

known for her outspoken views, shares her perspective on what success truly means to her

LEISURE | P2

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BHUBANESWAR | SATURDAY | MARCH 29, 2025

NATIONAL | P9

Quake rocks Myanmar, Thailand; over 150 dead

transferred to his parent

Allahabad High Court Friday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bangkok, March 28: A powerful earthquake rocked Mvanmar and neighbouring Thailand Friday, destroying buildings, bridges and a monastery. At least 144 people were killed in Myanmar, where photos and video from two hard-hit cities showed extensive damage. At least 10 died in the Thai capital, where a high-rise under construction collapsed.

The full extent of death, injury and destruction was not immediately clear particularly in Myanmar, one of the world's poorest countries. It is embroiled in a civil war, and information is tightly controlled.

"The death toll and injuries are expected to rise,' the head of Myanmar's military government. Senior Gen Min Aung Hlaing said as he announced on television that at least 144 people were killed and 730 others

DEVASTATION: People stand near the site of a collapsed building in Bangkok, Thailand, Friday REUTERS were injured in his country. high-rise.

In Thailand, Bangkok city authorities said 10 people struck at midday, with an were killed, 16 injured and epicentre near Mandalay, 101 missing from three con- Myanmar's second-largest

struction sites, including the city. Aftershocks followed,

one of them measuring a The 7.7 magnitude quake strong 6.4 magnitude.

In Mandalay, the earthquake reportedly brought down multiple buildings, including one of the city's

tos from the capital city of mittee's Myanmar director. Naypyidaw showed rescue crews pulling victims from earthquake belt, though the rubble of multiple buildings used to house civil servants

Myanmar's government said blood was in high demand in the hardest-hit areas. In a country where prior governments sometimes have been slow to accept foreign aid, Min Aung Hlaing said Myanmar was ready to million to start relief efforts. But amid images of buck-

ed and cracked roads and reports of a collapsed bridge and a burst dam, there were concerns about how rescuers would even reach some Deputy Prime Minister areas in a country already enduring a humanitarian crisis.

before we understand the full extent of destruction caused by this earthquake," said Mohammed Riyas, the

largest monasteries. Pho- International Rescue Com-Myanmar is in an active many of the temblors happen in sparsely populated areas, not cities like those

with the BSE benchmark Sensex

BUSINESS | P11

climbing over 5 per cent

affected Friday. The US Geological Survey, a government science agency. estimated that the death toll could top 1,000.

In Thailand, a 33-story building under construction crumpled into a cloud accept assistance. The Unit- of dust near Bangkok's poped Nations allocated USD 5 ular Chatuchak market, and onlookers could be seen screaming and running in a video posted on social media. Vehicles on a nearby freeway came to a stop.

"It's a great tragedy," Suriya Juangroongruangkit said after viewing the site, adding that there was "We fear it may be weeks hope that there were still survivors

The city's elevated rapid transit system and subway MORE P10 shut down

2,483 SC/ST atrocity cases in nine months

semi-final after Sebastian

SPORTS | P12

12 PAGE | ₹5.00

These cases were regis-

tered between June 2024 and February 2025 under

the Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes (Preven

tion of Atrocities) Act, said

Nityanada Gond, Minister

for ST and SC Development

Minorities and Backward

Classes Welfare in a written

reply to a query from BJD

MLA Sanjib Kumar Mallick

the minister, the majority

of the cases of atrocity on

SCs and STs were reported

registered in Jajpur, 159 cas-

es were recorded in Cuttack

Rural police district and 157

Similarly, Bolangir dis-

trict reported 156 cases, followed by Puri (153), Bhu-

baneswar Urban police dis-

trict (138), Bhadrak (126)

The remaining police dis

in Jagatsinghpur district.

While 269 such cases were

in Jajpur district.

As per data provided by

Korda in Miami Open

Odisha continues to grap- the Assembly Friday. ple with rising instances of atrocities against vulnerable tribal communities and castebased violence, if the figures on atrocities against SC and ST members as disclosed in the Assembly by minister Nityanand Gond is any indication. In just nine months, the state has recorded a whooping 2,483 of such cases, with coastal districts reporting a majority of the incidents. Significantly, Odisha remains one of the five states that receive the majority of funds from the Centre to prevent atrocities against members of SCs and STs. Experts blame poor implementation of the Act and low conviction rate -16.1% in case of SCs and 19.6 % for STs- as reasons behind the rise of such cases

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar. March Kendrapara (125), and Ma **28:** A total of 2,483 cases of yurbhanj (100). atrocity on people in the Scheduled Caste (SC) and tricts reported less than 100 Scheduled Tribe (ST) catecases each during the last gories have been recorded nine months, he said. During in various police stations the period, an average of 218 of Odisha in the last nine to 316 such cases were regismonths, a minister informed tered every month

^{2% DA hike for Central} Gold breaches ₹92K mark PK Jena appointed government employees

AGENCIES New Delhi: The Union Cabinet Friday increased the Dearness

Allowance (DA) by 2 percentage points effective from January 1 this year, benefitting nearly 1.15 crore Central government employees and pensioners. The Union Cabinet has approved the release of an additional instalment of DA to Central government employees and **Dearness Relief to pensioners** metal of 99.9 per cent purity with effect from January 1, 2025.

RREGULAR by MANJL

New Delhi, March 28: Gold prices rallied by ₹1,100 to hit a fresh peak of ₹92.150 per 10 gm in the national capital Friday amid rise in precious metal rates in the overseas markets, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious

had finished at ₹91,050 per 10 said. Silver prices surged by



Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities,

cord high at ₹1,03,000 per kg

OERC chairperson

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar. March 28: The state government Friday appointed former chief secretary Pradeep Jena as chairperson of Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC).

The Energy department in a notification said the appointment would be effective from the day Jena, In FY25, gold prices have ₹1,300 to trade near a re- a 1989-batch IAS officer. assumes office. The post of against Thursday's closing OERC chairperson has been vacant since November 2023 On March 19, the white after SC Mohapatra, also a former chief secretary, resigned from the post after being ap-Meanwhile, gold futures pointed as chief adviser to the for April delivery appreci-Chief Minister's Office (CMO). ated by ₹542 to ₹88,926 per Earlier, Jena served as secretary of the Energy de-10 grams on the Multi Compartment for over six years. Jena served as a chief secretary from February 26, 2023, to June 30, 2024. Though he was slated to retire from service December 31, 2023, he got a six-month extension because of general and Assembly polls in the state in April-May 2024.





No earthquake here. Those are just the venues where comedians used to perform

increased by ₹23,730 or 35 per cent from ₹68,420 per 10 gm April 1 last year. level of ₹1,01,700 per kg.

gm Thursday.

Continuing the momentum for the third straight metal prices hit a record session, gold of 99.5 per cent high of ₹1,03,500 per kg. purity jumped by ₹1,100 to hit a lifetime high of ₹91,700 per 10 gm. It had concluded at ₹90,600 per 10 gm in the previous market close.

modity Exchange. "Gold prices continues the "Gold prices continued to bullish momentum and set trade higher in the spot mara new record high Friday. ket as tariff concerns per-The gold rise is being driven sisted, keeping buying interest intact," Jateen Trivedi, by the fear of an escalating VP Research Analyst - Comglobal trade war and its immodity and Currency at LKP plications for economic development," Saumil Gandhi, Securities, said

Pig's head, decapitated rats: A new era of intimidation for Indonesia's journos

hen a large box arrived at the office with her name on it, Indonesian investigative journalist Francisca Christy Rosana assumed a friend had sent her a package.

Instead, it contained a stinking, mutilated pig's head with its ears cut off.

"I was shocked, I cried, and was immediately evacuated by some of my friends," said Francisca. "I was worried this terror would hurt my family.

The grisly gift was the first in a series of threats aimed at Tempo media in the past week, in what is being seen as a new low amid increasing intimidation of journalists in the country.

Days later, six decapitated rats wrapped in roseadorned paper were sent to Tempo's Jakarta office.



Online, there was a steady stream of harassment. "Are there enough pig heads? If not I can send more," wrote one menacing user on Tempo's Instagram account.

The threats have led to criticism of the leadership of ex-special forces commander-turned-president, Prabowo Subianto. On the pig's head threat, presidential spokesperson Hasan

the Tempo journalist to 'just cook it'.

Tempo, one of Indonesia's most critical media outlets, is no stranger to threats. During the decades-long reign of former authoritarian ruler Suharto, its weekly magazine was twice banned. 'Bombs, doxing, hijacking

of phone numbers. We've had so many threats in the past," said Bagja Hidayat, Tempo's deputy editor in

chief. "For the first time, animals and organs have been used as messengers ... It's very scary.

The attacks come weeks after Prabowo stated that some elements of the media had been infiltrated by 'foreign interests' intent on destroying the nation. Bagja says there is no clarity on who is behind the recent Nasbi initially suggested threats, but probe is on. In-

augurated in October, Prabowo is wary of the press.

During election campaign, he avoided all but a handful of interviews, and days before the vote was the only presidential candidate to skip an event where candidates pledged their commitment to uphold press freedom.

Ross Tapsell, an expert on Indonesian media at the Australian National University, said, "The incident is also important in the context of worsening attacks on female journalists in southeast Asia, where hyper-masmilitary-leaning culine. leadership encourages more overt displays of misogyny.'

The Committee to Protect Journalists described the threats as a 'dangerous and deliberate act of intimidation'.



AGENCIES



elsure



MEGAN, MGK WELCOME THEIR FIRST CHILD TOGETHER

Megan Fox and ex-Machine Gun Kelly welcomed their first child together. MGK shared the news on social media with a video of their newborn daughter. Engaged in January 2022, the couple split in November, shortly after announcing the pregnancy.

SMITH GETS A PHILADELPHIAN **STREET NAMED AFTER HIM**

Will Smith, The Pursuit of Happyness actor, gets the honour of having a street named after him in his hometown, Philadelphia. The portion of 2000 N. 59th Street is now to be called as the 'Will Smith Way.'

SAMANTHA'S

DEFINITION

OF SUCCESS

Mumbai: Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu,

means to her.

known for her outspoken views, shared

her perspective on what success truly

The actress, who recently headlined the curtain-raiser event for the 11th

edition of the Indian Film Festival of

Sydney (IFFS), emphasised that, for

women, success is not just about

achievements but about breaking

free from stereotypes and societal

boxes. Samantha highlighted the

importance of embracing freedom.

doing it well.

authenticity.

She further spoke about stepping into

the role of a producer, which she described

as an empowering move that gives her the

opportunity to champion diverse and mean-

can or cannot do.

wearing multiple hats and challeng-

ing outdated notions of what women

The Kushi actress shared, "I have said

this before - success, for me, is free-

dom. I don't wait for others to tell me

that I am successful. Success is waking

up with the freedom to do what you

are passionate about. It is about not

being put in a box and not being told

what women can or cannot do. It is

about wearing multiple hats and

Samantha also opened up

about her personal and profes-

sional journey. The actress

reflected on how she has nav-

igated obstacles and contin-

uously shaped her evolving

career with determination



Hrithik turns director JNE FORECASTI

GaneshaSpeaks.com accuracy • reliability • trust

Today is a bright day, and the stars foretell success for you. If you find yourself in a creative mood, indulge in some activity that will satisfy the urge. But, Ganesha says, if you are driving alone, exercise a great deal of caution to be on the safe side.

Ganesha is happy to say that you will acquit yourself well n whatever you do or undertake today. You will show outstanding caliber in handling the responsibilities given to you. If you are participating in a competition, you are likely to be way ahead of others.

GEMINI

Maintaining the image you have created in the minds of people, as well as upholding your reputation in society will give you some anxious moments today. You will work hard to improve your social standing, and will get results by the end of the day. It is an auspicious and lucky day for you, says Ganesha.

CANCER

Not a good day for you in

terms of fortune and opportunities. You will constantly find yourself in unwanted tricky situations without any fault of yours. You, however, are likely to know what to do in such situations by now, for you have been in too many of those in the past.

LEO

You will get good co-operation from your colleagues and subordinates. In your personal life also you will gain the support of your spouse and your friends. Other

people will be accomodating of your problems and will try to solve them for you. Your expenses may increase. leading to some financial worries, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

Today, your soul mate will both give and demand pleasant surprises, says Ganesha Your business partners may bring in some good news. Take responsibility of your past mistakes and make plans for the days to come. Do not be shy of the advice of loved ones, as it will help you more than hinder.

LIBRA Sit back and think hard -

think about what is it that you really want when it comes to your business enterprises, because there are many ways to go about things at work, and they all shall lead your somewhere



Mumbai: Actor Hrithik Roshan is set to turn director for the upcoming film Krrish 4, and take the baton from his father Rakesh Roshan for the franchise. The development of the fourth installment of India's biggest superhero franchise has been confirmed by Rakesh Roshan, who has helmed the earlier 3 parts of the franchise.

The film is being produced by Yash Raj Films in association with Rakesh Roshan. The Indian superstar Hrithik

film as he essays the titular superhero in the franchise. The shooting

PEANUTS

THE PREVIOUS

OWNER

Roshan will be swinging between the two departments of direction and acting for the

for the film is set to begin early next year.

Confirming the development Rakesh Roshan said, "I'm passing the baton of the director of Krrish 4 to my son, Hrithik Roshan, who has lived, breathed and dreamt about this franchise since its inception with me! Hrithik has a clear and a very ambitious vision of taking Krrish's journey forward with the audience for the next decades"

He further mentioned. "I couldn't be more proud to see him wear the director's hat for a film that means the world to us as a family, 'Krrish' has entertained audiences the world over and Hrithik will now reveal the next chapters of this superhero saga

and take the vision I created so many years ago to greater heights".

IANS



Sara once envied Alia's success she might have faced to reach Mumbai: Sara Ali Khan recently adher achievements. Reflecting on this mitted to feeling Sara said, "When envious of Alia career Alia got the Na-Bhatt's and personal life. tional Award, I

During an interview. the Simmba actress shared that she felt jealousv when Alia won the National Award and thought Alia's life was perfect, especially since she had a child too. However, Sara acknowledged that she initially "de-humanised" the *Raazi*

thought, 'Her life is set. But I didn't went

ness." She emphasised the importance of understanding someone's journey rather than just seeing their success.

welcomed their daughter Raha Kapoor in November the

same year. In October 2023. Alia received a National Award for her role in Gangubai Kathiawadi. She will next star in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Love and War and Shiv Rawail's Alpha, set to release December 25.

Sara was last seen in Sky Force with Akshay Kumar and will next appear in Anurag Basu's Metro... In Dino, an anthology film slated for a July 4 release, featuring an

AGENCIES

ensemble cast.

Malaika on evolution of music industry Mumbai: Actress-model Malaika Arora

has opened up about the evolving dynamics of the music industry.

Addressing why many modern songs fail to leave a lasting impact, she highlighted how social media has significantly shaped today's music scene. She pointed out that while some songs continue to gain massive popularity and even surpass the fame of the films they are featured in, many tracks nowadays are designed with the goal of going viral, especially on platforms like Instagram Reels. Calling it a 'trend', the actress observed that despite this shift, there are still songs that manage to stand out purely because of their appeal — whether or not they contribute to a film's success.

Malaika told the news agency, "I believe that while there are many songs that become extremely popular and even outshine the films they're a part of, a lot of songs today are made with social media in mind. The focus is on creating songs that will go viral, especially through platforms like Instagram reels. It's a trend. But I do think there are still songs that become very popular, whether they help the film or not. It's a mixed bag, but the song itself sometimes becomes IANS

more significant than the movie."

ingful stories.

know what she through to get that. We often feel envy without knowing the full story. Envy means blind-

SCORPIO

You are in a mood of introspection and analysis, says Ganesha. This is likely to give you a clear vision in the days to come. Your systematic approach towards work will provide you room to think out of the box. Your innovative ideas may bag applause from superiors and bosses.

.

SAGITTARIUS

You become your own judge today. Through introspection, you try to find you the various causes that lead to troubles in your life. Though it may take time, eventually you achieve what you want and try to find reason able solutions for the same.

CAPRICORN

It's going to be a day of pleas ant surprises. You will try your level best to help people

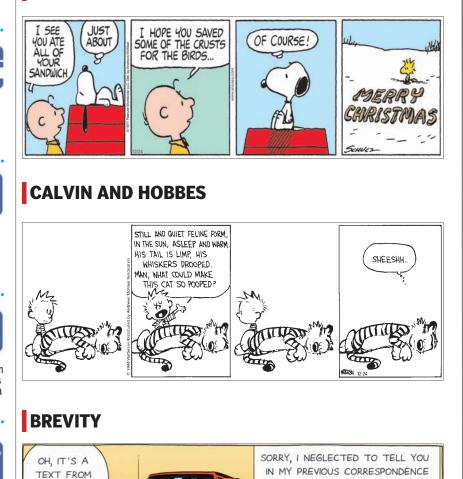
around you, and will find it exceedingly frustrating when the results won't be as expected, says Ganesha. In fact, this may even dampen your spirit and shake your self-confidence.

AQUARIUS

You will come out top in whatever you choose to do, and success will smell honeysuckle sweet! Naturally, recognition and rewards await you. Take your friends to that trendy café; you needn't wait for a reason to party, says Ganesha.

PISCES

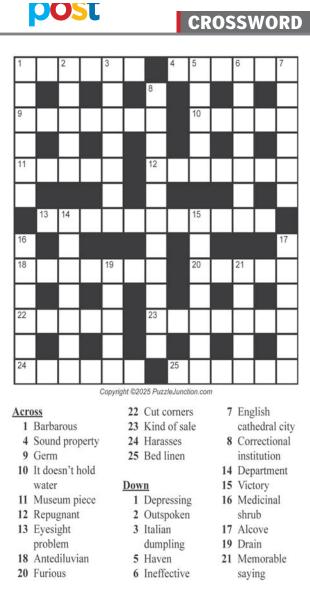
Take one cautious step at a time today, says Ganesha. You will discuss intimate matters at home and official matters at work but be careful about whom you trust and deception from someone close might lead to worry and stress in the future. Even though you are an emotional person, lay onus on working with your head over your heart today as people might try to take advantage of your nature and step on your shoulder, feels Ganesha.



THAT THE ONBOARD NAVIGATIONAL

JEEP.P.S.

SYSTEM IS BROKEN!



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

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.

2		5						
	9						7	
2	6		2		5		9	
3	1						4	
		2	3		7	6		
					9			
		1		3		7		Γ
6						9		
4	3	9			1			2

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

1	Ν	F	1	E	L	D		Ρ	E	Т	Т	Y
С		L		V		0		0		R		Е
1	М	A	G	Е		С	0	R	S	1	С	А
Ν		V		Ν				Т		Е		R
G	0	0	F		н	A	R	R	1	D	Α	Ν
		U		S		W		А				Е
Т	А	R		Κ	н	Α	К	1		F	Α	D
А				Е		1		Т		L		
Ν	0	В	1	L	1	Т	Υ		G	U	L	L
А		U		Е				В		S		0
G	Е	L	А	Т	1	Ν		0	Ρ	Т	Е	D
Е		В		0		Е		А		Е		G
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R	E	S	1	Ν		0	В	S	E	R	V	Е
R	E	S	1	N	· · ·	0	В	S	E	R	V	E
R 5	E	6	7		8	3	в	s	9	2		4
R 5 9	E	6 8	7	N	8	35	B	s	9 3	26		4 1
R 40 00 00	E	6 8 4	7 2 1	N	8 7 9	3 5 6	B	s	9 3 7	2 6 8		4 1 5
5 9 3 4	E	6 8 4	7 2 1 9	N	8 7 9	3 5 6 8	1 4 2	S	9 3 7 6	2 6 8		4 1 2
5 9 3 4 1	E	6 8 4 7 5	7 2 1 9 6	N	8 7 9 3	3 5 6 8 4	1 4 5 7	5	9 3 7 6 8	2 6 8 1 3		4 1 2 9
593418	E 1 1	6 8 4 7 5 2	7 2 1 9 6 3	N	8 7 9 3 2	3 5 6 8 4 9	B 1 2 5 7 6	s 1 5	9 3 7 6 8 5	2 6 8		4 1 5 9 7
59341		6 8 4 7 5 2 9	7219634	N	8 7 9 3 2 1	3 5 6 8 4 9 2	B 1 4 2 5 7 6 3	5	9 3 7 6 8 5	2 6 8		4 1 5 9 7 8

2 1 8 6 7 9 4 5 3



actress, not considering the challenges

Alia married Ranbir Ka poor in April 2022, and they

FUN



owntown **Govt to fill 10K teacher** posts in high schools

OST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 28: School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond Friday informed the Assembly that the state government will fill 10,000 vacant teaching positions in the high schools across the state in near future.

Responding to a query raised by BJD MLA Byomkesh Ray, Gond said that a total of 6,025 teacher posts remain vacant out of 40,166 sanctioned posts in the high schools across the state.

This is part of the state government's broader initiative to enhance the quality of education by addressing the shortage of teachers in government schools

The minister also highlighted that over 18,000 teachers have already been appointed since the BJP government assumed office, further bolstering the teaching workforce. The upcoming recruitment will include 1,375 Post Grad-

Bhubaneswar, March 28:

Chief Minister Mohan Charan

Majhi and Leader of Opposi-

tion in the Assembly Naveen

Patnaik Friday expressed

concern over the devastating

earthquake in Myanmar and

A 7.7 magnitude earth-

quake rocked Thailand and

Myanmar Friday. More than

a dozen people were killed in

Bangkok and several others

were buried when a high-rise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thailand.



uate Teacher (PGT) positions in various government and upgraded higher secondary schools, along with 1,061 PGT posts in aided higher secondary schools.

On Chandabali Assembly constituency, Gond revealed that 163 teacher posts are vacant across 327 schools there. Efforts are underway to address these vacancies through new appointments and promotions. In addition to teacher recruit-

ment, the minister shared positive developments regarding the state's school dropout rates. He stated that in the past five

years, Odisha has made significant progress in reducing dropout rates. For the 2023-24 fiscal year, primary schools in the state reported a 0% drop out rate. Additionally, dropout rates in upper primary (2%) and secondary schools (12.8%) were considerably lower than national averages of 1.9%. 5.2%, and 14.1%, respectively. On the issue of reopening

of schools, particularly those closed under the previous government's merger scheme, the minister assured the House that the state government would evaluate district-level proposals and consider public demands before making any decisions. He clarified that these schools could be reopened if there are at least 20 children in scheduled areas and 40 children in non-scheduled areas. However, he emphasised that schools closed under the merger scheme would only reopen if the required number of students

enrolled.

Artistes of Nrityadhara Dance Academy perform during an event organised by Central Sanskrit University in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts at IGNCA in New Delhi

MESMERISING SHOW



TALENT FETED: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Science & Technology Minister Krushna Chandra Patra felicitates scientist Apramita Chand for her contributions to the field of science, during an event at Lok Seva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Friday

Marine biotech research corridor soon: Majhi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 28: The state will soon have Odisha Marine Biotechnology Research & Innovation Corridor to strengthen its marine biotechnology sector, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Maihi said Friday.

While attending the 'Scientist Felicitation and Award Ceremony 2023' organised by Odisha Bigyan Academy at Lok Seva Bhawan here. Majhi said Odisha, with its rich biodiversity of flora and fauna, has immense potential

"Odisha Marine Biotechnology Research & Innovation Corridor will be a platform through which a roadmap will be developed for harnessing the bio-potential of the Bay of Bengal along the eastern coast by bringing together various stakeholders, including researchers, philanthropists, entrepreneurs, and policymakers," he said.

Majhi also announced plans to establish a network of planetariums and science centres to promote education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) across the state. The CM emphasised that scientific advancements should be leveraged to bring about lasting changes that benefit the common man.

He stressed that the primary objective is to position Odisha at the forefront of economic and scientific progress by fostering research at the grassroots and advancing science

and technology in the state. "If we aspire to grow on the international stage, we must formulate long-term strategies to drive human development through scientific discoveries and innovations," Majhi said.

He highlighted the need to focus on advanced knowledge, skills, and equipment innovation in agriculture, healthcare, energy, education, and environmental sectors to enhance the efficiency of development initiatives.

The CM also acknowledged India's achievements in space science which have established the country as a leading scientific power globally.

Majhi noted that scientific research is evolving rapidly, with artificial intelligence playing a crucial role in advancing science and technology.

He stated that the state government is undertaking several initiatives to promote and develop science and technology.

"As part of our deep tech and frontier technology efforts, we are focusing on innovative fields such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, robotics, and quantum computing," Majhi added.

He congratulated the scientists present at the event, wishing them success in their future endeavours. Majhi expressed his belief that the next generation will revolutionise science, use it to serve the common man. and contribute to its widespread adoption.

On the occasion, the CM presented awards to several distinguished professors who have made significant contributions in the field of science.

PNN & AGENCIES in salary, pension

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 28: Four days after the Union government notified about 24 per cent hike in salaries and pensions of MPs, state MLAs, cutting across party lines, Friday requested Speaker Surama Padhy to issue a ruling directing the government to raise their salaries and pensions The issue was raised during Zero Hour by Opposition Chief Whip Pramila Mallik, who highlighted the financial hardships faced by ex-MLAs due to inadequate pensions that do not align with inflation. Calling for an urgent revision, Mallik stressed that the last salary revision for MLAs took place in 2017. Her demand was supported by members from both the Opposition and treasury benches. Her party colleague Pratap Keshari Deb backed the demand, pointing out that the salaries and pensions of MPs have already been revised recently. He argued that Odisha MLAs should not hesitate to seek a similar revision, noting that the previous government had planned a hike, but its implementation was delayed due to the Model Code of Conduct for the 2024 elections.

building under construction collapsed, while Myanmar declared a widespread state of emergency.

CM, Naveen express concern as guake rocks Thailand, Myanmar

The midday temblor with an epicentre near Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city, was followed by a strong 6.4 magnitude aftershock.

Taking to X, Majhi said, "Deeply concerned about the impact of the earthquake in Myanmar and Thailand. Praying for the safety of all those affected. #Odisha stands in solidarity with the people of

both nations and fully supports the Hon'ble PM Shri @ narendramodi's assurance of assistance. @PMOIndia ."

Opposition BJD president Naveen Patnaik in a social media post said: "Deeply concerned to know about the reports of devastation following the powerful #earthquake in #Mynmar and #Thailand. My prayers are with those who lost their loved ones and wishing speedy recovery of those who sustained

for biotechnology research, particularly in the fields of bio-resources and traditional medicine.

months after the BJP came to power in June last year, Khera

claimed. "It is not a small matter. It is a matter of great concern. Odisha now is among the top four/ five states in terms of crimes against women," he asserted. Khera also described the crimes against women are sins and not just crimes.

Das guestions CM's silence over Gandhi Marg scuffle

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 28: Congress Friday raised questions on Chief Minister Mohan Maji's silence over the clash between party supporters and the police, which left several peo-

MLAs demand hike Women safety a 'joke' in Odisha: Khera

favoured raising the salary and

pension of lawmakers. The state government had formed a committee, led by Udala BJP MLA Bhaskar Madhei, to review the demand for salary and pension hikes. BJP regimes.

iniuries.'

Bhubaneswar, March 28: Senior Congress leader Pawan Khera Friday claimed that women's safety has turned out to be a 'joke' in Odisha, alleging there is no end to the rise in the crimes against women in the state - both during the previous BJD and the current



of the previous year, has reduced significantly.

'Women's safety has turned out to be a big joke in Odisha as thousands of women and girls go missing for years together while the government claims to be promoting (Central scheme) Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao,' Khera said ridiculing the BJP government at the Centre.

Deb said the then Opposition chief whip and present CM Mohan Charan Majhi also

The panel has already submitted its report with recommendations. Khallikote MLA Purna Chandra Sethy (BJP) also supported the proposal, saying he understands the financial difficulties faced by ex-legislators.

He urged the Speaker to direct the government to implement the Madhei Committee's recommendations retroactively from June 2024. The salary of Lok Sabha and Raiva Sabha members was recently raised to Rs 1.24 lakh per month from Rs 1 lakh, whereas the daily allowance was increased to Rs 2,500 from Rs 2,000 earlier. Similarly, the pension of former MPs has been increased to Rs 31,000 per month from Rs 25,000 at present.

Odisha MLAs have a basic salary of Rs 35,000 and Rs 65,000 in allowances, excluding travel reimbursements and session attendance perks, while legislators in neighbouring Telangana earn a total of Rs 2.75 lakh per month. Maharashtra, Karnataka and Jharkhand also offer their legislators more than Rs 2 lakh per month, a sitting MLA said

outside the House said.

Addressing a presser here, Khera, the AICC Media & Publicity department chairman, and state Congress president Bhakta Charan Das attacked the BJP dispensation for not announcing a House Committee to inquire into the rise in the crimes against women in the state.

Congress MLAs had created a ruckus in the Assembly for the past few days demanding formation of a House Committee to inquire into the alleged rise in crime against women across



the state after the BJP came to power nine months ago. The Speaker suspended for seven days all 14 party legislators in two phases March 25 and 26.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, however, told the Assembly two days ago that since the BJP came to power in June 2024, crime against women and children, in comparison with the corresponding period

He wondered how women would fulfil their dreams if they fear to go outside their homes.

"Girls fear to go to schools because of the unsafe environment. A 6th standard girl in government school becomes pregnant and the skeleton of another girl of Kandhamal is found in a jungle. There are so many instances," he said.

As many as 44,000 women and girls had gone missing from Odisha when the state was ruled by BJD between 2000 and 2024, while 20,000 others were not found during the last eight

The people of Odisha will punish the state government for the sins it committed. These sins are also being noticed by the God and Maa Subhadra whom we all worship," he said.

All 14 Congress MLAs were suspended from the Assembly for raising the issue of crime against women and demanding formation of a House Committee. Das said.

The party supporters were also beaten up when they held demonstrations Thursday seeking safety for women, claimed the state Congress chief.

ple injured during the 'Vidhan Sabha Gherao' programme Thursday.



Addressing a presser here, state Congress president Bhak ta Charan Das also accused DGP YB Khurania of making a political statement on the agitation which turned violent.

Das alleged that the "peaceful agitation" turned violent because of a conspiracy hatched by the BJP. Das, who was leading the protest, wondered why the CM, who is also in charge of the Home department, is silent on the issue. Claiming that 40 party workers were injured in the police action during the protest, Das said the state BJP president Thursday evening visited the hospital to enquire about the injured police personnel.

"However, the CM, who holds the Home department, neither visited them nor uttered a single word on the incident", he said.

The Congress leader alleged that the DGP has threatened the Congress party. It is clear ly mentioned in the law book that the police can hit batons below the hips, but in this case, the Congress workers sustained serious head injuries. he said while terming the police action a "serious offence"

Das appealed to the Human Rights Commission to intervene in the incident to give justice to the injured Congress workers.

Jharsuguda hottest

Bhubaneswar: Heatwave conditions prevailed in several parts of the state Friday as 17 places recorded temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius with Jharsuguda town the hottest place in the state at 43 degrees Celsius. A bulletin issued by the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said Sambalpur recorded a maximum temperature of 41.6 degrees Celsius while Hirakud, Bolangir, Titlagarh and Boudh registered temperature of 41.2 degrees Celsius each.

Two arrested

Bhubaneswar: The twin city Commissionerate Police Friday arrested two persons on charges of looting Rs 4.10 lakh cash and valuables from a shop under Khandagiri police limits here March 20. official sources said. Khandagiri inspector in-charge Abhimanyu Das said the accused - Bharat Pandit, 45, and Shakti Prasad Karan, 24 - were earlier arrested by the twin city police for a similar case. "Rs 40,000 cash and an auto rickshaw were seized from their possession," Das said.

SUMMER TREAT: As daytime temperature soars, a roadside vendor puts up head caps for sale in Cuttack, Friday





OrissaPOST

SATURDAY | MARCH 29, 2025 | BHUBANESWAR

owntown



State Wildlife Board sends 14 proposals to NBWL



OST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 28: State Wildlife Board Friday cleared 14 key infrastructure development proposals related to forest and non-forest land use and forwarded them to National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) for the final approval.

This was revealed during the 10th meeting of the Standing Committee of the State Wildlife Board held in the Forest. Environment and Climate Change department conference hall at Kharavela Bhawan here Friday.

Forest, Environment, and Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia, who is also the chairman of the Standing Committee of the State Wildlife Board, presided over the meeting. The minister said the department would never be a barrier to initiatives aimed at

BBA demands dist status for Capital

neswar: Lawyers of Bhubaneswa Bar Association (BBA) Friday staged a protest outside the Districts and Sessions Court here demanding district status for Bhubaneswar. All Women Advocate Forum state president Harapriya Saman tray, State Bar Council member Atma Prakash Mohanty, BBA former presiden Durga Prashad Mishra and general secretary Prashant Kumar Sahoo, including senior lawyers and young legal professionals participated in the demonstration Earlier, under the leadership of Lingaraj Sahoo, BBA had collected signatures from around 20.000 senior citizens, including the heads of Durga Puja Committees. o ganisers of Bhubaneswar Bali Yatra, and residents from Balipatna, Balianta, and Nakhara. The signature campaign also continued Friday in front of the Court.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT I, NIRANJAN

the welfare and development of the people.

In the meeting, a review was conducted on the previous proposals approved in the ninth meeting held December 28, 2023. The 10th meeting revealed

that four major proposals had been sent to the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) and were subsequently approved. These projects are: Installation of mobile towers under 4G Saturation Project in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts, development of a Ro-Pax Jetty at Talchua in Kendrapara, and laying of optical fiber cable through Karlapat Sanctuary in Kalahandi.

The meeting also considered 14 new proposals related to forest and non-forest land diversions for essential infrastructure projects, including laying of optical fiber cables, installation of mobile towers.

Installation of mobile towers under 4G **Saturation Project** in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts, development of a **Ro-Pax Jetty** at Talchua in Kendrapara, and laying of optical fiber cable through **Karlapat Sanctuary in** Kalahandi get NBWL nod

and pipelines in various wildlife sanctuaries and tiger reserves such as Satkosia, Hadgarh, Sunabeda, and Chandaka Dampara. These proposals, aimed at augmenting digital connectivity, water supply, and

remote areas, were cleared by the State Wildlife Board and will now be forwarded to NBWL for final approval. "The Odisha government remains committed to a balanced

maintaining ecological sustainability." said the minister.

state's dedication to wildlife conservation and responsible infrastructure development, fostering a harmonious coexistence between nature and progress, he added.

infrastructure development in

approach, ensuring that development projects progress while

The meeting reaffirmed the

Fadnavis, Sarma & others pay tributes to Debendra Pradhan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 28: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma, Chhattisgarh Assembly Speaker Raman Singh were among many dignitaries who paid tributes to late Union minister Debendra Pradhan on his 12th-day death ritual here Friday.

Debendra Pradhan, the father of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, had passed away in New Delhi March 17. Fadnavis flew to Bhubaneswar to attend the veteran BJP leader's death ritual at his residence.

"Offered my heartfelt tributes to former Union Minister Late Debendra Pradhan ji, fa-

ther of Hon Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan ji, at the condolence meeting held at Swadhinata Sangrami Padia Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Deepest condolences to Dharmendra ji, his family and friends," Fadnavis said in a post on X.

AT LORD'S ABODE: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis comes out of Srimandir after offering prayers to the holy trinity in Puri Friday. Sport:

and Youth Services Minister Suryabanshi Suraj and Puri District Magistrate Siddharth Shankar Swain are also seen accompanying him

The Maharashtra CM also visited Puri Srimandir. He also met CM Mohan Charan Majhi. On his visit to Puri, Fadna vis said: "Feeling truly bless-

ed to visit and take the divine darshan of Mahaprabhu Shree Jagannath, Balabhadra, and Subhadra at the sacred Shree Jagannatha Temple in Puri, today. The serene and divine atmosphere of this Dhaam filled my heart with immense joy and spiritual energy. Bowing before

Mahaprabhu Shree Jagannatha, prayed for the happiness, pros-

perity, and good health of all." Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma, who extensively campaigned during Assembly elec-

tions in the state last year, also met his Odisha counterpart. "Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma held a courtesy call on Chief Minister Shri Mohan Charan Majhi in the Odisha Assembly," the Odisha CMO said.

Taking to X, Biswa Sarma said: "Today in Bhubaneswar. I paid my tributes to former Union Minister and a tall leader Late Dr Debendra Pradhan Ji. With his recent passing, we have lost a stalwart and scholar, who was rooted in humility.

Over 13K students got

He decided his life to strengthen our organisation in Odisha and won several admires for his zeal to serve society. Loffered my con dolences to Shri @dpradhanbjp Ji, his family and well wishers

Raman Singh wrote: "To day I reached the residence of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan ji in Bhubaneswar, Odisha and expressed my deep condolences on the demise of his respected father, former Union Minister Debendra Pradhan ji. His life was dedicated to the service of society and nation, his ideolo gy and contribution will always be a source of inspiration. May God grant peace to the depart ed soul and give strength to the family in this difficult time.

Apex court junks plea seeking reservation in polls for disabled



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 28: The Supreme Court Friday dismissed a plea seeking a two per cent reservation in parliamentary, Assembly and gram panchavat elections for differently abled persons.

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and Augustine George Masih said, "How can we issue such a direction? This is a matter of

Odisha undergoing transformation in data governance: Manoj Ahuja

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 28: The state is undergoing a transformative phase in data governance and is committed towards building a resilient data ecosystem that empowers government departments and policymakers, highlighted Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja during 'Unlocking the Power of Data Exchange for Smart Governance' forum at the Lok Seva Bhavan Convention Hall

here recently. Ahuja also spoke about the commitment in shaping the upcoming State Data Policy,



Electronics and Information Technology (E&IT) department. The forum focused on improving governance through effective data exchange and was graced by key figures from the state and national level.

The event featured presen-

under Krushi Vidya Nidhi Yojana (KVNY), a component of CM-KISAN Yojana, in the current academic year, said Source Data Exchange Plat an official.

CM-KISAN Yojana is a groundbreaking initiative launched by Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment department of the state government.

As part of this initiative.

ing, nursing, diploma engi neering, agriculture and al lied courses, BBA, and BCA in government, private, and national-level educational institutions.

officia According to sources, of the 13,923 students who received benefits under KVNY, 592 are pursuing Medical, 4,592 Engineering, 4,574 Polytechnic, 1,417 Nursing, 510 MCA, and 174 Agriculture and allied sec tor courses.

Significantly, 55 students from prestigious institutions like NIT and IIM have also availed of the benefits of this scheme To support this initiative, the state government has provided a total financial grant of Rs 53.57 crore. The payment has been directly transferred to the students' Aadhaar-linked bank accounts.



form', a tool already success

fully implemented by CDPG

in collaboration with vari-

ous stakeholders, including

the Ministry of Housing and

Urban Development and the

Government of Telangana.

SAMANTRAY, S/o: Gagan Chandra Samantray, resident of At. Flat No. 303, Block-A, Nageswar Residency, Kalarahanga, Bhubaneswar Urban, Odisha, India, PIN-751024 declare by this affidavit No. 632 dtd. 27/03/2025 that now onwards I shall be known as NIRANJAN SAMANTRAY for all future purposes.

LOST

I, Akhari Behera, W/o - Narayan Behera, At - Charibatia, P.O.-Ghanapana, P.S.-PuriSadar, Dist.-Puri. That the said Sale Deed has been lost in between from my village to Brahmagiri Bazar Sale Deed No-748, if anybody found that document please contact with our Advocate - Nrusingha Charan Pattanaik, Contact No. - 9853311189

policy

The bench went on to ask the petitioner, who appeared in person, "Had it be with regard to employment or something, we could have considered it. But how can we direct this?" The petitioner referred to the apex court's November 8 2024 order which directed the Centre to implement mandatory accessibility standards within three months. The bench said if the disabled

were not getting access to any public offices, the top court was ensuring that the same be made possible. The court, the bench observed, has said there should he lifts and ramps in public offices so that disabled did not find any difficulty in access.

"We are not inclined to entertain this petition. The writ petition is, accordingly, dismissed," the bench held.

The plea sought a direction to the Centre and others to provide reservation in elections, preferably two per cent, for persons with disability

In its order passed in November last year in a separate matter, the apex court underscored the necessity of "meaningful access" for persons with disability to public spaces and mandated a two-pronged approach - adapting existing infrastructures to accessibility standards, and ensuring that all new infrastructure is designed to be inclusive from the outset.

aimed at improving interoper ability, accessibility, and evidence-based decision-making. The event was organised by the Data, Policy, and Innovation Centre (DPIC), a five-year strategic partnership between the state government and the University of Chicago Trust (UCT), India, housed at the

tations from notable experts. including Centre of Data for Public Good (CDPG) chairman Inder Gopal, who spoke about fostering a scalable and flexible ecosystem for open-source data exchange platforms. The team from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) presented the 'Open-

E&IT department principal secretary Vishal Kumar Dev discussed the efforts being made to leverage advanced data science tools and research methods to drive evidence-based decision-making in governance. He also expressed gratitude to the IISc for contributing to the forum's success.

KVNY provides scholarship to the sons and daughters of CM-KISAN beneficiaries for higher education.

Under this scheme, annual tuition fees, including hostel fees, are covered for eligible students pursuing technical and professional courses such as medicine, engineer-

WE City doc implants biological ligament in woman's knee

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 28: In an initiative that promises early return to sports, Bhubaneswar-based orthopaedic surgeon and sports medicine expert, Dr Sarthak Patnaik, has conducted an advanced surgery and placed an artificial ligament in a 25-year-old female patient, weighing around 135 kg, for reconstructing of an torn Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL), a key soft tissue responsible for stabilisation of the knee, at a City hospital.

The patient, who had come to Bhubaneswar for the surgery from Gurugram, was also suffering from Meniscus tear.

Meniscus is a rubbery cartilage in the knee that acts as a shock absorber. Dr Patnaik is one of the first surgeons in Odisha to have executed this advanced arthroscopic proce-



Biological Implant Photo (insert)

dure in eastern India using a clinical outcomes,' bio-absorbable collagen im-Dr Patnaik explained. plant, called the 'BioBrace'.

This implant aids in the "The successful surgery will repair of ligaments, tendons, now pave the way for faster and other tissues while prorecovery in case of soft tissue viding strength and stimulatdamage or tear, especially ing the body's natural healing among sportspersons. It will response, the doctor explained. also increase the durability of "The BioBrace implant involves augmenting a bonetendon-bone (BTB) allograft with a bio-composite scaffold to reinforce the ligament and potentially enhance healing and reduce re-rupture risk, he added.

According to Dr Patnaik, this procedure may reduce re-rupture risk, enhance graft healing and improve patient-reported outcomes. It also provides increased mechanical strength, he claimed.

Speaking about its significance, Dr Patnaik claimed that the procedure is important for athletes who often suffer from ligament tear or ACL damage.

"I am confident that sportspersons in Odisha and beyond will be greatly benefitted by this technique and continue to enjoy a prolonged and injury free stint in their respective sports," he added.

WEATHER						
	BBSR	СТС				
Max Temp	40.2°	38.4°				
Min Temp	25.0°	22.6°				
Humidity	80%	85%				
Rainfall	Nil	Nil				
Mainly clear s	-	**				

MARKET WATCH 👠						
DEX	VARIATIO	DN				
SENSEX	77414.92	۲	191.51			
NIFTY	23519.35	¥	72.60			
DOLLAR	85.71	¥	0.26			
EURO	92.38	¥	0.47			
GOLD	₹ 89,034	4	₹650			
SILVER	₹ 100,824	¥	₹489			
	DEX SENSEX NIFTY DOLLAR EURO	DEX VARIATION SENSEX 77414.92 NIFTY 23519.35 DOLLAR 85.71 EURO 92.38	DEX VARIATION SENSEX 77414.92 ¥ NIFTY 23519.35 ¥ DOLLAR 85.71 ¥			

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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-9090090404, 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-Cookieman-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.











OST NEWS NETWORK

in the district.

Kendrapara, March 28: Over

70 per cent population of Ken-

drapara district depends on

agriculture for livelihood. How-

ever, lack of proper irrigation

facilities and ineffective drain-

age management have become major obstacles for agriculture

The coastal district, home

to seven rivers and 27 distrib-

utaries, has potential water

pathways. Canals like Kendra-

pada, Pattamundai, and Gobari,

along with nearby Mahanadi

and Chitrotpala water proj-

ects, have been established to

support irrigation. Despite

these efforts, more than half of

the district's agricultural land

does not receive water during

Flooding and storm-related

drainage issues only exacer-

bate the situation. While vari-

ous government departments,

including the Water Resourc-

es, Agriculture, Panchayati

Raj, and Lift Irrigation De-

partments, are involved in the

district, many areas remain

underserved. Blocks such as

Aul, Rajnagar, and Rajkanika

still lack canals, and the depart-

ments have made little progress

toward the state government's

'Eat Right Campus' tag

for Berhampur Circle Jail

BERHAMPUR: The 162-year-old

the cropping season.

state

Kumar Gantayat from Mahaka-

lapara block revealed that the

canals are covered with aquatic

weeds, which reduce the irri-

gation efficiency of these ca-

nals. With the canals not being

dredged in a timely manner, the

Irrigation woes hinder farming in Kendrapara Vig arrests senior revenue assistant der Rajnagar block, and Sunil

POST NEWS NETWORK

Athmallik. March 28: Sa tyapriya Nayak, a senior revenue assistant of Athmallik tehsil in Angul district, was arrested by Vigilance officials on bribery charges Friday, Authorities also seized ₹20.000 cash from Navak during the operation.

Nayak of Kendupati village in

had applied for partition of his ancestral land at Athmallik tehsil office. However. the senior

sistant allegedly ha-

a bribe of ₹20,000 to process the application. Frustrated. Charan lodged a complaint at the Cut-

The Vigilance team provided Charan with chemically treated currency notes worth ₹20,000. which he handed over to the of ficial Friday. Vigilance sleuths raided the location and caught the senior revenue assistant red-handed. The officials seized the bribe money and arrested the erring official

Subsequently, the Vigilance team searched Satyapriya's office, government quarters, ancestral home in Sapaghara, and his wife's quarters in Hinjilicut, Ganjam district, where she is employed.

A case was registered at the Cuttack Vigilance office. Athmallik Tehsildar Prasanna Tete stated that a hearing regarding Charan's land partition case was scheduled for Friday. However, due to the Vigilance operation, the senior revenue assistant was taken into custody.

Man beating elephant in viral video sparks outrage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, March 28: A video showing a young man beating an elephant herd with a stick has gone viral on social media, prompting outrage from wildlife activists.

The incident, which occurred in Keonjhar district, highlights the ongoing conflict between humans and elephants in the region.

Though the Forest department has been attempting to drive the elephants back into the forest, these efforts have often been unsuccessful. As a result. local residents have resorted to various methods to ward off the elephants, sometimes leading to aggressive confrontations. These altercations have, on occasion, resulted in human injuries and deaths.

Under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, teasing or attacking wild animals is a criminal offense, and the viral spread of such videos is also prohibited by law. The recent video, which depicts the young man taunting and beating the elephants, has been met with widespread condemnation.

Subhendu Mallick, former Honorary Wildlife Warden of Khordha, criticised the Forest department for failing to prevent such incidents. "If the forest officials and elephant driving squads are monitoring and tracking the movement of elephants daily, how could they have missed this incident?' Mallick said. "I have already reported the video to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Wildlife. We found at least 10 Instagram accounts that appear to be dedicated to monetising such videos of teasing elephants for views and likes.



Mallick also called for the government to withhold ex-gra tia compensation for anyone who dies in the course of shooting such videos. "These actions put both humans and elephants at risk," he added.

The practice of pelting stones or using sticks to chase away elephants has been a recurring is sue, despite repeated warnings from the Forest department. In a similar incident four years ago, the then Keonjhar Divi sional Forest Officer (DFO) had arrested a person for harassing an elephant.

"We are investigating the incident, including determin ing the location and timing Action will be taken once the facts are established," DFO Dhanraj HD said. The incident has intensified calls for the Forest department to take stronger action to curb such behavior and ensure the safety and well-being of both humans and elephants in the region.



goal of ensuring at least 35 per cent of land in each block is covered by irrigation.

In Rajkanika block, lift irrigation has managed to supply water to 33.62 per cent agricultural land. Meanwhile, in Mahakalapara block, out of 28,070 hectare farmland, only 6,823 hectare (24.31%) is irrigated. In Rajnagar, only 19.16 per cent of the 25,895 hectare is irrigated. Each year, the district aims to irrigate 1,54,000 hectare land for Kharif crops, allocating funds for seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, and technical knowledge. However, due to water management issues, these efforts are not reaching farmers effectively.

As a result, farmers are abandoning agriculture and mionly 47,727 hectare out of the targeted 154,000 hectare land is receiving irrigation via ca nals. Through lift irrigation and tube wells, a total of 30,781 hectare farmland in the district is irrigated, with other sources providing water to 10,624 hectare. Despite government data tions, including barrages, check dams, and connected coastal canals, to prevent water from flowing to the sea and enhance irrigation across the district. Umesh Chandra Sethy, the Farmers like Niranjan Pari district's lift irrigation officer, da from Kansar village under stated that efforts to prioritise

water does not reach fields at the far end of the canals, they alleged. In some areas, canals have been dug so deep that the water does not flow to the fields. Lift irrigation projects have also proved ineffective due to issues with power supply and grating outside state in search lack of maintenance. The Pani of work. According to the dis-Panchayats established by the trict's Agriculture department, Odisha Lift Irrigation Corporation (OLIC) under the Odisha Pani Panchat Act in the district have also become ineffective. Flooding and storms continue to devastate crops every year, while drainage issues persist. There is an urgent need for improved water management solu-

showing progress, farmers argue that the figures are unrealistic and the situation on the ground tells a different story.

Kendrapara block, Sushanta Nayak from Barahadomunda village under Rajkanika block, Tulu Pradhan from Hatia un-

7-yr RI for duping Haj pilgrims of ₹1.2cr

Berhampur Circle Jail is the latest among nearly 100 prisons in the country that have been certified as 'Eat Right Campus' by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The prestigious certification, valid for two years starting March 24, 2025, with a three-star rating, recognises the jail's commitment to providing safe, healthy, and sustainable food practices for its inmates. The 'Eat Right Campus' initiative by FSSAI aims to promote a culture of food safety and wellbeing in various institutional settings, including workplaces, educational institutions, and hospitals. The Berhampur Circle Jail has demonstrated exemplary adherence to FSSAI's stringent evaluation criteria, showcasing its dedication to the food safety and health of its 1.000 inmates.

${\tt PNN} \ \& \ {\tt AGENCIES}$

Balasore, March 28: Special Judge, Odisha Protection of Interests of Depositors (OPID) Court, Balasore, Biswajit Das Friday convicted a man for committing a financial fraud to the tune of ₹1.2 crore by deceiving Haj pilgrims and awarded him seven years rigorous imprisonment (RI).

The judge also imposed a fine of ₹2.75 lakh and ordered that on default of the fine amount, the convict will undergo further imprisonment of 15 months. According to reports, a case was registered against Nabeel Abdul Mubin Shaikh, resident of Andheri, Mumbai, the proprietors of 'AlAdam Tour & Travels' U/s 420/406/467/468/471/120-B IPC on the written report of

Mir Khursid of Kazimahala

in Bhadrak. Nabeel Abdul Mubin Shaikh was arrested September 27, 2024

from Mumbai. The company collected cash worth ₹45,786 and ₹50,786 from each of the prospective pilgrims totaling to ₹1.2 crore from 189 devotees, during the period from 2019-23, to arrange their pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia on the eve of Umrah.

Being induced, devotees of Bhadrak, Balasore, Baripada and other parts of Odisha had deposited their respective amounts in the accounts mentioned in the advertisements through bank transfer, apart from paying in UPI and even by cash. But, the proprietors neither took the prospective pilgrims on pilgrimage nor did he refund the amount collected from them.

During the period from

2019-23, the accused proprietor of M/s AlAdam Tour & Travel Agency floated advertisements on social media apart from distributing leaflets containing the lucrative packages and contact details. They motivated the Muslim devotees to avail the opportunity under two of their tour packages of ₹45,786 and ₹50,786 per individual pilgrim to go

canal irrigation are underway

and benefits for the district's

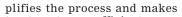
residents are expected soon.

on Umrah pilgrimage to Arab countries. They assured the pilgrims of a cheap, secure, and safe pilgrimage.

After the collection of cash, the proprietors switched off their mobile phones and remained disconnected from the depositors. The court, after examining 10 witnesses and 30 exhibits, pronounced the verdict Friday, Special Public Prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda said.



NITR research team brings new hope in bone defect treatment



According to sources, Charan Aida Circle

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tack Vigilance office, Thursday.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, March 28: Researchers of the National Institute of Technology Rourkela (NITR) have developed a new technology that will prove immensely helpful in treating bone defects caused by injury and diseases.

The team led by Devendra Verma, Associate Professor, Department of Biotechnology and Medical Engineering, has developed a bioink made from natural materials for 3D bioprinting of bone-like structures. This bioink is designed to address challenges in bone grafting and implants, which are commonly used to treat bone defects caused by injury or disease. The research focuses on improving existing bone repair techniques by developing a bioink that is biocompatible, easy to use, and supports bone regeneration.

The findings of this research have been published in Journal of Biomaterials Science, and Carbohydrate Polymers. The articles have been co-authored by Professor Verma, along with his research scholars Tanmay Bharadwaj, and Shreya Chrungoo. Additionally, the team has also secured a patent for the technology (Patent No. 562791. Application No. 202331054665. Date of Grant: March 18, 2025).

Bone grafting, a common method to repair damaged bones, is done by getting bone from a donor or other part of the body. This procedure and metal implants have drawbacks such as pain, limited availability, and the risk of rejection, and not bonding with natural bone leading to complications. And both require surgery.

3D bioprinting is being explored as an alternative method and it involves printing bone-like structures using bio-inks that contain cells and supportive biomaterials. A major challenge with the existing bioinks is that they require an extended preparation period in laboratory conditions before they can be implanted. The printed tissue must be maintained in a controlled environment for cells to grow and form functional bone before it can be used for treatment. This makes the process slow and difficult to implement in clinical settings.

To overcome these challenges, the research team developed a bioink that stays in liquid form at room temperature but quickly turns into a gel when exposed to body temperature and the potential of hydrogen (pH). This allows it to be printed directly onto an injury instead of being printed separately and implanted later. This approach simtreatment more efficient.

The developed bioink is composed of chitosan, gelatin, and nanohydroxyapatite, all of which are biocompatible and commonly used in biomedical applications. These materials closely resemble natural bone components, creating a suitable environment for bone regeneration. The bioink also supports stem cell growth and differentiation into bone cells. helping to promote new bone formation. Additionally, the inclusion of specialised nanofibers enhances cell attachment and proliferation, which is important for the healing process.

Speaking about the research, Verma said, "This research contributes to the growing field of 3D bioprinting by offering a bioink that is entirely natural, easy to apply, and capable of supporting bone regeneration. Further research and clinical trials will help determine its effectiveness in real-world applications, paving the way for its use in orthopedic and reconstructive surgery.'

Supported by funding from the Department of Health Research (DHR), Government of India, this bioink has potential applications in a range of clinical settings. It is particularly useful in reconstructive surgeries for the skull and face, where precise bone repair is necessary. The bioink's adaptability makes it suitable for irregularly shaped bone defects, providing a personalised approach to bone regeneration. Beyond clinical applications, it can also be used in research to study bone tissue engineering and test new therapies in laboratory and preclinical settings.

The team now plans to test the developed bioinks in suitable animal models and develop a scalable production process in a Good Manufacturing Practices facility for clinical trials. To facilitate commercialisation, the researchers have also established a startup, Quixotix Bioprinting Pvt. Ltd.

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No. -1970/D/FMMCHB Date-27.03.2025 No.E-826 : Sealed tenders (in two bid system) are invited from the registered firms/ authorized dealers/manufacturers/ suppliers for Supply, Installation & Commissioning of Biometric Devices a FMMCH, Balasore. The proposal of the prescribed format along with all supportive documents should reach to the office of the Dean 8 Principal, FM MCH, Balasore by 22.04.2025 (1 P.M.) through Regd. Post/Speed Post/courier only. The bidders may download the tender documents directly from the website (www.blsmch.nic.in/www. baleswar.odisha.gov.in). Authority reserves every right to reject all or

any of the Tender without assign any reason thereof

Sd./- Dean & Principal. Fakir Mohan Medical College & Hospital, Balasore



 $\mathbf{N}(\mathbf{0})$ NATIONAL HIGHWAY-49 (Old NH- 06) REVISED USER FEE APPLICABLE ON MALAYAGIRI HIGHWAYS PRIVATE LIMITED

OIPR-10134/11/0040/2425

Pursuantto the Gazette Notification Published in Gazette of India in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways,CG-DL-E-24052021-227122 dated 24th May 2021 and revised user fee approved by NHAI vide letter no. NHAI/11018/11/BT (TOLL)/2021/PIU/KJR/490 dated 26.03.2025, the public are hereby informed that the revised toll fee for use of the section from Km 414.000 to Km 491.710 (Design Chainage Km 414.982 to Km 493.300) (Binjabahal-Teleibani) of National Highway 49 (Old NH- 06) in the state of Odishawill be as given below w.e.f. 00:00:01 hrs.on 01.04.2025 at Badeibadkudar Toll Plaza(Chainage 439.515 Km) near eibadkudar Village in Deoghar Districtin the state of Odisha

		PIL	J- Keonjhar		
			dkudar Toll Plaza		
	N	lew User fee rate w.	e.f. 01.04.2025 for Fy. 2025	5-26	
Vehicle Category	Fee for the Single Journey	Fee for the Return Journey within a day	Fee for the Pass for 50 Single Journeys in a Month	Fee for Single Journey for the Commercial Vehicles Registered within the District of Fee Plaza	Remarks
Car/Jeep/Van or Light Motor Vehicle	150	225	4960	75	Applicable as per Fee
Light Commercial Vehicle, Light Goods Vehicle or Mini-Bus	240	360	8010	120	Rules, 2008 as amended in 2011. The monthly
Truck or Bus (Two Axle)	505	755	16780	250	pass for non-commercial
Three-axle Commercial Vehicles	550	825	18305	275	vehicle residing within
HCM or EME or MAV (4 to 6 Axle)	790	1185	26315	395	a distance of 20 km of the toll plaza is Rs.350/-
Oversized Vehicles (7 or more axles)	960	1440	32035	480	110 ton piaza 15 N3.000/-

)The above rates are applicable for a completed length of 78.318 Km which comprises of 71.157Km net road lengthwithout bypass and 5.274 Km bypass and .887 Km length of structure.

2)The following Concessions are available at above Toll Plaza. As per Gazette Notification no. G.S.R 523 (E), dated: 24.08.2020 fee payable towards discounts as under sub-rules (2), (3) and (3A) of rule 9, shall be paid through FASTag. I.Return Journey within 24 hours from time of payment for all categories of vehicles (One & half times of the fee for one way journey) ii.50 single journeys in a month from date of payment for all categories of vehicles (Two third of the amount of the fee payable for fifty single journey) iii.Netty December 0.500 consultation and the constraint of the amount of the fee payable for fifty single journey)

 iii. Monthly Pass at Rs. 350/- per calendar month for non-commercial vehicle residing within 20 Km from Toll Plaza.
iv. Fee for Single Journey for the commercial vehicle (excluding vehicles plying under National Permit) registered in the district/where the fee plaza falls (Discount 50%).
3) The list of exempted vehicles is as given in the fee notification No. 950(E) dated 03.12.2010. To get Exempted FASTag for eligible vehicles, online application and be submitted on www.exemptedfastag.nhai.org/exemptedfastag/
4)The driver or owner or person in charge of a Mechanical Vehicle shall be liable to pay fee, for entering the overloaded vehicle on the National Highway, to the

user fee collecting agency, equal to fee as per Gazette Notification Published in Gazette of India in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, S.O. 920 (E) dated: September 25, 2018 and remove the excess load to make use of Highway.

5)As per Gazette Notification no. G.S.R 831 (E), dated; 21,11.2014 and amendment thereon G.S.R 298, dated; 15,05,2020, user of the vehicle not fitted applicable to that category of vehicles as per sub-rule (2) of rule 4".

i)Name and address are as under, for any enquiry and / or giving complaints / suggestions.

	Concessionaire	Independent Engineer	NHAI PIU	
Name of Representative	Sh. Sanjay Kumar Mohanty	Sh. Partha Sarathi Pradhan	Sh. Mahesh Gami	
	Project Head	(Assistance Highways Maintenance Engineer)	Project Director	
Address	M/s. Malayagiri Highways Private Limited.	M/s. MSV International inc. in Association with	National Highway Authority of India.	
	At/Village- Bideibadkudar, P.O-Bamparada,	D.N. Consultant, Gupta Palace, Unit No.2,	PIU - Keonjhar, Badadera, Mandua,	
	Tehsil- Barkote, Dist. Deogarh, Odisha-768110.	At/PO-Purunagarh, Deogarh, Odisha-768108	Keonjhar, Odisha-758014.	
	Email: Sanjay.Mohanty@malayagiri.com	Email: msvtileibaninh49@gmail.com	Email: pdnhai.kjr@nhai.org	
Mobile No.	+91 8917395746	+91 7751942202	+91 6766-253295	















power post



Our best friend is he who loves us in the best of ourselves and yet does not ask of us to be

other than we are.



THE MOTHER

Bureaucratic Aloofness

hat a tangled web! The BJP holds the reins both at the Centre and in Delhi, and you'd think this alignment would make the bureaucratic machinery hum like a well-oiled machine, right? Well, not quite. Recently, Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta penned a letter to Chief Secretary Dharmendra, highlighting a rather curious issue: government officials are giving the cold shoulder to MLA communications. Calls go unanswered, letters unacknowledged, and messages left on read. It's as if Delhi's babus have activated their "Do Not Disturb" mode regarding elected representatives.

Now, for the past decade, Delhi's administration has been the stage for a bureaucratic tug-of-war. The question of whether to follow the directives of the Delhi government or the Lieutenant Governor (LG) has been a perennial conundrum. This power struggle has often led to administrative delays, legal battles, and policy gridlocks, affecting governance and public service delivery in the capital. In May 2023, the Centre amended the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) Act of 1991, extending the LG's powers over bureaucratic appointments and transfers. This move was seen as an attempt to tighten the Centre's grip on Delhi's administration.

Fast forward to today, and it seems the bureaucracy is still grappling with this new power dynamic. The habit of looking towards the LG for direction appears deeply ingrained, making the transition to a more MLA-responsive approach akin to teaching an old dog new tricks.

This bureaucratic aloofness isn't just a matter of hurt egos. When officials sideline MLAs, they effectively sideline the voices of the people those MLAs represent. It's a classic case of the left hand not knowing (or ignoring) what the right hand is doing, leading to inefficiencies and a disconnect between policymaking and ground realities.

It's evident that a cultural shift within the bureaucracy is neededone that respects and acknowledges the role of elected representatives.

Kerala's DGP race: Who will take the top job?

The stakes are high as the race to become Kerala's next Director General of Police (DGP) intensifies. The state government is searching through a list of senior IPS officers in an attempt to



find the ideal candidate, as Shaik Darvesh Saheb is scheduled to retire in June. But as with any important appointment, qualifications and experience aren't the only factors involved.

Nitin Agrawal, a 1990-batch officer who just returned from a stint as BSF chief, is the most senior member of the group. Next up is Ravada A Chandrasekhar, a member of the 1991 class who is presently employed with the Intelligence Bureau. Will he even be interested, though, given that he will be retiring next year?

The younger generation is not far behind. Kerala's Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau is led by Yogesh Gupta (1993 batch), and the state's Law & Order chief, Manoj Abraham (1994 batch), is renowned for his tech-driven policing. Both 1995-batch officers S Suresh and MR Aiith Kumar are also involved: the latter may lose his chances due to corruption charges

Merit is important, but political factors are often as important. The UPSC will select three names from a shortlist submitted by the state government. The government will then make the final decision. Don't be shocked if political inclinations, prior connections, and personal ties to the ruling party play a role in the selection process, considering Kerala's history of DGP appointments.

Speculation is rife in Thiruvananthapuram's power corridors as the final decision is anticipated in June. Who is going to win?

States are holding on to their best babus

There was a time when central deputation was the dream gig for IAS and IFS officers, a plush posting in Delhi, power corridors buzzing with influence, and a chance to shape national policy. But now, big states like Maharashtra and UP seem to be keeping their best officers in the state. Meanwhile, Odisha and AGMU cadre are more than happy to send theirs to the Centre. What gives?

The reality is simple: states need talent more than ever. With grow-

FOCUS CENTRAL BANKS **STEM THE NATURE CRISIS**

he ten most expensive climate disasters of 2024 - the hottest year on record - cost more than \$229 billion, while extreme weather events have left fewer and fewer countries unscathed. Deadly floods in China, Germany, and Kenya. scorching heatwaves in India, prolonged droughts in Brazil, and, most recently, major wildfires in the United States and Ghana highlight the increasingly severe ripple effects of nature degradation and climate change on economies and



Julie McCarthy

CENTRAL **BANKS AND SUPERVISORS HAVE MANY POWERFUL TOOLS AT THEIR** DISPOSAL **TO GUARD AGAINST THE**

DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES

OF

ENVIRONMENTAL DISRUPTION societies. The global economy depends on a stable climate and reliable ecosystem services, including the provision of freshwater, healthy air, erosion and flood control, pollination, climate regulation, and carbon sequestration. According to the European Central Bank, nearly 75% of all eurozone bank loans are provided to firms that are highly dependent on at least one of these ecosystem services. The economic implications

of this dependence are profound. In the United Kingdom, environmental degradation could cause a 12% contraction in GDP – worse than the hit caused by COVID-19 - if left unaddressed. An analysis of nature-related risks in Hungarv found that in the absence of adequate mitigation strategies. severe drought could double the volume of non-performing loans, increase sovereign debt, and reduce economic output by 4-7% in a single year. It turns out that a stable financial system is highly dependent on nature, and nature is increasingly in crisis.

Although these risks are increasingly well understood hv central banks. businesses and financial institutions are not required or incentivized to invest in protecting nature. Central banks and financial supervisors are well placed

to change this trajectory and chart a new course toward a



Nearly \$7 trillion of public and private finance per year supports activities that damage forests, pollute water sources, and destroy biodiversity - 35 times the amount of investment in nature-positive initiatives

more resilient global economy. These authorities must start adapting their risk assessments and transition plans to the new climate reality and use their ability to influence the financial system through monetary policy, supervision, and regulation. The science is increasingly clear that failure to do so will lead to an increase in food insecurity, forced displacement, and overlapping shocks. These outcomes are already a daily reality in many parts of the world.

A recent report from NatureFinance (of which I am CEO), the ECB, the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, and the University of Minnesota shows that focusing only on climate policies heightens both economic and environmental risks. For example, large-scale, landbased carbon-sequestration measures, such as monoculture afforestation projects, can lead to lower species diversity and significant biodiversity loss. The subsequent loss of pollinators can then affect crop yields, undermining the long-term sustainability of global food production for

both farmers and consumers Ultimately, this means that well-intentioned but narrowly conceived policies to reduce carbon emissions can inadvertently undermine biodiversity and ultimately worsen rather than mitigate the climate crisis

Integrating climate and nature policies, alternatively, can help stabilize the agriculture sector, curb biodiversity loss, and limit temperature increases. Though far from a silver bullet, such an approach would go a long way toward breaking what has become a vicious cycle of nature loss and accelerated climate impacts. Unfortunately, the growing

body of evidence concerning how nature degradation and climate change are linked to price stability and the financial system is at odds with the current political zeitgeist. Donald Trump's return to the White House has further accelerated an already growing backlash against environmental, social, and governance (ESG) efforts in the US and Europe. The Federal Reserve recently withdrew from the Network for Greening the

Financial System, a group of more than 100 central banks and supervisors working to improve climate-risk management in the financial sector. Ahead of Trump's inauguration, major commercial banks and asset managers quit climate-action networks, while Texas and other states sued prominent money managers, arguing that they conspired against coal markets by integrating environmental risk into their investment strategies.

The rise of climate denialism on both sides of the Atlantic has pushed ambitious action to protect the financial system from nature- and climate-related shocks off the agenda for now. But central banks and supervisors still have many powerful tools at their disposal to guard against the devastating consequences of environmental disruption. They can require commercial banks and insurers to assess, report on, and stress-test their portfolios for nature- and climate-related risks and dependencies. They can set limits on investment exposure to assets or sectors that are particularly vulnerable to such risks. And they can give preferential treatment to more resilient and adaptive green assets and sectoral strategies in their collateralization frameworks and targeted refinancing operations.

Even as business, financial, and political leaders willfully ignore the overwhelming scientific and economic consensus in their decision-making, central banks can still move us toward an economy that is better protected against the mounting shocks of the nature and climate crisis. All they need to do is fulfill their financial-stability mandate.

> The writer is CEO of NatureFinance. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM NATION

Language row and federal spirit

the imposition of Hindi through the three-language formula in the southern states has sparked a debate, with Tamil Nadu leading the protest due to the withholding of central funds. The protest is quite justified, as these states are quite different from what we understand as Hindi culture. India is a diverse country, and to protect the federal structure, different languages and cultures have to be given their due importance and place. Tamil Nadu's opposition to Hindi is also consistent with the spirit of the Constitution. Until 1976, education was a state subject, but it was shifted to the Concurrent List during the Emergency. Experts have called this an arbitrary act, which is now being invoked by the Union government, threatening to withdraw funds to the state unless it follows the Centre's directive of teaching Hindi as a third subject. However, the language row must also be viewed in the context of the state Assembly elections due next year. The ruling DMK faces an anti-incumbency factor, and perhaps

whipping up emotions against Hindi may help woo the electorate. Meanwhile, the BJP, both at the centre and state levels, is going all out to explain that it is not imposing any language and does want to make a credible entry. Undoubtedly, the row is going to heat up this season.

and are receptive to suggestions that the North is imposing itself further. Tamil Nadu has been following a two-lan-

gations against the BJP. This indeed may be the correct approach, as it is necessarv to honor the progress and development of the southern states. They have shown the way in promoting education for girls and spreading higher education in rural areas. Comparable data paints a poor picture of school education in the northern states, with dropout rates being far higher than in the southern states. One cannot deny the fact that English is recognized as the language of professional advancement and a window to the developed Western world. As India moves ahead, there will be a need to give more emphasis to English, which is the dominant language in the world. Thus, keeping this in view, it would be advisable for the Centre to take a judicious decision and resolve the current standoff with the Tamil Nadu government and other southern states amicably, so as not to disturb the culture and traditional values of the South. This would be politically beneficial for the ruling party and help keep the federal spirit intact. INFA

ing governance challenges—from infrastructure overhauls to welfare schemes—losing top babus to Delhi feels like a self-inflicted wound. Why send your best players to the national team when your own squad is struggling?

Then there's the career calculus. Central deputation once promised prestige, but states are now offering equally powerful roles, direct access to top politicians, and cushy post-retirement gigs. Many officers believe that it's better to be a kingmaker at home than deal with the turf wars of Delhi.

And let's not forget the political angle. Many state governments don't exactly trust the Centre with their officers. The fear? Once they leave, they might return as Delhi lovalists, not state insiders. Given the Centre-state tensions in today's political climate, that's a real concern.

So, while the Centre keeps nudging states to send more officers. states are digging in their heels. And if you're a babu with a choice, the question is clear: why go to Delhi when you can rule your own backyard?

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

A man must commit a crime at least once in his life-time. Only then will his virtue be recognized

GIRISH KARNAD

The worst enemy of truth and freedom in our society is the compact maiority.

HENRIK IBSEN

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- **1461:** Edward IV defeated Henry VI for the throne of England in the bloodiest battle of the York-Lancaster conflict known as the Wars of the Roses.
- 1807: German astronomer Wilhelm Olbers discovered the minor planet Vesta, the brightest asteroid in the sky.
- **1867:** With the British North America Act, the British colonies of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Canada were united as the Dominion of Canada, and the province of Canada was separated into Quebec and Ontario.
- **1973:** American troops evacuated Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City) as the United States ended its involvement in the Vietnam War.



Dhurjati Mukherjee

NOT JUST TAMIL NADU, **BUT SOUTHERN STATES LIKE** KARNATAKA, **KERALA, AND OTHERS TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR LOCAL** LANGUAGES

etters

are most welcome to contribute letters

requested to send their contact

address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and

suggestions, preferably by email, to:

Orissapost

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post

(100 words), articles and

words). Contributors are

numbers and full postal

dit@orissapost.com

columns (between 600-1000

For about half a century, from 1965 till 2014, the Union government did not promote Hindi in the non-Hindi speaking states, which was undoubtedly a judicious decision. It now seems strange that the RSS chief, Mohan Bhagwat, has been asking Hindus to shun English, which is an established link language in the country. This can only be described as narrow-minded and parochial at a time when India is advancing in the global arena. One cannot denv the fact that English is recognized as the language of professional advancement and a window to the developed Western world.

Not just Tamil Nadu, but southern states like Karnataka, Kerala, and others take pride in their local languages

Judiciary under scanner

Sir, We have only heard of Bhogi as a festival in our state of Tamil Nadu, where we burn undesirable evil things. On the contrary, it pains to see that the discovery of cash bundles in the official residence of a Delhi High Court judge on the day of Holi was burnt in a fire, and yet the smoke is still lingering more than a fortnight later. Justice Yashwant Varma, though he claims to be innocent like many others in similar situations, cannot be taken at face value. One thing is evident: the system of selecting judges by the collegium has long been under controversy. The fate of the National Judicial Appointments Committee Act cannot be set aside, and the common man's faith rests on the transparency of the legal system. In its absence, we cannot prevent judges like Varma from getting involved in murky affairs, and the state of Tamil Nadu might start claiming Holi as Bhogi in the future. There is no smoke without fire, and the apex court must take a prudent decision to keep Justice Varma away from his regular court sittings so that justice can be properly served in this case.

AP Thiruvadi, CHENNAI

guage policy—Tamil and English—rooted in the state's Dravidian ethos. Its historical resistance to Hindi dates back to the anti-Hindi agitation of the 1960s. It may be recalled that when

the three-language formula was introduced in 1968, Tamil Nadu rejected it, viewing it as an imposition of Hindi. Under Chief Minister CN Annadurai, the state adopted a two-language formula, which has continued.

Though the BJP has been trying to impose Hindi in the country, ostensibly because it feels that promoting the language would further the cause of Hinduism, the RSS joint general secretary, CR Mukund, recently backed a three-language formula without Hindi. According to his formula, it would include learning the mother tongue, regional language, and English, with no reference to Hindi. This timely observation was aimed at countering the DMK's Hindi imposition alle-

Don't dare to be funny

Sir, Kunal Kamra's brush with Mumbai's politicians shows that they have an ultra-thin skin. Writer Mary P Poole once said, "He who laughs, lasts." However, with our SS (Shiv Sainiks) going about with the clinical precision of Hitler's most dreaded SS (Schutzstaffel, German for 'Protection Squadron'), one wonders if Kamra will last in his chosen field as a stand-up comic. The violent retaliation following his comments clearly indicates that those in power do not have the stomach for Kamra's comic act. There is a long list of past political leaders who enjoyed jokes at their own expense. Our present leaders, however, seem to lack funny bones. I fervently appeal to all of them to assure us, via your 'Vachan Patras' (manifestos), that you will not bulldoze humour from our lives, the way you bulldoze people's homes.

Avinash Godbole,, DEWAS (MP)





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THE CONGRESS IN BENGAL HAS BEEN GRAPPLING WITH A WEAKENED ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE DUE TO THE EXODUS OF ITS LEADERS TO THE TMC AND BJP, AS WELL AS PERSISTENT INFIGHTING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, March 28: Amidst an existential crisis and a declining presence in Bengal. the Congress remains divided over its strategy for the 2026 Assembly elections with three factions emerging: one advocating an alliance with the TMC. another favouring continued adjustment with the Left Front, and a third pushing for a solo contest to revive the party's fortunes

The Congress in Bengal has been grappling with a weakened organisational structure due to the exodus of its leaders to the TMC and BJP, as well as persistent infighting.

Its last significant electoral success came in 2011, when, in alliance with the TMC, it helped end the Left Front's 34-year rule.

Congress's vote share, which stood at 14 per cent in 2011, plummeted to 3 per cent in the 2021 state polls, and it currently has no seats in the Assembly.

One faction within Congress believes that historical alliances have only weakened the party.

This group blamed the TMC-Congress alliance in the 2009 Lok Sabha and 2011 Assembly elections, arguing that it weakened the grand old party as many of its leaders defected to Mamata Banerjee's camp.

Similarly, it criticised the Congress-Left alliance formed in 2016 for prioritising seat-sharing over rebuild-



Congress's vote share, which stood at 14 per cent in 2011, plummeted to 3 per cent in the 2021 state polls, and it currently has no seats in the Assembly

ing the Congress's grassroots support.

Pradip Bhattacharya, former state Congress president, commented on the current divide. saying, "It is true that we are facing a political existential crisis in Bengal. The state unit is now divided on three opinions whether to continue with the Left, align with the TMC, or contest alone. However, I believe we would benefit from continuing with the Left for a

respective alliance. In contrast, another faction argued that Congress, given its current weak presence in the

state, cannot afford to contest the 2026 Assembly elections alone. They view Mamata Banerjee's TMC as the only viable option for a seat-sharing arrangement. State Congress president

Shuvankar Sarkar is pushing for strengthening the party's base before any decision is made on alliances

He stressed, "The Congress has suffered for years because alliances have helped the other partners, not us. My task is to increase the party's presence and visibility across the state. Only then can we discuss alliances or going solo in the polls.'

He questioned the rationale behind aligning with the TMC, which, he argued, has "ruined' the party in Bengal, or with the Left, which he claimed has not been supportive beyond seat-sharing arrangements.

While all three parties Congress, the Left and TMC are part of the national opposition INDIA bloc, the Congress-Left alliance in West Bengal opposes both the TMC and the BJP.

Congress's presence has steadily declined between 2011-2021, when nearly 70 MLAs and one MP defected to the TMC.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the party's vote share further dwindled from 5.6 per cent in 2019 to 4.6 per cent, and the party secured just one seat.

Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, a prominent Congress leader and former state president, has been a strong advocate for maintaining the Left-Congress alliance. He pointed out that the Congress-Left coalition did well in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. with Congress leading in 12 Assembly segments, even surpassing both TMC and BJP in terms of votes in those areas.

The top three Congress leaders in Bengal, despite having differing views on how to revive the party, which ruled the state until 1977 except for a brief period of the United Front government, agree on the need to challenge the communal divide created by the TMC and BJP.

AI cameras, drones, security personnel boost safety in Katra

AHEAD OF NAVRATRI

Chaitra (spring) Navratra will commence March 30 and authorities are anticipating a large crowd of devotees thronging the cave shrine during the nine-day festival

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, March 28: Heavy security arrangements, including AI-enabled CCTV cameras and drones, are being put in place to avert any untoward incident at Mata Vaishno Devi shrine during the Navratri festival.

Chaitra (spring) Navratra will commence March 30 and authorities are anticipating a large crowd of devotees thronging the cave shrine during the nine-day festival.

These measures become all the more crucial following a fierce encounter with suspected Pakistani terrorists in the Kathua district, resulting in the killing of three terrorists and four policemen. The operation began early Thursday and was ongoing at the time of the latest reports.

Conducting a security audit of Katra, the base camp of the cave shrine. Reasi SSP Paramvir Singh said, "Security has been significantly strengthened... (we) assure all devotees arriving from various parts of the country that they will be provided with adequate security.

"We have conducted security



checks at several locations in Katra town and are planning additional deployments at strategic locations," he added.

Further, joint teams of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and police, along with quick reaction teams, have been deployed and remain vigilant, the SSP informed.

Deputy Inspector General of Police Rayees Mohd Bhat said thorough security arrangements have been made. including the deployment of drones, as part of the security measures.

Moreover, the track leading to the shrine is being closely watched by the CRPF.

Officials said that over 500-600 CCTV cameras equipped with advanced AI capabilities have been installed along the pilgrimage route.

The cave shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi is already witnessing increased footfall. "In the past few days, there

has been a significant rise in the number of pilgrims. Nearly 40,000 pilgrims visit the Mata Vaishno Devi temple daily,

with numbers rising even fur ther on weekends," said Anshul Garg, chief executive officer (CEO), SMVDSB.

ISSaP

SATURDAY | MARCH 29, 2025 | BHUBANESWAR

He further said that the num ber is expected to only rise in the coming days On its part, the Shri Mata

Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) has built new infrastructure and arranged more facilities for the pilgrims during the festival from March 30 to April 7.

An all-weather covered rest ing area for 1,500 pilgrims at Ardhkuwari has been set up The area will feature a water ATM, prasad kiosk, refresh ment unit and live telecast of 'garbhjoon aarti'. Additionally the renovated 'Darshani Deo di' with a double-storey queue complex is ready to welcome pilgrims this Chaitra Navratri. the Board said.

In view of recent terror inci dents and the upcoming Eid and Navratri festivals, security has also been beefed up in Jammu city and along the highways with increased vehicle checks and frisking of people.

'Sundarban Tramjatra' begins to promote heritage, conservation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, March 28: A tram adorned with cutouts of mangrove trees, images of crisscrossing rivulets and pictures of the Royal Bengal Tiger rolled through northern and southern parts of the city Friday, marking the beginning of the fourday 'Sundarban Tramjatra' festival.

Organised by the Calcutta Tram Users Association (CUTA), a group of tram enthusiasts working to revive Kolkata's heritage transport, the special tram offered free rides to the public from 10:30 AM to 5:30 PM, running along two active routes—Gariahat to Esplanade and Shyambazar to Esplanade, a spokesperson said on behalf of the organisers. CUTA member Aditva Banerjee explained the dual purpose behind the initiative. "The journey has been initiated for two reasons-to revive tram routes, most of which have become defunct. and to raise awareness about protecting the rich biodiversi-



ty of the Sundarbans. In an era of global warming and carbon emissions, when the government itself is promoting green energy-driven transport such as electric buses, trams remain an environmentally friendly al-

ternative," Banerjee said. The festival is supported by 31, where experts and citizens will discuss ways to protect Kolkata's green spaces and the Sundarbans.

Melbourne tram conductor Roberto D'Andrea, attending the event, emphasised the need to preserve trams. 'We are united in our love

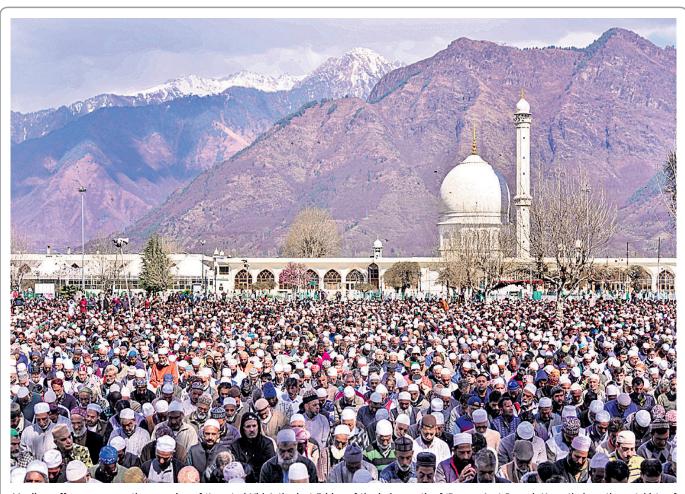
for trams, and this event sends a strong message about their importance in reducing air pollution." he said.

Festival co-curator and RMIT University associate professor Mick Douglas echoed this sentiment. "The more we engage in participatory dialogues, the

more we build momentum to

save our greens, our heritage,

and ecosystems like the Sund-



the Australian Government under the Maitri Cultural Grant and RMIT University.

It includes discussions and workshops aimed at engaging local communities in environmental conservation.

arbans." Trams first began operating in Kolkata in 1873 with horse-From March 28 to 30, the drawn carriages, later transi-Esplanade Tram Depot will tioning to steam and electric

host workshops and live pertrams by 1902. formances featuring eminent While the city had 257 tram personalities, including filmcars in 2023, only 25 trams are maker Ashoke Viswanathan. currently operational on a rota-A Citizens' Assembly will tional basis across three routes. take place at the ICCR Rabinaccording to a state transport dranath Tagore Centre March

Muslims offer prayers on the occasion of 'Jamat ul Vida', the last Friday of the holy month of 'Ramzan', at Dargah Hazratbal, on the outskirts of Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, Friday PTI PHOTO

Constable Singh's sacrifice upholds legacy of valour J&K **ENCOUNTER**

According to the local residents of Chib's native village -- Kanna Chak -- the family is venerated for its history of sacrifices and patriotism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chak (Kathua), Kanna March 28: As three brave police personnel lost their lives battling infiltrating Pakistani terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, Balwinder Singh Chib's sacrifice carries forward a legacy of courage that has endured for three generations

With his death, the Chib family has lost four members across three generations in the line of duty. According to the local residents of Chib's native village -- Kanna Chak -- the family is venerated for its history of sacrifices and patriotism.

Four police personnel, including Chib, have been killed in an ongoing encounter in Kathua district. The operation started early Thursday and was continuing when the last reports were received.

Former Sarpanch of Chak Hariya village, Deewan Singh, "The Chib family is said. known for its sacrifices and patriotism. The village of Chak Hariva takes immense pride in its sons who have given their lives for the country". Kanna Chak is a part of Chak Hariya.

Recalling the Chib family's long history of sacrifice, he said, "During World War I, Balwinder's great grandfather, Prakash Singh Chib, was awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery before attaining martyrdom. Prakash Singh Chib's brother, Shankar Singh Chib, also laid down his life, earning honourable recognition.'

Balwinder's uncle, Pritam Singh Chib, who served in the Border Security Force, was martyred in the line of duty.

"Now, Balwinder has lost his life becoming the fourth martyr from the family. It is an unparalleled legacy of courage and sacrifice," he said.

Three suspected Pakistani terrorists of the proscribed Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM)



outfit and an equal number of policemen were killed after a day-long gunfight Thursday. Another policeman was found dead Friday.

Balwinder bravely fought against the terrorists before making the ultimate sacrifice, Deewan Singh said.

Villagers remembered Balwinder as a kind-hearted, disciplined, and selfless man. "He was a very good person who always helped others. He never had a conflict or dispute with anyone," Sumit, his neighbour, said.

"Balwinder Singh Chib's name will be etched in history as a true patriot ... his sacrifice will remain a guiding light for generations to come," Sumit added. Balwinder is survived by his wife, a daughter and a son. Balwinder's mother, who fainted upon hearing the news of his death, said, "This pain is unbearable... I wish I had died instead of him."

According to his relatives, Balwinder joined the police force in 2000 during a special border recruitment drive launched by then SSP RR Swain, who later became Director General of Police (DGP)

One of his uncles, an ex-serviceman, said, "He sacrificed his life for the nation. Today, our family stands tall with pride. Bharat Mata Ki Jai! His sacrifice has made the country proud.'

Balwinder's friends said he was passionate about cricket since childhood and recalled that he led a disciplined life and respected everyone.

"His commitment to duty remained unwavering until his last breath. His sacrifice has helped save many lives from terrorists," one of his friends said. Meanwhile, the local residents of Kanna Chak have urged the government to recognise Balwinder's sacrifice and extend support to his bereaved family. They said honouring his brayery will serve as an inspiration for future generations.

J&K BYE-ELECTIONS

ECI announces voter list revision for Nagrota, Budgam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, March 28: The Election Commission of India has announced a special summary revision of voter lists in Jammu and Kashmir's Nagrota and Budgam Assembly constituencies where bye-elections are due shortly.

The revision will be based April 1, 2025, as the qualifying date, ahead of the upcoming bye-elections, said a notification issued by the Election Commission of India.

The Nagrota seat in Jammu district and the Budgam seat became vacant due to the death of MLA Devender Singh Rana and the resignation of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah from Budgam but he retained the Ganderbal seat, a stronghold of his party, the National Conference (NC).

Rana passed away at the age of 59 October 31 last year at a private hospital in Haryana's Faridabad.

The Election Commis sion of India has released the schedule for the Special Summary Revision (SSR) of electoral rolls in Nagrota and Budgam Assembly Constitu encies ahead of the upcoming bye-elections.

As per the schedule, the rationalization of polling stations will take place April 4, 2025 followed by the publication of the integrated draft electoral roll April 8, 2025.

The voters will be able to file claims and objections between April 8 and April 24 2025, it said. The final resolu tion of claims and objections is scheduled for May 2, while the final electoral roll will be published May 5.

The Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) for each con stituency will be responsible for ensuring that all eligible citizens are included in the voter list while preventing the inclusion of ineligible individuals.











Across India our youth are falling prey to drugs. India has 2.3 crore opioid and almost 1 crore inhalant users -- more than the entire population of Haryana RAHUL GANDHI LOP IN LS

CLERIC DEEMS SALMAN WEARING 'RAM EDITION' WATCH 'HARAM

Barelvi cleric and All India Muslim Jamaat president Maulana Shahabuddin Razvi has declared Bollywood actor Salman Khan wearing a 'Ram Edition' watch, which intends to promote the Ram Mandir, as "haram" (forbidden in Islam)



'Restaurants can't levy mandatory service charge on food bills'

of the day

It is good they (BJP) are giving gifts to Muslims but at least they should not break their (Muslims) houses

DIGVIJAYA SINGH | SENIOR CONG LEADER

The present state gov ernment has adopted a decisive goal to transform Assam, where crime is minimal and citizens can actively contribute to the state's progress

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

The Econom- 📷 ic Survey is a technical document that provides financial clarity. It has been presented in the Assembly for decades, but this time, the BJP government did not table it ATISHI FORMER DELHI CM

SHORT TAKES

FIR lodged against Arvind Kejriwal

New Delhi: A Delhi court was Friday informed by police that an FIR was filed against former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and others for allegedly misusing public money by putting up large hoardings in the national capital in 2019. Delhi Police made the submission in its compliance report filed before additional chief judicial magistrate Neha Mittal. "Copy of FIR has been filed in compliance of order dated March 11, 2025. A copy of FIR and status report have been supplied to the counsel for the complainant (Shiv Kumar Saxena)," the

4 of family

judge noted.

found dead Kodagu (Karnataka): Four

members of a family were found dead at their home in Ponnampet taluk of this district Friday, police said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 28: Restaurants cannot mandatorily levy service charge on food bills in a "camouflaged and coercive" manner as it is against public interest and amounts to unfair trade practice, the Delhi High Court on Friday held.

coercive manner, would be contrary to consumer interest and is violative of consumer rights (sic)," Justice Prathiba M Singh said in a 131-page judgment. The high court, therefore

restaurant establishments of

collecting service charge that

too on a mandatory basis, in a

dismissed the petitions of the The high court said collecrestaurant bodies challenging tion of service charge was provthe Central Consumer Protecing to be a "double whammy" for tion Authority (CCPA) guidelines prohibiting hotels and consumers who were forced to pav Goods and Services Tax on restaurants from mandatoritop of the service tax. "Service ly levying service charge on charge or TIP as is colloquially food bills. The court upheld the guidelines and imposed ₹1 referred to, is a voluntary payment by the customer. It cannot lakh cost each on the petitioners be compulsory or mandatory. to be deposited with the CCPA The practice undertaken by towards consumer welfare. It



said the mandatory levy of service charge by the restaurant establishments was against public interest and undermined the economic and social fabric of consumers as a class

The verdict added, "Furthermore, such a charge creates an unfair pricing structure which lacks transparency and is therefore contrary to public interest.

Federation of Hotels and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) and National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI) had moved the court in 2022 filing two separate petitions. According to the NRAI, it has 7,000 restaurants in India and 2,500 member outlets in Delhi NCR. FHRAI claimed to represent the interests of 55,000 hotels and 5,00,000 restaurants across the country. The court, while referring to consumer complaints and restaurant bills, said it was convinced that the service charge was being arbitrarily collected and coercively enforced and in such a situation it couldn't "be a mute spectator".

MoD signs ₹62,700cr contracts with HAL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 28: The de fence ministry Friday firmed up procurement of 156 light combat helicopter 'Prachand from Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) at a cost of ₹62,700 crore, shortly after the Cab inet Committee on Security (CCS) chaired by Prime Minis ter Narendra Modi cleared the acquisition to bolster the combat capability of the military

Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) Prachand is India's first indigenously designed and de veloped combat helicopter hav ing a capability of operating at an altitude of over 5000 metres

Following the decision by the CCS, the defence ministry signed two contracts with the HAL for the procurement. The CCS approved the proposal to buy 156 LCH 'Prachand' worth over ₹62,500 crore from HAL Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said.

"This decision marks a major boost to India's combat capabilities and self reliance in defence," he said on X.

Capable of operating from high altitude terrain and car rying out precision strikes at high altitude targets, 'Prachand' is a powerful machine, he said.

"The Cabinet's decision taken today will create more than 8500 jobs. This is indeed a proud moment for India's Make in India journey. I thank PM Narendra Modi for taking this important decision," he said.

The defence ministry said the first contract it signed with HAL is for supply of 66 Prachand helicopters to the Indian Air Force (IAF) while the second one is for buying 90 choppers for the Indian Army.

"The Ministry of Defence March 28 signed two contracts with HAL for supply of 156 Light Combat Helicopters (LCH), Prachand, along with training and other associated equipment worth ₹62,700 crore, excluding taxes." the ministry said in a statement.

SC upholds free speech, junks FIR against Cong MP

The verdict said, "Free expression of thoughts by individuals or groups of individuals is an integral part of healthy and civilised society. Without freedom of expression of thoughts and views, it is impossible to lead a dignified life guaranteed under Article 21 of the constitution."

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 28: Advocating the protection of freedom of speech and expression, the Supreme Court Friday quashed an FIR against Congress MP Imran Pratapgarhi for allegedly posting a clip of a poem alleged to be provocative.

The video carried the recitation of a poem uploaded on X by the Congress MP and it was alleged to carry words that damental rights," it added. pitted communities against one another aside from hurting religious sentiments. In a 54-page verdict, a bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Uijal Bhuvan held no prima facie case against Pratapgarhi and said the FIR appeared to be a "very mechanical exercise" and a "clear abuse of the process of law" The verdict said, "Free expression of thoughts by individuals or groups of individuals is an integral part of healthy and civilised society. Without freedom of expression of thoughts and views, it is impossible to lead a dignified life guaranteed under Article 21 of the constitution."

thoughts and opinions must be countered with a different view. "Even if a large number of persons dislike the views expressed by others, the right of person to express views must be respected and protected." it

added. The bench opined literature, including poetry, drama, films, satire and art, made the life of human beings more meaningful. "Courts are duty-bound to protect and uphold fundamental rights of citizens. Sometimes we the judges may not like the spoken or written words, but still, it is our duty to uphold the fundamental rights under Article 19(1). We judges are also under an obligation to uphold the Constitution and the respective ideals. It is the duty of the court to step in and to protect the fun-

Woman's body found in suitcase: Suspect hubby attempts suicide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore/Pune, March 28: The husband of a 32 year-old woman, whose body was found stuffed in a suitcase in Bangalore, has emerged as the main suspect in the case and was now undergoing treatment in Pune in Maharashtra after alleged suicide attempt, police said Friday.

The body of Gauri Khedekar, a native of Maharashtra, was found Thursday with severe injury marks and packed inside a suitcase. Her husband Rakesh Rajendera Khedekar, who works as a project manager in an IT firm in the Karnata ka capital, fled to Pune, around 875km from Bangalore, after the crime and allegedly attempted suicide by consuming poison, the Bangalore police said.

However, a police official in western Maharashtra's Sa tara district, where Rakesh Khedekar was found, said the man told them he had killed his wife. He was found lying unconscious on a road under jurisdiction of the Shirwal police station in Satara district.



Rakesh Khedekar was rushed to a hospital in Shirwal before being shifted to a private medical facility in Pune, Satara police officials said.

'We found the man lying on a road in an unconscious state Thursday night. When he regained consciousness, he told us he had killed his wife. By the time we informed our seniors. the news about the murder in Bangalore had surfaced," said Yashwant Nalawade, senior inspector, Shirwal police station. He has been detained in connection with the murder and is currently undergoing treatment, according to the

registered a case in this regard and it seems the woman's husband is the main suspect. Rakesh Khedekar had flown out of the Karnataka capital earlier, he said. According to the commissioner, a Bangalore Police team has gone to Pune, and as and when he is discharged from the

Bangalore police. Addressing

a press conference, Bangalore

City Police Commissioner B

hospital, he will be brought to the southern city for interrogation. Marital dispute is said to be the reason behind the gruesome murder. According to the Bengaluru police, the murder came to light when the owner of the house, where the couple lived, alerted the police control room at around 5:30 pm Thursday.

The woman and her husband, who works as a project manager in an IT firm in the southern city, moved to Bangalore last month and were living in a flat at Doddakammanahalli village in Hulimayu police station limits.



Dayananda said the police have

The deceased have been identified as Nagi (32), her seven-year-old daughter Cauvery, and Nagi's parents, Kariya (75) and Gauri (70), police added. Police suspect Nagi's husband, Girish (35), to be behind the killings, as he is currently absconding. The incident, according to police, came to light when Nagi and Girish's co-workers from a coffee estate went looking for them after they failed to report for work.

Porsche crash: 2 police in soup

Pune: Two Maharashtra Police officers are likely to face dismissal for alleged negligence in the investigation of last year's fatal Porsche crash, where a drunk minor driver killed two tech professionals, a top official said. Pune Police **Commissioner Amitesh** Kumar said a proposal was sent to the Maharashtra Home department Thursday "seeking dismissal of these two suspended cops."

The court highlighted that in a healthy democracy, views,

Constitutional courts, the bench said, must be at the forefront to "zealously protect" the fundamental rights of the citizens. "It is the bounden duty of the court to ensure that the Constitution and ideals of the Constitution are not trampled upon," the bench said

The top court said the police machinery was a part of the state and its officers must abide by the constitution and respect its ideals. "Moreover, the police officers being citizens, are bound to abide by the constitution. They are bound to honour and uphold freedom of speech and expression conferred on all citizens," it said.

The Congress MP was booked by Gujarat Police in the case January 3.



Water cannons being used to disperse activists of the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) during 'Uttar Kanya Abhiyan' as they protest agains' unemployment in the state, Siliguri, West Bengal

War of words follows disruption of Mamata's speech at Oxford

The TMC asserted that the disruption was a slur on the country as a whole and that people would "respond to the attack with interest", while CPI(M)'s student wing SFI stated that the "CM has no escape from tough questions from the enraged student community wherever she goes"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

boiler explosion at a paper mill in the Bhojpur police station area here Friday, police said. The incident occurred around 6 am when the workers were on duty at the Nordstern Rubber and Rolls Private Limited in Datedi village, they said. "All of a sudden the boiler of Oxford. blasted due to which the three labourers flung in the air and fell 50 feet away," a police source said.

Boiler blast at paper mill kills 3 Ghaziabad (UP): Three labourers were killed in a

Kolkata, March 28: Political reactions flew thick and fast back home in the aftermath of protestors, allegedly by Left-leaning youths, disrupting West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's speech on social development and women's empowerment at Kellogg College under the University

The Trinamool Congress asserted that the disruption was a slur on the country as a whole

and that people would "respond to the attack with interest", while CPI(M)'s student wing SFI stated that the "chief minister has no escape from tough questions from the enraged student community wherever she goes". Midway through Banerjee's speech, a section of the audience, who had come with posters, tried to interrupt her address by questioning her on a range of issues, from the RG Kar hospital medic's rape and murder to the flight of capital from the state, including the



Tata Motors' exit from Singur. A composed Banerjee tried to placate the protestors by offering to send them "chocolates" and wishing them a "good night's sleep over their agendas". She announced that such

resistance has only encouraged her more, strengthened her resolve and offered to visit Oxford twice a year, should she be invited to speak. "This same show can get repeated when your leaders come to

visit," Banerjee warned the protestors, adding, "My Left and ultra-Left friends, this is not the proper way to behave." Taking to his social media handle, TMC spokesperson and part of Banerjee's entourage to the UK, Kunal Ghosh wrote, "A motley band of Left supporters brought disrepute to the state and country by their actions. They have forgotten about everything that happened in Bengal during the Left rule. Confronted by the audience, they fled the scene. Instead of raising questions during the question and answer session, these people displayed their culture." The party's IT cell chief Debangshu Bhattacharya questioned the identity of the protesters.

Education Minister Bratva Basu, who himself was at the receiving end of students'

disgruntlement at Jadavpur University recently, called the protest "a reflection of collec tive hopelessness among the red and saffron camps"

"It has become a norm for el ements like these to attack our leaders in the midst of an ongo ing function. Mamata Banerjee was representing the state and the country and this wasn't a political platform. I would like to repeat after my leader that these people should, instead come back to the country and strengthen their party to fight communal forces," Basu said The SFI, though, maintained that the CM cannot hope to get away with "her back-to-back lies about Bengal" on foreign soil. The SFI will question her wherever she goes, he said add ing that Baneriee may choose to escape or answer them but she will not have a respite.











national

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, March 28: The Madras High Court Friday grant-

ed interim anticipatory bail to

comedian Kunal Kamra, who is

facing the heat over his jokes

on Maharashtra Deputy Chief

relief on the condition that he

should execute a bond to the

satisfaction of the judicial mag-

istrate at Vanur in Villupuram district in Tamil Nadu.

Justice Sunder Mohan also

issued notice to 2nd Respondent

The court granted Kamra the

Minister Eknath Shinde.



It is important for us to grow that tourism potential PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA CONG GENERAL SECY

ASARAM GETS INTERIM BAIL

The Gujarat High Court Friday granted three months of temporary bail to self-proclaimed godman Asaram Bapu in a rape case. The bail was granted on medical grounds





Necessary changes would be made in the policy as the focus is on tourism promotion in the state and

as strict compliance might not be possible for heritage buildings, ways to provide fire safety mea sures from the outside would also be explored

SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL CM

The entire system of the country is run by these three pillars. When all three work together, it helps in achieving the goal of good governance YOGI ADITYANATH UTTAR PRADESH CM

Along with the incident that

happened in Agra the SP chief should also remember the Lucknow State Guest House incident June 2, 1995,

when there was a murderous attack on me by this party during its government and should also repent for it

MAYAWATI | FORMER UP CM





Sanghis

Court quashed FIR filed by Gujarat Police against him for his poem "Ae khoon ke pyase, baat suno...' Victory of Constitution. Defeat for

@Politicx2029

SHORT TAKES

PM to travel to Thailand. Lanka

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will embark on a two-nation tour of Thailand and Sri Lanka next week with a broad focus on boosting regional cooperation under newly announced

Madras HC grants interim anticipatory bail to Kamra

bai Police.

The judge noted the petitioner, who is residing in Villupuram district, apprehends arrest in the case registered on the file of R-2 against him. Counsel for the petitioner submitted that the allegation against the petitioner was that he made certain remarks in a standup comedy on Deputy Chief Minister, called "Naya Bharath."

According to the prosecution it harmed the reputation of the deputy CM. Counsel further submitted that the allegation does not warrant custodial interrogation.

He was unable to seek anticipatory bail in Maharashtra. Counsel for the petitioner submitted that a life threat was made against him by partymen and the Ministers. He sought anticipatory bail to enable him to approach court in Maharashtra.

(R2-Khar Police) and posted the matter to April 7. Kamra had Citing a judgment of the Susubmitted he moved to Tamil preme Court, the judge said the petitioner prima facie satisfied Nadu from Mumbai in 2021 and as to why he was unable to aphas been "ordinarily a resident of this State since then" and proach a court in Maharashtra that he feared arrest by Mumimmediately



Devotees offer 'namaz' on the occasion of 'Jumat ul Vida', the last Friday of the holy month of 'Ramzan', at Palayam Juma Masjid, in Thiruvananthapuram. Kerala

Cash row: Justice Varma transferred to Allahabad HC

AGENCIES

New Delhi/Prayagraj, March 28: The government Friday notified the transfer of Delhi High Court judge Yashwant Varma to his parent Allahabad High Court, the order coming amid a row over alleged discovery of a huge amount of cash from his official residence here.

The law ministry issued the notification announcing his transfer. Recommending his repatriation to the government Monday, the Supreme Court Collegium had asserted the move was separate from an in-house probe ordered by the top court over the alleged discovery of cash from Justice Varma's residence after a fire incident around 11.35 on the night of Holi, March 14.

Following the incident, Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna had directed the Delhi High



SC rejects plea for FIR Court Friday rejected a PIL seeking Delhi Police to register an FIR over the alleged discovery of burnt wads of cash from the official residence of Del-hi High Court judge Yashwant Varma. A bench of Justices Abhav S Oka and Uiial Bhuvan said an in-house inquiry was in progress and there would be several options open to the chief jus-

report by Chief Justice Upa dhyaya, and constituted the three-member committee to conduct an in-house inquiry. Two days later, the Supreme Court Collegium formally recommended to the Centre Justice Varma's transfer.

"The Supreme Court Collegium in its meetings held March 20 and 24, 2025 has recommended the repatriation of Justice Yashwant Varma, Judge, High Court of Delhi, to the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad," an SC resolution on that day read. The next day, the three-member SC committee visited Justice Varma's residence, commencing its inquiry into the matter.

Justice Varma has denounced any insinuation and said no cash was ever placed at the site either by him or any of his family members. Earlier today, the top court rejected a PIL seeking Delhi Police to register an FIR over over the alleged discovery of burnt wads of cash from his official residence, calling the petition "premature" A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan said the in-house inquiry was in progress and there would be several options open to the Chief Justice of India after the probe concludes. Members of the Allahabad High Court Bar Association have been protesting against the Collegium's recommendation to repatriate Justice Varma to Allahabad. The protesting lawyers met Chief Justice Khanna in Delhi Thursday.

Kathua encounter enters day 2; bodies of 3 cops recovered PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, March 28: The bodies of three of the four Jammu and Kashmir Police personnel killed in an encounter with Jaish-e-Mo hammed (JeM) terrorists were retrieved Friday as the fierce gunfight between security forces and the ultras entered its second day in the remote forested region of Jammu's Kathua, officials said here.

Director General of Police (DGP), Jammu and Kashmir, Nalin Prabhat confirmed that this was the same group of terrorists that was intercepted in Sanival village in the Hiranagar sector March 23. but managed to escape, while resolving that his force will not sleep or take rest till all terror groups are appropriately dealt with. The operation, centred near Jakhole village in the Ghati Juthana area of Rajbagh. began Thursday morning following intensified police operations against recently-infiltrated terrorists from across

Cabinet clears Electronics Component Mfg Scheme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 28: The government Friday approved a ₹22.919 crore scheme to make India self-reliant in electronics component manufacturing, attract large investments in the segment and create jobs.

It is the first such scheme that focuses on promoting the manufacturing of passive electronic components. The Union Cabinet approved the 'Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme' with an aim to develop a robust supply chain by attracting large global as well as domestic investments in the electronics component manufacturing ecosystem.

The initiative is also expected to increase domestic value addition (DVA) by developing capacity and capabilities, and integrating Indian companies with Global Value Chains (GVCs). The domestic production of electronic goods has ris-



Cabinet nod to non-urea subsidy

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet Friday approved a ₹37,216 crore subsidy on phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilis ers for the Kharif (summer-sown) season this year as part of its efforts to provide soil nutrients to farmers at a reasonable rate. The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved a proposal to fix the Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) rates for Kharif season 2025 (from April 1, 2025, to September 30, 2025) on Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilisers. The budgetary requirement for the Kharif season will be ₹37,216.15 crore, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told reporters here.

one-year gestation period. Meanwhile, an official release said that the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme provides differentiated incentives to Indian manufacturers tailored to overcome specific disabilities for various categories of components and sub-assemblies so that they can acquire technological capa bilities and achieve economies of scale. The target segments include sub-assemblies (display module and camera module) and bare components (Non-Sur face Mount Devices, electro-me chanicals, multi-layer Printed Circuit Board (PCB), Li-ion cells, and enclosures for mobile. IT hardware products & related devices), which will receive turnover-linked incentives.

'MAHASAGAR policy' and vision for a stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific. In the first leg of the tour, Modi will visit Bangkok from April 3 to 4 to narticinate in the sixth BIMSTEC Summit being hosted by Thailand. It will be the prime minister's third visit to Thailand, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Friday. From Thailand. Modi will travel to Sri Lanka for a three-day trip to hold talks with top leadership of the island nation.

Mild tremors felt in Kolkata, Imphal

Kolkata/Imphal/Shillong: Mild tremors were felt in Kolkata, Imphal and Meghalaya's East Garo Hills district Friday after a powerful 7.7-magnitude earthquake struck Thai capital Bangkok. The epicentre was in central Myanmar, about 50 km east of the city of Monywa. Tremors were reported from Kolkata and its adjoining areas. However, according to official sources, there were no reports of damage to property or loss of life in the city due to the tremor.

Two trampled to death by elephants

Simdega (Jharkhand): Two persons were trampled to death by wild elephants in separate incidents in Jharkhand's Simdega district Friday, a forest officer said. A 28-yearold man, identified as Vikas Ohdar, was trampled to death by an elephant when he was sleeping outside his house in Buruirgi Debatoli village under the jurisdiction of Mahabuang police station around 1 am Friday, the officer said.

Court to withdraw judicial work from the judge. On Friday, the Supreme Court said the chief justice of the Allahabad High Court was asked not to assign any judicial work for now to Justice Varma upon assuming charge there.

"The chief justice of Allahabad High Court for the time being has been asked not to assign any judicial work to Justice Yashwant Varma, when he assumes charge as a judge of the Allahabad High Court," an apex court press release said. In a related development, the Bar Association president in Prayagraj Friday strongly criticised the transfer of Justice

Varma to the Allahabad High

tice of India after the probe's conclusion. The bench, therefore, refused to examine the plea of advocate Mathews J Nedumpara and three others.

Court and called it the "darkest day for India's judiciary" and announced that the association's members will boycott the swearing-in ceremony

The Supreme Court March 21 said Delhi High Court Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya had initiated an in-house inquiry against Justice Varma and there was a separate proposal to transfer the judge. Justice Upadhyaya was stated to have commenced the inquiry prior to a meeting of the apex court Collegium March 20. The CJI March 22 uploaded

on the SC website the inquiry

the International Border in the Hiranagar sector.

The encounter has resulted in the deaths of four police personnel and two JeM terrorists, while seven security personnel. including a deputy superintendent of police (DSP), have sustained injuries. The DGP clarified that only two Pakistani terrorists have so far been killed. The body of the fourth police personnel, who was reported missing Thursd av evening. was located Friday morning by the search parties with the help of drones, but the efforts to retrieve it are yet to succeed as two terrorists are still holed up at a height and firing at the search teams, the officials said.

en from ₹1.90 lakh crore in FY 2014-15 to ₹9.52 lakh crore in FY 2023-24, reflecting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 17 per cent.

Giving details about the Cabinet decision, Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the scheme will create direct employment for 91,600 people and attract investment of around ₹59,350 crore. The minister said that that segment will serve the requirements of several sectors, including telecom, consumer electronics, automobile, medical devices, power sector etc. He said that the scheme is expected to lead to production of ₹4.56 lakh crore. The tenure of the scheme is six years with a

HUMAN-ANIMAL CONFLICT 'No plans to amend Wildlife Act to give more power to states'

In response to a question by CPI-M Rajya Sabha member V Sivadasan, Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh said that the protection of wildlife, including human-wildlife conflict management, is primarily the responsibility of state and Union Territory governments under the Act

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Mar 28: The Centre is not considering any amendment to the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, to give states more power to deal with wild animal attacks, the government has informed Parliament.

In response to a question by CPI-M Rajya Sabha member V Sivadasan, Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh said that the protection of wildlife, including human-wildlife conflict man-

agement, is primarily the responsibility of state and Union Territory governments under the Act. The minister said Section 11(1)(a) of the Act empowers the chief wildlife warden to grant permits for the hunting of animals listed in Schedule I if they become dangerous to human life or are incurably

diseased. Section 11(1)(b) allows the chief wildlife warden or any authorised officer to grant permits for hunting wild animals listed in Schedule II, III, or IV if they become dangerous to human



life or property or are disabled or diseased beyond recovery. Sivadasan had sought details of requests made by states to amend the Act and its rules. Asked if the Union government intended to amend the Act

to give states more autonomy in handling wild animal attacks, the minister said, "Currently, no amendment in the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 Act has been proposed."

Sivadasan represents Kerala,

which has repeatedly requested the Centre to declare wild pigs as "vermin" in the state. The Kerala government argues that damage to crops and human-wildlife conflict have been rising due to wild boars. An estimated 344 people lost their lives in incidents of human-wildlife conflict in Kerala between 2021 and 2025, Environment and Forest Minister Bhupendra Yadav informed the Rajya Sabha Thursday.

Replying to supplementaries during the Question Hour, he said 180 deaths were due to snake bites, 103 due to elephants and 35 due to wild pigs. The ministry has advised the Kerala government to use the provisions under Section 11 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

Section 11(1)(a) and Section 11(1)(b) empower the state chief wildlife warden to allow selective hunting. This is different from declaring an animal as "vermin" under Section 62 by the central government.

Once declared "vermin" the species loses all legal pro tection, allowing unrestricted hunting, unlike the case-by case permission granted under Section 11. In 2021, the Centre had said that declaring wild boars as "vermin" in Kerala would do more harm than good The Kerala government later is sued an order allowing farmers to kill wild boars using licensed guns in the presence of a forest guard. This special order was extended for another year from May 17, 2022.

Last year, the Kerala As sembly passed a resolution urging the Centre to declare wild boars as "vermin" and amend the Act to reduce human-animal conflict.













international



It can look surprising only at first glance and it would be wrong to believe that this is some sort of extravagant talk by the current US administration. It's obvious that the United States will continue to systematically advance its geostrategic, military-political and economic interests in the Arctic VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

AUSTRALIA TO GO TO POLLS MAY 3

Australians will go to the polls May 3 for general elections with high costs of living and a shortage of housing likely weighing against the government as Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's centre-left Labour Party seeks a second three-year term



of the day

And I want to be frank there will be consequences for adventurism. There will be consequences for

aggressive actions. It would be a very bad day for the Venezuelan regime if they were to attack Guyana or attack ExxonMobil or anything like it

MARCO RUBIO US SECRETARY OF STATE

It is clear that the United States is no longer a reliable partner. It is possible that, with comprehensive

negotiations, we will be able to restore some trust, but there will be no turning back MARK CARNEY | PRIME MINISTER, CANADA

Antisemitism is a disease carried by barbarians" in "all civilised societies BENJAMIN NETANYAHU

PRIME MINISTER, ISRAEL

SHORT TAKES

Israel strikes Beirut

Beirut (Lebanon): Israel Friday launched an attack on the Lebanese capital, Beirut, for the first time since a ceasefire ended the latest Israel-Hezbollah war in November. Associated Press reporters in Beirut heard a loud boom and witnessed smoke rising from the area in Beirut's southern suburbs that Israel's military had vowed to strike. The attack was the first strike on Beirut since a ceasefire took hold November 27, 2024 between Israel and the Hezbollah militant group, although Israel has struck targets in southern Lebanon almost daily since then.

Pak repays loan worth S1bn to Chinese bank

Islamabad: Pakistan has repaid a \$1 billion commercial loan to the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) with the understanding of getting it refinanced soon, according to a media report. This repayment has nporarity pulled the country's already thin foreign exchange reserves to a six-month low of \$10.6 billion, the report added. The loan was originally provided by ICBC two years ago at a floating interest rate of approximately 7.5 per cent, reported The Express Tribune. The repayment was made in two equal tranches this month, according to Pakistani authorities.



The 7.7 magnitude quake, with an epicentre near Mandalay, Myanmar's second largest city, struck at midday and was followed by a strong 6.4

magnitude aftershock

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bangkok, March 28: A powerful earthquake rocked Myanmar and neighbouring Thailand Friday, destroying buildings, a bridge and a dam. At least 144 people were killed in Myanmar, where photos and video from two hard-hit cities showed extensive damage. At least eight died in the Thai

capital, where a high-rise under construction collapsed.

The 7.7 magnitude quake, with an epicentre near Mandalay, Myanmar's second largest city, struck at midday and was followed by a strong 6.4 magnitude aftershock.

The full extent of death, injury and destruction was not immediately clear — particularly in Myanmar, one of the world's poorest countries. It is embroiled in a civil war and information is tightly controlled. The head of Myanmar's military government said in a televised speech Friday evening that at least 144 people were killed and 730 others were in-

jured. "The death toll and injuries are expected to rise," Senior Gen Min Aung Hlaing said. Photos from the capital of Naypyidaw showed multiple

buildings used to house civil servants destroyed by the quake, and rescue crews pulling victims from the rubble. Myanmar's government said

blood was in high demand in the hardest-hit areas. Images of



buckled and cracked roads in Mandalay and damaged highways as well as the collapse of a bridge and dam raised further

concerns about how rescuers would even reach some areas in a country already enduring a widespread humanitarian crisis. Near Bangkok's popular Chatuchak market, a 33-story building under construction, with a crane on top, crumpled into a cloud of dust, and onlookers could be seen screaming and running in a video posted on social media. The sound of sirens echoed throughout central Bangkok and vehicles filled the streets, leaving some

of the city's already congested streets grid-locked. The elevated rapid transit system and subway shut down. While the area where the quake struck is prone to earthquakes, they are usually not so big and it is rare for them to be felt in the Thai capital, which sits on a river delta and is at

moderate risk for quakes. April Kanichawanakul, who works in an office building in

lore than 140 dead in Myanmar, state media says Earthquake was of 7.7 magnitude, USGS reports Skyscraper toppled in

Buildings and bridges in

Bangkok, initially didn't even realise it was an earthquake. the first she'd ever experienced. "I just thought I was dizzy," she said. She and her colleagues ran downstairs from the 10th floor of their building and waited outside for a signal that it was safe to go back in.

CRANE-TOPPED BUILDING COLLAPSED IN A CLOUD OF DUST

In Bangkok, at least three people were killed in the building collapse and 90 were missing, according to Defence Minister Phumtham Wechayachai. He offered no more details about the ongoing rescue efforts but first responders said





that seven people had been rescued so far from the area.

At least two of the dead were construction workers who were killed by falling rubble or debris, rescue worker Songwut Wangpon told reporters. The building was being built by the China Railway Construction Corporation for Thailand's government auditor general. Elsewhere, people in Bangkok evacuated from their buildings were cautioned to stay outside in case there were

more aftershocks.

The US Geological Survey and Germany's GFZ centre for geosciences said the earthquake was a shallow 10 kilometres, according to preliminary reports. Shallower earthquakes tend to cause more damage.

SCREAMING AND PANIC AS BUILDINGS SWAYED

Bangkok's city hall declared the city a disaster area to facilitate the response. The greater metropolitan area is home to more than 17 million people, many of whom live in high-rise apartments.

"All of a sudden the whole building began to move. Immediately there was screaming and a lot of panic," said Fraser Morton, a tourist from Scotland, who was in one of

Voranoot Thirawat, a lawyer working in central Bangkok, said her first indication that something was wrong came when she saw a light swinging back and forth. Then she heard the building creaking as it moved back and forth.

She and her colleagues ran down 12 flights of stairs. "In my lifetime, there was no earthquake like this in Bangkok,' she said. Paul Vincent, a tourist visiting from England, was at a streetside bar when the quake struck. As he came onto the street himself, he said he saw a high-rise building swaving and water falling from a rooftop pool

BRIDGE AND MONASTERY COLLAPSE AND DAM BURSTS IN MYANMAR

In Mandalay, the earthquake reportedly brought down multiple buildings, including the Ma Soe Yane monastery, one of the largest in the city, and damaged the former royal palace.

Meanwhile, Christian Aid said its partners and colleagues on the ground reported that a dam burst in the city, causing water levels to rise in the low land areas in the area.

A video posted online showed robed monks in the street shooting video of the multi-story monastery before it suddenly fell into the ground. It was not immediately clear whether any-

In the Sagaing region just southwest of the city, a 90-yearold bridge collapsed, and some sections of the highway connecting Mandalay and Myanmar's largest city, Yangon,

The military seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021, and is now involved in a bloody civil war with long-established militias and newly formed pro-democracy ones.

Army called out in Kathmandu

2 killed. 30 hurt as monarchists clash with cops

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, March 28: The Army was called out and a curfew imposed on parts of Kathmandu Friday after two people were killed and 30 injured as pro-monarchy protesters pelted stones, attacked the office of a political party, set fire to vehicles and looted shops. District authorities said the curfew will be in force for about five hours, up to 10 pm. Nobody was allowed to move about in certain areas Sabin Maharjan, 29, from Kathmandu, died at a hospital after sustaining a bullet injury during the clash, authorities said. Suresh Rajak, a photojournalist with Avenues Television, died while shooting a video of the protest from a building in Post newspaper. the Tinkune area, the site where monarchists clashed with security personnel and tried to break

PRO-MONARCHY PROTEST



CHINA, B'DESH EXPAND TIES

China, Bangladesh sign nine agreements after key meeting between Xi, Yunus

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing/Dhaka, March 28: China and Bangladesh Friday signed nine agreements after Muhammad Yunus' meeting with President Xi Jinping during which the Bangladesh Chief Advisor highlighted student protests that led to regime change in Dhaka and urged Beijing to play a "greater role" in establishing peace and stability. After his talks with Xi, the two countries signed nine agreements enhancing economic and technical cooperation between the two governments and cooperation in the areas of development, translation and publication of classical literary work, exchange and cooperation on cultural heritage, news exchange and media, and health sector, Bangladesh's official news agency BSS reported. As the two leaders discussed issues related to bilateral interest, Yunus urged China to play a greater role in establishing peace, prosperity and stability for both nations, the Bangla



viser for Foreign Affairs Touhid Hossain and hardline Islamic parties such as the Jamaat-e-Islami and opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

Analysts here say that Beijing at the same is carefully

Bangkok's many malls. "I just started walking calmone was harmed. were also damaged.

ly at first but then the building started really moving, yeah, a lot of screaming, a lot of panic, people running the wrong way down the escalators. Like Morton, thousands of people poured into Benjasiri

Park from nearby shopping malls, high rises and apartment buildings along Bangkok's busy Sukhumvit Road. Many were on phones trying to reach loved ones as others sought shade from the hot early afternoon sun.

More journalists detained by Turkive

Istanbul: Two journalists were detained in dawn raids in Istanbul early Friday as part of a crackdown on media workers covering Turkey's largest protests in more than a decade, their outlets reported. Elif Bayburt, who works for the Etkin News Agency, and Nisa Suda Demirel, from the Evrensel news website, were the latest to be arrested in early morning sweeps that have targeted political activists and trades' unionists as well as journalists.

US, Japan, Philippines stage navy drills

South China Sea: The United States, Japan and the **Philippines Friday staged** joint naval drills to boost crisis readiness off a disputed South China Sea shoal as a Chinese military ship kept watch from a distance. The Chinese frigate attempted to get closer to the waters, where the warships and aircraft from the three allied countries were undertaking maneuvers off the Scarborough Shoal in an unsettling moment, but it was warned by a Philippine frigate by radio and kept away.

through security barriers. Rajak was on the top of the building when demonstrators set it ablaze after accusing police of launching tear gas from

inside the structure, sources at the television channel said.

Later, police discovered a severely burned body, suspected to be of Rajak, on the fourth floor of the building. The official identification of the body is yet to be done, police said. About half of the people injured were police personnel, authorities said. During the clash, the protesters burnt a house, torched eight vehicles, attacked the office of CPN-Unified Socialists in Baneshwor, looted the Bhatbhateni Supermarket in Chabahil and vandalised the offices of Kantipur Television and Annapurna

The Kathmandu district administration announced the curfew between Shantinagar Bridge and Manohara River Bridge, including Koteshwor, Tinkune, the airport area, Baneshwor Chowk, and Gaushala.

desh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) report said.

Yunus' China visit is keenly watched as he is scheduled next week to attend the BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, where he has sought a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. India is yet to confirm the meeting. Xi, on his part, spoke about the long-standing history of "friendly exchanges" between the two countries and said China maintained a high degree of stability and continuity in ties with Bangladesh and Beijing continues to be a trustworthy neighbour, friend and partner of Dhaka, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of China-Bangladesh diplomatic ties, and 2025 is also the year of people-to-people exchanges between the two countries, Xi said, expressing his willingness to take the ties to a new level.

Since the Yunus government took over, China has been hosting a number of Bangladesh delegations including Bangladesh's Ad-

watching the unfolding chaot ic situation in Dhaka and the pressure mounting on 84-year old Yunus to hold elections without making any major commitments.

Besides the nine agree ments, Bangladesh and China have agreed to strengthen cooperation in such areas as hydrological forecasting, flood prevention and disaster reduc tion, river dredging, integrated management of water resourc es, water resources develop ment and related technology sharing, BSS reported.

The two sides spoke positive ly about the signing of the Implementation Plan of the MoU on Exchange of Hydrological Information of the Yarlung Zangbo and Jamuna River. The Brahmaputra river is called Yarlung Zangbo in Tibet and Jamuna in Bangladesh.

58mn face hunger crisis after huge shortfall in aid: UN

The Rome-based agency said it faced a 40% slump in donations in 2025 compared to last year, adding that the shortfall threatened feeding programmes for in 28

crisis zones around the world, including Gaza, Sudan, Syria and Congo

REUTERS

Rome, March 28: The UN World Food Programme warned Friday that 58 million people were at risk of extreme hunger or starvation unless urgent funding for food aid is

secured, after drastic shortfalls from donors so far this year, including the United States.

The Rome-based agency said it faced a 40% slump in donations in 2025 compared to last year, adding that the shortfall threatened feeding programmes for in 28 crisis zones around the world, including Gaza, Sudan, Syria and Congo. "WFP is prioritising the worst-affected regions and stretching food rations to maximize impact. But make no mistake, we are approaching a funding cliff with life-threatening consequences," said Rania Dagash-Kamara, WFP Assistant Executive Director for Partnerships and Innovation.

WFP, which describes itself as the world's largest human-



change.

itarian organisation, said 343 million people globally were experiencing severe food insecurity, driven by conflict, economic instability, and climate

According to WFP's website, the UN agency had received just \$1.57 billion in funding up until March 24. For the whole of 2024, WFP received \$9.75 billion, well below the \$21.1 billion it had sought. WFP did not point the finger at specific countries for cutting contributions, but a breakdown on its website showed the United States, long the biggest donor, had so far contributed just under 10% of the \$4.45 billion it gave for the full year 2024. Donald President US

Trump's administration is reviewing its foreign aid programmes and has largely shut down the foreign aid agency USAID.

US donations to WFP of food purchased from American farmers were briefly suspended by the Trump administration but resumed in February under a waiver authorising emergency food aid.

Other countries are also falling short of commitments from previous years, the WFP website showed, including Britain, which has said it will slash foreign aid this year to fund a defence buildup. Anti-poverty group Caritas Europa has said a number of European countries are also looking to cut foreign aid budgets.

WFP said it required \$2.49 billion to sustain emergency relief efforts in the coming months in Sudan, South Su dan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Palestine, Svria, Yemen Lebanon, Myanmar, Haiti, Sa hel and Lake Chad Basin.











It aims to assist 123 million

of them in 2025, nearly half of

whom face an imminent loss of

food support, it said.







suness





MARCH 28, 2025

3 pm

MBM

HCL TEC

GE: -191.51 (-0.25%)

TOF

LOSERS

•

After rallying ~17% in the first half of fiscal year,

years – on disappointing earnings, sharp devaluation and

markets recorded 5 consecutive monthly declines

from Oct-Feb 2025 - a record not seen in the last 29

77,414.92

Ensuring greater technology access is critical in today's

Today's Closing

77,414.92

-3.57 %

-2.45 %

-2.20 %

-2.10 %

-2.07 %

HYUNDAI MOTOR DEBUTS IN NIFTY NEXT 50, NIFTY 100, NIFTY 500

Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) Friday announced share inclusion in Nifty Next 50, Nifty 100, Nifty 500 and other key capital market indices. Hyundai Motor India commenced trading on the Indian stock markets after its listing on October 22, 2024



of the day uote **77**

The government is cognizant of the increasing frequency and sophistica tion of cyber-

attacks in the country. The government has taken several legal, technical, and administrative policy measures for addressing cyber security challenges in the country

ASHWINI VAISHNAW AND IT MINISTER

India's express logistics market is going through a major shift, driven by growing digital

adoption and consumers becoming more comfortable with e-commerce

MRIGANK GUTGUTIA | PARTNER, REDSEER STRATEGY CONSULTANTS

We aim to carry 30 million passengers in 2025-26, higher

than 20 million passengers in the current financial year ending March 2025 ALOKE SINGH | MD, AIR INDIA EXPRESS

SHORT TAKES

Forex kitty jumps to \$658.8 billion

Mumbai: The country's forex reserves jumped by \$4.529 billion to \$658.8 billion during the week ended March 21. the RBI said Friday. In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had increased by \$305 million to \$654.271 billion. This is the third consecutive week of rise in the kitty, which has been on a declining trend recently due to revaluation, along with forex market interventions by the RBI to help reduce volatilities in the rupee. The forex reserves had increased to an all-time high of \$704.885 billion in September 2024. For the week ended March 21, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by \$1.669 billion to \$558.856 billion, the

Investors' wealth swells by ₹25.90L-crore in FY25

After a stellar show in 2023-24 fiscal, stock markets had a roller coaster ride in 2024-25 financial year

+1.88 2

+1.01 %

+0.87 %

+0.82 1

+0.75 %

SATISH CHANDRA ALURI ANALYST, LEMONN MARKETS DESK

Stock markets came under

bear attack from October on-

wards amid worries over for-

eign investors fleeing the do-

mestic market and stretched

In October 2024 alone, the

BSE benchmark slumped

4,910.72 points or 5.82 per

cent. But, heavy retail inves-

tors' participation played a

significant role in the over-

all market's positive trend

Also, a number of main-

board Initial Public Offerings

(IPOs) and listing of shares

imparted optimism in the

On the last trading day of

the 2024-25 fiscal Friday, the

30-share BSE Sensex declined

191.51 points or 0.25 per cent

to settle at 77,414.92 in a vol-

atile trading session. The

Nifty dropped 72.60 points or

this fiscal.

equity markets.

valuations of the equities.

TOP

GAINERS

T

BSE SENSEX

77,606.43

HINDUSTAN UNILEVER

TATA MOTOR

NESTLE IND

foreign exodus

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 28: Dalal Street investors became richer by ₹25.90 lakh crore in the entire 2024-25 financial year, with the BSE benchmark Sensex climbing over 5 per cent, amid an overall optimistic trend in equities.

In the 2024-25 fiscal, the BSE bellwether gauge jumped 3,763.57 points or 5.10 per cent, and the NSE Nifty climbed 1,192.45 points or 5.34 per cent. The market capitalisation

of BSE-listed firms surged ₹25,90,546.73 crore to hv ₹4,12,87,646.50 crore (\$4.82 trillion) in FY25

BSE JUMPED 3,763.57 **POINTS OR 5.10%** NIFTY CLIMBED 1,192.45 **POINTS OR 5.34%**

"FY25 proved to be an eve-opener for new market participants, marking a departure from the continuous bull run they were accustomed to. While robust retail participation and domestic inflow drove a rally in the equity markets, FIIs turned cautious, selling off positions as valuations elevated due to the strong bull run and global uncertainties. Lower-than-expected corporate earnings particularly in the second half of FY25 further compounded the pressure on valuations. At the fiscal year end, policy actions by the new Trump administration added another laver of

volatility which intensified market corrections," Palka Arora Chopra, Director, Master Capital Services Ltd, said. The Sensex hit its all-time high of 85,978.25 September 27, last year.

Services exports drop for 2nd month in row PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 28: India's services exports declined for the second month in row in February to \$31.62 billion while imports dropped to \$14.5 billion, showed Reserve Bank data released Friday. Services exports stood at \$34.72 billion in January against \$36.96 billion in December 2024. Imports were worth \$16.7 billion in January. On annual basis, services exports rose by 11.6 per cent in February compared to the same month of the last year. Imports contracted by 4.8 per cent on year-on-year basis

0.31 per cent to 23,519.35. In 2023-24 fiscal, the Sensex climbed 14,659.83 points or 24.85 per cent. The market cap of BSE-listed companies had soared by ₹128,77,203.77 crore to ₹3,86,97,099.77 crore in FY24. According to experts, FY25

also saw widespread euphoria in the IPO markets.

Reliance Industries is the country's most valued firm with a market valuation of ₹17.25.377.54 crore. followed by HDFC Bank (Rs 13,99,208.73 crore), TCS (Rs 13,04,121.56 crore), Bharti Airtel (Rs 9,87,005.92 crore) and ICICI Bank (Rs 9,52,768.61 crore) in the top five order.

However, global uncertainty continued to rise with trade wars and shifting geopolitical headwinds from the Middle East to Europe, they said.

Key infra sectors growth slows in Feb

New Delhi: The output of eight key infrastructure sectors slowed down to a five-month low of 2.9 per cent in February, as against 7.1 per cent growth registered a year ago, according to official data released Friday. On a

monthly basis, the growth rate in the production of these sectors was lower than the 5.1 per cent expansion recorded in January. The previous low level of growth at 2.4 per cent was recorded in September. In February, production of crude oil and natural gas recorded a negative growth. The production growth

Right medication over profit, says Senapati

Sailendra Narayan Senapati, Managing Director of Rabindra Lifeline Pvt Ltd. has been a driving force in ଧରିତ୍ରୀ | OrissaPOST Odisha's pharmaceutical industry, championing ethical *healthcare practices and patient welfare. Continuing* BUSINESS his family's legacy in medicine by expanding a trusted EMINENCE pharmacy network, his journey is marked by dedication and responsibility. Being in the business for past 24 years, the dedicated pharmacy is the most sough-after location for patients in Bhubaneswar. In an exclusive conversation with **Orissa POST**, Senapati shares

insights on the challenges faced by India's healthcare system, the importance of ethical pharmacy practices, and his vision for the future. Excerpts...



Can you tell us about your early life and what inspired you to enter the pharmaceutical industry?

Our family has been in the medicine business for a long time, and we continue to carry that legacy forward. My father was a traditional healer who travelled from village to village providing medical care at a time when hospitals were scarce. He had experience in both homeopathy and allopathic treatments, particularly in administering injections, and people relied on his knowledge. To expand his work, he moved to Bhubaneswar in 1962. where we obtained our first pharmacy license. We opened our first medical store at Rajmahal Square, and from there, we continued to grow, ensuring access to essential medicines

business?

For us, the pharmacy business is not just about selling medicines-it is about serving people. There is no fixed working time in this profession. A pharmacist must be available even at night to provide emergency medicines, administer injections, and offer guidance on prescriptions. Back when Bhubaneswar had barely 10 to 15 pharmacies, we were known for our commitment to helping patients at any hour. We see our work as a judicial responsibility, ensuring that people receive

- the right medication without prioritising profit. Do you think the Indian healthcare system is struggling? If so, what are the biggest challenges, and how can they be
- addressed? Yes, the healthcare system in India faces numerous challenges. One of the major problems is the focus on brand names rather than the composition of medicines. If doctors and pharmacists prioritised the actual composition instead of trade names, we would see more uniformity and efficiency in healthcare. Another issue is the overwhelming number of pharmaceutical brands-there are 30,000 to 50,000 different brand names in the market. leading to duplication and confusion. Some medicines that are widely sold in India are banned in other coun-

is commonly available in India without a prescription, whereas it is banned in several nations. Our regulatory system needs to align with international standards to ensure patient safety.

AWARDS

- How has your journey been so far, and do you have any expansion plans?
- Our journey has had its share of ups and downs but we have never allowed challenges to weaken our resolve. We have always prioritised patient welfare. Today, we have four branches in Bhubaneswar and one in Jharsuguda, and we are expanding wherever opportunities arise. Our expansion plans are in progress, but good things take time, and we want to ensure that we grow in a way that maintains our core values.
- As an entrepreneur, what advice would you give to newcomers in the pharmaceutical industry?

Many young entrepreneurs are entering the pharmaceutical sector. My advice to them is work hard and have a genuine intent to help people. Understanding how to improve people's health should be a priority. Conducting workshops and learning about medical practices before starting a business will provide the right foundation. The key to success is not just selling medicines but making a positive impact on people's lives.

for the people. What do you think is the

data released Friday showed.

RBI allows banks to hike ATM charges

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank n Friday permitted banks to increase charges on ATM cash withdrawals beyond the free monthly usage by ₹2 to ₹23 per transaction from May 1. Customers are eligible for five free transactions (inclusive of financial and non- financial transactions) every month from their own bank Automated Teller Machines (ATMs). They are also eligible for free transactions (inclusive of financial and non-financial transactions) from other bank ATMs -- three transactions in metro centres and five in non-metro centres. "Beyond the free transactions, a customer may be charged a maximum fee of ₹23 per transaction. This shall be effective from May 1, 2025,' the RBI said in a circular.

10% import duty on bengal gram

New Delhi: The government has imposed 10 per cent import duty on desi chana (bengal gram) with effect from April 1. In May last year, the government had allowed duty-free import of chana to increase domestic availability and check prices. The import duty waiver was applicable till March 31, 2025. As per a finance ministry notification dated March 27, the import of bengal gram will attract 10 per cent duty from April 1. As per government data, chana production is estimated to be 11.5 million tonne in 2024-25, up from 11 million tonne in the previous year.



Meanwhile, in a release on 'India's International Investment Position for end-December 2024', the RBI said net claims of non-residents on India increased by \$11 billion during Q3:2024-25 and stood at \$364.5 billion in December 2024. Further, foreign assets of Indian residents declined by \$40.1 billion and the claims of

non-residents' in India also declined by \$29.1 billion, resulting in increase in the India net foreign liabilities 'The decline in Indian resi-

dents' foreign assets during October-December 2024 was mainly on account of the decrease of \$70.1 billion in reserve assets, the RBI said.

Reserve assets, however, recorded an increase of \$13.2 billion over December 2023.

The fall in India's foreign liabilities was due to the decline in inward direct and portfolio investments during the quarter, though trade credit, loans and currency and deposits recorded an increase, the central bank said.

of coal, refinery products, steel and electricity moderated to 1.7 per cent, 0.8 per cent, 5.6 per cent, and 2.8 per cent, respectively, against 11.6 per cent, 2.6 per cent, 9.4 per cent and 7.6 per cent in February last year.

CAD widens to \$11.5bn in Q3

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 28: India's current account deficit (CAD) inched up to \$11.5 billion, or 1.1 per cent of GDP, in the December quarter from \$10.4 billion (1.1 per cent of GDP) in the P year-ago period, mainly due to higher trade deficit, according to RBI data released Friday.

However, the CAD in the December quarter of 2024-25 has moderated from \$16.7 billion (1.8 per cent of GDP) in the preceding quarter of the fiscal year. India's current account defi-

cit (CAD) increased to \$11.5 billion (1.1 per cent of GDP) in Q32024-25 from \$10.4 billion (1.1 per cent of GDP) in Q32023-24 but moderated from \$16.7 billion (1.8 per cent of GDP) in Q22024-25.2, said the RBI's data on Developments in India's Balance of Payments. Merchandise trade deficit

increased to \$79.2 billion in the October-December period of 2024-25 from \$71.6 billion in year-ago period.

The CAD widened to \$37 billion (1.3 per cent of GDP) during April-December 2024 from \$30.6 billion (1.1 per cent of GDP) during the corresponding period of last year, primarily on account of a higher merchandise trade deficit, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said.

In the third quarter, net services receipts increased to \$51.2 billion from \$45 billion a year ago. Services exports have risen on a vear-on-vear basis across major categories

We expect the current account to witness a surplus of about \$4-6 billion in the fourth quarter of FY25, aided by a seasonal uptick in merchandise exports and the resulting moderation in the merchandise trade deficit, as well as healthy services surpluses ADITI NAYAR CHIEF ECONOMIST, ICRA

> Further, non-resident deposits (NRI deposits) recorded a net inflow of \$3.1 billion, lower than \$3.9 billion a year ago. Also, there was a depletion of \$37.7 billion to the foreign exchange reserves (on a BoP basis) in Q3:2024-25 as against an accretion of \$6 billion in Q3:2023-24.

On April-December period, the RBI said net invisibles receipt were higher during April-December 2024 than a year ago on account of services and transfers.

Net FDI inflow at \$1.6 billion during April-December 2024 was lower than \$7.8 billion during the corresponding period last year. During April-December 2024, portfolio investment recorded a net inflow of \$9.4 billion, lower than \$32.7 billion during the corresponding period a year ago.

most important aspect of running a pharmacy

tries due to health risks For instance, Nimesulide

BIZ BUZZ

Malabar opens third showroom in City

Bhubaneswar: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one of the leading jewellery retailers, inaugurated its third showroom in Soubhagyanagar, Bhubaneswar Friday. The new showroom aims to enhance the brand's presence in Odisha, offering customers a premium



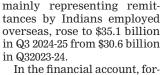
shopping experience with a wide range of gold, diamond, platinum, and gemstone jewellery. Ollywood actor and brand ambassador Sabyasachi Mishra and Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das inaugurated the showroom in the presence of company executives, customers, and well-wishers. "We are thrilled to launch our newest showroom at Soubhagyanagar, Bhubaneswar, continuing our journey of offering world-class jewellery to communities across India," said MP Ahammed, Chairman of Malabar Group. "Our commitment to craftsmanship, ethical sourcing, and exceptional service remains our top priority." With a global presence spanning 13 countries and over 380 showrooms, Malabar Gold & Diamonds is expanding its footprint further with 12 new outlets across India this March.

BoB unveils renovated Mangalpur branch



Bhubaneswar: The Bank of Baroda's Mangalpur branch in Bhubaneswar region reopened in a newly renovated avatar Friday. The inauguration ceremony was led by Swapna Bandopadhaya, General Manager & Zonal Head, Bhubaneswar Zone, in the presence of VMNS Saibabu. Deputy General Manager &

Regional Head, Bhubaneswar Region, Rajeev Kumar Sinha, Assistant General Manager & Deputy Regional Head, Bhubaneswar Region, and Branch Head Santosh Kumar Behera, along with other senior officials and staff members. Speaking at the event, Bandopadhaya emphasised the bank's commitment to enhancing customer service. "The renovated branch is a step towards providing better banking services to the people in and around Mangalpur. We are offering a variety of financial products with attractive interest rates on deposits and loans," she said.



puter services, transportation

Net outgo on the primary

income account, primarily

reflecting payments of invest-

ment income, increased to \$16.7

billion in Q32024-25 from \$13.1

Personal transfer receipts,

billion in Q32023-24.

services, and travel services.

eign direct investment recorded a net outflow of \$2.8 billion in Q32024-25 as against an inflow of \$4 billion in the corresponding period of 2023-24, the RBI said, adding that foreign portfolio investment recorded a net outflow of \$11.4 billion in October-December 2025 as against an inflow of \$12 billion in the









OrissaPO SATURDAY | MARCH 29, 2025 | BHUBANESWAR

SPORTS



SOUTHERN DERBY

RCB breach CSK bastion

Royal Challengers Bengaluru crush Chennai Super Kings by 50 runs to end 17-year wait for a Chepauk victory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, March 28: Skipper Rajat Patidar's fortuitous fifty received excellent support from an unerring set of bowlers as Royal Challengers Bengaluru snapped a 17-year winless streak at Chepauk with a huge 50-run victory over Chennai Super Kings here Friday.

Having fought their way to a competitive 196/7, RCB applied the perfect squeeze on CSK with early strikes

and the five-time winners crumbled without any resistance. making 146/8CSK's defeat

to RCB in the "Southern Derby" in their own "Anbuden" (Den of Love) was their first since the inaugural edition of the in 2008. IPL The value

the victory could have gauged from the wide smile on the face of old warhorse Virat Kohli, the only one man in this RCB line-up who was part of that distant 2008 victory. RCB's win came courtesy a heady

of

mix of 111 orthodox

Barca's Alves' rape conviction annulled

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, March 28: Former Barcelona player Dani Alves won his appeal against a sexual assault conviction as a Spanish court overturned the ruling Friday.

Alves was found guilty in February 2024 of raping a woman in a nightclub in December 2022 and sentenced to four years, six months in prison. The former Brazil and Barcelona defender denied wrongdoing during the three-day trial.



high in the air. CSK slipped to 8/3 soon when

game of giv-

ing it all with

the bat and sti-

fling the opposi-

tion with regular

wickets. But the Roy-

al Challengers also had

to thank CSK's shocking

lack of gumption as the

home side never landed

CSK never recovered

from a poor start which

saw them losing skip-

per Ruturaj Gaikwad (0)

among three wickets in-

side the first two overs.

second over when Rahul

Tripathi (5) lobbed an easy

catch to short midwick-

a pull

et off Josh Hazlewood

(3/21) while attempting

Hazlewood dealt a

body blow to CSK on

the final ball when

he had in-form

Gaikwad caught at

deep square leg

for a four-ball

duck, off a top

edge which flew

Gurindervir India's fastest man

The slide began in the

a punch in reply.

Deepak Hooda edged one behind off Bhuvneshwar Kumar while looking to guide the ball to third man, which left the five-time champions in deep trouble.

Rachin Ravindra (41, 31 balls) and Sam Curran (8) did well to arrest the slump but in bargain they could not whittle down the asking rate, which swelled to 13 runs an over.

In the ninth over, Curran went after Liam Livingstone (4-0-28-2) but was caught at long on by Krunal Pandya and it was evident at this point that CSK were staring at a heavy loss.

The regular fall of wickets never really allowed Ravindra to take the aggressive route, and his resistance ended in the 13th over when he chopped Yash Dayal onto his stumps (2/18).

Dayal reaped further benefits of the mounting pressure when he had Shivam Dube (19) playing one onto the stumps.

CSK sent in R Ashwin here, and not MS Dhoni. which told CSK had given up the fight with

116 to get with seven overs in hand. Dayal's twin strikes in the 13th over harmed CSK as much as RCB's Impact Sub Suyash Sharma's fine spell, delivering a measly 4-0-32-0 to tie down the opposition batters.

Dhoni struck three fours and two sixes to make 30 not out off 16 balls to go past Suresh Raina as CSK's highest run-scorer in IPL history, but that was only a minor consolation point.

Earlier, Patidar rode on his luck to make a vital 51 and along with Tim David (8-ball 22) lifted Royal Challengers Bengaluru to 196 for seven.

Patidar was dropped thrice by CSK fielders but he made most of the reprieves to score 51 off 32 balls (4x4s, 3x6s), providing his side a much-needed impetus in the middle-overs, while David's late burst made up for a mid-phase slump.

Early fireworks form Phil Salt (32 off 16 balls, 5x4s, 1x6s) and Devdutt Padikkal (27 off 14 balls, 2x4s, 2x6s) had masked Virat Kohli's (31, 30 balls) struggle but their dismissals left RCB in doldrums

DJOKO DEFIES AGE

At 37 years and 10 months, the Serbian tennis great is the oldest ATP Masters 1000 semi-finalist in series history (since 1990), surpassing Roger Federer

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Miami, March 28: Novak Djokovic turned on the style to take his place in the last four of the Miami Open with an impressive 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) win over American Sebastian Korda, becoming the oldest man to reach a Masters 1000 semi-final.

At 37 years and 10 months, Djokovic is the oldest ATP Masters 1000 semi-finalist in series history (since 1990), surpassing Roger Federer, who reached the last four in Indian Wells and Miami at 37 years and seven months in 2019.

He made a strong start against Korda, breaking early to get a first set advantage that he never let slip but Korda showed great resilience in the second set, taking the contest to a tie-break. But the fourth seed, looking for his seventh Miami Open title but first since 2016, again came up strong, sealing the win with a powerful ace.

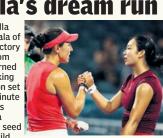
Djokovic, who will face Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov Friday. had no doubt what had been the key to his success after winning

Djokovic is two wins away from capturing a 100th career title as he cruises to Miami **Open semis**

Pegula ends Eala's dream run

essica Pegula has ended the Cinderella run of teenage wildcard Alexandra Eala of the Philippines with a 7-6(3), 5-7, 6-3 victory in the Miami Open semifinal Friday. From 5-2 down to start the match, Pegula turned around the opening set, crucially breaking serve at 5-3 after Eala double-faulted on set point, on the way to a 2-hour and 26-minute win. No 140-ranked Eala, whose run this fortnight has included wins over Jelena Ostapenko and Madison Keys and No 2 seed

following Elina Svitolina at Wimbledon 2023. The 19-year-old also became the first player from the Philippines to reach a tour-level semifinal after her huge upset win over Swiatek Thursday. Pegula will next face world No 1 Aryna Sabalenka. The American will now face the uphill challenge of winning only her third match against Sabalenka in eight previous attempts; her last win over the top seed came in Cancun during the 2023 WTA Finals.



84% of his first-serve points.

"One word, serve. I was serv-

ing very well, probably the best

serving performance, not just



I am obviously playing the best tennis I have played in quite some time. It's great when I experience tournaments like this and performances like this. It motivates me and encourages me to keep going for more NOVAK DJOKOVIC

refinding a top level.

Czech teenager Jakub Mensik marched into his first Masters semi when he defeated France's Arthur Fils 7-6 (7/5), 6-1.

Fils had enjoyed one of the biggest wins of his career on Wednesday when he defeated top seed Alexander Zverev but he struggled to repeat the feat against the impressive 19-yearold Mensik.

The towering Czech's big serve was too much for Fils, who had come through three set battles with Frances Tiafoe and Zverev and showed signs of tiredness. "It feels incredible. I think the biggest result so far in my career, so I'm glad I just kept going since the first round," said Mensik. "That's the key, to keep the focus during the two weeks because it's always tough. The iob is not done.'

ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Manisha wins first gold, bronze for Antim

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amman (Jordan), March 28: Seasoned Indian wrestler Manisha Bhanwala clinched India's first gold medal at the Asian Championships since 2021 edition with a close 8-7 win over Korea's Ok J Kim while Antim



Haryana beat Odisha; bag crown

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Harvana emerged as the champions of the Final Phase of the National Women's Hockey League 2024-2025 as they defeated Hockey Association of Odisha 3-2 in a closely contested encounter here at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf in Ranchi, Jharkhand In the much anticipated final match for the eleven days long competition. Hockey Harvana proved out to be the better one after clinching the title against Hockey Association of Odisha with a 3-2 win. Ahalya Lakra (8') opened the count on the scoreboard for Hockev Association of Odisha but the crowned champions Hockey Haryana had different plans today. Kajal (12',22') scored a brace for her team, joined by Saavi (44') who also scored one goal for the winning side. Hockey Haryana's defence restricted the opponent from scoring after the first goal till Dipika Barwa (54') again found the gap for Hockey Association of Odisha in the final moments of the game but fell short when the final whistle was blown.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HOCKEY LEAGUE

Iga Swiatek, became just the second wild card to defeat three or more Grand Slam champions in a single tour-level event,



NATIONAL WOMEN'S HOCKEY LEAGUE

2024-25 (FINAL PHASE)

That court ruled Friday that there was "insufficient evidence" to rule out Alves' presumption of innocence.

"Dani Alves is innocent, and that has been proven," his defense lawyer Inés Guardiola told Catalan radio RAC1. "Justice has finally been served."

The Alves trial was the first high-profile case since Spain overhauled its laws in 2022 to make consent central to defining a sex crime in response to an upswell of protests after a gang-rape case during the San Fermin bull-running festival in Pamplona in 2016.

The legislation popularly known as the "only yes means yes" law defines consent as an explicit expression of a person's will, making it clear that silence or passivity do not equal consent.

with a blistering 10.20-second run in a top-class field at the Indian Grand Prix 1, here Friday.

Racer smashes 100m

10.20s at IGP 1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore,

national record. clocks

Gurindervir Singh stormed in-

to the record books, smashing

the men's 100m national record

March

28:

The 24-year-old Punjab sprinter, representing Reliance, eclipsed the previous national mark of 10.23 seconds set by Manikanta Hoblidhar in October 2023.

Singh's previous personal best stood at 10.27 seconds -clocked in 2021.

Hoblidhar, also of Reliance. finished a close second with a time of 10.22 seconds which also bettered his own earlier national record by 0.01 seconds in the men's 100m Final Race D.

Running side by side in lanes 5 and 6, Singh and Hoblidhar were neck-and-neck from the beginning but the former won the race, bettering the earlier national record by 0.03 seconds. Reliance swept the top-three spots as another top sprinter



I wanted to run a fast race but the national record was a bonus. I should be able to do better at the Federation Cup GURINDERVIR SINGH

spot with a time of 10.43 seconds. The trio and Animesh Kujur have been India's top 100m runners for some time. Kujur did not take part in this event.

Singh had earlier won 100m gold in the 2021 and 2024 National Inter-State Championships, as well as in the 2024 Amlan Borgohain took the third Federation Cup.



Hockey Harvana remained at the top position throughout the tournament.

"Our team Hockey Haryana has always been known for playing aggressive hockey and that was the only plan today as well. I asked the team to play freely and play attacking hockey. We have played against Hockey Association of Odisha earlier also, we know how good they are converting penalty corners, our team put a good show in restricting them today and that was the game changer in today's match" said Dilbag Singh who's representing Hockey Haryana as the Head-Coach in this tournament.

In the other match for 3rd/4th position. Hockey Jharkhand edged past Hockey Madhya Pradesh as they won the game 1-0 to end their campaign with a podium finish. Sweety Dungdung (12') scored the deciding goal of the match for Hockey Jharkhand in the first quarter of the game.

Panghal settled for a bronze here Friday. Manisha (62kg) began with an easy technical superiority win over Kazakhstan's Tvnvs Dubek

and pinned Korea's Hanbit Lee for another dominating win. The semifinal was no different, as she conceded only one point to eventually win 5-1 against Kalmira Bilimbek Kyzy.

In the title clash, Manisha looked down and out, trailing 2-7 but logged six points in a row to grab her first gold medal at the Asian Championships.



She had three podium finishes at the tournament before but they were all bronze medal efforts. In the 2021 edition on Almaty, Vinesh Phogat and Sarita Mor had won gold medals.

The 20-year-old Panghal, competing in her first internation al event after a disappointing show at the Paris Olympics beat China's Jin Zhang in the 53kg quarterfinal but was no match for Japan's Moe Kiyooka, who won by technical superiority

In the opening three-minute period, Panghal, India's first U20 world champion, did not score any point but conceded one. In the second period, she tried hard but Kiyooka was too strong in her defence.

Indian wrestlers have now won one gold, one silver and six bronze medals, including two by Greco Roman wrestlers in the tournament.

Landmark moment as DCCI receives PCI recognition

PCI RECOGNITION TO DCCI IS A REMARKABLE MILESTONE IN THE HISTORY OF DIFFERENTLY ABLED CRICKET IN INDIA, AS THESE PLAYERS WILL GET TO PLAY UNDER THE BCCI UMBRELLA AND REPRESENT INDIA IN ESTABLISHED INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 28: The Differently Abled Cricket Council of India (DCCI) has achieved a incredible milestone by gaining recognition from the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) - the apex governing body dedicated to promoting and developing para sport in the country.

This acknowledgment is a significant step that highlights DCCI's dedication to fostering and promoting cricket for individuals with disabilities throughout the nation. This

recognition positions DCCI as an essential member of the PCI, empowering the cricket council to enhance its mission of inclusivity in sports, the DC-CI said in a statement Friday.

Founded in 2021 under the guidance of Jay Shah, the then Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), DCCI stands as the top organisation for four unique formats of differently abled cricket in India blind cricket, deaf cricket, physically challenged crick-

et and wheelchair cricket. Under the auspices of BCCI, DCCI serves as the umbrella



organisation for four distinguished cricket associations dedicated to differently abled cricket formats in India. The associations include the Cricket Association for Blind in India (CABI), the Indian Deaf Cricket Association (IDCA), the Physically Challenged Cricket Association of India (PCCAI) and the Wheelchair Cricket India Association (WCIA)

The establishment of DCCI was necessitated by the need to have a consolidated platform to upgrade the status of differently abled cricketers and offer them opportunities to flaunt their capabilities on national as well as international platforms.

Being a body recognised by

BCCI and PCI, DCCI conducts different tournaments and events under its umbrella, providing competitive opportunities for players in all formats of differently abled cricket. The council fosters cooperation among the stakeholders, such as players, coaches, and cricket enthusiasts, to consolidate the movement for differently abled cricket. BCCI has been actively supporting all DCCI ventures, resulting in the creation of a separate Differently Abled Cricket Committee with some notable personalities like Dr Mahantesh GK for Blind Crick-

et, Sumit Jain for Deaf Cricket and Ravikant Chauhan for Physically Disabled Cricket.

Having been recognised by PCI, DCCI has also called upon all the cricket enthusiasts and well-wishers to come along with them on their journey. Together, they hope to empower differently abled cricketers to live their dreams and bring glory to the country. In the future, the organisation continues to ensure increased participation and support for the athletes, getting them the respect they deserve within the larger cricketing fraternity

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