

HOLIDAY NOTICE

The offices of **Orissa POST** will remain closed May 1 (Thursday) on account of Labour Day. Therefore, there will be no edition of the paper May 2 (Friday).

—Editor

Majhi disburses CM-KISAN money

Bhubaneswar, April 30: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday disbursed ₹1,025 crore for 51 lakh farmers under the CM-KISAN Assistance Scheme during 'Krushak Dibas' held on the occasion of 'Akshaya Tritiya' here.

Financial assistance of ₹2,000 each was credited to the bank accounts of farmers through the DBT facility as Majhi, accompanied by Deputy CM KV Singh Deo, pushed the button at the function at the Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) farm here. The beneficiaries included small, marginal, landless and tribal farmers.

The CM also participated in 'Akhi Muthi Anukula' and Bhumi Pujan rituals. **MORE P3**

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Soon, we'll own both—Kamandal as well as Mandal



HIGH SPIRITS: Class X students of New Stewart School in Cuttack celebrate their success as the CISCE announced ICSE and ISC results, Wednesday **OP PHOTO**

SHORT TAKES

4 Odias among 14 dead in hotel blaze

Kolkata: A massive fire that tore through a budget hotel in the congested Mechuapatti area of Burrabazar in central Kolkata Tuesday night claimed at least 14 lives, including four from Odisha, and left 13 injured. The fire broke out around 7.30pm in the six-storey Rituraj Hotel and quickly engulfed the building, trapping several of the 88 guests staying in 42 rooms at the time. The deceased from Odisha have been identified as Manoj Kumar Patra, Dushmanta Kumar Nayak, Dushmanta Kumar Swain and Rajesh Santuka. **P8**

Fresh Anthropology exam May 14: OPSC

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) Wednesday said it will re-conduct the Anthropology optional Papers I and II of the Odisha Civil Services (OCS) Main Written Examination 2023 May 14 because of serious faults detected during the tests held April 27. **P3**

Centre okays caste census

Government slams Opposition for using it as 'political tool'

In a surprise shift in policy, the Centre has announced the inclusion of caste enumeration in the long awaited nationwide census amid growing demands for social justice and representation. With the latest move, the ruling alliance hopes to blunt a key plank of the Opposition, especially in poll-bound Bihar, where caste dynamics play a pivotal role. Opposition parties, particularly the Congress and RJD, hailed the announcement as a victory for their decades-long demand, asserting that the government was compelled to concede under public pressure. With caste census emerging as a major electoral issue, the Centre's move is likely to reshape political narratives in Bihar and beyond

New Delhi, April 30: In a major decision, the government Wednesday announced that caste enumeration will be included in the next census exercise in a "transparent" manner and slammed the Opposition parties for using caste survey as a "political tool".

The Congress and other Opposition parties have been vociferously demanding a nationwide caste census, making it a major election issue, and some states like Bihar, Telangana and Karnataka have conducted such surveys. The government decision comes ahead of Assembly elections in Bihar, where several parties including some BJP allies have been coming out in support of the caste census.

Announcing the decision taken by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the census comes under the purview of the Centre, but



some states have done caste enumeration in the name of surveys "non-transparently" which has created doubts in the society. Noting that caste was not included in all census operations conducted since Independence, Vaishnaw alleged that the Congress governments have always opposed caste census and the party had used the issue as a political tool.

"Considering all these facts and to ensure that the social fabric is not disturbed by politics, caste enumeration should

SC for inclusive KYC

Digital access intrinsic to right to life, says top court

Press Trust of India

New Delhi, April 30: Upholding inclusivity rights, the Supreme Court Wednesday directed changes in the digital KYC process enabling acid attack survivors and persons with visual disabilities to access banking services and welfare schemes, among others.

A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan passed 20 crucial directions to the Centre and its departments aside from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for making the digital KYC process inclusive and accessible for the disabled.

The bench said bridging the digital divide was no longer merely a matter of policy discretion but a constitutional imperative to secure a life of

dignity, autonomy and equal participation in public life.

"The right to digital access therefore, emerges as an intrinsic component of the right to life and liberty, necessitating that the State proactively design and implement inclusive digital ecosystems that serve not only the privileged but also the marginalised, those who have been historically excluded," the bench said.

In the contemporary era, the bench said, where access to essential services, governance, education, healthcare and economic opportunities was increasingly mediated through digital platforms, the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution must be reinterpreted in light of these technological realities.

India shuts airspace for Pakistan airlines

Press Trust of India

New Delhi, April 30: India Wednesday closed its airspace for flights operated by Pakistan airlines in a fresh retaliatory move amid escalating tensions with the neighbouring country following the Pahalgam terror attack.

The Indian airspace will not be available for the aircraft registered in Pakistan as well as for planes operated, owned or leased by Pakistan airlines and operators. Also, the ban will be applicable for the military aircraft of Pakistan, a senior government official said.

A NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) was issued by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) Wednesday evening in this regard and it will be applicable till May 23.

According to the official, the ban will come into force from 12am Thursday. Generally, NOTAM is a notice having essential information for people involved in flight operations.

DADLS-19

सत्यमेव जयते

MESSAGE OF HON'BLE GOVERNOR ON THE OCCASION OF MAY DAY -2025

I convey my greetings and good wishes to all sisters and brothers of the Working Class of the State on the occasion of 'May Day'.

I call upon everyone to work sincerely in their own spheres and be the reason of pride and glory for the State and contribute to the building of "Viksit Odisha-Viksit Bharat".

(Signature)
(Hari Babu Kambhampati)

ଶ୍ରମିକ ଦିବସ ଅବସରରେ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା

ଆନ୍ତର୍ଜାତିକ ଶ୍ରମିକ ଦିବସ ଅବସରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଶ୍ରମିକ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଶୁଭକାମନା ଜଣାଉଛି । ଶ୍ରମ ହିଁ ସମୃଦ୍ଧିର ମୂଳଭୂମି । ଶ୍ରମିକ ସମାଜର ସର୍ବାଙ୍ଗୀନ ଉନ୍ନତି, କଲ୍ୟାଣ ତଥା ଅଧିକାରର ସୁରକ୍ଷା ପାଇଁ ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାର ପ୍ରତିବଦ୍ଧ । ଆସନ୍ତୁ, ସମସ୍ତ ବର୍ଗର ଶ୍ରମିକ ମାନଙ୍କ କଲ୍ୟାଣ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଆମର ଉଦ୍ୟମ ଜାରି ରଖିବା ।

(Signature)
(ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ନାୟକ)
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

OIPR-15001/13/0619/2526

leisure



HOW MARGOT ROBBIE INSPIRED NCUTI GATWA

Actor Ncuti Gatwa, known for his performances in *Sex Education* and *The Last Letter from Your Lover* worked with Hollywood star Margot Robbie on *Barbie*, and he thought he would do something the actress did on the comedy fantasy film set while shooting *Doctor Who*.

LILY ALLEN EXPRESSES REGRET FOR TARGETING KATY PERRY

Actress-singer Lily Allen feels she was mean to singer-songwriter Katy Perry with regards to her comments on the latter after her Blue Origin space flight. The 39-year-old singer joined the chorus criticising the *Firework* hitmaker and the all-female crew for their brief trip into orbit earlier this month.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES

A favourable day as any can be, says Ganesh. You are happy and content with what you have, and you've planned and are working towards what you want. A romantic date may prove interesting or throw up a controversy — decide where you want to take it.

TAURUS

There is every possibility that you will enjoy a good rapport with people around you, predicts Ganesh. You will think with your stomach today, craving for delicacies. Such a feeling might be because of repressed hunger. Something refreshingly different might be on the cards today, says Ganesh.

GEMINI

You will witness a marked improvement in your emotional quotient, says Ganesh. This change may either come through watching a film, listening to a song or just a simple insight. At the workplace, people will be lavishing praise on you for your excellent performance.

CANCER

There is a fat chance that you will take pleasure in the company of your close friends and relatives, predicts Ganesh. You may have an awesome time with your mate. There may be a few minor problems here and there, but your family will rally behind you and will help you in solving your problems.

LEO

It may be that the best daffodils bloom early in the morning, but good ideas can come any time of the day, says Ganesh. So spruce up your management skills, as you shall need them to help organise and cash in on the multitude of ideas that will bombard you today. Remember, says Ganesh, a good idea can change your life, just the way a good poem can help you win a wife!

VIRGO

A la Sisyphus, you may realise the futility of your efforts and constant failure in achieving success. But do not despair, says Ganesh. Recharge your imagination, inquisitiveness and intelligence and focus on your long-term goals, says Ganesh.

LIBRA

It sure is tiring to run with the desire. You may feel the desire to get away from the rat race at work today. Maybe it is the monotonous and stressful environment in office that is pushing you to your limits. But you may seek a new direction and lifestyle, one that is less taxing.

SCORPIO

There is a big black hole in your pocket, and it's high time you looked for remedies there. Loved ones will make use of your money as suntan cream — liberally and carelessly. You are most likely to burn the holes larger by spending lavishly, especially to impress a member of the opposite sex.

SAGITTARIUS

A la a phoenix from the ashes, find yourself reborn as the perfect family person. You are bound to shower love and care on your betrothed. Children, too, will receive your share of love, and they will love it. Enjoy spending quality time with your loved one, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN

Work will suck you dry of your energy today, says Ganesh. Business rivals will go out of their way to mar your reputation and project you as incompetent. But to their dismay, you will prove to be way too smart to let them succeed in their sinister motives. In fact, you will hit where it hurts most and show your foes that you have all it takes to be a winner. Your superiority will reign over theirs.

AQUARIUS

You get a pat on the back due to your brilliant academic standing. People will admire your business acumen and may imitate your choices. But this doesn't mean you become haughty and unapproachable. Carry on the good work with a humble attitude, says Ganesh.

PISCES

Anticipation is all the fun. Sadly, this only alludes to your months-in-preparation travel plans that are most likely to be delayed today on one count or the other. Though, if this is any consolation, your trip, when it finally occurs, will bring you as much pleasure and satisfaction that you expected out of it, if not more, says Ganesh.

Samantha on taking risks

New Delhi: As her maiden production, *Subham*, is all set to light up the silver screen May 9, Samantha Ruth Prabhu has opened up about taking risks. Reflecting on her journey in cinema, the actress-producer calls it 'essential for growth' and reveals that after 15 years in the industry, fear has long been eclipsed by passion and purpose.

In an industry where risk is inevitable, especially for first-time producers, how did Samantha manage her fears or doubts during the making of *Subham*?

"You can't expect meaningful change without taking risks, and I don't think I've ever shied away from taking risks. More often than not, those risks have paid off, so probably after 15 years of learning and of being an actor, I believe I've gained that kind of insight and experience needed to be sure of the stories I want to tell," Samantha told this agency.

One of South cinema's most talented stars, Samantha, stepped into the world of cinema in 2010 with *Vinaitaandi Varuwaaya* and gained the spotlight in Gautham Vasudev Menon's Telugu film, *Ye Maaya Chesave*.

In her 15-year journey of hard work, Samantha has worked on some of the finest projects, such as *Eega*, *Dookudu*, *Kaththi*, *Theri*, *24 Mersal*, *Aa*, *Oh! Baby*, *Majili*, *Rangasthalam*, and the OTT thriller series *The Family Man*.

IANS



Tamannaah embarks on mystical journey

Mumbai: Actress Tamannaah Bhatia will be seen sharing screen space with actor Sidharth Malhotra in the folk thriller *Vvan*, which is slated to release next year.

The official Instagram handle of Balaji Motion Pictures dropped a haunting teaser, unveiling Ta-

mannaah's foray into the world of mythology and mysticism. The spine-chilling clip opens with her stepping barefoot onto something sharp, flinching—but undeterred. With a fiery torch in hand, she ventures into the heart of a shadowy forest, setting the tone for a tale shrouded in mystery and magic.

"Rooted in Indian mythology and mysticism, *VVAN - Force of the Forrest* unfolds a tale straight from the pages of history and folklore. Delighted to welcome @tamannaahspeaks to this powerful narrative — a force in her own right, ready to command the screen like never before Starring @sidmalhotra, Directed by @arunabhkumar and @deepakmishra18 Releasing in theatres in 2026." Directed by Arunabh Kumar, the project will be made under banners of Balaji Motion Pictures, a division of Balaji Telefilms Ltd, and The Viral Fever (TVF).

The actress's latest release is *Odela 2*, a Telugu supernatural thriller film directed by Ashok Teja is scheduled to reach the cinema halls July 25.

IANS



NPMFF to be held at BPFTI



Cuttack: The Biju Patnaik Film and Television Institute (BPFTI) is set to host the Nirmal Pandey Memorial Film Festival (NPMFF) August 9 and 10, commemorating the legacy of acclaimed actor. The event will pay tribute to influential figures in both Odia and Hindi cinema, with special recognitions including the Lifetime Achievement Award, and honours for Best Iconic Director, Actor and Actress.

Also, student short films will be showcased and awarded in categories like Best Film, Editing, Cinematography, and Sound Design. Submissions are currently open via departmental applications. For details, interested participants can contact 9437059193 or 7400213799.

Notable dignitaries who have given their consent to be part of the festival include Gulshan Grover, Ashish Vidyarthi, Govind Namdev, Asif Sheikh, and Asim Bajaj Makar, as confirmed by festival director Anil Dubey and coordinator Chandrashekar Rath.

PNN

Abeyance of the generous water treaty has rattled many a ratty land that have lucked out in being at the receiving end of a nation's generosity and life-saving water, so far, despite raining fire in return. But the buck has got to stop there. For way too long, they have *pa(c)k*-ed and snuck in rats that run amok, ensue damage and creep back to their hiding place. These pesky little rats have a way of turning our homes- 'our tranquil heavens on earth' to literal hell. Unlike the loathsome rats bred in despicable raty land; common house rats, do not choose the homes they damage depending on whether they sport the

Abeyance it is...until further orders

symbol of "Om", "Cross" or "Crescent & Star" or if verses from the Geeta, Bible or the Kalma are recited. Armed with traps, rat-kills and pest control services, we humans adeptly tackle hordes of these rodents that infiltrate into our homes. We at times strike with *surgical* precision demolishing the hiding places of these rodents as well. But they just do not stop attacking our homes, do they? Alas, no magical pipe shall be played by a Pied Piper of Hamelin to drown the rats in a nearby

lake or river body. Homes with feline pets are quite often secure from rats. The mind wanders in vivid imagination to a certain scenic valley, wherein predatory big cats like the sabre-toothed tigers and Asiatic Cheetahs brought back by technology (genetic engineering and ancient DNA) that de-extincted the dire wolves recently, may have been unleashed in the surrounding deep dense forests. Their sharp knife-like canines as they dig into the flesh of the terrorizing mon-

sters would have ensured precision killing. When the infestation wrecks our peace of mind and PLAGUEs us, posing significant health hazard, we may, if necessary, destroy the surrounding habitat that shelters them.

For now, abeyance it is... minds numb, five senses in suspension, a heightened sixth sense, a sea of humanity seething in rage, in a state of pause, holding back... watching.... until further orders!

DR. RACHNA RATH

PEANUTS



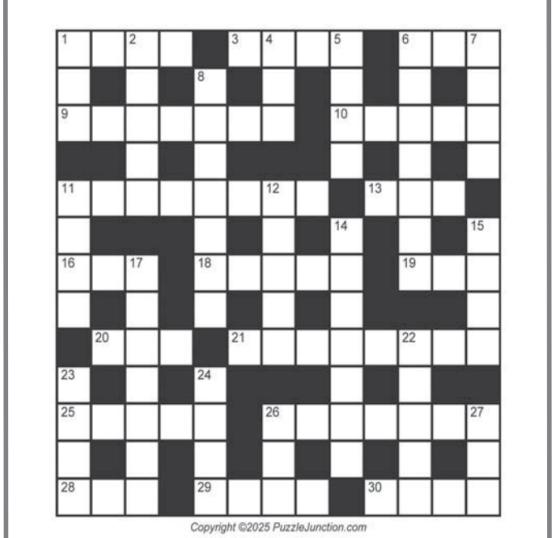
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



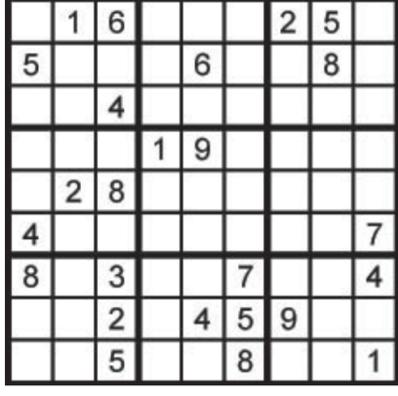
FUN POST CROSSWORD



- Copyright ©2025 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 Backgammon equipment
 - 3 Much of Mongolia
 - 6 Flyspeck
 - 9 Eau de cologne
 - 10 Rustic digs
 - 11 Military strength
 - 13 Milk producer
 - 16 Flow's partner
 - 18 Around that time
 - 19 Hot springs
 - 20 Overhead light?
 - 21 Kind of ad
 - 25 Blink of an eye
 - 26 Thankless wretch
 - 28 Dashed
 - 29 Diving bird of northern seas
 - 30 Kon-Tiki Museum site
- Down**
- 1 Party preparation
 - 2 Pool shot
 - 4 Flowery verse
 - 5 Ancient Andean
 - 6 Doubtful
 - 7 Muscle quality
 - 8 Small hill
 - 11 Bailiwick
 - 12 Hospital figure
 - 14 Corridor
 - 15 Cry like a baby
 - 17 Largest tuna
 - 22 Approaches
 - 23 Not quite closed
 - 24 Vega's constellation
 - 26 Annoy
 - 27 Conceit

SUDOKU

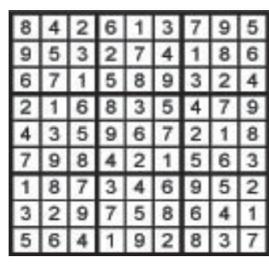
To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

51L farmers get ₹1,025cr under CM-KISAN Yojana



Bhubaneswar, April 30: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi disbursed ₹1,025 crore for 51 lakh farmers under the CM-KISAN Yojana during Krushak Divas held on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya here Wednesday.

Financial assistance of ₹2,000 each was credited to the bank accounts of farmers through the DBT as Majhi, accompanied by Deputy CM Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, pushed the button at the function at the Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) farm here.

The CM also participated in 'Akhi Muthi Anukula' and 'Bhumi Pujan' rituals.

The beneficiaries included small, marginal, landless and tribal farmers.

For the first time, 25,000 farmers from urban areas have been included under the CM-KISAN Yojana, marking a significant expansion in the government's outreach to cultivators, Majhi said.

The CM said needy farmers are being provided ₹2,000 each ahead of the Kharif crop to purchase seeds, fertilisers and other essential items.

On September 8, 2024, the state government had rolled out the CM-KISAN Yojana, which then benefited around 46 lakh farmers.

Under the scheme, the farmers are given ₹4,000 financial assistance per annum on two occasions - Akshaya Tritiya and Nua Khai - to assist them for Kharif and Rabi crops.

"I am a farmer by birth and used to work in fields along with my father during my college days," Majhi recalled.

The CM said since the BJP came to power in the state in 2024, the administration has been continuously making efforts to increase the income of farmers.

"The previous government kept silent by bringing only a resolution in the Assembly for MSP. We had promised, kept our word and gave ₹3,100 MSP. In the next five years, we have set a target of providing irrigation facilities in 15 lakh hectares with an investment of about ₹1 lakh crore," Majhi said.

He added the state is taking steps to set up cold storage facilities in every subdivision.

"To increase the income of the farmers, we are providing necessary assistance with discounts for fish farming, animal husbandry, poultry and duck farming along with agriculture," Majhi said.

Opposition Congress also observed the 'Akshaya Tritiya' celebrations with OPCC president Bhakta Charan Das, Congress Legislature Party Leader Rama Chandra Kad-

₹7cr for Jayadev birthplace facelift

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday laid the foundation stone for a project worth ₹7 crore for development and beautification of poet Jayadev's birthplace at Kendubilwa village in Khurda district. Majhi, along with Deputy CM Pravat Parida and Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi, reached Kendubilwa and garlanded the statue of the creator of Geeta Govinda. The CM announced several projects to transform the Jayadev Peeth into a global centre for literature, culture, and spirituality and laid the foundation stone for some initiatives. The CM emphasised the need for elevating the Peeth to a world-class spiritual hub. He said the projects will have diverse flower gardens, 10 lotus ponds, and a garden of creepers to restore the natural beauty of Jayadev's era as much as possible. Additional projects announced include an entrance gate, a Dashavatara plaza, beautification of the lotus pond, development of various groves, a craft shop, and a food court.

am, former ministers Niranjana Patnaik, Suresh Routray and others performing 'Akhi Muthi Anukula' at Kalyanpur village near famous Dhauri peace pagoda here.

BJD leaders also performed the ritual of sowing the first seeds of the season at a village in Purana Pradhan gram panchayat under Balianta block.

In a message, former CM and Leader of Opposition in Odisha Assembly Naveen Patnaik in a post on X said, "My heartfelt greetings to the people of the state on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya and Akhi Muthi Anukula. May the blessings of the Lord bring good harvest and happiness and prosperity to the lives of the farmer brothers and sisters. #AkshayaTritiya."

Akshaya Tritiya is considered the most auspicious day for the people of Odisha to begin any work.

Farmers traditionally start cultivation on this day when both the Sun and the Moon are believed to be in their most favourable positions.

The CM said since the BJP came to power in the state in 2024, the administration has been continuously making efforts to increase the income of farmers.

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WHITE T-SHIRT MOVEMENT

National Students' Union of India (NSUI) activists Wednesday organised a 'White T-shirt Movement' at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, as part of its nationwide campaign accusing the Union government of neglecting the poor and the working class, and favouring the capitalists. Led by state NSUI president Udit Narayan Pradhan, the march was attended by Odisha NSUI in-charge Chhunu Singh and NSUI national secretary Akhilesh Yadav. Wearing white T-shirts, the protesters held placards, marched from Master Canteen Square to the party office and raised 'Save Constitution' slogans.



PNN & AGENCIES

Puri, April 30: The construction of the three chariots for the annual Rath Yatra and the 21-day Chandan Yatra began on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya here Wednesday.

As per tradition, priests performed a yagna at the Rath construction yard and consecrated three Dhaura timber logs.

Pujapanda servitors brought the Agyanmala (divine garlands of command) of Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra in a procession from Srimandir and handed them over to the three Biswakarmas (carpenters) entrusted with constructing the chariots.

The Biswakarmas were presented with headgear (turbans) as a symbol of responsibility. They then began the construction work with ceremonial axes.

At around 5:30pm, Madan Mohan, the representative idol of Lord Jagannath, along with Ramakrushna, Sridevi



and Bhudevi, boarded a beautifully decorated palanquin, the 'Maniviman', and began their journey to the Narendra Tank, accompanied by the Pancha Pandavas in their respective palanquins.

The Bimanbadus, a special group of servitors, carried the palanquins on their shoulders.

Upon arrival at the Narendra Tank, the deities were anointed with sandalwood

paste to cool them and were offered bhog (sacred food offerings).

The deities were then escorted onto two swan-shaped boats, popularly known as Nanda and Bhadra, for the Chapa Khela (boating ritual).

This marked the beginning of Dina Chapa (daytime boating). In the evening, the Rati Chapa (night boating) was conducted.

After the boat ride, the deities were given a fragrant sandalwood paste and aromatic water bath at the Chandan Kunda (sacred bath) located in Chandan Chakada. The servitors offered Mandua bhog (a special delicacy) and adorned the deities with flowers. Late in the evening, the deities returned to the temple. A large number of devotees witnessed the boating ritual.

Five platoons of police personnel, headed by an Additional Superintendent of Police, along with several officers and Fire Services personnel, were deployed to prevent any mishap, following last year's tragic Chandan Yatra firecracker accident that claimed multiple lives.

The display of firecrackers has been banned. First aid centres were set up, and a feedback desk has been opened by the police near the Narendra Tank, encouraging devotees to share their opinions, experiences, and feedback regarding the festival arrangements.

BJD welcomes decision to hold caste enumeration in census

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 30: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Wednesday welcomed the Union Cabinet's decision to include caste enumeration in the next census exercise.

BJD president and former chief minister Naveen Patnaik claimed that his regional outfit had been demanding a caste-based census for long as his party stands for social justice.

Patnaik posted on X, "Welcome the decision of the Union Cabinet to include caste enumeration in the forthcoming census. @bjd_odisha has been repeatedly demanding countrywide caste census and removal of 50% cap on reservation."

"In Odisha, we also took certain concrete steps in 2023 to enumerate the number of people belonging to different classes to help us in making plans for their development and upliftment," Patnaik said, adding that the same objectives would now be met by this decision of the Central government to conduct a caste-based census.

He said, "We, in Biju Janata Dal, always stand for social justice, especially for backward classes such as ST, SC and OBC."

The Union government Wednesday announced that caste enumeration will be included in the next census exercise in a 'transparent' manner and slammed the Opposition parties for using caste survey as a 'political tool'.

The Congress and other Opposition parties have been vociferously demanding a nationwide caste census, making it a major election issue, and some states like Bihar, Telangana and Karnataka have conducted such surveys.

The government decision comes ahead of Assembly elections in Bihar, where several parties including some BJP allies have been coming out in support of the caste census.

Announcing the decision taken by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the census comes under the purview of the Centre, but some states have done caste enumeration in the name of surveys 'non-transparently' which has created doubts in the society.

GIRLS OUTSHINE BOYS IN ICSE, ISC EXAMS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 30: Girls continue to dominate boys in ICSE (Class X) and ISC (Class XII) examinations in Odisha the results of which were announced by the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), Wednesday.

A total of 8,968 students - 4,653 boys and 4,315 girls - from 96 schools across Odisha appeared for the ICSE examination this year. The overall pass percentage stood at 97.80 per cent, reflecting the continued academic strength of the state.

Girls performed better than boys, with a pass percentage of 98.22 per cent as compared to 97.42 per cent for boys.

With 99.4 per cent, Srujan Kumar Barma of De Paul School in Berhampur, Samanta Kanishka Dhal of Chinmaya School in Rourkela and Debabrata Panda of St. Paul's School in Rourkela emerged as joint toppers from Odisha in ICSE examination this year. Meanwhile, 1,628 students



Students of New Stewart School in Cuttack celebrate after announcement of the results

- 853 boys and 775 girls - from 35 schools across Odisha appeared for the ISC examination. The overall pass percentage was 98.99 per cent, with girls again taking the lead. Girls posted a pass percentage of 99.10 per cent, slightly ahead of boys (98.71 per cent).

The Odisha topper in ISC this year is Sandeep Agarwal (Science) of St. Mary's Higher Secondary School in Jharsuguda. Sandeep scored an outstanding 99.75 per cent.

In Bhubaneswar's

Loyola School, Aadit Samal emerged as the ICSE school topper with an impressive 99 per cent, closely followed by Aaryan Sar, who secured 98.8 per cent. In ISC exam, Sanjay Samuel Nayak (93.25 per cent) in Science stream, Sanskruti Routray (90.5 per cent) in Commerce stream and Ranya Thakur (96.75 per cent) in Arts stream are the school toppers.

Meanwhile, in Bhubaneswar's Stewart School, Maitraya Abhilasha Patnaik topped the ICSE exam with 99 per cent.

Fresh OCS Anthropology examination May 14

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 30: The Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) Wednesday said it will re-conduct the Anthropology optional Papers I and II of the Odisha Civil Services (OCS) Main Written Examination 2023 because of serious faults detected during the tests held April 27.

The written examination for Anthropology optional Papers I and II will be re-conducted May 14 (Wednesday) for ensuring fairness and equal opportunity to the concerned candidates, the OPSC said in a statement.

"Keeping in view the dislocation arising because of interchange of questions of Anthropology optional Papers I and II in the Odisha Civil Services Main (Written) Examination 2023 held April 27, 2025 and considering the grievances of candidates received by OPSC, the commission has decided to re-conduct the tests," it added.



While Paper I exam will be conducted from 9 am to 12 noon, Paper II will be held from 2 pm to 5 pm. Persons with Disabilities (PwD) candidates will be given one additional hour in each sitting, the commission said.

The written examination held April 27, 2025 will be treated as cancelled, and the answer scripts will not be evaluated, it added.

The candidates can download the admission certificate from May 8, 2025.

Man gets 7-year RI for crypto fraud

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 30: A court in Balasore district Wednesday sentenced a man to seven years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) after he was found guilty of fraud in crypto investment.

The designated court set up under Odisha Protection of Interests of Depositors (in Financial Establishments) Act, 2011, also slapped a penalty of ₹2.35 lakh on convict Nilesh Kumar Kar. He was convicted under different sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Information Technology (IT) Act.

The case was registered April 5, 2023, and the accused Nilesh Kar was arrested April 6, 2023, from Balasore.

Mahamanya Jena of Balasore had lodged a complaint alleging that Kar had induced him to invest in an app/website to earn extra money. He had invested ₹2,13,038 by depositing the same between January to March 2023.

When he was supposed to get ₹50,57,117 on his invested amount, suddenly the website

stopped functioning and he could not withdraw the amount, Jena alleged.

During investigation, Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the state Crime Branch found that it was a fake website developed for mining of crypto currency. The modus operandi revealed that one has to invest a minimum of ₹665 to become a member to get a return of ₹1,487.25 after 37 days. An investor was assured of earning about ₹40 daily on the invested amount.

Kar, being the leader of the fake website for Balasore district, had induced more than 400 persons from the state, including Jena, to become members of the website, the EOW said.

The investigation also revealed that the convict showed fake authorisation letter from RBI. After collecting money, suddenly the wallet and the website were closed down. The convict along with other accused persons cheated the investors of Odisha ₹1.13 crore, Special Public Prosecutor of the OPID Court, Balasore, said.

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For further details and terms & conditions visit the official website of Indian Railways at www.indianrailways.gov.in

Excise Superintendent held by Vigilance on graft charge

Krishna Nayak caught with ₹3L cash as Vigilance uncovers luxury properties, vehicles, and hidden wealth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 30: The Vigilance Wednesday arrested the superintendent of excise of Dhenkanal on the charge of corruption, an official said.

“Acting on an intelligence input, our team Tuesday intercepted Krishna Nayak near Deulasahi road in Dhenkanal when she was travelling back home from office with ill-gotten cash of ₹3 lakh,” said Radhakrishna, the Superintendent of Police (Vigilance), Cuttack cell division.

The Vigilance seized the cash and her vehicle, and began search operations at her properties at five locations, he said.

During the raids, one triple-storey building at Jagatpur in Cuttack, a double-storey building in Puri, and eight high-value plots, including four



■ VIGILANCE SWOOPS IN AFTER TIP-OFF; ARREST MADE UNDER GRAFT CHARGES

■ PROPERTIES TRACED ACROSS CUTTACK, PURI, AND JAGATSinghpur DISTRICTS

in Cuttack, two in Puri, and two in Jagatsinghpur, were found, the SP said.

Radhakrishna further said that two four-wheelers and over ₹20 lakh were found in her possession during the search operation.

“After detecting these properties from the excise superintendent, we have registered a corruption case and arrested her,” he stated.

In a related development, Bijay Kumar Mallik, a former godown in-charge, Dehunda additional storage point of MARKFED-Odisha, Balasore,

was convicted in a vigilance case Wednesday.

The officer, now retired, was charge-sheeted by Vigilance under different sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and IPC for misappropriation of government funds related to pilferage of fertilisers at the storage point.

Special judge, Vigilance, Balasore sentenced him to 3 years of rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of ₹50,000, officials said.

The Vigilance said it would move the competent authority to stop his pension.

Govt panel to review RTE admission row

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 30: The School and Mass Education department Wednesday formed a committee to review the online admission process under the Right to Education (RTE) Act via the Paradarshi Portal, following complaints from parents about irregularities.

The committee will oversee admissions, address grievances, and suggest improvements to ensure transparency and fairness. It will be chaired by Additional Secretary Sangram Keshari Mohapatra. Members include Additional Secretaries Durga Prasad Mohapatra and Jadumani Mahala, and Deputy Director of Elementary Education Sushree Sangita Panda. Jadumani Mahala will act as the member convener.

The move comes amid protests by parents who alleged that 8,101 RTE applications were rejected without explanation and 5,239 students were left without school allotments.

AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

KIIT School, Zain Foundation mark inclusion

Inclusive culinary fest celebrates abilities, fosters acceptance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 30: KIIT International School's Special Education Needs (SEN) Globe, in collaboration with the Zain Foundation's PECS Café, marked the culmination of Autism Awareness Month with an inclusive and heartwarming culinary event Wednesday.

Around 200 children on the autism spectrum participated by preparing and selling dishes on the school campus, engaging directly with KIIT students. The initiative aimed to promote awareness, acceptance, and inclusion while showcasing the talents of children with autism.

KIIT International School chairperson Mona Lisa Bal said the event reflects the school's commitment to inclusive education. “We strive to create



a space where every child is seen, valued, and celebrated,” she added.

Zain Foundation Trust chief trustee Gargi Bhattacharya noted that KIIT International is the only school in Odisha currently integrating children with autism into its mainstream primary curriculum. She thanked the school for its support and highlighted the importance of continued community efforts.

Since 2015, the Zain Foun-

ation Trust has championed autism advocacy through workshops, rallies, and inclusive initiatives. Its PECS Café uses the globally recognised Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to empower individuals with autism, including in workplace settings.

The event reinforced both institutions' shared vision of building an inclusive society that offers meaningful opportunities and support for individuals on the spectrum.

XIM University holds 9th UG convocation



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 30: XIM University, Bhubaneswar, held its ninth undergraduate (UG) convocation Wednesday with ceremonial grace, marking a major milestone in the academic journey of its students. A total of 560 undergraduate degrees were awarded across various disciplines, celebrating years of academic commitment and perseverance.

The event was graced by Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja, who served as the chief guest and convocation speaker. In his address, Ahuja shared valuable insights on leadership, integrity, and the pivotal role of youth in nation-building. He noted that while technology and AI propel societal advancement, true fulfilment is found in happiness and meaningful human relationships.

A total of 560 students awarded degrees as leaders urge focus on values, relationships, and responsible innovation

Distinguished attendees included university VC Fr. Antony R Uvari, S.J., registrar Fr. S. Antony Raj, S.J., chief finance officer Fr. Arokiyadass Vanathaiyan, S.J., controller of examinations V.R. Sathish Kumar; deans of various schools, senior university officials, and members of the board of governors. Dean of the School of Sustainability Sutapa Pati welcomed students, parents, dignitaries, and guests, setting the tone for the occasion.

A key highlight of the ceremony was the presentation of medals for academic excellence to top-performing students from various schools, presented by the chief guest.

The convocation concluded with a vote of thanks by registrar who expressed gratitude to all participants and supporters of the event.

XIM University reaffirmed its commitment to nurturing academic excellence, ethical leadership, and social responsibility—continuing its mission of shaping the leaders and change makers of tomorrow.

CM Majhi unveils national Women's Business Mela 2.0

Five-day event celebrates women-led enterprises, MSME growth, and inclusive innovation



RESHMI YADAV, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 30: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi inaugurated the second edition of the INWEC National Women's Business Mela at Exhibition Ground here Wednesday. Over 200 women entrepreneurs from across Odisha and India are participating in the event.

Organised by INWEC in collaboration with ICC and MSME DFO Cuttack, the five-day event highlights women entrepreneurship, MSME growth, and skill development across Odisha.

Commending the initiative, CM Majhi said, “The mela reflects our government's commitment to building a progressive, inclusive, and innovation-driven ecosystem for MSMEs and women-led enterprises.”

Industries Minister Sampad Chandra Swain noted that

empowering women and MSMEs goes beyond business—it shapes sustainable communities. ICC Odisha chairman Rajib Sahoo highlighted women-led MSMEs as pillars of equity and sustainability.

INWEC convener Preeti Pallavi Patnaik added, “Odisha's women are not just participating—they are leading.”

The mela includes panels on digital transformation, inclusive policies, and wellness in business, as well as a curated showcase of women-led ventures in textiles, organics, and tech.

Highlights included Bollywood actor Zayed Khan's interaction with changemakers like Barabati-Cuttack MLA Sofia Firdous, Commerce and Transport department Principal Secretary Usha Padhee, and Padma Shri Aruna Mohanty.

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 30: The Odisha government announced an investment of nearly ₹9,200 crore to upgrade healthcare infrastructure by redeveloping four major medical institutions, officials said Wednesday.

The decision was made in a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and attended by Health and Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling.

Veer Surendra Sai Institute of Medical Sciences

and Research in Burla will receive ₹1,594 crore for redevelopment, increasing its bed capacity from 1,485 to 2,861. MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur will be redeveloped at a cost of ₹1,014.13 crore, boosting its bed capacity from 1,583 to 2,033.

Rourkela Government Hospital (RGH) will receive ₹627.16 crore to expand its bed count from 437 to 763. Capital Hospital in Bhubaneswar will undergo a comprehensive redevelopment with an investment of ₹5,958 crore, increas-

ing its bed capacity from 750 to 2,582.

Additionally, the Chief Minister reviewed the ongoing redevelopment of Cuttack's SCB Medical College and Hospital, which is being revamped with a ₹4,474.49 crore investment, aiming to complete the first phase by June 2026, increasing bed capacity to 3,796.

The Acharya Harihar Post Graduate Institute of Cancer is also undergoing redevelopment, with a ₹895.89 crore investment to increase its bed count to 1,127.

Man killed by younger brother

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 30: A man was killed allegedly by his younger brother in Santipalli slum here, police said Wednesday.

The deceased was identified as Hamidul Khan, elder brother of the prime accused Imat Khan, a police officer said.

On a trivial matter, there was a quarrel between two brothers Tuesday, leading to the head injury to the deceased, he said.

Wednesday, the deceased complained of a headache. Then, he was shifted to hospital, where he was declared dead, the police said.

Saheed Nagar police arrested the main accused and further investigation is underway, the officer said.

BJD seeks OHRC action on child abuse



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 30: The opposition Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Wednesday urged the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) to intervene and take action on alleged rising child abuse cases in the state and also “deteriorating” law and order situation, particularly in Ganjam district.

A delegation of the BJD submitted a memorandum to the

OHRC and expressed the party's deep concern about child abuse in the state and cited the instance of the recent rape and murder of a 4-year-old girl in Ganjam district.

Earlier Tuesday, a BJD fact-finding team had visited the victim's village to express solidarity with the grieving family.

“This tragic case is not an isolated incident. Since the BJP government assumed power, there

has been a surge in child abductions, torture, sexual harassment, and murders across Odisha. The police administration's failure to contain this wave of crimes has instilled widespread fear and insecurity,” the BJD memorandum said.

The delegation also shared statistics with OHRC, highlighting the “breakdown” of law and order in Ganjam district over the past month alone. It has been reported 15 cases of murder, 28 attempted murders, and 35 incidents of temple thefts recently, the party said.

“Most disturbingly is a sharp rise in the cases of rape of minors, not just in Ganjam but across the entire state. These figures reflect a deeply concerning collapse of public safety and an urgent need for systemic intervention,” the party said.

Young, old Indians flourish more than middle-aged

Global study led by Harvard and international partners reveals age-linked wellbeing trends across 22 countries, with India showing a U-shaped pattern

In India, youths and older adults are flourishing more than those middle-aged, a study of over 2 lakh people across 22 countries has suggested.

The ‘Global Flourishing Study’, conducted by researchers from institutes, including the US Harvard University and University of Bremen, Germany, is envisaged to understand factors that govern the well-being of an individual and a community.

Flourishing was defined as a state in which all aspects of a person's life are good.

In Wave 1 of the study, questionnaire responses from 202,898 people from 22 countries, spanning six continents, were analysed. Findings are published in the journal Nature.

“Flourishing tends to increase with age in many countries, including Argentina, Aus-

tralia, Brazil, Sweden and the United States (US), but not in all. In India, Egypt, Kenya and Japan, patterns are somewhat more U-shaped,” the authors wrote.

The questionnaires surveyed people about aspects of well-being, such as happiness, health, meaning and relationships, along with demographic, social, political, religious factors and childhood experiences.

While men and women globally showed similar flourishing patterns, notable gender gaps emerged in some countries — men in Brazil reported significantly higher levels of flourishing than women, whereas in Japan, women reported flourishing more than men.

Further, those married were found to report a higher flourishing, compared to those single, in most countries.

However, in India and Tan-



zania, married people reported lower flourishing than those single.

The study also found that people employed reported higher flourishing than those not. Self-employment, retirement and being a student related with more satisfaction than

being employed in countries, including India, Japan, Israel and Poland.

The authors also found that young people around the world “are not doing as well as they used to”.

Despite country-wise differences in patterns of satis-

faction with age, “the overall global pattern is troubling”, they said.

They added that more data collected over time will help resolve if these patterns are an ‘age effect’ or a ‘cohort effect’.

The analysis found that India's strengths lie in housing, government services, political voice, and city satisfaction, while concerns persist around education, low engagement with life, and financial insecurity.

The Global Flourishing Study is expected to help understand ‘flourishing’ in general, especially in non-Western contexts. It is also expected to uncover which patterns are culturally specific and which more universal.

The study is aimed at supporting and expanding upon findings from similar studies such as the World Happiness Report.

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Jumbo tramples woman to death; hubby critical



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, April 30: A woman was trampled to death and her husband sustained grievous injuries in elephant attack at a cashew orchard under Telkoi forest range in Keonjhar forest division Wednesday.

The deceased was identified as Labanya Palei, 45, and the injured as Jadu Palei of Udayagiri village under Telkoi police limits in Keonjhar district. The injured man has been admitted to Keonjhar district headquarters hospital after preliminary treatment at Telkoi community health centre (CHC).

The mishap sparked tension in the area as several residents gheraoed the forest range of

bos and issue timely alert to the villagers accordingly.

The incident occurred when the couple visited a nearby cashew orchard to collect cashews where a herd of 16 elephants had camped. One of the elephants noticed the couple and attacked them.

The animal lifted Labanya on its trunk and crushed her under its feet, leaving her critically injured. Meanwhile, Jadu, rushed to save his wife but the elephant attacked him as well and left him severely injured.

On being informed, forest officials reached the spot and rushed them to Telkoi CHC. Later, they were shifted to the DHH as their health condition deteriorated. When the woman's condition worsened further, she was referred to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. However, she succumbed on the way to Cuttack. Jadu is now recuperating at Keonjhar DHH.

Sources said around 37 elephants in two herds are roaming around under Telkoi forest range close to Dhenkanal border for the last few days. The villagers are spending sleepless nights as the animals are destroying their crops and properties.



FESTIVE FERVOUR: Women take out 'Kalash Yatra' of Pancha Thakurani during Thakurani Yatra at Buguda in Ganjam district

OP PHOTO

Skeletal remains found; foul play suspected

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, April 30: Skeletal remains of a man in his 50's were spotted by a few local women in Kusumghati forest in Badagaon panchayat under Bangiriposhi police station in Mayurbhanj district Wednesday, indicating a foul play in the incident.



On being informed, Badagaon Forest Range personnel recovered the skeletal remains and informed the police who reached the spot and sent them to PRM Medical College and Hospital for a post-mortem.

Since the death occurred around 30-40 days ago, the body is beyond recognition. However, Bangiriposhi IIC Virendra Senapati confirmed that the elder brother and sister-in-law of the deceased identified it to be that of Sania Dehuri, a resident of Badagaon village. They recognised him from his clothes

and slippers, the IIC said.

Cops registered a case (12/25) of unnatural death and began an investigation.

The deceased's family members alleged that Sania had gone into Kusumghati forest—part of Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR)—several days ago to collect forest produce but didn't return. Despite the family's efforts to locate her, no missing complaint was filed at the time, said the police.

Based on a written com-

plaint from the Forest department, a scientific team and police personnel collected the samples from the site for further analysis.

Given the advanced decomposition of the remains, officials estimate that the death occurred around 30 to 40 days ago. The identity of the deceased and the cause of death will be ascertained only after the post-mortem and DNA reports are received, the police added.

Meanwhile, speculations are doing the rounds about the circumstances leading to Sania's death. Locals alleged that some members of the Forest department's Green Force had previously misbehaved with a few women collecting forest produce, and that Sania had opposed such behaviour. The villagers had reportedly lodged a complaint at the range office, leading to the transfer of two forest personnel, it was alleged.

Some community members suspect that Sania might have been attacked in connection with the incident.

Stating that it would be premature to speculate anything now, Deputy Director of South Division of STR Samrat Gouda said, "There was no formal complaint lodged regarding alleged misbehaviour of women. The transfer orders were issued owing to some other reasons."

Tractor overturns; 2 killed

Balasore: Two youths died when a tractor in which they were travelling in overturned in Balasore district Wednesday, police said. The incident occurred at Talakurunia village under Gopalpur police station. The deceased were identified as Satyajit Malik, 20, and Dinesh Panigrahi, 18, police said. They were using the tractor to collect paddy from agricultural land. The driver saved his life by jumping off the vehicle before it rolled down a roadside ditch and overturned, police said.

Two killed in lightning

POST NEWS NETWORK



Padmapur, April 30: A minor boy and a woman were killed after lightning struck them on a farmland during a thunderstorm at Lakshmaria village under Jagdalpur police limits in Bargarh district Wednesday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Mamata Meher, 40, and her nephew Ashis Meher, 14, of the village. The duo was working on the farmland when heavy rain accompanied by gusty winds lashed the area. They

took shelter in a shanty but lightning struck them, rendering them critical.

Family members rushed them to Padmapur sub-divisional hospital where doctors pronounced them dead. Jagdalpur police registered two cases of unnatural death and sent the bodies for post-mortem.

4 Odias among 14 die in Kolkata fire

Bhubaneswar: At least four persons from Jagatsinghpur district were among the 14 killed in the devastating fire at a hotel in central Kolkata, family sources claimed. The deceased have been identified as Manoj Kumar Patra, Dushmanta Kumar Nayak and Dushmanta Kumar Swain from Jagatsinghpur district, and Rajesh Santuka from Cuttack district. BJD president and former chief minister Naven Patnaik in a post on X said: "It is heartbreaking to learn of the untimely death of 14 people, including four from Odisha's Jagatsinghpur and Cuttack districts in a hotel fire in Kolkata. I pray for the eternal peace of their souls and express my deepest condolences to the bereaved families." A massive fire that tore through a budget hotel in the congested Mechuapatti area of Burrabazar in central Kolkata Tuesday night claimed at least 14 lives and left 13 injured, officials said. The majority of the victims died due to suffocation, while a few reportedly jumped off upper floors in panic, they said.



NGT forms panel to probe 'illegalities' at Balasore firm

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, April 30: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has constituted a four-member high-level fact-finding committee to investigate alleged illegal activities at Gadre Marine Export Private Ltd operating in Balasore district.

The committee has been directed to conduct an on-site investigation at the plant located at Tundura Chhak and submit its report to the tribunal within four weeks.

This was revealed by Bipin Bihari Das, president of Purbanchal Bikas Parishad, a local outfit, during a press conference held at Balasore Station Club Sunday.

Established near Kantia-chara River in 2023, Gadre Marine Export Pvt. Ltd. processes rotten fish to manufacture its products. The company reportedly produces 500 metric tonne fish feed and 10,800 metric tonne surimi annually. According to

the company's declaration, about 850 cubic metres of groundwater are extracted daily for its operations, raising concerns about excessive groundwater usage.

In addition, the discharge of polluted water from the company has been causing environmental damage, including reduced soil fertility. The company is also alleged to have blocked a catchment area, preventing proper drainage of floodwaters. Recently, a leakage in gas pipeline at the facility resulted in the death of two employees, raising serious concern about workplace safety standards.

Highlighting these issues, Das filed a complaint with the NGT's Kolkata bench. Responding to the complaint, the environment watchdog issued notices to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB), the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the Central Ground

Water Board (CGWB), the promoters of the fish processing unit, and relevant departments of the state government, directing them to submit their responses within four weeks.

The tribunal has formed a four-member committee comprising representatives from the Central Ground Water Board's regional director, senior scientists from the pollution control board, the SPCB, and the District Collector of Balasore, who has been appointed as the nodal officer.

The NGT has instructed this committee to submit a comprehensive investigation report within one month.

Advocates Biplab Kumar Yadav and Pratap Chandra Mohanty were also present at the press conference.

Meanwhile, repeated attempts to contact Sachin Sourav, senior official of the company on his mobile number @8668532706 went unanswered.

COPS CRACK BIZMAN'S MURDER, ARREST TWO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boudh, April 30: Boudh Police Wednesday cracked the murder of a young businessman and arrested two persons in this connection.

Addressing a presser, Boudh Superintendent of Police (SP) Rahul Goel said that businessman K Manoj Patra was murdered by a group of miscreants who attempted to rob him three days ago. When he refused to hand over the money, the assailants fatally stabbed him in the back and chest with sharp weapons.

The incident took place near Jagdishpur Chhak on Boudh-Baghiapada road around 5pm April 27. The attackers fled the scene immediately after committing the crime.

Police swung into action and identified the accused before arresting two of them. The arrested were identified as Ashish Luha alias Kulu, 19, of Bapuji Nagar in Boudh and Ashin Deep, 18, of Baghiapada



(Salibanka). The third accused is still at large, efforts are underway to apprehend him soon, said Goel.

Police recovered a knife, a

scooter, and a mobile phone from the arrested persons. Boudh police registered a case (225/25) and produced the duo in the court.

NIT Rourkela to host CSAB for admissions to IITs, NITs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela will be coordinating Central Seat Allocation Board (CSAB) 2025 for the academic year 2025-26, facilitating admissions to undergraduate programmes at IITs, NITs and other institutions, officials said Wednesday.

"CSAB 2025 is designed to offer a seamless, transparent, and inclusive seat allocation process for JEE (Main) qualified candidates across the nation. Simultaneously, Direct Admission of Students Abroad (DASA), 2025 underscores commitment to welcoming international students to India's leading technical insti-



tutions," said Umamaheshwar Rao, Director, NIT Rourkela, and Chairperson, CSAB

"With strong digital systems, multilingual assistance, and dedicated accessibility initiatives, we are focused on ensuring a smooth and student-centric admission experience for all aspirants, domestic and international alike," he said.

The NIT has also confirmed that CSAB-NEUT rounds for candidates from Northeast states

and select Union territories will begin in June 2025, under AICTE's reservation scheme for regions lacking such facilities.

While NIT Rourkela will lead the NIT System, IIT Kanpur will lead the IIT System, and both these institutes will co-host the 2025 edition of Joint Seat Allocation Authority (JoSAA). Activities of JoSAA 2025 will commence in the first week of June 2025.

There will be six rounds of seat allocation in the 2025 edition of JoSAA, the officials said.

"Like previous years, CSAB shall also organise CSAB-Special rounds of seat allocation to fill the vacant seats resulting after all rounds of JoSAA 2025. This year, CSAB-Special will be

of three rounds," they added.

"CSAB will coordinate the Supernumerary Round of seat allocation for students from Union territories such as Andaman & Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli in selected NITs," a senior official said.

It is estimated that over 14.5 lakh JEE (Main) qualified candidates will be competing for approximately 40,000 seats across all participating institutes, including 20 per cent seats reserved for female candidates.

"The entire seat allocation process, from registration and choice filling to seat allotment and document verification, will be conducted online," the official added.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. SBP-ELECT-2025-T-244
NAME OF WORK: SOLARIZATION OF ROOF TOP ON GRID PLANTS OF VARIOUS CAPACITY OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION.
Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 6,14,74,420.00, EMD : ₹ 4,57,400/-
Completion Period of the Work : Six months from the date of issue of L.O.A.
Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1530 hrs. of 26.05.2025.
No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website fifteen (15) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/ bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G)/ Sambalpur
PR-84/Q/25-26

TATA MEMORIAL CENTRE
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Invites applications for the post of
DIRECTOR
(For HBCH & RC, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh)
Last date for online application is 14.05.2025 upto 5.30 P.M. (Indian Standard Time)
For details visit our website : <http://tmc.gov.in>
CBC 48149/12/0001/2526

CENTRAL SILK TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
CENTRAL SILK BOARD
Ministry of Textiles, Government of India
BTM Layout, Madiwala, Bengaluru - 560 068, Karnataka
Ph: 080-26282325/2326, Fax: 080-26680435, E-mail: csb@svsrdri.ssmil
Date: 29.04.2025
E-TENDER NOTIFICATION
Sub: Supply of machineries for "Laboratory Spun Silk Machinery Line" for CSTR, Bengaluru - reg.
The CSTR, Central Silk Board, Bengaluru invites bids through e-procurement portal eprocure.gov.in under two bid system from reputed manufacturers or Authorized dealers/suppliers for Supply of machineries for establishment of "Laboratory Spun Silk Machinery Line" for CSTR, Bengaluru (Approx. Tender Value: 1.80 crores).
Interested parties may download the technical specifications, T&C and other details from the websites: eprocure.gov.in, www.cstri.res.in, csb.gov.in, [epublish/app](http://eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app) and upload their bids through e-procurement portal: eprocure.gov.in.
Last date of submission: 23.05.2025 - 1.00 PM
Date of opening of bids: 24.05.2025 - 1.00 PM
CBC: 41109/12/0003/2526
DIRECTOR

FOCUS **GEOPOLITICS**

THE ART OF WAR



Taking high-profile actions in a hurry may satisfy popular anger over the Pahalgam killings, but it is more desirable to exhaust the enemy to a point of collapse

in a hurry may satisfy popular anger over the Pahalgam killings, but it is more desirable to exhaust the enemy to a point of collapse. Balochistan is Pakistani army's Achilles' heel. India must give all help to Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) which has the determination and a newly-developed capacity to hurt the army most. At the same time, the barely-suppressed anger of the people in PoK and Gilgit-Baltistan must be stoked. Sabotage and counter-terrorism ops should be mounted, but all kinetic actions must be cloaked in plausible deniability.

Indian agencies must stoke the simmering discontent against Pakistani army within that country, particularly in the light of its harsh crackdown on Imran Khan's PTI. There is a huge constituency within Pakistan that is aware that the army's rapacious looting of the national resources is what has led the country teetering on the edge of sovereign default, and denied democracy.

New Delhi must take a page out of the US playbook, where CIA's actions are not announced, with the standard comment from the administration being that "it does not comment on operations." India's actions must be governed by Sun Tzu's dictum: "The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting."

The writer, a senior journalist, is an analyst of geopolitics.

The Pakistani army, which without any doubt is behind the Pahalgam tragedy, needs to be not just punished for its latest atrocity, but more importantly, its capacity for such heinous acts should be radically reduced, by degrading its military capability. With an all-out war with Pakistan out of question, what is needed is asymmetrical action by Indian security forces and agencies. The revanchist force has to be 'death by a thousand cuts', the same strategy Pakistan used by employing radicalized elements, - to ensure that it loses ability and motivation to launch such attacks against India.

The ultra-conservative force's religious facade is a stratagem to keep a largely illiterate Muslim mass fed on propaganda of its Islamic superiority. The Pak army's motto is "Iman, Taqwa, Jihad fi Sabilillah" meaning faith, piety and struggle and in the path chosen by God. Its sole target is India, which it portrays as the existential threat to Pakistan.

Kashmir is the Pakistani army's raison d'etre, but it is also a red herring to fool the people into believing that Kashmiris want to join Pakistan. That carrot is what enables the army to get an unconscionable share of the nation's resources. It is a cold, relentless force, bent on revenge for its series of defeats inflicted by the Indian Army during its misadventures.

The Pakistani army is not

just a source of acute danger on India's borders, but more importantly it is also an enemy of the Pakistani people, with its critics, politicians, human rights activists and journalists being vanished, kidnapped, tortured and killed. Currently, it is fighting on two fronts, in Balochistan, against the people who are fighting for their basic rights, and across the Durand Line. Balochistan, the richest province of Pakistan is also the poorest in that country, and any protests against the injustice is put down with no mercy.

It has killed Pakistani patriots striving for democracy, trade unionists, poor peasants in Sindh, Balochs and Pathans and repeatedly seized power to deny that benighted country rule by people. It is mercenary in character, and has offered its services to whoever is ready to pay, including the Americans, Saudis and now the

Chinese, whose CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) projects it is guarding. Such is its hireling nature that it killed Palestinians by thousands in Jordan in 1965 in what is known as Black September. It took billions of dollars from Saudis and sophisticated arms from US to fight the Soviets in Russia, and introduced guns and drugs in Afghanistan and Pakistan, unmindful of the damage it would cause to both societies.

Its repeated defeats in wars with India have taught the Pakistani army that it cannot win a conventional war with India. So, it funds and trains radicalised fundamentalist elements which it pushes across the border into Kashmir to visit violence on a state that has suffered for decades.

To deal with such a degenerate force, India will have to act with tact, mounting relentlessly a range of sub-kinetic ops. Taking high-profile actions



KV Ramesh

KASHMIR IS THE PAKISTANI ARMY'S RAISON D'ETRE, BUT IT IS ALSO A RED HERRING TO FOOL THE PEOPLE INTO BELIEVING THAT KASHMIRIS WANT TO JOIN PAKISTAN



Ngaire Woods

AS THE HEADS OF THE IMF AND THE WORLD BANK STEER THESE INSTITUTIONS INTO THE FUTURE, THEY MUST STRIKE A DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN CONFRONTING AND CONCEDING TO THE WHITE HOUSE

SPECTRUM **LABOUR DAY**

Workers' rights in jeopardy

The International Labour Day commemorates the untiring efforts and struggles of workers worldwide while acknowledging their hard work, dedication and sacrifices. Labour Day is a poignant reminder of the importance of protecting workers' interests and promoting social justice. It commemorates the historical struggle for an 8-hour workday and a 48-hour workweek. This demand stemmed from the harsh working conditions of the Industrial Revolution, where workers faced long hours and difficult circumstances. The movement for an 8-hour day gained momentum through trade unions and socialist movements, leading to the Haymarket insurrection in Chicago, a pivotal event in the fight for workers' rights. The International Labour Organization (ILO) later endorsed the 8-hour day, solidifying its significance in the global labour movement.

Despite India's labour laws capping working hours at 48 per week under the Factories Act, 1948, many employees, particularly in urban areas, often find themselves working overtime without adequate compensation. Labour laws, though designed to protect workers, are not always effectively enforced, leaving employees vulnerable to exploitation. Unfortunately, there is talk of increasing

working hours from 48 hours to 70 hours to even 90 hours per week to enhance the profits of employers to the detriment of work-life balance. The new Indian Labour Code allows for a 4-day workweek, but with the requirement of longer daily shifts to meet the maximum weekly working hours of 48 hours. This means employees might be working up to 12-hour days to fulfil their weekly obligations.

Wide-ranging research indicates that long work hours lead to increased stress, burnout, and serious health problems. Besides, they can encumber productivity as individuals' capacity to perform effectively reduces after a certain threshold.

Workers' rights are now in jeopardy. The gulf between the rich and the poor has widened, and this is due to a greater level of exploitation of labour by capital. Today, capital exploits labour more than ever due to increased automation, the rise of gig economies, rising unemployment and globalised supply chains. Automation is leading to job displacement, but it is not creating new jobs in tandem with decline of jobs. These changes are leading to lower wages, precarious work conditions, and less worker power. Yet, capital tends not only to exploit labour-power, but also ignores its contribution to the development process. Capitalists seek to

obsure workers' contribution to that process, whereas workers strive to have their contribution fully recognised.

Real wages - nominal wages factoring inflation - are among the most significant economic indicators of labour's welfare. If the real wages don't increase in tandem with the rise of GDP, or there is no substantial increase in real wages with passage of time, then labourers are exploited. That is precisely what seems to be happening in India today. The combination of slow wage growth and back-breaking inflation has triggered an unprecedented decline in real wages. Thus, India's economic boom camouflages the wage crisis.

As per the Economic Survey 2025, despite India's growth, real wages for men have dropped, exacerbating inequality. Inflation is outpacing wage growth, eroding purchasing power and deepening economic inequality. In 2023-24, real monthly wages for male salaried workers were 6.4% lower than in 2017-18, showing a significant loss of purchasing power. For self-employed men, real incomes dropped by 9.1% over the same period. The squeeze is even more apparent in rural India. Both sources point to a virtual stagnation of real wages in the last 10 years or so.

To the detriment of working-class people, India is

poised to formally launch the long-anticipated labour reforms under a new legal framework. The Labour ministry has decided to amalgamate 44 labour laws into four codes—on wages, industrial relations, social security and safety, health and working conditions. The 29 central laws will be streamlined into four consolidated codes. Though, it is propagated that the new labour codes are a transformative step for India's employment landscape, actually, they will adversely affect the interest of workers and will create an ecosystem to instil fear among workers and curb their striking power and democratic rights. The rights of workers, particularly their ability to form trade unions, organise strikes, and bargain collectively will be eroded. The Indian Constitution that protects fundamental rights including freedom of association will be undermined.

Many years ago, Dr Martin Luther King Jr. had famously asserted that the dignity of all work was essential to our health and well-being. He was not just making a moral observation. He was calling for genuine equality through an increase in wages, health-care, job safety and economic power.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

TODAY, CAPITAL EXPLOITS LABOUR MORE THAN EVER DUE TO INCREASED AUTOMATION, THE RISE OF GIG ECONOMIES, RISING UNEMPLOYMENT AND GLOBALISED SUPPLY CHAINS

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, Rasulgari Industrial Estate,
Bhubaneswar-751010

Honoring labour

Sir, On 1 May, 2025, the world commemorates the 103rd International Workers' Day—a global salute to the strength, struggles, and sacrifices of workers who have been the backbone of societal progress. Rooted in the historic fight for the eight-hour workday, May Day has evolved into a powerful reminder of workers' rights and the importance of solidarity across borders. This year's observance is especially relevant as the world of work undergoes rapid transformation driven by AI, automation, and platform-based employment. The theme, "Decent Work in the Age of Artificial Intelligence and Automation," highlights the urgency to protect workers' dignity, ensure job security, and promote access to skill development in an increasingly digital economy. From India to Europe and Latin America, workers will come together in marches, debates, and cultural events to advocate for fair wages, social justice, and inclusive labour policies. As we celebrate this occasion, let us reaffirm our commitment to a future where every worker—regardless of profession or geography—has the right to work with dignity, equity, and protection.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Carney's challenges

Sir, For Canada's Liberal Party leader Mark Carney, who will form the country's next government after securing enough votes in the federal election last Sunday, edging out Pierre Poilievre and his Conservatives, the road ahead will not be smooth. In an election cycle that largely revolved around US President Donald Trump's tariff war, Carney wooed voters with a message of strength and unity against the US President's harsh treatment of Canada over the last few months. The biggest and foremost challenge for Liberal Party leader, obviously, is dealing with Trump and trying to get the tariffs the latter has placed on Canada removed immediately. Carney seized the nation's mood by demonstrating his political acumen in framing Trump as an existential threat to Canada as the US president was referring to Canada as the 51st state of America ever since he resumed office. Now Carney's political skills will be tested further in leading a minority government.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

The heart's words fall back unheard from Wisdom's throne

SRI AUROBINDO



Treading the Tightrope

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are in a difficult position. Established to uphold global rules and support development, they are now caught between an aggressively nationalist America – their largest shareholder – and the rest of the world. If their leaders speak truth to power, they risk US President Donald Trump's wrath. If they don't, they risk their own legitimacy.

The challenge of walking this tightrope was evident at last week's Spring Meetings of the IMF and the World Bank. The IMF's mandate is to stand guard over countries' exchange rates and policies that affect global financial stability. This involves "calling out" those whose actions will impoverish their neighbours. So far, the Fund has not named the United States as its main rule-breaker. But ahead of the Spring Meetings, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva responded to the Trump administration's unpredictable behaviour by acknowledging the "off the charts" uncertainty caused by US tariffs, reiterating the need for central-bank independence, and urging countries to avoid "self-inflicted injuries."

In early April, World Bank President Ajay Banga emphasized the Bank's focus on its core mandate: driving development and reducing poverty. For several decades, the World Bank has supported efforts – particularly infrastructure investments – to lift millions of people out of poverty. But Trump's dismantling of the US Agency for International Development has decimated programmes that enabled the Bank's work. Instead of addressing this issue at the Spring Meetings, Banga focused on job creation amid rising unemployment worldwide. The Bank has also begun promoting nuclear and technology-agnostic energy solutions to appeal to a US administration that is allergic to climate action.

How the IMF and the World Bank approach the Trump administration will determine their effectiveness. The first 100 days of Trump's second term offer insights into the strategy they should pursue.

First, they could be targeted and should plan accordingly. Trump's takeover of Washington's John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts shows that no organisation is safe – some of America's largest NGOs and philanthropies are already preparing for funding cuts. Moreover, the IMF and the World Bank are mentioned in Project 2025, the conservative blueprint for Trump's second presidency published by the Heritage Foundation, and included in the 180-day review of US involvement in international organisations that Trump ordered on 4 February. True, the team overseeing the review has been dismissed, throwing the process into disarray. But that may not be an obstacle, given the administration's propensity to act without restraint.

Second, policymakers must bat away non-credible threats. When Mark Carney became Canadian prime minister in March, after Justin Trudeau stepped down, he insisted in his first conversation with Trump that the US president recognise Canada's sovereignty (Trump also addressed Carney as "Prime Minister," whereas he had often referred to Trudeau as "Governor"). It helped that Trump's bluster about annexing Canada lacked political backing in Washington, much less a feasible plan.

The situation is somewhat murkier for the IMF and the World Bank. At the Spring Meetings, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent criticized both institutions, but said the US would maintain its leadership role and expand its global influence.

Other countries must now decide the extent to which they are prepared to let one shareholder unilaterally determine the future of institutions that rely on their financial contributions and participation.

Third, no institution is alone. Whether and how the IMF and the World Bank accede to Trump's demands will affect the ecosystem in which they operate. US law firms that capitulated to Trump, who wielded the threat of illegal executive orders, may have ensured their own survival, but they have eroded the US legal system's legitimacy. The same goes for Columbia University, whose acquiescence to government oversight has undermined academic freedom.

The IMF's ability to achieve its objectives depends on the confidence of central bankers and policymakers worldwide, and maintaining it requires accurate reporting on the global economy. The World Bank, for its part, relies on thousands of firms and community organisations throughout the developing world, and its approach to infrastructure and energy projects sets standards for others to follow.

Fourth, as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy discovered, Trump puts a premium on personal relationships. But the right response is not capitulation. Both Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer have been able to maintain a working relationship with Trump by employing flattery and avoiding concrete commitments. This is new terrain for the IMF and World Bank, whose leaders are used to working with the US Departments of State and the Treasury, as well as Congress. Now, the IMF's managing director and the Bank's president must take a much more active role in relationship management with the White House.

Beyond the Trump administration, the IMF and the World Bank must remember their other stakeholders in the US: the American people. For example, support by religious organisations for debt relief for the poorest countries in the 1990s enabled the IMF and the World Bank to act on the issue.

The Trump administration shut down USAID despite agency officials' warnings that one million children will go untreated for severe malnutrition, up to 166,000 people will die from malaria, and 200,000 more children will be paralyzed by polio over the next decade. But many Americans support foreign aid, and more than half give to charity each year, often to help the poorest in other countries. Moreover, one-quarter take the time to volunteer, and some 240,000 have served in the Peace Corps since 1961.

As the heads of the IMF and the World Bank steer these institutions into the future, they must strike a delicate balance between confronting and conceding to the White House.

But staying on Trump's good side is not enough to pursue their missions: they must also be mindful of the world within and outside of America.

The writer is Dean of the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Gurugram gasps for air

Bandhwari landfill fire doused but toxic fumes fill sky



However, it was not the lone incident in the area. In 2024, more than 70 fire incidents were reported in the Bandhwari landfill site between March and June.

Methane gas builds up under garbage in landfills due to the decomposition of organic waste in the absence of oxygen. When it comes in contact with air, it catches fire immediately, according to a Municipal Corporation Gurugram (MCG) official.

Due to the intensity of the

fire, it becomes difficult to control it, he added.

An official said that during a preliminary investigation, waste littering in the forest area emerged as the reason behind the recent fire at the landfill site.

Meanwhile, citizen groups and environmentalists have raised demands for a special force to protect Aravallis.

The forest department had announced that a special force would be formed that would patrol the protected Aravallis and

FIGHTING FIRE

- Over 25 fire tenders were deployed to control the fire that broke out at the landfill site two days ago
- It took firefighters 16 hours to completely douse the blaze
- In 2024, more than 70 fire incidents were reported in the Bandhwari landfill site between March and June

curb illegal encroachments, illegal mining, tree felling etc. But the project has long been shelved. A senior forest officer said that the forest department will establish over 50 security outposts for almost 1 lakh hectares of the Aravallis in south Haryana.

At present, hundreds of forest guard posts are lying vacant and they will have written to the government to recruit more forest guards, he added.

Presiding seer of Ayodhya's Hanuman Garhi steps out after centuries to visit Ram Temple

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ayodhya, April 30: Mahant Prem Das Wednesday became the first head priest of Ayodhya's Hanuman Garhi in over 300 years to step outside the revered temple's premises as he led a procession to the Ram temple on Akshaya Tritiya festival.

Das visited the newly consecrated Ram Temple in a grand 'Shahi Juloos' (royal procession) in a historic and emotional departure from a centuries-old religious tradition that forbade the head priest from ever leaving the 52-higha premises of Hanuman Garhi during his lifetime.

Thousands of Naga Sadhus, devotees and disciples joined the procession, which featured elephants, horses, camels and musical performances by local troupes. The spiritual journey began at the banks of the Saryu River, where Mahant Prem Das and others performed a ritual bath, before proceeding to offer prayers at the Ram Temple.

"This tradition has been fol-



lowed for 288 years, since 1737," said Mahant Sanjay Das, a senior seer of Hanuman Garhi.

The Mahant's role is to devote himself entirely to Lord Hanuman. Once he is anointed to the seat, he lives and dies within the temple premises. His body can only leave after death.

Mahant Ramkumar Das, chief of the Nirvani Akhara, told PTI that due to the presiding seer's deep desire to visit the Ram Temple, he was granted this once-in-a-lifetime permission.

According to the constitution of Hanuman Garhi, formalised in 1925, these traditions were recognised and enforced by the Naga Sadhus. "Even in civil matters, the courts have respected this tradition," said Sanjay Das.

"If needed, a representative

of the Akhara appears in court. In fact, in the 1980s, the court itself held sessions inside Hanuman Garhi to record statements from the Mahant," he said.

However, the recent decision was not taken lightly. It came only after the 'Panch' (governing members) of the Nirvani Akhara -- the esteemed religious body that oversees Hanuman Garhi -- unanimously permitted the Mahant's wish to visit Ram Lalla's temple.

Mahant Ramkumar Das, chief of the Nirvani Akhara, said, "The presiding seer's deep desire to visit the Ram Temple was heartfelt. After ritual discussions and overwhelming spiritual consensus, the Akhara granted this once-in-a-lifetime permission."

The procession carried the Akhara's 'Nishana' (insignia) with immense reverence and symbolism. Alongside the Mahant were large groups of temple disciples, local shopkeepers and worshippers who saw the event as a powerful expression of religious unity and devotion.

Akhilesh-Ambedkar poster sparks political storm in UP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: Wedding-related businesses in Delhi are expected to surpass Rs 1,000 crore in one day as the national capital is witnessing around 21,000 marriages to coincide with Akshaya Tritiya -- an auspicious day in the Hindu calendar.

Akshaya Tritiya, celebrated annually on the third day of the bright half of Hindu calendar month Vaisakha, falls Wednesday this year.

According to the Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI), this is one of the peak days of the wedding season, benefiting a wide range of businesses including banquet halls, hotels, caterers, salons, decorators, event man-



agers, and orchestras. CTI estimated that the overall wedding-related business in the Delhi Wednesday could exceed Rs 1,000 crore.

"Rates of banquet halls and hotels have seen a 10-15 per cent increase due to high demand," CTI Chairman Brijesh Goyal said.

CTI General Secretary and gold trader Gurmeet Arora said that the gold and silver trade alone is expected to see a turnover of around Rs 200 crore. However, with gold prices at record

Akshaya Tritiya, celebrated annually on the third day of the bright half of Hindu calendar month Vaisakha, falls Wednesday this year

highs, buyers are showing more interest in light-weight jewellery.

"The price of gold has risen significantly. Ten grams of gold is currently priced at around Rs 97,000, compared to Rs 73,500 on Akshaya Tritiya last year. As a result, traders are focusing on smaller, lighter gold and diamond jewellery pieces to meet customer demand," Arora said.

Families are estimated to spend around 10 per cent of their wedding budget on clothing, 15 per cent on jewellery, and 5 per cent each on electronics, sweets and dry fruits. Gift items account for around 4 per cent of spending, according to Deepak Garg, Senior Vice President, CTI. In the services category, 5 per cent of the budget typically goes to banquet halls and hotels, 3 per cent to management, 10 per cent to tent and decoration services, and another 10 per cent on other services such as catering, he said.

Flower decoration makes up 4 per cent of total expenses, while transportation, photography and music-related services together account for about 15 per cent, he added.



The poster in question features a split image: one side displays the head and shoulders of Dalit icon BR Ambedkar, while the other shows a similar cutout of Akhilesh Yadav, separated by a thin white line

and suggested that the poster could be the work of the BJP.

When asked about the poster, SP chief spokesperson Rajendra Chowdhary told PTI, "This is not the official poster of Samajwadi Party... We are not aware of who has put this up. Anyone can put up a poster anywhere. Maybe it's the work of BJP men."

"Samajwadi party is fighting to save the Constitution of Dr BR Ambedkar and getting tremendous response from the people," he added.

The SP leadership, buoyed by the party's impressive showing in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls in UP, has been trying to woo the Dalits, once considered loyal to the BSP, and competing with the BJP for support of the OBCs, considered the mainstays of BJP's phenomenal wins in UP since the 2014 Lok Sabha polls.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the SP, in alliance with Congress, managed to check the BJP's growing dominance in the state and dealt an embarrassing blow when SP's Dalit leader Awadhesh Prasad defeated his BJP rival from the

Faizabad Lok Sabha seat. The constituency is part of Ayodhya, where only a few months back the Ram temple was built under BJP governments in the state and Centre.

The BJP regained some of its lost momentum when it won the subsequent by-polls in SP bastions of Kundarki, a Muslim-dominated seat, and Katehari, a seat with sizable OBC, Dalit and minority voters. Yet, the SP has continued to pursue more support from these groups and has opened its doors to many Dalit and OBC leaders who were previously with BSP.

Mayawati Wednesday named the SP and Congress in a social media post asking them to refrain from "insulting" Ambedkar or her party BSP would be forced to take to the streets in protest.

Barely two days before Ambedkar's birth anniversary (April 14), SP chief Yadav unveiled a statue of Ambedkar in Etawah April 12, praising the Dalit icon widely regarded as the architect of the Indian Constitution.

The poster controversy has now given the BJP some ammunition to hit back at the SP, the main opposition party in the UP, and its attempts to pitch itself as a party for Dalits



Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan with Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and Minister Ashish Sood during a run to support 'One Nation, One Election', at the University of Delhi North Campus in New Delhi, Wednesday

Red-crowned roofed turtle returns to Ganga after 3 decades

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: The critically endangered Red-Crowned Roofed Turtle has been reintroduced in the Ganga river as part of the government's flagship programme of cleaning the river and enhancing its biodiversity.

In a post on X Wednesday, Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Paatil said, 20 such turtles were released in Uttar Pradesh's Haiderpur Wetland April 26.

It is a UNESCO Ramsar site near the Bijnor Ganga Barrage within the Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary. This human-made wetland was formed in 1984 with the Madhya Ganga Barrage construction on the river's floodplain.

He described it as an important milestone in restoring the ecology of the Ganga river. Ac-

ording to his ministry, there has been no confirmed report of adult Red-Crowned Roofed Turtle sighting in the main channel of the Ganga in the past 30 years.

To make the reintroduction project a success, each turtle has been fitted with tracking devices so that their movement patterns and progress in adapting to the environment can be monitored.

According to officials, the turtles were divided into two groups for the reintroduction process.

One group was released in the upstream of the Haiderpur Wetland barrage and the other on the downstream in the main channel of the Ganga to determine which method is more effective for turtle reintroduction, they said.

The turtles would be tracked and monitored over the next two years.



The Union ministry said this was the first attempt at reintroducing this species in the Ganga by following a 'soft' versus 'hard' release strategy. The aim is to house the species in the Ganga in a stable manner with the Uttar Pradesh Forest Department's help, the ministry added.

Paatil credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his vision that took the shape of the Namami Gange Mission for the turtle reintroduction initiative.

Preparing for the reintroduction of the freshwater reptiles, the Turtle Survival Alliance India project team, with support

from the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), conducted a detailed assessment of turtle diversity and abundance in the Haiderpur Wetland Complex (HWC) in 2020.

This was followed by a 2022 Habitat Evaluation study on the newly formed turtle sanctuary along the Ganga near Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh.

The study along HWC suggested the presence of nine turtle species whereas indirect evidence of five turtle species was found in Prayagraj.

One of the findings of the 2020, 2022 and prior studies was that none of the viable populations or individuals of Red-Crowned Roofed turtle were sighted in the stretch of the Ganga, thereby suggesting that it was the most endangered species in entire north India.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.A-77
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
BURLA IRRIGATION DIVISION, BURLA

Phone No. : 0663-2430445, E-mail id : sambalpurirrigation@rediffmail.com
e Tender Call Notice No. BID-01/2025-26 (Online)

1. Nature of Works	: Improvement to Canal Structure
2. Nos. of works	: 44 (Forty-Four) Nos.
3. Amount Put to Tender	: Rs. 4.43 lakhs to 14.08 Lakhs Approximately
4. Period of Completion	: As per D.T.C.N
5. Date and Time of availability of Bid Document in the Portal	: Dt : 01.05.2025 at 11.00 A.M. to Dt : 08.05.2025 up to 05.00 P.M.
6. Last Date / Time for receipt of Bids in the Portal	: Dt : 08.05.2025 up to 05.00 P.M.
7. Date of opening of Bid	: Dt : 09.05.2025 at 10.00 A.M.
8. Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	: Dt : 08.05.2025 up to 04.00 P.M.
9. Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Superintending Engineer, Burla Irrigation Division, Burla AT/Po-Burla - 768017, Dist. - Sambalpur, Email Id : sambalpurirrigation@rediffmail.com

Further detail can be seen from the e-procurement portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

OIPR-32436/11/0010/2526

Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Burla Irrigation Division, Burla



Arunachal Pradesh, too can aspire to become a 'viksit Arunachal' by laying a strong foundation through AI integration

RAJNATH TO REPRESENT INDIA AT RUSSIA'S VICTORY DAY PARADE

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will represent India at Russia's Victory Day parade May 9 that will mark the 80th anniversary of the Soviet victory over Germany in the Second World War, official sources said Wednesday



of the day quote

We all know how Pakistani terrorists killed innocent people at Pahalgam last week. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said the terrorists will be pursued to the ends of the world, and our armed forces will serve them justice

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | CHIEF MINISTER, ASSAM

This is not just a policy decision, but a revolutionary step to bring justice to the last man in society. The Shiv Sena fully supports this move

EKNATH SHINDE | DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER, MAHARASHTRA

The Himachal Pradesh government is investing Rs 2415 crore to develop better infrastructure, wayside amenities and promote other adventure sports activities to attract tourists in the state

SUKHINDER SINGH SUKHU | CHIEF MINISTER, HIMACHAL PRADESH

Courts can modify arbitration awards under 1996 law: SC

The majority ruling by Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justices B R Gavai, Sanjay Kumar and AG Masih held that courts have 'limited power' under Section 34 and 37 of the Act to modify arbitral awards

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New Delhi, April 30: In a verdict set to impact commercial disputes, the Supreme Court Wednesday held courts can modify arbitral awards under the 1996 law on arbitration and conciliation under certain circumstances.

In a 4:1 majority verdict, Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna, writing the 61-page verdict also on behalf of Justices B R Gavai, Sanjay Kumar and Augustine George Masih, held the larger power to set aside an arbitral award under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, would also include the authority to modify it if certain conditions were met.

Justice KV Viswanthan, however, was the lone dissenting judge on the five-judge Constitution bench.

"To this extent, the doctrine of omne majus continet in se minus 'the greater power includes the lesser' applies squarely. The authority to set aside an arbitral award necessarily encompasses the power

to set it aside in part, rather than in its entirety," the verdict said.

The court went on, "This interpretation is practical and pragmatic. It would be incongruous to hold that power to set aside would only mean power to set aside the award in its entirety and not in part. A contrary interpretation would not only be inconsistent with the statutory framework but may also result in valid determinations being unnecessarily nullified."

The verdict answered the questions referred to it previously and held "court has a limited power under Sections 34 and 37 of the 1996 Act to modify the arbitral award".

"This limited power may be exercised under the following circumstances: when the award is severable, by severing the "invalid" portion from the "valid" portion of the award, as held in Part II of our Analysis," it added.

The CJI said the power could be used to correct "any clerical, computational or typographical errors which appear erroneous on the face of the record".

The verdict pointed out the power could also modify the post arbitral award interest in some circumstances.

"Article 142 of the Constitution applies, albeit, the power must be exercised with great care and caution and within the limits of the constitutional power," the verdict said.

Article 142 empowers the Supreme Court to pass any order for "doing complete justice" in any case.

The CJI said though the law does not expressly mention a power to modify arbitral awards, but such a power can be inferred in limited cases when the award is severable, allowing the "invalid" portion to be removed while preserving the "valid" part.

SHORT TAKES

3 booked as boy forced to urinate on Pak flag

Aligarh (UP): A video circulating on social media purportedly showing a mob surrounding a schoolboy and coercing him into urinating on a Pakistani flag lying on a road here has prompted police to launch a probe and book three people. In a police complaint, the 15-year-old student's family said he was returning home from the Government Inter College with friends on Monday afternoon when he noticed the flag lying on the ground and picked it up out of curiosity. Moments later, a mob accosted the boy, demanded to know his name, started abusing him and coerced him to urinate on the flag, it stated.

ACB files case against Sisodia, Jain

New Delhi: The Delhi government's Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) has filed a case against AAP leaders Manish Sisodia and Satyendar Jain over alleged corruption in the construction of 12,748 classrooms under the Arvind Kejriwal-led government, an official said Wednesday. The alleged scam is pegged at around Rs 2,000 crore and involved awarding contracts at highly-inflated rates with classrooms in government-run schools reportedly built at Rs 24.86 lakh each, nearly five times the usual cost, the ACB said in a statement.

CISCE board results: Girls outshine boys

New Delhi: Girls outshone boys yet again in the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) class 10 and 12 exams results declared Wednesday. In class 10 exams, the pass percentage of girls stood at 99.45 per cent while that of boys was marginally lower at 98.64 per cent. Similarly, girls performed better than boys in class 12 too, with girls' pass percentage at 99.45 per cent and boys' pass percentage at 98.64 per cent.

Meth tablets worth over ₹6cr seized

Aizawl: In a major drug haul, methamphetamine tablets worth Rs 6.17 crore were seized during an operation in Aizawl, police said in a statement Wednesday. Two persons have been arrested for transporting the drug, which was believed to be smuggled from Myanmar, the statement said.

PAHALGAM MASSACRE

India warns Pakistan over LoC ceasefire violations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: India has warned Pakistan against its unprovoked firings along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir as the directors general of military operations of the two armies spoke on the hotline amid the escalating tensions over the Pahalgam terror attack.

Pakistan has been resorting to firings on the Indian side of the LoC since Friday night in violation of a ceasefire understanding and the Indian Army responded to them "appropriately", according to military sources.

The directors general of military operations (DGMOs) held the conversation Tuesday. It came as India mulls its options to respond to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people.

The Pakistan military has been warned against the unprovoked firings, people famil-

iar with the DGMO talks said.

The sources, however, described the exchanges over the hotline as "routine", saying it was a weekly conversation between the DGMOs that is held every Tuesday.

The Indian DGMO strongly took up the matter of ceasefire violations by the Pakistan military, the sources said.

In a significant move aimed at reducing tensions, the Indian and Pakistani armies February 25, 2021 announced that they would cease firing across the LoC while recommitting themselves to a 2003 ceasefire agreement.

The ceasefire understanding was broadly being adhered to till last week.

The sources said Pakistan military resorted to "unprovoked firings" using small arms from their posts across the LoC in Baramulla and Kupwara districts, and across the international border in the Pargwal sector Tuesday night as well.

14 dead in Kolkata hotel blaze

PM announces ex gratia, CM orders probe, BJP hits out at Mamata

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 30: At least 14 people were killed and 13 injured when a massive fire engulfed a low-cost hotel in the congested Mechuapatti area of Burrabazar, central Kolkata, Tuesday evening, police said.

Most victims reportedly died due to suffocation, while a few may have jumped from upper floors in panic, officials added. The blaze broke out around 7:30 PM at the six-storey Rituraj Hotel, quickly spreading through the building.

Kolkata Police Commissioner Manoj Verma initially confirmed 15 fatalities, but later revised the number to 14 after verifying records with hospitals and rescue teams. "There was some confusion initially. After verification, the confirmed death toll is 14," Verma told reporters. Among the deceased were 11 men, one woman, and two children — a boy and a girl. Eight victims have been identi-



fied so far, according to police. The hotel reportedly had 88 guests staying in 42 rooms at the time of the incident.

Eyewitnesses described terrifying scenes as flames shot out of windows and dense smoke filled the corridors. Trapped guests screamed for help, with some leaping from windows to escape. Firefighters used ladders and ropes to rescue

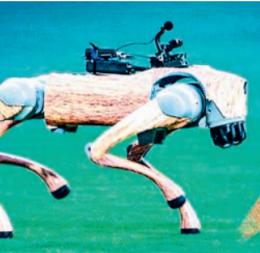
scorched survivors from the blaze. Ten fire tenders battled the fire for nearly 10 hours before bringing it under control early Wednesday morning.

A senior official from the state Fire and Emergency Services said the building was packed with combustible materials, contributing to the fire's rapid spread.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed sorrow over the tragedy and announced ex gratia of ₹2 lakh each to the families of the deceased and ₹50,000 to the injured from the PM National Relief Fund (PMNRF). "Anguished by the loss of lives due to a fire mishap in Kolkata. Condolences to those who lost their loved ones," the PMO posted on X.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also confirmed the death toll and ordered a detailed investigation. "My heart goes out to the victims. I monitored the rescue operations throughout the night and mobilised maximal fire brigade services," she said. The state government will also provide ₹2 lakh to each victim's family and ₹50,000 to the injured.

Delhi HC issues notice to BCCI on publisher's plea



Delhi Press Patra Prakashan Pvt Ltd moved the high court, saying it has been publishing Champak magazine since 1968.

The 18th session of the IPL is currently underway and will end May 25, 2025.

During one of the matches, BCCI and IPL introduced an AI-generated robotic dog April 20, calling it Champak.

Advocate Amit Gupta, representing the publisher, said naming the robotic dog Cham-

pack amounted to infringement of its registered trademark and also commercial exploitation as Champak was a well known mark.

He said Champak (robotic dog) as an entertainment feature during IPL matches, which are broadcast nationwide to over 20 crore viewers, resulted in irreparable harm to the plaintiff by diluting its well-established brand, tarnishing its goodwill, and unjustly enrich-

ing themselves. Senior advocate J Sai Deepak, who appeared for BCCI, opposed the plea saying Champak was the name of a flower and people associated the robotic dog with a character of a TV series and not the magazine.

The plea, also filed through advocates Mansi Kukreja, Kshitij Vaibhav and Muskan Nagpal, said the nickname of Virat Kohli, former captain of the Indian cricket team, is

Cheeku and in one of the interviews, he himself disclosed that his nickname was given on the basis of the character which appears in Champak magazine.

The judge then said the publisher did not choose to proceed against Kohli for his nickname akin to the name of a character in Champak magazine. "When did you come to know about it? This is one of the characters in Champak. But you did not proceed against him, you have not initiated any action against him," Justice Banerjee said. To this, the counsel said, based on a particular character in a comic book or any of TV series and movies, people generally give nicknames to their near and dear ones.

"Today my issue is the usage of the word Champak which is my registered trademark," Gupta said. When the court asked to show how infringe-

Shillong-Silchar highway gets Cabinet approval

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved the development of a 166.80 km greenfield high-speed corridor from Mawlyngkhung in Meghalaya to Panchgram in Assam on hybrid annuity mode at a total cost of Rs 22,864 crore.

According to an official statement, the project length of 166.80 km (NH-6) lies in Meghalaya (144.80 km) and Assam (22 km).

"The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the proposal for the development, maintenance and management of four-lane greenfield access-controlled 166.80 km of National Highway No 06 from Mawlyngkhung (near Shillong) in Meghalaya to Panchgram (near Silchar) in Assam on hybrid annuity mode at a total capital cost of Rs 22,864 crore," it added.

The proposed greenfield high-speed corridor will improve the service level for the traffic moving between Guwahati to Silchar, the statement noted. "The development of this corridor will improve the connectivity to Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur and the Barak Valley region of Assam from mainland and Guwahati with substantially reduced travel distance and travel time," it said, adding that this will, in turn, contribute to the enhancement of logistics efficiency of the nation.

The Art of Living bags Best NGO of The Year at Global CSR & ESG Awards

AGENCIES

Bangalore, April 30: In a resounding testament to the extensive work done by The Art of Living at the grassroots in border villages, in skill-based rehabilitation of jail inmates, and holistic transformation of schools, the organization has been awarded Best NGO of the Year - 2025 at the prestigious Global CSR & ESG Awards organized by Brand Honchos and Indian CSR Awards in New Delhi, which brought together visionaries and change makers spotlighting bold ideas in CSR, sustainability, and ESG (environmental, social, and governance) areas.

"As an organization we are present in over 180 countries today and we inspire people to give back to their communities. When we conducted our programs in villages we would ask them what is it we can do for them and so some would say they needed water, others would say they need education then some said, they had good youth but no jobs. That's where we started from. It is the collaborative effort of all the stakeholders, the donors, our community leaders, as well as members of the communities that we serve, that has made this award possible," shares Shri PrasannaPrabhu, Chairman, Art of Living Social Projects.

It's Champak, the magazine vs Champak, the robo dog

Delhi HC issues notice to BCCI on publisher's plea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: The Delhi High Court Wednesday sought response from the BCCI on a plea filed by the publishers of renowned children's comic book Champak alleging trademark infringement over the IPL naming its AI-powered robotic dog Champak.

Justice Saurabh Banerjee observed the Champak brand name was existing since eternity and asked the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and Indian Premier League (IPL) to file written statements in response to the plea within four weeks. The court posted the hearing July 9.

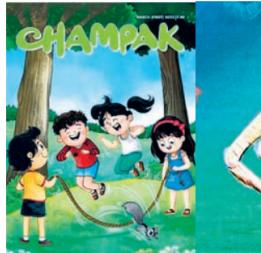
The plaintiff's counsel also prayed that an interim protection be granted to him by directing the defendants not to use the mark. The court, however, did not pass any interim order at this stage.

Delhi Press Patra Prakashan Pvt Ltd moved the high court, saying it has been publishing Champak magazine since 1968.

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During one of the matches, BCCI and IPL introduced an AI-generated robotic dog April 20, calling it Champak.

Advocate Amit Gupta, representing the publisher, said naming the robotic dog Cham-



pack amounted to infringement of its registered trademark and also commercial exploitation as Champak was a well known mark.

He said Champak (robotic dog) as an entertainment feature during IPL matches, which are broadcast nationwide to over 20 crore viewers, resulted in irreparable harm to the plaintiff by diluting its well-established brand, tarnishing its goodwill, and unjustly enrich-

ing themselves. Senior advocate J Sai Deepak, who appeared for BCCI, opposed the plea saying Champak was the name of a flower and people associated the robotic dog with a character of a TV series and not the magazine.

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"Today my issue is the usage of the word Champak which is my registered trademark," Gupta said. When the court asked to show how infringe-

national



The reason is, I see that kind of reception in all the places that I visit. Whenever I visit a district, I walk about 4-5 kilometers and when I see the huge turnout of people to give a grand reception, I get goosebumps

MK STALIN | CHIEF MINISTER, TAMIL NADU

AIR MARSHAL N TIWARI TO TAKE CHARGE AS VICE CHIEF OF AIR STAFF

Air Marshal Narmadeshwar Tiwari, currently serving as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the South Western Air Command, is set to take charge as the new Vice Chief of the Air Staff May 2. He will succeed Air Marshal SP Dharkar, who superannuated April 30



of the day uote

If the Pakistan Zindabad slogan was shouted, it is wrong, whoever it is. Inquiry is still going on, a case has been registered, let the report come. It will be clear as to what action should be taken against whom

The BJP and RSS together want to win the Panchayati Raj and urban body elections by hook or by crook. For this, first, they did not even conduct by-elections in many places, including that of Bharatpur Zila Pramukh

The physical and verbal assault on Kashmiri shawl vendors in Mussoorie, who had to flee when police refused to guarantee their safety, is very disturbing

POST OF THE DAY

Mr. Prime Minister, The Country wants Action, Not Reels. -- Why Has No Terrorist been

Arrested Yet ButOnTheOtherSide -- The Prime Minister's Office released Reels of the high-level meeting on a "War Like Situation" First Time in World History To show the Nation that "Work in Progress"

7 killed in Andhra temple wall collapse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Visakhapatnam, April 30: Seven people were killed when a rain-soaked wall collapsed at the Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple in Simhachalam here in the early hours of Wednesday, turning an annual ritual at the famous north Andhra shrine into a scene of both grandeur and grief.

The government said seven people died after the wall collapsed on the ₹300 ticket queue line near the shopping complex on the ghat road from Simhagiri bus stand at around 3 am. President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, AP Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, among others, expressed grief over the incident. Both the Centre and the state government announced ex-gratia to the families of those killed in the incident.

State Home Minister V Anitha, who was present at the site, said preliminary reports indicated that the wall collapse at the temple was triggered by soil loosening due to heavy rains in the area. According to government sources, one person sustained injuries.

CM Naidu expressed deep sorrow and said he had spoken to the Collector and SP and directed for treatment be provided to the injured.

The CM, who reviewed the situation via teleconference, announced an ex-gratia of ₹25 lakh each to the kin of the deceased and ₹3 lakh each to the injured, an official release said. An outsourcing job in temples under the Endowments Department will be provided to a family member of each victim.

Naidu also ordered an inquiry into the incident by a three-member committee.

CENTRE'S CASTE CENSUS MOVE

Oppn claims big victory

Announcing the decision taken by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs on caste enumeration, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw alleged that the Opposition parties have used caste survey as a political tool



Opposition parties, including the Congress, have been demanding a nationwide caste census, making it a major election issue, and some states like Bihar, Telangana and Karnataka have conducted such surveys

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: As the Centre announced the inclusion of caste enumeration in the next census Wednesday, Opposition parties said it is a victory for their long-standing demand and sought time-bound implementation.

They claimed that the BJP has been compelled to "bow" to the will of the majority and demanded that the Centre now work towards increasing reservation.

Welcoming the Narendra Modi dispensation's "sudden" decision to include caste enumeration in the census exercise after "11 years of opposing it", Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said they support the government but want a timeline for its implementation. "We want to know by when it will be done," he said, adding funds should be allocated for the caste census.

"This is the first step and Telangana is a model for caste census," the Congress leader said and reiterated the demand for removing the 50 per cent cap on reservations.

Former Bihar chief minister

and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Prasad Yadav said the "socialists" have been advocating it for the last 30 years.

"Those who called us casteists for demanding a caste-based census have received a fitting reply. There is still much left to do. We will keep making these Sanghis dance to our agenda," Yadav said in a post in Hindi on X.

He said the "first-ever caste-based survey" in the country was also conducted in Bihar during the 17-month Mahagathbandhan movement.

"What we socialists thought about 30 years ago reservation, caste census, equality, fraternity, secularism, etc. others start following decades later," he said.

The RJD chief said he and his party had demanded for a caste

census to be conducted in 2001, but the then Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led NDA government did not do it.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had been shying away from implementing this policy of social justice and had "falsely accused the opposition of dividing society". He demanded that the government allocate funds to initiate the caste census with "complete transparency".

CPI(M) general secretary MA Baby welcomed the decision but stressed that it should be completed in a time-bound fashion.

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav termed the Centre's decision as a "100 per cent victory" for the united strength of the PDA (Backwards, Dalits and minorities) and the INDIA bloc.

Govt revamps National Security Advisory Board

Ex-R&AW chief Alok Joshi appointed head

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 30: The Union government has revamped the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB), appointing former RAW chief Alok Joshi as its new head, along with six other members.

This comes amid a time when tensions between two nuclear-armed nations - India and Pakistan - are mounting following the recent Pahalgam terror attack.

The NSAB is a seven-member apex body that provides expert and strategic input on security-related matters to the government.

Alok Joshi is regarded as one of the country's most esteemed IPS officers, having held various successful assignments during his tenure in RAW and other postings. He is considered an expert in intelligence-driven operations.

The other six newly inducted members of the board are former Western Air Commander Air Marshal PM Sinha, former Southern Army Commander Lieutenant General AK Singh, former Admiral Monty Khanna, Rajiv Ranjan Verma, Manmohan Singh, and B Venkatesh Varma.

B Venkatesh Varma is a retired officer of the Indian Foreign Service. A Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) meeting, chaired by PM, was convened and concluded at the Prime Minister's



residence, which deliberated on various aspects of national preparedness.

Sources indicated that during the CCS meeting, the government reviewed every aspect of preparedness undertaken in the aftermath of the terror attack to deliver a stern response to the perpetrators and promoters of terrorism.

Within the NSAB, the government inducts reputed and experienced individuals outside the official government domain as members of the advisory group, typically former officials with distinguished records of performance and integrity.

Those appointed as members or chairman of the group are drawn from the military, academia, and distinguished members of civil society, with deep expertise and experience in areas such as external security, foreign affairs, defence, science and technology, and economic affairs.

This comes amid a time when tensions between two nuclear-armed nations - India and Pakistan - are mounting following the recent Pahalgam terror attack

21 Manipur MLAs urge PM, Shah to form 'popular govt'

The letters were received separately by the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Home Affairs April 29 and made public Wednesday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, April 30: Twenty-one Manipur MLAs have written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah separately, urging them to form a "popular government" in the northeastern state, which is now under the President's rule, to ensure peace and normalcy.

The Centre had February 13 imposed the President's rule in Manipur, where more than 250 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in ethnic violence between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo groups since May 2023.

The imposition of the President's rule came after Chief Minister N Biren Singh resigned. The state Assembly, which has a tenure till 2027, has been put under suspended animation.

The letters, containing the



same appeal, were signed by 13 BJP MLAs, 3 NPP legislators, 3 Naga Peoples' Front MLAs and two independent members of the Assembly.

The letters stated, "The people of Manipur welcomed the President's rule with lots of hope and expectations. It's going to be almost three months since the President's rule was imposed, but no visible actions to bring peace and normalcy are seen so far."

"There is strong apprehension among the people that the violence may recur in the state. Many civil organisations have come out openly against the imposition of the President's rule.

They have been demanding installation of a popular government in the state," it said.

The legislators claimed in the April 10 letter that these organisations have started "holding public rallies, street corner meetings, instigating the general public, blaming the ruling MLAs for not staking claim to form a popular government and fixing responsibility for the imposition of PR (President's rule) in Manipur".

The letters were received separately by the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Home Affairs April 29 and made public Wednesday, one of the legislators said.

Empowering Bharat's Banking Ecosystem through Language, Intelligence, Innovation

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 30: Bharuwa Solutions Pvt Ltd (BSPL), the technology arm of the Patanjali Group, proudly announces its strategic foray into the Indian banking sector with the launch of an AI-powered, Multilingual (Bilingual) 360° Banking ERP System. This next-generation

platform is designed to revolutionize digital banking by empowering regional, cooperative, and small financial institutions with intelligent, inclusive, and compliant technology.

Bharuwa's cutting-edge CBS platform (B-Banking) is purpose-built to address four critical challenges that have long hindered innovation and

inclusivity in India's banking ecosystem. With India's linguistic diversity, most banking services remain limited to English. BSPL's bilingual solution allows banks to serve customers in both English and their local language—e.g., Gujarati in Gujarat, Punjabi in Punjab—ensuring accessibility and ease of use for all citizens.

In Lord Krishna's land, many temples reject call to boycott Muslims

Recounting a historical example, Goswami said that Bankey Bihari doesn't teach us to discriminate, citing the instance when Emperor Akbar visited Swami Haridas and offered 'itra' (perfume) for the deity, which Swamiji accepted

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mathura, April 30: In the land of Lord Krishna, several prominent temples in Mathura and Vrindavan have pushed back against growing calls for boycotting Muslims - either from entering temples or for business interactions - stressing that devotion (bhakti) knows no religion or caste. This comes almost a week af-

ter the terrorist attack in Kashmir Valley's Pahalgam that left 26 people, mostly holidayers, dead in a targeted attack on them.

"Bhakti is supreme in Brijmandal. It rises above knowledge or even detachment (vairagya). If someone has faith and comes for darshan, why should we oppose it?" asked Gyanendra Kishor Goswami, Rajbhog Seva Adhikari at the

Bankey Bihari temple in Vrindavan.

"This is clearly stated in the first 'Skandh' of the 'Srimad Bhagwat'," he added.

Recounting a historical example, Goswami said, "Bankey Bihari doesn't teach us to discriminate. Akbar came to meet Swami Haridas and offered 'itra' (perfume) for the deity, and Swamiji accepted it."

Goswami also highlighted the integral role that Muslims have historically played in temple traditions.

"They play the 'nafiris' (ceremonial instruments) and sing bhajans for Thakurji. Much of the intricate 'mukut' (crowns) and embroidery work is done



by them. Even Bankey Bihari's attire comes from artisans across India, many of whom follow different faiths. We are not concerned about their reli-

gion - only the devotion in their work."

"Whoever works for Thakurji must do so with a pure heart," he said. Many others also emphasised inclusivity.

"When God didn't stop Raskhan or Rahim from composing bhajans, who are we to stop anyone from praying?" asked Lala Pandit, priest at Danghati Temple in Goverdhan. "Lord Krishna is the god of love. There's no space for hatred in his land." Mahant Dinesh Chaturvedi of the Kali Temple in Mathura echoed this, "How can anyone stop a devotee from entering a temple? Temples are public places. Good and bad people exist in every religion."

Commenting on the practicality of such boycotts, he said, "You can't go around asking every shopkeeper's religion before buying something. Besides, there are many Muslims who've helped tourists in Kashmir. We must not paint everyone with the same brush."

Govind Pandey, priest of the Dauji Temple in Baldev, saw no issue in buying from Muslims either.

"The temple welcomes everyone who wants darshan. The local Muslim community is very cooperative," he said.

However, Mohit Maral Goswami of the Radhaballabh Temple in Vrindavan took a contrary view.

international



Peace is our priority but it should not be mistaken as cowardice. I have always emphasised the importance of the Kashmiris' right to self-determination, as guaranteed by United Nations resolutions

IMRAN KHAN | FORMER PM, PAKISTAN

'SEDE VACANTE' STAMPS

Vatican post offices and selected collectors' shops this week started selling special stamps marking the period between Pope Francis' death and the election of his successor. The so-called "sede vacante" stamps include an image used by the Vatican in official documents in periods between popes: two crossed keys but no papal headgear



of the day note

The (Russian) president remains open to political and diplomatic methods of resolving this conflict



DMITRY PESKOV | SPOKESPERSON, KREMLIN

The issue of a federal structure is nothing more than a raw dream. It has no place in the reality of Syria. I advise (Kurds) not to dream of a federal structure or make decisions that will threaten the region, but rather take steps that will serve the stability of the region

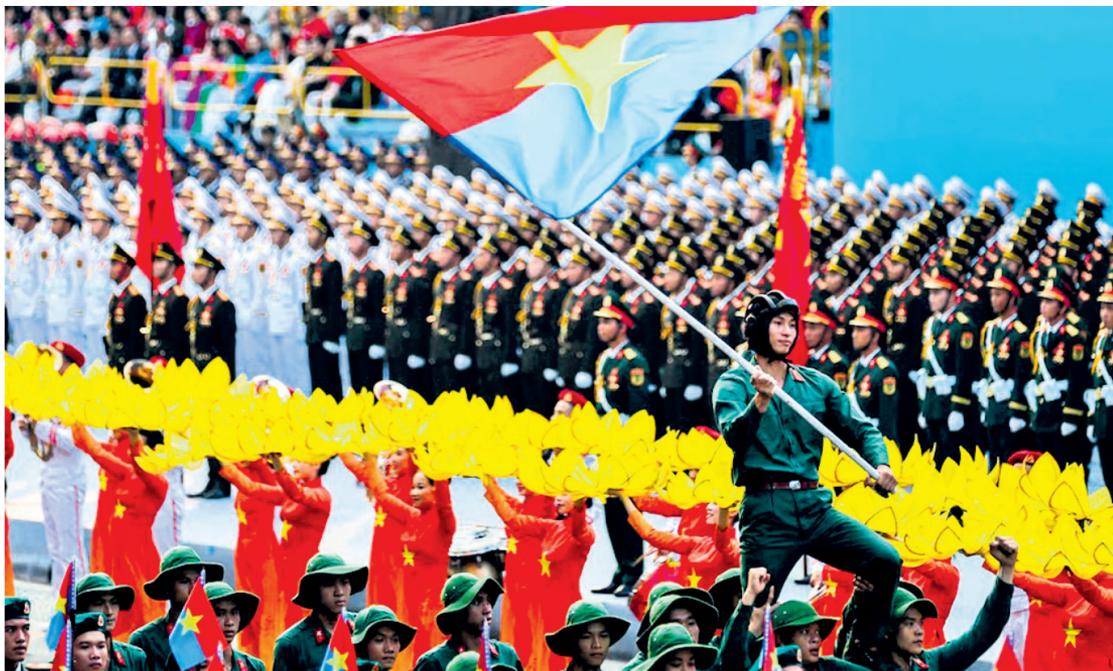


TAYYIP ERDOGAN | PRESIDENT, TURKEY

The heads of our humanitarian agencies are being forced to take impossibly painful decisions as budget cuts have an immediate and often deadly impact on the world's most vulnerable



STEPHANE DUJARRIC | SPOKESMAN, UN



Vietnamese troops march during a parade to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam, April 30

Israeli strikes kill 12, including kids

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem, April 30: Israeli airstrikes on homes in central Gaza killed at least 12 people including children, Palestinian hospital workers said Wednesday, including two young brothers whose bodies arrived in pieces.

Israel has been striking homes, shelters and public areas daily since resuming the war with Hamas last month. It has cut off the territory's 2 million Palestinians from all imports, including food and medicine, for nearly two months.

UN food stockpiles have run out and aid groups say thousands of Palestinian children are malnourished.

Israel says its blockade aims to pressure Hamas to release hostages taken on October 7, 2023. However, the UN high commissioner for human rights warned this week that starving civilians as a military tactic constitutes a war crime.

Israel's war against Hamas

in Gaza has killed more than 52,000 Palestinians, according to the territory's Health Ministry, including more than 2,200 in the six weeks since Israel shattered the ceasefire. Some 1,200 people, mostly civilians were killed in the Hamas attacks of October 7, 2023, which started the war.

STARVATION FEARS

Scores of Palestinians gathered at charity kitchens in Deir al-Balah and Nuseirat to get their only meal for the day as food across the territory runs out. On Wednesday, one kitchen served pasta in a thin tomato sauce, another served just lentils.

Crowds of people pushed against each other and yelled as they held their pots and containers up high in the air in a desperate attempt to not leave empty-handed. "There is starvation. There is no food or thing to drink," said Wafaa, a woman displaced in Nuseirat with eight family members.

PAHALGAM ATTACK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York/London, April 30: Amid rising tensions between India and Pakistan, the US has called on both countries "not to escalate" the conflict. Secretary of State Marco Rubio will speak to their foreign ministers "as early as today or tomorrow".

US State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce at a press briefing Tuesday said that Washington is reaching out to both India and Pakistan "regarding the Kashmir situation" and telling "them not to escalate the situation."

Secretary of State Marco Rubio "expects to speak with the foreign ministers of Pakistan and India as early as today or tomorrow. He is encouraging other national leaders and foreign ministers to reach out to the countries on this issue," Bruce said.

"So it is - again, as I've noted, every day action is being taken, in this case the Secretary speaking directly to his counterparts in India and Pakistan, and we'll - we expect certainly the impact he's usually had with the individuals he's spoken with and certainly with President Trump's leadership, India and Pakistan having those conversations. It's very important for them," Bruce said.

Responding to a question on Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif's comments that Pakistan has "been doing this dirty work for United States", Bruce added "the only thing I'm really prepared to discuss here is the fact that the Secretary of State is going to be speaking

US, UK urge de-escalation



We, of course, are encouraging all parties to work together for a responsible solution. The world is watching this

MARCO RUBIO | SECRETARY OF STATE, US

We take seriously our responsibility for the security of all embassies and High Commissions under the Vienna Convention, so both the Pakistani and Indian High Commissions will receive all the support of the UK state to ensure that they stay safe

HAMISH FALCONER | FOREIGN OFFICE MINISTER, UK

with the foreign ministers of both countries.

"What I can tell you - obviously, we're also monitoring the developments across the board in that region, and we - as you know, at multiple levels, I have to say - are in touch with the governments of India and Pakistan, not just at the foreign minister level, certainly, but at multiple levels. We, of course, are encouraging all parties to work together for a responsible solution. The world is watching this. But I have no additional

Pak's national carrier cancels all flights to and from Gilgit, Skardu and other areas in PoK

details in that regard."

Meanwhile, the UK government called for calm and dialogue between India and Pakistan at a time of heightened tensions in the region following the "horrific terrorist attack" in Pahalgam, as the issue has been raised in Parliament.

Foreign Office Minister Hamish Falconer responded to an "Urgent Question" tabled in the House of Commons Tuesday by British Sikh Labour MP Gurinder Singh Josan on the role Britain is playing in supporting India in bringing the

Pak defence min says chances of conflict with India increasing with passage of time

Islamabad: Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif Wednesday said that the chances of conflict with India were increasing with the passage of time despite efforts by different countries to defuse the tensions between the two neighbours. Asif made the remarks while talking to the media outside the parliament, where he was asked about the latest security situation. "Chances (of conflict) are increasing with the passage of time; they are not decreasing. Though many countries have been trying to avert the situation," he said. Asif also vowed to give a suitable response to India in case of any attack on Pakistan but refused to provide the details of the Pakistani response. "If there is a violation by India, we will respond and the nature of our response will be determined by the Indian action," he said. "There should be no doubt about our response." He expressed his desire that "India will see sense" but added that there was no evidence on ground because there was no decrease in the escalation. Replying to a question, he said may God help to avert the situation of conflict. To another question, he said, "I do not want to speculate about the response by Pakistan but it will be bigger than Indian action".

perpetrators to justice.

He also raised concerns over the regional tensions spilling over onto UK streets in the form of protests, characterised by provocative language and gestures, including "what appears to be a throat-slitting motion by an alleged Pakistan official" and "windows being smashed" at Pakistan's High Commission in London.

"The horrific terrorist attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir on 22 April was devastating... We call on all sides, all community leaders and all involved to call for calm at a time of tension in the region," said Falconer.

"We are aware of reports of the video that my Honourable Friend refers to; the Metropolitan police are investigating, so I will not provide any further commentary on that particu-

lar incident, but it is obviously concerning," he said, with reference to a Pakistani official caught on camera making a threatening gesture towards Indian protesters last week.

On April 22, terrorists opened fire in Kashmir's Pahalgam, killing 26 people, in the deadliest attack in the Valley since the Pulwama strike in 2019. The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), claimed responsibility for the attack.

Meanwhile, in New Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday told the top defence brass that the armed forces have "complete operational freedom" to decide on the mode, targets and timing of India's response to the Pahalgam terror attack, according to government sources.

Ukraine poised to sign mineral resources deal with United States



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, April 30: Ukraine is prepared to sign a landmark mineral resources agreement with the United States in Washington Wednesday, according to two senior Ukrainian officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorised to discuss the matter publicly.

Economy Minister Yulia Svyrydenko is currently in Washington for the final coordination of the agreement's technical details, the sources said.

It wasn't immediately clear whether the Trump administration also was ready to ink the deal.

Trump has said that he wants Ukraine's rare earth elements as a condition of further support in its more than three-year

war with Russia.

The Ukrainian Cabinet is expected to approve the agreement's text before the Washington meeting, after which it will be signed by an authorised government representative.

The deal will then require ratification in the Ukrainian parliament before it can take effect. According to one of the Ukrainian officials, multiple documents are involved - including a main agreement and at least two technical accords outlining the structure and operations of the joint fund.

The official said that the Ukrainian side is generally satisfied with how the agreement has evolved following negotiations between both teams.

The other senior official expressed hope that there would be no further changes from Washington's side.

Ukraine has introduced new provisions to the agreement, aiming to address earlier concerns that the initial US draft, presented in March, disproportionately favoured American interests. Negotiations between the two sides have continued steadily since then.

Trump's fresh policy terminates international students' legal status

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, April 30: The US government has begun shedding new light on a crackdown on international students, spelling out how it targeted thousands of people and laying out the grounds for terminating their legal status.

The new details emerged in lawsuits filed by some of the students who suddenly had their status cancelled in recent weeks with little explanation.

In the past month, foreign students around the US have been rattled to learn their records had been removed from a student database maintained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Some went into hiding for fear of being picked up by immigration authorities or abandoned their studies to return home.

On Friday, after mounting court challenges, federal officials said the government was restoring international students' legal status while it developed a framework to guide future terminations. In a court filing Monday, it shared the new policy: a docu-



ment issued over the weekend with guidance on a range of reasons students' status can be cancelled, including the revocation of the visas they used to enter the US

Brad Banias, an immigration attorney representing a student whose status was terminated, said the new guidelines vastly expand ICE's authority beyond previous policy, which did not count visa revocation as grounds for losing legal status. "This just gave them carte blanche to have the State Department revoke a visa and then deport those students even if they've done nothing wrong,"

Banias said.

Many of the students who had visas revoked or lost their legal status said they had only minor infractions on their record, including driving infractions. Some did not know why they were targeted at all.

Lawyers for the government provided some explanation at a hearing Tuesday in the case of Banias' client Akshar Patel, an international student studying information systems in Texas. Patel's status was terminated - and then reinstated - this month, and he is seeking a preliminary court ruling to keep him from being deported.

B'desh HC orders Hindu leader's release on bail



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, April 30: A bench of Bangladesh High Court Wednesday ordered release of Hindu leader Chinmoy Krishna Das on bail, five months after he was arrested on a charge of defaming the country's national flag, court officials said.

"The two-judge bench declared absolute its earlier rule asking authorities why he should not be granted bail," an official of the High Court said.

The bench comprising Justice Atoar Rahman and Justice Ali Reza granted the bail after the final hearing on their previous rule.

On October 31, a case with Kotwali police station in Chattogram was filed accusing Das and 18 others of disrespecting the Bangladesh national flag.

A former ISKCON leader, Das was arrested at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on November 25 last year.

A spokesperson for the Sammilito Sanatani Jagaran Jote, a Hindu organisation, Das was taken to the court at the south-eastern port city of Chattogram, which sent him to jail rejecting his bail petition the next day.

Das' arrest sparked widespread protests with his followers demonstrating in Dhaka and other places. In the port city, the protest turned violent when assistant government prosecutor Saiful Islam Alif was hacked to death, hours after Das was sent to jail.

The development - less than three months after a mass student-led protest ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina August 5 - also emerged as an issue between Bangladesh and India with New Delhi expressing its concern over his detention. After Hasina fled to India, Muhammad Yunus took over as Chief Adviser of the Interim government on August 8.

"This incident follows the multiple attacks on Hindus and other minorities by extremist elements in Bangladesh. There are several documented cases of arson and looting of minorities' homes and business establishments, as well as theft and vandalism and desecration of deities and temples," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in New Delhi on November 26.

"It is unfortunate that while the perpetrators of these incidents remain at large, charges should be pressed against a religious leader presenting legitimate demands through peaceful gatherings," MEA said and urged Bangladesh authorities to ensure the safety and security of Hindus and all minorities.



I think we'll have a deal with India. The prime minister, as you know, was here three weeks ago, and they want to make a deal
DONALD TRUMP | US PRESIDENT

RUPEE JUMPS 42 PAISE

The rupee surged 42 paise to 84.54 against the US dollar Wednesday as optimism around the US-India trade deal and unabated foreign fund inflows boosted investor sentiments. Besides, weakness in the greenback against major crosses overseas and lower levels of global crude prices supported the domestic unit, forex dealers said.



of the day quote

Today there are less than 50 million consumers who are willing to pay a premium for coffee. However, that cohort is growing massively in double digits... That's why India is an important market for us



PHILIPPE SCHAILLEL | COSTA COFFEE GLOBAL CEO

We remain cautiously optimistic because we work for customers across these industries which could be impacted by tariffs, not us as an industry directly, especially in the largest markets, which is in the US



ROSHINI NADAR MALHOTRA | CHAIRPERSON OF HCL GROUP

India is ready to lead responsibly, collaborate openly and build sustainably as we build an inclusive global energy future



HARDEEP SINGH PURI | UNION MINISTER FOR PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS

Brisk gold buying on Akshaya Tritiya

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: Gold and silver buying in India -- the world's largest gold consumer -- kicked off positively Wednesday's auspicious Akshaya Tritiya festival despite high prices, with jewellers' body GJC projecting gold sales to jump 35 per cent in value terms over the last year.

Consumer footfalls were higher in south India during the first half of the day and were expected to increase in Maharashtra and northern states later due to extreme weather conditions.

Gold prices are trading between Rs 99,500 and Rs 99,900 per 10 grams across different parts of the country, 37.6 per cent higher than Rs 72,300 on Akshaya Tritiya in 2024.

Consumers who had hesitated to buy gold at elevated prices are now purchasing as prices have stabilized from peak levels, All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC) Chairman Rajesh Rokede told PTI.

"We expect gold sale to remain steady at last year's level



of 20 tonnes. However, in value terms, we see 35 per cent increase in gold sale today," he said.

Buying precious metal on Akshaya Tritiya is a tradition widely followed in south India that has gradually spread across the country with increased awareness.

Rokede noted that even consumers aged 25-40 years are buying gold and silver, an emerging trend amid sharp rises in precious metal rates.

Consumers are purchasing jewellery, coins, and bars

based on necessity and budget. "Affordability has been impacted due to rise in gold prices. However, there is strong buying sentiment due to Akshaya Tritiya. Consumers will buy," said World Gold Council India CEO Sachin Jain.

PNG Jewellers Chairman and Managing Director Saurabh Gadgil said consumer sentiment remains upbeat despite record-high gold prices, with steady interest in gold, diamond and silver jewellery.

Nearly 50 per cent of purchases are being financed

through old gold exchanges, allowing customers to manage budgets without compromising on festive or wedding needs, he added.

"While volume growth may see a marginal dip of 8-9 per cent value-wise, we expect to be up by 20-25 per cent, which is a healthy sign of market resilience," Gadgil said.

GSI India Managing Director Ramit Kapur noted an uptick in studded jewellery across key Indian markets, while Aukera CEO Lisa Mukhedkar highlighted the growing importance of lab-grown diamonds during this year's festival.

All India Jewellers and Goldsmith Federation President Pankaj Arora projected sales of about 12 tonnes of gold worth nearly Rs 12,000 crore and about 400 tonnes of silver worth Rs 4,000 crore, totalling an estimated Rs 16,000 crore in business.

Experts said gold demand has not declined in the last three years despite the yellow metal reaching new peaks. India imports 700-800 tonnes of gold annually.

Markets settle flat amid geopolitical tensions

BSE SENSEX

APRIL 30, 2025



Stock	Change
MARUTI	+3.04%
BHARTI AIRTEL	+2.18%
SUN PHARMA	+1.41%
POWER GRID	+1.12%
HINDUSTAN UNILEVER	+0.81%

Stock	Change
BAJAJ FINSERV	-5.45%
BAJAJ FINANCE	-4.99%
TATA MOTORS	-3.22%
SBIN	-2.91%
ULTRATECH CEMENT	-1.87%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 30: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty stayed range-bound for the second consecutive session and ended flat Wednesday in a highly volatile trade amid escalated geopolitical tensions and selling in Bajaj twins.

Sustained foreign fund inflows, however, restricted the markets' decline.

The 30-share BSE benchmark gauge declined 46.14 points or 0.06 per cent to settle at 80,242.24. During the day, it hit a high of 80,525.61 and a low of 79,879.15, gyrating 646.46 points.

The NSE Nifty ended marginally lower by 1.75 points or 0.01 per cent at 24,334.20.

"Nifty extended its consolidation for the second consecutive session, closing flat ahead of key US economic data (Q1 GDP) today. Market sentiment remains cautious due to the ongoing India-Pakistan geopolitical concerns," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Oswal Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd.

From the Sensex firms, Bajaj Finserv dropped over 5 per cent, while Bajaj Finance tanked almost 5 per cent each. Bajaj Finserv Ltd (BFL) Tuesday reported a 14 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 2,417 crore in the fourth quarter ended March 2025.

Meanwhile, NBFC firm Bajaj Finance Tuesday reported a 16 per cent rise in standalone net profit to Rs 3,940 crore in the March 2025 quarter.

Tata Motors, State Bank of India, UltraTech Cement, Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Steel and Asian Paints were among the other laggards from the 30-share pack.

Maruti, Bharti Airtel, Power Grid, Hindustan Unilever and HDFC Bank were among

Pakistan Stock Exchange plunges 3500 points

Islamabad: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) plunged by more than 3,500 points Wednesday as uncertainty took hold due to increasing risk of a showdown with India. Information Minister Atta Tarar said that India was planning military action against Pakistan in 26 to 36 hours, spreading panic in the market. The market maintained a downward trend throughout the day and finally the index closed at 111,326.57, down by 3,545.61 or 3.09 per cent, from the last close of 114,872.18, according to the data provided by the PSX.

the gainers. The BSE smallcap gauge tanked 1.74 per cent and mid-cap index declined by 0.72 per cent.

"Benchmark indices closed largely flat for the second straight session Wednesday in a range-bound market. However, broader mid and smallcap indices closed sharply lower for the day. Markets traded in a narrow range, digesting earnings announcements. There are no clear or strong signals from the macro side to push the markets decisively in either direction. While trade deal optimism persisted, the border situation remained tense," Satish Chandra Aluri, Analyst, Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

Among sectoral indices, industrials dropped 1.20 per cent, services (1.10 per cent), commodities (0.93 per cent), power (0.89 per cent), utilities (0.88 per cent) and financial services (0.72 per cent).

Telecommunication, auto, realty and teck were the gainers.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi index and Shanghai SSE Composite settled lower while Tokyo's Nikkei 225 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng ended higher.

Hero MotoCorp unveils Xtreme 250R & Xpulse 210

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, April 30: Hero MotoCorp Wednesday launched its much-awaited premium motorcycles — the Xtreme 250R and Xpulse 210 — at a grand event hosted by Essen Premia, Cuttack, the state's first and only Hero Premia dealership.

The launch event witnessed the esteemed presence of Hemant Kumar Thacker and Saurabh Thacker, owners of Essen Automobiles, along with Ujjwal Kohli, Area Manager, Hero MotoCorp Ltd., and Sourav Nanda, Territory Manager - Sales, Hero MotoCorp Ltd. Their collective vision and collaboration mark a significant milestone in bringing Hero's premium offerings to the Odisha market.



These two cutting-edge models are exclusively available through Hero Premia dealerships, and as of now, Essen Premia in Cuttack remains the only authorised outlet in the entire state of Odisha offering these models.

The event marks the beginning of a new chapter in premium motorcycling for the region. The launch was attended by industry partners, media representatives, and motorcycling enthusiasts who got a first-hand look at the new machines that promise unmatched performance, design, and technology.

The initiative focused on the theme 'One Safety Culture'—a commitment to fostering a unified approach to safety and risk management across all AM/NS India locations. The first day saw multiple awareness sessions led by the safety team, including discussions on best practices, risk mitigation strategies, and employee

AM/NS India observes World Steel Day for Safety and Health

POST NEWS NETWORK



Paradeep, April 30: Arcelor-Mittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) marked World Steel Day for Safety and Health with a two-day campaign aimed at reinforcing the importance of workplace safety and employee well-being across its operational sites in Odisha. Held on April 28 and 29 the observance featured a series of interactive and engaging events at Paradeep Pellet Plant and the Beneficiation Plant at Dabuna.

The initiative focused on the theme 'One Safety Culture'—a commitment to fostering a unified approach to safety and risk management across all AM/NS India locations. The first day saw multiple awareness sessions led by the safety team, including discussions on best practices, risk mitigation strategies, and employee

responsibilities. A mass housekeeping drive was undertaken by employees, underscoring the value of cleanliness and order in maintaining a safe work environment. Polls and quizzes were conducted to test and reinforce knowledge, while a safety pledge united employees and associates in a shared commitment to prioritise safety above all. The second day brought a more creative and participative tone, with a range of team-building activities designed to instill safety consciousness in a dynamic way. These included hazard hunts, poster and slogan contests, poetry and essay writing competitions, and a drama performance depicting rescue operations. The events saw enthusiastic participation from both plant locations, transforming safety education into an inclusive and engaging experience.

Meta launches AI app

ASSOCIATED PRESS

California, April 30: Working to differentiate itself in the crowded field of artificial intelligence, Meta Platforms has launched a standalone AI app — with a social media component — to compete with OpenAI's ChatGPT.

The Meta AI app, built with the company's Llama 4 AI system. It includes a "discover" feed that lets users see how others are interacting with AI. It also has a voice mode for interacting with the AI.

"It's smart for Meta to differentiate its ChatGPT competitor by drawing from the company's social media roots. The app's Discover feed is like a version of the OG Facebook Feed but only focused on AI use cases," said Forrester research director Mike Proulx. By letting users link their Facebook and Instagram accounts, the Meta AI app "gets a leg up on instantly personalising its user experience with social media content."

Meta has taken a different approach to AI than many of its rivals, releasing it for free as an open-source product. The company says more than a billion people use its AI products each month.

At the Menlo Park, Califor-

nia-based tech giant's inaugural conference, LlamaCon, on Tuesday Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg chatted with Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella in a technical discussion around the speed of AI development and how the technology is shifting both their companies — where AI is already writing code — as well as the world. Acknowledging there is a lot of "hype" around AI, Zuckerberg said "if this is going to lead to massive increases in productivity, that needs to be reflected in major increases in GDP."

"This is going take some multiple years, many years, to play out," Zuckerberg said. "I'm curious how you think, what's your current outlook on what we should be looking for to understand the progress that this is making?"

Nadella brought up the advent of electricity, saying that "AI has the promise, but you now have to sort of really have it deliver the real change in productivity — and that requires software and also management change, right? Because in some sense, people have to work with it differently."

He said it took 50 years before people figured out to change how factories operated with electricity.

US economy contracts in first quarter

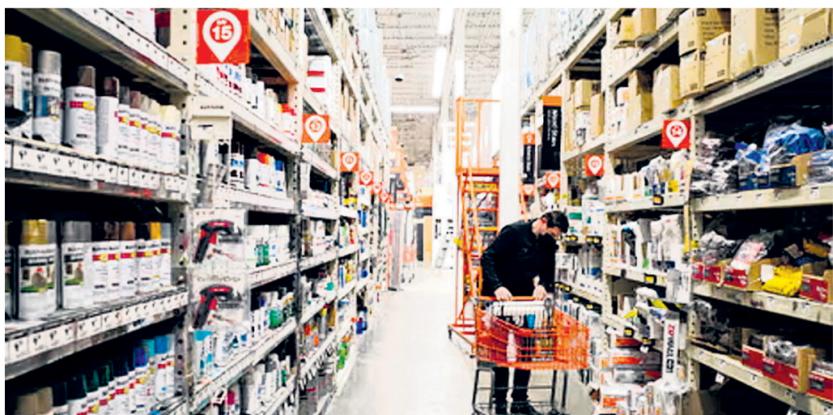
REUTERS

Washington, April 30: The US economy contracted in the first quarter, weighed down by a deluge of goods imported by businesses eager to avoid higher costs, underscoring the disruptive nature of President Donald Trump's often chaotic tariff policy.

Gross domestic product decreased at a 0.3% annualized rate last quarter, the Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis said in its advance estimate of first-quarter GDP Wednesday.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast that GDP increased at a 0.3% pace in the January-March period. The survey was, however, concluded before data Tuesday showed the goods trade deficit surged to an all-time high in March amid record imports, which prompted most economists to sharply downgrade their GDP estimates.

The economy grew at a 2.4% pace in the fourth quarter. But the report likely grossly exaggerated the economy's dimming prospects as consumer spending continued to grow, though at a moderate pace. Coinciding with Trump's



first 100 days in office, it nonetheless reinforced Americans' growing disapproval of his handling of the economy so far. Trump swept to victory last November on voter angst over the economy, especially inflation.

Consumer confidence is near five-year lows and business sentiment has tanked. Airlines have pulled their 2025 financial forecasts, citing uncertainty over spending on non-essential travel because of tariffs, which economists have warned will raise costs

for companies and households.

Given that an unusually large amount of non-monetary gold had accounted for some of the jump in imports, some economists warned against placing too much weight on the GDP number. Others argued that the data did not change the narrative of an economy struggling because of uncertainty due to tariffs.

Inflation picked up last quarter and is expected to rise further through the year. Economists expect the Federal Reserve to resume cutting interest

rates at some point this year.

Trump Tuesday softened the blow of his auto tariffs through an executive order mixing credits with relief from other levies on parts and materials.

A 145% tariff on Chinese goods, which unleashed a trade war between Washington and Beijing, remains in place, as does an array of other import duties. Trump sees tariffs as a tool to raise revenue to offset his promised tax cuts and to revive a long-declining U.S. industrial base.

Shreyas' match-winning fifty, Chahal's 19th-over hat-trick help PBKS win over CSK

CSK crash out of playoffs race

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, April 30: In a high-stakes thriller at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, Punjab Kings (PBKS) edged out Chennai Super Kings (CSK) by four wickets in the final over of a chaotic game that ended CSK's playoff hopes in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 here Wednesday.

A combination of Shreyas Iyer's elegant match-winning fifty and Yuzvendra Chahal's stunning 19th-over hat-trick orchestrated a memorable turnaround for PBKS after Sam Curran had set the game up brilliantly for the hosts with a fiery 88.

Put into bat, CSK rode on a stunning 47-ball 88 from Sam Curran — an innings laced with 9 fours, 4 sixes, and just 10 dot balls. Curran weathered a two-paced pitch and draining conditions to build what looked like a match-winning platform. His brutal takedown of part-timer Suryansh Shedge in the 16th over, which went for 26 runs, shifted the momentum in CSK's favour.

However, PBKS captain Shreyas Iyer's brave decision to hold back Chahal for the end turned out to be game-defining.

Chahal was brought back in the 19th over after bowling just two overs earlier. With MS Dhoni at the crease — known for his struggles against leg-spin — Iyer tossed the ball to Chahal. Dhoni hit a six off the first legal delivery he faced, but holed out the next ball. What followed was an astonishing



hat-trick — Deepak Hooda, Anshul Kamboj, and Noor Ahmad all fell in succession, and CSK collapsed from 185/5 to 190 all out, losing five wickets in seven balls for just six runs.

Chasing 192, PBKS began confidently. Prabhsimran Singh showed his full range early — a flat-batted six over long-on, followed by a cheeky scoop past short fine leg — set the tone. Though his partner Priyansh Arya fell to a sharp Khaleel Ahmed bouncer after a brisk start, PBKS reached 44/1 quickly.

Prabhsimran's approach was both aggressive and smart. He punished Noor Ahmad with a paddle sweep for four and

then stepped out for a six in the ninth over. He brought up his second successive fifty in 31 balls, but his momentum was halted when he miscued a big shot off Noor and was caught at deep midwicket for 54. At that stage, PBKS were 116/2 after 13 overs, needing 75 from 42.

At the other end, Shreyas Iyer was quietly building up. He was on 29 off 25 when Prabhsimran fell, but shifted gears decisively afterwards. A six over long-on off Sam Curran and a flat-batted four through cover showed he had found his timing. He reached his fifty off 32 balls and looked in complete control.

The 17th over by Pathirana

saw Iyer at his creative best — a slot ball launched over long-on, a wristy whip over wide long-on, and a delicate open-faced shot between backward point and short third man demonstrated the full array of his skills. PBKS coasted to 175/3 at the end of that over, needing just 17 off 18 balls.

Shashank Singh played a handy cameo — 23 off 12 — including two sixes. But he gave Dewald Brevis a chance to showcase arguably the best catch of the season. Sprinting along the deep midwicket boundary, Brevis juggled the ball twice, stepped out and back in again multiple times before completing an extraordinary

IPL STANDINGS

TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS
RCB	10	7	3	0.521	14
PBKS	10	6	3	0.199	13
MI	10	6	4	0.889	12
GT	9	6	3	0.748	12
DC	10	6	4	0.362	12
LSG	10	5	5	-0.325	10
KKR	10	4	5	0.271	9
RR	10	3	7	-0.349	6
SRH	9	3	6	-1.103	6
CSK	10	2	8	-1.211	4

relay catch that sent Shashank back. Even with PBKS needing just three runs off nine balls, the game took a chaotic turn. Shreyas Iyer tried to finish things in style but was bowled by a full delivery from Pathirana for a sublime 72 off 41.

Despite Curran's brilliance and moments of fielding excellence, CSK's final overs implosion cost them dearly. Chahal's spell — 4 wickets in the 19th over, including a hat-trick — was one of the standout moments of the IPL season, and Shreyas Iyer's composed yet explosive 72 ensured PBKS didn't let the opportunity slip.

Brief scores:
Chennai Super Kings: 190 all out in 19.2 overs (Sam Curran 88, Dewald Brevis 32; Yuzvendra Chahal 4-32, Marco Jansen 2-30) lost to **Punjab Kings:** 194/6 in 19.4 overs (Shreyas Iyer 72, Prabhsimran Singh 54; Khaleel Ahmed 2-28, Mateesha Pathirana 2-45) by four wickets

SUPERBET RAPID AND BLITZ

Pragg bounces back to claim second spot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Warsaw (Poland), April 30: Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa bounced back from a poor start to climb to second in the overall standings at the end of the first half of the blitz section in the Superbet Rapid & Blitz tournament, part of the Grand Chess Tour.

Praggnanandhaa's efforts held him in good stead for a second day running. The Indian had not done well on the first two days of rapid chess but has come back strongly especially showing his expertise in the blitz section.

With just five minutes given for each game and a three seconds increment after every move is made, Praggnanandhaa played his usual brand of complicated games and ended with three straight wins.

He had started with losses to Deac Bogdan-Daniel of Romania and Levon Aronian of United States but then recovered to beat Firouzja Alireza of France and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave.

In the last three rounds, Praggnanandhaa put it across former world champion Veselin Topalov of Bulgaria, Aravindh and David Gavrilescu of Romania to collect score 5.5 points out of allotted nine games.

On a day when Indian GM Aravindh Chithambaram ran a bit out of steam and could only garner 3.5 points from his nine games, Vladimir Fedoseev of Slovenia cruised to a brilliant 8/9 on the penulti-



mate day and took his tally to a massive 19 points out of a possible 27.

Fedoseev's dominance started right from the beginning now enjoys a huge 3.5 points lead over second place Praggnanandhaa.

Unless there is a massive change in the fortunes of other players, the overall first place seems almost decided for which 4.5 points should be enough for Fedoseev in the remaining nine games slated on the final day.

Aravindh started with 2.5 points from first four games and then could only get one point from the last five.

He will have to fight hard in the second half of blitz in order to finish what he started so well — tying for first place in the rapid section.

SHORT TAKES

Eves to test new combinations vs Oz

Perth: After two matches against the Australia A side, the Indian women's hockey team is set to face the senior team in their next three friendlies at the Perth Hockey Stadium 1 May. India will be looking to improve upon their performance after suffering two defeats in their first two games against Australia A. In the first match, India fought valiantly but fell short and were dealt a 3-5 defeat by the Australia A team. In the second match, India suffered an unfortunate defeat with a narrow scoreline of 2-3. India's 26-member squad, led by captain Salima Tete and vice captain Navneet Kaur, will now face a bigger challenge facing the senior team of Australia over the next three matches. The last time both sides met, India enjoyed a 1-0 victory during the FIH Hockey Pro League 2023-24 and will look to obtain a similar result.

Djokovic withdraws

Rome: Novak Djokovic pulled out of the Italian Open in the midst of a three-match losing streak, shedding doubt on how well he'll be able to play at the upcoming French Open as he continues to seek a record 25th Grand Slam trophy and 100th tournament title overall. The clay-court event in Rome, which will be held next month, posted on social media that Djokovic wouldn't be participating and wrote: "See you next year, Nole," referring to the 37-year-old Serbian star by his nickname. Djokovic has struggled this season, going just 12-6 and dropping his past three contests in a row — at the Miami Open, the Monte Carlos Masters and, Saturday, at the Madrid Open. He has spent more weeks ranked No 1 than any other tennis player but is currently No 5. His only title in 2024 or 2025 was the gold medal he claimed by beating Carlos Alcaraz in the final of the Paris Olympics in August.

B'desh to tour Pak

Islamabad: Pakistan will host Bangladesh for five T20 matches next month with Faisalabad set to stage its first international match after a 17-year hiatus, the Pakistan Cricket Board said Wednesday. The first two games of the series will be played at Faisalabad on May 25 and 27 with Lahore hosting the remaining three games between May 31-June 3. Bangladesh was the last team to play an ODI at Faisalabad in 2008. Bangladesh was due to play three T20s and three ODIs in Pakistan. However, both cricket boards agreed to replace the ODIs with two additional T20s as part of preparations for the T20 World Cup to be co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka in 2026.

NATIONAL OPEN RELAYS

Sprinters rewrite men's 4x100m national record

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandigarh, April 30: A team comprising top sprinters Gurindervir Singh, Animesh Kujur, Manikanta Hoblihdhar, and Amlan Borgohain broke the national record in the men's 4x100m relay at the 2nd Indian Open Relay Competition here Wednesday.

The quartet, representing the Reliance Foundation team, clocked a timing of 38.69 seconds to set a new record in the discipline during the competitions held at Chandigarh's Sector 7 Sports Complex. The previous record of 38.89 seconds was set at Delhi's 2010 Commonwealth Games.

The members of the record-breaking team are part of the Reliance Foundation's High-Performance Centre in association with the government of Odisha in Bhubaneswar.



Boxing future looks promising

India top Asian U-15 Boxing Championships medal tally with 11 golds



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amman, April 30: India topped the Asian U-15 Boxing Championships medal tally with 25 medals, 11 golds, powered by a stellar showing in the girls' category. The young Indian women secured 10 golds and four bronze medals across the 15 weight appearances, winning every title bout they contested in the finals.

The girls' U-15 bouts started with Komal (30-33 kg) narrowly edging Kazakhstan's Aiaru Onggarbek with a 3:2 split decision. Khushi Ahlawat (35 kg) then beat her opponent with

a 4:1 win, while Tamanna (37 kg) sealed hers with a second-round RSC.

Svi (40 kg), Milky Meinam (43 kg), Princi (52 kg), Navya (58 kg), Sunaina (61 kg), Trushana Mohite (67 kg), and Vanshika (70+ kg) all won their respective bouts unanimously, capping a clean sweep in the finals for the girls' U-15 squad.

Speaking on the U-15 contingent's accomplishment from Amman, BFI president-chairman, Interim Committee, Ajay Singh, said, "What an incredible evening for Indian boxing. Hearing the national anthem play eleven times and seeing

India topping the charts filled us all with pride. I heartily congratulate our 25 Under-15 medallists on this outstanding achievement; these are our future Olympic Champions, and they've made the nation proud."

"But, India's campaign isn't over yet. Seven of our Under-17 boxers will step into the ring for finals on the last day, and we'll be backing them all the way from the sidelines. Such performances confirm our belief that India's national anthem will play again and again in the coming years in boxing arenas around the world," he added.

Four Indian boys contest-

What an incredible evening for Indian boxing. Hearing the national anthem play eleven times and seeing India topping the charts filled us all with pride. I heartily congratulate our 25 Under-15 medallists on this outstanding achievement; these are our future Olympic Champions, and they've made the nation proud

AJAY SINGH | PRESIDENT-CHAIRMAN, INTERIM COMMITTEE, BFI

FORMER NATIONAL SHOOTING COACH SUNNY THOMAS DIES



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, April 30: Former India shooting coach Sunny Thomas, under whose tutelage the sport achieved some historic highs including multiple Olympic medals, died Wednesday after suffering a cardiac arrest.

He was 84 and breathed his last in Kottayam where he was based. Thomas is survived by his wife KJ Josamma, sons Manoj Sunny, Sanil Sunny and daughter Sonia Sunny.

He was bestowed with the Dronacharya award in 2001 and was part of the coaching staff during the 2004 Athens Olympics where Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore became the first Indian to win a Games medal in shooting with his silver in the men's double trap competition.

The highest point in Thomas' career came in Beijing when Abhinav Bindra became the first Indian to claim an individual gold medal, bagging the yellow metal in the men's 10M air rifle event.

Cricket retained for 2026 Asian Games

THE MATCHES WILL BE PLAYED IN THE T20 FORMAT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 30: The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) has confirmed that cricket will be a part of the 2026 Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games to be held in Japan from September 19 to October 4. The call to retain cricket was taken during the meeting between the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) and the organising committee (AINAGOC) earlier this week.

"The latest development in the compilation of the sports program came at the 41st meeting of the AINAGOC Board of Directors at Nagoya City Hall on Monday, April 28, when cricket and Mixed Martial Arts were both formally approved," the OCA said. Cricket matches will be played in the T20 format and hosted in Aichi prefecture, although the exact venues are yet to be finalised.



"The venue for cricket will be in Aichi prefecture but the exact location has not been decided. Interest will be high, not only because of cricket's popularity in South Asia in particular but also because the T20 (20 overs per side) format will be included in the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 2028," the OCA said. "This will be cricket's first appearance in the Olympics since 1900 in Paris, where Great Britain beat France by 158 runs in the final of the two-team tournament.

This will be the fourth time cricket features in the Asian Games, following its inclusion in Guangzhou (2010), Incheon (2014), and Hangzhou (2023). The Indian men's and women's teams are the defending champions

Cricket will be among 41 sports featured at the Games, which are expected to see participation from 15,000 athletes and officials representing the

OCA's 45 National Olympic Committees.

Cricket will also feature in 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. It will be cricket's first appearance in the Olympics since 1900 in Paris, where Great Britain beat France by 158 runs in the final of the two-team tournament.

The OCA also confirmed that a "floating Athletes' Village" — a cruise ship docked in Nagoya Port — will accommodate 4,600 athletes and officials.

It will house athletes from several disciplines including archery, basketball 3x3, canoe/kayak (sprint), cycling mountain bike, cycling BMX racing, football (men), gymnastics, handball, judo, kabbadi, kurash, mixed martial arts, rowing, rugby, sepaktakraw, sport climbing, squash, tennis, weightlifting, wrestling and wushu.

However, that cricketers will be accommodated in hotels, alongside athletes from badminton and football.

Kalinga Super Cup

Goa to face Jamshedpur in final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 30: FC Goa breezed into the Kalinga Super Cup summit clash with a crushing 3-1 win over Mohun Bagan SG, riding on second-half goals from Iker Guarrotxena and Borja Herrera, here Wednesday.

The Gaur's, champions in 2019, will face Jamshedpur FC in Saturday's final.

Goals from Brison Fernandes (20'), Guarrotxena (61'), and Herrera (58') sealed a comfortable victory for Manolo Marquez's side over Bastab Roy's young guns.

Later, Jamshedpur made it to the final for the first time, defeating Mumbai City 1-0.

Japanese midfielder Rei Tachikawa scored the all-important goal in the 87th minute to win it for the Red Miners.

Earlier, in a blistering start, Goa constantly pressured Mohun Bagan's defence on the back foot, their high pressing



and high-speed game leaving the Mariners' midfield constantly out of position and disjointed.

To add to that, Goa also brought unpredictability to their set-piece routines, and in the 20th minute, Fernandes capitalised on one to score the opener. From an improvised corner routine, Herrera curled a perfect cross into the danger zone, for Brison to slightly glance into the far corner.