

DSPL - 436



ଶ୍ରୀ ନରେନ୍ଦ୍ର ମୋଦୀ
ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ



ଶ୍ରୀ ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

ଶୁଭାରମ୍ଭ

ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ **ଶ୍ରୀ ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ**ଙ୍କ
କରକମଳରେ

ଅନ୍ୟୋଦୟ ଗୃହ ଯୋଜନା

ପୂରଣ ହେବ ପଙ୍କାଘର ଆଶା, ବିକଶିତ ହେବ ଆମ ଓଡ଼ିଶା

ଭିନ୍ନକ୍ଷମ, ବିଧବା, ରୋଗାକ୍ରାନ୍ତ, ଶହୀଦ ପରିବାର, ଘରଯୋଡ଼ି, ହାତୀ ଉପଦ୍ରବ, ବନ୍ୟା ବାତ୍ୟା କ୍ଷତିଗ୍ରସ୍ତ ଯୋଗ୍ୟ ପରିବାରଙ୍କୁ ଅଗ୍ରାଧିକାର ଭିତ୍ତିରେ ଗୃହ ମଞ୍ଜୁର ହେବ

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ଏବଂ

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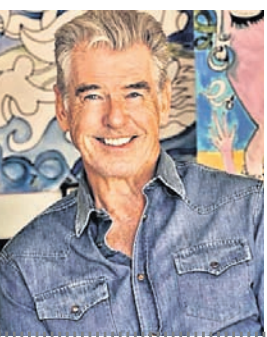


KIM'S 'MANIFESTING' HER NEW ROMANCE

During the latest episode of *The Kardashians*, Kim Kardashians explained that she's renovating her house and creating a space for 'him'. Kris Jenner, Kim's mom, then asked: "Who's him?" And Kim - who was married to Kanye between 2014 and 2022 - replied: "I don't know. Manifesting!"

BROSNAN HAD ALWAYS HIS EYES ON DUMBLEDORE

Hollywood star Pierce Brosnan says he has always had his eyes on playing the Hogwarts headmaster Dumbledore in a *Harry Potter* remake. The 72-year-old actor has been backed by fans to play the wise and powerful character in the upcoming TV adaptation of JK Rowling's beloved wizarding saga.



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ARIES
Today, you may wake up with your nose in the air. Though you may feel bossy and important, others may not feel that way about you. Avoid giving orders that sound like insults. Otherwise, the whole thing may fall flat on your face, says Ganesha.

TAURUS
Getting through today will be like a cruise, says Ganesha. Business deals will kneel to the charm of your honey tongue and you will taste success. As the day progresses, you may lose interest in things. Beware of being too sentimental in the evening, warns Ganesha. You will feel loved and generous in social gatherings tonight.

GEMINI
A marathon brainstorming session with your colleagues, a scamper for meeting deadlines, and a demanding spouse will leave you quite stressed out by the end of the day. You, however, are an expert in dividing time between business, home and pleasure.

CANCER
This is your big moment. You are going to deal with a huge amount of money - the kind of amount you would want to fill your swimming pool with and swim in it. Statutory warning issued by Ganesha: Don't dive in it, for you may hurt yourself as something or someone is likely to pull the plug, draining out most of the wealth that was amassed overnight.

LEO
Since when was a day complete without a little bit of a scruff and a small squabble? These are the annoying little situations that remind you just how better the alternative is. Ganesha portends a day in which you are jinxed with a propensity for quarrels. So, it is advisable to shun any open confrontation at work.

VIRGO
A roof, a cloth and two square meals a day is what you obviously provide for your family; but today, your thought will be burdened by how you can deliver the luxury too. Think on a new line at work today. You may host your loved ones to a fabulous dinner in the evening, says Ganesha.

LIBRA
All achievements are scripted. So, share the blueprint of your success with others today. Ganesha expects you to be obedient and cooperative at work in the afternoon; as a result, your social connections will grow miraculously in the evening.

SCORPIO
You shall be magical with relationships today. Wave your wand and rebuild bridges, says Ganesha. You might even be involved in some cloak-and-dagger stuff. You are likely to be cavalier and bold in all the moves you make. Ganesha sees you blazing a trail and winning in your path to glory.

SAGITTARIUS
You may just strike the notes of your beloved's heart today. Your presence and presents will make them realise how much you do indeed love them. Expect a trip to posh showrooms and designer shops to buy them expensive gifts. But don't neglect work or your long-term goals, advises Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
In all probability, you will be in a bizarre frame of mind. At work, there will be a sudden turn of events that shall suddenly create a tottering pile of tasks on your table. In financial matters, you are likely to remain very cautious.

AQUARIUS
You are fully charged and raring to go! Your friends are supportive of your new schemes, and your bosses are pushing you to complete pending projects. This shouldn't be a problem, considering your current levels of energy and enthusiasm, says Ganesha.

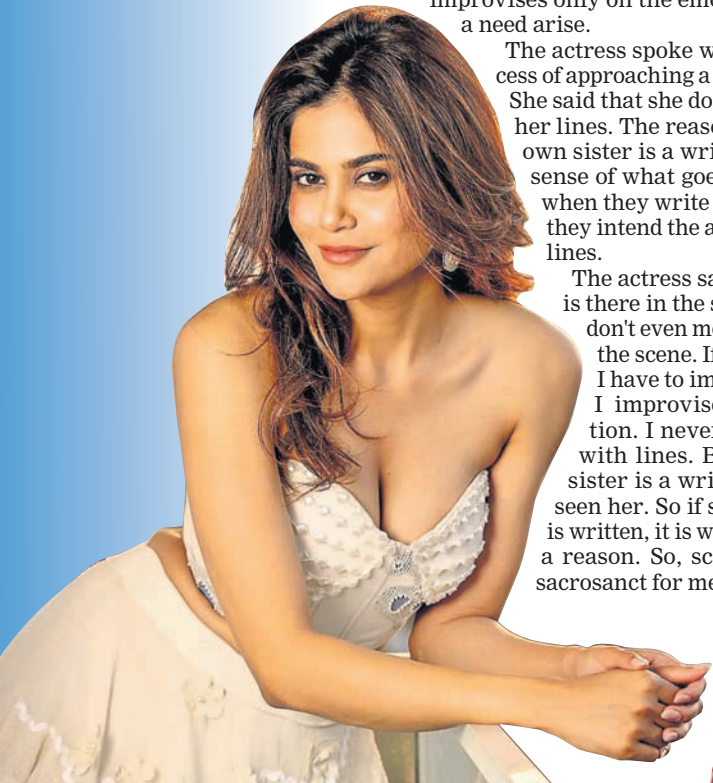
PISCES
Your decision-making ability will be at its finest today, with all your spontaneous split-second decisions hitting the mark. However, do not get carried away by your early successes and temper your responses, for there could be implications later.

Script sacrosanct for Aaditi

Mumbai: Actress Aaditi Pohankar believes in maintaining the sanctity of the script. The actress, who shot to fame with her character in the hit streaming show *Aashram*, has said that the improvises only on the emotions of her character should a need arise.

The actress spoke with this agency about her process of approaching a part, and sticking to the script. She said that she doesn't even change the words in her lines. The reason behind the same is that her own sister is a writer so, the actress has the sense of what goes on a writers' minds when they write a dialogue, and how they intend the actor to speak those lines.

The actress said, "Everything is there in the script. I, in fact, don't even move words from the scene. If I am told that I have to improvise, then I improvise with emotion. I never improvise with lines. Because my sister is a writer, I have seen her. So if something is written, it is written for a reason. So, script is sacrosanct for me." IANS



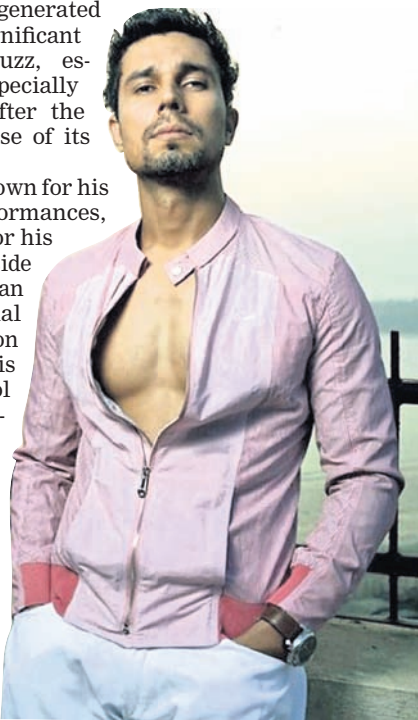
Sara's desire

Mumbai: Sara Ali Khan has carved a niche for herself in the industry, taking on diverse roles that reflect contemporary narratives. As she continues her journey in Bollywood, she recently shared insights into the kind of films she would like to produce if given the opportunity. Her passion for storytelling and deep understanding of modern audiences highlight her evolving career.

Expressing her vision, Sara emphasised her desire to tell stories that resonate with modern Indian women. "Our country has so many stories. There was a time when I wanted to be a queen in a Sanjay Leela Bhansali film and a modern girl in a Zoya Akhtar film—both are still true. I just want to depict stories of a modern Indian girl with dreams, aspirations, and everything," she stated. Her commitment to portraying nuanced female characters aligns with the increasing demand for stories reflecting the aspirations and struggles of today's generation. With more actresses stepping into production, her potential entry into this space could strengthen the representation of independent, strong-willed women in Indian cinema.

On the acting front, Sara has an exciting lineup ahead. She will star alongside Aditya Roy Kapur in Anurag Basu's *Metro... In Dino*, exploring human relationships in a metropolitan setting.

Mumbai: Randeep Hooda is set to share screen space with veteran actor Sunny Deol in the upcoming action film *Jaat*, directed by Gopichand Malineni. The film promises high-intensity action sequences and



Palak's run-in with paparazzi

Mumbai: Actor Palak Tiwari recently found herself at the receiving end of a frustrating encounter with the paparazzi. As she was being clicked, one of photographers referred to Ananya Panday, leaving Palak

irked. Palak Tiwari was recently spotted in Mumbai when her encounter with the paparazzi left her disheartened. As she arrived, smiling and waving at the photographers, one of them posed a question that caught her off guard: "Palak Tiwari bole ya Ananya Panday bole?" (Should we call you Palak Tiwari or Ananya Panday?)

Initially, Palak chose to ignore the remark, but when the photographers repeated the question, she couldn't help but respond. With a hint of frustration, she asked, "Hamesha aise kyu bolte ho aap log?" (Why do you always speak like this?). She then walked away. Despite the moment, she maintained her composure. For the airport outing, she was dressed in a black one-shoulder top featuring a *Bhootnii* poster and grey denim.

The video of the same has surfaced on social media, following which social media users dropped shocking face emojis in the comment section. IANS

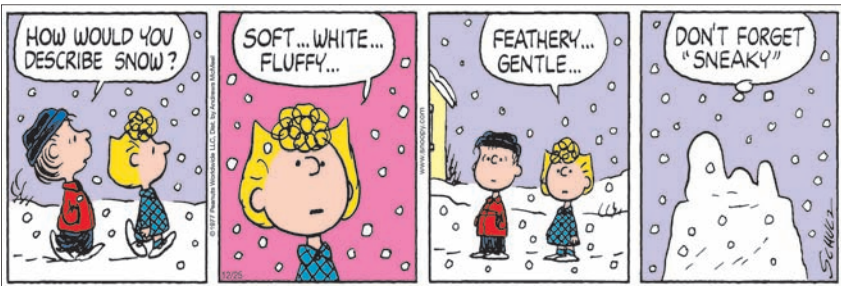
Randeep's childhood inspiration

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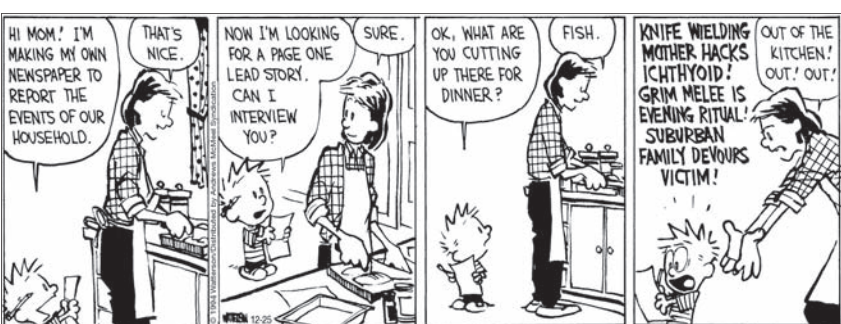
has generated significant buzz, especially after the release of its trailer. Hooda, known for his compelling performances, is receiving praise for his powerful presence alongside Deol. For him, *Jaat* is more than just another film—it is a personal milestone. Reflecting on his admiration for Deol, Hooda revealed that he and his friends idolised the actor during their school days, even keeping his posters in their hostel cupboards for inspiration. "I have always been a huge fan of Sunny Deol. Growing up, we admired his powerful screen presence, intensity, and physique. I remember having his posters in our school hostel cupboards, looking at them and trying to lift weights and do push-ups," he shared. Hooda expressed excitement about matching Deol's energy on screen. "Playing an ultra-macho action star opposite a legend like Sunny sir is a dream. He is a powerhouse, and sharing space with him is both a challenge and an honor," he added.

With *Jaat* marking Malineni's Bollywood debut, the film promises an action-packed showdown. Set for release April 10, 2025, it features an ensemble cast, including Regina Cassandra, Saiyami Kher, and Vineet Kumar Singh.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

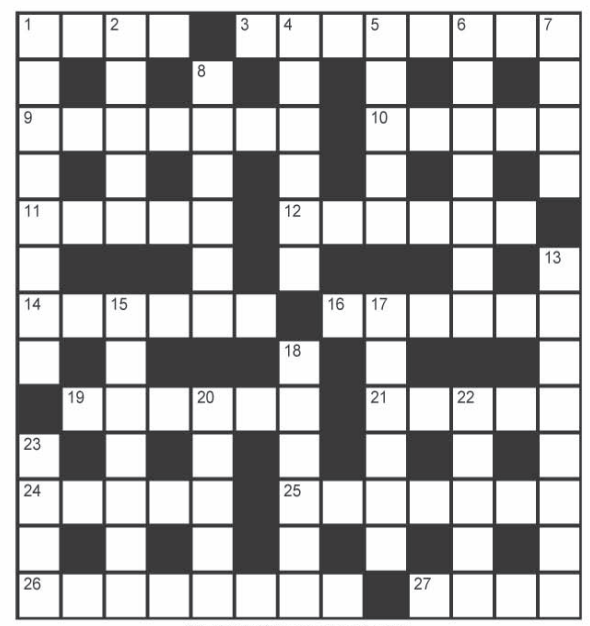


BREVITY



FUN POST

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Ump's call
 - 3 Appealing
 - 9 Graduate
 - 10 Solar system member
 - 11 Literary genre
 - 12 Employee's worry
 - 14 Legendary
 - 16 Gun dog
 - 19 Falling star
 - 21 Angler's basket
 - 24 Sharp narrow ridge
 - 25 Military operation
 - 26 Quartz pieces
 - 27 Greek letter
 - 8 Infuriate
 - 13 Adam's Peak locale (3,5)
 - 15 A place for suds?
 - 17 Make allowances
 - 18 Having existed from the beginning
 - 20 Boot out
 - 22 Upper echelon
 - 23 Barber's supply
- Down**
- 1 Draw
 - 2 Animal group
 - 4 Shoe part
 - 5 Diplomat
 - 6 Perk
 - 7 Alleviate

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.

		9						3
		6	8					
8	3			4				
						4		
4	8	7		9		5		
		2						7
				7	9			1
5			1	6		3		
	7		4	3		9		2

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

S	A	V	A	G	E	V	O	L	U	M	E
O	O	N	R	A	S	S	X				
M	I	C	R	O	B	S	I	E	V	E	
B	A	C	F	I	L	E	T				
R	E	L	I	C	O	B	S	C	E	N	E
E	H	R	O	S	E	R					
A	S	T	I	G	M	A	T	I	S	M	
C	E	A	R								
A	N	C	I	E	N	T	I	R	A	T	E
S	T	M	O	U	D	C					
S	K	I	M	P	R	U	M	M	A	G	E
I	O	T	Y	P	G	S					
A	N	N	O	Y	S						
S	H	E	E	T	S						

SUDOKU

2	8	5	7	9	4	1	3	6
1	9	4	8	6	3	2	7	5
7	6	3	2	1	5	4	9	8
3	1	7	5	2	6	8	4	9
9	4	2	3	8	7	6	5	1
8	5	6	1	4	9	3	2	7
5	2	1	9	3	8	7	6	4
6	7	8	4	5	2	9	1	3
4	3	9	6	7	1	5	8	2

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



COURTESY VISIT: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta calls on Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at Lok Seva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

18 Naxals killed in twin encounters

Inching towards the Union government's goal of eradicating Naxalism before March 31, 2026, security forces Saturday eliminated 18 Left Wing Extremists (LWEs), including 11 women, during encounters in Chhattisgarh's Sukma and Bijapur districts. Four security personnel are said to have received injuries in the gunfights which have become a norm in the jungles of the mineral-rich state, of late. The encounters came 10 days after 30 members of the banned CPI (Maoist) were eliminated in two separate encounters in Bijapur and Kanker districts. With Saturday's encounter, a total of 134 Naxals have been gunned down in the state so far this year, while 219 of them had been neutralised last year. However, the veracity of such 'encounters' have time and again come under a cloud. One such encounter in May last year where 12 Maoists were killed, generated unprecedented controversy after villagers staged protests terming it as cold-blooded mass murder of innocent tribals



recording a major success in the mission to eradicate Naxalism before March 31, 2026.

The encounters occurred on the eve of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to Chhattisgarh.

Four jawans were injured as security teams inflicted major damage on Naxals, killing 17 cadres, including a high-ranking Maoist, identified as Kuhdami Jagdish, carrying a reward of Rs 25 lakh on his head, in Sukma, police said.

He was wanted in more than a dozen deadly Naxal incidents, including the 2013 Jhiram Valley attack that left several Congress leaders dead.

Another encounter was reported from the neighbouring Bijapur district where one Naxal was killed, a police officer said.

Among the four injured security personnel, three belong to the District Reserve Guard (DRG), a unit of the

state police, while the fourth is from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), they said.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah hailed the Sukma encounter, saying those carrying weapons and resorting to violence cannot bring change but peace and development can.

"Another strike on Naxalism! Our security agencies have neutralised 16 Naxalites and recovered a massive cache of automatic weapons in an operation in Sukma," he wrote on X.

The Home Minister said under the leadership of Prime Minister, the government is resolved to eradicate Naxalism before March 31, 2026.

Ten days ago, security forces had gunned down 30 members of the banned CPI (Maoist) in two separate encounters in the Bijapur and Kanker districts in the Bastar region, which also includes Sukma.

Lord's land: Uniform Policy within 3 months

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 29: The state government will bring a new 'Uniform Policy' within three months to settle disputes involving lands belonging to Srimandir, Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan informed the Assembly Saturday.

The Odisha government had brought a 'Uniform Policy' in 2003 to provide temple land of up to 100 decimals on a concessional rate and over 100 decimals at the benchmark value or market rate to people who already have possession of the land for long years, he said. "The previous government had stopped implementing the policy. Another revised Uniform Policy was brought in 2019. But, the 2019 policy also needs some revision. So, we will bring a fresh Uniform Policy over the next three months for settlement of the land disputes," the minister said.

For this, district-level committees led by the respective District Collector and a high-level panel at Jagannath temple administration level have been formed, he said. "We set a target to complete the land settlement process in the next two years," he further informed the House. Harichandan said the money collected through the process will strengthen the foundation fund of the Jagannath temple. He said a total of 60,426.943 acres of land in the name of Shree Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bi-

Total 60,426.943 acres of temple land in Odisha

- 322.930 acres in WB
- 28.218 acres in Maha
- 25.110 acres in MP
- 17.020 acres in Andhra
- 1.7 acres in Chh'garh
- 0.274 acre in Bihar

je, Srikhetra Puri, have been identified in 24 of the 30 districts of Odisha.

Of these, the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) has received the final Record of Rights (RoR) of over 38,061.892 acres of land, and the digitisation process of the land records is nearly complete, he said.

The government is taking steps to collect RoR of the remaining land parcels, he said. Similarly, 395,252 acres of land in six other states were identified in the name of Lord Jagannath, Harichandan said.

On the landed properties in other states, he said a maximum of 322.930 acres of land is in West Bengal followed by 28.218 acres in Maharashtra, 25.110 acres in Madhya Pradesh, 17.020 acres in Andhra Pradesh, 1.7 acres in Chhattisgarh and 0.274 acre in Bihar.

He further informed that a total of 169.86 acres of land belonging to Jagannath temple, Puri have also remained encroached in seven districts of Odisha - Cuttack, Puri, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Khurda, Balasore and Jajpur.

Centre approves Sujata Karthikeyan's retirement plea

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 29: Senior Odisha cadre IAS officer Sujata R Karthikeyan, wife of BJD president Naveen Patnaik's former close aide VK Pandian, has been granted permission to take voluntary retirement from government service, official sources said Saturday. The approval to her request for voluntary retirement was informed to Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja by Under Secretary in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievance and Pensions, Bhupinder Pal Singh through a letter.

Sujata, a 2000-batch officer, was the special secretary in Finance department. She had applied for voluntary retirement owing to personal reasons. In May 2024, the Election Commission had ordered her transfer to a department where she would not deal with the public following allegations of misuse of her office. She was then serving as the Commissioner-cum-Secretary of Mission Shakti department. She went on a six-month leave after BJD lost the elections in 2024. She was granted Child Care Leave till November 26 last year, but her application for extension was rejected by the state's BJP government.

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US-INDIA TRADE TALKS: TRUMP TERMS MODI 'VERY SMART MAN'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York/Washington, March 29: US President Donald Trump has described PM Narendra Modi as a 'very smart man' and his 'great friend' while emphasising that tariff talks between the US and India would 'work out very well'.

The remarks assume significance as they came the same day Foreign Secretary Vikram

Misri spoke with US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau to discuss bilateral trade, including the reduction of barriers to achieve a balanced trade relationship.

"PM Modi was here just recently and we have always been very good friends," the US president said in the White House Friday. The remarks came days before Trump's reciprocal tariffs on the US trade partners kick in April 2. **P7**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sukma/Bijapur, March 29: Security forces gunned down 18 Naxals, including 11 women, in twin encounters in Chhattisgarh's Sukma and Bijapur districts in the Bastar region Saturday,

MYANMAR QUAKE TOLL CROSSES 1,600

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bangkok, March 29: Myanmar's ruling military said Saturday on state television that the confirmed death toll from a devastating 7.7 magnitude earthquake rose to 1,644, as more bodies were pulled from the rubble of the scores of buildings that collapsed when it struck near the country's second-largest city.

The new total is a sharp rise compared to the 1,002 total announced just hours earlier, underlining the difficulty of confirming casualties over a widespread region and the likelihood that the numbers will continue to grow from Friday's quake.

The number of injured increased to 3,408, while the missing figure rose to 139.

Rescue efforts are underway especially in the major stricken cities of Mandalay, the country's No 2 city, and Naypyitaw, the capital. But even though teams and equipment have been flown in from other nations, they are hindered by the airports in those cities being damaged and apparently unfit to land planes.

Myanmar, also known as Burma, is in the throes of a prolonged civil war, which

Tremors in Manipur

IMPHAL: An earthquake of 3.8 magnitude hit Manipur's Noney district Saturday, officials said. There was no immediate report of any loss of life or damage to property, they said. The earthquake took place at 2.31 pm, and the location was in Noney district of the northeastern state, the National Center for Seismology said. The depth of the quake was 10 km, it said. The northeastern states fall in the high seismic zone, and earthquakes frequently hit the region.

is already responsible for a humanitarian crisis. It makes movement around the country both difficult and dangerous, complicating relief efforts and raising fears that the death toll could still rise precipitously.

The earthquake struck midday Friday with an epicentre not far from Mandalay, followed by several aftershocks, including one measuring 6.4. It sent buildings in many areas toppling to the ground, buckled roads, caused bridges to collapse and burst a dam.

In Naypyidaw, crews worked Saturday to repair damaged roads, while electricity, phone and internet services remained down for most of the city. The earthquake brought down many

buildings, including multiple units that housed government civil servants, but that section of the city was blocked off by authorities Saturday.

In neighbouring Thailand, the quake rocked the greater Bangkok area, home to around 17 million people, and other parts of the country.

Bangkok city authorities said the number of confirmed dead was now 10, nine at the site of the collapsed high-rise under construction near the capital's popular Chatuchak market, while 78 people were still unaccounted for. Rescue efforts were continuing in the hope of finding additional survivors.

On Saturday, more heavy equipment was brought in to move the tons of rubble, but hope was fading among friends and family members of the missing that they would be found alive.

"I was praying that that they had survived but when I got here and saw the ruin—where could they be? In which corner? Are they still alive? I am still praying that all six are alive," said 45-year-old Naruemo Thonglek, sobbing as she awaited news about her partner, who is from Myanmar, and five friends who worked at the site. **MORE P8**

Drugs young bankers use to survive the summer

As Mark Moran was facing another 90-hour week as an investment-banking intern at Credit Suisse in New York, he knew he needed help to survive the rest of the summer. His colleagues gave him a tip: Visit a Wall Street health clinic and tell the staff he had trouble focusing.

Ahead of his first appointment, he filled out a five-minute questionnaire. One of the questions asked if he had trouble staying organised, another, if he procrastinated. He then met with a clinician who said his answers suggested he

had attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). He left with a prescription for Adderall.

No matter that a family member, a psychologist, didn't think Moran had ADHD. He found that when he took Adderall, he could keep working for hours, and was able to actually be interested in some of the mundane tasks required of a young investment banker, such as aligning corporate logos on a PowerPoint or formatting cells in Microsoft Excel.

He also wanted to show his bosses he was a hard



worker and eventually secure a lucrative full-time job offer after finishing graduate school.

"They gave me a script,

and within months, I was hooked," said Moran, now 33 years old and running his own investor-relations firm. He's also a provocative personality on social media, commenting on finance, politics and culture, including prescription drug use. "You become dependent on it to work."

Images of Wall Street's rank-and-file blowing cash on illegal drugs and nightlife are well known, with cocaine a favored drug through the 1980s, as portrayed in "The Wolf of Wall Street."

Contd....P2

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Assembly clears Appropriation Bill 2025 as BJD stages walkout

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 29: Amid a walkout by the opposition BJD and in the absence of suspended Congress MLAs, the Assembly Saturday passed the Appropriation Bill, 2025, allowing the state government to spend ₹2.90 lakh crore from its consolidated fund during the financial year 2025-26.

This was the first full budget of the BJP government, which was presented by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi in the House February 17.

"No money can be withdrawn from the consolidated fund of Odisha except under appropriation made by the law passed in accordance with the provision of the Constitution," Majhi said, adding that two aspects are taken into consideration, one is the size of the budget, and the second is the fiscal discipline.

The budget for the financial year 2025-26 is based on these two criteria, he said.

"If we look at the size of the



budget, it is ₹2.90 lakh crore, which is about 10 per cent more than that of the 2024-25 fiscal. Out of this total estimate, the proposed programme expenditure is ₹1.70 lakh crore, which is 59 per cent of the total budget estimate," Majhi said.

He said the capital expenditure is ₹65,012 crore in the current budget is 6.1 per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), the "highest" among all the major states in the country.

"A few days ago, I was watching an interview with the chief minister of Telangana, he was saying the financial condition

of his state is so bad that it is not even able to spend ₹500 crore per month on capital expenditure. It is better not to talk about the financial condition of Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh," he said. However, the chief minister said that Odisha is able to spend more than ₹5,000 crore per month on capital expenditure and has also made provisions for this.

Stating that one of the key indicators of the budget is the fiscal deficit, Majhi said for the financial year 2025-26, this deficit is only ₹34,200 crore, which is limited to 3.21 per cent of the GSDP. "This is a very healthy economy. This financial management of our government is the best in the country and our government has not deviated from this goal even a little," he said.

He said this budget is based on four pillars - livelihood, infrastructure development, women empowerment and social security. These four pillars will lead to a new, strong and prosperous Odisha, he said.

Exotic wildlife seized at BPIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 29: Customs officials Saturday seized exotic wildlife, including king snakes, monitor lizards and turtles, at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here.

The seized wildlife concealed in chocolate boxes were being smuggled from Thai capital Bangkok to Chennai, Injeet Kumar Mohanty, a Customs official engaged at the airport, said.

Acting on a tip-off, the luggage of a person hailing from Chennai was searched and the seizures were made, he said, adding the passenger was detained and he was being questioned.

A total of nine California king snakes, 10 pig nose turtles and 12 Nile monitor lizards were seized, of which three lizards were dead, he said.

The wildlife species have been handed over to the forest department.

During preliminary investigation, it was found that the exotic species were being taken to the Tamil Nadu capital for sale, Mohanty added.

Delhi govt to celebrate Utkal Divas in grand manner: Gupta

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 29: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta Saturday announced that her government will celebrate the upcoming 'Utkal Divas' in a grand manner in the national capital.

Utkal Divas, also known as Odisha Day, is celebrated April 1 every year to commemorate the formation of the state of Odisha. On this day in 1936, Odisha was carved out as a separate province from the Bihar and Orissa province under British rule, based on linguistic identity. While extending greetings to the Odia people here and those living in Delhi on upcoming Utkal Divas, Gupta said, "This time, the Delhi government will celebrate the Odisha Day with much fanfare in the national capital."

She said Odia families residing in the national capital are working hard for the development of Delhi.

"I would like to say that they are an integral part of Delhi and I assure them that the government of Delhi always stands



Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta at Srimandir in Puri, Saturday

by them and the government is committed to work for their development," Gupta said.

Gupta met Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Saturday. "Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta paid a courtesy visit to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at Lok Seva Bhawan today," Odisha Chief Minister's Office said in a post on X.

The Delhi CM visited Srimandir in Puri Saturday accompanied by Puri MP Sambit Patra and Odisha Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandran and offered prayers to the sibling deities.

"Jai Jagannath, I had the op-

portunity to have the darshan of Lord Jagannath at Puri Temple. I prayed to Mahaprabhu that under the leadership of Modi Ji, Delhi and the country should reach new heights of development and this path should always remain clear," Gupta told reporters outside the 12th-century shrine.

"I am visiting Puri Jagannath Dham for the first time after assuming the office of Chief Minister in Delhi. On the occasion of 'Amavasya'," she said.

The Delhi CM is on a two-day visit to Odisha. The Delhi CM Friday paid tributes to veteran BJP leader and former Union Minister Debendra Pradhan on the departed leader's 12th Day ritual.

"Today in Bhubaneswar, I paid floral tributes to the father of Union Minister @dpradhanbjp, former Union minister Late Debendra Pradhan ji, at a tribute meeting. Remembering his invaluable contribution to the development of the country, I prayed to God to grant peace to the departed soul. Om Shanti," Gupta said in a post on X Friday.

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	38.6°	37.2°
Min Temp	25.6°	24.2°
Humidity	83%	81%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST
Mainly clear sky

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By an affidavit before Executive Magistrate, Tigriria 24.01.2025, I Santosh Kumar Bahadi declare that my wife's surname has been changed from Behera to Bahadi. Henceforth she will be known as Sarojini Bahadi instead of Sarojini Behera for all purpose.

I, Taslim Alias Tasneem Husain Kanchwala, W/o-Husain Kanchwala, R/o 3rd Flr, Metro Plaza, Phase-II, PO - Buxi Bazar, PS - Cantonment, Dist-Cuttack, Pin-753001, Odisha, declare by this Affidavit No.- 151-D8, Dated - 27.03.2025 that now onwards I shall be known as TASNIM HUSAIN KANCHWALA for all future purposes.

I Rajani Agrawal, W/o. Pankaj Kumar Agrawal, At-Club Road, Balangir, PIN - 767001, Declared by this Affidavit No.1958, Dtd. 26.03.2025 that Rajani Agrawal and Rajni Agrawal connotes and denotes to one and same individual person.

I, Priti Priyadarsini, D/o of Prasanta Kumar Behera, At- MIG11, H.B. Colony, P.O./P.S./ Dist.- Khordha-752055, I declare by this affidavit No.-842, dated on 28.3.2025 that now onwards I shall be known as Priti Priyadarshini for all purpose.

Vig arrests 5 for over ₹1 crore fraud

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 29: The Vigilance department Friday arrested five government officials, including four former Primary Agriculture Cooperative Credit Societies (PACS) secretaries and a large-sized Adivasi Multipurpose Cooperative Society (LAMPCS) official, for allegedly embezzling over ₹1 crore through fraudulent means.

A senior vigilance official identified the arrested officials as Bhubaneswar Sahu (former secretary, Katarbaga PACS), Bhagaban Patel (former secretary, Talab PACS), and Chhabila Behera and Kantilal Behera (both former secretaries, Kans-



RI DEBASIS NAYAK

ingha PACS).

These officials allegedly misappropriated ₹64,13,730, meant for public loan repayment, by manipulating official records and withdrawing money from depositors' savings accounts. They have been booked under Sections 13(1)(a) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 2018, along with IPC Sections 477(a),

201, and 409.

In a separate case, Chitta Ranjan Mohanty, managing director of Raibhoga LAMPCS, was arrested for misappropriating ₹40,68,000 by showing fake excess expenditure for the financial years 2019-20 and 2023-24.

Additionally, Debasis Nayak, a revenue inspector at Krandibili Revenue Circle in Kandhamal district, was caught red-handed while demanding and accepting ₹7,000 bribe. Investigators found that Nayak had used threats to extort the bribe. He has been booked under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 2018.

Investigations are ongoing in all cases.

BDA VC Naik reviews TP scheme progress

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 29: Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) vice chairman N Thirumala Naik reviewed the ongoing Town Planning (TP) scheme here Saturday and assessed the progress of infrastructure development across TP scheme number I, II, III, and IV, which covers eight revenue villages, including Paikarapur, Sijiput, Naragoda, Sahajpur, Tamando, Bijipur, Nuagaon, and Shyamsundarpur.

Officials reported that BDA has completed 60km of embankment roads, 64.9km of drainage work, and constructed 29 culverts in the revenue villages. Additionally, bitumen work has been completed on a 4km stretch. The hearing process regarding objections and suggestions from landowners under the TP-VIII scheme for Andharua and Daspur is ongoing.

BDA has also proposed 14 new TP schemes in Zone-4 to enhance urban infrastructure. Naik directed officials to expedite execution and conduct regular progress reviews to ensure timely completion. The meeting was attended by Khurda Collector Chanchal Rana, BDA Secretary Manas Ranjan Padhi, and Deputy Commissioner (TP) Bhabataran Sahu.



As per the scheme, landowners contribute 40 per cent of their land for infrastructure, while 60 per cent remains as TP area, featuring roads, drainage, water supply, sewerage, and electricity.

The initiative aligns with the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) 2010, which proposes a 64.9km ring road. BDA plans to implement 45 TP schemes across 58 revenue villages to facilitate planned development and minimise land acquisition.

Loyola School clinches inter-school tourney

The tournament, held as part of Loyola School's Silver Jubilee celebrations, brought together top city schools in a spirited competition

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 29: Loyola School, Bhubaneswar, showcased remarkable skill and determination as they triumphed in the inter-school cricket tournament, securing the championship with a commanding eight-wicket victory over Vikash International School in the final held here Saturday.

The tournament, organised as part of Loyola School's Silver Jubilee celebrations, took place from March 26 to March 29.

Around eight leading schools—Venkateswar School, Vikash International, ODM,



DAV Kalinga Nagar, CCIE, Loyola Odia, and Saraswati Sishu Vidya NDRV from the City participated in the tournament.

After an intense competition, Loyola School (English Medium), Loyola Odia, Saraswati Sishu Vidya NDRV, and Vikash International advanced to the semifinals.

During the finals, Loyola School displayed an all-round performance to outclass Vikash International School. Midhanshu Das of Loyola

School was named 'Man of the Series' for his exceptional contribution throughout the tournament.

The event was graced by notable dignitaries, including Falcon Group of Industries director Adyasha Pattanaik, Sophia Advertising Agencies director Madhumita Panda, Rector Father Augustine and Loyola School Principal Fr Amaladoss, who encouraged the young cricketers with their presence and support.

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- Satellite gardens with diverse plant species
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Safety & Security

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- Dedicated Residential complex for security staff
- Round the clock security to the park



Conservation Breeding Programmes

- Breeding tigers, mouse deer, vultures, gharials
- Centre for Conservation Research & Training
- World's only Indian pangolin Conservation Breeding Centre



Conservation Education Programmes

- Internships, volunteers, and outreach initiatives
- Eco days and citizen science efforts
- Educational programs engaging students and visitors



FOCUS GLOBAL ECONOMY

NAVIGATING TRUMPIAN CHAOS



As the push for economic sovereignty gains momentum, multinational corporations must heed developing economies' demand for a fairer share of the gains from global economic growth

SMEs that struggle to pay living wages. And the few SMEs that manage to scale up tend to concentrate talent, financing, and access to international markets.

A more effective approach would be to adopt a hybrid industrial policy that combines temporary subsidies for SMEs—with unambiguous sunset clauses—and competitive pressures that reward performance and limit waste. Perhaps more importantly, multinational corporations should be welcomed, but with strong incentives to facilitate technology sharing and localize production in ways that create high-quality jobs.

China offers a useful model. After joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, the country facilitated technology transfers by effectively forcing foreign corporations to enter joint ventures with Chinese firms. What made this possible was both the appeal of China's low-cost labor and the promise of access to its vast and rapidly growing domestic market. By contrast, other Asian countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam have made enormous efforts to attract multinational corporations but have struggled to localize production and expertise.

The broader lesson is that in a fragmenting world economy, multilateral organizations must do more to support the provision of public goods in developing countries. As the push for economic sovereignty gains momentum, multinational corporations must heed developing economies' demand for a fairer share of the gains from global economic growth and ensure that the benefits of open markets are shared more equitably.

The writer is Director of Research at the French National Center for Scientific Research.

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US President Donald Trump's repeated threats to impose reciprocal tariffs on goods from nearly every country have set off alarm bells around the world. Trump's tariffs are likely to accelerate the ongoing fragmentation of the global economy. And, as is often the case, developing economies will bear the brunt of the fallout.

The developing world now faces a series of interconnected threats: imported inflation, driven by tariff-related costs, could trigger a global recession, lowering commodity export prices and fueling business uncertainty, which in turn would reduce foreign direct investment. To protect themselves, developing countries must find ways to navigate today's Trumpian chaos while still responding to their rapidly growing youth populations' demand for decent jobs and economic opportunities.

Achieving this requires striking a delicate balance between maintaining open markets and preserving economic sovereignty—broadly defined as a country's ability to make independent policy decisions affecting its economy. That is easier said than done.

Most developing economies in Africa, Latin America, and South and Central Asia are heavily reliant on extractive industries and cash-crop exports—sectors often dominated by multinational corporations, primarily Western ones, which are often perceived as predatory, extracting resources from developing economies while giving little in return. Despite repeated international efforts to rein in tax evasion and abusive practices, such violations remain widespread.

Few companies illustrate this better than the commodity giant Glencore. In 2023, the company was ordered to pay a

\$700 million fine after admitting to a years-long scheme to bribe officials in multiple countries. Glencore has also faced allegations of massive tax evasion, bullying governments, and fomenting violence against protesters.

Glencore's behavior underscores the longstanding power imbalance between developing-country governments and multinationals. But the dynamic is beginning to shift as more governments assert their economic sovereignty and demand a fairer share of the value created by foreign investment.

Rebalancing these relationships must start with transparent contracts and stronger institutional capacity, enabling developing countries to negotiate better terms, boost tax revenue, and invest in social programs and infrastructure. Given that extractive industries are capital-intensive, well-designed policies on local content can help create positive spillovers and boost job creation. To this end, some governments require multinationals to process raw materials domestically. Botswana, for example, has leveraged its

15% stake in De Beers—the world's biggest diamond company—to increase the share of rough diamonds that are cut domestically.

Some critics may argue that developing economies should simply give up on open markets, thereby eliminating the influence of multinational corporations. But while multinationals are certainly part of the problem, they can also be part of the solution. Severing ties with them would amount to adopting an autarkic model of economic development, which would impede technological spillovers to the broader economy and restrict access to global markets and financing. Even China, despite its size and rapid growth, has never attempted such a move.

That is not to say that some adjustments won't be required. It is now widely accepted that small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) drive job creation in developing countries, but the reality is far more complex. In most, labor markets are bifurcated: on one side are state-owned and private companies, including multinationals; on the other, informal, low-productivity



Rabah Arezki

CHINA OFFERS A USEFUL MODEL. AFTER JOINING THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION IN 2001, THE COUNTRY FACILITATED TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS BY EFFECTIVELY FORCING FOREIGN CORPORATIONS TO ENTER JOINT VENTURES WITH CHINESE FIRMS



What the soul sees and has experienced, that it knows; the rest is appearance, prejudice and opinion

SRI AUROBINDO

Religious Freedom

Each year, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) names those nations whose governments engage in or tolerate "particularly severe" violations of religious freedoms, especially of minorities. It calls such nations Countries of Particular Concern (CPC) and asks the US State Department to sanction individuals and institutions in these nations.

This year, these are Afghanistan, Burma, China, Cuba, Eritrea, India, Iran, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Vietnam.

India first came on the list in 2020 and has been on it each year since. In the 2020 report, USCIRF said that "India took a sharp downward turn in 2019. The national government used its strengthened parliamentary majority to institute national-level policies violating religious freedom across India, especially for Muslims." It said the Modi government's prejudice against India's Muslims was showing through India's actions on citizenship laws, cow slaughter, Kashmir, and conversions. The report noted the Ayodhya ruling and the conduct of the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. It recommended to then-US President Donald Trump that he designate India as a Country of Particular Concern "for engaging in and tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious religious freedom violations, as defined by the International Religious Freedom Act." It sought sanctions against India.

The response from our Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) was as follows: "We reject the observations on India in the USCIRF Annual Report. Its biased and tendentious comments against India are not new. But on this occasion, its misrepresentation has reached new levels. It has not been able to carry its own Commissioners in this endeavor. We regard it as an organization of particular concern and will treat it accordingly." India did not respond to a single accusation or deny any of the facts.

The reference to "carry its own Commissioners" is about dissenting notes from two of the commissioners, Gary Bauer and Tenzin Dorjee, who agreed with the other seven commissioners that the situation in India was problematic but did not want it to be designated a CPC.

The next year, 2021, the report noted India's "disinformation and hateful rhetoric — including from government officials — often targeted religious minorities, continuing familiar patterns" during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This time there were no dissents, and from here on, each of the four years under President Biden, there have been none. In 2021, the government of India did not respond. This has been the pattern since, and sometimes India has hit out and at other times been silent.

In the 2025 report, released on March 25, the USCIRF said, among other things, that the Trump administration should "impose targeted sanctions on individuals and entities, such as Vikash Yadav and RAW, for their culpability in severe violations of religious freedom by freezing their assets and/or barring their entry into the United States."

Within hours, our MEA put out a statement that called the report "biased and politically motivated" and attempting to "misrepresent isolated incidents and cast aspersions on India's vibrant multicultural society reflect a deliberate agenda rather than a genuine concern for religious freedom." It said that "In fact, it is the USCIRF that should be designated as an entity of concern."

One wishes that the Indian government does designate USCIRF formally and sanctions it because it is true that it is not free from bias. The USCIRF refers to itself as a "bipartisan" body, meaning both Republicans and Democrats are represented on it and it advises the US State Department. But it is partisan in other ways. USCIRF reports make no reference to the genocide in Gaza and the apartheid practiced by Israel on Palestinians, including Christians, because that is inconvenient for the US government.

It would have been better for India to have responded to the specific allegations. But in our part of the world, who says something is as important and perhaps even more important than what is being said. We should have responded specifically, particularly because it may not necessarily be true that the people saying it are biased or politically motivated against us. This is how the 2021 USCIRF report on India ended:

Individual views of Commissioner Johnnie Moore:
I love India. I have floated early in the morning down the Ganges in Varanasi, walked every alley in Old Delhi, stood in awe of the architecture in Agra, sipped tea next to the Dalai Lama's temple in Dharamsala, circled the shrine in Ajmer, and looked in awe at the Golden Temple. All along the way, I have met Christian brothers and sisters who serve the poor selflessly, often in difficult circumstances.

Of all the countries in the world, India should not be a country of particular concern. It is the world's largest democracy and it is governed by a pristine constitution. It is diversity personified, and its religious life has been its greatest historic blessing.

Yet, India does seem to be at a crossroads. Its democracy—still young and free-wheeling—is creating through the ballot box difficult challenges for itself. The answer, of course, is for India's institutions to draw upon their rich history to protect their values. India must always resist allowing political and inter-communal conflict to be exacerbated by religious tensions. India's government and people have everything to gain and absolutely nothing to lose from preserving social harmony and protecting the rights of everyone. India can. India must.



Aakar Patel

ONE WISHES THAT THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT DOES DESIGNATE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM FORMALLY AND SANCTIONS IT BECAUSE IT IS TRUE THAT IT IS NOT FREE FROM BIAS

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

There's no alternative to peace

The world is in dire need of peace and security, as violent conflicts and wars have disrupted global stability and made life insecure. The Gaza and Ukraine wars highlight the failure of world leaders to prevent such conflicts. In January 2025, American President Donald Trump took a controversial but bold initiative to stop the war in Ukraine, demonstrating a determination to end the conflict.

In international theory, the absence of war does not guarantee peace. Durable peace requires the creation of appropriate social, economic, and political structures. The international community must engage in building these structures, as existing organizations like the United Nations have failed to generate momentum for peace or prevent conflicts.

The Raisina Dialogue 2025, a significant international forum, included a session on peace, but it failed to produce substantial outcomes. The dialogue was marred by wrangling from European countries and their opposition to

the Trump administration. India, as the world's largest democracy without a history of intervention or aggression, is well-positioned to initiate a global peace-building process. This initiative could be part of a new world order emerging from the current geopolitical shifts.

Historically, the West was defined as America plus Europe, but this definition is changing. The American Vice-President has advocated for withdrawing from Europe, reflecting a shift in US foreign policy. This new world order may introduce new power dynamics and issues, but peace will remain a priority.

India's spiritual philosophy, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which emphasizes the oneness of humanity, can guide the creation of a peace manifesto for a unified world. This concept, rooted in ancient Indian thought, promotes a universal welfare system backed by common security. Modern thinkers like Swami Vivekananda have elaborated on these ideas, advocating for global unity and peace.

Today's world is both divided and shrinking, with communication technology reducing distances and increasing inter-dependence. However, international relations are often managed in a confrontational mode, which needs to be replaced by a solidarity mode to achieve peace.

Historically, the League of Nations and the United Nations have failed to prevent wars due to the dichotomy between their objectives and the actions of their member states. For example, Hitler's aggressive policies led to World War II under the League of Nations, and current conflicts like China's expansionist policies and Russia's actions in Ukraine highlight the UN's limitations.

The current world order is flawed, based on confrontation and competition. Instead, structures of equality, freedom, and solidarity are needed. The earth has enough resources for everyone to live in peace and prosperity if managed cooperatively. National and universal welfare state systems, along with a common security system for national

defence, can achieve this.

Scandinavian countries, known for their peaceful and contented societies, offer models for universal welfare systems. These countries are at the top of the list for having peaceful and contented societies in the world. A world survey has repeatedly rated Finland as the happiest country in the world. Their systems provide cradle-to-grave care, ensuring social security for all citizens. A common security system would reduce defence expenditures, allowing countries to invest more in welfare and development.

The idea of a peace manifesto, inspired by India's spiritual philosophy and supported by practical models, is proposed for discussion. This manifesto aims to promote universal peace and security, recognizing that while there may be no alternative to war, there is no alternative to peace. The hope is that this initiative will lead to a more unified and peaceful world.

The writer is a Professor at NIIS Group of Institutions, Odisha

INFA



DK Giri

THE EARTH HAS ENOUGH RESOURCES FOR EVERYONE TO LIVE IN PEACE AND PROSPERITY IF MANAGED COOPERATIVELY

WISDOM CORNER

As a well-spent day brings happy sleep, so a life well spent brings happy death.
LEONARDO DA VINCI

Truth can be stated in a thousand different ways, yet each one can be true.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I can calculate the motion of heavenly bodies, but not the madness of people.
ISAAC NEWTON

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1853: Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh, one of the greatest Post-Impressionists, known for works that convey not only keen observations of nature but the anguish of a mental illness, was born.

1856: The Treaty of Paris was signed, ending the Crimean War.

Big budget boost

Sir, with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) returning to power in the national capital after a gap of 26 years, the new government ensured that the Budget strongly reaffirmed the themes on which it had campaigned. The BJP rode to power on the promise of a "double engine government" that would facilitate development in Delhi, and the record outlay reflects the Centre's financial backing. Chants of "Modi, Modi" and the thumping of desks by ruling party members accompanied the Budget presentation, which repeatedly emphasized the "double engine government" theme. In her speech, Gupta made numerous references to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, acknowledging the significant role the Centre would have to play in fulfilling poll promises and delivering on both welfare and development fronts. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta's maiden Budget speech in the State Assembly on March 25 was the longest-ever Budget presentation in the history of the Vidhan Sabha. Also record-breaking was the total outlay of the Budget, a whopping Rs. 1,00,000 crore—31.6 per cent higher than the previous financial year.

CK Suresh, BANGALORE

So-called freedom of speech

Sir, the wonderful narrative in our great country, led by the bravehearts from the opposition, claims that India is not a democracy. Dissenting voices are throttled and dissenters jailed. Dissenters' homes are demolished. People who follow a vocation, including stand-up comedy, are under constant threat to their lives. People who say anything negative about the ruling dispensation are likely to find themselves at the wrong end of the gun. People who receive money from agencies like US AID to carry on their lives as honest dissenters are deprived of their regular income, which is essential for their survival. Thank God we have such wonderful votaries of democracy and free speech, within the dark clouds of fascism and intolerance from the central government. The comedian who passed unsavory and distasteful comments on a lot of people in a show, which was anything but funny, is hiding in a state which is a beacon of free speech.

CK Subramaniam, NAVI MUMBAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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



Andhra govt conducts e-KYC in Kotia village

Pottangi block officials clueless about the development

POST NEWS NETWORK



Pottangi, March 29: There is no let-up in intrusion by neighbouring Andhra Pradesh in the disputed Kotia panchayat of Koraput district as government officials from Andhra Pradesh were seen conducting an e-KYC drive Saturday at Neredibalsa, a border village under Kotia panchayat of Pottangi block in Koraput district. The incident raises concerns over repeated intrusions by Andhra officials, who allegedly misled and lure villagers towards the neighbouring state with forced implementation of various welfare schemes. Despite these ongoing activities, the Pottangi block administration appears to be unaware of Andhra's interventions. According to sources, Andhra officials have been enrolling elderly villagers, Anganwadi children, and students under Aadhaar-based verification processes while offering financial aid through state-sponsored programmes such as old-age pensions and Amawadi Yojana (a scheme

benefiting students). In the past, women in Kotia's border villages were reportedly deprived of benefits under Odisha's Subhadra Yojana due to similar KYC-related issues. With Andhra officials now conducting fresh KYC registrations, the matter has become a growing concern for the local administration. Kotia Sarpanch Liu Gemel has alleged that Andhra Pradesh is luring residents of border villages with the promise of implementing various government welfare schemes. According to Gemel, Andhra has been actively pursuing implementation of these schemes, while the Koraput district administration and Pottangi block administration are clue-

less and sitting pretty, instead of paying closer attention to these developments. He criticised the local administration's negligence, which he claims has enabled Andhra's repeated incursions into the area. When contacted, Pottangi Block Development Officer (BDO) Ramakrishna Nayak confirmed the development, stating that Andhra is primarily conducting Aadhaar verification. He added that Odisha authorities also plan to conduct e-KYC verification soon. Additionally, steps are being taken to include 618 women who were previously excluded from the Subhadra scheme, ensuring they receive its benefits.

Election for RMC council remains uncertain

POST NEWS NETWORK



Rourkela, March 29: Hopes of an election for the Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) were rekindled with the formation of the new BJP government. However, with each passing month, that optimism continues to fade. There seems to be no serious effort from the government in this regard, as elections for two municipal corporations—Rourkela and Sambalpur—remain uncertain. Although Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra emphatically announced that "elections will be held in the next six months," no significant developments have followed. His statement has been welcomed, as announcements from a minister are typically seen as the voice of the government.

Polls for the RMC council have been pending since 2013, with the decision being sub-judice. The issue arose after then-Biramitrapur MLA George Tirkey, who is now with the BJD, filed a case against the upgradation, citing that "Sundargarh is a scheduled district." Recently, a booth-level agent meeting was convened by the administration, with members from all political parties in attendance. This led to speculation regarding the election

in Rourkela. However, those hopes were dashed when BJP's state spokesperson Dhiren Senapati clarified, "The meeting was regarding linking the Aadhaar card to the voter list, which is happening at the national level. Do not link this to the municipal election." Pressed further, Senapati said, "I cannot speak on the election; the decision will be taken at the highest level," effectively extinguishing any speculation. Locals have been making interesting observations regarding the election and its potential outcome. When Orissa POST spoke to some politically aware individuals, they offered insightful comments. One noted, "The BJD was never confident, so it was happy with the sub-judice status and never seriously at-

tempted to fast-track the case." Another added, "If the Ram Mandir case could be heard on a day-to-day basis, the same could have been done for the RMC matter." A third individual made a shrewd remark, "Perhaps this government is not sure of victory and is buying time because it knows it has nothing substantial to show the people." Notably, Rourkela MLA Sarada Nayak defeated political heavyweight Dilip Ray of the BJP in the Assembly elections in 2024. It is no secret that the BJP here is a divided house, split between the original BJP faction and the one led by Ray. "It will be very difficult for the party to choose the right candidates, as there will be severe clashes of interest at every booth," one observer said.

Rourkela police continue crackdown on drug menace

Rourkela: Rourkela police have made another significant breakthrough in the ongoing crackdown on drug peddlers, arresting a man during routine patrol. This marks the fifth arrest in the last fortnight, along with seizure of ganja, heroin, and cocaine from the peddlers. The arrest was made around 10pm Friday when the Plant Site police team, acting on a tip-off, apprehended SK Zakir, 21, of Kamal Nagar, Kharagpur. Zakir was found in possession of 16.27 grams of brown sugar worth several lakhs of rupees. He was taken into custody and brought to the Plant Site police station for further investigation. Authorities revealed Zakir had been regularly visiting Rourkela to distribute the banned substance. He has been charged under Section 21(B) of the NDPS Act.

SI jailed for cheating woman with false promise of marriage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baliapal/Kalipada, March 29: A police sub-inspector has been arrested on charge of cheating a young woman under the pretext of marriage in Balasore district's Bahanaga block. The accused, identified as Bijay Kumar Sahu from Badatalapada village under Jamkunda panchayat, was taken into custody by a team led by Basta SDPO Manas Deo Saturday.



According to reports, Bijay allegedly developed a romantic relationship with a young woman from Nikhira village, under the jurisdiction of Baliapal police station, while undergoing training at Baliapal Physical Training College in 2017. During this period, he reportedly promised to marry her and engaged in physical relationship with her. After securing the job as a sub-inspector and undergoing training in Malkangiri, Bijay allegedly began avoiding the woman, refusing to marry her. Despite several pleas from the woman's family and the village elders seeking justice, no resolution was reached. Feeling betrayed, the woman lodged a formal complaint at Baliapal police station December 24, 2024. A case (264/24)

was registered, and an investigation was initiated. However, despite passage of three months, no concrete action had been taken. Ultimately, the woman approached Balasore SP Friday, which prompted swift action under the supervision of Basta SDPO Manas Deo. A police team led by Baliapal police officer Govind Behera raided Bijay's residence and arrested him. Bijay was produced before the court Saturday, but his bail plea was rejected, leading to his remand to judicial custody.

Blasting at illegal stone quarry kills 15-foot python

POST NEWS NETWORK

Panchalingswar, March 29: The death of a 15-foot long python during illegal blasting at a stone quarry has sparked widespread discussion in the region.

According to reliable sources, an illegal stone quarry under the Hatikhulia beat of Kuldiha range, located in Phase-4, carried out blasting of stones with gelatin explosives last Friday. The powerful explosion severely injured the python, which was later found trapped under the debris. In an alleged attempt to cover up the incident, stone mafia operatives reportedly moved the injured snake about 500 metre away to the boundary of Baulagadia near Phase-5. They allegedly crushed its head with stones there before informing the Forest department.

However, concerns have been raised regarding the inaction of local Forest officials. Despite being informed, Hatikhulia Forester Jayanta Pradhan and other beat officers were yet to visit the site, raising suspicion over their response to the incident. The tragedy highlights a larger issue—the rampant illegal stone quarrying and smuggling in the Debagiri hills, which threaten the region's wildlife. Residents have urged the Balasore district collector to take strict action against illegal stone quarries and ensure protection of the region's wildlife.

Discontent over substandard work under Mukhya Mantri Sadak Yojana

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, March 29: Residents have expressed dissatisfaction over the poor quality of construction on the Haldiatangiri-Kholapa road near Keonjhar town, accusing the district administration of negligence. The road, a key connectivity project in Sadar block, is being built under the Mukhya Mantri Sadak Yojana by the Rural Development department.



According to sources, the construction is estimated to cost more than Rs 3 crore. While a contractor was initially awarded the project through a tender, he failed to carry out the work. Instead of taking legal action, the department allegedly handed the project over to another contractor with just a notice and an undertaking. Local residents questioned the department's accountability questioning the absence of action against the original contractor. They argued that both the government and the public suffered due to the negligence,

the roads become muddy and hazardous. Villagers further alleged that concrete work was being done without the proper ratio of chips, cement, and sand. They also claimed that inferior quality iron bars were used, compromising the structural integrity. In the dry season, the absence of water sprinkling worsened air pollution as dust spread from the construction site. Concerns have been raised about the durability of concrete since

no water curing is being done. The lack of regular monitoring is attributed to a junior engineer who is tasked with overseeing multiple projects, with senior officers reportedly not inspecting the site. Senior lawyer Jyotiratna Mahanta criticised the delay in the project's completion. Although work has now resumed, the absence of the departmental engineer has affected its quality. Residents also expressed frustration over the absence of an information board at the construction site, leaving them unaware of key project details. Junior Engineer Smruti Ranjan Behera stated that after receiving complaints, he visited the site and reprimanded the contractor. He confirmed that a notice had been issued to the previous contractor, and the project was now in the hands of a new contractor.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RWS&S DIVISION, NABARANGPUR - 764059

No. O-1678
**Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. 08 of 2024-25 Dated: 28.03.25**

- Name of the Work: Procurement of MS Pipes
- Estimated Cost: Rs.38.89 Lakhs
- Period of Completion: 1 (One) Month
- Date and time of availability of bid documents in the portal: 05.04.2025 (5.00 P.M.) to 11.04.2025 (5.00 P.M.)
- Last Date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal: 5.00 P.M. of 11.04.2025
- Date and time of submission of technical bids: 5.00 P.M. of 05.04.2025
- Date & time of opening of technical & financial bids: 11.00 A.M. of 15.04.2025
- Name & address of the Officer Inviting Bid: Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Nabarangpur

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "https://tenders.odisha.gov.in".
OIPR-25028/11/0013/2425
Sd./- Superintending Engineer
RWS&S Division, Nabarangpur

CENTRAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY

Established by an Act of Parliament
(Formerly Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, under Ministry of Education, Government of India
56-57, Institutional Area, Janakpuri, New Delhi - 110058,
Ph. No.: 011-28524993, 28524995, 28520979, 28520966, Website: www.sanskrit.nic.in

Notification No. CSU/36014/Advt./S-I/2025-26/01
Dt. 25.03.2025

ONLINE APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE YEAR 2025-26 UNDER "SCHEMES FOR SANSKRIT PROMOTION"

Central Sanskrit University, Delhi is the nodal agency for implementing Central Schemes of Ministry of Education, Government of India for the Promotion of Sanskrit Language. Accordingly, applications are invited from interested NGOs/Voluntary Organizations/Universities/Institutions/Publishers/Individuals/Students, through online as applicable under the following Schemes for Sanskrit Promotion.

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	Online Registration Starting Date	Closing Date
1	Sanskrit Teaching - Engagement of Sanskrit or Modern Subject Teachers for teaching in Traditional Sanskrit Pathshalas/Mahavidyalayas/Government Schools/Guru-Sishya Parampara Institutions and Residential Scholarships	01.04.2025	30.06.2025* [However, Portal will be open in the entire year for application]
2	Samman Rashi - Annual grant to Eminent Sanskrit Pandits living in Indigent Circumstances.		
3	Publication, Bulk Purchase and Re-print of Rare Sanskrit Books		
4	Shastra Chudamani - for utilization of Services of Eminent Shastric Scholars or Retired Sanskrit Scholars.		
5	Programmes & Activities for Promotion of Sanskrit - Financial Assistance for implementation of various Sanskrit Programmes & Activities.		
6	Vocational Training - Conduct of Vocational Training to the students of Registered Traditional Sanskrit Institutions.		
7	Ashtadashi - Eighteen Projects for sustaining the Growth of Sanskrit (apply only in designated areas).		
8	Scholarships - Award of Scholarships to the Students regularly studying Sanskrit/Pali/Prakrit languages from 9th Class to Ph.D Level in Traditional/Modern Stream.		

* The online portal of the website for all above schemes will remain open in the entire financial year. However, applications received by 30.06.2025 as advised above will be considered for financial assistance in GIAC meeting to be held immediately thereafter. The applications received after the above date may be considered most likely in the later GIAC meeting, as per convenience of the GIAC (Chairman and Members), and subject to availability of the budget etc. In this regard, it may be noted that the financial assistance will be limited/entertained to the extent of budget availability in a financial year only. The interested applicants, while submitting their applications for the financial assistance, may kindly keep in mind the following instructions:
i) Interested applicants are advised to forward their applications in respect of the above-mentioned schemes through online mode only. The applications submitted through any other mode will not be entertained.
ii) As per the guidelines of the above-mentioned schemes, interested applicants are required to submit hard copies of publications/books/necessary documents etc., alongwith hard copy of their filled in online application duly certified by the Competent Authority. All pages of application and annexures should be signed in ink and self-attested.
iii) After filling the online applications, hard copy of the completed applications should invariably be sent separately by Registered Post, within 20 days to "Registrar, Central Sanskrit University, 56-57, Institutional Area, Janakpuri, New Delhi - 110058. Name of the scheme is to be superscribed on the top of envelop.
iv) Before filling the application form, it is advised that the scheme guidelines be referred thoroughly.
v) For more details regarding guidelines of each scheme, remuneration, required documents, how to apply in online and application forwarding process etc., please visit the Central Sanskrit University's website www.sanskrit.nic.in/schemes.
vi) In each scheme, automatic renewal shall not be considered. Hence, it is mandatory for all grantee institutions of previous years to apply afresh for each scheme, as per schematic norms.
vii) Further, consideration or rejection of the application for financial assistance will depend upon the availability of funds and approval of the GIAC etc., as per schematic norms. Therefore, it is mandatory to apply every year on scheme-to-scheme basis separately for financial assistance.
viii) In case of any clarifications or doubts, interested applicants may contact Central Sanskrit University through e-mail at help.schemes@csu.co.in or through above mentioned phone number or postal address.
NOTE: For application format (i) above) and Scheme details (v) above), please refer to the "Notifications" on the website of the University, where at above are attached.

cbc-21212/12/0005/2425
Sd./- Registrar/IC

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER, JICA PROJECT Brahmani Left Basin, Sukinda, At: Jamuposi, P.O.: Amploba, Dist.: Jajpur, Odisha, PIN - 755018 E-mail: cejicablbeicwr.od@gov.in / cebmbib@gmail.com Expression of Interest No. CE-BLB/Eol-01/2024-25

No. A-1252: Expression of Interest (Eol) is invited from the interested Chartered Accountant Firms empanelled with C & AG of India in the prescribed format for engagement of Chartered Accountants Firm as Auditor for the work "Annual Audit in Left Bank Canal of Rengali Irrigation Project, Phase-2 for the financial year 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 (As per JICA Guideline)". The details with all terms of reference may be downloaded from the Government Portal <https://odisha.gov.in/dowrodisha.gov.in> from Dtd.01.04.2025.
The application duly filled in will be received in a sealed cover in the office of the Chief Engineer, JICA Projects, BLB Sukinda by Person/Registered Post/Speed Post on or before 21.04.2025 upto 12.00 Noon and will be opened on the same day at 1.00 P.M.
Sd./- Chief Engineer, JICA Project
OIPR-32343/11/0001/2425
Brahmani Left Basin, Sukinda

पंजाब नैशनल बैंक Punjab National Bank

Circle Sastra Centre, Sambalpur : Circle Office, Balaji Midtown, 1st Floor, Deheripali, P.O.: Budharaja, Sambalpur, Email: cs8310@pnb.co.in

[Rule-8(1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property/ies)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Punjab National Bank under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Asset and Enforcement of Security Interest (Second) 1[Act], 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued Demand Notices calling upon the following Borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice with interest, charges & expenses within 60 days from the date of notice/date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property/ies described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said 1[Act] read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on the date mentioned below. The Borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property/ies and any dealings with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of the Punjab National Bank for the amount detailed below with interest, charges & expenses thereon.

SAMBALPUR BRANCH (044200) / Name & Address of the Borrower(s)	Demand / Possession Notice Date	Total dues as per Demand Notice	Description of the Immovable Property/ies
Borrowers: 1) M/s. Surender Singh Kabli (Partnership Firm), Partners: Shri Surender Singh Kabli & Shri Gurej Singh Kabli, 2) Surender Singh Kabli, S/o- Late Uttam Singh Kabli, 3) Gurej Singh Kabli, S/o- Late Uttam Singh Kabli, All are at Address-1: Contractors Colony, PO/PS: Burla, Dist.: Sambalpur, PIN-768017, Odisha, Address-2: At: Lambdunguri, PO/PS: Hirakud, Dist.: Sambalpur, PIN-768016, Odisha.	26.12.2024 / 24.03.2025 26.12.2024 / 29.03.2025	₹36,49,315.62 as on 02.12.2024 + interest & expenses thereon	(1) All the part & parcel of property situated over Khata No.: 152/149, Plot No.: 177/1313, Area: Ac.0.200 dec., Mouza: Lambdunguri, Tahasil/Dist.: Sambalpur, recorded in the name of Surender Singh Kabli. (2) All the part and parcel of Residential Flat No. MIG-7, situated at Saliabagichha, Mouza: Sambalpur Town No. 4, Pensionpara, Dist.: Sambalpur.

Date: 29.03.2025, Place: Sambalpur
Sd/- Authorised Officer, Punjab National Bank

बँक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र Bank of Maharashtra

पंजाब नैशनल बैंक
बँक उदयान एक बँक

BANK OF MAHARASHTRA ZONAL OFFICE : BHUBANESWAR

First Floor, Door Sanchar Bhavan, Unit-IX, Near Rupaai Square, Bhubaneswar -751022, Email Id: dzmbbsr@mahabank.co.in

POSSESSION NOTICE [Rule - 8(1)]

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Maharashtra under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under sub-section (12) of section 13 read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrower/Guarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest and expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Physical Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrower/Guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of Maharashtra for an amount stated below with interest & expenses thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

SAMBALPUR BRANCH/ Name & Address of the Borrower/Guarantor	Description of the Security Interest taken over possession	Liabilities due on the specified date as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice/ Date of Possession
Borrower: M/s. M.M. Suppliers, Prop.: Mr. Rabi Narayan Mishra / Guarantor: Mrs. Rashmita Mishra, W/o.: Mr. Rabi Narayan Mishra, Both are At: H. No.: LIG 2-46, SRIT Colony, Near Hanuman Temple, Budharaja, Sambalpur, Odisha-768004	All those piece and parcel of Land Situated at Mouza: Orakol, SRO: Pipili, P.S.: Pipili, in the registration Dist.: Puri, Sub-Dist.: Puri, bearing Khata No.: 137, Plot No.: 431, measuring Area: Ac.0.043 Dec., Standing in the name of Mrs. Rashmita Mishra, Bounded by North: Plot No.: 430, East: Plot No.: 4206, West: Property of Kanika Biswas & Others, South: Road	₹56,97,559.15 as on 22.11.2024 + interest & other charges thereon	22.11.2024 / 24.03.2025

Place: Bhubaneswar
Date: 30.03.2025
Chief Manager & Authorised Officer
Bank of Maharashtra



Fire safety norms would be eased to support the tourism industry while approving construction plans for hospitality units

SITUATION RETURNING TO NORMAL IN BENGAL

The situation in clash-hit Mothabari in West Bengal's Malda district was returning to normal, even as 16 more people were arrested in connection with violence in the area, a senior police officer said Saturday



of the day quote

DTC was ruined due to mis-management. If buses do not operate on all routes, how will DTC generate revenue? Due to improper scheduling, there has been a loss of Rs 668 crore



SP should now stop basking its political bread in the guise of the Agra incident and should not allow further oppression of Dalits here like the incident that happened in Agra



The government of Modi ji and Nitish Kumar ji has done many important works for the development of Bihar. An NDA government will be formed in Bihar with a bigger mandate than before



OPERATION BRAHMA

India sends NDRF team to Myanmar



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 29: As Myanmar reels from death and destruction caused by a massive earthquake, India mounted a multi-agency relief mission on Saturday, delivering 15 tonnes of essential materials and dispatching more aid by air and sea, along with rescue teams, to the neighbouring country.

In a reflection of New Delhi's strong commitment to extend help, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with Myanmar's Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and said India stands in solidarity with the people of that country.

India, which named its relief mission for Myanmar as "Operation Brahma", became the first country to bring rescue personnel to the capital city of Nay-Pyi-Taw to help local authorities, according to officials. Hours after New Delhi delivered 15 tonnes of essential relief materials to Yangon in a military transport aircraft, two C130J planes of the Indian Air Force (IAF) landed in Nay-Pyi-Taw, carrying a total of 80 National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel and some more aid.

Two more C17 military aircraft of the IAF, carrying 60 para-field ambulances, will land in Myanmar shortly, the officials said. India deployed the NDRF abroad on two previous occasions - during the 2015 Nepal earthquake and the 2023 Turkey quake. The total aid sent by air sorties and naval ships amounts to 137 tonnes, sources said, adding that more supplies will be sent in accordance with the requirement. "Conveyed our deep condolences at the loss of lives in the devastating earthquake. As a close friend and neighbour, India stands in solidarity with the people of Myanmar in this difficult hour," the prime minister said on X after his phone conversation with the senior military general. "Disas-

2 Indian naval ships on way to Myanmar

Intensifying its efforts for aiding relief and rescue work in earthquake-hit Myanmar under "Operation Brahma", India has dispatched two naval ships to the neighbouring country while a field hospital is slated to be airlifted later Saturday, Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal in a briefing here also said that two more Indian naval ships would follow under this humanitarian assistance operation.

ter relief material, humanitarian assistance, search and rescue teams are being expeditiously dispatched to the affected areas as part of #OperationBrahma," he said.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said Indian naval ships INS Satpura and INS Savitri are carrying 40 tonnes of humanitarian aid and headed for the port of Yangon. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told a briefing here that two more Indian naval ships would follow under this humanitarian assistance operation.

Jaishankar said a 118-member Indian Army Field Hospital unit is also en route to Mandalay from Agra to assist in providing first aid and emergency medical services to the people of Myanmar. In the morning, India delivered 15 tonnes of relief materials to the Myanmar city of Yangon after a C130J military aircraft of the IAF transported the consignments to the Myanmar city.

The supplies included tents, sleeping bags, blankets, ready-to-eat meals, water purifiers, solar lamps, generator sets and essential medicines, the officials said. "#OperationBrahma gets underway. First tranche of humanitarian aid from India has reached the Yangon Airport in Myanmar," Jaishankar said.

Saif attack case: Accused seeks bail

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 29: The Bangladeshi national arrested for allegedly stabbing actor Saif Ali Khan after breaking into his Bandra house this January has moved a court here for bail claiming he has been implicated in the case.

In a plea before the sessions court Friday, the accused Mohammad Shariful Islam Shehzad, claimed "the first information report (FIR) is patently false and a false case has been registered against him". He also said the police had not informed him the grounds of his arrest as mandated in law thus violating his fundamental rights.

The sessions court is expected to hear the plea April 1. Khan (54) was stabbed multiple times with a knife by an intruder inside his 12th-floor apartment in upscale Bandra January 16, following which he underwent emergency surgery at Lilavati Hospital.



A farmer harvests wheat crop in a field, in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

Centre slams 'X' for calling 'Sahyog' censorship tool



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, March 29: The Centre has strongly objected to social media platform X's characterisation of the 'Sahyog' portal as a "censorship" tool, calling the claim both "unfortunate" and "condemnable."

In a detailed response submitted before the Karnataka High Court, the Centre countered the claims made by X Corp in its petition challenging India's information-blocking framework. The government asserted that the petitioner had misinterpreted the provisions of the Information Technology (IT) Act, particularly Sections 69A and 79(3)(b).

X Corp has argued that Section 79(3)(b) does not authorise the government to issue content-blocking orders in a manner that bypasses the safeguards outlined in Section 69A, its corresponding blocking rules, and the Supreme Court's ruling in the Shreya Singhal case.

In a detailed response submitted before the Karnataka High Court, the Centre countered the claims made by X Corp in its petition challenging India's information-blocking framework

The government asserted that the petitioner had misinterpreted the provisions of the Information Technology (IT) Act, particularly Sections 69A and 79(3)(b)

However, the government contended that Section 69A explicitly allows the Centre to issue blocking orders under specific conditions and provides multiple safeguards for online content restriction.

It stated that this section differs significantly from Section 79(3)(b), which only requires intermediaries to fulfill their due diligence obligations upon receiving notices from authorised agencies. "The Section 79 framework does not authorise 'blocking orders.' Instead, it merely notifies intermediaries of their responsibilities. If they fail to comply, they risk losing

safe harbor protections and facing action under Rule 7 of the IT Rules, 2021," the government clarified.

It further argued that Section 69A empowers the government to block access to information with legal consequences for non-compliance, whereas Section 79 determines the conditions under which intermediaries can claim safe harbour protection. According to the government, X Corp had incorrectly equated the "blocking orders" issued under Section 69A with the "notices" issued under Section 79(3)(b), despite the Supreme Court previously distinguishing between the two in the Shreya Singhal case.

Addressing concerns raised by X, the government defended the Sahyog portal, describing it as a facilitative mechanism designed to streamline coordination between intermediaries and law enforcement agencies.

The Centre asserted that the portal provides a structured platform to ensure swift action against unlawful online content and benefits both intermediaries and investigative authorities. The government also pointed out that X, being a foreign commercial entity, has no inherent right to host or defend third-party content on its platform. It emphasised that in an earlier case brought by Twitter, the Karnataka HC had explicitly ruled that Articles 19 and 21 of the Indian Constitution do not apply to the company.

Court dismisses plea seeking prosecution of Saurabh Bharadwaj

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 29: A Delhi court Saturday dismissed a plea filed by a BJP leader seeking prosecution of AAP's Saurabh Bharadwaj for allegedly making defamatory remarks against him in September 2018.

Special judge Vishal Gogne turned down the petition filed by BJP's Suraj Bhan Chauhan against a trial court's February 19 order which rejected his complaint against Bharadwaj citing delay in filing it. The limitation period was found to have lapsed March 16, 2024, the court said while noting the magisterial court had already accorded the permissible liberal construction to the limitation period.



The court finds the conduct of Chauhan to have been "whimsical and opportunistic" in filing the belated defamation complaint, regarding the press conference of the year 2018, only in December 2024 against respondent Saurabh Bharadwaj on the cusp of the Delhi Assembly elections in early 2025, the judge said. Chauhan had alleged that Bharadwaj defamed him in 2018 by falsely claiming at a press conference that an FIR had been lodged against him.

SHORT TAKES

Human sacrifice in Aurangabad

Aurangabad: A 65-year-old man was allegedly killed and his torso was burnt in a 'Holika Dahan' fire as part of 'black magic' rituals in Bihar's Aurangabad district, a police officer said. The deceased has been identified as Yugal Yadav (65), he said. Police have arrested four persons, including a relative of a 'tantric' in connection with the incident, the officer said Friday, adding that the tantric is absconding.

Search ops in J&K's Kathua

Jammu: Security forces on Saturday extended the ongoing search operation to new areas after the body of the fourth policeman and two slain terrorists were recovered from the scene of a gunfight in a remote forested area in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. Body of head constable Jagbir Singh was retrieved from Ghati Juthana forest in Rajbagh and was shifted to Jammu where a wreath laying ceremony for the deceased was held near police headquarters Gulshan Ground, they said.

14 foreigners held in Navi Mumbai

Thane: Fourteen foreign nationals, including five women, were arrested in Navi Mumbai Saturday for allegedly living in the country illegally, an official said. The foreigners, belonging to the African nations of Nigeria, Ghana and Uganda, were taken into custody from Jahugaon in the Vashi area, he said. Police have seized Rs 2,03,500 cash from the arrested persons and recovered liquor worth over Rs 90,000 from the place where they were staying, the official said.

Delhi govt signs MoU with Centre

New Delhi: The Delhi government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Centre for the skill development of Sikh youth, with an allocation of Rs 100 crore to enhance employment opportunities, officials said Saturday. This initiative will be implemented by the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC), Industry Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said. Union Minister of Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju and Sirsa visited a gurdwara to seek blessings following the signing of the MoU.

J&K to set up early warning system

The government has constituted the FGMC or Focused 'Glacial Lake Outburst Flood' (GLOF) Monitoring Committee which has conducted expeditions to various such lakes to enhance understanding and preparedness against potential hazards

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, March 29: The Jammu and Kashmir government is establishing an early warning system to enhance preparedness for any sudden breach of glacial lakes due to the climate change-induced rapid melting in the Himalayas, officials said here.

They said there is an "imminent risk of sudden breach" of Glacial Lakes in the high-altitude regions, particularly in the Himalayas, and the government has adopted a proactive approach for mitigation and risk reduction to address the growing threat.

"The government of J&K has

SUDDEN GLACIAL LAKE BREACHES



adopted a focused, holistic and a proactive approach which include comprehensive understanding of risk landscape and the development of robust mitigation and risk reduction strategies," an official said.

In this connection, the government has constituted the FGMC or Focused 'Glacial Lake Outburst Flood' (GLOF) Monitoring Committee which has conducted expeditions to various such lakes to enhance understanding and preparedness against potential hazards. Geographical field expeditions

an unnamed lake, they added.

The officials said the expeditions provided valuable data on the conditions of the lakes, surrounding environmental factors, and potential risks of a breach, or technically, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF).

Another expedition was carried out to the Gangabal Lake, in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district -- a high-altitude glacial lake located in the northwestern Himalayas, they said.

The expedition examined the physical and geological characteristics of Gangabal Lake, and a particular focus was given to assessing the local geomorphology, the stability of the natural dam containing the lake, and the conditions of the glaciers feeding it, the officials said.

The investigation provided critical insights into the GLOF hazard potential of Gangabal Lake and contributed to broader efforts to enhance climate resilience in the region, they said. Field expeditions for the rest of the categorised lakes are scheduled to be carried out in the coming months, the officials added.

CASH-AT-DOOR CASE

CBI court acquits ex-HC judge Nirmal Yadav after 17 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, March 29: Seventeen years after the case of cash-at-judge's door rocked judiciary, a special CBI court here Saturday acquitted former Punjab and Haryana High Court judge Justice (Retd) Nirmal Yadav and four others in the matter.

In the sensational case, a packet containing Rs 15 lakh was allegedly wrongly delivered at the residence of Justice Nirmaljit Kaur, another sitting high court judge, August 13, 2008.

The Court of Special CBI judge Alka Malik pronounced the verdict Saturday. Defence counsel Vishal Garg Narwana said the court acquitted former Justice Yadav and four others. There were a total five accused in the case, one of whom died during the trial.

"Today the court has passed the judgement in the matter. Justice (Retd) Nirmal Yadav has been acquitted. False allegations have been levelled against her," Narwana told reporters here. A detailed order



In the sensational case, a packet containing Rs 15 lakh was allegedly wrongly delivered at the residence of Justice Nirmaljit Kaur, another sitting high court judge, August 13, 2008

It was alleged that the cash was meant for Justice Yadav as a bribe to influence a property deal

is awaited. The court Thursday had heard the final arguments in the case registered against Justice Yadav by the Central Bureau of Investigation and posted the pronouncement of verdict for March 29. The names of Sanjiv Bansal, former Additional Advocate General, Haryana, Delhi-based hotelier Ravinder Singh, city-based businessman Rajiv Gupta and another person had also surfaced in the case.



The BJP government has written off ₹16 lakh crore in loans for their billionaire friends. Cronyism, coupled with regulatory mismanagement has pushed India's banking sector into crisis. This burden is ultimately borne by junior employees, who endure stress and toxic work conditions

PM TO VISIT RSS FOUNDER'S MEMORIAL IN NAGPUR TODAY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will arrive in Nagpur Sunday, where he will visit RSS founder Dr K B Hedgewar's memorial and pay homage to Dr B R Ambedkar at Deekshabhoomi. The Prime Minister's visit coincides with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's function to mark the Gudi Padwa festival



of the day quote

Visited the families of our bravehearts -- Balvinder Singh, Tariq Ahmad, Jaswant Singh and Jagbir Singh -- who laid down their lives in the line of duty during the Kathua encounter. Their sacrifice is etched in our hearts forever. We stand with their families in this hour of grief

India reserves its right to grow responsibly based on our national circumstances... But the climate anxiety which has gripped the world cannot force India to give up its right to ensure food, water, energy... to its 140 crore people. India is confidently striking a balance between challenges and opportunities

Since the BJP came into power, Bangladeshis (infiltrators) have crawled into their holes and have not come out as we are together

POST OF THE DAY

1) For 1 house in Bengaluru, 185 people compete. (Housing supply to population ratio: 1/185) 2) For 1 house in Dubai, 7 people compete. (Housing supply to population ratio: 1/7) 3) There is not enough land. And, too much population pressure on our cities. Traffic, pollution, crumbling infra are all signs. Mind you: this is not a population problem. This is a planning problem. Our governments failed to spread jobs beyond 10 cities in India. This unplanned development is now wrecking havoc. Congrats on getting a 20L job in a city: now pay 75K+ GST to live.

India, US decide to hold sectoral talks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 29: India and the US have decided to hold sectoral talks under the proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA) in the coming weeks, the commerce ministry said Saturday.

It was decided after the four-day negotiations of senior officers from India and the US. These negotiations ended Saturday here. "Sectoral expert-level engagements under the BTA will start virtually in the coming weeks and pave the path for an early negotiating round in person," the ministry said. In order to realise the shared objective of promoting growth that ensures fairness, national security and job creation, both sides have through four days of discussions here broadly come to an understanding on the next steps towards a mutually beneficial, multi-sector BTA, with the goal to finalise its first tranche by fall 2025, it said.

During these discussions, the two sides held a productive exchange of views on deepening bilateral cooperation in priority areas, including increasing market access, reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers and deepening supply chain integration in a mutually beneficial manner, it added. A team of US officials, headed by Assistant US Trade Representative for South and Central Asia Brendan Lynch, was here for the negotiations.

The meeting follows the visit of Commerce and Industries Minister Piyush Goyal to Washington from March 4-6 during which he met his US Trade Representative Jameson Greer and Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and subsequent video conferences between the two sides.

"The successful conclusion of the discussions reflects progress in efforts to expand India-US bilateral trade and investment relations to promote prosperity, security and innovation in both the countries," the ministry said. These steps are designed to unlock new opportunities for businesses, drive bilateral economic integration, and reinforce the economic partnership between the two trading partners.

Air Force civil engineer shot dead at his home

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Prayagraj (UP), March 29: An Indian Air Force civil engineer was shot dead Saturday morning by an unidentified assailant while he was sleeping at his official residence in the high-security cantonment area here in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj, police said.

The attacker fired at the engineer from the window of his room, Puramufiti Station House Officer (SHO) Manoj Singh said. Police said his wife and son were present in other rooms when the incident happened in their Engineers Colony house inside the Air Force Station.

Air Force civil engineer SN Mishra (51) received a bullet in his chest and he was rushed to the Army hospital. Mishra succumbed to his injuries at the hospital, the SHO said.

'Unacceptable that kids need to wear masks to play outside'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 29: Supreme Court Judge Justice Vikram Nath Saturday laid stress on the need to regulate emissions and invest in cleaner technologies to combat pollution, saying it was unacceptable for children to grow up in an environment where they need ed masks to play in the open.

Justice Nath also said there was a need to explore solutions which struck a balance between economic growth and environmental wellbeing and that government policies must focus on green technologies. He was speaking during the inaugural session of the National Conference on Environment - 2025 at Vigyan Bhawan. President Droupadi Murmu was the chief guest at the event. "The capital city of India regularly experiences high levels of pollution. I believe we can all agree that it is not acceptable for our children to grow up in an environ-



ment where they need masks to play outside or worry about respiratory ailments at a young age," Justice Nath said. "This is an urgent call for action, a signal that we must come together to regulate emissions, invest in cleaner technologies and think of sustainable transport options that allow economic progress without compromising the air we breathe," he said.

He flagged water pollution as another key concern, saying many sacred and pristine rivers had been burdened with untreated waste. "When I see these riversides, I feel a mix of nostalgia and concern ... Nostalgia for how vibrant and pure these waters once were and concern for our inability to preserve them in their natural glory. Treating industrial effluent, enhancing sewage infrastructure and encouraging local communities to maintain cleanliness along riverbanks are essential steps," Justice Nath said.

US President Donald Trump Friday described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a "very smart man" and a "great friend of mine" while emphasising that tariff talks would "work out very well between India and our country"

The remarks assume significance since Trump has repeatedly criticised the alleged high tariffs charged by India and other countries on American goods

He has announced plans to impose reciprocal tariffs on its key trading partners, including India, April 2

removal of retaliatory import duties on eight US products, including chickpeas, lentils, and apples, which were imposed in 2019 in response to America's measure to increase tariffs on certain steel and aluminium products. In 2024, India's main exports to the US included drug formulations, biological (USD 8.1 billion), telecom instruments (USD 6.5 billion), precious and semi-precious stones (USD 5.3 billion), petroleum products (USD 4.1 billion), gold and other precious metal jewellery (USD 3.2 billion), ready-made garments of cotton including accessories (USD 2.8 billion), and products of iron and steel (USD 2.7 billion).

Imports included crude oil (USD 4.5 billion), petroleum products (USD 3.6 billion), coal, coke (USD 3.4 billion), cut and polished diamonds (USD 2.6 billion), electric machinery (USD 1.4 billion), aircraft, space crafts and parts (USD 1.3 billion), and gold (USD 1.3 billion). In 2023-24, the US was the largest trading partner of India with USD 119.71 billion bilateral trade in goods (USD 77.51 billion worth of exports, USD 42.19 billion of imports, with USD 35.31 billion trade surplus). India has received USD 67.8 billion in foreign direct investments from America during April 2000 and September 2024.

The US is pushing India to negotiate a large and grand bilateral trade agreement while seeking to open the agriculture sector for American businesses. According to experts, India is unlikely to include dairy and agriculture in trade negotiations as it is a politically sensitive sector.

The US agri exports to India was USD 1.6 billion in 2024. Key exports include almonds (in shell - USD 868 million); pistachios (USD 121 million), apples (USD 21 million), ethanol (ethyl alcohol USD 266 million). In June 2023, India announced

Protest in Jaipur over temple vandalism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, March 29: Members of Vishva Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal along with locals Saturday held a massive protest over vandalism at Tejaji temple on Tonk road here, police said.

At least 20 people were detained after a mob attempted to set a petrol pump on fire, they said, adding that the protestors blocked the Tonk road for nearly three hours. Meanwhile, a suspect who allegedly damaged the idol of the deity inside Tejaji temple Friday night has been, DCP (East) Tejaswani Gautam said.

The accused has been identified as Siddharth Singh (34), a native of Bikaner, who is currently residing in Rajapark area of the state capital. According to the DCP, Singh was returning to his place last night after having liquor with his friend when he stopped near the temple and vandalised the temple in a fit of rage over financial losses.

"He stopped his vehicle and entered the temple. After spending some time there, he lifted the idol and threw it. Singh told that he was disturbed due to financial losses," DCP Gautam said, adding that the accused was identified on the basis of CCTV footage. Assistant Commissioner of Police (Sanganer) Vinod Sharma said that resentment grew among the people when they saw the damaged idol this morning. Locals along with members of the two Hindu outfits started protesting. The protestors burnt tyres and blocked the busy Tonk Road, a national highway, demanding

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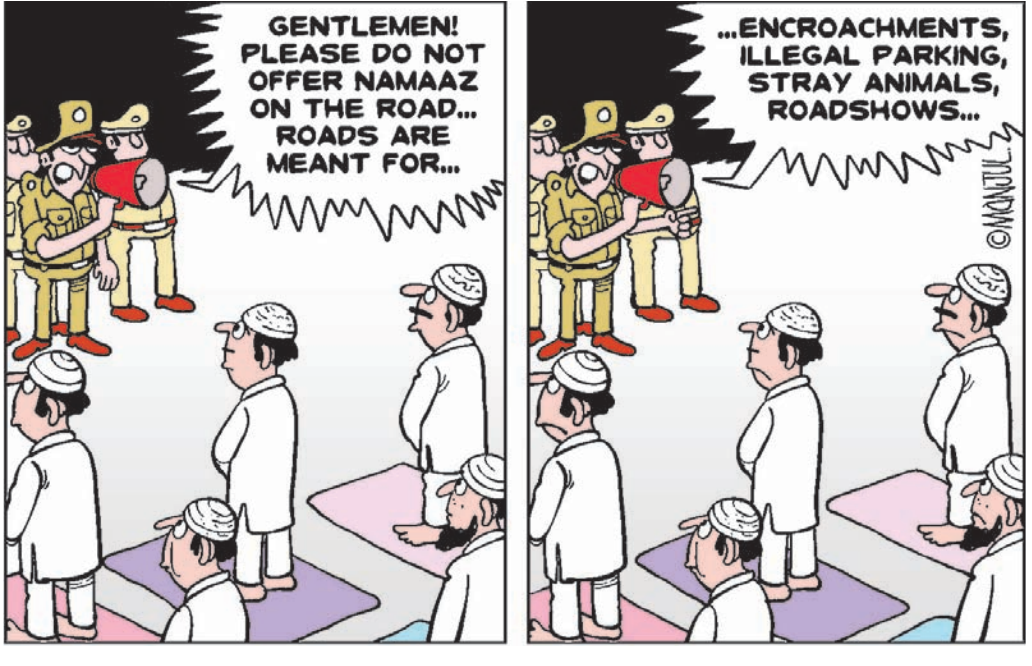
arrest of the accused involved in the vandalism.

As the resentment grew, the number of protestors increased, prompting police to use mild force to disperse the mob to open the road for traffic movement. In the meantime, a mob swarmed to a petrol pump nearby and vandalised it. The DCP said that they spilled petrol and before they could set the pump on fire, police took prompt action and removed them. "A catastrophe was averted by a quick action by police," she said, adding that at least 20 people were detained. VHP members and leader from Congress and Rashtriya Loktantrik Party condemned the incident and demanded action. VHP spokesperson Amitosh Pareek said some miscreants damaged the idol last night which created anger among the Hindu community.

"This is an insult to Tejaji maharaj. We have demanded identification and arrest of the accused involved in the matter," he said.

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POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Allahabad HC lawyers suspend strike till probe report comes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Prayagraj/Varanasi (UP), March 29: Lawyers of the Allahabad High Court, agitating since Tuesday against the transfer of Delhi High Court judge Yashwant Varma to the Allahabad High Court, suspended their strike Saturday till the report of an investigation against the judge comes.

The lawyers said they have also decided not to attend Justice Varma's oath-taking ceremony. After a meeting of the executive committee of the high court's bar association here, its president Anil Tiwari told reporters, "We have decided to suspend the strike till the report of the investigation against Justice Varma comes."

SHORT TAKES

Violent clash at PU: Student killed

Chandigarh: A 22-year-old student, among four students who were stabbed by some unidentified persons at a concert held at Panjab University's South Campus, succumbed to his injuries Saturday, said police. The incident occurred during the concert of Haryana singer Masoom Sharma Friday night. The deceased has been identified as Aditya Thakur, a second-year student of computer science engineering at the University Institute of Engineering and Technology.

Drug haul in Goa: Three in custody

Panaji: Three persons have been arrested so far in connection with the recent recovery of ₹11.67 crore drugs in Goa, and efforts are being made to track down the other members of the gang, police said Saturday. The drug racket was exposed after a Bengaluru native, Goutham M (26), was arrested at St Anthony Wado in the Mapusa area of North Goa March 8.

Arrested Assam journalist released

Guwahati: Arrested Assam journalist Dilwar Hussain Mozumder was released from judicial custody Saturday, a day after a court had granted him bail in a second case, his lawyer said.

'Unacceptable that kids need to wear masks to play outside'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 29: Supreme Court Judge Justice Vikram Nath Saturday laid stress on the need to regulate emissions and invest in cleaner technologies to combat pollution, saying it was unacceptable for children to grow up in an environment where they need ed masks to play in the open.

Justice Nath also said there was a need to explore solutions which struck a balance between economic growth and environmental wellbeing and that government policies must focus on green technologies. He was speaking during the inaugural session of the National Conference on Environment - 2025 at Vigyan Bhawan. President Droupadi Murmu was the chief guest at the event. "The capital city of India regularly experiences high levels of pollution. I believe we can all agree that it is not acceptable for our children to grow up in an environ-

This is an urgent call for action, a signal that we must come together to regulate emissions, invest in cleaner technologies and think of sustainable transport options that allow economic progress without compromising the air we breathe

JUSTICE VIKRAM NATH | SUPREME COURT JUDGE

upholding the constitutional guarantee to a healthy environment and ensuring that green violations were checked, no single institution could accomplish the monumental task of environmental protection alone. "It is when we work in tandem that we can create meaningful and lasting transformation in the days ahead. Let us remember why we are here. We are here because we believe that progress does not have to be through pollution and that development can and must be in harmony with na-

ture," the Supreme Court judge said.

Speaking at the event, National Green Tribunal Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava said the conference "stands out for its inclusivity, bringing together jurists, experts, faculty and students, all united by a commitment to sustainability" and that it had been carefully designed to address environmental challenges through four technical sessions. Attorney General R Venkataramani said urbanisation meant an increase in energy consumption that, in turn, led to an increase in the exploitation of natural resources.

"I also think that the corpus of environmental laws need to be redesigned, and the conventional framework where citizen involvement and engagement is in a mass measure is absent, and this will have to be addressed. We need to go beyond mere penal and coercive enforcement systems," he added.



It is clear that the United States is no longer a reliable partner. It is probable now that by negotiating we will be able to restore an element of trust but we cannot go back
MARK CARNEY | NEW CANADIAN PM

UKRAINIANS EXPECT RUSSIA TO LAUNCH FRESH OFFENSIVE
Russian forces are preparing to launch a fresh military offensive in the coming weeks to maximise the pressure on Ukraine and strengthen the Kremlin's negotiating position in ceasefire talks, Ukrainian government and military analysts said



international

of the day **QUOTE**

Our relationship has been very strong over the years. Our business is very strong and we benefit from our collaboration with China
MUHAMMAD YUNUS | BANGLADESH INTERIM GOVT'S CHIEF ADVISER



The world's newest and one of its poorest countries is facing a security emergency with intensifying clashes and a political upheaval culminating with this week's arrest by the government of First Vice President Riek Machar
ANTONIO GUTERRES | UN SECRETARY-GENERAL



Iwo Jima embodies our shared warrior ethos, our shared devotion to the nation, and to duty and our shared reverence for the men of valour who preceded us
PETE HEGSETH | US SECRETARY OF DEFENCE



Desperate bid to rescue survivors

AGENCIES
Bangkok, March 29: In the hours after a massive earthquake flattened buildings in Myanmar's Mandalay Friday, survivors scrambled through the debris using their bare hands in desperate attempts to save those still trapped. Without heavy machinery to assist them and with authorities absent, a resident and rescue workers in the Southeast Asian country's second-largest city told Reuters that they were struggling to pull out survivors crying out for help.

QUAKE RATTLES MYANMAR



Myanmar has been in crisis since 2021, when the military seized power from an elected government, brutally crushing protests and sparking an unprecedented armed uprising. Humanitarian agencies say Friday's quake, which measured 7.7 magnitude and has killed more than 1,000 people, has come at a vulnerable moment for the country, after four years of military rule and civil war that has crippled infrastructure and displaced millions.

POLYCRISIS

In January, the United Nations said the country was facing a "polycrisis" marked by economic collapse, intensifying conflict, climate hazards and deepening poverty. More than half of the country lacks access to electricity, and hospitals in conflict zones are out of service. More than 3.5 million people have been internally displaced and many more driven across the borders amid fighting between the military and a mosaic of armed groups that have seized control of vast swathes of territory. Fighting continued Friday, with military jets launching airstrikes and drone attacks shortly after the quake in Karen state, near the headquarters of one of the largest ethnic

- Quake hit at 'worst possible time' for country in civil war, economic crisis
- Over 3.5 million people internally displaced
- Conscription to hurt disaster response, scholar says
- Meanwhile, Myanmar's shadow National Unity Government, which coordinates the popular struggle against the ruling military, has announced a unilateral partial ceasefire to facilitate earthquake relief efforts

armed groups, according to the Free Burma Rangers, a relief organisation. Nyi Nyi Kyaw, a Myanmar academic at Bristol University, wrote in a social media post that the loss of a "signifi-

cant portion of (the country's) youth, particularly young men, due to forced conscription" into the military would hinder the disaster response. A rescue worker trying to free 140 monks from the ruins of a collapsed building in Amara-pura, Mandalay, told Reuters, "we cannot help because we do not have enough manpower and machines to remove the debris". Nonetheless, he said, "we will not stop working".

NO HELP

Myanmar's junta has issued a rare appeal for international aid, and disaster response teams from Russia, China, Singapore and India flying in Saturday. But rights activists raised fears that aid would not reach people on the ground, as the regime has a history of blocking relief to parts of the country controlled by Opposition groups. Thomas Andrews, the United Nations special rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar, said in a post on X that the military's response to a recent cyclone and typhoon showed its "willingness to weaponise aid in the midst of natural disasters". In Mandalay, residents interviewed by Reuters said they had not yet received any assistance from military authorities. One rescue worker said Saturday they had borrowed machinery from businesses to help sift through the rubble.

Curfew lifted in east Kathmandu



AGENCIES

Kathmandu, March 29: Authorities in Nepal Saturday lifted a curfew imposed in the eastern part of Kathmandu following violent clashes between the security personnel and the pro-monarchy protesters, as tensions eased in the area. Parts of Kathmandu Friday witnessed a tense situation after pro-monarchy protesters pelted stones, attacked the office of a political party, set fire to vehicles and looted shops in the Tinkune area of the capital. Two persons, including a TV cameraman, were killed and 110 others injured in the clashes between the security personnel and the pro-monarchy protesters. The Army was later called out to control the situation. Police have arrested 105 agitators who were involved in burning houses and vandalis-

Ex-Nepal King fined by civic body for vandalism

Kathmandu: Former King Gyanendra Shah was Saturday issued a letter demanding fine by Kathmandu's civic body following the damage caused to public property and environment during the pro-monarchy protests in parts of the Nepalese capital a day before. Parts of Kathmandu Friday witnessed a tense situation after pro-monarchy protesters pelted stones, attacked the office of a political party, set fire to vehicles and looted shops in the Tinkune-Baneshwor area of Kathmandu. Two persons, including a TV cameraman, were killed and 110 others injured in the clashes between the security personnel and the pro-monarchy protesters.

SHORT TAKES

Top Baloch leader, workers escape unhurt
Karachi/Islamabad: A top Baloch nationalist leader and other workers of his party escaped unhurt when a suicide bomber blew himself up near their sit-in protest in Balochistan province of Pakistan Saturday. Sardar Akhtar Mengal, chief of Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M), who escaped unhurt, later claimed four participants from the rally were injured in the blast. Mengal has been leading a long march from Wadh to Quetta since Friday protesting the arrests of the leaders and workers of the Baloch Yakehti Committee (BYC), whose chief Dr Mahrang Baloch was arrested under anti-terrorism laws.

Hegseth vows to boost alliance with Japan

Tokyo: US Secretary of Defence Pete Hegseth Saturday praised American-Japanese friendship and trust while attending a memorial service on Iwo Jima to honour those who died in a pivotal World War II battle. Japan is Hegseth's second stop after the Philippines on his first Asia trip. His visit comes as Beijing has been showing increasing assertiveness in the disputed South China Sea.

Large crowds rally in Istanbul

REUTERS
Istanbul, March 29: Hundreds of thousands of Turks protested in Istanbul Saturday against the jailing of Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, President Tayyip Erdogan's main rival, sustaining the largest demonstrations Turkey has seen in more than a decade. A letter from Imamoglu was read out at the rally to cheers from the crowd. "I have no fear, you are behind me and by my side. I have no fear because the nation is united. The nation is united against the oppressor," the letter said. "They can put me in jail and try me as much as they want, the nation has shown that it will crush all traps and plots." Hundreds of thousands of Turks nationwide

have heeded opposition calls to protest since Imamoglu was detained last week and then jailed pending trial on graft charges. Protests have been mostly peaceful but nearly 2,000 people have been detained. The main Opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), other Opposition parties, rights groups and some Western powers have all said the case against Imamoglu is a politicised effort to eliminate a potential electoral threat to Erdogan. **'JUSTICE WILL BE SERVED'** Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators waving Turkish flags and banners flocked to the sea-front rally at Maltepe on the Asian side of Istanbul for Saturday's "Freedom for Imamoglu" rally, organised by the CHP.

Vance slams Denmark for not keeping Greenland safe

REUTERS
Nuuk, Greenland/Washington March 29: US Vice President JD Vance Friday accused Denmark of not doing a good job keeping Greenland safe and suggested the United States would better protect the semi-autonomous Danish territory that President Donald Trump has pressed to take over. During a visit to the US military base at Pituffik in the north of the Arctic island, Vance said the US has no immediate plans to expand its military presence on the ground but will invest in resources including additional naval ships. He pledged respect for Greenland's sovereignty but also suggested the territory would come



to see the benefit of partnering with the US, in remarks the Danish prime minister called unfair. "Denmark has not kept pace and devoted the resources necessary to keep this base, to keep our troops, and in my view, to keep the people of Greenland safe from a lot of very aggressive incursions from Russia, from China and other nations," Vance said. He gave no details of the alleged incursions. Trump has frequently said that the United States has a se-

- Vance says Denmark has not kept Greenland safe
- Vance asks people of Greenland to partner with the US
- Greenland prime minister says US visit shows lack of respect

an overseas trip last month and later accused Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of not showing enough gratitude to Trump during a contentious meeting at the White House. In Greenland Friday, Vance said Russia, China and other nations are taking an "extraordinary interest" in Arctic passageways, naval routes and minerals in the region. He said the US will invest more resources, including naval ships and military icebreakers that will have a greater presence in the country. As Greenlanders expressed deep unease about the visit, Vance vowed the people of Greenland would have "self-determination" and the US would respect its sovereignty.

WEEK'S BEST PICS



A person wearing a Pikachu costume joined numerous demonstrators in Istanbul, protesting against the detention of Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, who is a significant opponent of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. **MSN**

A combo of 3 images taken from a viral social media video shows the moments as a building collapses during an earthquake, in Bangkok, Thailand. **PTI PHOTO**

A child runs past a burning barricade during a protest against gang-related violence and to demand the resignation of Haiti's transitional presidential council, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. **REUTERS**

A bride takes part in a photo session as she walks next to Hellenic Army vehicles before a military parade marking Greece's Independence Day, in Athens, Greece. **REUTERS**

US Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem speaks as prisoners look out from a cell during a tour of the Terrorist Confinement Center in Tecoluca, El Salvador. **REUTERS**

Business



Strong arbitration and mediation mechanisms are crucial for India's emergence as a global manufacturing hub
PIYUSH GOYAL | UNION MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

PARK MEDI WORLD FILES ₹1,260-CR IPO

Park Medi World, which operates the hospital chain under the Park brand, has filed preliminary papers with markets regulator Sebi seeking its approval to raise ₹1,260 crore through an initial public offering (IPO). The IPO is a combination of fresh issue of shares worth ₹900 and an offer for sale (OFS) of shares valued ₹300 crore by promoter Ajit Gupta



of the day quote

The objective is to strengthen trust-based economic governance and take transformational measures to enhance 'ease of doing business', especially in matters of inspections and compliances. States will be encouraged to join in this endeavour

AJAY SETH | SECRETARY, FINANCE SECRETARY AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS



India's ultra-luxury home market is soaring and in the last three years, 49 such homes -- each commanding a price tag of ₹100 crore or more -- have been sold for ₹7,500 crore

SAMANTAK DAS | CHIEF ECONOMIST AND HEAD OF RESEARCH AND REIS, INDIA, JLL



The bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the European Union will enhance market access and remove trade barriers for both the nations in the new geo-political world

CARLO MASTELLONE | PRESIDENT, UIA



SHORT TAKES

German company to invest \$1.5bn in India

New Delhi: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal Saturday said a German company from the chemical sector has decided to invest \$1.5 billion in India, and a state has identified land for the project. Though the minister did not disclose the name of the company or the state, he said that the company's head is expected to meet the state's chief minister on. The company will "have the allotment of land in his hand, and we will have a billion-and-a-half dollars of foreign direct investment coming into the country over the next 12 months", Goyal said at a session of the Union Internationale des Avocats (UIA) here. The company is looking for a parcel of land, which is about 250 acres near a port. Germany is the ninth largest investor in India. The country has received about USD 15 billion foreign direct investment (FDI) during April 2000 and December 2024. He said that more and more companies are looking at coming to India to explore business opportunities.

Startups secure over \$150mn this week

New Delhi: The domestic startup ecosystem secured more than \$150 million this week, showcasing robust growth in the current financial year (FY25). During the final week in March, 23 Indian startups raised a total of \$150 million, including five growth-stage and 17 early-stage deals. The number of funding deals that materialised during the week stood at 16. Delhi-NCR based startups led with eight deals followed by Bangalore, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Chennai. In the first quarter of 2025, domestic tech startups raised \$2.5 billion, marking a 13.64 per cent increase from the previous quarter and an 8.7 per cent rise from the same period last year -- making India the third most-funded country globally. According to Tracxn, a leading market intelligence platform, Delhi-based tech startups accounted for 40 per cent of all funding seen by tech companies across India. This was followed by Bengaluru, accounting for 21.64 per cent. India is currently home to nearly 1.59 lakh startups., according to the recent Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) data.

Solar energy addition skyrockets in 10 yrs



India saw massive 3,580 pc growth in solar power capacity in last decade

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ahmedabad, March 29: There has been an unprecedented increase in solar power capacity in the country -- from 2.82 GW in 2014 to 104 GW today -- showing a significant increase of 3,580 per cent in the last 10 years, Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy, Pralhad Joshi, said Saturday. By 2030, the production of solar modules will skyrocket and reach 150 GW and the capacity for solar cells will increase to 100 GW, with wafer production reaching 40 GW, said the Union Minister while inaugurating a state-of-the-art 5.4 GW solar cell gigafactory/manufacturing facility of Warree Energy at Chikhali in Gujarat.

"This magnificent facility embodies the spirit of India and stands in the form of India's growing expertise in the global renewable energy scenario. The plant will not only cater to local needs but also position India as a major exporter of advanced solar technologies," said Joshi. The minister said that the emphasis on module produc-

tion has also increased and its capacity has increased from 2 GW in 2014 to 80 GW today. "In 2014, the production of solar cells and wafers did not exist, but today, India has 25 GW of cells and 2 GW of Wafers produces. To give a further boost to this, the government has issued guidelines stating that all solar PV modules used in projects will have to get their solar cells from ALM list-II starting from June 1, 2026," Joshi explained. He further said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India co-founded the International Solar Alliance (ISA) to accelerate the global development of solar energy. At present, more than 100 countries have committed to a greener future through the ISA. The Union Minister pointed out that, according to the 'Future of Jobs Report 2025' released by the World Economic Forum, creating jobs globally in sectors such as green transition will lead to 170 million jobs by 2030. "Contributing to this number will also be the significant number of jobs generated by this 5.4 GW solar cell manufacturing plant. The facility will create numerous opportunities for both local residents and professionals," he said.

Deliver what you promise: Lenka

Leotronix Power Systems has been a trusted name in the power solutions industry for nearly three decades. With years of expertise, it has become a dependable provider of reliable stabilisers with innovative and quality products. Founded by Jayant Kumar Lenka, Proprietor, the brand has consistently focused on cutting-edge power solutions, durability of products and customer satisfaction. In this exclusive interview with Orissa POST, Lenka shares insights into his journey, the growth of Leotronix, and the evolving electronics market in Odisha. Excerpts...



Can you brief us about your early life and what made you enter the electronics business?
 I come from a humble background and have always believed in the power of hard work and perseverance. My journey in the electronics industry began in 1998 when I recognised a pressing issue—frequent voltage fluctuations causing damage to home appliances. Understanding the need for a reliable solution, I decided to venture into the stabiliser business. With a modest initial investment of ₹37,500, which I secured as a loan from the Central Bank of India, I set up my

first small manufacturing unit in a 100-sq.ft space. The primary focus was on refrigerator stabilisers, TV stabilisers, and domestic voltage stabilisers. Over time, Leotronix gained the trust of customers due to the quality and durability of our products. Today, from that small setup, we have expanded our operations to a facility spanning 1 lakh sq.ft, offering a diverse range of power solutions and lifestyle products.

The electronics market in India is growing. Are you also witnessing this surge in sales in the Odisha market?
 The electronics market in India has been growing rapidly, and Odisha is no exception. Consumers today are more aware and demand high-quality products that ensure long-term reliability. Our growth is a testament to the increasing demand in the market. One of the key reasons we have sustained our growth is our unwavering focus on customer service. Our presence in all districts of Odisha, along with dedicated service centres in cities like Rourkela, Berhampur, Bhadrak, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, and Dhenkanal,

has allowed us to address customer needs efficiently.

What are the leading challenges that the industry is facing?
 The electronics industry is highly competitive, with numerous brands offering similar products. One of the biggest challenges is maintaining affordability without compromising on quality. Customers are price-conscious, but they also seek long-term value, making it essential for brands to strike the right balance. Another challenge is the ever-evolving technology landscape. To stay ahead, continuous innovation and adaptation are necessary. Additionally, ensuring a strong service network is crucial because a product's success is not just about sales but also about post-purchase satisfaction.

How important is customer satisfaction in your business?
 Customer satisfaction is the backbone of any business, and for Leotronix, it has always been our top priority. A satisfied customer not only returns but also brings in new customers through word-of-mouth recommendations. Our philosophy has

always been simple: deliver what you promise, maintain quality, and ensure seamless service. We do not just focus on selling a product; our responsibility continues even after the sale. We actively seek customer feedback, improve based on their suggestions, and provide prompt services whenever required.

How has your journey been so far? Do you have any advice for new entrants?
 The journey has been filled with challenges, learning experiences, and achievements. As Leotronix moves into its 28th year, our journey continues with a strong foundation of trust, quality, and service excellence. We have recently expanded into the metal furniture segment, offering storage solutions for homes and workspaces. Starting from zero, I have faced multiple hurdles, but perseverance and commitment to quality have helped me overcome them. The key to success is dedication, integrity, and an unwavering focus on customer satisfaction. The future is exciting, and we look forward to growing alongside our valued customers.

New UPI guidelines from April 1

According to the new norms, the UPI ID linked to the inactive mobile number will become inactive

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 29: The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) recently issued new guidelines on numeric UPI ID solution with the aim of enhancing customer experience for UPI number-based payments. These new guidelines will be effective from April 1. It will be mandatory for UPI member banks, UPI apps and third-party providers to follow these new guidelines. According to the new norms, the UPI ID linked to the inactive mobile number will become inactive. That is, if the mobile number registered with the bank of a UPI user is inactive for a long time, then the UPI ID of the user will also be unlinked, and the person will not be able to use the UPI service. In such a situation, every person using the UPI service will need to ensure that the mobile number registered with his bank is active. UPI service can be used without any problem only if the bank records are kept updated with the correct mobile number.



ber. There may be problems with the UPI service associated with inactive or reassigned mobile numbers. According to the new rules of the Department of Telecom (DoT), a mobile number can be assigned to a new user after 90 days of disconnection. If a customer's mobile number is not being used for calls, messages or data, then such numbers are deactivated by telecom providers. These numbers are called recycled or churned numbers. Under the new guidelines, the user's bank-verified mobile number will act as the user's UPI identifier. On the other hand, banks and

UPI applications will also need to update their mobile number records every week so that mistakes caused by recycled or modified numbers can be avoided. Applications will need to seek permission from users before assigning numeric UPI IDs. Users must actively opt in for this feature as the default setting is opted out. In case there is some delay in the NPCI verification, UPI applications may temporarily resolve numeric UPI ID issues internally. These issues will need to be documented and reported to NPCI on a monthly basis for monitoring purposes.

Centre sends another notice to Ola Electric

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 29: The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has reportedly sent a fresh show-cause notice to Ola Electric Mobility, seeking an explanation about mismatch in its sales numbers recorded in February. The show-cause notice, dated March 21, seeks details about Ola scooters of various models sold and registered last month, as per reports. The Bhavish Aggarwal-led electric vehicle (EV) maker has been asked to respond to whether Ola scooters sold in February are on the road without registrations; whether Ola scooters were delivered to customers without number plates; and whether Ola scooters are being sold from stores without trade certificates. It was not clear yet if the EV maker had responded to the ministry's letter within the seven-day deadline. Ola Electric claimed to have sold 25,000 scooters in February but only 8,652 of them were reg-



MISMATCH IN SALES

istered due to renegotiation of contracts with vendors that handled vehicle registrations. The vendors, Rosmerta Group, subsequently filed insolvency petitions against the company over unpaid dues of up to ₹25 crore. Ola Electric said it has "amicably settled all outstanding dues between its wholly owned subsidiary, Ola Electric Technologies Private Limited, and the Rosmerta Group" and the Rosmerta Group has filed the memo for withdrawal of the petitions filed before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Bengaluru.

STOCK DEAL

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 29: Billionaire Elon Musk has announced his artificial intelligence company, xAI, has acquired social media platform X for an all-stock transaction of \$33 billion. The combination, which values xAI at \$80 billion and X at \$33 billion (\$45B less \$12B debt), will unlock the immense potential. It will blend xAI's advanced AI capability and expertise with X's massive reach. X has more than 600 million active users. Musk had in 2022, bought X -- originally Twitter -- for \$44 billion. In the last two years, the

Musk sells X to his xAI startup for \$33bn

platform has been transformed into one of the most efficient companies in the world, positioning it to deliver scalable future growth. On the other hand, xAI, founded by Musk in March 2023, has rapidly become one of the leading AI labs in the world. It builds models and data centers at unprecedented speed and scale, said Musk, who also leads Tesla and SpaceX and serves as an adviser to President Donald Trump. Today, we officially take the step to combine the data, models, compute, distribution, and talent, said Musk. He said the future if both xAI and X's are intertwined, and will deliver smarter, more



The future could not be brighter
LINDA YACCARINO | CEO, X

meaningful experiences. The combination will allow us to build a platform that doesn't just reflect the world but actively accelerates human progress. Calling it just the beginning, Musk also lauded the hardcore dedication of the people in both companies.

Since Musk's acquisition of Twitter in 2022, he made several changes to the company, including scrapping a free verified programme, introducing a paid membership and even changing the company's name to X. However, X's financial outlook has not seen much growth. According to Fidelity, one of the investors that participated in Musk's acquisition, X's valuation plummeted to \$12 billion in December, the New York Times reported. In contrast, xAI has grown rapidly. The AI start-up raised \$6 billion from investors in December, valuing it at \$35 billion to \$40 billion, up from \$24 billion in May.

PLAY STORE CASE

NCLAT upholds CCI ruling against Google, penalty cut by a fifth
 PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 28: In a setback for Google, appellate tribunal NCLAT Friday upheld fair trade regulator CCI's finding that the company's app store billing policy was unfair and restrictive for developers. It, however, slashed the penalty to almost a fifth to ₹216 crore from ₹936.44 crore imposed by the Competition Commission of India (CCI). In a 104-page order, the NCLAT said Google "has abused its dominant position and has violated Section". However, it also said there was no violation by the tech major on charging 15 to 30 per cent service fee from apps depending on various parameters. A two-member bench comprising Chairperson Justice Ashok Bhushan and Technical Member Barun Mitra said Google "has abused its dominant position and has violated Section", however, in some sections, violation was "not proved, but penalty was still leviable on proof of violation". "The penalty imposed on Google is modified as per the computation contained in paragraph 105 of this order. Thus, the penalty imposed on Google for relevant turnover of last three preceding year of ₹936.44 crores is modified to the amount of ₹216.69 crore (USD 2,98,89,312.39)," said the NCLAT order. As Google has already "deposited 10 per cent of the penalty in the present Appeal, rest of the amount of penalty shall be deposited by the Appellant within 30 days from today", said NCLAT. Earlier October 25, 2022, the CCI had slapped a penalty of ₹936.44 crore on Google for abusing its dominant position with respect to its Play Store policies. This was challenged by Al-phaet Inc and Google before the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), which is an appellate jurisdiction over the orders passed by CCI.

Clinical GT overpower MI

Prasidh and Siraj star as Gujarat Titans get off the mark with brilliant 36-run win over Mumbai Indian



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ahmedabad, March 29: Prasidh Krishna showed excellence in picking wickets with slower balls while Mohammed Siraj was proficient in his scrambled seam deliveries as Gujarat Titans got off the mark with a brilliant 36-run win over Mumbai Indians in Match 9 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 at the Narendra Modi Stadium here Saturday.

After opener B Sai Sudharsan continued his good start to the IPL 2025 season by top-scoring with 63 and helping GT post a huge 196/8, the bowlers were impressive in their plans to keep MI to 160/6 on a two-paced pitch. While Krishna picked 2-18, Siraj took 2-34 while Kagiso Rabada and R Sai

Kishore had a scalp each. Such was the impact of GT's impressive bowling that Rashid Khan bowled only two overs.

For MI, barring Suryakumar Yadav, none of the batters got into any sort of serious batting rhythm, with the lack of execution in shots emerging as a big sore point. Chasing 197, Rohit Sharma began by clipping Siraj twice off his wrists. But Siraj bounced back immediately by getting a scrambled seam delivery to come in from outside the off-stump and castle Rohit through the gate for eight.

Even as Tilak Varma hit Rabada for three boundaries, Siraj struck again by having Ryan Rickleton chop onto his stumps off another scrambled seam delivery and uproot the off-stump, as the opener fell for

six. Suryakumar brought out his trademark flick for six off Siraj before Tilak reversed an lbw decision on review as MI ended the power-play at 48/2.

Tilak and Suryakumar took a boundary each off Ishant Sharma, before the latter swept Kishore for four, though it also resulted in B Sai Sudharsan going off the field after clutching his left hamstring while trying to save that boundary. With the required run rate going just above 11, a scratchy Tilak looked to loft off Krishna, but the delivery's slowness meant he was caught by long-on for 39.

Robin Minz couldn't do much as an impact player, as he sliced to short third off Kishore. Suryakumar, after being knocked to the ground when Krishna's short ball hit

him on the helmet, couldn't stay till the end as he holed out to long-off against the tall pacer's slower delivery.

With Hardik Pandya's painful stay of 17-ball 11 being brought to an end by Rabada, the big hits coming from Naman Dhir and Mitchell Santner were too late, as they couldn't stop the five-time champions from going towards being winless against GT for the fourth straight time in Ahmedabad.

Brief scores:
Gujarat Titans: 196/8 in 20 overs (B Sai Sudharsan 63, Jos Buttler 39; Hardik Pandya 2-29) beat **Mumbai Indians:** 160/6 in 20 overs (Suryakumar Yadav 48, Tilak Varma 39; Prasidh Krishna 2-18, Mohammed Siraj 2-34) by 36 runs

RAHUL RETURNS AGAINST WOUNDED SUNRISERS

Delhi Capitals eye second win when they take on formidable Sunrisers Hyderabad Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Visakhapatnam, March 29: Fresh from their morale-boosting win over LSG and bolstered by the return of India wicket-keeper-batter KL Rahul, Delhi Capitals will look to build on the momentum when they take on formidable Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL here Sunday.

After a thunderous start to their campaign, SRH lost to Lucknow Super Giants by five wickets Thursday as the defeat showed that their explosive batting line-up can be reined in.

Going out of their den, the pressure will be on skipper Pat Cummins to inspire a turnaround. Delhi, on the other hand, will be strengthened by the return of Rahul, who missed the season opener against LSG due to the birth of his first child.

A key architect of India's Champions Trophy triumph in Dubai earlier this month, Rahul was picked by Delhi Capitals for Rs 14 crore. Despite his experience, he chose not to lead the side, entrusting the responsibility on Axar Patel.

Once considered an all-format mainstay for India, Rahul was not a part of India's T20 World Cup-winning squad last year and struggled to impress during his IPL stint with LSG, leading to his non-retention.

His tense on-field exchange with Sanjiv Goenka, where the team owner looked visibly frustrated, became one of the talking points last season.

Rahul will be eager to let his performances do the talking in



a fresh start at a new franchise. He was seen training under India's assistant coach Abhishek Nayar in Mumbai before joining the Delhi Capitals camp here.

Rahul's return will give Delhi's top order, which struggled in the previous match, the much-needed stability.

Chasing 211, DC found themselves reeling at 65/5 before Ashutosh Sharma (66 not out

off 31 balls) and Vipraj Nigam (39 at No. 8) scripted a thrilling one-wicket victory. Tristan Stubbs also played a handy knock of 34 at No 6.

Beyond his batting, Rahul will be an integral part of the leadership group, providing crucial inputs to Patel, who is leading an IPL team for the first time. DC have often struggled to close out games in recent seasons, and the hard-fought win over LSG should inject the much-needed belief in the squad.

Delhi boast of a formidable bowling attack, spearheaded by Mitchell Starc, whose face-off with fellow Australian Travis Head promises to be a key battle.

Starc, alongside Axar and Kuldeep Yadav, will be crucial in countering SRH's explosive opening pair of Abhishek Sharma and Head. Stubbs and Mohit Sharma can also provide crucial breakthroughs towards the end.

Confused CSK pitted against clueless RR

Guwahati: Shaken by the sound thrashing that Royal Challengers Bengaluru handed them, a confused Chennai Super Kings might feel more "at home" against an equally clueless Rajasthan Royals on an expected slow turner in their next IPL game here Sunday. Losing by 50 runs at 'Fortress Chepauk' would have seemed like a wishful thinking for an opposition side till date but RCB's 'class of 2025' under an ever-improving skipper Rajat Patidar has exposed some chinks in the CSK armoury and match against Royals couldn't have come at a better time for Ruturaj Gaikwad's men. CSK coach Stephen Fleming looked livid about Chepauk conditions where normally the CSK template is to play games where they either defend 165 to 170 if batting first or chase 155 to 160 by restricting opposition. The kind of batting line-up that they have with MS Dhoni now becoming a designated 'tail-ender' at No 9 due to Impact Substitution has worked well.



AIFF draft constitution proposes radical tweaks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 29: The draft constitution of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) has proposed several radical changes, including the provision for inclusion of at least five former national players in the 14-member Executive Committee and removal of the office bearers through a no-confidence motion.

The draft constitution, prepared by retired Justice L Nageswara Rao has been submitted to the Supreme Court. An SC bench comprising Justices PS Narasimha and Joyimalya Bagchi March 25 commenced final hearing on pleas related to the finalisation of the AIFF Constitution. The matter is likely to be taken up by the bench for further arguments and final disposal April 2.

The draft constitution says that the current elected members of the Executive Committee (after polls in September 2022), "shall stay in power and serve their permitted full term(s) of four years, subsequent to which fresh elections shall be conducted in the manner prescribed in this amended Constitution." But according to officials tracking the development, election can be called before the end of the term of the current office bearers - which is September 2026 - if the SC gives nod to the new constitution and the AIFF adopts it quickly.

TT legend Sharath retires

The 42-year-old, a record 10-time national champion, is currently India's top-ranked men's singles player, placed 92nd in the latest WTT ranking list



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, March 29: Indian Table Tennis legend Achanta Sharath Kamal hung his boots following his face-off against Snehit Suravajjula in the Men's Singles Round of 16 at WTT Star Contender Chennai 2025.

The 3-0 defeat against his compatriot meant this was Sharath's final official match. The five-time Olympian and India's most celebrated paddler, Sharath, had announced his retirement from table tennis ahead of the start of the tournament.

At 42 years old, Sharath, who is a record 10-time national champion, is currently India's top-ranked men's singles player, placed 92nd in the latest

WTT ranking list. Sharath has won 13 Commonwealth Games medals (including seven gold) and two Asian Games bronze medals, five Olympic Games appearances, and two ITTF Pro Tour titles under his two-decade-long career.

He won his first national title in 2003 and his maiden international medal at the 2004 Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships. His career graph reached a new high when he qualified for the 2004 Athens Olympics. In 2004, Sharath was conferred the Arjuna Award and won five national titles in a row. A historic singles gold medal at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne and another gold in the men's team event capped a successful year.

SHORT TAKES

Kiwis beat Pakistan by 73 runs in 1st ODI

NAPIER: Mark Chapman scored 132 and Daryl Mitchell 76 in a 199-run partnership as New Zealand made 344-9 and went on to beat Pakistan by 73 runs Saturday in the first one-day international. Chapman posted his third one-day international century and rebuilt the innings with Mitchell after New Zealand had been three wickets down in the 13th over, struggling against bounce and swing from the Pakistan fast bowlers. Muhammad Abbas, the first Pakistan-born player to play for New Zealand, made 50 from 24 balls — the fastest half century by a player on debut in one-day internationals.

Brazil fires Dorival after worst defeat

SAO PAULO: Brazil coach Dorival Júnior was fired Friday after 14 months amid poor results and disappointing performances from the national team. Júnior's sacking by Brazilian Football Confederation president Ednaldo Rodrigues came three days after a 4-1 defeat to bitter rival Argentina in Buenos Aires, Brazil's heaviest defeat in a World Cup qualifier. "The confederation announces that Dorival Júnior's cycle is over," Rodrigues told media in Rio de Janeiro. Brazil is fifth in South American qualifying for the 2026 World Cup. The top six qualify automatically.

Sandhu top golfer

GURUGRAM: Ajeetesh Sandhu reclaimed his position as the top Indian golfer, rising 10 places to a tie for 15th after the third round of the Hero Indian Open here Saturday. Sandhu, who was tied for 4th after the opening round, carded a two-over 74 in Round 3, which included three birdies and five bogeys, to take his total to four-over par. This lifted him from his overnight tied-25th spot. Last edition's runner-up, Veer Ahlawat (74), who had two birdies, including one on the 18th, but also two bogeys and a double bogey, stood at five-over, tied for 18th.

ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Tough day for wrestlers

Five Indian freestyle wrestlers eliminated

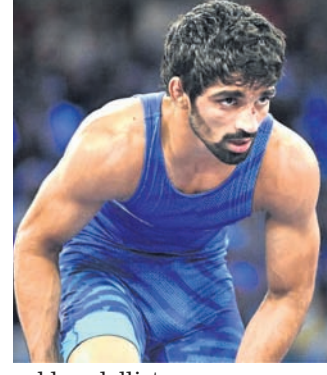
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amman (Jordan), March 29: India's men's freestyle wrestlers endured a tough day in the field as all five in action Saturday bowed out of the Asian Championships after tame defeats, here.

In the 65kg, Sujeet Kalkal was off to a flying start, beating Palestinian Abdullah Assaf by technical superiority but could not breach the defence of Japanese Kaisei Tanabe.

Sujeet had a chance to bounce back to medal contention via repechage route as Tanabe had made the title clash but the Indian did not take the mat due to an injury.

Vishal Kaliraman's fate was in the hands of his vanquisher Tulga Tumur Ochir from Mongolia. Vishal lost his opening bout 0-8 to 2022 Asian Games



gold medallist.

Ochir faced Tajikistan's Viktor Rassadin in the 65kg semifinal but lost, ensuring Vishal's exit.

Competing in the 57kg category in the absence of Olympic bronze medallist Aman Sehrawat, Chirag could not score even a single point, losing his bout by technical superiority

to Almaz Smanbekov. The Kyrgyzstan wrestler then lost his quarterfinal, shutting the repechage door on the Indian.

In the 79kg, Chandermohan bowed out after suffering a defeat by fall against Tajikistan's Magomet Evloev, who later lost his semifinal.

Indian Greco Roman wrestlers grabbed two medals as out of 10 women wrestlers six returned with medals, including Manisha Bhanwala's gold in 62kg and Reetika Hooda's silver in 76kg.

Sunday is the final day of the competition and the remaining five men's freestyle wrestlers will look to ensure that India's outing does not end without a medal. India's hopes will ride on 2019 World Championship silver medallist Deepak Punia, who is competing in the 92kg category.

BFI's leadership battle needs early solution in players' interest

India's boxers are yet to compete in an international tournament in this Olympic cycle. With the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games scheduled for next year, they are still adjusting to new world governing body's weight categories. Further delays could hurt them

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 29: The Indian boxers are regaining momentum after months of inactivity but if the Boxing Federation of India's (BFI) election deadlock continues, the uncertainty around the formation of new body could adversely impact progress of the country's pugilists.

President Ajay Singh, seeking a third term, has announced a series of age-group tournaments and assured that national camps will also resume soon, along with a revamped coaching setup. But if a new president takes over post-elections, there is no guarantee if the new EC will keep the current system.

Singh stated, "We will fulfil our responsibility, a new team is free to take their calls later." However, potential disruptions could harm the boxers' preparation and affect consistency.

India's boxers are yet to compete in an international tournament in this Olympic cycle. With the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games scheduled for next year, they are still adjusting to new world governing body's weight categories. Further delays could hurt them.

Singh has promised to recruit new coaches and review the controversial selection policy.

Indian boxing has been without a High-Performance Director since Bernard Dunne stepped down in March last year. The BFI invited applications for a foreign coach in August, but no appointment has been made.

Foreign coach Dmitry Dmitruk and chief coach CA Kutappa are also absent from the men's team which is currently in Brazil for the first World Cup.

The president has also introduced a new selection process



for national camps. Previously, the top four finishers at the Nationals secured camp spots. Under the new system, a pool of eight boxers will be formed based on performances across three tournaments, from which four national campers in each weight class will be selected.

But if Singh loses the election, these plans risk being

overturned, further disrupting the boxers' training and development.

Factionalism, its fallout The BFI's internal power struggle has already cost athletes valuable time. The ongoing factionalism led to repeated postponements of the women's Nationals.

Days before the Nationals,

Singh suspended Secretary General Hemanta Kalita and Treasurer Digvijay Singh after an investigation led by former Delhi High Court Judge Sudhir Kumar Jain found them guilty of "financial irregularities."

Two rival factions have emerged in the run up to the elections, one being led by Singh. On the other side are Kalita, Digvijay, and Vice President Rajesh Bhandari, who support former sports minister Anurag Thakur's presidential bid.

As a result state units that aligned with the opposing faction, including Assam, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha, boycotted the women's Nationals, depriving their boxers of crucial competition.

Like several other National Sports Federation (NSF) elections in recent times, the BFI elections have been marred by legal disputes and procedural

delays. The Returning Officer has paused the electoral proceedings until greater clarity emerges.

The Delhi Amateur Boxing Association (DABA) and the Himachal Pradesh Boxing Association challenged the exclusion of their representatives, which stemmed from a March 7 order by Singh that only elected members in state bodies could participate in the electoral process.

The Delhi and Himachal High Courts stayed the disqualifications and ruled in favour of the state units.

The Himachal court had also directed the BFI to extend the date of nominations to enable his candidature. The BFI has filed appeals against both judgments.

Singh has support from some senior members, but shifting loyalties and withdrawals make the outcome uncertain until polling day.