on the demand for grants for Manipur in Lok Sabha. "My state is a small state, but we are not small people. We are equal in every way to this nation," he said.

Arthur highlighted the stark disparities between Manipur's hill and valley regions, emphasising that 98 per cent of the hill areas are inhabited by tribal communities. He said a disproportionate allocation of resources has exacerbated systemic inequities, leading to unrest and marginalisation. "The hills are lush and fertile, yet they remain neglected." He said the state's agrarian economy, which sustains the majority of its people, has seen no increase in budgetary allocations for agriculture or horticulture. "Ninety-eight per cent of Manipur is hills, but there is no income, no growth, and no development. How can we sustain ourselves when the very foundation of our livelihood is ignored?" Arthur wondered.



Artists perform during the opening ceremony of the World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2025, in New Delhi

Sitharaman, Gogoi spar in Parliament

New Delhi, March 11: Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman sparred in Lok Sabha Tuesday over the opposition member's remarks targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Initiating a discussion on the supplementary demands for grants, excess grants and the Manipur budget, Gogoi said the prime minister "disappears" whenever an important issue comes up in the country. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla interjected Gogoi and said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had informed him about his foreign visit and pointed out that previous prime ministers too have undertaken visits abroad during Parliament sessions. Modi is on an official visit to Mauritius.

Gogoi said he has utmost respect for the Prime Minister, but it was the tendency of the Treasury benches to insult former prime ministers time and again and their utterances were always part of parliamentary record. At this point, Sitharaman said Gogoi had made some "profound" remarks and added there were a number of occasions when the prime minister was not allowed to speak in the House. "It was music to my ears to hear a leading member of the opposition say that he respects the PM only to add quickly when the treasury talks about the previous prime ministers, it is not in a respectable language," Sitharaman said, and wondered whether Gogoi would also apologise for abusing the prime minister on previous occasions. The finance minister said the opposition has abused Modi and he was even not allowed to speak in the House.

Voter list row: TMC, BJP, BJD delegations meet EC

While the BJP urged the EC to audit and revise the voter rolls in West Bengal, claiming that more than 13 lakh duplicate voters have been added to the list during the TMC rule, the latter alleged cloning of Aadhaar cards for fake voter registration

New Delhi, March 11: Delegations of the BJP, TMC and the BJD approached the Election Commission (EC) separately Tuesday raising issues of discrepancies in the voter rolls and demanding that the poll panel take steps to rectify them. While the BJP urged the EC to audit and revise the voter rolls in West Bengal, claiming that more than 13 lakh duplicate voters have been added to the list during the TMC rule, the latter alleged cloning of Aadhaar cards for fake voter registration. The ruling party in West Bengal also demanded that the poll panel issue a

separate list of voter deletions, new additions and modifications with every new revised electoral roll. The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) suggested an independent audit of the poll process and monitoring by citizens in the wake of the allegations of irregularities levelled by the Opposition parties. The issue came into focus after the TMC, the Congress and other Opposition parties raised it in both Houses of Parliament Monday and demanded a discussion on it. In separate posts on X, the EC said it welcomed the delegations of the BJP and the TMC. "Updation of electoral roll is a participative process with all



political parties, including established mechanisms of appeal under section 24 of the RPA (Representation of the People Act) 1950," it wrote on X after meeting the BJP delegation. In another post on X, the poll panel said it apprised the TMC delegation that all concerns including duplicate EP-

IC numbers, duplicate, shifted and dead voters and illegal migrants will be resolved by each Booth Level Officer and concerned Electoral Registration Officer with active participation of Booth level Agents appointed by all political parties. Amid allegations of fudging of electoral rolls, the Election Commission Tuesday invited political parties for an interaction to strengthen the electoral process. In a statement, the EC said it has invited suggestions from all national and state political parties by April 30 for "any unresolved issues" at the level of electoral registration officers, district election officers and

chief electoral officers. BJP West Bengal unit delegation comprised its state president state president Sukanta Majumdar, also a Union minister Malviya alleged that over the last 14 years, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and her government have "systematically infiltrated" the voter rolls with illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingyas. The TMC delegation met the EC raising the issue of duplicate voter ID numbers and alleged that Aadhaar cards were being cloned which may lead to the possibility of these being used for fake voter registration.

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international



But, if the pro-monarchy forces attempt to dismantle it, a harsh revolution will be a response to them. I urge pro-monarchy forces to seek their space within the republican democracy
PUSHPA KAMAL DAHAL | EX-PM, NEPAL

CHINA DEPLOYS ROBOT DOGS FOR PUBLIC SECURITY

China has deployed its robot dogs and autonomous patrol vehicles in the tech area of Beijing for public security, showcasing its advances made in Artificial Intelligence tools. The Beijing Economic-Technological Development Area (BDA) has deployed unmanned vehicles and robotic patrol dogs to boost urban security and governance



of the day quote

I am #Wheel-sUp on a multi-nation trip to the Indo-Pacific, a region I know very well having grown up as a child of the Pacific. I'll be going to Japan, Thailand, and India, with a brief stop in France enroute back to DC
TULSI GABBARD | DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE, US



It's in the interest of both countries, be it India, Mauritius and also the UK and the US, for us to reach a deal on Chagos once for all. Bring stability, bring visibility, bring certainty with regards to the base, which is being operational at Diego Garcia
DHANANJAY RAMFUL | FOREIGN MINISTER, MAURITIUS



The two sides discussed various issues pertaining to bilateral relations as well as regional developments. The Afghan side appreciated and thanked Indian leadership for continuing to engage and support the people of Afghanistan
PARVATHANENI HARISH | INDIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN



Militants hijack train in Pak

The train was trapped in a tunnel and the driver was killed after sustaining serious injuries



Quetta, Pakistan, March 11: Separatist militants have taken 35 passengers hostage after attacking a train in southwestern Pakistan, and nearly 350 other passengers are believed to be safe, local police said Tuesday. The Baloch Liberation Army, a separatist militant group, said it blew up the track and "swiftly took control of the train". The group said it had 214 hostages and threatened to kill them if Baloch prisoners are not freed.

Another security source said 80 passengers had been rescued and the militants were surrounded.

The train was trapped in a tunnel and the driver was killed after sustaining serious injuries, local authorities, police and railway officials said. "Around 350 passengers, including women and children are safe and a relief train will be reaching the area where the train was attacked," said a district senior police officer, Rana Dilawar. "Security forces launched a massive operation," he said, adding that helicopters and special forces had been deployed. Security forces said an explosion had been heard near the tunnel and that they were exchanging fire with the militants in a mountainous area. A security source who asked not to be identified said many people had lost their lives in the attack, adding that 80 military personnel were among the 425 passengers aboard the train.

"The operation will continue until the last terrorist is eliminated," they said. The BLA, which seeks independence for Balochistan province bordering both Afghanistan and Iran, said it had killed 30 soldiers and shot down a drone. There was no confirmation of that from Pakistani authorities. "BLA is prepared for a prisoner exchange," the group said, demanding the Pakistani state release within 48 hours Baloch political prisoners, activists and missing persons it said have been abducted by the military. "If our demands are not met within the stipulated period or if the occupying state attempts any military action during this time all prisoners of war will be neutralized and the train will be completely destroyed."

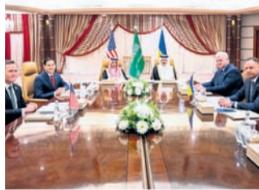
SEPARATISTS SAY THEY HOLD HOSTAGES AND HAVE KILLED SOLDIERS
TRAIN TRAPPED IN TUNNEL, WAS CARRYING OVER 400 PASSENGERS
BALOCH LIBERATION ARMY THREATENS TO KILL CAPTIVES
DECADES-LONG INSURGENCY HAS SEEN REGULAR ATTACKS

that if military intervention continues, all hostages will be executed." The Jaffar Express had been on its way from Balochistan's capital, Quetta, to the city of Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province when it was fired on. Pakistan's interior minister, Mohsin Naqvi, condemned the attack and said the government would not make any concessions to "beasts who fire on innocent passengers". The Balochistan government has imposed emergency measures to deal with the situation, spokesperson Shahid Rind said, without giving more details. The BLA is the biggest of several ethnic groups battling the government for decades, saying it unfairly exploits Balochistan's rich gas and mineral resources. The conflict has seen frequent attacks against the government, army and Chinese interests in the region.

US, Ukraine hold talks after major drone attack on Russia

REUTERS

Jeddah, March 11: Ukrainian and US officials met behind closed doors for hours of talks in Saudi Arabia Tuesday to find a path towards ending the war with Russia, after Kyiv's forces launched their largest drone attack on Moscow of the war overnight. Ukrainians and anxious allies watched for any signs of an improvement - or further deterioration - in Kyiv's troubled transatlantic ties after President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's disastrous talks with US President Donald Trump last month. Under Trump, Kyiv's one-time staunchest ally has upped its pressure on Ukraine, declining to provide security guarantees as part of any peace deal, while pausing military aid and intelligence sharing with Kyiv. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio told reporters en route to the talks in Jeddah that the meeting would be important to gauge if Ukraine is willing to make concessions to reach peace. More than three hours into the meeting, Mike Waltz, the US national security adviser, emerged for a break with Rubio and told reporters, "We're getting there."



US-Ukraine in first meeting since Trump-Zelenskyy clash

Ukraine conducted major overnight drone attack on Russia

Zelenskyy has pushed for truce in air and at sea

Andriy Yermak, Zelenskyy's chief of staff who is leading the Ukrainian delegation, said earlier that the meeting had "begun very constructively". British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, a close Kyiv ally, told Trump Monday that he hoped that US military assistance and intelligence sharing could be resumed as a result of a "positive outcome" at the talks. THREE DEAD IN DRONE ATTACK ON MOSCOW As the diplomacy plays out, Ukraine's battlefield positions are under heavy pressure, particularly in Russia's Kursk region where Moscow's forces have launched a push to flush out Kyiv's troops, which had been trying to hold a patch of land as a bargaining chip. Ukraine overnight launched its biggest drone attack on Moscow and the surrounding region yet, showing that Kyiv can also land major blows after a steady stream of Russian missile and drone attacks, one of which killed 14 people Saturday. The attack, in which 337 drones were downed over Russia, killed at least three employees of a meat warehouse and caused a short shutdown at Moscow's four airports, Russian officials said.

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SHORT TAKES

Medical helicopter crash in US kills 3

Madison County: A medical transport helicopter crashed in Mississippi Monday, killing a pilot and two hospital workers on board, officials said. A spokesperson for the University of Mississippi Medical Center confirmed the deaths of everyone on board the flight. The AirCare copter was not carrying any patients when it crashed in Madison County, north of the capital of Jackson, the university said in an earlier statement. Families of the three victims were notified, but authorities didn't release names to protect privacy. The university did not offer a reason for the crash.

Israeli fire kills 6 Palestinians

Tel Aviv: Israeli fire has killed six people and wounded 14 in the Gaza Strip over the past 24 hours, Palestinian officials said, even as a fragile ceasefire with Hamas has largely held. Israeli strikes have killed dozens of Palestinians who the army says had approached its troops or entered unauthorized areas in violation of the January truce.

12 dead as bus overturns in SA

Johannesburg: A bus overturned on a highway Tuesday and passengers were thrown out of it, killing at least 12 people and injuring 45 in the South African city of Johannesburg, emergency services said. Emergency crews were trying to lift the bus back onto its wheels to see if any more victims were trapped underneath it, said William Nthladi, a spokesperson for the city's Ekuhuleni Emergency Management.

6 killed in militant attack in Somalia

Mogadishu (Somalia): A car bomb exploded Tuesday at a hotel in the central Somali city of Beledweyne in a militant attack that killed at least six people, including two prominent traditional elders, according to witnesses. The explosion targeted the Cairo Hotel, which houses traditional elders and military officers currently involved in coordinating the government's offensive against the militant group al-Shabab. The blast triggered intense gunfire as attackers stormed the hotel, engaging security forces.

SNIPPETS

China, Iran, Russia hold joint naval drills in Mideast

Tehran: China, Iran and Russia conducted joint naval drills Tuesday in the Middle East, offering a show of force in a region still uneasy over Tehran's rapidly expanding nuclear programme and as Yemen's Houthis rebels threaten new attacks on ships. The joint drills, called the Maritime Security Belt 2025, took place in the Gulf of Oman near the strategic Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of all crude oil traded worldwide passes. The area around the strait in the past has seen Iran seize commercial ships and launch suspected attacks in the time since President Donald Trump first unilaterally withdrew America from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers. The drill marked the fifth year the three countries took part in the drills. This year's drill likely sparked a warning late Monday from the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations centre, which said there was GPS interference in the strait, with disruptions lasting for several hours and forcing crews to rely on backup navigation methods.



Kurdish forces merge with Syrian army in landmark deal

Cairo: The Kurdish-led and US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, which controls much of Syria's oil-rich northeast, signed a deal with the Damascus government Monday to join Syria's new state institutions, the Syrian presidency said Monday. Photos showed interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa and SDF commander Mazloum Abdi shaking hands in Damascus on the agreement that provides for SDF-controlled civilian and military institutions in northeast Syria to be integrated with the state. The accord came at a critical moment as Sharaa grapples with the fallout from mass killings of Alawite minority members in western Syria - violence that he said Monday threatened his effort to unite Syria after 14 years of conflict. In December, insurgents toppled the regime of former President Bashar al-Assad, a member of the country's Alawite minority who fled to longtime supporter Russia. The agreement signed Monday calls for SDF-controlled border crossings, an airport and oil and gas fields in eastern Syria to become part of the Damascus administration.



Trump says he's going to buy Tesla

About 350 demonstrators protested outside a Tesla electric vehicle dealership in Portland, Oregon, last week, while nine people were arrested during a raucous demonstration outside a New York City Tesla dealership earlier in March



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, March 11: After one of the worst single day sell-offs in Tesla's history, President Donald Trump threw his support behind his advisor, billionaire Elon Musk, vowing to buy one of his cars Tuesday. Tesla has been pummeled this year under competition from rival electric vehicles, particularly out of China, as well as his close association with Trump and with far right causes globally. Shares have plummeted 45 per cent in 2025 and Monday tumbled more than 15 per cent to \$222.15, the lowest since late October, reflecting newfound pessimism as sales crater

around the globe. In an overnight post on his Truth Social platform, Trump said Musk is "putting it on the line" to help the country. Trump claimed in the post that "Radical Left Lunatics" were attempting to "illegally and collusively boycott Tesla, one of the World's great automakers, and Elon's baby". The stock climbed more than 3 per cent before the market open Tuesday. Numerous auto industry analysts have attributed Tesla's recent sagging stock — and auto sales — to Musk's support of Trump and other far right candidates around the world. In recent days, Tesla showrooms

Indian student goes missing while vacationing in Dominican Republic

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, March 11: A 20-year old Indian student has gone missing while on vacation in the Dominican Republic and US federal law enforcement agencies are working with authorities in the Caribbean country on the investigation in her disappearance. Sudiksha Konanki is a citizen of India and a permanent resident of the United States. A student at the University of Pittsburgh, Konanki was reported to be vacationing with five female college friends at a resort in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office said in a statement Monday. Konanki was reported missing March 6. The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office (LC-SO) said it continues to assist and support the US federal law enforcement agencies working with the Dominican National Police and others to determine Konanki's whereabouts and what may have happened to her.

Greenlanders vote in election dominated by Trump's control pledge

REUTERS

Nuuk, Greenland, March 11: Greenland residents began voting Tuesday in an election brought into the international spotlight by US President Donald Trump's pledge to take control of the mineral-rich island, firing up a debate over its independence. Since taking office in January, Trump has vowed to make Greenland - a semi-autonomous territory of Denmark - part of the United States, saying it is vital to US security interests. The vast island, with a population of just 57,000, has been caught up in a geopolitical race for dominance in the Arctic, where melting ice caps are making its resources more accessible and opening new shipping routes. Both Russia and China have intensified

military activity in the region. Greenland is a former Danish colony and a territory since 1953. It gained some autonomy in 1979 when its first parliament was formed, but Copenhagen still controls foreign affairs, defence and monetary policy and provides just under \$1 billion a year to the economy. In 2009, it won the right to declare full independence through a referendum, though has not done so on concern living standards would drop without Denmark's economic support. Voting began at 11:00 am Tuesday at 72 polling stations across the Arctic island, where 40,500 people are eligible to vote. Polling will close at 10:00 pm and the final result is expected Wednesday between 1:00 am and 3:00 am.



"I'm feeling very excited. I hope that people will vote with their common sense and without greed," Liv Aurora, a candidate with the ruling Inuit Ataqatigiit party, said at a polling station in the capital Nuuk. "I hope to make a difference and to make Greenland strong and independent."

INUIT PRIDE Trump's vocal interest has shaken up the status quo and coupled with the growing pride of the indigenous people in their Inuit culture, put independence front and centre in the election. "The question of independence was put on steroids by

Trump," said Masaana Egede, editor of local newspaper Sermitsiaq. "It has put a lid on everyday issues." In the final debate on Greenland's state broadcaster KNR late Monday, leaders of the five parties currently in parliament unanimously said they did not trust Trump. "He is trying to influence us. I can understand if citizens feel insecure," said Erik Jensen, leader of government coalition partner Siumut. INVESTMENT STUMTUS Trump initially declined to rule out military force, alarming many Greenlanders, although he later softened his stance, stating he would respect the will of the local people and was "ready to invest billions of dollars" if they joined the US. Greenland's Prime Minister Mute Egede has stressed the

island is not for sale and advocated for a broad coalition government to resist external pressure. In an interview aired Monday by Danish broadcaster DR, he dismissed Trump's offer as disrespectful, expressing willingness to cooperate with other countries instead. Denmark's prime minister has said Greenland is not for sale, but made it clear that it is up to the local people to decide their future. All six main political parties support independence but differ on how and when it could be achieved. The pro-independence Naleraq party, the leading opposition force, has gained momentum ahead of the election, bolstered by US interest and fresh accusations of Denmark's historic exploitation of Greenland's mineral wealth.



Reaching 60 crore registered users is a proud moment for all of us at PhonePe. Every milestone we achieve brings us a step closer to realising our vision of building a truly inclusive financial ecosystem

SAMEER NIGAM | PHONEPE
CO-FOUNDER AND CEO

RBI TO ISSUE NEW BANKNOTES

The Reserve Bank of India Tuesday said it will shortly issue banknotes of ₹100 and ₹200 denominations bearing the signature of Governor Sanjay Malhotra. "The design of these notes is similar in all respects to ₹100 and ₹200 banknotes in Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series," it said in a statement. All banknotes in the denomination of ₹100 and ₹200 issued by the Reserve Bank in the past will continue to be legal tender.



of the day quote

India achieves a historic milestone in solar energy! Under the visionary leadership of PM @narendramodiji, the @PMSuryaGhar Muft Bijli Yojana has empowered 10 lakh homes with solar energy, driving a new era of sustainability, affordability, and self-reliance

PRALHAD JOSHI | UNION MINISTER FOR NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Starlink ties up with Airtel to enter India

This agreement is subject to SpaceX receiving authorisations to sell Starlink's satellite communications-based services in India



New Delhi, March 11: Telecom operator Bharti Airtel Tuesday said it has partnered with Elon Musk's SpaceX for providing Starlink's high-speed internet services to its customers in India.

This agreement is subject to SpaceX receiving authorisations to sell Starlink's satellite communications-based services in India, Airtel said in a statement.

The agreement will enable Airtel and SpaceX to further explore how Starlink could complement and expand Airtel's offerings, and how Airtel's expertise in the Indian market could complement SpaceX's direct offerings to consumers and businesses.

Bharti Airtel Managing Director and Vice Chairman Gopal Vittal said that working with SpaceX to offer Starlink

services to Airtel customers in India is a significant milestone and further demonstrates the company's commitment to next-generation satellite connectivity.

"This collaboration enhances our ability to bring world-class high-speed broadband to even the most remote parts of India, ensuring that every individual, business, and community has reliable internet. Starlink will complement and enhance Airtel's suite of products to ensure reliable and affordable broadband for our Indian customers - wherever they live and work," Vittal said.

Under the pact, Airtel and SpaceX will explore offering Starlink equipment at Airtel's

retail stores, Starlink services via Airtel to business customers, opportunities to connect communities, schools, and health centres, among many others, in even the most distant rural parts of India.

Airtel and SpaceX will also explore how Starlink could help expand and enhance the Airtel network, as well as SpaceX's ability to utilise and benefit from Airtel's ground network infrastructure and other capabilities in India, the statement said.

The Starlink announcement comes weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with Elon Musk in Washington where they discussed issues including space, mobility, technology and innovation.

IndusInd Bank hit by ₹2,100cr accounting lapse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: IndusInd Bank Tuesday fire fought the fallout of a ₹2,100 crore discrepancy in accounting, saying it has enough reserves and capital to cover for it, but the management's assurance failed to arrest the free fall of shares which tanked over 27 per cent on the bourses.

IndusInd Bank CEO and Managing Director Sumant Kathpalia said that the accounting lapse was noted around September-October last year and the bank gave a preliminary update to the RBI about this last week. The final number will be known after the external agency, which the bank has appointed, finalises its report by early April.

In a stock exchange filing, private sector lender IndusInd Bank Monday disclosed that the bank has noted some discrepancies in its derivatives portfolio which could have an adverse impact of about 2.35 per cent of the bank's net worth as of December 2024 as per its internal review.

Analysts peg the discrepancy at ₹2,100 crore in absolute terms.

The bank has, in parallel, appointed an external agency to independently review and validate the internal findings. "The bank's profitability



and capital adequacy remain healthy to absorb this one-time impact. The issue was identified by the bank... The bank has enough reserves and capital to manage this..." Kathpalia said.

Shares of IndusInd Bank nosedived 27.17 per cent to close at ₹655.95 on the BSE. During the day's trade, the stock had hit its 1 year low of ₹649 a piece, down 28 per cent over Monday's closing price of ₹900.

In an analyst call late Monday night, Kathpalia said that the discrepancy in the derivative portfolio has been accumulated in the book over a period of 5-7 years prior to April 1, 2024.

The discrepancy in IndusInd Bank's treasury business went unnoticed despite multiple audits like that of internal, statutory, and compliance, as well as by the RBI.

Adani Group wins ₹36k-cr housing redevelopment project in Mumbai

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: After the Dharavi slum redevelopment project, billionaire Gautam Adani's group has emerged as the highest bidder for the ₹36,000 crore redevelopment of Motilal Nagar in Mumbai, sources said.

Motilal Nagar I, II & III is one of Mumbai's biggest housing redevelopment projects, covering 143 acres in western suburb of Goregaon (W). Adani Properties Pvt Ltd (APPL) emerged as the highest bidder, offering more built-up area than its nearest rival, L&T, sources aware of the matter said. Letter of Allotment (LoA) will be issued in due course.

This will be the second mega redevelopment project of Adani Group in Mumbai. It is already redeveloping Dharavi, one of Asia's largest slums in Mumbai. Adani Group did not offer any comments on the story.

The Mumbai High Court last week gave Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) a go-ahead to redevelop Motilal Nagar through a construction and development agency (C&DA). The state government has declared it as a 'special project', with MHADA retaining control over it but working through a C&DA in absence of the necessary potential to accomplish the work, based on economic viability and its capability.

Indian consumers expect their banks to take the lead in the fight against fraudsters

DATTU KOMPPELLA | MANAGING DIRECTOR IN ASIA FOR FICO

India's solar sector saw record-breaking installations in 2024, but the numbers could have been significantly higher if not for transmission issues and supply chain delays

RAJ PRABHU | CEO OF MERCOR CAPITAL GROUP

SHORT TAKES

Rupee up 10 paise to close at 87.21

Mumbai: The rupee pared early losses to settle higher by 10 paise at 87.21 against the US currency Tuesday as the dollar fell to a four-month low level and crude oil prices also stayed subdued. A volatile trend in domestic equity markets and foreign capital outflows amid fear of recession in the US and trade-related uncertainties restricted the recovery in the local currency, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened lower at 87.37 and touched the day's low of 87.39 against the greenback in early trade. The unit later rebounded up to 87.17 before ending the session at 87.21 against the dollar, 10 paise higher compared to its previous closing level. On Monday, the rupee crashed 36 paise to close at 87.31 against the US dollar. Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan, attributed the rupee's recovery to weak tone in the US dollar index and a decline in the US 10-year treasury yields. He said that weak crude oil prices and mixed-to-positive domestic markets supported the rupee but FI outflows capped sharp gains.

Gold edges up to ₹88,790 per 10g

New Delhi: Snapping its three-day losing run, gold rebounded to ₹88,790 per 10 grams in the national capital Tuesday amid firm global trends, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity rose by ₹40 to ₹88,790 per 10 grams from the last close of ₹88,750 per 10 grams. Gold of 99.5 per cent also went up by ₹40 to ₹88,390 per 10 grams. However, silver prices declined by ₹350 to ₹98,900 per kg. The white metal had settled at ₹99,250 per kg Monday. Comex gold futures for April delivery rose by USD 1.44 per ounce to USD 2,918.70 per ounce in the global markets. Meanwhile, spot gold advanced 0.82 per cent to USD 2,912.43 per ounce. "Gold traded higher as dollar index weakness and escalating tariff concerns in the US signalled economic uncertainty. Safe-haven buying remained strong, with ETF inflows supporting the bullish sentiment," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, said. Comex silver futures in the Asian market hours traded 1.44 per cent higher to USD 33 per ounce. According to HDFC Securities' Senior Analyst of Commodities Saumil Gandhi, market participants continue to monitor President Donald Trump's comments and assess how the tariff battle will play out in the near future.

Coinbase registers with FIU to offer crypto trading services



REUTERS

Mumbai, March 11: US-headquartered cryptocurrency exchange Coinbase Global has registered with India's Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), allowing it to offer crypto trading services in the country, the company said Tuesday.

Coinbase said it plans to launch its initial retail services later this year and roll out additional investments and products thereafter, but did not disclose a specific timeline.

Coinbase's entry into India comes at a time when interest in the asset class has soared in the country, with many young Indians dabbling in crypto and flocking to trading academies in the hopes of supplementing their regular incomes.

Other crypto exchanges that currently operate in India include CoinDCX, Binance and KuCoin.

"India represents one of the

most exciting market opportunities in the world today, and we're proud to deepen our investment here in full compliance with local regulations," said John O'Loughlin, Coinbase's regional managing director for Asia Pacific.

India requires virtual digital asset service providers, such as crypto exchanges, to register with the FIU as a reporting entity and comply with obligations mandated under the country's anti-money laundering rules.

While the country levies a 30% tax on crypto trading gains, among the highest globally, it is yet to outline regulations for the asset class, which has been in the spotlight since Donald Trump's victory in the US Presidential election last year.

India is reviewing its stance on cryptocurrencies due to global regulatory shifts, and influenced by recent US policy changes, a senior official told Reuters last month.

SENSEX, NIFTY SETTLE ALMOST FLAT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 11: Benchmark BSE Sensex recovered most of its losses to close marginally down in a volatile session Tuesday even as private lender IndusInd Bank slumped 27 per cent and global markets declined on US recession worries.

The 30-share BSE Sensex settled down by 12.85 points or 0.02 per cent at 74,102.32 with half of its constituents closing lower. The index opened sharply down and slumped further 451.57 points or 0.61 per cent to hit a low of 73,663.60 in early deals following weak global trends. The barometer later recovered losses to close almost flat.

Analysts said late-buying in select blue-chips such as ICI-Bank, Reliance and Airtel helped recover losses.

The broader Nifty of NSE advanced 37.60 points or 0.17 per cent to close at 22,497.90, rebounding from the day's lows. The index rose by 61.8 points or 0.27 per cent to hit a high of 22,522.10.

Shares of IndusInd Bank plummeted by more than 27 per cent to close at ₹655.95 apiece on BSE after the private sector lender reported some discrepancies in its derivatives portfolio.

Infosys, Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, Zomato, Hindustan Unilever, Power Grid, Axis Bank, UltraTech Cement, Adani Ports, and Tata Consultancy Services were among the laggards in the Sensex pack.

On the other hand, Sun Pharmaceuticals, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, HCL Technologies, Maruti Suzuki India, Larsen & Toubro, Reliance Industries, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Titan



were the gainers.

"Despite significant sell-offs in the US and other Asian markets driven by concerns over an economic slowdown caused by the ongoing trade war, the domestic market is showing signs of a gradual recovery. Its relatively lower volatility can be attributed to a moderation in valuations, following recent corrections, along with supportive factors like falling crude oil prices, an easing Dollar Index, and expectations of a rebound in domestic earnings," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

The attention remains on the upcoming retail inflation data, which could provide insights into potential interest rate cuts, Nair added.

Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said markets remained volatile but managed to close slightly in the green amid mixed signals. A weak global outlook led to a gap-down opening, but selective buying in heavyweight stocks helped recover losses, he added.

Analysts said that US President Donald Trump's flip-flop tariff policy and the high uncertainty has started impacting US stock markets with benchmark indices tanking up to 4 per cent on Monday.

The BSE Smallcap gauge fell 0.70 per cent, however, the mid-cap index went up 0.72 per cent.

Among the BSE sectoral indices, Realty, Telecommunication, Energy, Oil & Gas, Commodities, Consumer Dis-

cretionary, Healthcare, Capital Goods, Consumer Durables and Metal were among the gainers. FMCG, IT, Utilities, Auto, Bankex, Teck and Focussed IT were the laggards.

As many as 2,506 stocks declined while 1,466 advanced and 119 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Despite the market ended in the negative zone. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms edged up by ₹39,721.99 crore to ₹3,94,25,540.72 crore (USD 4.51 trillion).

In Asian markets, Tokyo and Seoul ended lower, while Hong Kong settled flat. Shanghai stock markets finished in the green territory. European markets were largely positive in the mid-session deals.

India's employment outlook rises 43% in Q2: Survey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 11: Indian employers continued to report strong hiring intentions globally in the second quarter of this calendar year, with a Net Employment Outlook (NEO) of 43 per cent, a survey said Tuesday.

India continues to lead the global Net Employment Outlook (43 per cent), exceeding the global average by 18 points for the second quarter of 2025, according to the latest ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey.

The ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey is based on inputs from 40,413

employers across 42 countries, including 3,000 head hunters across different regions of India from January 2-31, 2025.

The survey revealed that 55 per cent of employers intended to hire, 12 per cent forese a decrease, 29 per cent do not expect any change in their workforce, and 4 per cent are unsure.

Information Technology (55 per cent), Industrial and Materials (48 per cent), Health Care and Life Sciences (42 per cent), Transport and Logistics and Automotive (40 per cent) and Communication Services (38 per cent) sectors report a growth in hiring intentions when compared to the first quarter of 2025.



Financial and Real Estate (43 per cent), with the third highest outlook (43 per cent), is margin-

ally down by 1 point while Energy and Utilities (32 per cent) and Consumer Goods and Services

(32 per cent) see a decrease of 6 points and 8 points, respectively, compared to the previous quarter, it added.

Meanwhile, year-on-year, job markets have strengthened in all four regions with the West (47 per cent) leading regional hiring intentions, followed by the North and East (44 per cent), and the South (39 per cent), said the survey.

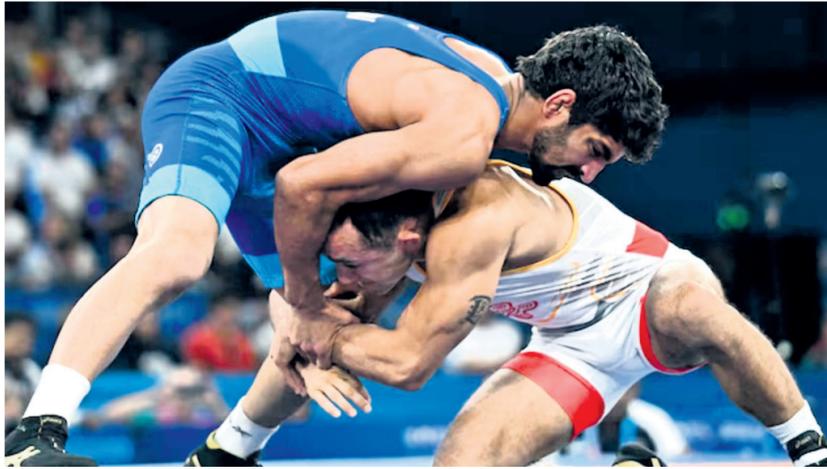
Company expansion (45 per cent) is cited as the top reason for staffing increases, while market changes (36 per cent) was listed as the top reason for employers anticipating a staffing decrease in the second quarter, it added.

"This year, the Survey reflects a resilient and growing job market in India. Hiring sentiment has strengthened compared to the previous quarter, showcasing the confidence of Indian businesses in navigating an evolving economic landscape," ManpowerGroup India and Middle East Managing Director Sandeep Gulati said.

He said, technology, industrial, and financial sectors continue to lead the hiring momentum, with larger organizations driving workforce expansion - this growth is fuelled by business expansion, digital transformation, and a strong commitment to upskilling.

Sports Min revokes WFI suspension

The suspension of the Wrestling Federation of India was lifted after 15 months following an order by the Delhi High Court



As per the High Court order, the ministry decided to lift the sanctions so that our wrestlers can participate in the Asian and World Championships. This also gives justice looking at the future of our wrestlers

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | SPORTS MINISTER

terminated officials. It may be noted that Prem Chand Lochab, the new general secretary, was elected from the rival camp and the ministry's directive could be understood in that context. "The EC of the WFI must give an undertaking in this regard within 4 weeks. Any violation of the undertaking will invite appropriate legal action, including the action under the Sports Code," the ministry said in its order. It also said that the WFI must ensure that the selection for all international events should be done in a free, fair and transparent manner as per the extant provisions of the Sports

Code and the other latest instructions issued in this regard along with regulations issued from time-to-time by the UWW (United World Wrestling). The WFI president said there is nothing that can't be followed. "We have already shifted to a new office and soon we will call for an EC meeting and also issue a circular for the selection trials. We have no issues in following these instructions," he said. The Asian Championship is scheduled to be held in Amman, Jordan from March 25. The Indian wrestlers missed out on competing in Ranking Series tournaments in Zagreb

and Albania due to the ministry's suspension and the court cases filed by prominent wrestlers Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia and Satyawart Kadian. The Indian wrestlers could have missed participation in the World Championship also last year but after they protested outside the residence of Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, they were allowed to participate. The wrestlers, who had led the protest against Brij Bhushan, had contended that the WFI did not have the authority to pick national teams since it was suspended. The court had directed the Indian Olympic Association to restore the ad-hoc panel for managing the WFI but the sports body had refused, saying UWW, the world governing body, recognises only the WFI and won't accept entries from the ad-hoc panel. The UWW, which lifted its suspension on WFI January 13, 2024, had threatened IOA to suspend WFI again if there was interference in its governance. "We are so relieved that this suspension has been lifted. There was a complete lull, the young wrestlers were suffering for no fault of theirs. They were missing tournaments, there was no national camp. The suspension should have been lifted long back," said a coach associated with a leading training centre in Haryana.

Conspirators could not succeed

Gonda: Hailing Sports Ministry's decision to lift the WFI suspension, its former chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh Tuesday said justice has been delivered as conspirators bit the dust. Suspended only three days after it conducted elections in December 24, for misgovernance, the ministry restored Wrestling Federation of India's status as an NSF after the sports body took corrective measure such as moving its office from the premises of Brij Bhushan. The country's top wrestlers Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik had alleged that Brij Bhushan sexually exploited junior wrestlers during his tenure and staged a protest at Jantar Mantar in January 2023, demanding his arrest and a complete overhaul of WFI. The matter is still in court even as Brij Bhushan loyalist Sanjay Singh won the elections later that year. For a few months IOA ad-hoc panel ran the show but after UWW lifted its suspension following the conduct of elections, the committee was dissolved. "For 26 months, many conspiracies were hatched, false allegations were levelled and efforts were made to stall Indian wrestling, but the conspirators could not succeed in their aim," Brij Bhushan told reporters.



ICC unlikely to offer explanation to PCB



Dubai, March 11: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is unlikely to receive any "formal clarification" from the ICC on the perceived snub during the closing ceremony of the Champions Trophy in Dubai. India beat New Zealand by four wickets in the title clash Sunday to win the tournament for the third time. The controversy erupted when Sumair Ahmed, who is chief operating officer of the PCB and was the tournament director of the Champions Trophy, was not invited on stage for the final presentation. "We have filed a formal complaint with the ICC as what happened is unacceptable to us," a PCB official said Tuesday. However, according to ICC sources, the PCB won't be given any formal explanation. "If the PCB mandarins look up, even ICC CEO Geoff Allardice wasn't present on stage. The reason is protocol," said the ICC source.

PCB slashes match fees
Karachi: In a stunning development, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has resorted to cost-cutting measures including slashing the match fees of players in domestic cricket, raising questions about the financial health of the sport's apex body in the country. The PCB has reduced the match fees of cricketers participating in the upcoming National T20 Championship from 100,000 rupees per match to 10,000 per match with reserve players getting 5000 per match. "The players who were first being offered accommodation at five-star and four-star hotels are now being offered cheaper accommodation. Air travel has also been reduced for them besides fees," a source said. Another source said that outstanding payments from last season are yet to be cleared for players and umpires. The irony, according to one source, is that while match fees for players are being reduced, officials taking these decisions are getting monthly salaries in millions. Mentors Misbah ul Haq, Waqar Younis, Shoaib Malik, Sarfaraz Ahmed and Saqlain Mushtaq, on two-year contracts, are said to be paid around 5 million per month. The PCB has also spent around 1.8 billion rupees on upgrading the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore, National Stadium in Karachi, and the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium for the Champions Trophy.

"Sumair Ahmed is an employee of the PCB and not an office-bearer. Also please check when has a tournament director been on stage for presentation? "We can give an example. ICC's new head of operations and communications Gaurav Saxena was once Tournament Director for Asia Cup in Dubai. Was he on stage for final presentation," an ICC source said. BCCI president Roger Binny presented the white jackets to India players and the medals to match officials, while ICC chairman Jay Shah handed the trophy to skipper Rohit Sharma and gave the

medals to the winners. BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia and New Zealand Cricket's CEO Roger Twose were also present on stage. It must be mentioned that Saikia is BCCI Director on ICC board and Binny is the Alternate Director. "The reasons being given for not having our COO and tournament director on stage for the final presentation make no sense to us. We are waiting for a formal clarification/apology," the PCB official said. "We are appalled by this blatant disregard for Pakistan's role as the host nation," the official said.

SHORT TAKES

Deepti ranks 5th in ICC Women's All-rounders

Dubai: India's Deepti Sharma surpassed New Zealand's Amelia Kerr to climb one spot and break into the top five of the latest ICC Women's all-rounders rankings. The 27-year-old Indian now occupies the fifth spot with 344 points, in a list headed by Australia's Ashleigh Gardner. Deepti is ranked third in the T20 all-rounder rankings and holds the fourth position in the ODI bowling charts.

Indian cricketers return from Dubai

New Delhi: The Indian cricketers, led by Rohit Sharma, have made a quiet return home following their triumph in the Champions Trophy in Dubai. After leading India to their second ICC title in nine months, skipper Rohit landed back in Mumbai Monday night. Head coach Gautam Gambhir and pacer Harshit Rana landed in Delhi on Monday night. Superstar Virat Kohli had left the team hotel with wife Anushka Sharma right after the team returned from the Dubai International Stadium late on Sunday night. Shreyas Iyer, who played a big role in the middle order, will captain Punjab Kings and will join the team March 16.

FORMULA 1

Maini reserve driver at Alpine F1 team

London, March 11: India's Kush Maini was Tuesday promoted to the reserve driver's role at the Alpine Formula 1 team ahead of the season opener in Melbourne March 16. Maini competes in the Formula 2, a feeder series to Formula 1. The 24-year-old from Bengaluru joined Alpine's junior driver program in October 2023 and now joins Franco Colapinto, Paul Aron and Ryo Hirakawa in the pool of reserve drivers of the F1 team. "Maini's duties will involve offering valuable support to the team's car development and set-up objectives using the driver-in-loop simulator at Enstone, as well as participating in its TPC (testing of previous cars) Programme aimed at improving skills at the wheel of a contemporary, modern Formula One car," said Alpine in a statement. For the majority of Formula



1's 75-year-old history, teams would have only one reserve driver but that trend has changed of late with multiple drivers performing that role. For Maini, the development comes as a big boost as he aims to become the third Indian to compete in Formula 1 after Narain Karthikeyan and Karun Chandhok. The Indian racer will represent DAMS in his third Formula 2 season which is run concurrently on select Formula 1 weekends. He finished 11th and 13th in drivers' standing in 2023 and 2024, totalling five podiums including a victory in Hungary.

Indian shuttlers face ranking setbacks

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 11: Indian badminton biggest names—Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty and Lakshya Sen—suffered a significant blow, falling out of the top 10 in their respective categories in the latest world rankings released by the Badminton World Federation (BWF) Tuesday. Former world No 1 men's doubles pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty have dropped five places in the rankings to 12th. The duo, who were ranked seventh last week, last competed at the Badminton Asia Team Mixed Championships in February. This marks the first time since November 2021 that the pair has fallen outside the top 10, reflecting a turbulent period in their career following their underwhelming performance at the 2024 Paris Olympics. Since their Olympic exit, Rankireddy and Shetty have undergone a series of changes in their training setup, including parting ways with their long-time coach, Mathias Boe. They are now being mentored



by Tan Kim Her, the coach credited with forming their partnership in their early days. Despite the setback, they remain India's highest-ranked men's doubles pair. In the men's singles, Lakshya Sen has also suffered a ranking decline. The former world No 10 has slipped five places to 15th in the latest standings. Much like Rankireddy and Shetty, Sen last competed at the Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships and has struggled for form in 2025. His early exits at the Malaysia Open and India Open have

contributed to his slide in the rankings. His best performance so far this year has been reaching the Round of 16 at the Indonesia Masters Super 500 event. In women's singles, PV Sindhu, India's double Olympic medallist, has also seen a dip in her ranking. She has slipped to the 16th position from 15th last week. Despite the setback, Sindhu remains the only Indian in the top 20 of the women's singles rankings. While most Indian shuttlers struggled in the rankings, there were a few bright spots. The

women's doubles pair of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand continues to hold firm in the top 10, occupying the ninth spot in the world rankings. The duo remains India's best bet in women's doubles and will look to build on their steady performances. Meanwhile, in mixed doubles, the pairing of Tanisha Crasto and Dhruv Kapila achieved a career-high ranking of 19th. Crasto's feat is particularly noteworthy as she has now broken into the Top 20 of the world rankings with three different partners. Previously, she had achieved this distinction with Ashwini Ponnappa in the women's doubles and Ishaan Bhatnagar in mixed doubles. Among the young talents making a mark, Ayush Shetty had a breakthrough week, climbing to a career-best ranking of 43rd in men's singles after his impressive semi-final run at the Orleans Masters. The young shuttler has moved up five places and is now the fifth-highest-ranked Indian in men's singles, trailing behind Lakshya Sen, HS Prannoy, Priyanshu Rajawat, and Kiran George.

World Para Athletics Grand Prix off to a sedate start

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: The absence of star para athletes like javelin thrower Sumit Antil and discus exponent Yogesh Kathuniya came as a dampener as India began its campaign in the three-day World Para Athletics Grand Prix on a sedate note here Tuesday. With the Para Athletics World Championships scheduled in September, several top Indian athletes are missing the Grand Prix because "they are training as per their international schedule," said Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) president and two-time gold-medallist javelin thrower at the Paralympic Games Devedra Jhajharia. In the absence of several In-



dian and foreign para athletes, who had initially confirmed their participation but pulled out for various reasons, there were several events where the participation was a bare minimum -- in some disciplines just one athlete participated. The men's high jump T42

final -- for those with single above the knee amputations or a disability that is comparable -- saw just one athlete, Ramsinghbai Gobindbhai Padhiyar, competing and taking the top spot. Three others -- Lokesh Mantra, Shailesh Kumar and Varun Singh Bhati -- pulled out.

In men's javelin throw (F33, F34) -- for those with a moderately affected movement and coordination across the whole body, or affecting part of the body which affect their movement to a high degree in the legs -- only two para athletes took part with Uzbekistan's Oybek Egamnazarov emerging on top with a best throw of 18.05m. India's Devershee Sachan came in second with a best of 11.34m. In men's 100m (T11, T12) sprint -- near-total visual impairment -- Brazil's Joeferson Marinho de Oliveira won the gold clocking 11.17 seconds, while Vishnu (12.39 sec) and Pragadeeshwara Raja Moorthy (12.94 sec) of India finished second and third in a three-man field. Another Indian, Ramanjee did not start.

Injured Neymar under fire for missing semi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sao Paulo, March 11: Neymar's justification for missing a semifinal with Santos was criticized because he was seen at Carnival last week. Santos lost to archrival Corinthians 2-1 Sunday in the semifinals of the Sao Paulo state championship, and Neymar sat on the bench for all 90 minutes. On Monday, he said he had a minor injury without elaborating. Days earlier, the striker was photographed at Rio de Janeiro's Sambadrome, the venue for the glitzy Carnival parade. Neymar, who rejoined his boyhood club Santos in January, attended the Carnival parade only hours after being substituted in the second half of another Sao Paulo state cham-



pionship match March 2 because of an apparent left thigh injury. He recently recovered from an ACL tear that sidelined him for more than one year. Santos did not reveal Neymar had any injuries before Sunday's semifinal. "All I wanted was to be on the pitch and help my teammates in some way," Neymar said on Instagram. "But last Thursday I felt a discomfort that prevented me from being on the pitch. We took a test this morning and I ended up feeling it again." Santos coach Pedro Caixinha said he asked Neymar to stay

on the bench despite the injury. "It was just a discomfort, but it meant he couldn't participate. It was my request and he agreed to be with the squad," Caixinha said in a news conference after his team's elimination. "He's a different player, he is enlightened and has fantastic energy. Neymar suffered a lot for not being able to participate in the game." Still, many pundits accused Neymar of not focusing on his career, which he is trying to revive at the Brazilian club following spells at Barcelona, Paris Saint-Germain and Al-Hilal. "He chose Carnival over the semifinal," popular pundit Walter Casagrande Jr. said on his social media channels. "Neymar's behavior of the last five, six years has come back. He switches the professional side for pleasure and fun."