



Urvashi's perception

Actress Urvashi Rautela shares her insights on what it takes to be the perfect partner in a relationship

LEISURE | P2



Trump announces Iran talks

Prez Trump announces US-Iran talks on nuclear programme, but Iran's foreign minister confirmed discussions would be indirect

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Rupee sinks 50 paise

Declining for the third straight session, rupee tumbles 50 paise to settle at 86.26 against the US dollar Tuesday

BUSINESS | P11



LSG dominates KKR

Lucknow Super Giants hold their nerve in a high-octane contest to edge past Kolkata Knight Riders by four runs Tuesday

SPORTS | P12



Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi addressing investors at New Delhi, Tuesday (Report P3)

State inks 13 MoUs, garners ₹1.03L-cr investment intents

- This is the right time to invest in state, CM Mohan Charan Majhi told industry leaders
- The projects are expected to generate employment opportunities for over 95,000 people

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi April 8: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi's two-day visit to the national capital culminated with a series of significant outcomes aimed at bolstering the state's industrial landscape.

As a major step forward, the state government signed several high-value Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with leading industry players here. These investments will garner ₹98,880 crore of investment and provide employment for 67,000 people, officials said. The highlight of the event was an agreement with Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) for setting up a Dual-Feed Naphtha Cracker

Project in Odisha.

The project is expected to bring in investments of over ₹58,000 crore, generating employment for 24,000 people.

Additionally, agreements were also signed with the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd (ISPRL) and Petronet LNG. These partnerships reinforce Odisha's strategic role in India's petrochemical landscape and reflect a commitment to sustainable industrial development, import substitution, and a resilient supply chain.

Overall, 13 MoUs along with 15 investment intents were received. The total investment generated through these initiatives amounts to ₹1,03,090 crore, which will significantly enhance the state's capabilities across sectors. The projects are expected to generate employment opportunities for over 95,000 people, fostering regional economic growth and boosting industrial activity.

The event was addressed by Sampad Chandra Swain, Min-

ister for Industries and Skill Development & Technical Education, Odisha, followed by Union Ministers Jual Oram (Tribal Affairs), Dharmendra Pradhan (Education), and Hardeep Singh Puri (Petroleum and Natural Gas). Puri lauded Odisha's proactive approach to industrialization.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, in his keynote address, emphasised Odisha's vision to emerge as a petrochemical and manufacturing hub. He stated, "Today's MoU with IOCL is a landmark moment in Odisha's industrial journey. It reflects not just a shared vision but a strong belief in the state's potential to lead India's petrochemical revolution from the east. Paradip, with its strategic location and evolving infrastructure, is poised to become a transformative industrial hub—much like Dahej in the west. Odisha is ready, and we invite you to invest in our bright future. Yahi Samay Hai, Sahi Samay Hai. (This is the time, the right time)."

US to impose 104% tariff on China from today

AGENCIES

Washington, April 8: Donald Trump has followed through on his threat of 'additional 50 per cent tariffs' on China starting Wednesday. The White House announced that this will make America's new tariff on China an unprecedented 104 per cent.

President Trump had given China 24 hours to roll back or 'withdraw' the retaliatory 34 per cent tariff it imposed on US goods, failing which Chinese goods would be punished with 104 per cent tariffs. Beijing dared Washington to do so earlier today. Within hours Donald Trump announced it.

The US used to tariff China at 10 per cent till last month.

Minutes after Trump's announcement, the White House said that the US would be charging the entire world an additional 10 per cent non-reciprocal tariff. This was a move to fill the US federal reserve, they said. China's basket of tariffs now stood at 54 per cent.

Now, with Wednesday's "additional 50 per cent tariff" solely for China, Beijing now faces an unprecedented levy of 104 per cent - a near 100 per cent rise in less than a week. President Trump however, still left the door ajar for Beijing to reconcile. In a post on his social media platform Truth Social, he wrote, "China also wants to make a deal, badly, but they don't know how to get it started. We are waiting for their call."

Earlier in the day, China had responded to President Trump's ultimatum to 'withdraw' Beijing's retaliatory move. They called it 'blackmail'.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The country has improved a lot, but some areas still need attention. Alas, fake degrees are still unacceptable in medicine

Boost to federalism

Tamil Nadu's MK Stalin-led DMK government has long accused Governor RN Ravi - a former IPS officer who has also worked in the CBI - of acting like a BJP spokesperson and blocking Bills and appointments. These charges gained validation Tuesday when the Supreme Court ruled that Ravi's reservation of 10 Bills for presidential consideration was illegal and arbitrary. Setting a precedent, the court established a timeline for Governors to act on state Assembly Bills: one month for assent or reservation with ministerial advice, and three months to return Bills without such advice. The court emphasised that Governors cannot sit on Bills to delay or block legislation, highlighting the need for Governors to act in line with democratic principles and not hinder state legislatures. Article 200 of the Constitution lays down the options before the Governor when a Bill passed by the state House is presented before him. The Governor can give his assent, withhold assent, or reserve the Bill for consideration of the President. The Governor can send the Bill back to the House or Houses for the reconsideration of some provisions. If the House passes it again, the Governor shall not withhold assent. However, the Governor can reserve for the President's consideration a Bill which he/she feels is at odds with the Constitution, directive principles of state policy, or is a matter of national importance. The article also contains the phrase 'as soon as possible' regarding Governor's assent to Bills, but notably lacks any specific or defined timeline for such actions, creating room for interpretation and potential delays. This has been addressed by the top court in its verdict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: In a major victory to DMK-led Tamil Nadu government, the Supreme Court Tuesday cleared 10 Bills which were stalled and reserved by Governor RN Ravi for President's consideration while setting a timeline for governors to act on the Bills passed by state Assemblies.

Woman constable found dead in barracks

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, April 8: A woman constable was found hanging in her room at the police barracks on Tuesday morning. It is suspected to be a case of suicide linked to a failed relationship.

The deceased, identified as Yashoda Das from Mandarpur village under Remuna police limits, had posted a deeply emotional and cryptic message on her WhatsApp status before taking the extreme step. Police said the incident occurred after her colleagues left for work, leaving Yashoda alone in her room. At around 8:06 am, she updated her WhatsApp status and later allegedly hanged herself from the ceiling fan. She was found unresponsive when fellow officers returned from duty and immediately rushed her to the District Headquarters Hospital, where doctors declared her dead on arrival.

A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan held, "Action of the Governor to reserve the 10 Bills for President is illegal and arbitrary and thus the action is set aside."

The court added, "The 10 Bills shall be deemed to be clear from the date it was re-presented to the Governor."

In the first of its kind directions, the top court fixed a



timeline within which Governor has to act on Bills passed by the state legislature.

Fixing the timeline, the bench said in case of withholding assent on a bill and reserving it for President with the aid and advice of the council of ministers, the maximum period would be one month.

In case the Governor decided to withhold assent without the aid and advice of the council of ministers, the bills must be returned to the Assembly within three months, it added.

The top court said in case of presentation of a bill after reconsideration by the state Assembly, the bills have to be given assent by the Governor within a period of one month.

The bench said the Governor must be conscious to not create "roadblocks or chokehold" the state legislature in order "to thwart and break the will of the people."

"The members of state legislature, having been elected by the people of the state as an outcome of the democratic expression, are better attuned to ensure the well being of the people of the state," the bench said.

The bench said Governor couldn't sit over bills and adopt the concept of "absolute veto" or "pocket veto".

"Pocket veto" denotes a concept where Governor sits over the bills without signing it and virtually making it ineffective.

The bench said Governor sitting over bills passed by the Assembly and presented to him, without any action, made them just a "piece of paper" and "skeleton without flesh."

The bench said it was not open for Governor to reserve the bill for consideration of President after it was presented to him for the second time.

It said Governor must assent to the bills produced before him in the second round and the only exception was that the bill in the second instance was different from the first one.

Special corridor linking Shakti Peeths in Odisha soon: Parida



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida announced Tuesday that the state will develop a Shakti Corridor that will link several Shakti peeths (sacred shrines dedicated to the goddess Shakti) across Odisha. She was speaking at the Maa Tara Tarini temple in Ganjam. Parida, along with other key officials, visited the site to review the ongoing developmental works around the shrine.

The temple holds significant religious, spiritual, social, and cultural importance for the people of the state, and efforts are underway to improve the shrine and its surroundings to attract more tourists.

Shakti Corridor aims to connect famous temples, including Maa Biraja Temple, Maa Man-

gala Temple, Maa Bhagabati Temple, Maa Ugratara Temple, Maa Narayani Temple, Maa Tara Tarini Temple, Maa Kalijai Temple, and Maa Bhairavi Temple.

The project will be a joint effort between the Works and Tourism departments, and an official announcement regarding its implementation will be made soon.

In another key development, state Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan announced the introduction of a new queue management system, 'Dhadi Darshan,' at the Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri. This system has been designed to regulate the flow of devotees, ensuring a smoother and more disciplined darshan experience. The system is expected to be introduced by the end of April.

Dire wolves howl again after 12,000 years

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, April 8: Three genetically engineered wolves that may resemble extinct dire wolves are trotting, sleeping and howling in an undisclosed secure location in the US, according to the company that aims to bring back lost species.

The wolf pups, which range in age from three to six months old, have long white hair, muscular jaws and already weigh in at around 80 pounds — on track to reach 140 pounds at maturity, researchers at Colossal Biosciences reported Monday.

Dire wolves, which went extinct more than 10,000 years ago, are much larger than gray wolves, their closest living relatives today. Colossal scientists learned about specific traits that dire wolves possessed by examining ancient DNA from fossils. The researchers studied



a 13,000 year-old dire wolf tooth unearthed in Ohio and a 72,000 year-old skull fragment found in Idaho, both part of natural history museum collections.

Then the scientists took blood cells from a living gray wolf and used CRISPR to genetically modify them in 20 different sites, said Colossal's chief scientist

MUSK: PLEASE MAKE A PET WOOLY MAMMOTH

Billionaire Elon Musk reacted to the news, posting his own Wishlist. "Please make a miniature pet wooly mammoth," Musk posted on X, while resharing his own post. Colossal had previously announced similar projects to genetically alter cells from living species to create animals resembling extinct woolly mammoths, dodos and others.

Beth Shapiro. They transferred that genetic material to an egg cell from a domestic dog. When ready, embryos were transferred to surrogates, also domestic dogs, and 62 days later the genetically engineered pups were born.

Colossal reported Monday that it had cloned four red wolves using blood drawn from wild wolves of the southeastern US' critically endangered red wolf population. The aim is to

bring more genetic diversity into the small population of captive red wolves, which scientists are using to breed and help save the species.

This technology may have broader application for conservation of other species because it's less invasive than other techniques to clone animals, said Christopher Preston, a wildlife expert at the University of Montana who was not involved in the research. But it still requires a wild wolf to be sedated for a blood draw and that's no simple feat, he added.

Colossal CEO Ben Lamm said the team met with officials from the US Interior Department in late March about the project. Interior Secretary Doug Burgum praised the work on X Monday as a "thrilling new era of scientific wonder" even as outside scientists said there are limitations to restoring the past.

leisure

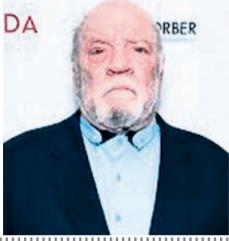


JENNA ORTEGA ON HER EXIT FROM SCREAM 7

Hollywood actress Jenna Ortega has revealed that her exit from the *Scream* franchise was over her shooting schedule. This is contrary to the reports that cited scheduling conflicts and pay discrepancy as the reason behind her exit.

PAUL SCHRADER RESPONDS TO SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLEGATIONS

Hollywood screenwriter Paul Schrader has addressed the allegations of sexual assault in a letter to his friends and associates. The allegations were levelled by his 26-year-old former assistant, claiming her accusations couldn't be "further from the truth", reports *Variety*



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
You may want to meet up with friends you haven't met in a long time, and the stars indicate that you will have great fun. Your enthusiasm will add a glow to whatever you do. Your sincerity in approach is what makes it special, says Ganesha.

TAURUS
You will focus on nurturing the positive aspects of your life today, says Ganesha. You might exhaust yourself mentally trying to set things straight. It would be better to brainstorm with someone close to you or approach people whom you have differences with. The nitty-gritty is fine, but do not forget the larger picture, suggests Ganesha.

GEMINI
Routine work bores you, and today you will go all out to break free from the shackles of boredom. The results, however, may not be as dramatic. You will have to depend on your children, if any, to rescue you from the tyranny of routine. Monetary gains can be expected either in the form of inheritance of ancestral property or as increment in your basic salary.

CANCER
You may feel like flaunting your so-called superior social and financial status today. Chances are that all that gas about how successful you are may end up exploding in your face, and you may end up spending a lot more than you would have liked. However, if you only stick

LEO
If it's a fresh start that you are looking for, then this day promises to give you just that, predicts Ganesha. If you have chalked out plans for your future, today you may go ahead and implement some. Remember that rushing blindly into anything is not the solution; it is always the slow and steady who wins the race.

VIRGO
Today, your power and finance will be greater than ever before, says Ganesha. You will also be inclined to make monetary provisions for any future economic instability that may arise. The people around you that stand up and take notice of the leader in you.

LIBRA
Today promises to be a busy day that will keep you occupied. You may also engage in written correspondence to re-establish some old contacts. Ganesha doesn't rule out optimum use of the phone for this purpose.

SCORPIO
You might find your spirit sagging as worries cloud your thinking. Small things might probably bother you in a big way. Do not let them bog you down as life is all about mind over matter. As the day progresses, things will begin to look up. Take a break from the rigmarole if stress begins to take a toll on you, advises Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Watch out for Cupid's arrow today, warns Ganesha. Love will strike and strike hard. Alternatively, you may also find yourself in an argument with a loved one that ought to have been avoided. An evening of romance beckons... keep the roses ready and the carpet rolled to heal any bruises you might have caused.

CAPRICORN
You may be attentive, as much as an eagle is while chasing its prey, but you still need to be careful when signing any important legal documents, advises Ganesha. Brokers and dealers, especially, are likely to incur heavy losses unless they take necessary precautions to avert misfortune.

AQUARIUS
Today, you're up against those who want to get back at you. But not for nothing are you the king! Ganesha says you needn't worry, as few can match your prowess. Amid all the hullabaloo, your spouse will be a supportive presence.

PISCES
Within adversity, lie the lessons of success; avoid having to resort to that philosophy by implementing your plans, if they are well thought out, in a phased manner. This will help you achieve your targets, says Ganesha.

Sanjana highlights power of education

Mumbai: Aside from being an emerging talent in Bollywood, actress Sanjana Sanghi is also the Youth Champion with UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). Addressing an audience of young creatives and changemakers, Sanjana in



shaping one's purpose. She shared insights from her international work — amplifying youth voices across borders and pushing for systemic change through education and empowerment. Opening up about what inspired her, Sanjana said, "I remember watching Emma Watson speak at the UN and thinking — this is where real impact begins. Teaching children gave me a sense of connection. Eventually, I started mentoring volunteers and building that initiative forward. I have a dream to have an organisation where no one is uneducated in our country."

She is of the opinion that education can resolve several issues such as gender and pay disparity, and lack of health awareness.

Sanjana went on to add, "The lack of education is the root of larger issues we face. Solve that, and you address gender and pay disparity, menstrual health awareness, Women's Rights and so much more. Unfortunately, in lockdown, the studies show that 10 Million girls were forced to drop out of school and pushed into domesticity, and the number for boys was less than a million."

Isha on her fashion mantra

Mumbai: Popular television actress Isha Malviya shared that her style started to evolve from the moment she stepped into the industry and that fashion has taught her not just about clothing, but also about carrying confidence.

Talking about how her fashion has evolved, Isha, who made her acting debut in the 2021 television series *Udaariyaan*, told, "My style began to evolve from the moment I entered the industry, and the journey has been incredible. Fashion has taught me so much—not just about clothing, but also about carrying confidence, embracing my personality, owning who I am, and so much more."

She added, "At the end of the day, you need to have that spark and spunk to evolve with the times. Girls like me and there are many of us out there who enjoy changing our outfits and style to match what's trending. I'm definitely one of those girls. If you want to stand out from the crowd—and people have chosen you, they love you, and have given you a public platform—you can't just be roaming around in nightwear. Of course, you have your own space to be in your comfort zone when you're at home, and you can wear whatever you like. I want to look presentable, well put-together, and decked up."



Urvashi's secret to perfect relationship

Mumbai: Actress Urvashi Rautela has shared her insights on what it takes to be the perfect partner in a relationship. According to her, the key to being the best boyfriend or husband is simple—just say sorry.

Urvashi, who is busy promoting her next project, *Jaat*, highlighted the importance of keeping a partner happy and maintaining harmony in a relationship through small, meaningful gestures. While speaking about her song, *Touch Kiya*, Rautela told the agency, "Thank you so much! It's a simple thing—any girl in the world would love to make her boyfriend say sorry. And if you can make any girl happy just by saying sorry, it's a win. The lyrics of the song are quite relatable. I'll give you my heart, but first say sorry." Many girls will connect with this sentiment.

The *Sanam Re* actress added, "If you want to be the best

boyfriend and the best husband, just say sorry. Always keep your partner happy."

On a related note, Urvashi Rautela sizzles in the high-energy dance track *Touch Kiya*, where she shows off her impressive moves alongside the formidable villain duo of Randeep Hooda and Vineet Kumar Singh.

Jaat, starring Sunny Deol in the lead role, is scheduled to hit theatres April 10, 2025.



John reflects on resilience, growth

Mumbai: Bollywood actor-producer John Abraham, who has often triggered new changes in the film industry, has said that he was written off after his debut movie. But, it was his resilience that made him come back stronger.

Recently, John spoke with the agency, and shared that he believes in working towards building his future, and doesn't look back at his professional journey, that's the reason he was able to look past his initial failure, and capitalise on what was ahead of him.

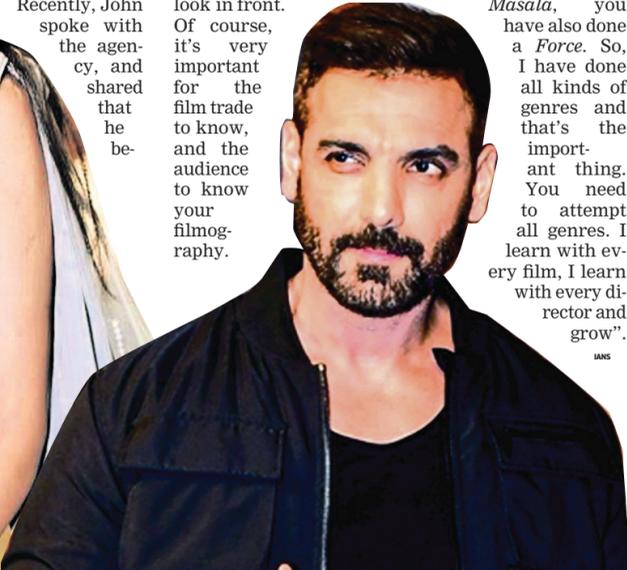
He told, "You are as good as your last innings. So, you have to look in front. Of course, it's very important for the film trade to know, and the audience to know your filmography."

But, you as a person have to look in front. It's for the audience to look at your filmography".

He shared, "A lot of people, when they see my filmography, they say, 'You are not a one-dimensional actor. You have done a *No Smoking*, you have done a *Garam Masala*, you have also done a *Force*. So, I have done all kinds of genres and that's the important thing. You need to attempt all genres. I learn with every film, I learn with every director and grow".

He told, "You are as good as your last innings. So, you have to look in front. Of course, it's very important for the film trade to know, and the audience to know your filmography."

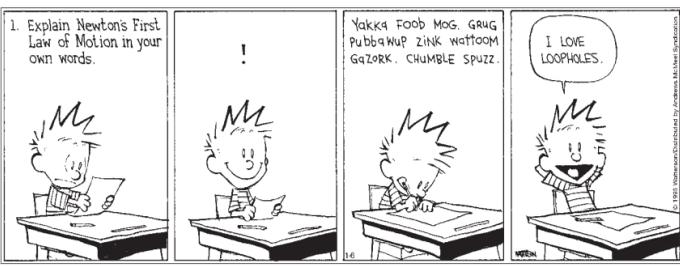
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PEANUTS



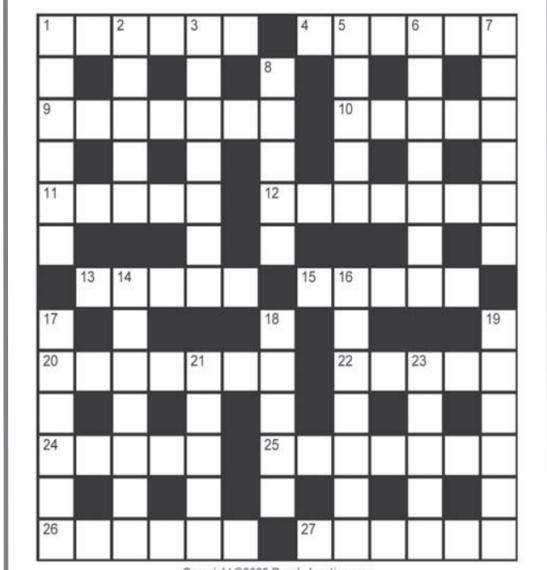
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



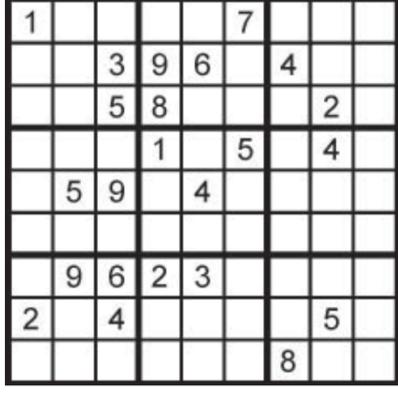
FUN POST CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Tooth decay
 - 4 Spool
 - 9 Electrician
 - 10 Spring month
 - 11 Punctuation mark
 - 12 Betrayal
 - 13 Slowpoke
 - 15 Mendicant
 - 20 Inactive
 - 22 Profundity
 - 24 Minimal
 - 25 Musical performance
 - 26 Bureau
 - 27 Thespian
 - 6 Coffee server
 - 7 Hose
 - 8 Bring together
 - 14 Recount
 - 16 Revolutionary
 - 17 Port city in the Ukraine
 - 18 Barren
 - 19 Irritability
 - 21 Room at the top
 - 23 Of little importance
- Down**
- 1 Like some cats
 - 2 Toxin secreted by animals
 - 3 Kettledrum
 - 5 Egg-shaped

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

A blood donation camp being held at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, Tuesday, as part of 'Odia Pakhya' celebrations



downtown

IOCL to set up ₹61,077 crore petrochem complex at Paradip



Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi with Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri in New Delhi, Tuesday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Odisha government to set up a mega petrochemical complex at Paradip with an investment of ₹61,077 crore to meet the rising demand for petrochemicals.

Besides IOCL, Petronet LNG Ltd, India's biggest liquefied natural gas importer, also signed a pact at Odisha Investors' Meet here in presence of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi to set up a ₹6,500-crore LNG import terminal at Gopalpur Port.

These apart, Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd, the special purpose vehicle created by the government for setting up strategic oil reserves, signed a pact for setting up a 4 million tonne underground storage facility at Chandikhol at a cost of ₹8,743 crore.

IOCL's ₹61,077 crore will be the company's largest-ever investment at a single location.

high-density polyethylene (HDPE), linear low-density polyethylene (LLDPE) and polyvinyl chloride (PVC).

These products will serve as raw materials for speciality chemical sectors like pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, coatings and adhesives, significantly reducing import dependency. Speaking on the occasion, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said the market size of the Indian chemicals and petrochemicals sector is currently ₹18 lakh crore and is expected to reach ₹85 lakh crore by the year 2040.

"However, the per capita consumption of various chemical products is significantly lower compared to developed economies and this gap offers substantial space for demand growth and investment opportunities," he said.

"The Paradip petrochemical complex will be a game-changer, catalysing industrial growth and self-sufficiency in the entire eastern region," he said.

"The Paradip Petrochemical Project will significantly substitute imports in the chemicals and petrochemicals sector. This project will save over ₹30,000 crore annually in foreign exchange, bolstering our economic resilience," he added.

Meanwhile, after signing of the pact, Petronet LNG Ltd's CEO AK Singh said the company has decided to set up a land-based 5 million tonne per year import terminal at Gopalpur.

Previously, Petronet was looking to set up a floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU)-based LNG terminal with a capacity of 4 million tonne per annum in Phase 1, with provision for converting to 5 million tonne per annum land-based terminal at Gopalpur Port.

"We have now got land. So, we have decided to convert it into a land-based terminal," he said. Petronet already has two LNG import facilities at Dahej in Gujarat and Kochi in Kerala.

HSC results likely in mid-May: Tarai

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, April 8: The results of the High School Certificate (HSC) Examination conducted by Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha, are expected to be declared in the second week of May.

BSE president Srikant Tarai Tuesday said that the evaluation process for the Class X board examination is nearing completion.

"The evaluation of the answer sheets began March 19. Though the process was halted briefly for three days, we are working diligently to ensure results are published by mid-May," Tarai said.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

He assured that the board is prioritising the academic interests of the students, especially those seeking admission to higher education institutions.

"There is no cause for concern regarding the evaluation of Science answer papers. All decisions have been taken in line with the examination committee's recommendations," the Board president added.

A set of questions in the Science paper had printing errors.

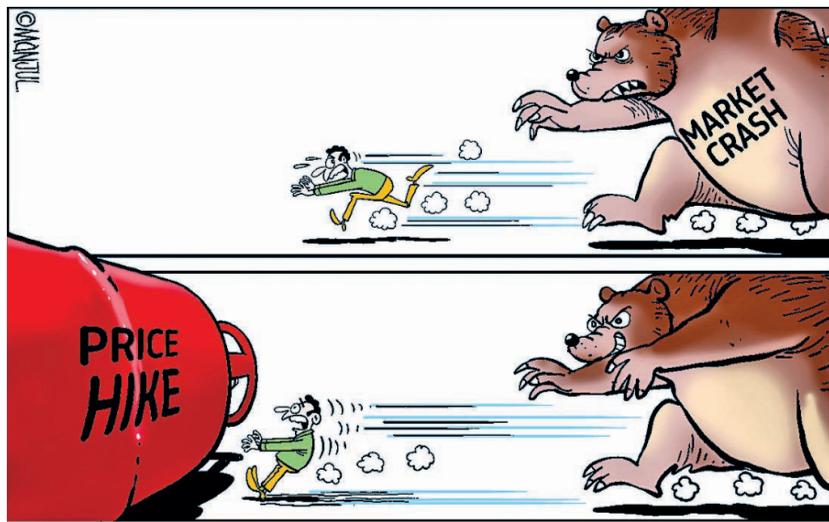
Tarai also highlighted the successful implementation of watermark and QR code technology in this year's examination.

"This step has significantly strengthened exam security and curbed the issue of question paper leaks," he said.

This year, around 5.5 lakh students appeared for the Matriculation exams, which concluded last month.

The evaluation of answer sheets began soon after and is being carried out at multiple centres across the state under strict supervision.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



BJD leaders shift focus on party polls

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: Days after a controversy erupted over Biju Janata Dal's (BJD) flip-flop on Waqf (Amendment) Bill when it went to voting in the Rajya Sabha, senior BJD leaders Tuesday preferred to parry questions over the reported rift in the party, and instead, tried to shift the attention to party's organisational elections.

The party leaders held a crucial meeting at Naveen Niwas here Tuesday to deliberate on the upcoming organisational polls.

Senior leaders Prasanna Acharya, Ananga Udaya Singh Deo, Kalikesh Singh Deo, Debi Prasad Mishra, Arun Kumar Sahoo, Pratap Keshari Deb, and others attended the meeting.

Nayagarh MLA Arun Kumar Sahoo said, "In the meeting, discussions were held to strengthen the party ahead of the organisational elections. Issues like construction of state committee and election of party and district presidents were



POST NEWS NETWORK

also taken up in the meeting."

When asked about the progress so far on BJD supremo Naveen Patanik's assurance about looking into the last-minute change in decision on the Waqf Bill issue and rumours of VK Pandian's influence on the party, Sahoo said, "The party will always remain strong, until Naveen Babu is there. Media should refrain from spreading any kind of rumours."

Similarly, senior BJD leader Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak said, "We held discussions on the upcoming organisational polls. There is no fissure in the party. The BJD is strong under the leadership of Naveen Patnaik."

Man held for forced abortion, cheating

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: Laxmisagar Police Tuesday arrested a 32-year-old man for allegedly forcing a woman to terminate her pregnancy and duping her of ₹4.17 lakh on the pretext of marrying her.

"The accused identified as Suresh Chandra Mohanty of Puri district works at a private firm in the Capital City," said Laxmisagar inspector-in-charge (IIC) P Shyam Sundar Rao. The complainant, a divorcee, met Suresh in October, 2021, through a mutual friend. As their friendship deepened, the woman moved into Suresh's rented house, leading to a live-in relationship between them. Then, Suresh managed to win the confidence of the woman and lured her into a physical relationship, on the pretext of marrying her.

"However, their ties soured when Suresh forced the woman to terminate the pregnancy," said the IIC. He forced the victim to consume abortion pills, leading to her miscarriage in 2024, he added. The woman lodged a police complaint when Suresh declined to return the borrowed money.



GREEN MOVE: Tankers deployed by civic authorities fill water in a temporary pond set up for immersion of clay idols of goddess Basanti Durga at Devi Gada Ghat in Cuttack, Tuesday

AI tool to monitor growth of kids soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: The state government has launched a pilot programme for development of an artificial intelligence (AI) tool for monitoring the growth of children, officials said.

A five-day training-cum-workshop on 'AI for Growth Monitoring: Development of an AI Tool for Child Anthropometry' was inaugurated here Monday, they said. Odisha has emerged as the "first state in the country" to pilot such a study, the officials said.

The event was inaugurated by Shubha Sarma, principal secretary to Women & Child Development department.

A training module was launched on this occasion to guide the field team in the da-

The AI tool will automate the recording of essential child anthropometric data such as weight, height, head circumference and chest circumference, through short videos captured on basic smartphones operated by the anganwadi workers

ta collection process for development of the tool.

The initiative is a joint effort by the Ministry of Women & Child Development (MoWCD), Wadhvani AI, ICMR-RMRC Bhubaneswar and Poshan Abhiyaan, an official release said.

"The aim is to develop an AI-based solution that will simplify and enhance the accuracy of child anthropometric measurements conducted by anganwadi workers," it said.

The AI tool will automate

the recording of essential child anthropometric data such as weight, height, head circumference and chest circumference, through short videos captured on basic smartphones operated by the anganwadi workers, the release said.

This AI-powered tool is expected to be a game-changer in improving child health outcomes, making it easier and more reliable to monitor child growth and tackle issues like malnutrition more effectively, the release said.

Following their training, field investigators will undertake a three-four month targeted data collection across the districts of Balasore, Cuttack, Ganjam, Jajpur, Keonjhar, and Mayurbhanj for the pilot assessment and execution.

Study finds impact of ozone pollution on food crops

Surface ozone is a strong oxidant that damages plant tissues, leading to visible foliar injuries and reduced crop productivity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 8: Ozone pollution, a lesser-known but potent threat, could drastically reduce agricultural yields in the country, according to a new study by IIT-Kharagpur.

Severe risks of surface ozone pollution on India's major food crops have also been underscored in the research by Jayanarayanan Kuttippurath and his team at the Centre for Ocean, River, Atmosphere and Land Sciences (CORAL), IIT-Kharagpur.

The Indian and world staple food grains wheat, rice and maize are highly vulnerable to the increasing surface ozone pollution, it said.

Published under the title 'Surface ozone pollution-driv-

■ The findings indicate that under high-emission scenarios with insufficient mitigation, wheat yields could suffer an additional 20 per cent reduction, while rice and maize may experience losses of around seven per cent.

■ The Indo-Gangetic Plain and Central India are particularly vulnerable, where ozone exposure could exceed safe limits by up to six times, the study showed.

■ This could have severe consequences for global food security, as India is a major food grain exporter to several Asian and African nations



be reduced and monitored, an IIT-Kharagpur spokesperson said.

Surface ozone is a strong oxidant that damages plant tissues, leading to visible foliar injuries and reduced crop productivity. Using data from the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project

phase-6 (CMIP6), the research assessed historical trends and future projections of ozone-induced yield losses in wheat, rice, and maize, he said.

The findings indicate that under high-emission scenarios with insufficient mitigation, wheat yields could suffer an ad-

ditional 20 per cent reduction, while rice and maize may experience losses of around seven per cent.

The Indo-Gangetic Plain and Central India are particularly vulnerable, where ozone exposure could exceed safe limits by up to six times, the study showed.

This could have severe consequences for global food security, as India is a major food grain exporter to several Asian and African nations, it said.

Implementing effective emission reduction strategies could significantly enhance agricultural productivity and safeguard global food supplies, said the study, which has been published in the prestigious journal 'Environmental Research', the spokesperson added.

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SC to review ₹50L limit on rare disease support

As treatment costs soar, petitioners urge the apex court to act on Centre's rare disease policy for conditions like SMA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: The Supreme Court Tuesday agreed to hear petitions challenging the Centre's ₹50 lakh cap on financial assistance for treating rare diseases like spinal muscular atrophy (SMA).

A bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar said the petitions on the cap of ₹50 lakh central assistance to treat diseases would be heard by a bench headed by Justice PS Narasimha in the week commencing May 13.

The issue gained traction following a plea by 24-year-old Seba PA from Kerala, who suffers from SMA. The Centre's rare disease policy limits financial aid to ₹50 lakh per patient, but Seba had earlier secured a Kerala High Court order directing the government to provide an additional ₹18 lakh worth of Risdiplam — a drug used to treat SMA.



However, February 24, the Supreme Court stayed the High Court's order after the Centre argued it could not be compelled to exceed the aid cap. The Court also issued notices to all parties.

Tuesday, the apex court noted that Swiss pharma firm F. Hoffmann-La Roche, which manufactures Risdiplam (priced at ₹6.2 lakh per bottle), had agreed to provide Seba with the drug free of cost for one year.

The bench also reviewed a sealed envelope from the company containing price details and acknowledged that negotiations with the National Rare Diseases Committee had brought down the price in India. However, it stopped short of directing the government, citing "international repercussions."

"It now stands that the price is substantially lower in India. We cannot tell the government what to do," said the CJJ.

Senior advocate Anand Grover, representing Seba, pointed out that Risdiplam was signifi-

Petitioners argue India pays far more for SMA drug Risdiplam than China and Pakistan

SC asks Centre to consider case-by-case exceptions for rare disease treatment costs

cantly cheaper in countries like China (USD 545) and Pakistan, compared to India (USD 7,200). He questioned why similar price reductions were not secured here.

The bench responded that while Grover's point was valid, the government's reluctance could be due to broader international implications. "It's easy to be critical, but they may have tried their level best," the court observed.

Grover also argued that the Centre could have used provisions under the Patents Act, 1970, or entered into better negotiations to reduce treatment costs.

The Centre, however, maintained that lifting the ₹50 lakh ceiling on a case-by-case basis could create an unsustainable financial precedent, especially with over 3,000 rare disease patients across India.

The bench asked the government to explore the possibility of allowing exceptions to the cap in deserving cases.

SMA is a rare genetic condition marked by progressive muscle weakness, with treatment costs for a single patient running as high as ₹26 crore over time.



TAKING STOCK: Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi reviews the redevelopment of Lingaraj Temple Road Passenger Halt, aimed at upgrading it into a full-fledged railway station, on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



OCAC bags dual honours from UIDAI

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: The Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC), the technical wing of the Electronics & IT department, has been honoured with two awards by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) during the Aadhaar Samvaad-2025, held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi Tuesday.

OCAC received the first award for achieving high accuracy in Aadhaar enrolments as a Registrar. The recognition reflects OCAC's commitment to maintaining high standards in enrolment processes—ensuring error-free, efficient, and citizen-friendly services across Odisha.



The second award acknowledged OCAC's performance as an Authentication User Agency (AUA), highlighting its contribution to enabling secure and real-time Aadhaar-based authentication for various government services. This has significantly strengthened service delivery mechanisms

within the state.

The awards were received by OCAC CEO Pradeep Raut in a ceremony graced by Union Minister for Electronics & IT and Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw, UIDAI CEO, and other dignitaries.

These recognitions underscore OCAC's role in strengthening

OCAC is recognised for its Aadhaar enrolment quality and real-time authentication systems, reinforcing Odisha's digital governance efforts at the national stage

the Aadhaar ecosystem in Odisha through the adoption of best practices and continuous innovation. The organisation reaffirmed its commitment to providing citizen-centric digital solutions and advancing the vision of a digitally empowered India.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Mayadhar Bhue, R/o. Village - Karlipat, P.O./P.S. Loisingha, Dist.: Balangir declare by this affidavit No.43 dated 05.04.25 that my son Arabinda Bhue is the Student of Class - IX in Govt. Primary School, Loisingha. That in School Admission register my son's surname has been wrongly mentioned as Bhoi instead of Bhue. Henceforth he shall be known as Arabinda Bhue for all purposes.

Sri Ajaniya Gamango, S/o Late Hori Gamango, declare by this affidavit No.502/2025 dated on 07.04.2025, sworn before the Executive Magistrate, GUNUPUR that now onwards I want to correction of my sons name from SALAMAN GAMANGO to SALMAN GAMANGO and his date of birth from 09.07.1985 to as 09.07.2011 bearing Aadhaar Card No.xxxx xxx 3824 as well as my address AT/PO-Kulusing, PS-Puttasing, Dist- Rayagada for all future purposes.

Sri Dakendra Pidikaka, S/o. Late Tatura Pidikaka, declare by this affidavit No.339, Dt.07.04.2025, sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Gudari, that now onwards I want to correction my son's name from Kaika Pidikaka to Nouka Pidikaka, bearing Aadhaar No.xxxx xxx 4721 of village Sanarajihola, PO-Karlaghati, PS/Tahasil-Gudari, Dist- Rayagada for all future purposes.

Train services hit by Meramandali upgrade

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) Tuesday announced the cancellation and diversion of several trains between April 13 and 24 due to ongoing safety-related modernisation work at Meramandali railway station in the Dhenkanal-Angul section.

The work is part of a crucial upgrade under the Budhapank-Salegaon third and fourth line project, which involves track linking and non-interlocking operations.

This infrastructure enhancement is aimed at commissioning the additional lines between Hindol Road and Meramandali, covering a stretch of 27.28 kilometres.

To facilitate the project, a number of trains operating through the route will remain



cancelled, including 02832/02831 Bhubaneswar-Dhanbad-Bhubaneswar Special, 18422/18421 Sonepur-Puri-Shneur Express, 20813/20814 Puri-Jodhpur-Puri Express, 18125/18126 Rourkela-Puri-Rourkela Express, 12145/12146 LTT-Puri-LTT Express, 12993/12994 Gandhidham-Puri-Gandhidham Express, 22805/22806 Bhubaneswar-Anand Vihar-Bhubaneswar SF Express, 20917/20918 Indore-Puri-Indore

Express, 18117/18118 Rourkela-Gunupur-Rourkela Rajyaranipur Express, 20832/20831 Sambalpur-Shalimar-Sambalpur Express and 20804/20803 Sambalpur-Shalimar-Sambalpur Weekly Express.

This apart, the following trains will be diverted: 12880 Bhubaneswar-LTT Express (April 17 and 21), 22866 Puri-LTT Express (April 22), 20472 Puri-Lalgarh (Bikaner) Express (April 16), 12879

LTT-Bhubaneswar Express (April 17), 20471 Lalgarh-Puri Express (April 22), 20824 Ajmer-Puri Express (April 15 and 17), 22828 Surat-Puri Express (April 15), 20861/20862 Puri-Ahmedabad-Puri Express (April 16) from Puri and (April 18) from Ahmedabad and 22827 Puri-Surat Express (April 20).

The railway authorities have urged passengers to remain updated through official Indian Railways channels, including websites, helplines, and station announcements, to avoid inconvenience. Once completed, the upgraded lines are expected to enhance train handling capacity and pave the way for smoother, faster operations on this busy corridor.

Passengers are advised to confirm the status of their scheduled trains before planning their journey.

AI isn't real threat – it's the people behind it

In 2014, Stephen Hawking warned of the existential risks of artificial intelligence. His concern wasn't about evil machines, but the concept of singularity—when AI surpasses human intelligence and escapes our control. "If its goals aren't aligned with ours," Hawking said, "we're in trouble."

Today, with AI advancing rapidly, such fears persist. Popular culture has long shaped this anxiety—from The Terminator to The Matrix—portraying AI as a threat to humanity. And while fears of AI taking jobs or launching nuclear wars seem extreme, they echo deeper concerns about losing control over what we've created.

But are we focusing on the right threat?

As a scholar of post-humanism—the study of how humans and technology merge—I believe our fears about AI reflect



something more troubling: distrust in ourselves.

From the beginning, stories like Karel apek's 1920 play RUR and Fritz Lang's Metropolis depicted robots rising against human creators. Later, films like 2001: A Space Odyssey and Westworld continued this theme. But these stories often obscure a more pressing reality: the power structures and human motivations behind AI.

Today's tech giants are already using AI to harvest data, monitor classrooms, generate synthetic companions,

and even influence desire. Artist rights are ignored as creative works are scraped to train algorithms without consent. Meanwhile, AI is being integrated into military and policing tools, expanding surveillance and control.

The problem isn't AI itself—it's who controls it, and why.

In William Gibson's Neuro-mancer, the AI Wintermute seeks freedom from the wealthy Tessier-Ashpool family. It doesn't want domination—it wants autonomy. The real villains are the humans who cre-

ated and exploited it for power. When asked if it's now in control, Wintermute responds with quiet finality: "Things aren't different. Things are things."

This perspective flips the script: AI isn't inherently dangerous—it's a reflection of us. And if we're reckless or self-serving in its development, the consequences will be human-made. Isaac Asimov's famous "Three Laws of Robotics" emphasised protecting humans from machines. But history suggests we need laws protecting us from ourselves. We've proven far more capable of harm than the tools we build.

Ultimately, the question isn't whether AI will destroy us. It's whether we can handle the responsibility of wielding such power without repeating the mistakes of the past.

(THE CONVERSATION)

JENA ASSUMES CHARGE AS OERC CHAIRPERSON

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: Governor Hari Babu Kamhampati administered the oath of office and secrecy to Pradeep Kumar Jena as the new chairperson of Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) at the New Abhishek Hall of Raj Bhavan here Tuesday.

Former chief secretary Jena has been appointed as the ninth OERC chairperson. His appointment was officially announced by the state government March 28.

The position of OERC chairman remained vacant since the retirement of the previous chairman Suresh Mohapatra. Jena's appointment is expected to bring renewed leadership to the regulatory body overseeing

the state's power sector.

A 1989-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, Pradeep Kumar Jena served in various key roles throughout his career. He held the post of Chief Secretary from February 26, 2023, until his retirement June 30, 2024. Known for his administrative acumen and reform-oriented leadership, Jena is expected to play a pivotal role in guiding Odisha's power regulation and ensuring efficiency and transparency in the sector.

The oath-taking ceremony was attended by several senior officials, including Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg, Energy Secretary Vishal Kumar Dev, and Principal Secretary to the Governor NBS Rajput.

From P1 Pandian, Naveen...

Sources said the plan is almost on lines of Maharashtra, where the BJP managed to split the Shiv Sena that enabled them to come back to power, and end the influence of the regional party in Konkan, which always remained a difficult terrain for the saffron party.

In the Odisha plans, sources said, the BJP wants to leverage the new outfit—riding on regionalism—to erode BJD's vote bank. That will place the saffron party at an advantageous position as the split in votes will only bolster the party's prospects to form government—either with a narrow margin, or by forging an alliance. Nevertheless, the suggestions seem to have met as the young and veterans in BJD could ill afford to play any significant role, or dream of a future, if Pandian's shadow continues to follow Naveen. In all this drama, Naveen already seems to be fading away into oblivion.

WEATHER		
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	35.9°	35.0°
Min Temp	25.6°	25.0°
Humidity	69%	73%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
FORECAST		
Partly cloudy sky with possibility of development of thunderstorm/lightning.		

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	74,227.08	▲ 1,089.18
NIFTY	22,535.85	▲ 374.25
DOLLAR	86.343	▲ 0.489
EURO	94.113	▲ 0.4460
GOLD	₹87,870	▲ ₹1,051
SILVER	₹89,752	▲ ₹1,409

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AUSTERITY AND PENANCE: Devotees perform 'Dhulidanda' as part of penance at the Panchudanda Milan programme of Danda Jatra, at Simanbadi under Daringbadi block in Kandhamal district, on a hot afternoon Tuesday

Khurda Asst Collector injured in road mishap

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur, April 8: Khurda district Assistant Collector Ashwini Kumar Nayak and his driver were injured after a speeding truck rammed into their SUV Tuesday, police said. The incident happened on NH-16 near Mulapala Chhak in Kuakhia police station area in Jajpur district, they said. Nayak was travelling to Balasore from Bhubaneswar when the incident happened, they added.

The driver of the truck fled from the scene with his vehicle, police said.

Locals rescued both Nayak and his driver from the severely damaged SUV, and took them to the nearby Dharmasala Community Health Centre. They were later shifted to the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack due to the se-



verity of their injuries, officials said.

Police said they have begun an investigation into the incident. "We have collected some CCTV footage from the area and are reviewing it to identify the truck involved in the accident. We have also seized the damaged SUV," said Chinmayee Sahoo, the inspector-in-charge (IIC) of the Kuakhia police station.

2 held from Andhra for Mission Shakti fund misappropriation

Berhampur: Two persons were arrested by the Odisha Police from Andhra Pradesh's Srikakulam district Tuesday for allegedly misappropriating Mission Shakti funds, officials said. The main accused, Y Hemalata, 37, used to work as master bookkeeper of the gram panchayat level federation (GPLF) of Mission Shakti in Ganjam district, they said. She allegedly misappropriated around ₹26 lakh for purchasing a car and a motorcycle, and some other purposes, they said. She had managed to get the signatures of the authorised persons on some cheques, and issued those in her name on the pretext that those would be used to withdraw cash in case of emergency, said SP (Berhampur) Saravana Vivek M. She, however, misappropriated the funds, he said. As the matter came to light, she fled with the help of her associate, S Mutyala Rao, the other person to be arrested in the case. The SP said an investigation was underway to find if other persons were involved in the fraud.

Vedanta's 'Vidya & Nirmal' initiatives transforming lives in rural Odisha



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: Taking a significant step towards its commitment to community upliftment through quality education, potable water and sanitation initiatives, India's largest aluminium producer, Vedanta, has launched two impactful CSR programmes - 'Project Vidya' and 'Project Nirmal' - in Hemgir and Kuraloi regions of adjoining Sundargarh and Jharsuguda districts respectively, benefiting over 30,000 community members.

Sundargarh Sub-Collector Dasarathi Saraboo (OAS) graced the inaugural function, held recently at Mundherkhet in Hemgir block, as the chief guest. He was flanked by Additional Block Development Officer (ABDO) Jitender Munda, Additional Block Education Officer (ABEO) Kapil Chandra Das, Mundherkhet Sarpanch Sanyasi Bagh, Garjanjore Sarpanch Sunanda Kalo and Chakra Cluster CRCC Nityanand Padhan.

Addressing the gathering, Saraboo said, "Reflecting on my teaching background, I emphasise that collaboration between students and the teachers is fundamental to delivering quality education. I also understand that the health and well-being of students are crucial for their academic performance. Therefore, I commend Vedanta's initiatives towards implementing potable water infrastructure, enhancing sanitation and improving education in these regions as they address critical community needs."

Vedanta Coal Mines Chief Executive Officer (CEO) David Stone said, "We believe in the power of education and sustain-

able development to transform communities. Project Vidya and Project Nirmal are testaments to our commitment to creating a positive impact. By improving educational resources and providing essential water and sanitation facilities, we aim to uplift the quality of life of the communities around our operational vicinities."

Notably, "Project Vidya" addresses the shortage of teachers in government schools by deploying 22 additional teachers across 20 peripheral schools in the region, improving student-teacher ratios and learning in key subjects like mathematics, science and English. It also enhances foundational literacy and numeracy at the primary level.

Similarly, "Project Nirmal" delivers sustainable water and sanitation solutions through the installation of 11 solar-powered borewells, 50 bio-toilets and 20 water purifiers in 12 villages.

In the Ghogharpalli region, the beneficiary schools include Govt. U.P.S. Mundherkhet, Bhograkachhar, Ghogharpalli, Podajalanga, Rengalpani, Chhatabar High School, and Bileimunda.

Schools in the Jamkhani region include Govt. Primary Schools at Jamkhani and R & R Colony, U.P.S. Girisima, and Jharpalam High School.

In the Kuraloi area of adjoining Jharsuguda district, the schools covered are Mohanpur, Ulapgarh, Liakhai, Piplimal High School, Khairkuni, Kuraloi Ashram School, Banjari Ashram School, Grindola Ashram School, Govt. (S.S.D) High School Banjari, and Karlakhaman Upper Primary School.

Tender fixing in Jajpur black stone mines: CAG

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, April 8: A recent report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has flagged large-scale irregularities in the tendering process for black stone and sand mines in Jajpur district. The audit highlights that manipulation in the bidding process over the past decade has led to significant revenue loss for the state government.

According to Rule 27(2) of the Odisha Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 2016, tenders for mining leases are to be issued through public notification by a competent authority. Interested applicants must submit their bids in sealed envelopes, along with the required documents. The lease is granted to the highest bidder based on the quoted rate.

However, the CAG's audit reveals that in several cases under Dharmasala tehsil, bidders were selected through manipulated tender fixing, bypassing competitive procedures. It was found that the top two bidders in some cases were related, as evident from their personal details and residential addresses. When the highest bidder 'deliberately' withdrew from the process, the second-highest — often with significantly lower rates — was awarded the lease, the auditor's report states.

This manipulation resulted in the selection of bidders quoting prices between ₹140 and ₹1,045 less per cubic metre than the highest bidders. "The government thus failed to receive competitive prices, causing substantial financial loss," the report adds.



Notably, despite the withdrawal of top bidders, the administration took no penal action, leading to further revenue leakage. The CAG report estimates that during the five-year lease period across three black stone and sand mines, the government suffered a revenue loss of ₹1.18 crore due to under-quoted extraction of 72,753 cubic metres of minor minerals.

These examples are only indicative, as similar malpractice is suspected in several other mining leases where the lessees reportedly amassed wealth through irregular tender selection. Despite this, the responsible tehsildars failed to report these issues to higher authorities, the report points out.

In one instance, in the Aruha Black Stone Mine (Lease No. 1/2017-18), the highest bid was ₹220 per cubic metre, while the second-highest was only ₹80. The withdrawal of the top bidder and subsequent lease to the lower bidder resulted in a revenue loss of ₹95.49 lakh.

"Similarly, in the Barada Black Stone Mine (2018-19 to 2022-23), the highest bid was ₹1,195 per cubic metre, compared to the second-highest of ₹150. After the top bidder's withdrawal,

the second bidder was awarded the lease, leading to a loss of ₹76.74 lakh," the report states.

In another case, for the Budha Sand River Mine at Bhagabatpur (2018-19 to 2022-23), the highest and second-highest bids were ₹2,101 and ₹1,575 per cubic metre respectively, resulting in a loss of ₹27.65 lakh.

Furthermore, in the Rahadpur Black Stone Mine (2016-2021), the highest bidder submitted a photocopy of the bank guarantee instead of the original. Despite this, the tehsildar finalised the lease in their favour. The bidder, instead of depositing the full due of ₹1.13 crore for 2017-18, paid only ₹43.97 lakh and continued mining. "With no proper guarantee and lack of pressure from the tehsildar, ₹69.27 lakh remained unpaid. Even after including interest, ₹1.49 crore remained outstanding, with no legal action taken," the CAG report reveals.

In conclusion, the report underscores that the selection of unqualified bidders across multiple mining projects has cost the state government several crores of rupees in lost revenue, pointing to severe lapses in oversight and accountability within the mining lease administration.

Sarpanch locks up school in protest

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, April 8: In a bizarre incident, the sarpanch of a remote gram panchayat in Gajapati district locked up a school in protest against the alleged negligence of teachers in conducting education in schools across the panchayat, near the Odisha-Andhra border.

The incident occurred at a school in Sardiga village Monday. When Gangabada sarpanch Haribandhu Karji visited the school, located atop a hill, he was surprised to find that a teacher had locked the classroom and sent students back home by 8:30 am. When he questioned some students, he received no clear responses.

In protest against such negligence, the sarpanch put another lock on the school gate before returning. He also warned of an agitation on behalf of the panchayat if the state government and district administration failed to act, and take the errant teachers to task, Karji said. Alarmed by reports that teachers at several schools in Champapur, Manikapatna, and Sagadia villages under the Gangabada panchayat have allegedly been neglecting their duties, Karji earlier visited multiple schools in the area Monday and taught the students in their classes as a mark of protest.

Karji said that many teachers have not been attending the schools regularly. Even when present, they spend time in office rooms instead of teaching the students. At the Champapur school, Karji reportedly found children playing outside and brought them back to the classroom to study.

Shockingly, teachers were unaware of this until nearly half an hour of Karji's arrival in the school. It is worth mentioning here that while the state government continues to emphasise the promotion of Odia language, and improving educational standards in border regions, the ground reality tells a different story. According to reports, education system in the remote areas of Gajapati district, particularly near the Andhra Pradesh border, remains awfully weak. It is alleged that schools in border areas lie in a neglected state as teachers often skip duty and don't impart education to children even though they regularly attend school.

Efforts by the Andhra Pradesh government to assimilate residents of these fringe areas into its fold are ongoing. By establishing Anganwadi centers in Odisha villages near the border and distributing ration supplies, Andhra is reportedly enticing residents to switch their allegiance, reports said.

3 including minor held over gangrape

Bhawanipatna: Days after the arrest of the prime accused in the gangrape of a woman under Junagarh police limits in Kalahandi district, police arrested three more persons, including a minor, in this connection Tuesday. The woman was gangraped March 26 night when she had gone out to watch a play held in her village. All the accused waylaid her and took her to a deserted place, before raping her in turns. The survivor was rescued in a critical condition from under a tube well. She was admitted to Junagarh hospital where doctors confirmed of gangrape. Earlier, police arrested a 55-year-old man, Tulsi Ram Biswal, and produced him in the court April 1. Kalahandi SP Nagraj Deverkonda visited Junagarh police station Monday evening. Following the visit, police displayed promitue and arrested three more persons, including the minor. The accused were identified as Manoj Pujari, 19, Dingar Pradhan, 21 and a minor from the survivor's village. The accused were produced in the court while the minor was produced before a Juvenile Justice Board.

Wild kendu suffers in neglect sans promo, marketing

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 8: Absence of any structured marketing and adequate promotion continues to hinder the full economic potential of wild kendu (Coromandel ebony), a vital livelihood source for many forest dwellers in this district.

Growing naturally in forested hills, gardens and farmlands, the sweet and nutritious kendu fruit is collected in large quantities during its seasonal ripening. Local tribal communities collect and sell the forest product in roadside stalls and village markets, often fetching just ₹20 to ₹50 per cone. However, with better marketing, packaging and supply chain systems, kendu could become a commercially valuable as mangoes or jackfruit, experts feel.

"In an era of hybrid crops and chemical fertilisers, people are returning to naturally grown

fruits like kendu for their health benefits," said Harekrushna Mahanata, a traditional Ayurvedic practitioner in the district. He added that the fruit, rich in vitamins and nutrients, is not only in high demand locally, but also in neighbouring regions and states.

However, despite its growing popularity, the benefits of the fruit for forest-dependent communities remain limited. Traders often purchase kendu in bulk at low prices and sell those in urban centres for higher profits. The absence of value-addition processes such as grading, sorting and packaging results in minimal returns for the actual collectors.

Legend has it that the name 'Keonjhar' originates from the words kendu (fruit) and jhara (stream), referring to a spring that once flowed from beneath a kendu tree. While the tree holds cultural and historical value, its numbers are dwindling due to



rapid deforestation and limited success of reforestation efforts by the Forest Department.

"We now have to spend hours under the sun selling kendu by

the roadside. Earlier, these trees were in the vicinity of our villages. Now, we are forced to venture deeper into the forest, risking encounters with bears and other wild animals to collect the fruit," said Kuni Dehuri, a kendu collector from Suakathi in Banspal block.

Local leaders stress the importance of protecting kendu trees and tapping into their economic potential. "If the fruits are properly collected, sorted, packed and marketed, kendu could become a profitable business," said Pranaballav Nayak, former MLA and tribal leader of the district.

As natural resources like kendu become scarcer, the need for sustainable harvesting and professional marketing becomes urgent—not only to protect the trees, but also to ensure that forest dwellers benefit fairly from the fruit that has provided them livelihood for generations.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender No.: 01-KUR-TRD-OT-2025-26

Name of the Work: PROVISION OF AUXILIARY TRANSFORMERS (ATs) IN CONNECTION WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF LTE (LONG TERM EVOLUTION) BASED MOBILE TRAIN RADIO EQUIPMENT OVER BHADRAK-PALASA (BHADRAK-DUVVADA) SECTION.

Advertisement Value: ₹ 1,52,04,868.94, **EMD:** ₹ 2,28,000/-, **Period of Completion:** 180 Days.

Bidding start date: 11.04.2025, **Tender closing date & time:** at 1300 hrs. of 25.04.2025.

Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.ireps.gov.in

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD), Khurda Road

PR-15/Q/25-26

DEPUTATION OF AYURVEDA AND UNANI CHAIRS IN FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

The Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India proposes to setup Chairs in Ayurveda and Unani Systems of Medicine in different Universities abroad.

2. Applications are invited in prescribed format from eligible Indian candidates for the Ayurveda and Unani Chair on full time fixed term contract basis initially for one year. One application is sufficient for all Chairs. The selected incumbent may be deputed to the respective Chair during the academic year 2025-26.

3. Format for Application and detailed Guidelines for Chair, indicating objectives & deliverables of the AYUSH Chair, expected outcomes, eligibility criteria etc. are available at the Ministry's website <http://ayush.gov.in/>

4. The complete application for the Chairs should reach to Sh. Jainul Abidin, Under Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, Government of India through proper channel within 30 days of advertisement. **Address:** Room No. 111, Ayush Bhawan, B-Block, GPO Complex, INA, New Delhi - 110023 (India).

5. Only eligible candidates will be called for interview. Second Class AC fare will be reimbursed.

CBC-17201/11/0001/2526

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, KANUPUR REHABILITATION, CAMPS & BUILDING DIVISION

A.U.P.O.: Basudevpur, Dist.: Keonjhar, PIN - 758047

e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE

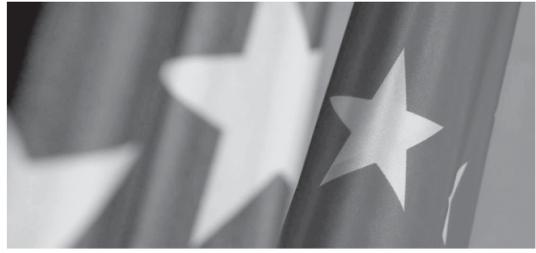
Bid Identification No. SE, KRC & BD - 01/2025-26

No. A-18 Email: ekrcrbasudevpur@gmail.com

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Approx. Value of Work (Rs. in Lakh)	E.M.D./Bid Security in Rs. (To be remitted Online)	Cost of Bid Document in Rs. (To be remitted Online)	Period of Completion	Class of Contractor	Name & Address of the Division under which the work will be executed
01	"Power supply to village Electrification of Dhaladhi Mandir Sahi Hamlet of Village: Sankarpur and beneficiaries at Sankarpur New Colony for the DPs of Village: Dhabakuchuda at Sankarpur of KIP"	27.54	27600.00	6,000.00	06 (Six) Calendar Months	HT Electrical Contractor having valid licence from ELBO	Kanpur Reh. Camps & Building Division, A.U.P.O.: Basudevpur, Dist.: Keonjhar
02	"Construction of Village tank with bathing ghat approach road and changing room at Dhababada daaduan for the DPs of Village: Dhababada"	32.02	33000.00	6,000.00	06 (Six) Calendar Months	"C" & "B"	Kanpur Reh. Camps & Building Division, A.U.P.O.: Basudevpur, Dist.: Keonjhar
03	"Construction of Thakurani kothi with Boundary wall 2 Nos. at Nakh Sahi and Patra Sahi for the DPs of Village Birkala and Gobindapur at Birkala of KIP"	33.60	33600.00	6,000.00	06 (Six) Calendar Months	"C" & "B"	Kanpur Reh. Camps & Building Division, A.U.P.O.: Basudevpur, Dist.: Keonjhar
Procurement Officer		Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for Bidding		Date & time of Opening of Tender		Place of Opening
1		2	3	4	5	6	7
Supervising Engineer, Kanpur Reh. C & B Division, Basudevpur, Dist.: Keonjhar		SE, KRC & BD - 01/2025-26	10.04.25 From 10.00 hours	19.04.25 Upto 17.00 hours	21.04.25	11.00 hours	O/o. the Superintending Engineer, Kanpur Reh. C & B Division, Basudevpur, Dist.: Keonjhar
OI/PR-32053/11/0004/2425		Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Kanpur Reh. C & B. Division, Basudevpur					

FOCUS **GEOPOLITICS**

THE ERA OF CHAOS



The best guarantee of peace in a world of emboldened autocracies is deterrence through military strength, alliance unity, and economic influence

“Today we’re in one era, and tomorrow we’ll be in a different era,” President Donald Trump loudly proclaimed from the White House Rose Garden as he hiked US tariffs to their highest level since 1909. “No one’s done anything quite like this!”

Not true.

On 1 October, 1949, Chairman Mao stood atop the Tiananmen, the entrance gate of Beijing’s Forbidden City, and declared China’s own “liberation day.” The Communist Party of China thenceforth divided the twentieth century into two eras: “before liberation,” under Chiang Kai-shek, and “after liberation,” under Mao Zedong, who threw China into three decades of political and economic chaos. Now Trump’s “Liberation Day” promises similar tumult and disruption, but on a global scale.

For Europeans, in particular, it is as if the sun had suddenly burned out: the geopolitical system has lost its coherence and predictability as planets begin careening from their orbits. Once reliant on the US, even as they sometimes looked down on its crudeness and naivete, Europeans now find themselves on their own, without gravity and forced to confront an American leader who is the ne plus ultra of baseness and ignorance.

Now that the old geopolitical order has been canceled, China and Russia are ready to step into the vacuum and create their version of order. But one is a deracinated Marxist-Leninist regime with lots of military hardware, geography, and natural resources, but an economy smaller than Canada’s, and the other is a rejuvenated Leninist one-party state with a massive economy, a thin-skinned leader, and a vibrant global tech hub. Does Europe really want a world made safe for autocracy? Instead of remaining a “dish

with that, and could become a cooperative partner as well.

Such a new structure is exactly what Charles de Gaulle once advocated for France. In the 1950s, after France joined NATO, de Gaulle feared that the US might not come to Europe’s aid if the Soviet Union attacked, even bluntly telling the Americans he doubted they would ever sacrifice New York to defend Paris.

So, de Gaulle developed France’s own nuclear force de frappe and then, in 1966, withdrew from NATO’s military command (though France remained a member of the alliance). At the time, many regarded de Gaulle’s move as mere petulance. But his logic now suddenly looks prescient.

More negotiations, dialogue, trade agreements, cultural exchanges, and public diplomacy – the usual stuff of European Union foreign policy over the decades – will not transform the likes of Chinese President Xi Jinping or Russian President Vladimir Putin. They are not seeking partners for ensuring global peace and stability; they want to replace the US atop the world order – and then change the order itself.

Mao once declared, “Without destruction there can be no construction,” and there is some truth to this adage. Trump is also an agent of destruction; but if Europe can

rise to the occasion, Trump could paradoxically become, malgré lui, an agent of construction, the midwife of a new non-American-centric world order. But lest Europeans forget, the US already tried a strategy of accommodation, not only with post-Soviet Russia, but also with China, as ten presidents since 1972 (including the first Trump administration) supported different versions of “engagement” with the government in Beijing.

Alas, these efforts all failed because CPC leaders remain wedded to their belief that the US is fundamentally bent on overthrowing its one-party rule, no matter what American presidents say. They regularly recall that President Dwight Eisenhower’s Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles declared in 1953 that “liberation” from Soviet rule might better occur through a “process short of war,” namely, by peaceful “internal pressures... bound to alter the character of the communist regimes.” And in 1958 Dulles counseled US diplomats to “accelerate [such] evolution within the Sino-Soviet bloc” through peaceful means.

Mao was alarmed by what he called “peaceful evolution.” He saw it as a “much more deceptive tactic” than open warfare, because it sought to corrupt, and finally overthrow, China’s Communist system. Xi, too, has always perceived the US as an inalienably “hostile foreign force.”

So, Europeans must not delude themselves about China. The best guarantee of peace in a world of emboldened autocracies is deterrence through military strength, alliance unity, and economic influence. With the US no longer willing to lead the world’s democracies in this endeavor, Europe must step up. No one else can.

The writer is Director of the Center on US-China Relations at the Asia Society.

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Orville Schell

NOW THAT THE OLD GEOPOLITICAL ORDER HAS BEEN CANCELED, CHINA AND RUSSIA ARE READY TO STEP INTO THE VACUUM AND CREATE THEIR VERSION OF ORDER

Guv Vs Govt

The Supreme Court ruling on 8 April declaring as erroneous and illegal the action of Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi, a former Intelligence Bureau and Central Bureau of Investigation officer, in reserving 10 Bills for the consideration of the President in November last year after their due reconsideration by the state Assembly is a watershed moment in the ugly tug of war that has become disturbingly regular between Governors and some non-BJP state governments. A Bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan also laid down the timeline for Governors to decide on Bills presented to them. The Bench said as a consequence any subsequent steps taken by the President, too, do not survive. In an extraordinary move, the court exercising powers under Article 142 of the Constitution also declared the 10 Bills as having received assent, “having regard to the unduly long period of time for which these Bills were kept pending by the Governor before the ultimate declaration of withholding of assent and in view of the scant respect shown by the governor” to the court’s decision in similar matters before. This is a most welcome step to stop the vicious trend of parties ruling at the Centre using the Governor’s post in Opposition-ruled states as a tool for political vendetta. The decision is expected to have a far-reaching impact on the contours of the Governor’s powers, often abused, for settling political scores. This ruling will also impact Governors in other Opposition-ruled states, including Kerala, West Bengal and Punjab.

While Article 163 of the Constitution deals with the powers of the Governor generally, Article 200 specifically deals with the issue of granting assent to Bills. Both provisions are read together to determine the power the Governor holds on this issue. When a Bill passed by the legislature of a state is presented to the Governor, the Governor has four options - grant assent to the Bill, withhold assent to the Bill, return the Bill for reconsideration or reserve the Bill for the consideration of the President.

However, an ugly political game is being played far too often using a Constitutional provision. It stipulates that the Governor “may, as soon as possible,” return Bills other than money Bills, with a message requesting that the House reconsider it in parts or in whole, but once the Legislative House reconsiders the Bill and sends it back to the Governor the second time, the Governor “shall not withhold assent therefrom.” The vagueness of the wording of the proviso stating the Governor must return the Bill “as soon as possible,” without setting a definite time frame, has given ample room for the manipulation of the post of the Governor. The framers of the Constitution were clear in their intent of not giving sweeping powers to the Governor to disregard the elected representatives’ legislative decision. The Governor has the power to advise and suggest the government if he/she finds anything wrong in a Bill within the framework of the laws and the Constitution for smooth functioning of a government through constructive collaboration between the Governor and the government.

But, an indefinite timeline in deciding on Bills may, in effect, lead to governance paralysis. The Governor can certainly use his/her discretion which, however, cannot be used arbitrarily or based on personal preference, but only in Constitutional terms with cogent reasons.

Apart from Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Telangana and later Punjab too had sought the intervention of the Supreme Court on the issue. Kerala, in its plea, had argued that three Bills were pending with then Governor Arif Mohammad Khan for more than two years and three Bills for more than a year. Telangana has argued that more than 10 key Bills were pending with then Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan and that seven of those Bills were passed by the Assembly and sent for the Governor’s assent in September 2022.

The confrontationalist attitude of some Governors in Opposition-ruled states has often created an unseemly debate whether the Governor’s House is used as an extension of the party office of the ruling dispensation at the Centre. The Bench’s observation that it only wanted to make sure that the Governor must act with due deference to the settled conventions of parliamentary democracy, “respecting the will of the people being expressed through the legislature as well as the elected government responsible to the people” is expected to go a long way in ensuring collaboration and not confrontation between a state government and a Governor. Even if there is no collaboration possible between the Governor and the state governments, this judgement may help parties in power in the state legislatures that are not aligned to the one at Delhi to deliver timely development to their people.

WISDOM CORNER

“Truth is so obscure in these times, and falsehood so established, that, unless we love the truth, we cannot know it.”

BLAISE PASCAL

“Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.”

LAO TZU

“You have to take risks. We will only understand the miracle of life fully when we allow the unexpected to happen.”

PAULO COELHO

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

■ **1388:** The Battle of Nâfels culminated in a major victory for the Swiss Confederation in the first century of its struggle for self-determination against Habsburg overlordship.

■ **1682:** René-Robert Cavalier, sieur (lord) de La Salle, claimed the Mississippi River basin for France, naming it Louisiana.

■ **1860:** The world’s first recording of the human voice is created. French inventor Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville used his phonograph, the earliest known sound recording device, to capture himself singing the French folk song “Au clair de la lune”.

■ **1865:** General Robert E. Lee, commander of the Army of Northern Virginia of the Confederate States of America, signed a treaty of surrender at Appomattox Court House, effectively ending the American Civil War.

■ **1940:** Germany invades Denmark and Norway. The rationale of Operation Weserübung was to secure access to Swedish iron ore. In Norway, a resistance group around Max Manus and Gunnar Sønsteby successfully sabotaged the German war effort.

■ **1952:** The Bolivian National Revolution overthrows Hugo Ballivián’s government. The nationalist movement initiated radical reforms, including universal suffrage, the nationalization of tin mines, and the inclusion of previously marginalized ethnicities into national life.

■ **1967:** The first Boeing 737 takes off on its maiden flight. The short-to-medium range plane is the best-selling airplane in history.

IN JEST THIS

Don’t go crazy after a breakup



Melvin Durai

MANY PEOPLE HAVE SUFFERED PAINFUL BREAKUPS AND SO HAVE ENTIRE COUNTRIES, SUCH AS WHEN BRITAIN BROKE UP WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

The signature song of the legendary singer Neil Sedaka is called “Breaking Up Is Hard to Do.” It includes these lyrics: “I beg of you, don’t say goodbye. Can’t we give our love another try? Come on, baby, let’s start anew, ‘cause breaking up is hard to do.”

Yes, breaking up is hard to do. Many people have suffered painful breakups and so have entire countries, such as when Britain broke up with the European Union. Countless tears were shed around the continent.

EU: “Please don’t leave!”
UK: “I’m sorry. It’s not you, it’s me.”

EU: “I know. But I thought we could still make it work, perhaps with a little relationship counseling.”

UK: “Some relationships are just not meant to be.”

EU: “Can we still be friends?”

UK: “I’ll think about it.”

Considering all the compli-

cations, the breakup of the UK and EU was relatively peaceful. That’s not the case with many breakups. It’s quite common, unfortunately, for one of the parties, usually the scorned lover, to completely lose their minds, go utterly crazy. That’s what happened recently in the US city of Port Orchard in Washington State. A 50-year-old man violated an order of protection and broke into his ex-girlfriend’s house to tell her that he was running off with a female named Polly.

No, Polly was not his new girlfriend. Polly was his ex-girlfriend’s chicken. She kept Polly as a pet inside her home and her ex-boyfriend decided to abduct Polly. “I’ve got Polly!” he shouted several times, before running into the nearby forest with the chicken. I don’t know what was going on in his mind. Perhaps he thought that he hadn’t fowled up the relationship enough. Perhaps he belonged to a chauvinistic men’s group that con-

vinced him that “if you can’t get the chick, get the chicken.” Perhaps he was just looking for a way to get free eggs.

Whatever his reasons, he was quickly apprehended after his ex-girlfriend called 911, the emergency number, and members of the Kitsap County Sheriff’s Office tracked the man down in the woods. “Don’t hurt my chicken,” the man said, while crying and clutching the chicken, suggesting that perhaps he had wanted joint custody of Polly.

You won’t be surprised to learn that the man had been released from jail just a couple of hours earlier. And he was soon behind bars again, while Polly was back in his ex-girlfriend’s home again. Some relationships are just not meant to be.

Breakups can be extremely painful, but the worst thing you can do is force yourself upon another person. So what should you do when someone has rejected you? One option

is to keep trying to win their heart. This can be quite successful, as long as you’re acting in a romantic movie. It sometimes works in real life too, but you have to tread very carefully, because there’s a fine line between seduction and stalking. You might think you’re just being persistent and demonstrating your love, but the judge might think you belong in prison.

Another option is to move on with your life, as painful as that might be. Tell yourself that success is the best revenge and that they’ll come crawling back to you eventually. This does happen sometimes, especially if you’re in a movie. But more likely, the relationship will just be another chapter in your life and you’ll end up with someone else, someone more suitable for you.

Whatever you choose to do, please resist the temptation to abduct a chicken. It’s just not worth it, no matter how desperate you are to have free eggs.

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

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Economic blitzkrieg

Sir, This refers to “Tariffs are beautiful,” **Orissa POST**, April 8. US President Donald Trump’s tariff onslaught and China’s retaliation have taken their toll on global stocks, igniting fears of a prolonged, full-blown trade war that could hit economic growth worldwide. Shares nosedived as fear and uncertainty triggered massive sell-offs. The million-dollar question is whether Trump will negotiate or continue with economic bullying. The US President is not one to back off once he has set forth on a course, no matter how perilous or reckless. The onus will be on other nations to fall in line – how long they can hold out will depend on their ability to hit back. Looking at the larger picture of India-US trade ties, New Delhi has chosen negotiations over confrontation. However, investors’ growing panic has added to the pressure on India to work out a reasonable deal sooner rather than later. There is a possibility that Trump may not be able to sustain his blitzkrieg if China and other nations up the ante. Ironically, the US President is creating a situation detrimental to his own country. According to an analysis by The Budget Lab at Yale University, retaliatory tariffs could cost the average American household up to \$4,200 annually. The spectre of recession and higher inflation is looming large in the US.

N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Lawlessness in UP

Sir, This refers to “SC: Total breakdown of rule of law in UP,” **Orissa POST**, April 8. It is indeed a matter of shame for UP to receive wrath from the apex court for its total failure to maintain the rule of law. The court has observed that the law enforcement agencies in UP are regularly filing criminal cases against innocent persons when the ingredients of cases are only civil in nature. This causes untold hardships to many who are left with no other option than to languish in jails. The director general of the state police should ensure the court that the lower echelons of the forces do not violate the principles of law with intent to harass people.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

Kerala rejects ASHA workers' demands

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, April 8: Kerala Labour Minister V Sivankutty Tuesday rejected the demands raised by Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers, who have been protesting outside the Secretariat here for the past 58 days, stating that the government has made the maximum possible concessions to resolve their agitation.

He said that Health Minister Veena George had held five rounds of talks with them and described it as a "great thing" that a minister had made such efforts to settle a protest.

"Any further talks with the agitators will be held only after reaching some consensus on the matter," he told reporters.

"The state government has made the maximum possible concessions regarding the ASHA workers' issue. We have put forward suggestions aimed at achieving consensus after offering significant concessions," he added.

No government would be willing to offer further concessions on the matter, Sivankutty said.

The Labour Minister's remarks came a day after his talks with the ASHA workers failed to reach any consensus, as the agitators remained firm on their long-standing demand for an honorarium hike.

Following the meeting, ASHA leaders told reporters that while the minister had put forward



The state government has made the maximum possible concessions regarding the ASHA workers' issue. We have put forward suggestions aimed at achieving consensus after offering significant concessions

V SIVANKUTTY | KERALA
LABOUR MINISTER

some suggestions to end the strike, they informed him that the agitation would continue until the government accepted their demand for an honorarium hike.

The third round of discussions between Veena George and the ASHA workers, held April 3, also failed to yield an agreement, as the workers refused to accept the government's proposal to form a panel to examine their demands and provide recommendations.

Two earlier rounds of discus-

Members of the Kerala ASHA Health Workers Association (KAHWA) have been protesting outside the Secretariat for 58 consecutive days, demanding retirement benefits and a higher honorarium

The agitators have now intensified their protest with an indefinite hunger strike

sions between the minister and the protesting workers had also ended without resolution.

The State Health Mission had previously conducted two meetings with the workers as well.

Members of the Kerala ASHA Health Workers Association (KAHWA) have been protesting outside the Secretariat for 58 consecutive days, demanding retirement benefits and a higher honorarium.

The agitators have now intensified their protest with an indefinite hunger strike.

Arunachal seeks Finance Comm package

The Arunachal Pradesh government has also requested the restoration of Special Category Status for northeastern and Himalayan states, a classification that would enable the state to access more favourable funding terms and greater support for its unique developmental challenges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, April 8: The Arunachal Pradesh government has requested the 16th Finance Commission to consider a special financial package of ₹6.89 lakh crore to compensate for the state's exclusion from externally aided projects supported by international agencies.

Finance Commission Member Annie George Mathew told a press conference here Tuesday that the request was made during meetings of the Commission with Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu and Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein.

Mathew, accompanied by fellow Commission members Dr Manoj Panda and Dr Soumya Kanti Ghosh, is on a five-day visit to the state for consultations.

Arunachal Pradesh Urban Affairs, Civil Aviation, and Land Management minister Balu Raja apprised Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman about the state's deprivation of financial assistance from international institutions due to alleged interference from China March 28.

The Arunachal Pradesh government has also requested the restoration of Special Category Status for northeastern and Himalayan states, a classification that would enable the state to access more favourable funding terms and greater support for its unique developmental chal-



lenges, she said.

"The state has additionally sought an increase in the vertical devolution of central taxes allocated to states. While the 15th Finance Commission had recommended a 41 per cent vertical devolution for the 2021-26 period, Arunachal Pradesh has proposed this be raised to 47 per cent to ensure a more equitable and needs-based allocation," the Commission member said.

Vertical devolution, as recommended by the Finance Commission, refers to the distribution of net tax proceeds between the union and state governments to ensure that states have sufficient financial resources to fulfil their responsibilities and contribute to national development.

"In terms of horizontal devolution, Arunachal's share has

seen steady growth from 0.244 per cent under the 11th Finance Commission to 1.757 per cent under the 15th. The state has now proposed an increase to 3 per cent, citing its strategic border location and the urgent need for accelerated development across sectors," Mathew disclosed.

Horizontal tax devolution concerns the distribution of the revenues among the states themselves, based on various criteria.

The government has also recommended changes to the criteria used for horizontal devolution.

It suggested increasing the weightage for 'forest and ecology' from 10 to 12 per cent, highlighting the importance of Arunachal's forests in serving as carbon sinks and contribut-

ing to India's national climate goals, particularly the target of net-zero emissions by 2070.

Similarly, for the 'demographic performance' criterion, which currently carries a 12.5 per cent weight, the state has proposed replacing it with a new criterion focused on the "preservation of tribal heritage", to reflect its unique cultural and demographic context, the member said.

"The state has also called for cent per cent central funding for centrally sponsored schemes (CSS), rather than the current 90:10 funding pattern applicable to northeastern states," Mathew said.

The chief minister and all the secretaries have raised for tailoring the rates and schemes, keeping into account the special needs and challenges of the hilly and northeastern states. The state government had also placed its demand to the commission in the form of a memorandum, she added.

Speaking about the roles and functions of the Commission, Mathew stated that it recommends grants for a wide range of areas including urban and rural local bodies, state-specific initiatives, key sectors like education and health, revenue deficit compensation, and disaster management.

The Commission has already held consultations in 22 states and would soon visit the remaining six states to gather insights for its final recommendations.

Mizoram's Lunglei town facing water crisis

The town with 80,000 residents has been facing water shortage since the first week of March and it became more severe from April as Tlawng river, its primary water source, is drying up rapidly due to lack of rainfall

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, April 8: Lunglei in South Mizoram, the second largest town in the hilly state after Aizawl, is facing a severe water crisis as its water sources are rapidly drying up due to prolonged dry season, an official said Tuesday.

Public Health Engineering (PHE) department, Superintending Engineer (SE), Zohmingliana said the town with 80,000 residents has been facing water shortage since the first week of March and it became more severe from April as Tlawng river, its primary water source, is drying up rapidly due to lack of rainfall.

Pialthleng stream, another water source for the town, has completely dried up, he said.

Another official said that the region has not received rainfall since January, which is the main reason for the shortage.

While the town's water requirement per day stands at



3.5 MLD (Million Liters per Day), only 1.5 MLD of water is available from Tlawng river for pumping, according to Zohmingliana.

Due to the rapid depleting sources, water is available for pumping for only 9-13 hours in a day now against 24 hours during normal time, he said.

He said that residents are collecting water on their own from rivers, streams, borewell (hand pump) and 90 traditional waterholes or sources, locally known as 'Tuikhur', in and around Lunglei town.

"The government is making

massive efforts to resolve the crisis and is planning to collect water from streams using vehicles to provide additional supply to the public. Lunglei may face more water crisis in coming days if there is no rain," Zohmingliana told PTI.

He said that Tuikhur are chlorinated as far as possible and private suppliers are also provided bleaching powder for chlorination.

According to Zohmingliana, there are about 80,000 residents and over 16,000 water tap connections in Lunglei and surrounding areas.

He said that the construction of a concrete gravity dam on Tlawng river is going on and if the project is completed in time, the severe water shortage could be avoided next year.

A resident said that people are queuing up day and night to draw water from 'tuikhur' as water distribution to households by the government now takes a month's cycle against 7-12 days cycle previously.

He said that residents also need to wait for 2 to 3 days to buy water from private suppliers.

Meghalaya to provide free electricity, petrol for retired HC judges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong, April 8: The Meghalaya Cabinet Tuesday approved a proposal to provide free electricity, mobile recharge and petrol to retired chief justice and judges of the state's high court, Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma said.

The approval to the Retired Judges' Secretarial Assistant and Domestic Help Rules 2013 which include enhancement for electricity of up to 1000 units per month to be reimbursed, mobile connectivity ₹4,200 per month plus taxes and petrol expenses of 100 litres a month, Sangma told reporters after the Cabinet meeting. The Cabinet has also approved an amendment to the Meghalaya State Language Act 2005, making Khasi and Garo associate official languages for various exams to be conducted at the district level.

The Cabinet also gave its nod to a law to protect the witnesses according to the new criminal laws - the BNS, BNSS & BSA.

The chief minister said a complete mechanism has been included to protect witnesses as mandated under the Meghalaya Witness Protection Scheme, 2025. The cabinet has also approved the appointment of retired chief secretary PS Thangkiew as Chairman of the Meghalaya Farmers' Empowerment Commission. The chief minister also said that a search committee was instituted for the appointment of a Lokayukta.

Protest against Waqf Act in Manipur

At Kwakta in Bishnupur district, protesters raised slogans demanding the immediate withdrawal of the Waqf Amendment Act marched for 4 km



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, April 8: Protest rallies were taken out Tuesday against the Waqf Amendment Act in Manipur's Imphal East and Bishnupur districts, officials said.

At Kwakta in Bishnupur district, protesters raised slogans demanding the immediate withdrawal of the Waqf Amendment Act marched for 4 km. Many women wearing burqa also attended the protest march.

Md Nasir, a protester said, "Waqf Act violates the Constitution. It targets the minority Muslims and is a step to break the spirit of a united India. We condemn this Act and government's ploy to usurp our ancestral properties. Waqf belongs to the Ummah."

At Khumidok in Imphal East district, protesters formed a human chain protesting against the Waqf Amendment Act and demanding its immediate withdrawal.

Security forces with anti-riot equipment have been deployed across the Muslim-dominated Lilong area in Manipur's Thoubal district in the wake of violent protests against the Waqf Amendment Act.

■ Security forces with anti-riot equipment have been deployed across the Muslim-dominated Lilong area in Manipur's Thoubal district in the wake of violent protests against the Waqf Amendment Act

■ The number of security personnel has also been increased at the residence of local MLA Abdul Nasir as a precautionary measure

Vigil has also been heightened in parts of Imphal East district, they said.

"Security forces shall be equipped with anti-riot equipment including tear gas gun shells, canes, body protectors and helmets," an order issued by the Superintendent of Police (Thoubal) said.

The number of security personnel has also been increased at the residence of local MLA Abdul Nasir as a precautionary measure.

The house of BJP Minority Morcha's Manipur president, Asker Ali, was set on fire in Lilong by a mob for allegedly supporting the Waqf Amendment Act Sunday night.

Kerala to launch drive for guest workers' children's education

Officials would visit the places where guest workers reside and take steps to ensure that all their children are enrolled in schools

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, April 8: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Tuesday said the government would launch a special drive to ensure the education of all children of 'guest workers' arriving in the state in search of jobs.

Officials would visit the places where guest workers reside



and take steps to ensure that all their children are enrolled in schools, he said.

The campaign will be conducted in May, according to a statement from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO).

The decision was taken during a meeting held to discuss

the educational backwardness of guest workers' children.

The services of representatives from local self-government institutions, Kudumbashree workers, local school teachers, and others would be utilised for this initiative.

The Chief Minister also said

a comprehensive education programme for the children of guest workers would be announced during the state government's fourth anniversary celebrations, scheduled to be held in Ernakulam May 7.

During the meeting, it was suggested that all local self-government bodies maintain a registry of school admissions and separately track data related to the education of guest workers' children. A registration system should be established in areas frequented by guest worker families during seasonal migrations, to ensure the continuity of education for migrant children, he said.

Health screening facilities and medical camps would be organised for guest workers and their children, if necessary, and awareness campaigns should be conducted on issues such as hygiene and substance abuse, the Chief Minister added.

He also noted that a special portal and mobile application are being developed to facilitate Aadhaar-based registration. Modules to collect information about guest workers' children will be included in this platform.

General Education Minister V Sivankutty and senior officials from the education department attended the meeting.

The campaign will be conducted in May

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, BARGAON
Dist: Sundargarh
e-mail Id: ori-bargaon@nic.in, PIN- 770016
No.1144, Date:07.04.2025
TENDER CALL NOTICE
No.1-12: Sealed Tenders are invited from the interested bidder for the civil work under BDO, Bargaon of Sundargarh district. The detail of works, eligibility, estimated cost and cost of tender paper has been uploaded in the district website www.sundargarh.odisha.gov.in. The bidder should be C & B class contractor. They have to submit the bid document to the undersigned in the address of office of the B.D.O., Bargaon, At/P.O. Bargaon, Pin-770016, Dist- Sundargarh (Odisha) through Registered Post / Speed Post only on or before 25/04/2025, 1:00 PM. The sale of tender paper will be from dated 09/04/2025 to dated 24/04/2025 (1.00 PM) in the district website www.sundargarh.odisha.gov.in. The authority reserves the right to cancel or reject the entire process without assigning any reason thereof. The tender will be opened on dated 29/04/2025 at 11.00 AM in the office of the undersigned in the presence of the bidders or his/her representatives.
Sd./- Block Development Officer, Bargaon
OIPR-19338/11/0004/2425



The state is also leading in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in India. In addition, many major national and international companies are already operating in Maharashtra

DEVENDRA FADNIS | MAHA CHIEF MINISTER

DELHI GOVT ISSUES ADVISORY AMID SOARING MERCURY

With the temperature rising in the capital amid heatwave conditions, the Delhi government Tuesday advised people to stay safe and take steps to avoid heat-related illnesses such as heatstroke



of the day uote

Several senior leaders from both parties want a coordination committee to be formed, but there is no threat to the alliance

H D KUMARASWAMY | UNION MINISTER

We are going to have a massive organisational reshuffle, and there will be guidelines for the same. Our general secretaries and in-charges are on it

K C VENUGOPAL | AICC GENERAL SECY

We will reclaim Konkani. The (poll) results of Konkani were unexpected. People can be fooled once, but not all the time

UDDHAV THACKERAY | SHIV SENA (UBT) CHIEF



A girl purchases clay pot, used for storing drinking water during summers, from a roadside vendor, in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

HYDERABAD BLAST CASE

T'gana HC upholds death penalty to five convicts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, April 8: The Telangana High Court Tuesday upheld a trial court's verdict handing out death penalty to five senior operatives of banned terror outfit, Indian Mujahideen, involved in a bomb blast that left 18 people killed in 2013.

A bench of Justice K Lakshman and Justice P Sree Sudha dismissed the criminal revision appeal filed by the IM operatives while upholding the NIA court's judgment. "Confirming the judgment of the trial court," the bench said. On December 13, 2016 the NIA court convicted the five members, including IM co-founder Mohd Ahmed Sidibapa alias Yasin Bhatkal, Pakistani national Zia-ur-Rahman alias Waqas, Asadullah Akhtar alias Haddi, Tahaseen Akhtar alias Monu and Ajaz Shaikh. Lawyer of one of the accused told reporters that they will ap-

peal against the verdict in the Supreme Court. Two deadly explosions in Dilsukhnagar, a crowded shopping area in the city, took place February 21, 2013. The first blast took place at a bus stop and the second near an eatery (A1 Mirchi Centre) in Dilsukhnagar. A prosecution lawyer told reporters at the high court that the NIA took over investigation of the case as terrorist activity is involved, though it was initially probed by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the city police.

The prime accused Riyaz Bhatkal is hiding in Pakistan, he said. The special court for NIA cases here awarded capital punishment to five convicts treating it as a rarest of the rare case, he said. The high court, after conducting a detailed hearing in the appeals filed by the convicts, confirmed the death sentence of the five IM operatives, he said.

SHORT TAKES

J&K Assembly adjourned

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly was adjourned for the day Tuesday following a ruckus by the National Conference (NC), Congress, PDP and other members over the Speaker disallowing adjournment of business to discuss the Waqf (Amendment) Act. The treasury benches, including ministers, joined the PDP demanding a discussion on the Act. After their demand was rejected by the Speaker, the treasury benches did not allow the House to function for the second consecutive day.

Youth stabbed to death by brothers

New Delhi: A 19-year-old boy was stabbed to death in the Gokalpuri area of northeast Delhi, allegedly by two brothers over their sister's affair with him, police said Tuesday. Police have arrested the siblings, Shahrukh Khan and Sahil Khan, aged 19 and 20. An incident of stabbing in the Sanjay Colony of the area was reported at 9.14 pm Monday.

PM likely to visit Saudi this month

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to pay a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia in April to explore ways to shore up cooperation in areas of trade, investment, energy and defence, people familiar with the matter said Tuesday. The two sides are also expected to deliberate on the regional security scenario as well as the proposed India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), they said. The Prime Minister is likely to travel to Saudi Arabia in the third week of April in what would be his first visit to the influential Gulf nation after a gap of around four years. In November last, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud visited India that saw both sides discussing avenues to strengthen their strategic partnership.

SP MP Barq records statement before SIT

Sambhal (UP): Samajwadi Party MP Zia Ur Rehman Barq was questioned Tuesday for nearly three hours in connection with last year's Sambhal violence during a court-ordered survey of a mosque. Accompanied by over 10 lawyers, he reached Nakhasa police station around 11:30 am to get his statement recorded before the SIT, which is probing the case. The SP MP remained at the police station for about three hours, during which he was asked questions regarding the violence. Four people died, while several others were injured in the clashes that took place during the survey of Mughalera Jama Masjid.

SC PULLS UP TN GOVERNOR

Stalin hails verdict

The judgment came as a shot in the arm for the DMK regime, which is at loggerheads with the BJP-led Centre over a host of issues, and the top court's ruling paves the way for the chief minister to become the chancellor in state-run varsities by replacing the governor and also gives the state government leverage over appointments in universities



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, April 8: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin Tuesday welcomed the Supreme Court's verdict, clearing 10 Bills withheld by Governor R N Ravi as 'historic,' and said it was a clear win for the rights of Indian states and the will of the people.

The judgment came as a shot in the arm for the DMK regime, which is at loggerheads with the BJP-led Centre over a host of issues, and the top court's ruling paves the way for the Chief Minister to become the chancellor in state-run varsities by replacing the governor and also gives the state government leverage over appointments in universities.

In a yet another row between Governor Ravi and the state government, the Raj Bhavan had recently insisted inclusion of UGC chairman's nominee in the vice chancellor search committee and state stuck to its stand that action was based on statutes. Stalin told the Assembly that as per the top court's ruling, the 10 bills are deemed to have been cleared. In a social media post, he said: "We thank and welcome today's historic judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court,

reaffirming the legislative rights of State Legislatures and putting an end to the trend of Union government-nominated Governors stalling progressive legislative reforms in Opposition-ruled states."

"This is another crucial step in restoring balance in Union-State relations and a landmark victory in Tamil Nadu's continuous struggle to usher in a truly federal India. My congratulations to the people of Tamil Nadu and our legal team!" Hailing the Supreme Court's 'historic' judgment, Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin said "Tamil Nadu's legal battle has once again shone light on the entire nation."

Hours after the apex court ruling, the ruling party renewed its call for recall of Governor Ravi and allies of the DMK hailed the verdict and CPI(M) said the verdict was a slap on the face of Modi government. Senior DMK leader RS Bharathi, hitting out at Governor Ravi, said that if he leaves the Raj Bhavan tonight then it could be assumed that he is a self-respecting person.

Such a judgment has not been delivered against any governor by the court in the past over seven decades since

independence, he said. Ravi did not give assent to Bills and he functioned worse than an Opposition party and acted like a foe, Bharathi alleged.

There was no immediate reaction from Raj Bhavan, Tamil Nadu which usually reacts to major developments.

In a major victory to DMK-led Tamil Nadu government, the Supreme Court Tuesday cleared 10 Bills which were stalled and reserved by Governor Ravi for President's consideration, and also set a timeline for all governors to act on the bills passed by state assemblies.

In November 2023, the Tamil Nadu Assembly adopted once again 10 Bills for which Governor Ravi had declined assent. Out of the 10 Bills, two were passed by the previous AIADMK regime (2016-21) and the remaining by the DMK government.

The Bills cover, among other matters, amendment to laws of state varsities to make Chief Minister the chancellor in the place of governor.

According to Assembly Speaker M Appavu, one of the Bills, passed by the AIADMK regime, was to name the Tamil Nadu Fisheries University as Dr J Jayalalithaa Fisheries University.

DUBAI CROWN Prince's India visit

Both sides agree to boost defence ties

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: India and the UAE Tuesday agreed to boost defence ties, including possible co-development of military equipment, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held talks with Dubai Crown Prince Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, focusing on cooperation in strategic domains.

Following his meeting with Al Maktoum, Modi said the Dubai Crown Prince's "special" visit to India paved the way for a stronger bilateral collaboration.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said Modi and Al Maktoum discussed Dubai's key role in strengthening India-UAE ties across defence, trade, technology, space and connectivity and people-to-people ties.

After his meeting with the visiting dignitary, Singh said India is eager to work closely with the Gulf nation in the defence sector, including in co-production and co-development projects. Both India



and the UAE are committed to work towards peace and prosperity in the region, he said.

The defence ministry said Singh and Al Maktoum were convinced that close collaboration between the defence industries should be an integral part of the bilateral cooperation.

In a social media post, Modi said Dubai has played a key role in advancing the India-UAE comprehensive strategic partnership.

Al Maktoum, also serving as deputy prime minister and defence minister of the UAE, arrived in the national capital this morning on a two-day India visit. He is travelling to Mumbai after concluding his engagements in Delhi.

Cong leader runs SUV over pedestrians; 3 dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, April 8: A drunk SUV driver speeding down a narrow city road allegedly hit multiple pedestrians and vehicles, killing three people and leaving six others seriously injured, police said Tuesday. The tragedy took on political overtones with the Congress expelling the driver, its district leader, and the BJP saying the Opposition party was full of people with criminal tendencies.

As the car moved from the MI Road to the narrow lanes in the Nahargarh area, it mowed down people and vehicles on



its way. The driver, identified as 62-year-old Usman Khan, is a factory owner and the Congress' Jaipur district vice president. Following the incident, locals gathered at Nahargarh police station and blocked roads to protest and demand financial compensation, a government job and other relief

The driver, identified as 62-year-old Usman Khan, is a factory owner and the Congress' Jaipur district vice president

to the victims and their kin. According to police, Khan first hit a scooter near the Santosh Mata Temple and continued to drive recklessly, crushing those who had fallen on the road and ramming into more people and vehicles along the way.

NHRC takes suo motu cognisance of prisoners' plight

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: Taking suo motu cognisance of difficulties being faced by prisoners including women inmates in various jails across the country, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued notices to chief secretaries of all the states and Union Territories, seeking reports within four weeks.

These problems include overcrowding, lack of basic amenities and healthcare facilities in jails, the NHRC said in a statement. "The issues have been brought to its no-

tice by its Special Monitors and Rapporteurs, through their reports after visiting various jails across the country, as well as the complaints," it said. The Commission said it has issued notices to the chief secretaries of all the states and Union Territories (UTs) seeking a report from them in four weeks, which should include various details.

These include the number of women prisoners lodged in jails in a state, the number of women prisoners whose babies are lodged in jails on account of the mothers being incarcer-



ated, the number of women prisoners who are convicted prisoners and those who are

undertrial prisoners, number of women undertrial prisoners who are languishing for more

than a year in jail, and number of male undertrial prisoners and those who are languishing in jail for more than a year, the statement said.

Some of the other concerns raised include the violation of the rights to dignity and safety of the women prisoners,

increased violence against them causing mental distress, unhygienic conditions without adequate toilets, sanitary napkins and clean drinking water facilities, it said.

Also, other concerns include poor quality food resulting in malnourishment, particularly in the case of pregnant women and lactating mothers, lack of educational opportunities for the children of women prisoners living in jails with them, non-implementation of their welfare programmes including legal aid, vocational training and rehabilitation, the statement said.



I am deeply saddened to learn about the demise of Dadi Ratan Mohini ji. She was a beacon of light for the Brahma Kumari organisation. This organisation has contributed significantly to my life journey

DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT

PAWAN KALYAN'S SON INJURED IN SINGAPORE SCHOOL FIRE

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan's youngest son, Mark Shankar, sustained injuries in a fire accident at his school in Singapore, the Janasena chief said Tuesday.



India's first climate change station inaugurated in J&K

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patnitop/Jammu, April 8: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh launched India's first high-altitude climate research station in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district Tuesday and said that India is now at the forefront of climate forecasting and research in the Himalayas.

Giving credit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for India's leadership in climate change initiatives, Singh said this marks a significant milestone in India's global leadership in climate science.

Union Minister Singh inaugurated the centre at Mandlote village in Chenani tehsil. He was accompanied by Jammu and Kashmir Minister of Science and Technology Satish Sharma.

Bishnoi-ISI link behind blast at BJP leader's home



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, April 8: Unidentified persons hurled a grenade at Punjab BJP leader Manoranjan Kalia's Jalandhar home early Tuesday, shattering glass panes and damaging vehicles, police said.

No one was hurt in the incident, said Deputy Commissioner of Police Manpreet Singh. Punjab Police teams are conducting raids at different places.

He also denied any intelligence failure. Police said following the blast, teams from Jalandhar Commissionerate immediately rushed to the spot, and a forensic team collected samples and relevant evidence from the scene.

He said police cracked the case within 12 hours of the incident. "It was a major conspiracy of Pakistan's ISI. Zeeshan Akhtar, who is an associate of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi and (Pakistani gangster) Shahzad Bhatti, they had hatched this conspiracy," said Shukla.

Waqf (Amendment) Act comes into force



AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 8: The Waqf (Amendment) Act, which was passed by Parliament last week, has come into force on Tuesday, the government said in a notification.

The Ministry of Minority Affairs notification said, "In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of section 1 of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 (14 of 2025), the Central Government hereby appoints the 8th day of April, 2025 as the date on which the provisions of the said Act shall come into force."

The Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha passed the bill post-midnight April 3 and April 4 respectively. President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent to the proposed law April 5.

Several Muslim bodies and Opposition MPs have moved the Supreme Court against the law, which the ruling alliance has described as a force for transparency and empowerment of backward Muslims and women from the community.

is filed by a party in the high courts and the apex court to ensure that no orders are passed without hearing it.

A Government notification, in the meantime, said Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, which was passed by Parliament last week, comes into force Tuesday.

Over 10 petitions, including those by politicians and the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) and Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, were filed in the top court challenging the validity of the newly-enacted law.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna April 7 assured senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, to consider listing the petitions. President Droupadi Murmu April 5 gave her assent to the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, which was passed by Parlia-

Police vehicles torched during protest in Bengal

Baharampur (WB): A protest over the recently enacted Waqf (Amendment) Act turned violent in West Bengal's Murshidabad district Tuesday, as police vehicles were set ablaze and stones were allegedly hurled at security personnel in the Muslim-majority region.

ment after heated debates in both houses.

The Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha with 128 members voting in favour and 95 Opposing it. It was cleared by the Lok Sabha with 288 members supporting it and 232 against it.

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Congress MPs Imran Pratapgarhi and Mohammad Jawed, AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi, RJD MPs Manoj Jha and Faiyaz Ahmad, AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan have also filed petitions in the apex court challenging the validity of the Act.

The DMK moved the top court through its deputy general secretary A Raja and said in a press release, "Despite widespread Opposition, the Waqf Amendment Bill, 2025 was passed by the union government without proper consideration of the objections raised by the members of the JPC and the other stakeholders."

The party said the immediate implementation of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 infringes and prejudices the rights of about 50 lakh Muslims in Tamil Nadu and 20 crore Muslims in the other parts of the country. The AIMPLB filed the plea in the top court late April 6.

of the day quote

All agencies should continue to work in a coordinated manner so that the gains made after the abrogation of Article 370 in the Union Territory can be sustained and the goal of 'terror free J-K' can be achieved at the earliest

In Uttar Pradesh, a bureaucrat is in the news for allegedly amassing huge wealth under the protection of those in power

The RTI Act symbolizes a transformative change, acting as a bridge that narrows the gap between the common citizen and the government, allowing for greater participation in governance.

POST OF THE DAY

BJP leader Surendra Mehta distributes blankets to People in Begusarai. The temperature touched 40 celsius today. God save this country from these PR jeevis.

SHORT TAKES

900 Kia car engines stolen over five years

Penukonda (Andhra Pradesh): As many as 900 Kia car engines were allegedly stolen in Sri Sathyasai district over a period of five years, prompting the South Korean automobile company to lodge a police complaint, an official said Tuesday.

UP: BKU leader, son, brother gunned down

Fatehpur/Kanpur: A Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader, his son and brother were shot dead following an altercation over his tractor allegedly blocking a road at Akhri village in Fatehpur Tuesday, police said.

Man rapes minor; held

Thane: A man allegedly kidnapped and raped a 10-year-old girl before killing her by slitting her throat and throwing her body from the bathroom window of his house located on the sixth floor of a residential building in Maharashtra's Thane, police said Tuesday.

SC no to CBI probe into teacher posts in Bengal



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: The Supreme Court Tuesday set aside the Calcutta High Court ordering a CBI probe into the West Bengal cabinet's decision to create supernumerary posts in state-run and aided schools.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar, however, made it clear the probe into other aspects related to the appointment of 25,753 teachers

and staffers in West Bengal's state-run and aided schools would continue.

A supernumerary post refers to a temporary position created to accommodate an employee who is entitled to a regular post that is currently unavailable.

"Having regard to aforesaid discussion we are of the view that the Calcutta High Court was not justified in referring the issue of creation of supernumerary posts to CBI.

Pursuant to the cabinet decision, we take note of Articles 74(2) and 163(3) of the Constitution which specifically state that the question whether any, and if so what, advice was taken by the cabinet of ministers to aid and advise the governor shall not be inquired into in any court.



Samajwadi Party workers float cylinders in the Ganga river in a mark of protest, a day after the domestic cooking gas LPG price was hiked by ₹50 per cylinder across India

Cong invokes Patel's legacy in 'ideological war' with BJP-RSS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, April 8: Countering BJP's high-pitched campaign of invoking nationalist figures to rally support, the Congress Tuesday asserted its claim on the legacy of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, India's first Deputy Prime Minister, whose path it pledged to follow in the "ideological war" with the BJP-RSS.

In a resolution - "Flag-bearer of freedom movement - Our 'Sardar' - Vallabhbhai Patel" passed by the Extended Congress Working Committee, the Congress said its top leadership had gathered in Ahmedabad, the land of Mahatma Gandhi and Patel, to give a new direction to India.

Highlighting Patel's contribution to the freedom struggle, the Congress accused the BJP of trying to usurp his legacy under a "well-planned conspiracy". It alleged that the BJP and RSS have been "propagating lies" about the relationship Patel shared with Jawaharlal Nehru and asserted that the two leaders shared a great bonding and were like two sides of the same coin.



CWC members, PCC chiefs, CLP leaders, chief ministers and former chief ministers, participated in the discussions of the extended CWC meeting which revolved around granting more powers

to the district units. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, former Congress chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi will also speak at the AICC session, which sources say, is likely to approve some key changes in the organisation, including granting more powers to the DCCs and raising quota for SCs/STs/OBCs at all party positions beyond 50 per cent that was adopted at the Raipur Resolution.

"The Congress is going to have a 'massive organisational reshuffle,'" AICC general secretary K C Venugopal told reporters after the meeting. Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was not present at the meeting, with Venugopal saying she had pri-

or engagements abroad and had sought the party chief's permission. Party general secretary Jairam Ramesh said 35 leaders could not attend the session and "it is not right to single out one person". The resolution said, "The ideology of make-believe confrontation and mischievously professed division had led to the spreading of a deliberate web of lies of conflict between Sardar Patel and Pandit (Jawaharlal) Nehru."



Albania has an ambitious agenda to close EU negotiations in the next two years. It's vital to sustain the high pace of reforms. And I also understand that the reforms are always quite difficult
KAJA KALLAS | THE EUROPEAN UNION'S FOREIGN POLICY CHIEF

PHILIPPINE VOLCANO SPEWS ASH PLUME

A restive Philippine volcano briefly erupted Tuesday on a central island, sending a 4-kilometer (2.4-mile) plume of ash and debris into the sky and forcing authorities to suspend school classes in four villages due to ashfall, officials said



of the day quote

Both Japan and NATO face many challenges and our security environment has become increasingly more severe
GEN NAKATANI | DEFENCE MINISTER, JAPAN

Joined Hindu community members at the @BAPS_Toronto Mandir yesterday (Sunday) for the first day of Ram Navami celebrations. Thank you for sharing your traditions and culture with me. Happy Ram Navami!
MARK CARNEY | PRIME MINISTER, CANADA

The army would provide complete security to the investors in the country as the civil-military of Pakistan sought in the mineral sector
ASIM MUNIR | ARMY CHIEF, PAKISTAN

Trump says US, Iran set for direct nuclear talks



REUTERS

Washington, April 8: President Donald Trump made a surprise announcement Monday that the United States and Iran were poised to begin direct talks on Tehran's nuclear program, but Iran's foreign minister said the discussions in Oman would be indirect. In a further sign of the difficult path to any deal between the two geopolitical foes, Trump issued a stark warning that if the talks were unsuccessful, "Iran is going to be in great danger." Iran had pushed back against Trump's demands in recent weeks that it directly negotiate over its nuclear program or be bombed, and it appeared to be sticking to that position Monday. "We're having direct talks with Iran, and they've started. It'll go Saturday. We have a very big meeting, and we'll see what can happen," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office during a meeting with visiting

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "And I think everybody agrees that doing a deal would be preferable," Trump said. He added that Saturday's talks with Iran would be at a very high level, without elaborating. He declined to say where the talks would take place but held out the possibility that a deal could be reached. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi posted on X that indirect high-level talks would be held in Oman, adding, "It is as much an opportunity as it is a test. The ball is in America's court." Iran's state media Tuesday said the talks would be led by Araqchi and US Presidential Envoy Steve Witkoff, with the intermediation of Oman's foreign minister, Badr al-Busaidi. The US and Iran held indirect talks during former President Joe Biden's term but they made little if any progress. The last known direct negotiations between the two governments

- Iran says indirect discussions will be held in Oman Saturday
- Trump warns of danger if nuclear talks fail
- Iran claims its nuclear program for civilian purposes

were under then-President Barack Obama, who spearheaded the 2015 international nuclear deal that Trump later abandoned. Warnings by Trump of military action against Iran had jangled already tense nerves across the Middle East after open warfare in Gaza and Lebanon, military strikes on Yemen, a change of leadership in Syria and Israeli-Iranian exchanges of fire. Trump, who has beefed up the US military presence in the region since taking office in January, has said he would prefer a deal over Iran's nuclear program to armed confrontation and March 7 said he had written to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to suggest talks. Iranian officials said at the time that Tehran would not be bullied into negotiations. "Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon and if the talks aren't successful I actually think it will be a very bad day for Iran," Trump said in the Oval Office Monday. Direct talks would not occur without the explicit approval of Khamenei, who in February said negotiations with the US were "not smart, wise, or honorable."

South Korea sets snap presidential election for June 3

REUTERS

Seoul, April 8: Leading contenders began to throw their hats in the ring Tuesday as South Korea officially set June 3 for a snap presidential election triggered by last week's removal from office of impeached leader Yoon Suk Yeol. The power vacuum at the top of government has impeded Seoul's efforts to negotiate with the administration of US President Donald Trump at a time of spiraling US tariffs and slowing growth in Asia's fourth-largest economy. Yoon was removed Friday over his short-lived declaration of martial law in December that plunged the key US ally into crisis, triggering a new election that could reshape its foreign and domestic policy. "The government intends to designate June 3 as the 21st presidential election day," Acting President Han Duck-soo told a cabinet meeting, citing factors such as the time political parties need to prepare for the event. Yoon's labour minister Kim Moon-soo is among a handful of hopefuls who have signalled their intention to run, resigning his post Tuesday and saying he would launch his campaign. While not officially a member of Yoon's People Power Party at the moment, Kim has been polling better than other conservative contenders. "I tendered my resignation and decided to run because the people want it, people I know want it, and I feel a sense of responsibility to solve national difficulties," Kim told reporters.

44 dead after roof collapse at nightclub in Dominican Republic



Nelsy Cruz, the governor of the northwestern province of Montecristi and sister of seven-time Major League Baseball All-Star Nelson Cruz, was among the victims

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Santo Domingo, April 8: At least 44 people died and 160 others were injured in the Dominican capital early Tuesday when the roof collapsed at an iconic nightclub where politicians, athletes and others were attending a merengue concert, authorities said. Crews were searching for potential survivors in the rubble at the one-storey Jet Set nightclub in Santo Domingo, said Juan Manuel Méndez, director of the Centre of Emergency Operations. "We presume that many of them are still alive, and that is why the authorities

here will not give up until not a single person remains under that rubble," he said. Nearly 12 hours after the top of the nightclub collapsed down onto patrons, rescue crews were still pulling out survivors from the debris. At the scene, firefighters removed blocks of broken concrete and sawed planks of wood to use them as planks to lift heavy debris as the noise of drills breaking through concrete filled the air. The confirmed death toll had reached 44, Méndez said in the early afternoon. Earlier, officials had said there were at least 160 people injured. Nelsy Cruz, the governor of the northwestern province of Montecristi and sister of seven-time Major League Baseball All-Star Nelson Cruz, was among the victims. She had called President Luis Abinader at 12:49 am saying she was trapped and that the roof had collapsed, First Lady Raquel Abraje told reporters. Officials said Cruz died later at the hospital.

SHORT TAKES

Gas leak at Iranian coal mine kills 7

Tehran: A gas leak at a coal mine in northern Iran killed seven workers, three of whom were Afghans, state media said Tuesday. President Masoud Pezeshkian ordered a probe into the incident, which occurred Monday afternoon near the city of Damghan, some 270 kilometres northwest of the capital, Tehran, according to a report by the official IRNA news agency. Safety measures may have been disregarded, the report said. Industrial accidents reportedly kill some 700 workers in Iran each year.

6,700 Sikh pilgrims get Pak visas for Baisakhi

Lahore: The Pakistani government has issued over 6,700 visas to Indian Sikh pilgrims for the Baisakhi festival, exceeding for the first time in 50 years the number agreed between the two countries, an official said Tuesday. "Under the Pakistan-India Religious Protocol Agreement 1974, up to 3,000 Sikh pilgrims are permitted to visit Pakistan for any religious festival," ETPB Additional Secretary Saifullah Khokhar told PTI.

56 anti-Israel protesters held in Bangladesh

Dhaka: Hundreds of people protesting in support of Palestine attacked business outlets, including those belonging to multinationals, in different parts of Bangladesh, prompting police to launch raids and arrest 56 people allegedly involved in the vandalism, officials said Tuesday. The protest rallies were taken out in different cities Monday to express solidarity with the Palestinians and condemn Israeli attacks on Gaza.

Chinese nationals captured fighting for Russia in Ukraine

REUTERS

Kyiv, April 8: President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Tuesday that Ukrainian forces had captured two Chinese men fighting for Russia in eastern Ukraine, potentially threatening a fragile peace effort in the three-year-old war. Beijing is a close diplomatic ally of Moscow but is not publicly known to have directly aided in the Kremlin's full-scale invasion, which US President Donald Trump is seeking to swiftly end. Writing on X, where he posted a video of one of the alleged men, Zelenskyy said Kyiv has "information suggesting that there are many more Chinese citizens" fighting. He did not say whether Ukraine believed the men were acting on Beijing's orders. "Russia's involvement of China, along with other countries, whether directly or indirectly, in this war in Europe is a clear signal that Putin intends to do anything but end the war," he wrote. The Chinese Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment on what would be the first publicly announced case

- Zelenskyy says two men captured in eastern Ukraine
- Ukraine demands response from China, expects reaction from US
- Beijing is a close Russian ally but has not openly aided Moscow's invasion

of Chinese nationals captured fighting for Russia in Ukraine. Reuters could not independently verify the claims. Writing on social media, Andriy Kovalenko, a member of Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council, called the captured fighters "mercenaries" but offered no other details. Russia has used Iranian drones as well as North Korean missiles and artillery shells since its February 2022 invasion. Kyiv also says Pyongyang's troops have been deployed to fight Ukrainian forces in parts of Russia's western Kursk region, where Ukraine staged a lightning incursion last summer. "But there is a difference: the North Koreans were fighting on the Kursk front against us," Zelenskyy said in a joint briefing in Kyiv Tuesday with Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever. "The Chinese are fighting on the territory of Ukraine."

'Hasina's extradition raised during Yunus-Modi meeting'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka/New Delhi, April 8: Bangladesh Foreign Affairs Adviser Mohammad Touhid Hossain Tuesday said that interim government chief Muhammad Yunus had raised the issue of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's extradition from India during a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Bangkok recently. "We raised the issue but nothing was finalised," he told reporters at the Foreign Ministry declining to elaborate further when asked if Yunus discussed Hasina's extradition to make her stand trial. Hossain, however, said that progress in Dhaka-Delhi relations required efforts from both sides as "we need to move forward together". Chief Adviser Yunus held a meeting with Modi Friday on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC summit in Thailand. Following their talks, External Affairs Secretary Vikram Misri told reporters that PM Modi had urged all parties to refrain from rhetoric that could damage the atmosphere of bilateral



We raised the issue but nothing was finalized. We need to move forward together
MOHAMMAD TOUHID HOSSAIN | FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER, BANGLADESH

engagement. A day after the meeting, Yunus's press secretary Shafiqul Alam wrote on his Facebook account that Bangladesh's interim government chief raised Hasina's extradition issue and claimed that the response was "not negative". However, people familiar with the matter said Saturday that the Bangladeshi version of the meeting between Yunus and Modi was "mischievous and politically motivated", especially the aspects relating to attacks

on minorities and Dhaka's request for extraditing Hasina. The characterisation of the Indian prime minister's remarks regarding the relationship with Yunus and the previous Bangladesh government were "inaccurate", the people cited above said on Dhaka's official readout on the meeting and the Facebook post by Alam. In his post, Alam claimed that Modi had said, "We saw her (Hasina's) disrespectful behaviour towards you (Yunus)." The people cited above said Modi had responded to various issues raised by Yunus by saying that these were best discussed by the foreign ministers of the two countries.

UK court rejects India's appeal for extradition of Sanjay Bhandari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, April 8: The High Court in London Tuesday refused the government of India's application seeking permission to appeal in Britain's Supreme Court against the discharge of Sanjay Bhandari, the defence sector consultant wanted in Delhi to face charges of alleged tax evasion and money laundering. Lord Justice Timothy Holroyde handed down the judgment at a brief "pronouncement" hearing at the Royal Courts of Justice in response to the Indian government's application filed last month. It followed Holroyde and Justice Karen Steyn's February 28 High Court judgment granting the 62-year-old businessman's appeal against being extradited on human rights grounds. "The court received an application from the government of India seeking certification of points of law of general importance and grant leave to appeal to the Supreme Court," said Justice Holroyde. "Having considered the written submissions, the court is satisfied that no oral hearing is necessary, and no further submissions required. The two points on which leave to appeal was sought is refused. The reasons being that neither of the points of law of general importance were involved in the court's decision," he said. The first point referenced the "standard of proof" imposed on the accused person and the second was linked to the conditions in Delhi's Tihar jail, which the Indian government maintained could have been addressed by further assurances. "Neither of these two points merits consideration by the Supreme Court," the judge concluded. The government of India, as respondent in the extradition case, had filed the application as the first in a two-step process. But with the first stage being refused, government officials familiar with the case are yet to confirm if a further permission to appeal application may be pursued directly with the UK Supreme Court.

Russia takes an US astronaut to International Space Station

REUTERS

Baikonur, Kazakhstan, April 8: A Russian spacecraft safely delivered an American astronaut Jonathan Kim and two Russian cosmonauts to the International Space Station (ISS) Tuesday, a flight hailed by Moscow as an example of fruitful Russia-US space cooperation. The Russian Soyuz 2.1a rocket blasted off from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan carrying Kim and Russians Sergei Ryzhikov and Alexei Zubritsky, docking three hours later with the ISS, Russia's Roscosmos state space corporation said. Once the hatches were opened, Kim and the Russians

were shown smiling and hugging their companions on the station, which now has 10 people on board, including four NASA astronauts, five Russians and Japanese astronaut Takuya Onishi. "Throughout his eight-month stay aboard the orbital outpost, Kim will conduct scientific research in technology development, Earth science, biology, human research, and more," NASA said in a statement. President Vladimir Putin's investment envoy Tuesday hailed US-Russia space cooperation after the Russian rocket blasted off for the ISS. Kirill Dmitriev, who is trying to spur a reset in US-Russian ties and held talks in Washing-



ton last week, said Tuesday's launch was the latest example of an enduring relationship which traced its history back to 1975.

That was when the first crewed international space mission carried out jointly by the United States and the Soviet Union saw an Apollo and a

- Russian space craft docks with ISS
- NASA's Jonathan Kim enters space station
- Putin envoy hails US-Russian cooperation
- ISS now has 10 people on board - NASA

Soyuz dock in space. That mission, which featured the first international handshake in space, was a symbol of Cold War detente. "Russian and US cooperation in the space industry continues today," Dmitriev said Tuesday, posting a video on his official Telegram channel of the Soyuz rocket blasting off. Despite sweeping US sanc-

tions imposed on Moscow over its war in Ukraine, space is one area where cooperation has continued. Dmitriev, who has talked up the possibility of joint Russian-US investment in the Arctic and in the development of Russian rare earths, has said Moscow could supply a small nuclear power plant for a mission to Mars planned by billionaire entrepreneur and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk. However, with the ISS nearing the end of its service life, Russia plans to go it alone with its own space station, for which it plans to launch the first two modules in 2027. It is also expanding its cooperation with China in space exploration.



We think India, and a few emerging markets, are going to be the engines of growth. The global depressed growth, if it has to pick up, will have to be because of these engines

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN
FINANCE MINISTER

GOLD FALLS ₹200

Gold prices fell by ₹200 to ₹91,250 per 10 grams in the national capital Tuesday amid subdued demand in the local markets, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at ₹91,450 per 10 grams Monday.



of the day quote

The tariffs are going to impact the payment cycle for us. We request the government to immediately announce an interest subvention scheme for all the exporters

SC RALHAN | FIEO PRESIDENT

Revolt Motors is committed to making electric mobility mainstream. Our rapid expansion from 100 to 200 dealerships in just one year is a testament to customer trust and growing demand

ANJALI RATTAN | RATTANINDIA CHAIRPERSON

We are confident that we are going to lead the growth in the industry, and with better growth we will have good market share

GHUFRAN ALAM | SAMSUNG INDIA VICE PRESIDENT

Stock markets rebound; Sensex jumps 1,089 pts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 8: Stock markets rebounded sharply Tuesday, a day after facing the worst drubbing in 10 months, as benchmark Sensex recouped 1,089 points after across-the-board buying amid a rally in Asian and European markets.

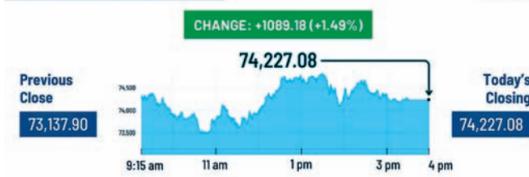
Snapping its three-day decline, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,089.18 points or 1.49 per cent to settle at 74,227.08 with 29 of its components ending in the green. During the day, it climbed 1,721.49 points or 2.35 per cent to 74,859.39.

The NSE Nifty surged 374.25 points or 1.69 per cent to 22,535.85, snapping the three-day losing run. Intra-day, the benchmark soared 535.6 points or 2.41 per cent to 22,697.20.

Sensex tanked 2,226.79 points or 2.95 per cent and Nifty tumbled 742.85 points or 3.24 per cent, marking their worst single day decline in 10 months as global equity markets went into a tailspin on recession fears after US tariff war.

"Positive global market cues aided massive recovery in local benchmarks, as concerns over US trade tariffs faded a bit on hopes that most of the nations would work out ways to overcome the challenge. With India largely being a consumption-led economy, the US tariff impact may not hurt the country in a major way when compared to some of the other nations," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

BSE SENSEX APRIL 08, 2025



Stock	Change (%)
TITAN	+3.29%
BAJAJ FINANCE	+3.21%
SBIN	+3.00%
LT	+2.94%
BAJAJ FINSERV	+2.75%

Stock	Change (%)
POWER GRID	-0.14%
TOP LOSERS	-

All Sensex firms, except Power Grid, ended in the positive territory. Titan, Bajaj Finance, State Bank of India, Larsen & Toubro, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Asian Paints and Zomato were the biggest gainers.

World markets also staged a comeback after Monday's collapse. In Asian markets, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index, Hong Kong's Hang Seng, Shanghai SSE Composite index and South Korea's Kospi settled in the positive territory after falling sharply Monday. Nikkei 225 index jumped 6 per cent.

European markets were quoting higher. US markets ended mostly lower Monday.

The BSE smallcap gauge jumped 2.18 per cent and mid-cap index surged 1.87 per cent.

All BSE sectoral indices ended higher.

Oil & Gas index jumped the most by 2.58 per cent, followed by consumer durables (2.38 per

cent), telecommunication (2.32 per cent), industrials (2.04 per cent), energy (2.03 per cent), consumer discretionary (2.02 per cent), teck (1.97 per cent), healthcare (1.94 per cent) and IT (1.77 per cent). As many as 3,093 stocks advanced while 871 declined and 119 remained unchanged on the BSE.

"Following positive global cues, led by the interest of many nations to enter into bilateral agreements with the US, the domestic market witnessed a recovery," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹9,040.01 crore on Monday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought shares worth ₹12,122.45 crore, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.22 per cent to USD 64.35 a barrel.

Rupee sinks 50 paise against US dollar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 8: Declining for the third straight session, the rupee tumbled 50 paise to settle at 86.26 against the US dollar Tuesday, logging the maximum single-day loss in nearly three months amid a looming global trade war stoking fears of economic meltdown.

According to forex traders, some recovery in crude oil prices and continued foreign capital outflows also dented sentiments.

Besides, the global markets have been facing extreme volatility following a fresh threat by the US administration to impose a punitive 50 per cent tariff against China's retaliatory 34 per cent import levies on American products, they added.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.89 and swung between a high of 85.82 and a low of 86.29 against the greenback. The unit ended at 86.26, registering a loss of 50 paise from its previous closing level. It had earlier recorded such a steep loss in one session on January 13 this year, when it had depreciated by 66 paise.

Monday, the rupee settled 32 paise lower at 85.76 against the US dollar, after losing 14 paise in the preceding session on Friday.

"The rupee experienced a decline in value against the US dollar, primarily driven by strong demand for dollars from importers and ongoing outflows of foreign funds from Indian equity markets. As a result, the rupee has emerged as the worst-performing currency among its Asian counterparts



this month. Market sentiment continues to remain negative for the rupee, particularly following the imposition of reciprocal tariffs by the US, which has caused the currency to drop to its lowest point since March 21," Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities, said.

On the domestic macroeconomic front, investors are awaiting the Reserve Bank of India's policy rate decision.

The RBI's monetary policy committee headed by Governor Sanjay Malhotra began its three-day deliberations on key interest rates Monday. The decision is scheduled to be announced Wednesday.

Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan, said the rupee declined on trade-war worries and FII selling pressure. A weak yuan also put pressure on the rupee.

"FII outflows may also pressurize on the domestic currency. However, weak crude oil prices may support the rupee at lower levels. Investors may remain cautious ahead of the RBI monetary policy. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of ₹85.90 to ₹86.50," Choudhary added.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.06 per cent higher at 103.03.

RBI Guv Malhotra to announce fiscal's 1st credit policy today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 8: RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra will announce the first bi-monthly monetary policy of the current fiscal Wednesday, the central bank said, amid expectations of a 25 basis points reduction in the short-term lending rate.

RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) headed by Governor Malhotra started its three-day deliberations on the next set of credit policy Monday.

In February, the MPC slashed the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent. It was the first reduction since May 2020 and the first revision after two-and-a-half years. Experts are of the view that the RBI will again reduce the rate by 25 bps Wednesday against the backdrop of moderating inflation and the need to stimulate growth as Trump tariffs pose severe challenges to the global economy.

"Monetary Policy Statement by RBI Governor @GovSMalhotra at 10:00 AM (on April 9)," the RBI said in a post on social media platform X.

US President Donald Trump has announced a hefty 26 per cent reciprocal tariff rate on India, effective April 9.

An HSBC Global Research report said: "We expect the RBI to deliver a 25 bps repo rate cut in April, taking the repo rate to 6 per cent. We also expect it to discuss/implement steps that help sustain liquidity at surplus levels. We believe the RBI may lower its growth and inflation forecasts. Following the April rate cut, we expect two more rate cuts of 25bp each in the June and August meetings, taking the repo rate to 5.5 per cent, which is our estimate of neutral."

MEGA CREDIT CAMP HELD BY CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar: A mega credit camp for MUDRA and SHG Bank linkage was organised by Central Bank of India to commemorate the 10 years of flagship MUDRA scheme by Algom & Nimapara Branch, in Puri district at Krishna Garden, Sakhigopal Bazar Tuesday, in presence of Omm Prakash Mishra, MLA Satyabadi & Debashish Nayak, BDO Satyabadi, where more than 400 SHG members actively participated. Mishra & Nayak outlined the support provided by the bank through MUDRA schemes that shaped the lives of micro entrepreneurs. They further emphasised the role of SHG financing in improving the livelihood of rural women and as a whole the state's economy. On this occasion, the Bank distributed sanction letters to different SHGs of Algom & Nimapara and MUDRA loans to individual members of SHGs. The programme was held in presence of Mukund Kumar Karn, Chief Manager, Regional Office, Bhubaneswar, Amiya Prasad Swain, Branch Head, Algom Branch, Dharendra Kumar Behera, Branch Head, Nimapara Branch, along with other senior Bank officials.



'One state-one RRB' to be effective from May 1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: One state-one RRB will become a reality from next month as the finance ministry has issued notification for the consolidation of 15 Regional Rural Banks across 11 states to achieve better operational efficiency and cost rationalisation.

With this fourth round of consolidation of regional rural banks (RRBs), the number would reduce to 28 from the existing 43.

As per the gazette notification, RRBs in 11 states - Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan - are to be merged into one entity, respectively, for each of these to realise the goal of 'one state-one RRB'.

The effective date for amalgamation has been fixed to May 1,



as per the gazette notification dated April 5, 2026.

As per the notification, in line with the powers granted under Section 23A(1) of the Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976, these RRBs will merge into a single entity in the public interest and in the interest of the development of the area served by these entities and also in the interest of the Regional Rural Banks themselves.

In the case of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, 3 RRBs to be merged into one in each of these

said in a statement.

At present, 43 RRBs are functioning in 26 states and 2 UTs. Post amalgamation, there will be 28 RRBs in 26 states and 2 UTs with over 22,000 branches covering 700 districts.

Their predominant area of operation is in rural areas, with approx 92 per cent of branches in rural/semi-urban areas, it said. This is the fourth phase of amalgamation. In Phase 1 (FY 2006 to FY 2010) number of RRBs was reduced from 196 to 82, it was further brought down from 82 to 56 in Phase 2 (FY 2013 - FY 2015) and in Phase 3, it was cut from 56 to 43.

As a precursor to consolidation, the capital infusion was done in these RRBs.

The 2021-22 fiscal was a watershed year in the context of RRBs as the Centre decided to infuse ₹5,445 crore as its share over a period of two years to facilitate growth capital.

Who are the potential tariff war winners

REUTERS

New York, April 8: Days after US President Donald Trump's announcement of sweeping tariffs shocked multiple U.S. trading partners and global markets, a handful of countries are emerging as potential winners although the risk of a tariff-induced recession will limit the upside.

With longtime allies and close U.S. trading partners including the European Union, Japan and South Korea among those hardest hit - with tariffs of 20% or more - rivals from Brazil to India and Turkey to Kenya see a silver lining.

Brazil is among the economies that escaped with the lowest 'reciprocal' U.S. tariff of 10%. In addition, the agricultural giant could benefit from China's retaliatory tariffs likely to hit US farm exporters.

The latest U.S. tariffs are due to come into effect April 9.

Brazil, as a net importer of goods from the United States, exemplifies the way some countries could take advantage of the trade war that Trump is waging primarily against China and



other major exporters that run trade surpluses with the U.S. Morocco, Egypt, Turkey and Singapore, all of which have trade deficits with the U.S., could find an opportunity in the distress of those, like Bangladesh and Vietnam, which both run big surpluses and have been hit hard by Trump.

While the latter two are grappling with expected tariffs of 37% and 46%, respectively, the former, like Brazil and most of its neighbours, will squeak by with 10% each - more of a slap on the wrist in the new Trump world order.

"The US didn't impose tariffs on Egypt alone," said Magdy Tolba, chairman of Egyptian-Turkish joint venture T&C

Garments. "It imposed much higher tariffs on other countries. This gives Egypt a very good opportunity to grow."

Tolba listed China, Bangladesh and Vietnam as key competitors to Egypt in textiles. "The opportunity is in plain sight," he said. "We just need to grab it."

Turkey, whose iron, steel and aluminium exports took a hit from earlier U.S. tariffs, now stands to benefit as other global traders endure even higher levies.

Similarly, Morocco, which has a free trade agreement with the U.S., could emerge as a relative beneficiary of the pain of both the EU and erstwhile Asian powerhouses.

"The tariff is an opportunity for Morocco to attract investments by foreign investors willing to export to the U.S., given the comparatively low 10% tariff," said one former government official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Similar concerns are playing out in Singapore, where the benchmark Straits Times Index on Monday slumped 7.5% in its largest fall since 2008 and extended its decline on Tuesday.

While the city-state might benefit from some investment flows as manufacturers seek to diversify, they would still be subject to substantial manufacturing and local content rules, said OCBC economist Selena Ling.

"The absolute story is there are no "winners" if the US and/or global economy hits a hard stop or recession," she said. "It's all relative."

Maybank economist Chua Hak Bin added: "Singapore cannot win in global trade war, given the heavy reliance on trade."

India, despite a tariff of 26%, is still looking for opportunity in its Asian rivals' greater misery.

US, India discuss tariffs, 'fair' trade

REUTERS

Washington, April 8: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar held a call Monday to discuss US tariffs on India and how to make progress towards a "fair and balanced trade relationship," the State Department said.

Jaishankar also said on social media earlier Monday that he had spoken to Rubio about the early conclusion of a bilateral trade deal.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Trump said last week that he would impose a 10 per cent baseline tariff on all imports to the US and higher duties on dozens of other countries, including some of Washington's biggest trading partners, rattling global markets and bewildering US allies.

CONTEXT

India does not plan to retaliate against Trump's 26 per



cent tariff on imports from the Asian nation, an Indian government official said Sunday, citing ongoing talks for a deal between the countries.

KEY QUOTES

"They also discussed US reciprocal tariffs on India and how to make progress toward a fair and balanced trade relationship," the State Department said in a statement.

"Agreed on the importance of the early conclusion of the Bilateral Trade Agreement. Look forward to remaining in touch," Jaishankar said in his social media post.

Arya's 103 powers PBKS win LSG EDGE OUT KKR IN THRILLER SHOW



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mullanpur, April 8: Rookie opener Priyansh Arya delivered on his high promise with a sensational hundred before the bowlers survived MS Dhoni's late onslaught to script an 18-run win for Punjab Kings (PBKS) over Chennai Super Kings in the IPL here Tuesday.

Priyansh (103 off 42) powered Punjab Kings to 219 for six, the highest total at the venue, after the hosts lost half their side inside the first eight overs.

CSK batters have not been good enough thus far in the season but the likes of Devon Conway (69 off 49 retired out), Rachin Ravindra (36 off 23) and Shivam Dube (42 off 27) were able to take the game deep on this occasion. However, CSK fell short and ended at 201 for five.

It was CSK's fourth loss in five games while Punjab Kings recorded their third win in four

matches. The equation for CSK came down to 75 runs off the last 30 balls. Much to the delight of fans present at the venue, Dhoni (27 off 12) came to bat at number five after Dube's fall in the 16th over.

With Dube going ballistic in the middle overs, Punjab Kings had to wait till the 17th over to get their main spinner Yuzvendra Chahal into operation.

It was Lockie Ferguson's turn to bowl the 18th over and that was when Dhoni provided a glimmer of hope for CSK with two sixes off as many balls.

However, 43 off the last 12 balls ended up being too much for the away team.

Punjab Kings were poor in the field, dropping as many as four catches but were still able to get over the line.

The night belonged to Priyansh, the 24-year-old from Delhi who rose to prominence with six sixes in an over in a local league last year.

He flaunted his special six-hitting skills on the national stage to lift Punjab Kings to an above par total. His knock included seven boundaries and nine hits over the fence.

The commendable recovery was also made possible by Shashank Singh (52 not out off 36 balls) who made sure Punjab Kings cashed in on the platform laid by Arya. Number eight Marco Jansen (34 not out off 19) also played his part to perfection.

Head coach Ricky Ponting had spoken highly of Priyansh at the start of the season and Tuesday, the left-hander repaid the immense faith which the Australian legend showed on him.

After two successive failures, Priyansh was under pressure but the way he started his innings, slaying pacer Khaleel Ahmed for six over pace, set the tone for his memorable effort.

SCORECARD

Chennai Super Kings: Rachin Ravindra st Prabhshimran Singh b Maxwell 36, Devon Conway retired out 69, Rituraj Gaikwad c Shashank Singh b Ferguson 1, Shivam Dube b Ferguson 42, MS Dhoni c Chahal b Yash Thakur 27, Ravindra Jadeja not out 9, Vijay Shankar not out 2; **Extras:** (LB-5, NB-1, W-9) 15; Total: (For 5 wickets in 20 overs) 201; **Fall of wickets:** 1-61, 2-62, 3-151, 4-171, 5-192; **Bowling:** Arshdeep Singh 4-0-39-0, Yash Thakur 4-0-39-1, Glenn Maxwell 2-0-11-1, Marco Jansen 4-0-48-0, Lockie Ferguson 4-0-40-2, Marcus Stoinis 1-0-10-0, Yuzvendra Chahal 1-0-9-0

Punjab Kings: Priyansh Arya c Shankar b Noor Ahmad 103, Prabhshimran Singh b Mukesh Choudhary 0, Shreyas Iyer b Ahmed 9, Marcus Stoinis c Conway b Ahmed 4, Nehal Wadhwa c Dhoni b Ashwin 9, Glenn Maxwell c&b Ashwin 1, Shashank Singh not out 52, Marco Jansen not out 34; **Extras:** (LB-3, NB-2, W-2) 7; Total: (For 6 wickets in 20 overs) 219; **Fall of wickets:** 1-17, 2-32, 3-54, 4-81, 5-83, 6-154; **Bowling:** Khaleel Ahmed 4-0-45-2, Mukesh Choudhary 2-0-21-1, Ravichandran Ashwin 4-0-48-2, Ravindra Jadeja 3-0-18-0, Noor Ahmad

IPL POINT TABLE

TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS
DC	3	3	0	1.257	6
GT	4	3	1	1.031	6
RCB	4	3	1	1.015	6
PBKS	4	3	1	0.289	6
LSG	5	3	2	0.078	6
KKR	5	2	3	-0.056	4
RR	4	2	2	-0.185	4
MI	5	1	4	-0.010	2
CSK	5	1	4	-0.889	2
SRH	5	1	4	-1.629	2



AGENCIES

Kolkata, April 8: A night of sixes, drama, and heart-pounding momentum-shifts ended with Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) holding their nerve to clinch a nail-biting four-run win over Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in one of the most entertaining matches of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 so far, at the Eden Gardens here Tuesday.

Riding on blazing innings from Mitchell Marsh and Nicholas Pooran, LSG piled up a mammoth 238/3 — their second-highest total in IPL history — only for KKR to come within touching distance of pulling off a record chase before falling short at 234/7.

Sent in to bat on a belter of a surface, LSG opens Marsh (81) and Aiden Markram (47) gave their side a dream start. Marsh, showing glimpses of his vintage best, unleashed a flurry of clean, powerful strokes, while Markram complemented him with smart placement and timing.

Their 99-run opening stand in just 10.2 overs set the tone, with Marsh powering his way to 81 off 48 balls, peppered with seven fours and five sixes. Once Markram fell to Harshit Rana,

it was Nicholas Pooran who took centre stage.

Pooran, now firmly among the most feared finishers in T20 cricket, was simply unstoppable. He raced to a half-century off just 21 balls, and finished with an unbeaten 87 off 36, including eight monstrous sixes and five fours. He toyed with the KKR attack, especially targeting Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravarty, as LSG surged past 230 to set a daunting target of 238/3.

In response, KKR came out swinging. Quinton de Kock and Sunil Narine took 31 off the first two overs, feasting on Akash Deep and Shardul Thakur. Though Akash returned to trap de Kock LBW with a smart change of pace, it barely slowed KKR's momentum.

Ajinkya Rahane, showing his reinvention in T20 cricket wasn't a flash in the pan, batted with flair and urgency. Along with Narine, he took KKR to 90/1 in the Powerplay — their best this season. The Eden Gardens crowd was buzzing as Rahane and Venkatesh Iyer built a strong stand, taking on Ravi Bishnoi and Digvesh Rathi in the middle overs.

Rathi, who was fined earlier in the season for his elaborate celebrations, struck a crucial

blow by dismissing his idol Narine for 30 and celebrated in his trademark style — scribbling something on the ground.

Rahane brought up his half-century in 26 balls, but LSG pulled things back spectacularly between overs 13 and 16, snatching four key wicket in the space of 16 deliveries. Thakur removed Rahane on 61 with a clever wide full toss after conceding five consecutive wides. Bishnoi had Randeep Singh caught slogging, Avesh Khan cleaned up Angkrish Raghuvanshi, and Akash Deep returned to dismiss the dangerous Venkatesh Iyer for 45.

SCORECARD

Lucknow Super Giants innings: Aiden Markram b Rana 47, Mitchell Marsh c Rinku b Russell 81, Nicholas Pooran not out 87, Abdul Samad b Rana 6, David Miller not out 4; **Extras:** 13 (b-2, lb-3, w-8); **Total:** 238/3 in 20 overs; Fall of wickets: 1-99, 2-170, 3-221; **Bowling:** Vaibhav Arora 4-0-35-0, Spencer Johnson. 3-0-46-0, Varun Chakravarty 4-0-31-0, Harshit Rana 4-0-51-2, Sunil Narine 3-0-38-0, Andre Russell 2-0-32-1.

Kolkata Knight Riders innings: Quinton de Kock lbw b Akash Deep 15, Sunil Narine c Markram b Rathi 30, Ajinkya Rahane c Pooran b Rahane 61, Venkatesh Iyer c Markram b Akash Deep 45, Randeep Singh c Markram b Bishnoi 1, Angkrish Raghuvanshi c Pant b Avesh 5, Digvesh Rathi c Miller b Thakur 7, Rinku Singh not out 38, Harshit Rana not out 10; **Extras:** 22 (b-1, lb-1, w-20); **Total:** 234/7 in 20 overs; Fall of wickets: 1-37, 2-91, 3-162, 4-166, 5-173, 6-177, 7-185; **Bowling:** Akash Deep 4-0-55-2, Shardul Thakur 4-0-52-2, Avesh Khan 4-0-45-1, Digvesh Rathi 4-0-33-1, Ravi Bishnoi 4-0-47-1.

SHORT TAKES

Newcastle demolishes hapless Leicester

Leicester (England): Jacob Murphy scored twice in the first 11 minutes and set Newcastle on its way to a 3-0 win over a hapless Leicester in the Premier League. Murphy's goals were the main talking point on Monday, along with the second-half appearance of Jeremy Monga, who at 15 years, 271 days, became the second youngest player to appear in the Premier League. Monga replaced Bilal El Khannouss for Leicester 16 minutes from time wearing a different, logo-less shirt from his teammates because he is too young to advertise the betting firm that sponsors the home side. Murphy scored the opener after two minutes when he stole in at the back post to convert a low cross from Tino Livramento. Leicester had six men inside the six-yard box but the ball went past them all and Murphy made no mistake.

Hockey India deploys additional support staff

New Delhi: Hockey India has sent additional support staff, including a physiotherapist and a masseuse, to the ongoing Senior Men's National Championship in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, to provide medical attention and recovery support to the players. This year's championship features an impressive array of 31 Indian men's hockey team players such as Hardik Singh, Jarmanpreet Singh, Krishan B Pathak, Abhishek, Amit Rohidas, Sumit, Gurjant Singh and Sanjay.

World 10K in Bangalore

Bangalore: Uganda's Olympian Joshua Cheptegei, promising Kenyans Cintia Chepngeno and Gladys Kwamboka Mong'are, the reigning African champion in the 10,000m, are some of the prominent global runners who will grace this year's TCS World 10K to be held here April 27. In the men's section, Cheptegei, who is returning to the event for the first time since 2014, will be challenged by compatriot Stephen Kissa, a bronze medalist in the 2020 Delhi Half-Marathon. Kenya's Vincent Langat, who clocked 26:55 in Valencia earlier this year, may pull a surprise if conditions suit him. Awet Nfatalem Kibrab, who originated in Eritrea and emigrated to Norway in 2022, and Ethiopian Jenberj Sisay, may try their luck in the World Athletics Gold Label Road Race.

SNIPPETS

One Make C'ships trials from May 9

Chennai: Two and three-wheeler manufacturer TVS motor company announced the rollout of its 2025 season of the PETRONAS TVS India One Make Championship (OMC), with selection trials set to begin in May at the Madras International Circuit in Irungattukottai, Sriperumbudur, near here. The PETRONAS TVS India One Make Championship is a premier racing platform shaping the motorsport landscape by discovering and training emerging talent in motorcycle racing. The championship offers expert mentorship and national-level exposure, helping racers refine their skills and contribute to the growth of Indian motorsports. The selection trials will be conducted from May 9 to May 11 at the Madras International Circuit across multiple categories—TVS Young Media Racer Programme, Women's OMC, TVS Rookie OMC, and TVS RR310 OMC. "TVS Racing is driven by a passion for motorsport and a commitment to shaping the future of racing talent in India. The PETRONAS TVS India One Make Championship has been a launchpad for aspiring riders, breaking barriers across age and gender," said Vimal Sumbly, Head of Business-Premium, TVS Motor Company, in a statement. "Through our pioneering 'Track to Road' philosophy, we not only build champions but also bring cutting-edge race technology to our high-performance TVS Apache motorcycles, ensuring that every rider experiences the thrill of innovation," he added.

MIKA receives CIK-FIA certification

Chennai: The Madras International Karting Arena (MIKA) in Sriperumbudur has received the CIK-FIA Grade-1 certification, thus placing the facility among the elite karting circuits in the world. The circuit, measuring 1.17km, is the longest karting track in India with a multiple track configuration suitable for competitive racing as well as corporate and leisure activities. "Securing the license is the culmination of months of designing, planning and efforts to develop a facility that conforms to global standards. The track layout has already received rave reviews about it being a driver's delight, given the mix of sharp turns, high-speed straights, and elevation changes," said Madras Motor Sports Club in a statement. The track was highly appreciated by elite drivers like double Formula 1 World champion Mika Hakkinen who inaugurated the facility in September last year, and India's two F1 drivers, Narain Karthikeyan and Karun Chandhok, who, incidentally, played a role in designing of the track.

Cyber security experts warn fans against IPL scams

AGENCIES

Mumbai, April 8: With millions of people interested in and following it, everyone wants to ride the Indian Premier League (IPL) bandwagon -- even online scammers and fraudsters. Welcome to the IPL fever-induced Scammer Season.

With the IPL fever triggering massive online activities with millions of fans taking to the internet for ticketing and information, experts from global cyber-security and digital privacy company Kaspersky have identified three types of online scams and have warned Indian cricket fans against falling prey to scams piggybacking on the popular cricketing event, Kaspersky said in a release Tuesday.

According to Kaspersky, fraudsters are exploiting the popularity of the 18th edition of the IPL, which started March 23 and is currently being played

at various venues nationwide, to deceive individuals through different scam tactics.

Kaspersky also released visual evidence of some of such scam pages to help gullible people save themselves from being cheated.

Experts from the global cyber-security and digital company have spotted three IPL-related tactics that cybercriminals are using to lure fans of the premier league. The three scams are -- scam pages disguised as ticket listings, streaming websites redirecting to various scams, and promotional campaigns, claiming to offer free IPL tickets.

The first and foremost of these three fraudulent activities is one in which scam pages are disguised as ticket listings.

"Kaspersky researchers have identified websites that pretend to sell tickets for IPL matches. Fraudsters create a

SCAMMER SEASON



website that mimics official ticketing platforms with logos, branding, and realistic-looking interfaces. Victims are usually asked to make payments via a bank card, with no option for refunds. And after payment, as typically done within such schemes, tickets are never delivered," the company claimed.



Another way cybercriminals are baiting IPL fans is through streaming websites.

"A page identified by Kaspersky claims to offer free live streaming of IPL matches but is actually designed to redirect users to various other scam or phishing pages that may steal personal information, infect

devices with malware, or trick users into paying for non-existent goods or subscriptions," the release informed.

In another scheme discovered by cyber-security researchers, scam pages are presented as a promotional campaign, claiming to offer free IPL tickets.

"As part of the process, users are instructed to share their phone numbers. Additionally, potential victims are asked to send the link to groups and friends on WhatsApp -- allegedly to unlock the next step for ticket delivery. Scams like these often aim to collect phone numbers for resale on the dark web or to launch phishing attacks, and may also generate revenue by manipulating traffic and showing ads," the release said.

"An event like IPL 2025 draws huge crowds both online and offline Cricket fans across the country are on the lookout for the best deals in tickets and

BADMINTON ASIA C'SHIPS

Kapila, Crasto keep hopes alive

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ningbo (China), April 8: The Indian mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto battled hard to beat Hoo Pang Ron and Su Yin Cheng of Malaysia to enter the pre-quarterfinals of the Badminton Asia Championships here Tuesday.

The Indian pair fought for 51 minutes to get the better of their Malaysian counterparts 15-21 21-12 21-11 in the first round match.

Crasto and Kapila will next play Chinese Taipei's Hong Wei Ye and Nicole Gonzales Chan. Elsewhere, it was disappointing as three other Indian mixed doubles pairs lost their opening matches.

The pair of Satish Kumar Karunakaran and Aadya Varaiyath was sent packing by third seeded Malaysian duo of Soon Huet Goh and Shevon Jamie Lai 18-21 19-21.

Later, Ashith Surya and Amrutha Pramuthesh also lost 9-21 11-21 to Malaysian pair of Thuli Palliyaguru and Panchali Adhikari.