



LEISURE | P2



INTERNATIONAL | P10



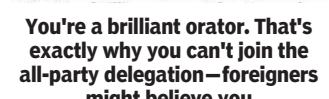
BUSINESS | P11



SPORTS | P12

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## POST NEWS NETWORK

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## QURESHI REMARKS

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Moreover, the button's success encouraged Facebook to take things even further by allowing other digital services to ingrain it into their feedback loops and then, in 2016, added six more types of emotions — “love,” “care,” “haha,” “wow,” “sad,” and “angry.”

## ASSOCIATED PRESS

part of your tribe,'” Reeves said during an interview with this agency. “But it’s very hard to answer the simple question, ‘Well, who invented the Like button?’” Although Facebook is the main reason the Like button

As happens with many innovations, the Like button was born out of necessity but it wasn't the brainchild of a single person. But Facebook unquestionably turned the Like button into a universally understood symbol, while also profiting the

Moreover, the button's success encouraged Facebook to take things even further by allowing other digital services to ingrain it into their feedback loops and then, in 2016, added six more types of emotions — "love," "care," "haha," "wow," "sad," and "angry."



# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You love meeting people, says Ganesha, and you are going to have a wonderful time interacting with the most brilliant people today. You remain a perfectionist as ever, and may spend a fortune to buy that 'perfect' gift to please your sweetheart!

**TAURUS**  
Communication may be poignant with your loved ones today, says Ganesha. Your unpretentious character will seek to safeguard the feelings of others from being hurt. You will learn that total agreement is sometimes twice as seductive in love's intimacies, feels Ganesha.

**GEMINI**  
You need to guard against hurting the sentiments of anyone today. You need to pay greater attention to the problems of your elders and solve their issues. Post noon you may find yourself busy in religious or intellectual pursuits, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
Can too much of love be a bad thing? Well, you will find it today, warns Ganesha. Today you may find your relationship in throes of chaos. There may be an outburst of emotions by both of you. And, if you both share the same sun sign then the situation may get out of control due to such overflow of emotions.

**LEO**  
You will not compromise with your principles today, and will feel satisfied with yourself as a result. However, do not lose your conciliatory approach. You need to be practical and businesslike about your professional affairs, says Ganesha.

**VIRGO**  
Ganesha says you will raise the bar today. You will set higher goals for yourself, and will want to crack the existing barriers. You will be deeply concerned in the afternoon about your finances. Petty matters will lower your spirits. However, Ganesha advises you to climb the next rung in the ladder by spending the evening in spiritual pursuits.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha foresees that today you will chart out your future course of action, so that any steps you take from thereon leads only to success. Sudden and unexpected profits are also on the cards as on the professional front, increased reputation and rewards knock on your door.

**SCORPIO**  
The chemistry between you and your partner would be electrifying. Ganesha foresees a day full of romantic indulgences. Things at home front would be pretty relaxing. You are on a money saving mission today and your bargaining skills would definitely yield benefits.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
The fountain of creativity will be gushing within you today. You may strive to take on new challenges later in the day. Workplace may offer economic gains later in the evening. But do not neglect your health, says Ganesha.

**CAPRICORN**  
You know your cards well, now it all depends upon how you play them to your advantage and boost your business, feels Ganesha. You have an efficient team working for you, but you will need to examine their talents without any biases. If they perform well in absolute terms, you can expect the productivity you require from them, today.

**AQUARIUS**  
If you are associated with law and legal matters, today is a favourable day for you. You will aim for the stars, because you know that even if you can't reach there, you will not end up being in the mud. Later on the day, you will receive some favourable news, feels Ganesha.

**PISCES**  
You need to control the vortex of emotions swirling through you. Your savage mood swings could have a bearing on vital decisions you need to take today. You need to guard against being emotional, be more calculative in your dealings, and think lesser about chasing after money, says Ganesha.



## JENNIFER LAWRENCE OPENS UP ON MOTHERHOOD, POSTPARTUM

Jennifer Lawrence recently opened up about becoming a mother and what she went through when she gave birth to her first child. The actress spoke about this during the press conference after the Cannes premiere of her upcoming film Die My Love, in which she features opposite Robert Pattinson.

## TILDA SWINTON TO STAR IN DEATH IN HER HANDS

Oscar-winning actor Tilda Swinton is set to star in psychological thriller *Death in Her Hands*. Directed by David Lowery, the upcoming film is an adaptation of Ottessa Moshfegh's cult novel with the same name, according to the entertainment news outlet *The Hollywood Reporter*.



# Kubbra's battle with dark past

**Mumbai:** In a recent podcast, actor Kubbra Sait opened up about a deeply personal chapter from her past — her struggles with childhood bullying. Long before her breakout role in Sacred Games, she was teased for her name, hair, and eye colour. "I was bullied for my name, for my hair, for the colour of my eyes," she recalled, her tone calm but reflective. As a child, Kubbra felt isolated and disconnected, unable to understand why she was being targeted for things that were simply a part of who she was.

The impact of the bullying extended beyond fleeting schoolyard jabs; it shaped her self-image. As the years passed, the comments grew more hurtful, intensifying her loneliness. At 13, a personality development and self-esteem course marked a turning point. It was an unusual choice at the time, but it planted the seeds of self-worth.

Theatre became her sanctuary. "I went deep inside myself and found something beautiful," she said. In front of crowds, she found comfort. What once made her feel 'odd' now empowers her.

Today, Kubbra is a voice for authenticity. Her story is a powerful reminder that our differences aren't flaws — they're strengths. "Being different is not your weakness, it's your superpower."

AGENCIES



# Shilpa mantra to burn calories

**Mumbai:** Actress and fitness enthusiast Shilpa Shetty has given out fun tips on how to burn calories by doing cardio.

Shilpa took to Instagram, where she shared a video of herself doing jumping jacks, standing ab crunches and other exercises before she starts dancing on the zumba number.

For the caption, she wrote: "The road to fitness doesn't have to be monot-

onous Who said burning calories can't be fun Fun Cardio - My Way Benefits: • Burns calories, hence fat. Conditions heart and lungs."

This is not the first time that Shilpa has shared her workout routine on social media. The actress often posts details on how to get fitter.

Last month in April, the actress shared a video of herself doing a core workout, where her trainer too was seen doing a slamming workout alongside the actress.

She wrote as the caption: "Abs OR Jabs! Benefits: Better posture, sharper balance, internal organ support and enhanced athletic performance. Sit-ups are a powerful way to activate the entire core, especially the abs. Add a fun vibe, and the

workout becomes even more enjoyable and effective!"

On the professional front, Shilpa Shetty was last seen in *Indian Police Force*, a series directed by Rohit Shetty and Sushwanth Prakash.

IAN S



# Nimrat on gendered expectations

**Mumbai:** Bollywood actress Nimrat Kaur recently opened up about the gendered expectations and societal pressure she faced early in her career. Despite working in the industry for several years, her family didn't consider acting a "real" profession until she starred opposite Irrfan Khan in *The Lunchbox*. "My work was finally taken seriously because there was Irrfan in the project," Nimrat shared. Before that, she was frequently reminded it was time to "settle down" and get married, with her stay in Mumbai dismissed as a temporary phase of fun.

During her initial years, Nimrat lived paycheck to paycheck, doing ad films and small roles. Her family viewed her pursuit of acting as a hobby rather than a career. "I didn't know where my next paycheck was coming from," she recalled. Despite the struggle, she remained focused and determined.

Now, Nimrat is unapologetic about taking her time with marriage. She believes that marriage isn't a universal solution for feeling settled. "People are most unsettled in marriages and unhinged in marriages that are a front. That to me is more worrisome than a woman, who by virtue of her life, isn't married at this point in time," she said. She emphasised the importance of living authentically and rejecting imposed conditioning.

AGENCIES



# Wamiqa about her childhood dream

**Mumbai:** Actress Wamiqa Gabbi, who has wrapped up shooting for *Bhoot Bangla*, called being part of Akshay Kumar and Priyadarshan's movie "a childhood dream."

Wamiqa took to Instagram stories, where she shared a picture from the shoot featuring him and Akshay near a waterfall.

"From hysterically enjoying all 'Akshay Kumar Priyadarshan' movies all my life to now being part of their world. This had been a childhood dream. Thank you to the coolest @ektarkapoor ma'am, the most amazing @akshaykumar sir & the sweetest @priyadarshan.official sir."

She described the experience as fun and fantastic.

"It was a FUNtastic experience cannot wait for you to experience #Bhoot Bangla Aaaaand my second film with my most favourite @tabutiful ji," Added Wamiqa.

Co-produced by Faara Sheikh and Vedant Baali, the story for *Bhooth Bangla*

has been penned by Akash A Kaushik with screenplay by Rohan Shankar, Abilash Nair, and Priyadarshan. The dialogues for the

much-awaited drama have been provided by Rohan Shankar.

Along with Akshay and Gabbi, the project also has Tabu, Paresh Rawal, Sharman Joshi, Mithila Palkar, and Jaaved Jaaferi in prominent roles, along with others.

IAN S

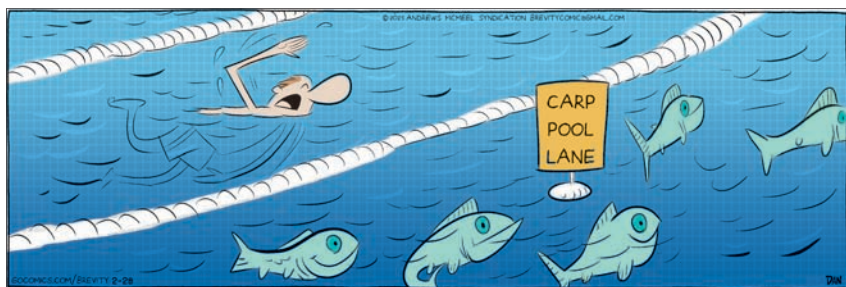
## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

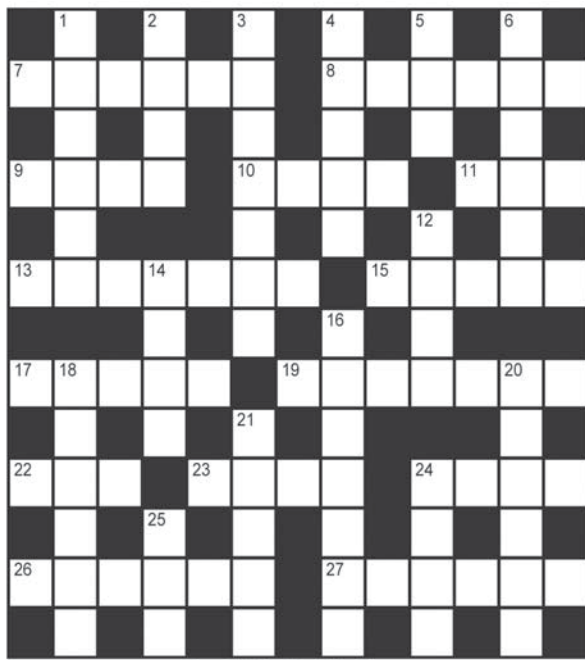


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



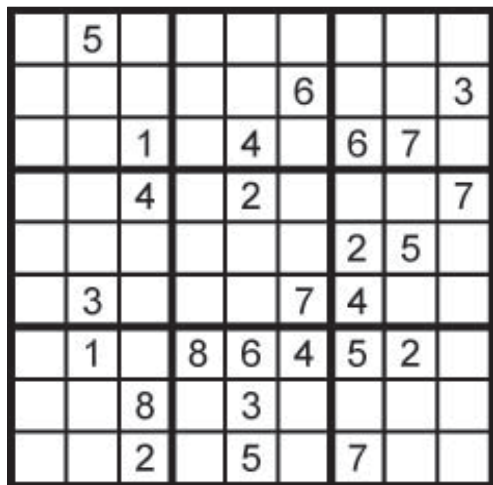
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- |                     |                              |                      |
|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Across</b>       | 23 Free ticket               | 4 Infectious disease |
| 7 Cure              | 24 Small pigeon              | 5 Combine            |
| 8 Accord            | 26 Reddish blue              | 6 Kind of movie      |
| 9 Outback birds     | 27 Make like Sherlock Holmes | 12 Race track shape  |
| 10 Slangy denial    |                              | 14 Wind instrument   |
| 11 Ornamental vase  |                              | 16 Ebb               |
| 13 On the way (2,5) | <b>Down</b>                  | 18 Peaceful          |
| 15 Stave off        | 1 Religious address          | 20 Tyro              |
| 17 Fancy tie        | 2 Animal shelters            | 21 Pago Pago's place |
| 19 Part of Denmark  | 3 Young swans                | 24 Extinct bird      |
| 22 Debate position  |                              | 25 Jar part          |

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

## SUDOKU

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

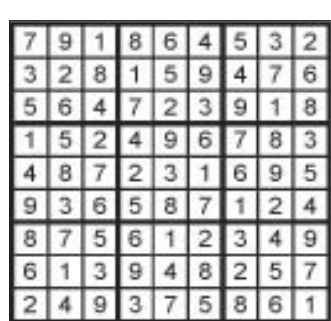


## SOLUTIONS

## CROSSWORD



## SUDOKU









In a powerful retaliation to Pahalgam terrorist attack that claimed the lives of 26 innocent tourists April 22, Indian Armed Forces launched a series of coordinated strikes on Pakistani terror camps on the night of May 6.

India launched airstrikes targeting nine terrorist camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) in an operation code-named 'Operation Sindoor'. What followed was a three-day intense conflict between the two nations. On the nights of May 7, 8 and 9, Pakistan launched missiles and drones targeting several border areas - from Jammu and Kashmir to Gujarat. It also targeted New Delhi and Golden Temple in Punjab. However, India's advanced air defense systems intercepted and neutralised the flying projectiles in skies. Russian-made S-400 missile defense system, also known as *Sudarshan Chakra*, played a key role in these precise and calibrated responses by India.

Indigenous systems such as Akash missile defence system also helped thwart Pakistani aggression by neutralizing countless drones and missiles. India responded swiftly and decisively from land, air and sea. The Indian forces destroyed key components of Pakistan's air defense and radar infrastructure, while carrying out strikes on 11 airbases and three other military installations, leaving Pakistan's air retaliation capabilities completely crippled.

Rattled by India's military might, Pakistan's military and government came on their knees and begged for a ceasefire by May 10 afternoon. India responded to the request affirmatively and temporarily paused its counter-terror operations against Pakistan-backed terror outfits. Indian Armed Forces have been widely applauded across the country, and internationally, for their valour. Every countryman has expressed gratitude as the bravery of our soldiers continues to receive salutes and respect from across the world. The men in uniform have made every Indian proud.

# Every Indian is proud of you: PM

“Every Indian is proud of you... you have written history. I have come for your blessings. You are an inspiration for this and the coming generations. I want to salute the Army, Navy and Air Force,” said Prime Minister Narendra Modi while expressing his deep gratitude to the armed forces following the successful strikes against Pakistan as part of Operation Sindoor.

“The terrorists dared us... but you hit them front-on. You wiped out their terror bases and killed 100 terrorists. They have now realised that if they try to attack us, the result will be their destruction... massive destruction,” PM Modi said during his address to air warriors at the Adampur Air Force base in Punjab.

He praised India's armed forces for their massive re-



sponse to the Pahalgam terror attack. 'Operation Sindoor'— India's swift, coordinated military response -- targeted nine terror bases in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir,

Operation Sindoor, which he described as India's first tri-service combat operation since the 1971 war. “India's 'Laxman Rekha' against terrorism is crystal clear now. If another terror attack occurs now, India will give a reply – a solid reply. We saw this during the surgical strike, during the air strike. Now, Operation Sindoor is India's new normal,” he asserted.

Taking aim at Pakistan's military support for terror outfits, PM Modi declared: “Jis Pakistani sena ke bharse ye aatanki baithe the, Bharatiya sena, Bharat ki Air Force aur Bharatiyon ne us Pakistani sena ko bhi dhool chata di hai. (The terrorists who were relying on the Pakistani Army — the Indian Army, the Indian Air Force, and the people of India have made that Pakistani Army bite the dust).”

He added that India's growing military strength should serve as a deterrent. “Our drones, our missiles, just thinking about them will keep Pakistan sleepless for days.”

Issuing a sharp warning to Pakistan and its supported terror groups in the aftermath of India's strikes on terror camps and infrastructure as part of Operation Sindoor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made it clear that India's new doctrine on terrorism involves striking at the source, deep inside enemy territory.

“Hum ghar mein ghus kar mareng aur bachane ka ek mauka tak nahi denge,” the Prime Minister thundered.

As the speech ended with chants of 'Bharat Mata ki Jai', the message was clear: India will no longer tolerate cross-border terrorism and will respond not just in defence, but with pre-emptive precision.

## This was a trailer

Sending a clear and firm message to Islamabad, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has made it clear that Operation Sindoor is not yet over as the current ceasefire means that India has kept Pakistan on 'probation' on the basis of its behaviour. “If the behaviour improves, it is fine; but if there is any disturbance, harshest punishment will be given,” said the defence minister while addressing the air warriors at Gujarat's Bhuj Air Force station recently. “Our actions were just a trailer, we will show the full picture, if need be. Attacking and eliminating terrorism is the new normal of new India,” he said.

Singh said Pakistan has again started trying to rebuild the terror infrastructure destroyed by India recently and that Islamabad will “spend the tax collected from the common citizens of Pakistan to pay around Rs 14 crore to Masood Azhar, the head of the terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad” and a UN designated terrorist.

The Bhuj air force base was one of the military installations that Pakistan targeted during the four-day confrontation between the two militaries. Singh cautioned against providing financial support to Pakistan saying any such assistance would be no less than terror funding.



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**BrahMos: The supersonic spear**

India's BrahMos supersonic cruise missile made its combat debut during Operation Sindoor May 10, when the Indian Air Force launched precision strikes on Pakistani airbases. The attacks caused major damage, reportedly wiping out 20 per cent of Pakistan's air force assets. Jointly developed by DRDO and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyeniya, BrahMos is one of India's most advanced missiles, capable of speeds up to Mach 3 and precision within one metre. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh aptly called it “not just a weapon but a message of India's military strength.”

**Akash missile system: India's 'Iron Dome'**

Pakistan's missile and drone attacks were effectively intercepted by India's Akash missile system, showcasing its defensive prowess. Developed by DRDO and built by Bharat Dynamics, Akash is a short-range surface-to-air missile capable of engaging four aerial targets simultaneously at a range of 25 km. Often compared to Israel's Iron Dome, Akash stands out with its electronic counter-measure (ECCM) features.

**Samar air defence: A second protective cover**

As Pakistan launched drones and missiles, India's air defence held firm, thanks to the Samar (Surface to Air Missile for Assured Retaliation) system. Developed by the IAF and Indian industries, Samar counters low-flying threats like drones with advanced radar and precision missiles. D-4 – the drone destroyer Alongside the Akash and Samar systems, India deployed DRDO's D-4 anti-drone system to counter Pakistan's aerial onslaught. The D-4 uses electronic jamming, spoofing, and laser-directed energy weapons to detect, disable, and destroy both standard drones and advanced UAVs.



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# SALUTES INDIAN ARMED FORCES

TUESDAY | MAY 20, 2025 | BHUBANESWAR

## Multiple losses for Pak

Pakistan had to pay a heavy price for abetting and sponsoring terrorism on Indian soil as the quantum of devastation and losses inflicted by Operation Sindoor emerged. Pakistan air force has suffered severe losses, with 20 per cent of its infrastructure destroyed in Indian strikes. Many of its fighter jets were destroyed, while more than 30-40 of its armymen are understood to have succumbed. India targeted at least 10-11 airbases in Pakistan, many of whom are known to host the country's key fighter jets. The strikes caused severe damages, destroying ammunition depots and airbases such as Sargodha



and Bholari, where the PAF's F-16 and J-17 fighter aircraft were said to be stationed. India targeted military installations and the airbases of

Nur Khan in Chaklala, Rafiqui in Shorkot, Murid in Chakwal, Sukkur, Sialkot, Pasrur, Chuni-an, Sargodha, Skardu, Bholari and Jacobabad. The satellite images showed the scale of destruction at many airbases including Shahbaz airbase in Jacobabad. High-resolution satellite images revealed the damages at the airbases. Over 600 drones launched by Pakistan were simply swatted out of the sky while the rest were repelled by Army Air Defence (AD) units, which were swiftly deployed along the western front. In the satellite imagery, large craters on the runways and damaged aircraft hangars were seen.

## A decisive blow to terror infra in Pak

Operation Sindoor signalled a doctrinal shift in India's strategy and also underlined a new red line that Pakistan could no longer ignore. On the intervening night of May 6-7, India annihilated around a dozen high-value terrorists in Pakistan. Among those killed were Yusuf Azhar, IC-814 hijacker and brother-in-law of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) chief Masood Azhar, and Abu Jundal (Mudassar), head of Lashkar-e-Taiba's Muridke base. The son of the 2016 Nagrota attack mastermind and several others involved in attacks across Jammu and Kashmir were also killed. Indian intelligence estimates that 130-140 terrorists were neutralized in precision strikes, conducted in retaliation for the Pahalgal killings.


## Akashteer: The unseen wall

India's indigenously-developed Akashteer air defence control and reporting system played a pivotal role in neutralising waves of Pakistani aerial attacks including drones and missiles during the four-day military confrontation with Pakistan. While Pakistan relied on imported HQ-9 and HQ-16 systems that failed to intercept Indian strikes, Akashteer showcased India's dominance in automated air defence, the defence ministry said, adding that it is the unseen wall that


stopped a barrage of missiles and drones fired by Pakistan. Manufactured by state-run Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Akashteer was inducted into Indian Army around a year ago. "In the dark skies, a new kind of warrior awakened. It did not roar like a fighter jet or flash like a missile. It listened. It calculated. It struck," the defence ministry said. "This invisible shield,

Akashteer, is no longer a concept confined to defence journals. It is the sharp edge of India's air defence, the unseen wall that stopped a barrage of missiles and drones on the night of May 9 and 10, when Pakistan launched its deadliest attack on Indian military and civilian areas," it said. "Akashteer has demonstrated that it sees, decides, and strikes faster than anything the world has fielded," the ministry said in a statement. Explaining the air defence system's features, the system reduces the possibility of friendly fire, allowing rapid engagement of hostile targets while ensuring the protection of aircraft in contested airspace.






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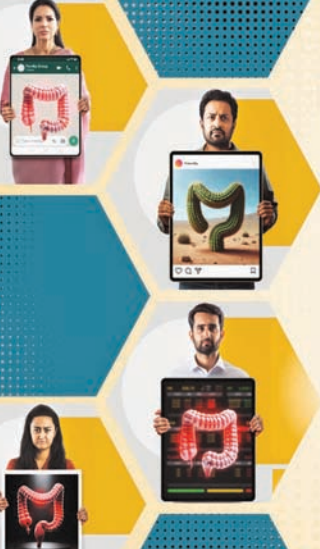
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Love is the keynote, Joy is the music, Knowledge is the performer, the Infinite All is the composer and audience.



# Nation First

After a laudable show of unity by the Indian government and the Opposition on the terrorist attack in Pahalgam on 22 April and the subsequent Operation Sindoor to take on cross-border terrorism and Pakistan’s collusion in it, the two sides of India’s political establishment appear to be squandering the good will earned and are now showcasing their disunity and enmity towards each other. Even a national crisis of monumental proportions for which precious lives have been snuffed out, fails to prompt them to rise above their familiar partisan politics. The spectacle of a fight between the government at the Centre and the Congress over the nomination of leaders to visit countries in an outreach programme to present India’s case in the conflict lowers the country’s image before the international community. In another development, a minister belonging to the ruling BJP from Madhya Pradesh has disgraced the nation with his purported derogatory remarks on a woman army officer, who became a prominent face of Operation Sindoor. The court is seized of the matter and has directed the police to lodge an FIR against the minister. On the other hand, a professor of a reputed university has been arrested in BJP-ruled Haryana for airing remarks that he believes did not breach any laws of the land as alleged by the police and the Haryana State Commission for Women (HSCW). The Supreme Court agreed on 19 May to urgently hear the matter.

Surprisingly, the BJP leadership at the central or state level is yet to condemn the minister’s remarks that would surely have attracted provisions of the draconian Sedition Laws, had they been made by anyone not belonging to the ruling party. The same party has wasted no time in arresting the professor who claimed his patriotism is beyond question and his criticism was very much within the Constitutional provisions of free speech.

The Narendra Modi government announced the names of seven delegations who would explain the country’s position on the handling of the latest terrorist attack and confrontation with Pakistan. The initiative is praiseworthy for bringing together representatives from the ruling party and the Opposition, diplomats and strategic experts since it demonstrates, before the world, that India is speaking with one voice on the heinous killings perpetrated by terrorists. That India is an example of the concept of unity in diversity needs to be loudly and forcefully spelt out globally, even though that image has suffered a massive jolt during the past few years when pluralism has far too often become a casualty. In the past the Narasimha Rao government showed the same sagacity by choosing then Opposition leader AB Vajpayee to represent the country in the UN. Both rose above narrow political considerations and enhanced the image of unity in the country in a remarkable manner.

But in the present case, both the ruling party and the Congress have unseemly let their petty politics get the better of national interests. The Congress sent a list of its leaders to be included in the outreach committees, which was mostly rejected by the government. Instead, the latter selected Congress leaders of its choice. The list of Congress nominees, which excludes some prominent and most articulate voices on international affairs, lays bare its own narrow, internal squabbles. On the other hand, the government should have shown broadness by not foisting its choice on the Congress and accepting its nominees. If it had prepared its own list beforehand, there was no need for asking the Congress to depute its members.

The arrest of the professor at this very crucial juncture is a disturbing and unwarranted development. This is more so when one considers the minister in the BJP government in MP called Colonel Sofiya Qureshi the “sister” of terrorists and he is still not censured by his party, not to speak of sacking him from the state cabinet. This is no time for exacerbating communal tension or stifling independent voices critical of the government. To note that the Congress has objected to the unilateral fashion of choosing its MPs by the government has already dented the image of the parliamentary groups that are to go to various countries to project India’s unified stand. Added to this is the withdrawal of the TMC from this initiative. The government should have consulted with Opposition parties’ leaders and that would have given a much better image to the country. Sadly, here also the desire to demonstrate one-upmanship is proving negative for India.

WISDOM CORNER

“If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.”

HENRY DAVID THORAEAU

“All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.”

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

“Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood. All is riddle, and the key to a riddle is another riddle.”

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

■ 1862: US Homestead Act signed. On this day in 1862, U.S. President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act, which provided 160 acres of public land virtually free of charge to those who had lived on and cultivated the land for at least five years.

■ 1873: Blue jeans are patented. Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis invented the garment, which today represents one of the most popular types of trousers worldwide.

■ 1882: Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy secretly formed the Triple Alliance, a treaty organization that provided for mutual protection against attacks by other European powers until Italy entered World War I.

■ 1902: Cuba gained its independence from the United States, which had taken control of the island in 1899 after defeating Spain in the Spanish-American War.

■ 1927: Charles Lindbergh takes off on the first solo non-stop transatlantic flight. He departed from Long Island in the United States and arrived in Paris, France at 22:22 on the next day.

■ 1940: The first prisoners arrive at Auschwitz concentration camp. Auschwitz was the biggest extermination camp during World War II. From 1940 to 1945, the Nazi regime murdered at least 1.1 million people here.

FOCUS

MULTILATERALISM

DEVELOPMENT

DESTRUCTION



If wealthier countries refuse to provide for the global common good, the multilateral system as we know it will not survive

Toward the end of the ancient Indian epic the Mahabharata, Krishna’s Yadava clan self-destructs. Many dark omens presage their downfall: nature behaves erratically and pests multiply. Sin, deception, and violence proliferate, eroding trust and solidarity. Clan members humiliate and insult wise elders. When Krishna’s extended family goes on a picnic, the men get drunk, argue, and attack each other, until eventually all of them are dead.

This cautionary tale has gained new resonance as geopolitical tensions – including in South Asia – escalate, and many countries embrace protectionist policies. US President Donald Trump’s second administration has contributed significantly to the current fragmentation and disorder. But other wealthy countries have exacerbated the situation by failing to show any real solidarity in response to Trump’s hostile policies. The lack of development cooperation is a prime example of this growing appetite for mutually assured destruction. To be sure, aid from donor countries was already declining, and recent events have exposed the system’s injustices. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted Western governments’ greed, undermining others’ trust in their global leadership. Moreover, the fact that these governments have directed most of their dwindling foreign-aid budgets to Ukraine since Russia’s 2022 invasion, diverting funds away from other war-torn and desperately poor countries, has underscored the largely self-serving approach to such “charity” flows.

Still, it is surprising – and dispiriting – that other donor countries have not stepped

up after Trump terminated almost all US foreign-aid funding and programming. This would have been the obvious thing to do, not necessarily out of solidarity, but simply because of geopolitical self-interest.

For starters, Trump’s indiscriminate attacks on allies and rivals alike have demonstrated the necessity of coordinated action, which requires building alliances, supporting multilateralism, and cultivating soft power. One easy and relatively cheap way to do that is by continuing to support multilateral institutions. Such funding may also defuse some of the anger that many people in the Global South feel about the Western world’s complicity in the ongoing decimation and mass killings in Gaza.

Moreover, the massive reduction in US direct aid and financing for international organisations will hinder the provision of global public goods, including health and climate stability. The concept of global public investment suggests that all countries have a stake in solving these challenges, and should thus contribute resources to addressing them, according to

their means, and distribute the collected funds based on need and impact. But the response of most rich countries has so far been appalling. Instead of scaling up foreign assistance, several European governments have slashed it, citing the need to channel funds to defense investment. As a result, some of the most immediate needs that fall under a global public investment framework are going unmet.

This is especially baffling because the amounts required to plug the development-financing hole left by the United States are so small as to be trivial. For example, Trump’s withdrawal of the US from the World Health Organization – which remains absolutely critical for managing global health threats – means that the WHO faces a \$1.9 billion budget shortfall in 2026-27 – a gap that rich countries and even most large middle-income countries could easily afford to fill.

It’s a similar story at other international organizations. The United Nations World Food Programme faces an estimated 40% reduction in funding – equal to roughly \$4 billion. The WFP, which served more than 100 million

people in 2024 and won the Nobel Peace Prize five years ago, must now downsize its staff by nearly one-third (around 6,000 positions worldwide) and reduce the amount of life-saving food that it provides, because no other countries have offered to offset the shortfall.

Similarly, the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), which relied on the US for more than 40% of its financing, will need to cut more than half of its workforce and reduce or eliminate some of its essential programmes. (Switzerland and the United Kingdom, two other major UNAIDS funders, have likewise reduced their contributions). That could lead to six times more HIV infections and a 400% increase in AIDS deaths by 2029, as well as the emergence of new strains, which would have negative repercussions for all countries. But the organization’s budget gap is a modest \$8 million – the same shortfall facing the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which has to lay off 20% of its staff.

Given these minuscule sums, filling the gap left by the US would have a negligible fiscal impact on traditional donors and large middle-income countries. But only a handful of countries, like South Korea, have responded to the funding crisis, preventing essential organizations’ collapse and enabling them to function properly – for now. If wealthier countries refuse to provide for the global common good, the multilateral system as we know it will not survive.

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

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SPECTRUM

SOCIETY

# Scapegoating multiculturalism

Migrants work as doctors and nurses, sustaining vital health services. They serve as teachers and lecturers in schools, colleges, and universities, helping to develop and disseminate knowledge. Migrants also work as chefs and cooks in hotels and restaurants, providing essential services for leisure and hospitality. They operate as drivers of trains, buses, and taxis, maintaining transportation networks. Migrants contribute as scientists, engineers, construction workers, cleaners, and agricultural labourers who produce our food. Migrants serve as soldiers and excel as football and cricket players. Migrants not only bring national and international glory but also bring a diverse set of skills and competencies that sustain the European economy. Their diverse cultural backgrounds not only enrich democratic diversity but also deepen multicultural society in Britain and Europe.

However, migrants and multiculturalism are often blamed for the persistent problems in the UK and Europe. It has become widely accepted in much of Western Europe today that migrants are a source of trouble. Anti-migrant propaganda and anti-multicultural narratives undermine migrants’ essential contributions and reinforce harmful stereotypes. Flawed political narratives are deliberately manufactured to reinvent a non-existent national identity in Britain and a fabricated European identity across the continent, both based on imaginary shared values. In reality, the historical foundations of shared values that most closely bind Britain with other Western European countries are feudalism, colonialism, racism, capitalism, and imperialism—often branded as a collective foundation of a glorified past. The British Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, has warned that the UK risks becoming an ‘island of strangers’ due to migration, highlighting the need for stronger visa restrictions. Many people were not only uncomfortable but also surprised by the conservative tone of the Labour Party PM during his Downing Street press conference ahead of the publication of an immigration white paper. His speech echoes Enoch Powell’s infamous 1968 ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech, in which Powell warned of the so-called dangers of multiculturalism and claimed that white people were becoming ‘strangers in their own country.’

Historically, there is absolutely no surprise in the conservative content of Starmer’s speech, which not only panders to white supremacists in Britain but also to those in a racialised Europe.

Much of the political leadership scapegoats secular multiculturalism and blames migrants for the various predicaments faced by Britain and Europe. This is a deliberate political strategy to escape accountability and deflect attention from leadership failures, exonerate the failures of capitalism, and obscure its inherent crises—conditions that provide the lifeblood for far right-wing and reactionary politics to flourish across Britain and Europe. Contrary to dominant narratives and propaganda, it is not migrants or multiculturalism that are responsible for the destruction of livelihoods and sources of income. Despite state support, capitalism has failed to generate adequate employment and income for the majority of the population across the continent.

Migration is neither automatic nor spontaneous, nor is it simply driven by the emotions or personal choices of migrants. Rather, it is deeply rooted in the legacies of European colonialism, wars, conflicts, and ongoing neocolonial strategies of resource exploitation. These forces compel people to leave their homes and livelihoods in search of safety, stability, and the means to survive. However, the alienating, individualistic nature of European culture—combined with the absence of

meaningful conditions for assimilation—often compels migrants to rely on their own cultural identities as a means of coping with the harsh realities of a capitalist society, where migrant workers are forced to work overtime just to cover basic living expenses. This reliance on cultural identity is often misrepresented and used to construct illiberal stereotypes about migrants to undermine their contributions in the making of modern Britain and Europe. European capitalism and its accompanying culture reduce migrants to mere economic units—numbers on Excel sheets in foreign offices and border security systems. This reductive approach undermines the very foundation of human dignity that binds individuals to one another.

As reactionary politics fuels anti-migrant sentiment worldwide, it is more important than ever to build solidarity among workers. Workers have no country to hide in, only each other to defend in the face of the onslaught by reactionary corporations, states, and governments. This solidarity is essential to building workers’ unity and upholding the ideals of workers’ internationalism.

*The writer teaches at the London Metropolitan University.*

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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)



B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

**Real Mr Cool**

Sir, Doing full justice to his name, British climber Kenton Cool climbed Mt Everest for the nineteenth time, breaking his own record for the most summits by a non-Nepali (Sherpa). Noteworthy is the fact that Cool was once told he would not walk unaided again after a rock-climbing accident broke both his heel bones. Talking of records, Nepali climber Kami Rita Sherpa, 55, is also attempting to break his own world record for the most Everest summits with his 31st climb. We wish him Godspeed and good luck.

*Avinash Godbole, DEWAS*

**Health crisis**

Sir, India has more than one hundred and thirty five million obese people, highest only after the US, of which fifteen million are children. Both undernutrition and overnutrition are problematic. If calorie consumption surpasses calorie burnt then obesity may set in. Diabetes mellitus and hypertension are two important lifestyle deviations that can lead to a series of serious diseases. Smartphones are versatile but spending a lot of time with it can reduce the portability of children keeping them confined to their new comfort zones – chair and bed with sweets, snacks and aerated drinks. A study has shown that more than five hours of interrupted or continuous use of smartphones for more than six months can bring in unwanted changes. Besides conjunctivitis, the blue glow emitted from smartphones may cause loss of eye sight due to macular degeneration.

*Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA*

**Protocol breach**

Sir, This refers to “CJI flags protocol breach.” **Orissa POST**, May 19. I am sorry to comment that this degree of disrespect to the Chief Justice of India by Maharashtra’s key government officials speaks volumes of the fact that one organ of the Constitution lacks respect for another and the consequences may be far reaching. The existing protocol very well demands that whenever the CJI will visit any state for the first time, the respective state government key officials need to be around him. I am at a loss why the Maharashtra government is not mentally prepared to exchange mutual respect?

*Arun Gupta, KOLKATA*



# UP: Campaign to end child labour by 2027



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, May 19:** Uttar Pradesh government has launched a comprehensive state-wide campaign aimed at eradicating child labour by 2027, an official statement said Monday.

The multi-pronged approach focuses on awareness, education and rehabilitation to ensure that every child in the state is given opportunities for growth, learning and a dignified future instead of being forced into labour.

Special awareness programs are scheduled for June 12, coinciding with the World Day Against Child Labour, to further strengthen the campaign, the statement said.

It said the campaign will be intensified through coordinated efforts across various departments of the government.

According to the statement, 10,336 child labourers have been identified so far because of the state government's initiatives. Between 2017-18 and 2024-25, as many as 12,426 child labourers have been rehabilitated educationally, enabling them to return

**The multi-pronged approach focuses on awareness, education and rehabilitation to ensure that every child in UP is given opportunities for growth, learning and a dignified future instead of being forced into labour**

to school and start afresh.

Additionally, the government has supported the families of these children, giving economic assistance to 1,089 families to prevent them from forcing their children into work.

Under the 'Bal Shramik Vidya Yojana', 2,000 working children have been enrolled in schools and given financial aid to ensure that their education is uninterrupted. The scheme not only promotes education, but also works to transform social attitudes towards child labour, it said.

The government has also taken a firm stance against bonded labour. A total of 1,408 bonded labourers, between 2018-19 and 2014-25, have been rehabilitated and are receiving financial assistance amounting to ₹18.17

■ 10,336 child labourers have been identified so far because of the state government's initiatives

■ Between 2017-18 and 2024-25, as many as 12,426 child labourers have been rehabilitated educationally, enabling them to return to school and start afresh

■ The government has supported the families of these children, giving economic assistance to 1,089 families to prevent them from forcing their children into work

## Delhi Metro ticketing goes live on Uber app



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 19:** Ride-hailing platform Uber on Monday announced the rollout of metro ticketing on the Uber app, powered by the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), starting with Delhi Metro.

Three more cities across India are slated to go live in 2025, Uber said, adding it will soon launch B2B Logistics via the ONDC network, a solution that will allow businesses to request on-demand logistics from Uber's delivery network, without needing their own fleet.

"Uber today announced the rollout of metro ticketing on the Uber app, powered by the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), with Delhi Metro going live as the first launch city. This marks Uber's first integration with India's pioneering digital public infrastructure and a major step forward in making public transport more connected," the company said in a release.

This move follows an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 2024 during Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi's visit to India, where Uber committed to collaborating with ONDC to advance the reach and impact of India's digital public goods.

"Today's launch is a tangible realisation of that commitment, reinforcing Uber's mission to make urban mobility more inclusive, sustainable, and seamlessly connected," it said.

# Delhi Police to use PTMs to curb drug abuse in students

*The initiative, being rolled out in collaboration with the Directorate of Education, aims to build a broad-based awareness framework at the school and community level to address the rising threat of narcotics among school-going children*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 19:** In a proactive effort to tackle drug abuse among adolescents, Delhi Police will now utilise parent-teacher meetings (PTMs) in schools as a platform to sensitise and educate parents about the early warning signs of substance use in their children, an official said Monday.

The initiative, being rolled out in collaboration with the Directorate of Education (DoE), aims to build a broad-based awareness framework at the school and community level to address the rising threat of narcotics among school-going children.

The Delhi Police has already conducted training sessions for teachers from schools that opted for the programme, equipping them to identify behavioural indicators and psychological cues that may signal drug use among students, particularly teenagers, a senior police officer said.

"We recently partnered with the Directorate of Education and conducted a training session for teachers to help them understand how to identify early warning signs and behavioural changes in students who might be using drugs," the officer said.

Building on this, the police will now focus on involving parents directly through



## Delhi government schools to introduce pre-vocational education programme

A pre-vocational education programme will be introduced for students of classes 6 to 8 in government schools of Delhi in the academic year 2025-26 in line with the National Education Policy, the Delhi Directorate of Education has announced. According to a circular issued by the Vocational Education Branch of DoE, 'Kaushal Bodh' will be introduced as a distinct subject for Class 6 in the first phase, followed by Classes 7 and 8 in subsequent years. The initiative is aimed at equipping students with essential life skills and vocational awareness to prepare them for real-world challenges and opportunities. The curriculum has been aligned with the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023 and focuses on three broad categories of work --- Work with Life Forms, Work with Machines and Materials, and Work in Human Services. Students are expected to complete three projects each year, one from each of the three categories, it stated. The programme encourages hands-on learning through activities such as organic farming, pottery, carpentry, cooking with millets, embroidery, and basic electrical work. Teachers will guide students in carrying out tasks safely, collaborating in groups, and applying their learning in practical settings, it said. Each student will be assessed based on written tests, oral presentations, activity books, portfolios, and teacher observations, with a total of 110 hours allocated annually for these activities, the circular read.

PTMs, ensuring early intervention at the family level.

To further support the initiative, Delhi Police is in advanced discussions with the de-addiction centre at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) to rope in expert counsellors.

"With the help of professional counsellors from AIIMS, we plan to create short, informative videos that explain the psychological and physical signs of drug use in adolescents. These will be shown during PTMs to ensure the message reaches parents in an accessible, visual format,"

the officer said.

The videos will serve as a conversation starter between parents and teachers and will be tailored to reflect age-appropriate warning signs.

The programme is open to both government and private schools and authorities hope to scale it up citywide in the coming months.

"The initiative will help bridge the gap between schools, families, and law enforcement, fostering a collaborative environment where children are better protected against the growing menace of substance abuse," he added.



Young men cool off in a canal at Vrindavan on a hot summer day in Mathura district, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

## Delhi's power demand soars to peak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 19:** The peak power demand of Delhi at 7265 MW Monday was the highest for May 1-19 period in the past four years, discom officials said.

State Load Dispatch Centre Delhi realtime data recorded Delhi's power demand at 7265 MW at 3.29 pm.

The peak power demand of Delhi for May 1-19 period was 7174 MW in 2024, 5953 MW in 2023 and 7070 MW in 2022, officials said.

The BSES discoms BRPL and BYPL met the peak power demand of 3227 MW and 1596 MW, respectively, in their areas, said a spokesperson of the company.

A Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (TPDDL) statement said that the peak power demand of 7265 MW Monday (May 19) was the highest on the day in last five years.

It was 7164 MW May 19, 2024;



5518 MW May 19, 2023; 7070 MW May 19, 2022 and 3266 MW May 19, 2021, it said.

The discom successfully met its peak demand of 2,136 MW Monday, the highest of this season so far, without any network constraints or supply disruptions, despite the ongoing hot weather, it said.

The discom is "fully prepared" to ensure uninterrupted, quality power supply

to the consumers, through a multi-layered power procurement strategy comprising long-term bilateral agreements, reserve shutdown capacity, and dynamic participation on the power exchange, it added.

The BSES discoms are geared-up to ensure reliable power supply to meet the power demand of more than 50 lakh consumers in South, West, East and Central Delhi, said the company spokesperson.

These arrangements include long term power purchase agreements and banking arrangements with other states and deployment of latest technologies for predicting power demand accurately, he added.

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**  
Tender Notice No. 08-SBP-TRD-OT-2025-26,  
Date : 13.05.2025

<b>NAME OF WORK :</b>	TRD RELATED WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH THE WORK "PWAY AND OTHER ALLIED WORK IN CONNECTION WITH REMOVAL OF PSR OF CURVE NO. 32 (UP) AT KM 66/31-67/17 IN JULIOMURA - KEREJANGA SECTION SAMBALPUR DIVISION.
<b>Approximate Cost (₹) :</b>	33,67,048.51.
<b>EMD (₹) :</b>	67,400.00, Completion Period : 12 Months.
<b>Tender Closing Date and Time :</b>	At 1530 Hrs. of 04.06.2025
No manual offers sent by Post / Courier / Fax or in person 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 considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.	
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">http://www.ireps.gov.in</a>	
<b>Note :</b>	The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigendum issued for this tender.
<b>Pr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD),</b>	<b>Sambalpur</b>
<b>PR-140/Q/25-26</b>	

**Registered Office :** 6th Floor, Tower A, Peninsula Business Park, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai – 400013

**DCB BANK**

### POSSESSION NOTICE

(As per Appendix IV Under Sec 13(4) read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)

The undersigned being the authorized officer of the **DCB Bank Ltd.**, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice on below mentioned dates calling upon the **Borrowers 1. Mr. Sanatan Behera (Applicant), S/o. Prafulla Behera, 2. Mr. Prafulla Behera (Co-Applicant-1), S/o. Late Panu Behera, 3. Mr. Prahalad Behera (Co-Applicant-2), S/o. Late Panu Behera, 4. Mr. Ranjan Behera (Co-Applicant-3), S/o. Prafulla Behera, 5. Mr. Santosh Behera (Co-Applicant-4), S/o. Prahalad Behera, all are at / P. O. - Sanabhimdaspur, Gram Panchayat - Sandhrasasan, P. S. - Satyabadi, District - Puri, Odisha - 752014** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice as detailed below in tabular form with further interest thereon from within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrower and Co-Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower, Co-Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **Physical Possession** of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest Rules 2002 on **this 16th May, 2025.**

The Borrower, Co-Borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property (Description of the immovable Property) and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **DCB Bank Ltd.**, for respective amount as mentioned here below.

<b>Demand Notice Dated :</b>	<b>16/10/2323 (Posted date 17/10/2023)</b>
<b>Name of Borrower(s) and Co-borrower(s) :</b>	<b>1. Mr. Sanatan Behera (Applicant) 2. Mr. Prafulla Behera (Co-Applicant-1) 3. Mr. Prahalad Behera (Co-Applicant-2) 4. Mr. Ranjan Behera (Co-Applicant-3) 5. Mr. Santosh Behera (Co-Applicant-4)</b>
<b>Loan Account Number :</b>	<b>16745600000116 &amp; 16756400000046</b>
<b>Total Outstanding Amount :</b>	<b>Rs. 2,702,824.60 (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh Two Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty Four and Sixty paise Only) under Loan A/C No. 16745600000116 being the amount due as on 05.10.2023 (this amount includes interest till 01.05.2023) and another amount of Rs. 3,03,650.00 (Rupees Three Lakh Three Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Only) under Loan A/C No. 16756400000046 being the amount due as on 05.10.2023 (this amount includes interest till 29.09.2023) (in total Rs. 3,006,474.60)</b>
<b>Description of the Immovable Property :</b>	All that the piece and parcel of homestead land with building situated at District : Puri, Mouza : Bhimadas Purasan, Tahasil : Satyabadi, Tahasil No. 487, Thana : Satyabadi, Thana No. : 116, Khata No. 99, Plot No. : 416 admeasuring an area of Acre 0.0500, Kissam : Gharabari registered in the name of <b>Prafulla Behera &amp; Prahalad Behera, S/o. Panu Behera.</b>
<b>Date : 20.05.2025</b>	<b>For DCB Bank Ltd. Authorized Officer</b>
<b>Place : Bhubaneswar</b>	

# Artisan crafts BrahMos replica, orders soar high

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Varanasi, May 19:** In the spiritual heart of India, where the Ganga flows and temples echo with chants, a unique fusion of tradition and technology is taking shape.

National award-winning pink enamel artisan Kunj Bihari Singh, based in Varanasi's Visheshwarganj area, has crafted an exquisite replica of the BrahMos missile - a symbol of India's pride in its defence capabilities - using the ancient art of meenakari (pink enamelling).

The model, adorned with silver and gold accents, is capturing national attention and stoking patriotic fervour.

The BrahMos missile, a symbol of India's cutting-edge military prowess, recently returned to global headlines following its reported use in India's precision strikes during Operation Sindoor, a robust counter-terrorism response after the Pahalgam terror attack. The craftsman, inspired by the courage of India's armed forces, chose to honour their valour in his own artisan language: enamel, metal, and fire.

Speaking to IANS, Kunj Bihari Singh said: "After the Pahalgam attack, our brave soldiers gave a befitting reply. I wanted to pay tribute to their courage through my art. The BrahMos missile represents India's strength and technological



edge. Making this replica is my salute to our jawans."

Crafted with silver and adorned with traditional pink enamelling - a technique deeply rooted in Varanasi's artistic heritage, the BrahMos model has struck a chord with collectors and patriots alike. So far, Singh has sold over 150 units,

each priced between ₹10,000 and ₹20,000. He is now exploring more budget-friendly options to make the piece accessible to a wider audience without compromising on quality.

Singh leads a team of 20 artisans who are working around the clock to meet the surging demand.

The fusion of modern warfare symbolism with centuries-old craftsmanship has created a one-of-a-kind collectable that resonates with today's patriotic sentiment.

Globally, the BrahMos missile, developed jointly by India's DRDO and Russia's NPOM, is garnering increasing interest from countries across Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Known for its precision, speed, and versatility in being launched from land, air, sea, or submarines, the BrahMos is one of the most formidable cruise missiles in the world.

However, international sales of the missile remain tightly regulated. As a 50:50 joint venture between India and Russia under the BrahMos Aerospace banner, any decision to export the missile to a third country requires mutual consent. This constraint ensures that the missile's sales remain within strategic bounds.

**We are flooded with orders from across the country. People want to display the model in their homes and offices as a symbol of national pride**

**KUNJ BIHARI SINGH | NATIONAL AWARD-WINNING PINK ENAMEL ARTISAN, UP**



of the day quote

Chief justice of the country and the protocol is placed very high. When he indicated this, it was not personal, it was for the position he holds. And I am sure this will be kept in mind by one and all



JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE-PRESIDENT

But I can see one member from his party (Sena-UBT) is part of the delegation. I feel local-level politics should not be brought into this issue



SHARAD PAWAR | NCP (SP) PRESIDENT

Public service is the top priority of the state government, in line with the ideology of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's Antyodaya and the vision of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar



BHAJANLAL SHARMA | CHIEF MINISTER, RAJASTHAN

In soup for AI visuals of Sikh gurus, Rathee takes down YT video

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chandigarh, May 19:** You-Tuber Dhruv Rathee Monday took down his AI-generated video depicting Sikh gurus in the face of the Akal Takht, SGPC and the Shiromani Akali Dal's strong protests against depicting the religious figures in human form or in films.

In a post on Instagram, Rathee said even though many have appreciated the video and "would like it to stay on the (YouTube) channel, I have decided to remove it because some viewers feel strongly that any animated depiction of the Sikh Gurus conflicts with their beliefs".

"I do not want this to become a political or religious controversy, because the video was simply an effort to showcase the stories of our Indian heroes in a new education format," he said.

The Akal Takht, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) and the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) had demanded an immediate takedown of the video which features artificial intelligence-generated images of Guru Gobind Singh and his four sons known as 'Sahibzadas'.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

Before Executive Magistrate, Khallikote affidavit No.- A/1438, 15.05.2025, I, Srisinti Shradhanjali Patra, Res/Vill-Srikrushnarnapur, P.O.- Panditgaon, P.S.- Khallikote, Ganjam changed my name as Srisinti Shradhanjali Patra to S.Shraddhanjali Patra. Henceforth, I shall be known as S.Shraddhanjali Patra for future purposes.



Deeply concerned to hear about @JoeBiden's health. Extend our best wishes to him for a quick and full recovery. Our thoughts are with Dr. Jill Biden and the family

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

IN A FIRST, TRIPURA ZOO WELCOMES 3 TIGER CUBS

The Sepahijala Zoo in Tripura has welcomed three tiger cubs in a cheer for animal lovers. This is the first time in the history of the state's only zoo, which was set up in 1972, that tiger cubs have been born here. With the birth of the three cubs, the number of big cats in the zoo has grown to five



COURT CORNER

SC rules one rank one pension for ex-HC judges

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Monday directed uniform pension benefits for all retired high court judges, irrespective of their mode of appointment or tenure, saying "one rank one pension has to be the norm in respect of a constitutional office". A bench comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justices Augustine George Masih and K Vinod Chandran held that any classification in pension benefits based on whether judges came from the bar or district judiciary, or whether they were permanent or additional judges, was discriminatory and violative of Article 14 of the Constitution. "One rank one pension has to be the norm in respect of a constitutional office," the CJI, writing a 63-page judgement, said.

Posts on Operation Sindoor: SC agrees to hear prof's plea

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Monday agreed to examine a plea of Ashoka University's faculty Ali Khan Mahmudabad against his arrest for his social media posts over Operation Sindoor. A bench comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih noted the submissions of senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the associate professor, and said the plea would come up Tuesday or Wednesday. "He has been arrested for a patriotic statement. Please list it during the day," Sibal insisted. "Please list it tomorrow or day after," the CJI said.

Sambhal mosque row: HC junks Masjid committee plea against survey

**Prayagraj/Sambhal (UP):** The Allahabad High Court Monday dismissed a plea of the Masjid committee against the survey ordered by a Sambhal court in the Shahi Jama Masjid and Harihar Temple dispute, upholding the civil court's direction for the survey. The court said the order to appoint a court commissioner and the suit were maintainable. The mosque committee moved the high court against the November 19 last year order of the civil judge directing the Mughal-era mosque' survey which took place the same day.

India not dharamshala: SC

The counsel submitted that the petitioner was a refugee and that his family had already settled in India, to which the apex court asked, 'what is your right to settle here?'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 19:** The Supreme Court Monday observed the country was not a "dharamshala" or a public shelter to accommodate foreign nationals from across the globe.

A bench of justices Dipankar Datta and K Vinod Chandran was hearing a plea challenging an order of the Madras High Court directing the petitioner, a Sri Lankan citizen, to leave the country after finishing his seven-year sentence in an Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) case.

"Is India to host refugees from all over the world? We are struggling with 140 crore people... This is not a dharm-

shala that we can entertain foreign nationals from all over the world," the bench said.

The petitioner's counsel said his client was facing threats of arrest and torture in his country as he was a former Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) member, and that his wife and children had settled in India.

The bench, however, said the fundamental right to settle in India was available only to its

citizens and that there was no violation of his rights under Article 21 (protection of life and liberty) of the Constitution.

"What is your right to settle here," the bench said, "go to some other country."

The petitioner was sentenced under Section 10 (penalty for being a member of an unlawful association) of the UAPA Act.

The Madras High Court while reducing his sentence from 10 years to seven directed

him to leave the country immediately.

Another apex court bench rapped the petitioners May 16 who claimed 43 Rohingya refugees, including women and children, were dropped in the Andaman sea for deportation to Myanmar and said, "when the country is passing through a difficult time, you come out with fanciful ideas."

The top court was then informed that some refugees having United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) cards, including women and children, were arrested by police authorities late last night and deported.

"If they (Rohingyas) are all foreigners and if they are covered by the Foreigners' Act, then they will have to be dealt with as per the Foreigners' Act," the bench had said while adding that UNHCR-issued identity cards may not be of any help to them under the law.

The top court May 8 said if Rohingya refugees in the country were found to be foreigners under Indian laws they would have to be deported.

OPPN TEARS INTO GOVT ON CITY INFRA Heavy downpour sinks B'lore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, May 19:** A 35-year-old woman was killed in a wall collapse Monday after heavy rains lashed the city, inundating many low-lying areas and leading traffic to pile-up. The chaos triggered by the rains led to a political blamegame with the Opposition BJP targeting the Congress government over the city's infrastructure and resultant civic issues.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said the woes faced by the IT capital during rains was not new, but that the government was now working to fix them with a long-term solution.

The city received about 104 mm of rainfall in the last 24 hours, inundating many low-lying areas and leading to traffic pile-up, prompting the BJP to launch a scathing attack on the ruling Congress.

Former Deputy Chief Minister and MLA of Malleswaram, CN Ashwath Narayan criticised Shivakumar, saying, "Crores spent. Zero results."

Taking to 'X' he said, "Last night's rains didn't expose Bangalore's infrastructure — they exposed @DKShivakumar's track record of the last two years of doing nothing."

Karnataka BJP General Secretary and MLA of Karkala, Sunil Kumar Karkala challenged the government on 'X' to release a white paper on how much has actually been spent on Banga-



lore's infrastructure in the last two years.

"Visit Silk Board once — you'll see your real contribution," he said.

Speaking at a press conference, BJP spokesperson Ashwath Narayan Gowda said that "despite the weatherman predicting heavy rainfall almost a week ago, there were no efforts made to meet any monsoon-related exigency. The deputy chief minister D K Shivakumar is directly responsible for the rain havoc in the city".

He alleged that the deputy CM kept repeating 'Brand Bangalore' and in the last Assembly session, Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill was passed.

"From Brand Bangalore to Greater Bangalore, and now from Greater Bangalore, it has now become Submerged Bangalore. This is the achievement of the state government," Gowda charged.

The BJP leader alleged no development work took place in the city in the past two years, which finally culminated in rain havoc.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, May 19:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday asserted that the TMC is not boycotting the Centre's multi-party diplomatic mission aimed at countering Pakistan-sponsored terrorism and would send its representatives once a formal request is received from the Centre.

Banerjee, the Trinamool Congress supremo, also emphasised that the Centre should not decide the party's nominee to the delegations.

Her statement came af-



ter a controversy broke out that TMC MP Yusuf Pathan was forced to opt out of the multi-party diplomatic delegation. The BJP has attacked West Bengal's ruling party for the development.

Nowadays, the system is that they do not inform the mother party but inform the parliamentary party. But the parliamentary party works for Parliamentary sessions. They cannot make policy decisions

MAMATA BANERJEE | CHIEF MINISTER, WEST BENGAL

"We were not contacted about this (naming a party representative for the delegation)," Banerjee said at the Kolkata airport before leaving for the northern part of West Bengal on a three-day official visit.

"Nowadays, the system is that they do not inform the mother party but inform the parliamentary party. But the parliamentary party works for Parliamentary sessions. They cannot make policy decisions," she said.

The TMC supremo said the Centre did not request the party authorities to name an MP to be a member of the delegation

"If the request comes to us, of course we can consider it. We always support the Central government's policy (on external affairs). If anything is special, we will think of it, but not now.

Young male leopard dies during rescue efforts

**Bahraich:** A male leopard, aged around one to one and a half years old, which was found injured a day earlier along a canal embankment in the Katarniaghat Wildlife Division here, died during the rescue attempt, officials said Monday. Forest department officials believe it was likely hit by an unidentified vehicle. Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) B Shivshanker told PTI that the leopard was found near Harkhapur village in the Dharampur Range of the division. "The exact cause cannot be confirmed, but the site conditions suggest the leopard was struck by a vehicle," he said. A team of forest staff and veterinarians rushed to the spot upon receiving information. They first considered tranquillising the cat for treatment, but because of its young age feared the sedative might prove fatal, the officer said. Instead, they decided to cage the leopard and transport it for care. Unfortunately, the animal succumbed during the rescue operation, he added.



A child gets a bath to get respite on a hot summer day, on the outskirts of Jammu

PTI PHOTO

CDS Gen Chauhan visits Suratgarh, Naliya military bases

The visit was marked by a spirit of pride in recognition of the exemplary courage displayed by soldiers during Operation Sindoor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 19:** Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan Monday visited strategically important military bases of Suratgarh in Rajasthan and Naliya in Gujarat and commended the troops for maintaining high state of operation-

al readiness.

The Pakistani military attempted to target both the bases during the military confrontation between the two sides recently.

In his interaction with the troops, Gen Chauhan also complimented the synergy among the three services during Operation Sindoor.

The Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) emphasised on the need to remain ever prepared for responding to any challenge with "decisive force", according to the defence ministry.

"To boost the morale of the armed forces, Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan paid a visit to the strategically important Suratgarh military station



and Naliya air force station today," it said. Gen Chauhan also emphasised the importance of

operational readiness and resilience in the face of evolving security challenges, it said.

"He commended the operational preparedness and high morale of the personnel and expressed confidence in their ability to respond effectively to future threats," the ministry added.

The CDS was accompanied by Lt Gen Manjinder Singh, Army Commander of South Western Command, and Air Marshal Nagesh Kapoor, the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of South Western Air Command.

"The visit was marked by a spirit of pride in recognition of the exemplary courage displayed by soldiers during Operation Sindoor," the ministry said in a statement.

Gen Chauhan was apprised

of the robust air defence systems deployed in the operation.

The CDS lauded the "exceptional valour and professionalism" of the soldiers during the active phase of Operation Sindoor, the ministry said.

Highlighting their selfless dedication, resolute courage and steadfast commitment in neutralising multiple attempts by the western adversary of breaching the security, he said that the troops upheld the highest standards of military professionalism.

"The visit reaffirmed the nation's gratitude towards its armed forces and reinforced the message of unity, readiness, and unwavering national commitment," the ministry said.

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After Pahalgam and the India-Pakistan conflict, (it is felt) that a Prime Minister should be like Indira Gandhi to protect the country. (She) Fought a war with Pakistan and made Pakistan into parts. One is Bangladesh, and the other is Pakistan. Indiramma proved it 54 years ago



A REVANTH REDDY |

CHIEF MINISTER, TELANGANA


For the past some time, apples imported from Turkey and America have hit apple growers of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir ... I will write to the Union government and the prime minister to ban apple imports from Turkey



SUKHINDER SINGH SUKHU |

CHIEF MINISTER, HIMACHAL PRADESH

Only through cooperatives, the dream of a self-reliant farmer can be realised. Rise in cooperative bank loan disbursal to over ₹23,000 crore in eight years is a remarkable achievement



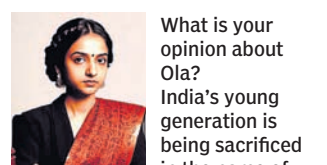
YOGI ADITYANATH |

CHIEF MINISTER, UTTAR PRADESH

X

POST

OF THE DAY



nation building. They are losing their health and mental sanity working at toxic work cultures in Indian companies. A recent incident at Ola, which is being suppressed by the company.

@DefiantDevii

SHORT TAKES

Pirated NCERT books worth ₹2.4cr seized

New Delhi:

The Delhi Police has busted a major piracy racket by seizing over 1.7 lakh pirated NCERT textbooks worth more than ₹2.4 crore and arresting three persons, including a father-son duo, an official said Monday. "Prashant and Nishant had a shop where police found a large stock of pirated educational books being sold under the guise of genuine NCERT material. The racket was unearthed following a tip-off received by the police May 16 regarding the sale of pirated NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) books from a shop on Mandoli Road," Deputy Commissioner of Police said.

AAP protests at Mayor's office

New Delhi:

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) councillors held a sit-in outside Delhi Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh's office Monday, protesting the omission of a proposal to roll back user charges from the House agenda. Following the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) polls last month, when the BJP came to power and appointed its mayor, the party April 25 promised to roll back the user charge.

Storm in HP: 2 dead as tree crushes truck

Shimla/Dharamshala:

Two people were killed in a fierce storm that swept Kangra and Mandi districts early Monday morning. The two were killed as a massive tree fell on a parked truck in the Khowa Panchayat of Nagarota Bagwan of Kangra around 4.30 am. Sanjeev Kumar, 42, a resident of Dehra Gopipur, and Tekram Chand, 48, a resident of Ridhi Baroh, Kangra, were sleeping in the truck.

Rahul targets Jaishankar

Gandhi says his silence 'damning'; it's Pak's language, says BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19:

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi Monday launched a fresh attack on External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, saying his silence on the number of aircraft India "lost" after Pakistan was "informed" about the military action under Operation Sindoor is "damning".

The BJP hit back, accusing Gandhi of speaking the "language of Pakistan" and asking whether the Congress party was truly serious about supporting the nation.

Gandhi had earlier also targeted Jaishankar on the issue, suggesting that the Indian side informed Pakistan ahead of the military strikes on terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

However, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) had



described Gandhi's claims that Jaishankar acknowledged India having alerted Pakistan before the launch of Operation Sindoor May 7 as "utter misrepresentation".

"EAM Jaishankar's silence isn't just telling, it's damning. So I'll ask again: How many Indian aircraft did we lose because Pakistan knew?" he asked in a post on X.

"This wasn't a lapse. It was a crime. And the nation deserves the truth," Gandhi also said.

The Congress leader earlier shared an undated video clip of Jaishankar and wrote, "Informing Pakistan at the start of our attack was a crime. EAM has publicly admitted that GOI (Government of India) did it."

"Who authorised it? How many aircraft did our air force lose as a result," the Congress leader asked.

"The external affairs minister had stated that we had warned Pakistan at the start, which is clearly the early

6 more alleged spies arrested

AGENCIES

Gurugram/ Chandigarh/ Hyderabad, May 19:

Police have arrested six more persons, on charge of espionage, in Punjab, Haryana, UP and Telangana, according to reports, Monday.

The police identified the arrested accused as Mohammad Tarif, a resident of the Kangarka village in the Nuh district of Haryana. He is accused of leaking intelligence information of military activities to Pakistan.

Investigation revealed that some data from a Pakistani WhatsApp number was found deleted from his mobile phone.

In another case, Punjab Police Monday said it has arrested two persons for allegedly sharing sensitive military information with Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI.

Preliminary findings establish that the accused were allegedly in direct contact with ISI handlers and had transmitted critical information concerning the Indian Armed Forces, said Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav .

In the third case, an alleged agent of ISI was arrested in UP's Rampur Sunday. Accused Shahzad is a resident of Tandra in Rampur. Meanwhile, a major terror bid was foiled in Hyderabad Sunday after two men, suspected of planning blasts in the city, were arrested. According to the police, the two accused, Siraj Ur Rehman (29) and Syed Sameer (28), have suspected links with an ISIS module in Saudi Arabia.

Earlier, six people were nabbed on similar charges from Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

New e-Zero FIR to help nab cyber criminals



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19:

The Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), which comes under the Ministry of Home Affairs, introduced the new e-Zero FIR initiative to nab cybercriminals with unprecedented speed, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said Monday.

Started as a pilot project for Delhi, the new system will automatically convert into FIRs cyber financial crimes filed on the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP) and helpline number 1930, initially above the threshold limit of ₹10 lakh, he said.

The minister said the process of issuing FIRs electronically, irrespective of territorial jurisdiction, will soon be extended to the entire nation.

This initiative will enable easy restoration of money lost by victims and facilitate punitive action against cyber criminals. It leverages the provisions of the recently introduced criminal laws, an official statement said.

"The MHA's Indian Cyber-crime Coordination Centre

(I4C) introduced the new e-Zero FIR initiative to nab any criminal with unprecedented speed."

"Launched as a pilot project for Delhi, the new system will automatically convert cyber financial crimes filed at NCRP or 1930 to FIRs, initially above the threshold limit of ₹10 lakh. The new system, which will drive investigations swiftly cracking down on cybercriminals, will soon be extended to the entire nation," Shah wrote on 'X'.

The home minister said the Modi government is bolstering the cybersecurity grid to build a cyber-secure Bharat.

The I4C was established by the MHA in New Delhi to provide a framework and ecosystem for law enforcement agencies to deal with cybercrime in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

The I4C is envisaged to act as the nodal point to curb cyber-crime in the country.

This is a significant step to achieve Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a 'Cyber Secure Bharat', the official statement said.

Govt mulls changes to Atomic Energy Act, nuclear liability law

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19:

Government is considering amendments to the laws governing the nuclear power domain, including the sectoral regulator, to allow participation of private sector as India eyes to produce 100 GW atomic energy by 2047.

Government sources said amendments were being considered to the Atomic Energy Act to allow private sector participation and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act to limit the liability on suppliers of equipment to build atomic energy plants.

The government is also considering regulatory reforms and is evaluating the model of Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (INSPACe) which acts as the promoter and regulator for the space sector that was opened up

for private participation in 2020.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced opening up of the nuclear power sector which has been restricted to public sector companies. The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited operates atomic power plants across the country that contribute 8.7 GWe to the country's energy mix.

Sitharaman also announced the Nuclear Energy Mission for research and development of Small Modular Reactors (SMR) with an outlay of ₹20,000 crore and to operationalise five indigenously developed SMRs by 2033.

The Department of Atomic Energy officials has recently said that the Nuclear Energy Mission aims to leverage private sector participation, streamline regulatory frameworks, and scale up nuclear power production to meet India's increasing



energy demands.

Foreign nuclear power firms had evinced interest in setting up atomic power plants in India after it secured a waiver from the Nuclear Suppliers Group to engage in global nuclear trade. The NSG waiver came after the landmark India-US civil nuclear

phase after Operation Sindoor's commencement," the external publicity (XP) division of the ministry said.

"This is being falsely represented as being before the commencement. This utter misrepresentation of facts is being called out," it said in a brief statement.

BJP leaders slammed Rahul Gandhi for questioning the government's handling of a recent conflict, accusing him of disrespecting the armed forces and echoing Pakistan's propaganda. Amit Malviya called his remarks "sinister," while Pradeep Bhandari labeled him "complicit" in spreading anti-India narratives.

In response, Congress leader Pawan Khera defended Gandhi, saying he raised valid concerns based on external affairs statements and questioned the government's transparency.

Khera accused the BJP of politicizing national security and demanded answers on aircraft losses and the role of foreign powers, especially the US and China, in mediating the conflict and influencing India's actions.

REMAINING SCHOOLS REOPEN IN 30 JAMMU BORDER AREAS

Schools near the India-Pakistan border in Jammu reopened Monday after nearly 12 days of closure due to recent hostilities. Institutions in 30 locations across Poonch, Rajouri, Jammu, Samba, and Kathua districts resumed as normalcy returns



MANIPUR VIOLENCE

NIA arrests militant involved in brutal killing of woman in Jiribam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19:

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested from Kerala a militant of a banned insurgent group involved in the brutal killing of a woman and looting of houses in a village in Manipur's Jiribam district last year, officials said Monday.

Rajkumar Maipaksana was arrested from Kannur district of Kerala and has been sent in transit remand by the NIA special court, Kochi, for production before the Imphal NIA court, they said.

Hailing from Jiribam district, Rajkumar is associated with the proscribed insurgent group People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK), a statement issued by the probe agency said.

He was among the key perpetrators of the crime, in which a woman, Zosangkim, was killed and several houses were set afire and looted in Zairawn village in November 2024, it said.

The NIA had last week arrest-



ed two other accused militants, belonging to different militant outfits, in the case.

The agency is continuing with its investigations and is hunting for the other perpetrators of the horrendous crime, the statement said.

The 31-year-old tribal woman, who was killed November 7, was subjected to third-degree torture and suffered 99 per cent burns, according to her autopsy report.

Several body parts and limbs of the victim were missing and viscera for chemical analysis could not be collected as most were charred and unrecognisable, according to the report.

"Right upper limb and parts of both lower limbs and the facial structure found missing," it stated.



A woman rides a bicycle as clouds gather in the sky during a summer afternoon, in Nadia, West Bengal, Monday

₹6,200 CRORE BANK LOAN FRAUD CASE

ED arrests ex-UCO Bank CMD Goel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 19:

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Monday said it has arrested former UCO Bank CMD Subodh Kumar Goel on money laundering charges in an alleged bank loan fraud case of more than ₹6,200 crore linked to a Kolkata-based company.

Goel was arrested from his residence here May 16 in the case being probed against Concast Steel and Power Ltd (CSPL) and others.

He was produced before the special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in Kolkata May 17 which sent him to ED custody till May 21, the federal probe agency said in a statement.

The ED had raided the premises of Goel and some others in



April as part of this investigation.

The money laundering case stems from a CBI FIR related to the sanction of credit facilities to CSPL and subsequent large-scale "diversion" and "siphoning" of loans amount-

ing to ₹6,210.72 crore (principle amount without interest).

The ED claimed that during the tenure of Goel as the CMD of UCO Bank, large credit facilities were "sanctioned" to CSPL which were subsequently "diverted" and "siphoned off" by the borrower group.

In turn, it alleged, Goel received "substantial illegal gratification" from CSPL.

"The illegal gratification was layered and channelled through various entities to give a facade of legitimacy. Investigation revealed that Goel received cash, immovable properties, luxury goods, hotel booking etc routed through a web of shell companies, dummy persons and through family members to conceal the criminal origin of the money," the ED said.

Government sources said amendments were being considered to the Atomic Energy Act to allow private sector participation and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act to limit the liability on suppliers of equipment to build atomic energy plants

The government is also considering regulatory reforms and is evaluating the model of Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (INSPACe) which acts as the promoter and regulator for the space sector that was opened up for private participation in 2020

for Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC).

The government expects the private sector to pitch in with investments to achieve the target of producing 100 GWe nuclear power by 2047.

The officials said that around 50 per cent of the 100 GW target is expected to come from Public-Private Partnerships (PPP).

A parliamentary panel has also recommended establishing a robust financial model that includes government incentives, Viability Gap Funding (VGF), and sovereign guarantees to attract both domestic and foreign investments.

The Committee had suggested that expediting legislative amendments to the Atomic Energy Act and Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act to encourage private investment in nuclear power generation.

India plans to set up private sector SMRs of 220 MW Bharat Small Reactors (BSR) for captive use. NPCIL had recently invited Request for Proposals from Indian industries for setting up 220 MW BSRs for captive use.



of the day

quote

The next two weeks will decide the future of Poland

DONALD TUSK | POLAND PRIME MINISTER

Walmart will be absorbing some of the tariffs, some may get passed on to consumers

SCOTT BESSENT | US TREASURY SECRETARY

The tariff is fascinating because of the 100%...I'm not an expert in that area of economics, but I feel that means Trump is saying he's going to take all the money. And then what do we get?

WES ANDERSON | AMERICAN FILM DIRECTOR

SHORT TAKES

Spain cracks down on Airbnb

**Madrid:** Spain has ordered Airbnb to block more than 65,000 holiday listings on its platform for having violated rules, the Consumer Rights Ministry said Monday. The ministry said that many of the 65,935 Airbnb listings it had ordered to be withdrawn did not include their license number or specify whether the owner was an individual or a company. Others listed numbers that didn't match what authorities had. Spain is grappling with a housing affordability crisis that has spurred government action against short-term rental companies. In recent months, tens of thousands of Spaniards have taken to the streets protesting rising housing and rental costs, which many say have been driven up by holiday rentals on platforms like Airbnb that have proliferated in cities like Madrid and Barcelona and many other popular tourist destinations. Last year, Barcelona announced a plan to close down all of the 10,000 apartments licensed in the city as short-term rentals by 2028 to safeguard the housing supply for full-time residents.

UK, EU ink new deals

**London:** Britain and the European Union hailed a new chapter in their relationship on Monday after they sealed new agreements on defense cooperation and easing trade flows at their first formal summit since Brexit. Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who met European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and other senior EU officials in London for talks, said the deals will slash red tape, grow the British economy and reset relations with the 27-nation trade bloc since the UK left the EU in 2020. "Britain is back on the world stage," Starmer said. "This deal is a win-win." Von der Leyen called the talks a "historic moment" that benefits both sides. More broadly, she said it sends a message at a time of global upheaval that the U.K. and EU are "natural partners standing side-by-side on the global stage". Britain's opposition parties slammed the deals as backtracking on Brexit. "We're becoming a rule-taker from Brussels once again," Conservative Party leader Kemi Badenoch said. Under the deals, a new UK-EU defence and security partnership will allow the UK to access a EU defence loan programme worth 150 billion euros (USD 170 billion.)

Trump dials Putin, calls for ceasefire

REUTERS

**Moscow/ Washington, May 19:** US President Donald Trump said Monday that Russia and Ukraine 'will immediately start negotiations' toward a ceasefire and an end to their three-year-old war, speaking after he held a call with Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

"Negotiations between Russia and Ukraine will begin immediately," Trump said in a Truth Social post following his call with Putin, which lasted two hours.

After the call, Putin said efforts to end the war were "generally on the right track" and that Moscow was ready to work with Ukraine on a potential peace deal.

"We have agreed with the president of the United States that Russia will propose and is ready to work with the Ukrainian side on a memorandum on a possible future peace accord," Putin told reporters near the Black Sea resort of Sochi.

There was no immediate comment from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the statement that talks would begin immediately. A source familiar with the matter earlier said Zelenskyy spoke "for a few minutes" with Trump before



the U.S. leader's call with Putin.

Kyiv has said it is ready for a ceasefire now while Moscow has said conditions must be met first. In his social media post, Trump said the Vatican, "as represented by the Pope, has stated that it would be very interested in hosting the negotiations. Let the process begin!"

Putin and Trump spoke after direct talks last week in Turkey between Moscow and Kyiv, the first since 2022 in the early months of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Talks last week failed to agree on a truce.

US Vice President JD Vance earlier repeated a warning that Washington could walk away from the peace process.

Putin said the memorandum

would define "a number of positions, such as, for example, the principles of settlement, the timing of a possible peace agreement."

He said that if appropriate agreements were reached, there could be a ceasefire, adding that direct talks between Russia and Ukraine gave "reason to believe that we are generally on the right track."

"The main thing for us is to eliminate the root causes of this crisis," Putin said. "We just need to determine the most effective ways to move towards peace."

He thanked Trump for supporting the resumption of direct talks between Moscow and Kyiv and said Trump noted Russia's support for peace,

though the key question was how to move towards peace.

Trump, who has promised to bring a swift end to Europe's deadliest war since World War Two, has repeatedly called for a ceasefire after three years when Washington joined other Western countries in arming Ukraine. European leaders have said they want the United States to join them in imposing tough new sanctions on Russia for refusing a ceasefire. The leaders of Britain, France, Germany and Italy spoke to Trump Sunday ahead of his call with Putin.

Putin was speaking from Russia's Black Sea resort of Sochi while Trump was in Washington. Shortly before the call, Vance told reporters that Washington recognised there was "a bit of an impasse here."

"And I think the president's going to say to President Putin: 'Look, are you serious? Are you real about this?'" Vance said as he prepared to depart from a visit to Italy. "I think honestly that President Putin, he doesn't quite know how to get out of the war," Vance said.

He said it "takes two to tango. I know the president's willing to do that, but if Russia is not willing to do that, then we're eventually just going to say, 'This is not our war.'"

RUSSIA OUTLAWS AMNESTY

Russian authorities Monday outlawed Amnesty International as an "undesirable organisation," a label that under a 2015 law makes involvement with such organisations a criminal offense. The decision by the Russian Prosecutor General's office, announced in an online statement, is the latest in the unrelenting crackdown on Kremlin critics, journalists and activists



Lithuania takes Belarus to top UN court over migrants

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Vilnius, May 19:** Lithuania is asking the International Court of Justice to rule that Belarus breached its international obligations by allegedly organising the smuggling of migrants to its territory and award it compensation.

The Foreign Ministry in Vilnius said Lithuania filed its case to the court in The Hague Monday. It revolves around alleged breaches by Belarus of its obligations under the United Nations' Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

The number of migrants arriving at the borders of European Union member countries from Belarus increased sharply last year, and European authorities have accused Belarus of helping migrants to get across.

In December, the EU gave a green light to Poland and other countries on its eastern flank to temporarily suspend asylum rights when they believe that Belarus and Russia are "weaponising" migrants



to destabilise the bloc.

Lithuania said evidence it has collected confirms the direct involvement of Belarus in organising migrant flows, including an increase in flights from the Middle East and elsewhere by Belarusian state-owned enterprises.

It alleges that after arriving in Belarus many migrants were escorted to the Lithuanian border by Belarusian security forces and forced to cross it illegally. It added that Belarus' border services refused to work with Lithuania to stop illegal crossings. The Lithuanian Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Vilnius is appealing to the ICJ to hold Belarus accountable under international law for violations of the migrant-smuggling protocol.

BIDEN DIAGNOSED WITH AGGRESSIVE PROSTATE CANCER

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Washington, May 19:** Former President Joe Biden has been diagnosed with prostate cancer, his office said Sunday.

The finding came after the 82-year-old reported urinary symptoms, which led doctors to discover a nodule on his prostate. He was diagnosed with prostate cancer on Friday, with the cancer cells having spread to the bone.

"While this represents a more aggressive form of the disease, the cancer appears to be hormone-sensitive which allows for effective management," his office said. "The President and his family are reviewing treatment options with his physicians."

In a post on X Monday morning, Biden posted a photo of himself and his wife, Jill Biden, and wrote: "Cancer touches us all. Like so many of you, Jill and I have learned that we are strongest in the broken places. Thank you for lifting us up with love and support."

Prostate cancers are graded for aggressiveness using what's known as a Gleason score. The scores range from 6 to 10, with 8, 9 and 10 prostate cancers behaving more aggressively.

China plans to accelerate dam construction in Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Beijing, May 19:** China has announced plans to accelerate work on a "flagship" dam in Pakistan to ease pressure on its all-weather ally, weeks after India placed the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in abeyance following the Pahalgam terror attack, according to a media report.

The state-owned China Energy Engineering Corporation has been working on the Mohmand Hydropower Project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in north-western Pakistan since 2019.

The project was scheduled to be completed next year.

On Saturday, state broadcaster CCTV reported that concrete filling on the dam had started, marking "a critical construction milestone and a phase of accelerated development for this national flagship project of Pakistan", the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

The project officially began in September 2019 and was scheduled to be completed next year.

The move comes ahead of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar's visit to Beijing Monday for talks with top Chinese diplomat Wang Yi.



Chilli the dog wears a chilli hat in the BBC Radio 2 Dog Garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in London

PTI PHOTO

CENTRIST DAN WINS ROMANIAN PRESIDENCY

REUTERS

**Bucharest, May 19:** Romania's European allies and markets welcomed centrist Nicușor Dan's presidential election victory over a eurosceptic hard-right rival Sunday, relieved that the European Union member had avoided a lurch to a Donald Trump-inspired political path.

Dan, a softly-spoken 55-year-old mathematician and Bucharest mayor, won 54% of votes in the country of 19 million, beating George Simion, a vocal Trump admirer whose strong showing in the first round of voting this month had rattled allies and investors.

"I told him Romania will remain a firm ally in NATO," Dan said, adding defence investment was a focus. "At the same time, we are counting on NATO to guarantee Romania's security."

Dan also spoke to French President Emmanuel Macron and neighbouring Moldova's President Maia Sandu, who had called the election result "a step forward for democratic values and our shared European path."

Dan had pledged to fight cor-



Poland set for knife-edge presidential runoff

**WARSAW:** The centrist and nationalist hopefuls contesting Poland's presidential election runoff began trying to win over the supporters of eliminated candidates Monday, in a major test of the coalition government's pro-European policies. A broad alliance led by Prime Minister Donald Tusk swept to power in 2023 promising to mend ties with the European Union and undo judicial reforms implemented by the previous Law and Justice (PiS) rulers, which the EU said undermined democracy. However, Tusk's agenda has been stymied by the veto powers of the outgoing president, PiS-ally Andrzej Duda. Rafal Trzaskowski, from Tusk's ruling Civic Coalition (KO), narrowly led Karol Nawrocki, the candidate backed by the conservative-nationalist PiS, on Sunday, by 31.4% to 29.5%, a much narrower gap than opinion polls had suggested. But a surge in support for far-right and anti-establishment candidates left the runoff on a knife-edge. An Opinia24 poll for private broadcaster TVN published after the first round gave Trzaskowski 46% in the runoff and Nawrocki 44%, with 10% undecided or refusing to say. The second round takes place on June 1. "We have to talk to everyone, the most important thing is the arguments," Trzaskowski, the mayor of Warsaw, told reporters. "I'm glad that many young people went to the polls, but it's a great challenge to convince them to vote for me." Nawrocki said he would seek support from both left and right. "My social agenda and the fact that I will be the guardian of the social achievements of the Law and Justice government and Solidarity (trade union) make it an offering for left-wing, socially sensitive circles too," he said. The far right achieved its best result ever. Slawomir Mentzen of the Confederation party and Grzegorz Braun, who in 2023 caused international outrage by using a fire extinguisher to put out Hanukkah candles in parliament, together scored over 21%.

ruption, maintain support for Ukraine - where Romania has played an important logistical role - and keep the country in the European mainstream.

In contrast, Simion, a 38-year-old nationalist, had been critical of EU leadership and opposed military aid to Ukraine. His strong position before Sunday's run-off caused the collapse of Romania's pro-Western coalition government.

Dan, who must appoint a new prime minister, was due to meet Interim President Ilie Bo-

lojan to discuss the transition and upcoming coalition talks, a political source said.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen was one of the first to congratulate

Dan. "The Romanian people have turned out massively to the polls," she said on X. "They have chosen the promise of an open, prosperous Romania in a strong Europe."

Portugal's far-right Chega surges as ruling party misses majority

**LISBON:** Portugal's far-right Chega won a record vote share in Sunday's snap election and was vying to become the main opposition party as the ruling centre-right Democratic Alliance (AD) again fell short of a majority needed to end a long period of instability. Prime Minister Luis Montenegro hailed the result as a vote of confidence in his AD which won most seats in parliament. However, with votes from abroad still to be counted, Chega could supplant the centre-left Socialists as leader of the opposition, ending five decades of dominance by the two major parties. "We've done what no other party has ever achieved in Portugal. We can safely declare in front of all the country today that bipartisanship in Portugal is over," Chega leader Andre Ventura told jubilant supporters in Lisbon. "Nothing will be as it was," he said, highlighting the fact that the continued rise of Chega, which he founded just six years ago, proved most opinion polls wrong. Chega gained eight seats for a total of 58 in the 230-seat parliament, winning a record 1.34 million votes, or 22.6%. In the previous vote, it won two out of four seats reserved for overseas voters. Montenegro, whose AD won 89 seats - up nine - and 32.7% of the vote, has refused to make deals with Chega and said he would form a new minority government. Chega, which has allied with Europe's hard-right, anti-immigration parties, such as Marine le Pen's National Rally in France and Germany's AfD, has proposed tougher sentences for criminals, including chemical castration for repeat rapists. It has also called for an end to "open doors" immigration and accused mainstream parties of perpetuating corruption.



# business

## of the day quote

Our systems are built to address practical needs. We aim to deliver reliable solutions to regions where traditional logistics simply can't keep up

SATYABRATA SATAPATHY | CEO, BONV AERO

While the sentiment index shows a marginal decline in both current and future sentiment scores compared to Q4, this slight dip amidst global uncertainties reflects the strength and adaptability of India's real estate sector

HARI BABU | PRESIDENT, NAREDCO

Improvement in the credit profile of some key telecom service providers, who are the customers for tower companies, has eased the working capital cycle of tower companies

ANKIT JAIN | VP, ICRA LTD

## Q4 RESULTS

### ICRA projects growth

**New Delhi:** ICRA Monday projected India's GDP growth at 6.9 per cent in the quarter ended March 31 and at 6.3 per cent for the full 2024-25 fiscal, undershooting the National Statistics Office (NSO) estimates made in February. NSO had projected Indian economy to grow at 6.5 per cent in 2024-25. With economic growth in June, September and December quarter at 6.5 per cent, 5.6 per cent and 6.2 per cent respectively.

### HMVL profit rises

**New Delhi:** Hindustan Media Ventures Ltd Monday reported an over four-fold rise in profit after tax at ₹45.4 crore in the fourth quarter ended March 2025, with its digital business clocking strong revenue growth. The company had posted a consolidated profit after tax of ₹10.74 crore in the corresponding quarter of preceding fiscal, HMVL said in a regulatory filing.

### Power Grid profit flat

**New Delhi:** State-owned Power Grid Corporation of India Monday reported an almost flat consolidated net profit of ₹4,142.87 crore in the January-March quarter of 2024-25 compared to the year-ago period. The consolidated net profit stood at ₹4,166.33 crore in the quarter ended on March 31, 2024, a BSE filing showed.

### SBI's record \$9.2bn profit

**New Delhi:** State Bank of India posted record profits of about USD 9.2 billion in fiscal ending March 2025, becoming only the third Indian company, after Reliance Industries and ONGC, to feature in the Global Top 100 companies ranked by net profit.

### Petronet reports profit

**New Delhi:** Petronet LNG Ltd Monday reported Net profit of ₹1,070.18 crore in January-March, the fourth quarter of April 2024 to March 2025 fiscal was 23.4 per cent higher than ₹737.68 crore earning a year back, according to a company's stock exchange filing.

### DLF profit rises

**New Delhi:** DLF Ltd's consolidated net profit jumped by 39 per cent to ₹1,282 crore in the January-March quarter on higher revenue while its sales bookings hit a record ₹21,223 crore in the whole 2024-25. The company's sales bookings rose 44 per cent, company said in filing.



India's medical implant sector is on a robust growth trajectory, driven by strong domestic demand and growing exports. India's implant sector, including exports, is expected to reach \$4.5 to \$5 billion by FY28, registering an impressive CAGR of around 15-16 per cent. Additionally, with supportive government policies and a growing healthcare infrastructure, the implant market is advancing towards

Atmanirbharta

KRUNAL MODI | DIRECTOR, CAREEDGE RATINGS

## FOXCONN INVESTS \$1.48BN IN INDIA

Apple vendor Foxconn has invested \$1.48 billion in India unit, the company said in a regulatory note. Foxconn has made an investment in its Tamil Nadu unit, Yu-zhan Technology (India) Private Limited, through its Singapore-based arm. The investment comes amid Apple's plans to enhance the production of iPhones in India



# MF assets hit record of ₹65.74L-cr

Increase in assets shows the perspective of investors as contemporaries want to infuse money in aggressive mutual funds. The sharp surge in asset base also reflected the number of folios reaching all-time high of 234.5 million

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 19:** Mutual fund assets surged 23 per cent or over ₹12 lakh crore year-on-year to reach a record of ₹65.74 lakh crore in FY25, propelled by robust net inflows and mark-to-market gains amid buoyant equity and debt markets.

In comparison, the assets under management of the industry stood at ₹53.40 lakh crore in March 2024.

"The asset base expanded partly owing to mark-to-market (MTM) gains, spurred by equity markets clocking positive returns, as reflected in the Nifty 50 TRI and Sensex TRI rising 6 per cent and 5.9 per cent, respectively. Debt markets also contributed positively through MTM gains, supported by favourable yield movements," according to the Association of Mutual Funds in India's (AMFI) annual report released Monday.

Also, the increase in AUM was attributed to net inflows summing up to ₹8.15 lakh crore during fiscal 2025. The sharp surge in asset base was also reflected in the growing numbers of investors, mutual funds, with the number of folios reaching an all-time high of 23.45 crore and an investor



base of about 5.67 crore.

A notable trend in the fiscal was a 33.4 per cent year-on-year increase in folios of equity-oriented schemes to 16.38 crore. The scheme continued to constitute a lion's share of the folios at 70 per cent.

Also, the folios of hybrid schemes increased by 16 per cent to 1.56 crore, while other schemes, including index funds and exchange-traded funds (ETFs), surged 48.3 per cent to 4.15 crore folios. In contrast, debt-oriented scheme folios declined 3 per cent to 69.5 lakh.

The systematic investment plans (SIPs) were popular among investors as flows into this segment rose sharply, with

yearly contributions rising by 45.24 per cent to ₹2.89 lakh crore in FY25. This substantial increase, along with MTM gains, saw SIP assets rise 24.6 per cent to ₹13.35 lakh crore, thereby accounting for 20.31 per cent share of the overall MF industry's AUM.

As of March 2025, the industry had a total of 5.34 crore unique investors. Of this, 26 per cent or 1.38 crore were women.

"This represents an increase from 24.2 per cent in March 2024, underscoring the growing financial independence and awareness among women. The rise in literacy rates and the growing presence of wom-

en in the workforce have been instrumental in enhancing their economic contributions and, as a result, women are now emerging as a key participant in the MF investor base," the report said.

Equity-oriented mutual funds saw a record inflow of ₹4.17 lakh crore, the highest ever in a financial year. The net inflows during the year exceeded twice the net inflows in the previous year. This, combined with valuation gains, propelled the AUM of equity-oriented schemes by 25.4 per cent to ₹29.45 lakh crore at March-end 2025.

The surge in inflow across sub-categories within equity-oriented schemes was partly attributable to the successful launch of new fund offers (NFOs) during the year. A total of 70 NFOs in the equity category were launched in fiscal 2025, collectively mobilising ₹85,244 crore, marking an increase from the 58 schemes launched in fiscal 2024, which garnered ₹39,297 crore.

Debt MFs registered net inflows of ₹1.38 lakh crore last fiscal against net outflows of ₹0.23 lakh crore in fiscal 2024. The category's AUM jumped 20.5 per cent to ₹15.21 lakh crore in March 2025 from ₹12.62 lakh crore in March 2024.

## Shah inaugurates Falcon new manufacturing facility



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Gujarat, May 19:** Falcon Agri-friz Foods Private Limited inaugurated its state-of-the-art, fully automated frozen potato products manufacturing facility in Mehsana, Gujarat. The plant was inaugurated by Amit Shah, Home Minister of India along with Bhupendra Patel, CM Gujarat; Balvantsinh Rajput, Minister of Industries, Gujarat; Mayankbhai Nayak, MP, Rajya Sabha; Haribhai Patel, MP, Mehsana; and Tara Ranjan Patnaik, Chairman, Falcon Group.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Falcon Group and the Government of Gujarat. The group has invested approximately ₹1,050 crore in the state, aiming to transform Gujarat into a global hub for frozen potato-based products.

In the last four decades, the Falcon Group has championed growth rooted in quality, trust, and innovation. The company has set its sights on making India a leader in processed potato exports. The company's journey from farm to fork is powered by deep-rooted quality controls.

## Market tumbles after US credit rating falls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, May 19:** Benchmark BSE Sensex dropped by 271 points Monday, marking the second straight day of losses due to selling in IT and banking stocks and a weak trend in global markets after rating downgrade of US by Moody's Ratings.

The 30-share BSE barometer declined 271.17 points or 0.33 per cent to settle at 82,059.42. During the day, it dropped 366.02 points or 0.44 per cent to a low of 81,964.57.

The NSE Nifty dipped 74.35 points or 0.30 per cent to 24,945.45. Among Sensex firms, Eternal, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, Reliance Industries, Asian Paints, HCL Tech and Adani Ports were the laggards.

Power Grid, Bajaj Finance, NTPC, State Bank of India and IndusInd Bank were among the gainers.

Among sectors, realty, pharma, and auto shares advanced while IT declined by over a percent.

Markets languished in negative territory for major part of the trading session as weak Asian and European indices resulted in investors resorting to profit-taking in IT, capital goods and oil & gas shares, Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities

Ltd, said.

Also Moody's downgrading US credit rating by a notch over the weekend created some sort of uncertainty amongst investors, Tapse added.

Indian equity markets extended their losses for a second consecutive day on Monday, dragged down by a combination of weak global cues, sharp selling in IT stocks, and rising volatility, Gaurav Garg, Analyst, Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

Investor sentiment took a hit after Moody's downgraded the US sovereign credit rating to 'Aa1', citing the nation's surging USD 36 trillion debt, he said.

Global markets echoed this nervousness. Asian and European equities traded mostly lower... Garg added. The broader market witnessed a mixed performance as the BSE small-cap gauge climbed 0.75 per cent and midcap index ended up by 0.27 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, BSE Focused IT declined 1.33 per cent, IT (1.23 per cent), teck (1.07 per cent), oil & gas (0.32 per cent), telecommunication (0.24 per cent) and capital goods (0.16 per cent). Realty jumped 2.22 per cent, healthcare (0.58 per cent), utilities (0.42 per cent), auto (0.41 per cent), power (0.36 per cent) and financial services (0.32 per cent).

## ₹ climbs 15 paise to 85.42 against \$

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, May 19:** The rupee appreciated 15 paise to settle at 85.42 against the US dollar Monday, on weak US dollar index and a decline in crude oil prices. Forex traders said global investors were also cautious as global rating agency Moody's downgraded US investment grade rating, leading to a fall in dollar index.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 85.43 and moved between the intra-day high of 85.35 and the low of 85.61 against the greenback. The unit ended the session at 85.42, registering a gain of 15 paise over its previous closing level.

Last week, the rupee pared its gains and settled 3 paise lower at 85.57 against the dollar.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a positive bias amid persistent weakness in US dollar index and a weak tone in global crude oil prices," Anuj Choudhary – Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan said, adding weak domestic equities capped a sharp upside.

"USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of 85.10 to 85.65," he noted. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.86 per cent at 100.22. US dollar weakened as Moody's downgraded US credit rating to AA1 from AAA. Economic data from the US released Friday too disappointed the markets, Choudhary said.

# Supreme Court rejects Vi plea for debt waivers



REUTERS

**New Delhi, May 19:** India's Vodafone Idea had its petition to waive more than \$5 billion in debt it owes to the government rejected by the Apex Court Monday, dealing a major setback to the telecoms giant.

The company has struggled to pay outstanding spectrum and revenue-sharing dues since a landmark 2019 Supreme Court order widened the scope of revenues on which the payments are assessed.

The court also dismissed a similar petition from larger rival Bharti Airtel, but the rejection will have more of an impact on Vodafone Idea, India's third-biggest telecoms carrier with an estimated net debt of

\$25 billion as of September.

"We believe... very firmly, these are misconceived writ petitions," the court said, dismissing the requests.

Vi approached the court after the government rejected its request for a waiver on interest and penalties it owes on \$9.76 billion in dues, which the company said was putting its survival at risk.

The firm, a joint venture between UK-based Vodafone Group Plc and India's Aditya Birla Group, had asked the judges to direct New Delhi to act "in public interest" and protect the "sensitive telecom sector".

To help the company, the government has gradually converted part of the dues into

## Vi shares dive nearly 9%

**New Delhi:** Shares of Vodafone Idea tanked nearly 9 per cent after the Supreme Court ruling against Vodafone Idea. The stock of the firm slumped 8.68 per cent to settle at ₹6.73 on the BSE. During the day, it tumbled 12.21 per cent to ₹6.47. The company's market valuation eroded by ₹6,933.95 crore to ₹72,914.86 crore. A bench comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan called the pleas "misconceived". The top court refused to "come in the way of the government" wanting to help the telecom companies. The telecom companies had alleged arithmetical errors in the calculation of the AGR dues and sought it to be rectified contending duplication of entries but the top court on July 23, 2021 dismissed their pleas. Vodafone sought a waiver of around ₹30,000 crore towards interest, penalty, and interest on penalty components of its AGR dues.

equity and increased its stake in the company to 49%.

The ruling on adjusted gross revenue has been the biggest overhang for India's telecom industry, increasing demands on companies by billions of dollars.

"No support will lead to a point of no return," Vodafone Idea CEO Akshaya Moondra wrote in an April 17 letter to the government. The company "will not be able to operate beyond FY26".

"The request cannot be considered," India's communications ministry wrote in response on April 29.

# IPO BUZZ: MARKET EXPECTS OVER ₹11,000CR IN MAY

India's IPO market rebounds with 6 companies, including The Leela owner, Borana Weaves and Belrise Industries starting off this week. Experts also believe that the economy is buoyant, and IPO market in 2025 will yield good return, seems promising

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 19:** After a tepid start to 2025, the IPO market is getting back on track with six main-board companies, including Schloss Bangalore, owner of luxury hotel chain The Leela, are set to float their initial share-sales this month to collectively mobilise over ₹11,000 crore, investment banking sources said Monday.

Of the six firms, Borana Weaves and Belrise Industries will launch their IPOs

this week.

Borana Weaves will float its ₹144-crore IPO on May 20, while Pune-based Belrise Industries' ₹2,150-crore IPO will open on May 21. The remaining four companies, Schloss Bangalore Ltd, which operates Leela Palaces Hotels & Resorts, Aegis Vopak Terminals, Arisinfra Solutions Ltd, and Scoda Tubes are expected to file their IPOs next week.

Moreover, the firms will announce their price bands this week, the investment banking



sources said. Together, these six companies are expected to raise ₹11,669 crore.

Overall, there has been a slowdown in new listings as only 10 firms came out with

their IPOs in 2025 so far, owing to volatility in the equity market driven by a combination of global and domestic factors.

This shift followed a remarkable 2024, in which 91 maiden

public issues collectively raised ₹1.6 lakh crore, driven by robust retail participation, a resilient economy, and booming private capital expenditure.

Despite the slowdown, an impressive number of documents are getting filed and waiting for market conditions to stabilize.

According to Axis Capital IPO Market Update May 2025, 57 companies have received final observations from the markets regulator and another 74 firms are awaiting final Sebi's observations, which is necessary to float public issues.

These companies planning to raise funds through IPOs are staggered across sectors such as solar renewables, co-working spaces, pharma-healthcare, cable-wire-electrical, tubes-pipes, manufacturing,

chemicals, realty, Indian arms of global MNCs, and even film entertainment among others.

As for Schloss Bangalore, the company's proposed IPO is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares worth ₹3,000 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of stocks valued ₹2,000 crore by promoter Project Ballet Bangalore Holdings (DIFC) Pvt Ltd, according to the draft papers.

Aegis Vopak Terminals, a subsidiary of Aegis Logistics Ltd, is aiming to raise ₹3,500 crore from a fresh issue of equity shares. Technology-driven construction material provider ArisInfra Solutions Ltd plans to garner ₹600 crore via initial share-sale and Gujarat-based Scoda Tubes' IPO is entirely a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to ₹275 crore.



# BCCI dismisses reports of withdrawal from Asia Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 19:** The BCCI Monday termed as "speculative and imaginary" the report which claimed that it has decided to pull out of men's Asia Cup and women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup.

A media report, quoting sources, said that BCCI won't let Indian teams compete in the two Asian Cricket Council (ACC) events at a time when the cricket body is being headed by a Pakistani and just days back the two neighbouring nations were involved in a military conflict.

Pakistan's interior minister Mohsin Naqvi, who is also PCB Chairman, holds the position of President in the ACC.

Defending champions India are the hosts for the Men's Asia Cup, to be played in the T20 format, in September while Sri Lanka have been allotted the Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup.

"Since this morning, it has come to our notice about some news items about BCCI's decision not to participate in the Asia Cup and Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup, both ACC events. Such news is devoid of any truth as till now, the BCCI

has not even discussed or taken any such steps regarding the ensuing ACC events, leave alone writing anything to the ACC," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia to PTT.

Saikia added that BCCI is focussed on ensuring the smooth conduct of the Indian Premier League (IPL) and the upcoming



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DEVAJIT SAIKIA | SECRETARY, BCCI

five-match Test series against England beginning next month.

"At this stage, our prime focus is on the ongoing IPL and the subsequent England series, both men and women. The Asia Cup matter or any other ACC event issue has not come up for discussion at any level, hence any news or report on that is purely speculative and imaginary. It may be said that the BCCI, as and when any discussion on any ACC event takes place and any important decision is reached, the same will be announced through the media," he added.

# SRH knock LSG out of play-offs race

The loss marked an ordinary season for LSG and their new captain Rishabh Pant, who could not live up to his record ₹27 crore price tag

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, May 19:** Abhishek Sharma smashed half a dozen sixes in his 20-ball 59 to ensure a convincing six-wicket win for Sunrisers Hyderabad and knock Lucknow Super Giants out of the IPL play-offs race here Monday.

Mitchell Marsh (65 off 39) and Aiden Markram (61 off 38) struck high quality fifties before Sunrisers Hyderabad stemmed the flow of runs to limit LSG to 205/7.

In the absence of his unwell opening partner Travis Head, Abhishek took the onus on himself to provide a perfect launch pad in the run chase before Heinrich Klaasen (47 off 28) and Kamindu Mendis (32 off 21) did the rest.

SRH were already out of the competition and LSG needed a win Monday night to stay alive in the tournament. Both LSG and SRH still have two more games to play this season.

The highlight of SRH's run chase was Abhishek milking leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi for four consecutive sixes with three of them coming down the ground. In the bowling department, the sole bright spot for LSG was leg-spinner Digvesh Rathie who has had a stellar debut season.

When Rathie had Abhishek



caught in the deep in the 8th over, his trademark notebook celebration followed but seconds later the two competitors found themselves in a heated exchange that prompted quick intervention from the umpires.

Earlier, Marsh and Markram were simply sublime in the powerplay, taking LSG to 69 for no loss.

Marsh began with a crisp pull for a six off his Australian captain Pat Cummins while Markram targeted the straight boundary against debutant left-arm spinner Harsh Dube in second over of the innings.

Dube, a record wicket-taker

in the latest Ranji Trophy season, was introduced rather early and the LSG openers made a conscious effort to target the rookie.

Marsh cleared his left leg to dispatch Dube for a six over long-on in the second ball of his opening over before Markram collected his first maximum of the match with another straight off the left-arm spinner in his following over.

Markram was dropped in the ninth over, making life tougher for the visiting team. But SRH finally got the breakthrough in the 11th over when Dube returned to have Marsh caught

IPL STANDINGS					
TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS
GT	12	9	3	0.795	18
RCB	12	8	3	0.482	17
PBKS	12	8	3	0.389	17
MI	12	7	5	1.156	14
DC	12	6	5	0.260	13
KKR	13	5	6	0.193	12
LSG	12	5	7	-0.506	10
SRH	12	4	7	-1.005	9
RR	13	3	10	-0.701	6
CSK	12	3	9	-0.992	6

at short third man, giving the 22-year-old his maiden IPL wicket.

That brought Rishabh Pant (7 off 6) to the crease with the under-fire skipper deciding to come ahead of Nicholas Pooran at number three.

Pant, who has changed batting positions through the season with little success, once again struggled before offering a catch to pacer Eshan Malinga.

In overs 11-15, LSG could only managed 38 runs for the loss of two wickets, impacting their momentum adversely. Pooran (45 off 26), who could not find the sixes with the ease he normally does, ensured his team crossed the 200-run mark. Nitish Reddy, bowling for the first time this season, was given the 20th over in which he conceded 20 runs.

**Brief scores:**

**Lucknow Super Giants:** 205 for 7 in 20 overs (Mitchell Marsh 65, Aiden Markram 61; Eshan Malinga 2/28) lost to **Sunrisers Hyderabad:** 206/4 in 18.2 overs (Abhishek Sharma 59, Heinrich Klaasen 47; Digvesh Rathie 2/37)

## SHORT TAKES

### Guardiola confident of UCL qualification

**Manchester:** Manchester City head coach Pep Guardiola is 'absolutely' confident that his team will secure UEFA Champions League qualification with just two games remaining in the season. City are sixth in the table with two matches remaining, but if they beat Bournemouth, which is their game in hand, they would move into third spot ahead of a final-day away game at Fulham, with the top five making it to the Champions League next season. "Absolutely," he said when asked if he was confident of qualifying for the UCL. "Of course, it's important. We have been the last 13, 14, 15 years in the Champions League but if we don't, we don't deserve it, and we will play the Europa League. I'm thinking we are going to qualify," said Guardiola in the pre-game conference. City expended a lot of energy in the 1-0 FA Cup final defeat to Crystal Palace, with 33-year-old captain De Bruyne playing over 100 minutes against the Eagles.

### Diksha finishes tied-9th; Hitaashee tied-12th

**Hilversum:** Indian golfer Diksha Dagar came up with steady 71 in the final round to finish tied-9th with an overall score of 4-under 212 in the Dutch Ladies Open, a part of the Ladies European Tour, here. It was the 24-year-old Diksha's fourth top-10 finish as she produced rounds of 71, 70 and 71 over three days. Behind Diksha, who has been on the Ladies European Tour (LET) since 2019, were rookies Hitaashee Bakshi (71-73-69) at tied-12th, and Avani Prashanth (77-70-67) at t-19th. England's Mimi Rhodes continued her sensational rookie season to claim her third LET title. She finished two shots clear of the field at the Goyer Golf & Country Club.

### Shuttlers eye turnaround

**Kuala Lumpur:** Star Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu and HS Prannoy will look to script a turnaround in fortunes when they lead the country's campaign at the \$475,000 Malaysia Masters Super 500 tournament beginning here Tuesday. Both Sindhu and Prannoy have endured a tough phase of late, struggling with form and fitness. The duo lost their respective matches against Indonesia and Denmark in the Sudirman Cup last month — their last competitive outing. With a two-week break under their belt, the experienced shuttlers will now be eager to rediscover their rhythm at the Axiata Arena.

## Khelo India Beach Games kick off, PM calls it watershed moment

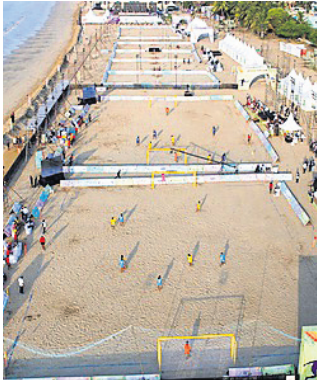
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Diu, May 19:** The first-ever Khelo India Beach Games began on Monday at Ghoghla Beach in Diu, with more than 1,350 athletes from over 30 states and Union Territories taking part. The event was inaugurated by Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and is being organised by the Sports Authority of India along with the administration of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a message to the organisers, called the Khelo India Beach Games a "watershed moment" in India's sporting history. He said the Games would strengthen India's domestic sports ecosystem and promote coastal culture.

PM Modi said, "An amalgamation of sun, sand and water, they enhance the physical challenge and at the same time, celebrate our coastal heritage." "The Khelo India Beach Games promise to make waves in India's sporting calendar," he added.

The Games, which will run till May 24, include competitions in six medal sports: beach soccer, beach volleyball, sepakraw, kabaddi, pencaksilat and open water swimming.



Additionally, mallakhamb and tug-of-war will be held as demonstration events.

Highlighting the significance of the venue, PM Modi said, "The choice of Diu as the venue of the Khelo India Beach Games is fitting."

He also underlined the power of sports to unite the country. "In a nation as diverse as ours, sports have always held a unique power that unites cultures, regions and languages. The vibrant energy of sports goes beyond entertainment and has become a transformative force, symbolising national pride and aspirations of our youth," he said.

The opening ceremony also featured cultural performances, celebrating India's traditional dance forms and diversity.

## HIL registration window opens

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 19:** More than 1,000 men's and women's players from across the world are expected to sign up for the Hockey India League's three-month long registration process, which began Monday.

HIL was revived last year after a gap of seven years with Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers winning the men's title and Odisha Warriors bagging the honours in the women's section.

Players from Netherlands, Belgium, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Australia, Spain, Argentina, Ireland, South Africa, New Zealand, Malaysia and South Korea besides India can sign up for the registration process in the men's section. In the women's section, players from India, Netherlands, Argentina, Belgium, China, Australia, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Ireland, Chile, Japan, USA and Scotland are eligible for registration.

The registration process for 2026 HIL will conclude August 20. "Building on the success of the 2024-25 revival season, which featured eight men's and four women's franchises, the upcoming edition promises to be even bigger," said a Hockey India release.

## Scheffler pulls away late for runaway PGA C'ship victory

Largest margin of victory in PGA Championship since 2012

REUTERS

**Charlotte, May 19:** Scottie Scheffler was put to the test at the PGA Championship Sunday but stood tall in the face of adversity as he corrected swing issues in time to hold off a spirited effort by Spaniard Jon Rahm for a runaway victory and third career major title.

Scheffler began the day with a seemingly comfortable three-shot lead but what many felt was an inevitable victory turned into a back-nine tussle as the world number one golfer struggled off the tee early and Rahm mounted a charge.

But like a true champion, the unflappable Scheffler did not panic and found his stride on the homeward stretch while Rahm, playing two groups ahead, endured a stunning collapse that robbed the final holes of any drama.

Scheffler made two key birdies midway through the back nine to regain control just as Rahm was falling apart and went on to card an even-par 71 that left him at 11 under on the week at the year's second major.



His five-stroke win is the largest at the PGA Championship since Rory McIlroy won by eight in 2012.

Ryder Cup hopeful Harris English, who began his day 11 shots adrift, shot a 65 that was the low round of the day and finished in a distant share of second place alongside fellow Americans Bryson DeChambeau (70) and Davis Riley (72).

Twice major champion Rahm

Finishing off a major championship is always difficult, and I did a good job of staying patient on the front nine. I didn't have my best stuff, but I kept myself in it, and I stepped up on the back nine and had a really good nine holes. That's about it

SCOTTIE SCHEFFLER

(73) gave Scheffler a scare early on the back nine but came apart in stunning fashion with five dropped shots over his final three holes to slide back into a share of eighth place.

"Pretty fresh wound right now," said Rahm. "But there's been a lot of good happening this week and a lot of positive feelings to take for the rest of the year."

Rahm, who began the day five shots back of the lead and playing two groups ahead of Scheffler, took a while to get going in the final round but found his groove right in time to set up some back-nine drama at Quail Hollow Club.

## Lineker to step down from BBC after sharing post on Zionism



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**London, May 19:** Gary Lineker, the England soccer great-turned-media celebrity, will leave his role as a presenter for the BBC after facing criticism for reposting an Instagram story about Zionism which featured a picture of a rat.

The 64-year-old Lineker, who is the British national broadcaster's highest-paid presenter on about 1.3 million pounds (\$1.7 million) a year, was set to leave flagship soccer highlights show "Match of the Day" at the end of this season but remain with the BBC to front other soccer coverage, including next

year's men's World Cup.

However, the BBC said Monday in a statement that Lineker will step down entirely from the corporation after the final "Match of the Day" episode next weekend in the wake of his decision to share a post from the group, Palestine Lobby, illustrated with a picture of a rat, titled: "Zionism explained in two minutes."

Rats, linked to disease and dirt, have been used to represent Jews in antisemitic propaganda throughout history, including by the Nazis in 1930s Germany.

"Football has been at the heart of my life for as long as I can remember — both on the pitch and in the studio," Lineker said in the BBC statement. "I care deeply about the game, and about the work I've done with the BBC over many years. As I've said, I would never consciously repost anything antisemitic — it goes against everything I stand for. "However, I recognize the error and upset that I caused, and reiterate how sorry I am. Stepping back now feels like the responsible course of action."