



Rashmika's shout-out

Actor Rashmika Mandanna gives a shout-out to women who never gave up despite life's toughest challenges

LEISURE | P2



MH370 mystery

12 years on, renewed hunt for missing Flight MH370 comes up empty as families urge Malaysia to extend search

INTERNATIONAL | P10



FPIs exit India

Foreign investors pull out Rs 21,000 crore from Indian equities over the last four trading sessions amid West Asia crisis

BUSINESS | P11



Sen falls short

Indian badminton ace Lakshya Sen goes down to familiar foe Lin Chun-Yi in the men's singles final of the All England Open

SPORTS | P12

K'taka conman held for raping woman in City

MANOJ KUMAR JENA, OP

Bhubaneswar, March 8: Saheed Nagar Police Sunday arrested a conman from Karnataka for allegedly luring a woman on false promise of marriage and assaulting her physically and sexually in the City, indicating a possible 'Love Jihad' angle to the incident.

The accused was identified as Irfan Ansari, a resident of Karnataka, who established relationship with the woman (a Hindu woman from Bhadrak) by introducing himself with a fake Hindu identity as Jairaj Sharma.

According to sources, the victim and Irfan came to know each other from social media and gradually they developed a relationship and Irfan promised to marry her.

Irfan arrived here and stayed in a private hotel with the victim. After the victim knew about Irfan's real identity, Irfan allegedly raped her and physically assaulted her and forced her to change her religion.

However, the victim managed to flee the hotel and lodged a complaint with Saheed Nagar Police who swung into action and arrested Irfan.



They also seized different IDs and a car with Andhra Pradesh registration number from his possession. Irfan has been forwarded to the court. A case has been registered on charges of rape, criminal conspiracy (Section 120B IPC) and investigation into a possible 'Love Jihad' angle is underway.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Wow! The feeling of being a real Vishwaguru is truly amazing

Kiwis bite dust as India retain T20 crown

◆ INDIA: 255/5 IN 20 OVERS ◆ NZ: 159 ALL OUT IN 19 OVERS ◆ SANJU PLAYER OF THE TOURNAMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, March 8: India produced a batting spectacle of rare ferocity to overwhelm New Zealand by 96 runs in the summit clash and defend the T20 World Cup title after posting a record total here Sunday.

Powered by a blazing 89 from Sanju Samson and explosive half-centuries from Abhishek Sharma (52) and Ishan Kishan (54), India's top order went on a six-hitting spree to leave the New Zealand bowlers shell-shocked in the title clash, posting a massive 255 for five.

The total was the highest ever posted in a T20 World Cup final, capping a dominant display by the defending champions on the biggest stage of the tournament. India also became the first team to win the tournament.

The scoreboard pressure got to the Black Caps who desperately went after the Indian bowlers and ended up losing three quick wickets initially.

Their biggest hope Finn Allen (9) and the dangerous Glenn Phillips (5) perished early and with that New Zealand's chances of putting up a decent fight went up in smoke. Axar Patel (3/27) and Jasprit Bumrah (4/15) had bulldozed the Kiwi innings and with the departure of Tim Seifert (52 off 26), the contest was reduced to a formality. Invited to bat, Sam-



ON CLOUD NINE: India celebrate with the trophy after defeating New Zealand during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 final cricket match at Narendra Modi Stadium, in Ahmedabad, Sunday

son and Abhishek went on the offensive, tearing into the Kiwi attack with audacious strokeplay. The duo hammered boundaries at will and raised a breathtaking 98-run opening stand in just 7.1

Champions! Congratulations to the Indian team on winning the ICC Men's T20 World Cup! This remarkable triumph reflects exceptional skills, determination and teamwork. They have shown outstanding grit through the tournament

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

thority and least respect for the Kiwi bowlers, India crossed the 200-run mark in 15 overs. However, New Zealand succeeded in putting the brake on the run flow by dismissing Samson, Kishan and skipper Suryakumar Yadav (0) in a space of six balls. Pacer James Neesham took all three wickets in the 16th over to somehow stop the game from slipping away.

Hardik Pandya (18) did not last long but Shivam Dube (26 not out) provided a flourishing finish, creaming off 24 runs in the final over from Neesham. India managed 52 in last five overs, thanks to Dube's fiery knock.

Jubilant fans cheered, danced and waved the tricolour as they poured into the streets across cricket-crazy India on Sunday night to celebrate the Men in Blue scripting history by winning the second consecutive T20 World Cup. Chants of "India, India" reverberated in the air as crowds gathered in city centres. **MORE P12**

Over 1cr women get Subhadra aid

AROUND 17 LAKH 'LAKHPATI DIDIS' HAVE EMERGED IN THE STATE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 8: Chief Minister Mohan Majhi, on the occasion of International Women's Day, Sunday, disbursed more than ₹5,106 crore to over 1.02 crore women as the fourth instalment of financial assistance under Subhadra Yojana at a state-level event held in Puri.

Of the 1,02,12,665 beneficiaries who received ₹5,000 aid under the flagship women-centric scheme for the fourth phase, 4,20,854 belong to Puri district alone, according to sources.

Extending greetings to the women beneficiaries, Majhi said Subhadra has brought a transformative change in the lives of women within a short span of one-and-a-half years. "The scheme has successfully empowered women in the state by ensuring financial independence and giving them a distinct identity," he said.

The CM noted that the scheme has become a major source of confidence and self-reliance

GOVT AIMS TO CREATE 60 LAKH 'LAKHPATI DIDIS' AND 10 LAKH 'MILLIONAIRE DIDIS' BY 2047, SAYS CM MOHAN CHARAN MAJHI



for women. He praised several beneficiaries who have used the financial support to start small enterprises such as mushroom cultivation, poultry farming, bamboo-based businesses and other micro-ventures in districts like Angul, Bolangir, Bargarh, Bhadrak and Cuttack.

During the programme, Majhi also unveiled Subhadra Review Report prepared by Indian Institute of Management Sambalpur. According to the survey, 25.52 per cent beneficiaries used the financial support to start business-

es, while 35.7 per cent used it for household needs. Many women have also utilised the funds for loan repayment, savings and skill development, which has helped them gain recognition and respect within their families. Emphasising the role of women in development, the CM said women will play a crucial role in achieving the vision of a prosperous Odisha by 2047. He added that around 17 lakh "Lakhpati Didis" have already emerged in the state, and the government aims to cre-

ate 60 lakh Lakhpati Didis and 10 lakh "Millionaire Didis" by 2047.

Majhi reiterated that women empowerment remains a top priority of his government, citing initiatives such as Mukhyamantri Kanya Bibaha Yojana, Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana, and the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana, which focus on women's welfare, education and financial security.

On the occasion, the CM released Subhadra review report, a coffee table book of the Women and Child Development department, and a booklet on child marriage prevention.

Deputy Chief Minister and Women and Child Development Minister Pravatī Parida said Subhadra Yojana has become a strong symbol of women empowerment in Odisha. She noted that more than ₹15,000 crore had already been disbursed in the first three phases, and the fourth phase further reflects the government's commitment to women's development. She also urged mothers to ensure that girls aged 14-15 receive vaccination against the Human Papillomavirus (HPV).

Israel hits Tehran fuel depots; Iran retaliates

REUTERS

Dubai / Jerusalem, March 8: Israeli forces expanded their bombardment of Iran overnight, striking fuel depots near Tehran, while Bahrain said an Iranian attack had damaged one of its desalination plants, signalling a widening assault on vital infrastructure across the region.

As the fighting escalated on day nine of the US-Israeli assault on Iran, Tehran moved closer to naming a new supreme leader after the killing of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, with every indication suggesting his powerful son could take charge.

Israel's military threatened to kill any replacement for Khamenei, while US President Donald Trump said the war might only end once Iran's military and rulers had been wiped out.

Video from Tehran showed thick, choking black smoke hanging over the city early Sunday after strikes on oil storage facilities had lit up the night sky with plumes of orange flame.

An Israeli source said the

WAR ENTERS DAY 9

Indian among two killed

An Indian national is among two killed after a projectile fell on a residential location in Saudi Arabia Sunday, officials said. The military projectile fell in a residential area in Saudi Arabia's al-Kharj Governorate Sunday, killing one Indian national and another Bangladeshi national, while 12 Bangladeshi residents sustained injuries, Al-Arabiya news reported.

fuel was used to manufacture and develop weapons and to operate military bases. Iran's oil distribution company said four of its employees were killed in the blitz, adding that rationing would be introduced temporarily in some areas "to ensure fair and sustainable supplies".

Shortly after the attack, which appeared to mark a new phase in the war, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his government would press on with the assault and strike Iran's rulers "without mercy".

"At some point, I don't think there will be anybody left maybe to say, 'We surrender,'" Trump said.

Online betting racket busted; four arrested

PNN & AGENCIES

Malkangiri, March 8: Malkangiri Police have unearthed an interstate online betting racket, arresting four scammers, including two kingpins from Chhattisgarh's Raipur.

After verifying 142 mule accounts, police found that some of those accounts were created by middlemen belonging to Kotpad area with the false promise of MGNREGA payments into the accounts of innocent citizens.

"These multiple bank accounts, passbooks, and mobile numbers were collected and couriered, and transported to the network operating in Rai-

pur," police said.

Delving deep into the fraudulent networks, Malkangiri police have arrested four persons, including two kingpins of the racket from Raipur, and brought them on police remand for further investigation.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the accused were operating several illegal betting platforms and managing transactions through multiple bank accounts and digital payment channels through sophisticated, organised networks.

Several WhatsApp groups were created by the accused to coordinate the payments and illegal betting across the states.

In a first, Olive Ridley lays eggs at Puri Blue Flag Beach

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, March 8: In a matter of great joy for the conservationists and wildlife lovers, an Olive Ridley turtle was found to have laid eggs at the Blue Flag Beach in Pilgrim City here. Around 114 eggs found at the beach were safely handed over to the Forest department Sunday. This is considered a historic first incident where a turtle chose to lay eggs in a crowded place.

According to reports, an Olive Ridley turtle came near Blue Flag Beach Saturday night and laid eggs over there. The staffers at Blue Flag Beach informed the Forest department after noticing the incident following which the department officials reached



the beach and safely collected the eggs from the sand. It is worth noting that 14 turtle protection camps have been set up along the stretch from Devi river mouth to Puri. These camps are arranged to

provide safe nesting sites to the sea turtles. After the baby turtles emerge from the eggs, they are safely released into the sea. Although this rare species of turtle (Olive Ridley) lays eggs every year, it is being reported

that the number of eggs laid is gradually decreasing. In a bid to protect these rare turtles, fishing restrictions are imposed along the coast every year from November 1 to May 31. An area up to 7 km from

the mouths of Devi and Keluni rivers is declared a restricted zone, and trawler movement within 20 km of the coastline is prohibited.

However, many trawler operators violate these rules and fish in the restricted areas, which has resulted in the death of many Olive Ridley turtles in the past. Environmentalists believe that the administration should pay more attention to this issue.

On the other hand, the rare Olive Ridley turtles usually lay eggs in areas they consider safe.

Since they have laid eggs at Blue Flag Beach for the first time, it cannot be ruled out that they may return to lay eggs here again in the future.

leisure



SZA FEELS 'AT WAR' WITH AI IN MUSIC

Singer-songwriter SZA has her reservation against AI in music. She feels like she is "at war" because of the rise of AI in music. The singer is of the opinion that the technology is causing particular problems for Black artistes

DEMI MOORE SHARES WORDS OF WISDOM

Hollywood actress Demi Moore has said that she doesn't aspire for perfection. The actress said that she used to strive to be "perfect", but her perspective shifted after she received some life-changing wisdom



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
 Ganesha predicts success if you're involved with the media. Here's a golden chance to showcase your talent, as all eyes are on you. Your skills and talent will be acknowledged, and short-term goals will see fulfillment.

TAURUS
 You will not just run the race but will reach the finish line with ease today, predicts Ganesha. Neither pressure nor overload will prevent you from accomplishing your targets this afternoon. However, Ganesha advises that you must learn to be patient to make the most of your success.

GEMINI
 Today, you will meet someone special, who will stay in your life for good, predicts Ganesha. Your kind and considerate nature will be at its magnanimous best in the afternoon. At the workplace, you will have a fabulous time if you are into marketing and advertising.

CANCER
 Enough of waiting on the sidelines, watching others take credit for all your hard work. Today, you will stake your claim to what is rightfully yours, the due credit for your work. Surprisingly for you, your peers and superiors will not only appreciate your work without any fuss, but also share with you the big plans they have in store for you.

LEO
 There are many milestones that one covers during the course of one's life, but it is usually the moment of love that one always remembers fondly, says Ganesha. It is quite likely that today will be one such memorable day that ushers in a turning point in your love life. Chances are that you will be busy with arranging a get-together with friends and relatives. After all, what is joy unless you have shared it with the people in your life.

VIRGO
 Mission: Finding an exciting relationship. Status: Accomplished. And so Ganesha smiles. At office, outshine others with both words and actions. Bewitch people with your arsenal of sweet nothings and charm your way to win their hearts in the evening, says Ganesha.

LIBRA
 You are at your best when communicating with others, and your silver-tongued speech will charm many. Your day will be spent in negotiating, meetings, and in interacting with people to get things done.

SCORPIO
 Your tolerance level is sky-high, and your optimism, boundless. Professionally, you are like Iron Man — heart of gold, nerves of steel (without the red and gold costume, of course). Academic pursuit in the arts will take you to new horizons.

SAGITTARIUS
 Belligerent — this word describes your state today. Good news, long since awaited, will come by at the workplace. Imagination is set to fly sky-high as you while the evening away in the pleasant company of someone from the opposite sex.

CAPRICORN
 Where there is a will there is a way. True, but even if it's an action driven by a strong will, a dying man cannot wage a war. You will have to be extra careful about your health today, says Ganesha. This besides, you are likely to strike a profitable deal with your clients, which may turn out to be a big achievement for your company. This will also be the right time to indulge in entertaining pursuits.

AQUARIUS
 Worried about your future? Just approach your work more seriously. You may be overburdening yourself by helping others. While this is noble, Ganesha says it shouldn't be at the cost of your own health. By noon, your spirits will lift. You realise that it's okay to be a little selfish.

PISCES
 You will implement abstract ideas into practice with the all the finesse of a feverish modern-day artist today. The evening will find you satisfied with and questioning about your place in the universe; you will also acknowledge God for the small mercies he gifts you on an everyday basis, says Ganesha.

INT'L WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION



A scene from the Odia play *Bijukta Banita*, staged at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Sunday. Written by Dilip Balabantaray and directed by Sounika Sahoo Panda, the drama — a joint collaboration of the cultural troupe Bidyakanak Srujanusthan, the Culture Department, and the Odisha Sahitya Akademi — marked the celebration of International Women's Day. A national-level symposium on 'Role and Contribution of Women in Theatre' and a poetry recitation programme were also held at the conference hall of Sanskriti Bhavan during the day.

Twinkle on painful side of motherhood

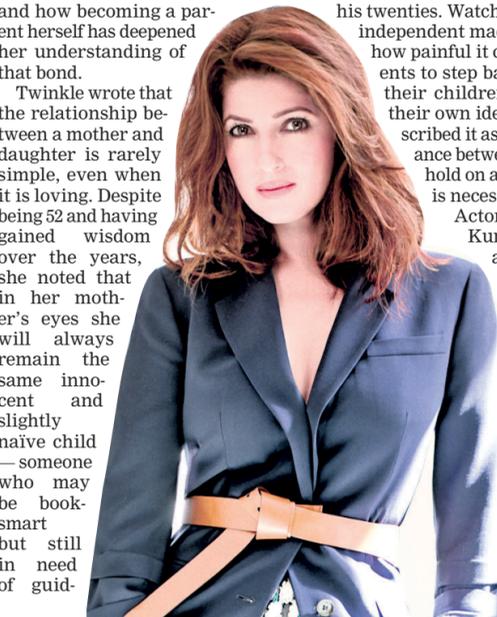
MUMBAI: Actor-turned-author Twinkle Khanna recently reflected on the emotional complexities of motherhood, describing it as both beautiful and bittersweet. In her latest column, she opened up about her relationship with her mother, veteran actor Dimple Kapadia, and how becoming a parent herself has deepened her understanding of that bond.

Twinkle wrote that the relationship between a mother and daughter is rarely simple, even when it is loving. Despite being 52 and having gained wisdom over the years, she noted that in her mother's eyes she will always remain the same innocent and slightly naïve child — someone who may be book-smart but still in need of guidance.

According to her, Kapadia continues to offer advice with the same protective instinct she always has.

The author also shared that she truly began to grasp the emotional challenges of motherhood when her elder son, Aarav Kumar, entered his twenties. Watching him grow independent made her realise how painful it can be for parents to step back and allow their children to discover their own identity. She described it as a delicate balance between wanting to hold on and knowing it is necessary to let go.

Actor Akshay Kumar also reflected to the column on X, praising Twinkle's writing and saying the piece, especially its ending, made him miss his own mother.



MUMBAI: Actor Sameera Reddy has spoken out strongly against toxic beauty standards in the film industry, reflecting on the pressures she faced earlier in her career. Known today for championing body positivity and mental well-being, the actor says it took time to unlearn the unrealistic expectations placed on women, especially in show business.

SAMEERA slams toxic beauty norms

how she was made to feel appearance did the industry's ideals. She said constantly told she to look fairer, with artists applying lighter makeup and even body makeup to match that image. Being tall also became a point of criticism, and she was frequently made to feel she was "too big" or "not slim enough." Looking back, the actor said it was disheartening that discussions about her size and appearance overshadowed conversations about her talent.

Sameera also opened up about her struggles after becoming a mother, including postpartum weight gain and the loneliness that followed. Determined to change the narrative, she began speaking openly about these issues online and launched the *Messy Mama* community to support women facing similar experiences. Today, Sameera says she has learned to ignore trolls and embrace authenticity. On the work front, the actor was last seen in the Kannada film *Varadhanayaka*.

RASHMIKA'S SHOUT-OUT TO GIRL POWER

MUMBAI: Actress Rashmika Mandanna took the time this Women's Day to remind her girlfriends that "You are enough exactly as you are". In her special post, Rashmika gave a shout-out to all the women out there who did not give up despite things being extremely difficult.

The *Animal* actress penned on the Stories section of her official Instagram handle, "To all the beautiful women out there... Today is your day... but honestly, every single day should be. To the women who dream big, to the women who work extremely hard but your wins are not always celebrated, to those who quietly

hold everything together, who are still figuring life out, and to the women who smile even on the days when it's hard and you just want to give up.. but you say to yourself 'this too shall pass' (sic)".

"I see you. And I am so proud of you. Sometimes we tend to forget how powerful we really are. How much strength it takes to keep going.. to love to deeply.. to core endlessly... and it's somehow become the norm of being a woman.. but we know it is so because we are the only ones capable of it... and to rise again and again and again.", added the Pushpa actress.

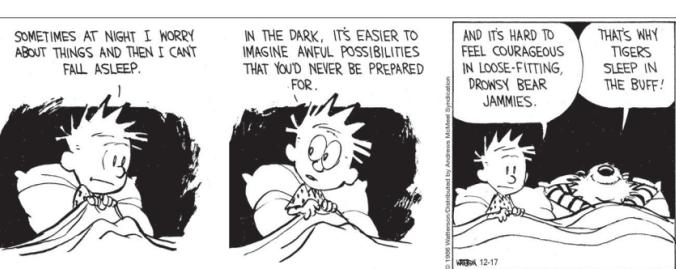
Rashmika further reminded every girl "You are enough. Exactly as you are".



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

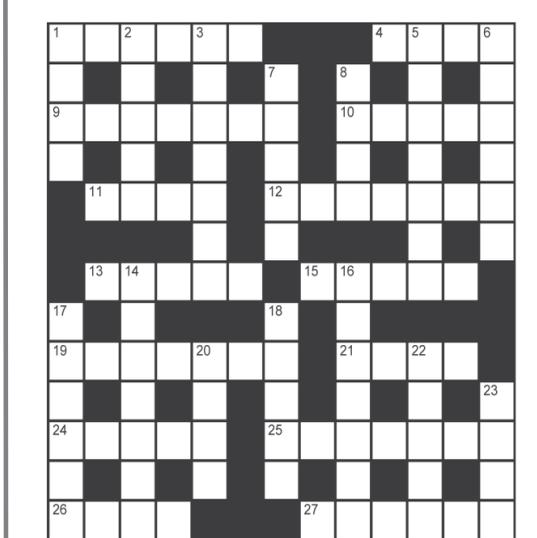


BREVITY



FUN post

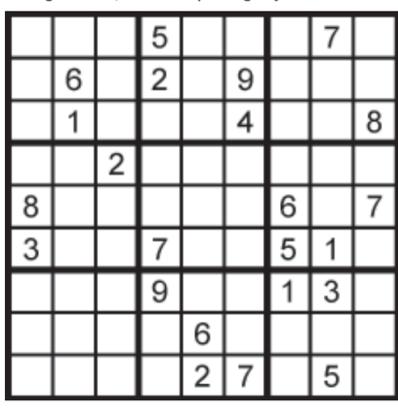
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Elementary
 - 4 Atlas section
 - 9 Tornado
 - 10 Waste away
 - 11 Insignificant
 - 12 Frugal
 - 13 Hee-haws
 - 15 Praises
 - 19 Some socks
 - 21 Undertaking
 - 24 Lay to rest
- Down**
- 25 Analyse
 - 26 Wistful word
 - 27 Hem
 - 1 Clairvoyant
 - 14 Boat race
 - 16 Draw in
 - 17 Docking facility
 - 18 Theatre employee
 - 20 Elders' teachings
 - 22 Pink-legged bird
 - 23 Interlock

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Budget Session-II set for stormy start



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 8: The second half of the Budget session of Parliament is set for a stormy start Monday, with the Lok Sabha scheduled to take up an Opposition-sponsored resolution seeking the removal of Speaker Om Birla.

The ongoing conflict in West Asia is also likely to figure prominently as the Opposition is already attacking the government over its stance towards Iran, the US 'waiver' on India's Russian oil purchase, among other issues.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will make a statement in the Lok Sabha regarding the 'Situation in West Asia', according to a revised list of business of the Lower House for March 9 circulated Sunday evening.

Besides, the outcome of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in poll-bound West Bengal, which led to the deletion of nearly 60 lakh votes, is expected to cast its shadow on

and parliamentary democracy. Apart from the no-trust notice, the US-Israel strikes on Iran and growing tensions in West Asia, which have led to disruption in crude oil supplies and increase in prices, are also likely to come up during the session.

TMC MPs are set to raise the heat on the SIR matter in the House, while the BJP may rake up the issue of President Droupadi Murmu's "protocol breach" during her visit to West Bengal Saturday.

According to the agenda paper for Monday, the resolution against the Speaker and the statement of External Affairs Minister Jaishankar on the situation in West Asia as items listed in the Lok Sabha business of the day.

Both the ruling BJP and the principal Opposition Congress have issued a whip to their respective Lok Sabha MPs to be present in the House when the issue comes up for consideration. The Opposition parties will also hold a strategy meeting in the chamber of Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge at 10am Monday.

The numbers are heavily stacked in favour of the government, which will ensure that the resolution is defeated.

The Lok Sabha may not take up the Question Hour between 11am and 12 noon Monday, as it may get adjourned to pay respect to sitting member from Shillong Ricky Syngkon who passed away February 19.

Three Lok Sabha speakers -- GV Mavlankar (1954), Hukam Singh (1966) and Balram Jakhar (1987) -- faced no-confidence motions in the past, which got defeated.

parliamentary proceedings.

The Opposition is also likely to raise questions over the interim Indo-US trade deal in the wake of the US Supreme Court ruling against tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump.

The second part of the Budget session will focus on the Demands for Grants for various ministries for 2026-27 and the passage of the Finance Bill, 2026, which has all the tax proposals presented in the Union Budget February 1.

The no-confidence resolution against Birla was given by several Opposition leaders who alleged that he had acted in a "blatantly partisan" manner in the House. Birla had recused himself from the proceedings of the House from the date of submission of the notice, with the Lok Sabha Secretariat saying he would return only after the disposal of the agenda.

Saturday, Prime Minister Modi backed Birla, saying he had taken all parliamentarians along and was committed to the principles of the Constitution

Student goes on attack spree in K'taka; 1 dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ballari (Karnataka), March 8: A Class IX student allegedly went on a rampage at a private residential school here, killing one person and injuring several others with a sharp object and an iron rod, police officials said Sunday. The incident occurred at the school hostel Saturday night, they added.

The deceased boy was a native of Andhra Pradesh. The body was shifted to the Vijayanagar Institute of Medical Sciences (VIMS), Ballari, for post-mortem.

According to officials, an investigation is underway to determine the motive and weapon used for the incident. A search is also on to nab the accused student, who apparently fled the scene immediately.

"Nine students were under the supervision of a social science teacher (also hostel warden) Saturday night. The student (accused), in a fit of rage, attacked everyone randomly... unfortunately, one student died and seven others are undergoing treatment," Inspector General of Police (IGP) for the Ballari Range PS Harsha said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said the teacher's statement has been recorded and a preliminary inquiry was conducted. Also, the Scene of Crime Officer (SOCO) and Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) teams have visited the spot.

"This case will be considered under the law as one involving a juvenile, who is in conflict with law. So, the investigation should be done sensitively under the Juvenile Justice Act, keeping in mind the safeguards available for the accused. More information cannot be shared," Harsha said.

He further said, "The statements of the deceased boy's parents will also be recorded. A detailed investigation will be conducted, and a report will be submitted to the concerned courts."

AI CAMERAS NAB FOUR POACHERS IN SIMILIPAL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, March 8: Four poachers were arrested by forest officials in the southern division of the Similipal National Park tiger reserve in Mayurbhanj district after their movement was detected by AI-enabled surveillance cameras.

The accused were identified as Sunil Bhakta, 25, Sahadev Mallick, 20, Ramchandra Hansdah, 25, and Dharendra Mallick, 24. All are residents of Chandanchatur village under Badasahi police station.

Forest officials said the four had entered the Dukura range of



Similipal at around 10pm March 5. Their photographs were captured by artificial intelligence-enabled cameras installed in the forest. Two country-made guns and hunting equipment were seized from their possession.

Deputy Director of the southern division of Similipal Tiger Reserve, Samrat Gouda, said another case will also be registered under the Arms Act, 1959



CLAY CRAFT: A woman vendor sells earthen pots on the occasion of International Women's Day in Bangalore, Karnataka, Sunday

PTI PHOTO

Woman gangraped in Bihar's Bhojpur; 5 held



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ara (Bihar), March 8: A 19-year-old woman was allegedly gangraped by unidentified persons in Bihar's Bhojpur district, police said Sunday.

Five persons have been arrested in connection with the incident, a police officer said. SP (Bhojpur) Shri Raj said, "According to a complaint filed by the victim's brother, the incident took place March 5 when the woman was called to one of the accused's residence. The accused had also called his other friends there, and they raped her. The victim's brother filed a complaint with the Karnamepur police station and also named the accused."

Police immediately registered a case and launched an investigation, he added. Police have arrested five persons so far, and a manhunt has also been launched to nab others.

The victim is undergoing treatment at a government hospital, the SP said, adding that further investigation is on.

Nitish's son Nishant joins JD(U), likely to be Dy CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, March 8: Nishant Kumar, son of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, joined the Janata Dal (United) Sunday and said he would work to strengthen the party's organisation.

An engineering graduate in his 40s, Nishant was inducted into the party at its headquarters here in the presence of senior leaders, including Union minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh, popularly known as 'Lalan', and JD(U) national working president Sanjay Jha.

After joining the party, Nishant said, "My father decided to go to the Rajya Sabha. It was his personal decision. We all respect it. We will keep working under his guidance. I will work to strengthen the organisation." Nishant claimed his father, as the longest-serving chief minister of Bihar, did a lot for the state in the last twenty years. People of the state will never forget the CM's contribution to the state's development, he said.

"I thank everyone. I will honour the trust you all have placed in me. The country, our state and I are proud of what my father has done in the last 20 years. I will take the development work done by the CM to the masses," Nishant said.



Nitish's son received a rousing reception at the JD(U) office on his arrival. Party functionaries gathered outside the office and were seen waving party flags and beating drums. Speculation is rife that Nishant will be made Deputy CM in the new government. A close aide of Nitish Kumar claimed Saturday that a unanimous decision had been taken to make Nishant deputy CM in the new government to be formed upon his father's resignation.

CM Nitish Kumar filed his nomination papers for the Rajya Sabha polls Thursday. JD(U) MLA from Harnaut, Hari Narayan Singh, claimed that Nishant would be elected to the state legislative council next month.

2 Class VII girls flee City to avoid exam, rescued

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 8: Two Class VII girls who fled their homes here to avoid annual examinations were rescued from the house of one of their relatives in Angul district, the police said Sunday.

The two girls left their homes under Maitri Vihar police station for school at about 10am Thursday, but did not return home, the police said, adding they were rescued Saturday.

According to official information, the incident came to light after Sridhar Nayak, 40, of Hatiasuni Nagar, Salia Sahi, lodged a complaint at Maitri Vihar police station March 5. In his complaint, he stated that his minor daughter and her friend, both Class VII students, had left home around 10am that day to go to school but did not return. The police had announced a ₹25,000 reward for information leading to the rescue of the two friends.

"Using human intelligence and technical support, we rescued the two from Kishore Nagar of Angul district Saturday," said Bhubaneswar-Cuttack Police Commissioner S Dev Datta Singh. It was revealed that the annual examination of the girls was scheduled to start from March 9. As both of them were weak in studies, they left home to avoid the examination, he said.

Trump admin uses video games to sell Iran war

REUTERS

Washington, March 8: A White House video begins with a scene from 'Call of Duty, the action-packed, first-person shooter game. It then quickly cuts to images of fighter jets launching from an aircraft carrier, missiles streaking through the sky and targets exploding in slow motion -- all set to the pounding beat of rapper Childish Gambino's song 'Bonfire' and a deep-voiced narrator declaring, "We're winning this fight".

A 'Call of Duty' kill score, which shows the numerical value earned for eliminating enemies, appears after each explosion. Viewed over 58 million times, the video is part of a social media campaign the Trump administration has launched to sell its bombing campaign against Iran to the American public.

Released by the White House and the Pentagon on X, TikTok and Instagram and packed with pop culture references, pulse-pounding music, and clips from muscular action movies, the videos have been

viewed millions of times and shared across social media by pro-Trump accounts.

Critics described the series of videos -- another one features Superman, footage from the films 'Braveheart', 'Top Gun', 'Iron Man' and 'Gladiator' interspersed with the destruction of military hardware -- as a distasteful 'gamification' of a war in which US service members and Iranian civilians have been killed.

As the White House has struggled to articulate a clear case for the war that began with a US-Israeli bombing campaign February 28, with President Donald Trump and some cabinet members providing shifting and contradictory rationales, some former Republican officials and communication experts describe the videos as an unseemly, swaggering attempt to showcase American military might.

Instead, they said, Trump should be clearly explaining to Iranians and the US public why America has triggered another Middle East conflict.

Anna Kelly, a White House spokeswoman, told Reuters



the U.S. military was meeting or surpassing its goals in the war against Iran.

"The White House will continue showcasing the many examples of Iran's ballistic missiles, production facilities, and dreams of owning a nuclear weapon being destroyed in real time," Kelly said.

One of the videos features an animated green lizard repeatedly tapping a glowing screen, with each touch followed by images of missiles being launched and a voice repeating the word 'lizard.' The lizard clip is from the end credits of the 2025 Disney Pixar film 'Elio.' Last year

it became a viral meme, often used to represent doing a repetitive task.

Another video, opens new tab contains U.S. military images that aren't from the current conflict. A 38-second TikTok clip posted March 3 by the White House is captioned 'OPERATION EPIC FURY,' the administration's name for the Iran campaign, set to the song 'Macarena turned' by DJ Shlepki.

The video contains clips of a B-1 bomber sitting on a tarmac, a B-2 Spirit stealth bomber flying against a backdrop of clouds, and what appears to be an F-35C fighter jet launching

- Public relations campaign aimed mainly at young men, experts say
- Critics say it demeans the victims of war
- PR campaign comes as administration offers changing rationales for the war

from an aircraft carrier, and multiple explosions. Reuters independently verified that some of the aircraft images are older stock footage and not from the current Iran war.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine has offered a more sober description of the Iran conflict elsewhere. In sharing the names of four of the six U.S. service members killed in the conflict, Caine this week spoke of his "profound sadness and gratitude". He added, "To the families of our fallen, we grieve with you today."

A 14-second video opens new tab posted by the White House account features a series of military explosions interspersed with the animated Nickelodeon character SpongeBob SquarePants repeatedly saying: "Wanna

see me do it again?" It has been viewed over 9 million times on X and TikTok.

Kristopher Purcell, who served in the White House communications department in the run-up to Bush's 2003 invasion of Iraq, said he believed the target audience for the videos was young men, a demographic that Trump performed strongly with in his 2024 election victory.

He said the Bush administration spent months laying out the case for the invasion of Iraq but now the Trump administration is sending out these videos after the fact to justify the war, and called it the 'gamification' of conflict.

Matthew Baum, a professor of global communications at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, said the potential problem for Trump was that he campaigned on a promise of American isolationism. As a result, it's not clear that the message of military might through memes and online videos will be as effective as Trump's previous use of social media to reach his Make America Great Again supporters.

ODISHA UTSAV IN KOLKATA

Suraj: Odia diaspora crucial in achieving 'Viksit Odisha 2036'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 8: Odia diaspora can rightly be described as cultural ambassadors of Odisha. Though many Odias reside outside the state, their emotional and cultural connection with Odisha remains deeply rooted. Participation and contribution of Odia diaspora will be crucial in realising the vision of Viksit Odisha 2036, said Odia Language, Literature and Culture (OLLC) Minister Suryabanshi Suraj during the inauguration of Odisha Utsav—organised for the first time in Kolkata at National Library Sunday.

The event aims to connect with Odia diaspora and promote the state's rich cultural heritage beyond its borders. Non-resident Odias have been playing a vital role in promoting and popularising Odisha's rich art, literature, heritage and cultural traditions across different parts of the country and the world, the minister said, adding that the state gov-



ernment remains dedicated to the development and welfare of the Odia diaspora community.

Extending his greetings on the occasion of International Women's Day, the minister conveyed his best wishes to the women of Odia diaspora, highlighting the significant role played by women in preserving the traditions and cultural values of Odia families and in carrying them forward globally.

Suraj also stated that the Directorate of Odisha Paribar under the OLLC department has been actively working to extend all possible support and assistance to Odias liv-

ing outside the State.

During the programme, the minister felicitated distinguished Odia writers from the diaspora as well as members of Odia diaspora community.

The festival showcased rich folk traditions and cultural heritage of the state, along with exhibitions of state's traditional cuisine, handloom and handicraft products. The cultural segment featured vibrant performances by artistes presenting Odissi, Sahi Jata, Chhau, Ghumura, Dhamsa, Pashumukha and Sambalpuri dance, reflecting the diverse artistic traditions of the state.

Total failure of leadership : Patnaik slams state BJP govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 8: BJD supremo Naveen Patnaik Sunday slammed the BJP government for "total failure of leadership" over the "rising" number of incidents of crimes against women.

Addressing the party's women leaders and members here on the occasion of International Women's Day, Patnaik said the BJD, which follows the ideology of former chief minister Biju Patnaik, had taken major steps for the empowerment of women when it was in power in the state.

"However, under the BJP government, atrocities against women are on the rise, and no one is there to listen to them... (It's a) total failure of the leadership at the government level," he said. Reacting to Patnaik's statement, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida asserted that the Mohan Charan Majhi government is committed to ensuring the safety and security of women.

Hitting out at the BJD chief, she said, "Because he failed to provide security to the women during his 24-year rule, they changed the government. If we start counting cases of crimes against women reported during the BJD government's tenure, it will be a very long list."

SPREADING AWARENESS AGAINST CHILD MARRIAGE

'Bal Vivah Mukti Rath' connects 17.7L people, covers 50,543 km

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 8: On the occasion of International Women's Day, Bal Vivah Mukti Rath—a massive awareness campaign against child marriage concluded its journey, travelling 50,543 km across the state and connecting more than 17.7 lakh people.

The campaign on wheels, organised by Just Rights for Children, covered 16,062 villages across Odisha with the message of creating a child marriage free society. The campaign was a part of Central government's 100-day intensive campaign to end child marriage. Across the country, more than 500 similar vehicles were deployed to mobilise and sensitise communities about the legal and social consequences of child marriage.

During its month-long journey, the Bal Vivah Mukti Rath conducted 3,383 awareness programmes, including rallies, nukkad natak, pledge ceremonies, cultural programmes and survivor testimonies. The campaign reached schools, gram



sabhas, religious institutions and historical sites to spread awareness about child rights and protection.

As many as 1,880 schools and colleges and 1,287 religious places were covered during the campaign. More than 2,289 faith leaders participated, while over 1.33 lakh students and teachers joined the awareness activities.

The campaign received widespread support across the state, with politicians, civil society organizations and police personnel joining hands to strengthen efforts to eliminate child marriage by 2030.

Despite progress, child marriage remains a concern in Odisha. According to government data for 2019-21, the state's child marriage prevalence stands at

20.5 per cent—lower than the national average of 23.3 per cent—but significant disparities persist across districts, with some reporting rates exceeding 30 per cent.

Nationwide, the Bal Vivah Mukti Rath campaign travelled through 66,344 villages, covering nearly 6.79 lakh km and reaching more than 5.22 crore people across 28 states. The campaign was flagged off in different states by chief ministers, ministers, members of Parliament and district collectors.

The organisation also revealed that in the past year alone, its network and partners helped stop 14,900 child marriages in Odisha through coordinated efforts.

Aquaculture key to ensure nutrition security: Experts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 8: Promoting aquaculture or fish farming is essential for ensuring nutrition security and addressing malnutrition, particularly in developing countries, experts said at a seminar organised by Orissa Environmental Society (OES) here Sunday.

The seminar, held on the theme 'Grow Fish for Nutrition Security', highlighted the growing importance of fish production in meeting the nutritional needs of an expanding population.

Experts noted that fish are a rich source of high-quality protein, essential fatty acids such as omega-3, and vital vitamins and minerals including vitamins A, D, B-complex, calcium, iodine and zinc. Regular consumption of fish contributes to improved brain development, stronger immunity and overall health.

Speakers emphasised that expanding fish farming in ponds, tanks, reservoirs and coastal areas can provide an efficient and sustainable source of nutritious food while also helping reduce pressure on overexploited wild fish stocks. Currently, capture fisheries contribute about 51 per cent of global fish supply while aquaculture accounts for 49 per cent.

The programme was presided over by OES president Sundara Narayana Patro, while Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA) Bhubaneswar principal scientist Jitendra Kumar Sundaray attended as chief speaker.



Empower women to create 'circle of protection': Padhy



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 8: Empower women to create a circle of protection so that everyone can remain safe and contribute to development, Odisha Legislative Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy said while attending an event organised by Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) here Sunday.

BMC organised a mass run to mark International Women's Day, spreading the message of cleanliness and community participation in the City.

The run was held as part of 'Sampoorna' programme organised by BMC, under Information, Education and Communication (IEC) initiative related to Swachh Survekshan Campaign. The event aimed to promote awareness about sanitation and civic responsibility in a unique way.

The run kicked off at Master Canteen Square and concluded at BMC headquarters. Over 600 women participated in the event, including members of self-help groups, sanitation volunteers (Swachh Saathis), sanitation workers, members of various voluntary organisations, and students from different schools and colleges, including Rama Devi Women's University.

BMC Mayor Sulochana Das highlighted the key role played by women in keeping the City clean. She said the City currently ranks ninth in the country due to the tireless efforts of women sanitation workers and volunteers. "Because of their dedication, we are able to live in a healthy and clean environment today," she said.

The mayor also urged women to continue taking the lead in cleanliness initiatives and help establish Bhubaneswar as the number one city in the country in the ongoing Swachh Survekshan rankings.

DAY CELEBRATED IN SALIA SAHI

Bhubaneswar: The Society for Nature, Education, and Health (SNEH) marked the day with an empowering celebration at its 'Conflict Resolution and Training Centre' in Salia Sahi. The event, on the theme 'Rights, Justice, Action For All Women and Girls' saw participation of over 100 women, including members from peace committees, self-help groups, Mahila Arogya Samiti, and local women.

BMC Mayor Sulochana Das, OFS Kananbala Nayak, writer Snehalata Nayak, social worker Mamata Dash and Abadhuta Swain along with SNEH project director Subas Panda graced the event and underscored the critical role of women in today's society.



On the occasion, Das delivered a powerful address emphasising the need to change traditional gender roles, noting that women are not only breaking barriers but are also creating a space for themselves across various fields. "Women are no longer confined to the periphery of society. They are at the forefront, creating a better future for all," Das said. Dignitaries jointly inaugurated a 'Family Counseling Centre', aimed at providing support for resolving domestic disputes and helping families achieve peaceful resolutions.

SEMINAR ON WOMEN IN FARMING CONCLUDES

Bhubaneswar: To mark the day, Maa Ramadevi Chair of Rama Devi Women's University (RDWU) here organised a two-day national seminar titled 'Women in Farming: Unsung Heroes of



the Soil' which concluded Sunday. The seminar highlighted the significant contributions of women farmers to agriculture and rural development and aligned with the United Nations' declaration of 2026 as 'International Year of Women Farmers'.

On the concluding day, Nilima Patra, IFS, joining as guest of honour and Raimati Ghiuria, joining as chief guest emphasised strengthening women's leadership in sustainable agriculture. RDWU VC (I/c) Chandni Charan Rath, along with Manoranjan Mishra and Anupam Behera, also addressed the gathering.

MARATHON IN CITY



Bhubaneswar: In a powerful display of strength, resilience, and sisterhood, hundreds of women reclaimed the streets of Capital here Sunday for International Women's Day Marathon at Kalinga Stadium. The race served as the triumphant conclusion of a three-day state-wide festival (6 to 8 March) dedicated to elevating women's health, safety, and leadership.

The event was officially flagged off by Odisha

ORISSA HIGH COURT, OLSA FORM HUMAN CHAIN, RAISE AWARENESS



Cuttack: In an innovative step to raise awareness about empowerment, socio-economic as well as legal rights of women, Orissa High Court and Odisha State Legal Services Authority (OSLSA) observed International Women's Day at Bellview Square here Sunday by forming a human-chain.

Judicial Officers of Registry of High Court of Orissa, Odisha Judicial Academy, OSLSA, Civil Courts, Cuttack, Cuttack District Legal Services Authority and Permanent Lok Adalat (Public Utility Services), Cuttack and the respective staffs of these legal institutions formed the chain. Students from Madhusudan Law University also participated in the event.

OSLSA executive chairman Justice Manash Ranjan Pathak, High Court Legal Services Committee chairman Justice Krushna Ram Mohapatra, judges of high court, along with their respected spouses graced the occasion. The event underscored that development of society can be achieved through women empowerment and their inclusive participation.

Climate change hits women hardest: UNGCNI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 8: Climate change has serious impacts from a gender perspective, yet the capital flowing toward supporting women affected by it represents only a small fraction of what is required, a top representative of the United Nations Global Compact Network India (UNGCI) said.

UNGCI president Vaishali Nigam Sinha emphasised the need to recognise the vital role women play in climate-related disaster management and to reduce the impacts of climate change on their lives through targeted investment.

"During climate-related disasters, women are significantly more likely to be affected. It is important to protect and support women when addressing climate-related impacts. However, when we look at the capital flowing toward helping women affected by climate change, it is only a small fraction of what is required—about



10 per cent," Sinha said.

Highlighting the plight of women in rural regions, she noted that those working in farming or similar jobs are often unrecognised and unpaid, yet are directly affected by extreme heat, particularly in regions such as Rajasthan and Gujarat, which impacts their mental health, livelihoods, and many other aspects of their lives.

The UNGCI president also pointed out the practical challenges women face on the ground. "In the renewable en-

ergy sector, for women to work on sites, hospitals and proper sanitation facilities (for both men and women) are essential." "We are already in 2026 and are looking at the 2030 timeline for many of the SDGs that need to be implemented, especially SDG five," she added.

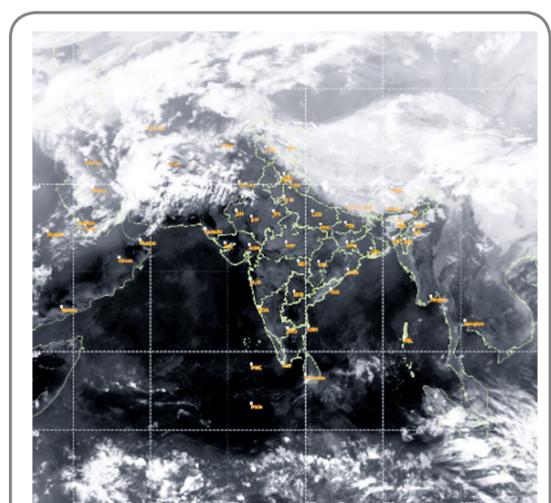
Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) aims to ensure gender equality and empower women and girls worldwide. Introduced by the United Nations in 2015 as part of its 2030 agenda, the goal highlights that gen-

der equality is not only a basic human right but also essential for building a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world.

In response to a question on whether artificial intelligence is fuelling gender disparity, Sinha said, "It is true to some extent," while stressing that AI can also be used positively to ensure more girls are educated and have access to opportunities in areas that never existed before.

"In a country like India, where poverty and illiteracy are significant challenges, I believe we can use AI positively to ensure more girls are educated and have access to opportunities in areas that never existed before. It is a huge opportunity, and we must embrace it," she added.

UNGCI convened over 200 leaders from government, the UN, industry, academia, and civil society for the 9th Gender Equality summit to discuss private sector action on gender equality and women's participation in leadership, entrepreneurship, and more.



WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	33.7°	32.4°	Light to Moderate rain or thunderstorm very likely to occur at one or two places
Min Temp	23.8°	22.2°	
Humidity	80%	87%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	



Manpower crunch dogs agri dept in Subarnapur

96 of 180 posts vacant; 44 village agriculture worker positions unfilled

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, March 8: Though Subarnapur district has emerged as one of the leading agricultural producers in the state, a severe shortage of staff in the district's Agriculture department is affecting the delivery of services to farmers.

According to official data, 96 of the 180 sanctioned posts in the district's Agriculture department remain vacant. The shortage is particularly acute at the grassroots level, with 44 of the 75 posts of Village Agriculture Workers (VAWs) lying vacant.

Subarnapur has made significant progress in agriculture due to the availability of irrigation facilities. Canals from the Hirakud Dam project irrigate a large portion of farmland in Binika and Dunguripali blocks during both the kharif and rabi seasons. Besides this, the Hariharjor medium irrigation project, several minor irrigation schemes, mega lift irrigation projects and thousands of smaller lift irrigation units have contributed to increased agricultural productivity in the district.

Owing to these irrigation facilities, paddy production in the district has risen considerably. The government procures nearly 6.3 million quintals of paddy from the district's farmers during the kharif and rabi seasons. Subarnapur has thus established itself as the second highest paddy producing district in Odisha after Bargarh. The district has also recorded notable production of cotton and pulses, while fisheries, animal resources and horticulture sectors have witnessed steady



growth over the years.

However, despite these achievements, the shortage of manpower in the Agriculture department has made it difficult to effectively implement government schemes and provide timely services to farmers.

The post of Chief District Agriculture Officer (CDAO) in Subarnapur is currently vacant. Additional District Agriculture Officer Ghanshyam Dehuri from Sonepur has been given the additional charge of the post. Similarly, the post of Block Agriculture Officer in Birmaharajpur block remains vacant.

Out of 14 Assistant Agriculture Officer posts, five have not been filled. All three Junior Accountant posts are vacant, while 11 of the 16 Senior Assistant posts remain unfilled. In addition, the lone Junior Stenographer post, all five Junior Assistant posts, and one Biochemist post are also lying vacant.

The shortage is most severe at the field level. With 44 of the 75 sanctioned Village Agriculture Worker (VAW) posts lying vacant, each worker is often handling three to four gram panchayats, making it difficult

to regularly reach farmers.

Meanwhile, irrigation coverage in the district is increasing steadily. After the government fixed the paddy procurement price at ₹3,100 per quintal, farmers have begun cultivating paddy during the rabi season across hundreds of acres using lift irrigation systems.

Despite the growth in agricultural production, staffing levels in the Agriculture department have not kept pace. As a result, farmers are reportedly unable to fully benefit from several government schemes.

Baikuntha Nath Satpathy, president of the Subarnapur District Farmers' Organisation, alleged that the shortage of staff has prevented many farmers from accessing agricultural schemes and technical support. He urged the state government to take immediate steps to fill the vacant posts.

Responding to the issue, Ghanshyam Dehuri, in charge of the district's Agriculture department, said the government has been informed about the vacant positions. "With limited officers and staff, we are trying to address farmers' problems and provide necessary advice whenever required," he said.

Man arrested for nephew's murder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bissamcuttack, March 8: Police in Rayagada district have solved the murder of a 7-year-old boy in Chatikana village under Bissamcuttack police limits, arresting the victim's uncle for the crime.

The accused, identified as Chandan Gantayat alias Bipin, 27, allegedly killed his nephew Rishi Gantayat over family disputes and his addiction to online gaming, police said.

Rayagada Superintendent of Police Swathi S Kumar said the accused had been facing financial problems due to excessive online gaming and had allegedly withdrawn money from his mother's bank account without her knowledge, leading to frequent quarrels in the family.



Chandan was reportedly reprimanded by his elder brother Purushottam and other family members near Chatikana UGB Bank March 6. Humiliated by the incident, he allegedly planned revenge by targeting his brother's son.

Police said Chandan had bought two sharp knives from a market three days earlier. On the evening of the incident, he took Rishi to the market on the pretext of buying snacks and later lured him into an under-construction house, where he slit the boy's throat.

He then stuffed the body into a sack and sent threatening WhatsApp messages to family members to make it appear like a kidnapping. Police later arrested him and seized the knife, blood-stained clothes and a mobile phone.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Doctor-philanthropist Narayani Panda dies

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, March 8: Dr Narayani Panda, a renowned gynaecologist and noted social worker from Sambalpur, died Sunday morning. She was 88.

Dr Panda was widely respected across Odisha for donating her entire life savings to support education and social causes. After earning her medical degree, she began her career as a practising doctor in 1963 and served people for decades.

Even after retirement, she continued her service during the Covid-19 pandemic, setting a remarkable example of dedication and compassion. Her



selfless service and generosity earned her deep admiration among people in the region.

Her contributions to education were also significant. As a gesture of gratitude to her alma mater, she donated ₹30 lakh to

the then Gangadhar Meher College, which helped establish the Narayani Panda IT Skill Centre on the campus.

In addition, she contributed ₹15 lakh each to Lady Lewis Girls' High School and Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose College to support educational development.

Despite being a pensioner, Dr Panda fulfilled her family responsibilities while donating much of her personal savings for the welfare of society — an act that will be remembered for years to come.

Her death has cast a pall of gloom over Sambalpur and across the state.

3 JNV employees suspended over 3 students' drowning

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, March 8: Three staff members including two teachers of the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) in Koraput have been suspended following the drowning of three students in the Kolab Reservoir, officials said Sunday.

According to the district administration, the regional office of the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti suspended two teachers and a caretaker of the school after the incident.

Meanwhile, a four-member team from the district administration visited the institute Sunday to investigate the incident on the direction of Koraput District Collector Manoj Satyawan Mahajan.

The team, led by Koraput Tehsildar Syed Sabir Saha, included SDPO Sanjay Kumar Mandal, District Welfare Officer Sunil Kumar Tandi and District Education Officer Karunakar Bhue. The officials visited the school and questioned teachers, the principal and the caretaker about the circumstances surrounding the incident. The team will submit its report to the District Collector.

Authorities said the bodies of the three students were sent for post-mortem and later handed over to their family members, Tehsildar Saha said.

Female teacher thrashes HM with shoes over misbehaviour



POST NEWS NETWORK

Hatadihi, March 8: A primary school headmaster was reportedly thrashed with shoes by a female teacher following allegations of "indecent behavior" towards the female colleague in Keonjhar district, sources said Sunday.

The incident occurred Saturday at Mithigaon Upper Primary School under this block. According to witnesses and local officials, the headmaster, identified as Babula Behera, allegedly targeted a female teacher after school hours.

Hatadihi Block Education Officer (BEO) Rajiv Dalei confirmed that the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), which handles matters of sexual harassment, has been directed to investigate the teacher's complaint.

"Action has been taken against the headmaster based on the investigation report," Dalei said, adding that a formal report detailing the dis-

ciplinary measures would be released Monday.

The situation reportedly escalated during a community meeting held to discuss the grievance of the woman teacher. Anam Palata, chairman of the School Management Committee, stated he received reports that Behera had forcibly grabbed the teacher's hand and tried to pull her inside the office after school hours.

During a meeting attended by committee members and village elders to address the claim, the female teacher reportedly thrashed Behera with a shoe.

Despite the physical confrontation and the BEO's disciplinary report, sources indicate the parties involved reached a settlement and decided to resolve the issue.

"Whatever happened has been resolved," Behera said when asked for comment on the incident and the subsequent allegations.

35 injured, 5 critical as 2 buses collide on NH-16

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bahanaga, March 8: At least 35 passengers were injured, including five critically, after two buses collided on National Highway 16 near Khantapada under Bahanaga block of Balasore district Sunday afternoon.

More than 80 passengers were travelling in the two buses when the accident occurred. The incident took place when a bus named 'Ashirbad', traveling from Kupari to Balasore, had stopped at the Khantapada market bus stand to allow passengers to disembark. At that time, another bus traveling from Puri to Ranchi reportedly lost control and rammed into the stationary bus from behind.

Around 35 passengers sustained serious injuries due to the impact.

Khantapada police and local residents rescued the injured and initially shifted them to the Khantapada Community Health Centre. As some of the victims were in critical condition, they were later referred to FM Medical College and Hospital in Balasore for further treatment.

Police and fire services personnel reached the spot and continued rescue operations. Police have launched an investigation into the incident and seized both buses.

Adopted son slits father's neck with surgical blade

POST NEWS NETWORK

Digapahandi, March 8: A man allegedly attacked his foster-father with a surgical blade and slit his neck following a family dispute in Bhismagiri village under Digapahandi block in Ganjam district Sunday afternoon.

The injured man, identified as Simanchal Sahu, is undergoing treatment at the Digapahandi Community Health Centre. His condition was reported to be critical.

According to sources, the incident occurred at around 1pm when an argument broke out between Simanchal and his adopted son, Kuna Sahu. In a fit of rage, Kuna allegedly attacked his father with an operation blade, slashing his neck and

leaving him critically injured.

Simanchal, who had no children, had brought Kuna — the son of a relative from Jakar village — to keep him as an adopted son. However, disputes had reportedly been continuing between them for some time.

After the attack, neighbours rescued the injured man in a bloodied condition and rushed him to the Digapahandi Community Health Centre for treatment. Digapahandi police reached the hospital after receiving information and conducted a preliminary inquiry. The accused fled the scene following the incident.

No formal complaint had been filed at the police station at the time of filing this report. Police said further investigation is underway.

12 hurt as pickup van turns turtle

POST NEWS NETWORK

Digapahandi, March 8: At least 12 people were injured, five of them seriously, after a pickup van turned turtle near Piliakadhia village in Ganjam district Sunday morning.

The accident occurred at around 10am on the Bankeswari Ghat road near the Kerandimal hill under B Turubudi panchayat in Digapahandi block when the pickup van reportedly lost control and overturned on the roadside. The critically injured have been identified as Subasi Mahankud, 60, Laxmi Mahankud, 50, Shubhasmita Mahankud, 17, and Sudeshna Gouda, 45, from Harina village and Kuni Gouda, 50, of Dharmapur village

under Patapur police limits in Sanakhemundi block.

Fire services personnel from Digapahandi rescued the injured and admitted them to the Digapahandi Community Health Centre. After preliminary treatment, the five critically injured persons were shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur. According to reports, the group was travelling to the Maa Bankeswari temple atop Kerandimal hill to attend a ceremonial feast organised following a head-shaving ritual of the son of Jatia Gouda of Dharmapur village. Relatives and friends were heading to the event in the pickup van when the driver lost control on the ghat road, causing the vehicle to overturn.

Anganwadi worker Beni Manga empowers and inspires

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nandapur, March 8: Through dedicated service in remote villages of Nandapur block in Koraput district, Anganwadi worker Beni Manga has helped ensure women, children, adolescents and elderly residents are included in various Central and state welfare schemes.

FROM PRESCHOOL TO PENSIONS

Beyond her regular duties, Manga has become a role model by spreading awareness among villagers about government programmes and encouraging them to access available benefits. Her efforts have earned appreciation from departmental officials, local representatives and residents.

Manga works at the Andarguda-2 Anganwadi Centre under Panthlung panchayat near the Andhra Pradesh border in Nandapur block under the Women and Child Development department. She currently provides preschool education to 37 children aged 3 to 6 years.

Since 2009, she has facilitated the inclusion of more than 170 pregnant women, over 300 children and more than 200 adolescent girls in government programmes related to maternal health, early childhood education and nutrition.

Maintaining close contact with 365 residents from 85 families under the Anganwadi centre, Manga has also played



key role in forming seven women's self-help groups.

She has helped 45 beneficiaries receive financial assistance under the Subhadra Yojana and ensured old-age, widow and disability pensions for 69 people. She also facilitated ration cards for 85 families, Aadhaar cards for more than 340 people and voter identity cards for over 270 residents.

Manga has been actively spreading awareness to prevent child marriage and discourage superstitions such as witchcraft and sorcery practices, said Nandapur Child Development Project Officer Minati Bala Pattnaik.

According to officials, the village currently has zero school dropouts. Manga is also

working to ensure all children receive birth certificates.

However, some children are yet to receive Aadhaar cards, and the Anganwadi centre still lacks a protective boundary wall.

Manga said she plans to raise these issues with the CDPO and panchayat authorities and organise an Aadhaar enrollment camp at the Anganwadi centre to ensure all residents receive Aadhaar cards.

Among the 240 Anganwadi centres in Nandapur block, the one where Manga works has been developed as a model facility, officials said.

Pattnaik said Manga has become an inspiration for Anganwadi workers, helpers and supervisors across the block.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS
Tender Notice No. SDMM/KUR/EP/2025-26/E-procurement Tender Notice/20, Dtd : 05.03.2026
The following tenders have been uploaded on website www.iraps.gov.in
SL. NO. 01 TENDER NO. 81265300. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS: DIFFERENT CARD'S FOR USED IN SIGNAL & TELECOM DEPARTMENT, MAKE-WEBFIL, QUANTITY: 183 NOS.
SL. NO. 02 TENDER NO. 81265257. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS: UPGRADEATION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF SUPERVISORY CONTROL DATA ACQUISITION (SCADA), QUANTITY: MANY ITEMS.
SL. NO. 03 TENDER NO. 81265282. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS: SUPPLY OF LIGHT WEIGHT TRACK MEASURING TROLLEY (LWTMT), QUANTITY: 53 SET.
SL. NO. 04 TENDER NO. 81265281. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS: DIFFERENT CARD'S FOR USED IN SIGNAL & TELECOM DEPARTMENT, MAKE-TEJAS, QUANTITY: 128 NOS.
Tender Closing Date & Time: At 1100 hrs. of 25.03.2026 (for Sl. No. 1), at 1500 hrs. of 06.04.2026 (for Sl. No. 2) and at 1500 hrs. of 02.04.2026 (for Sl. No. 3&4).
Sr. Divisional Materials Manager/ PR-1201/Q/25-26 Khurda Road

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to all concerned that, Prabira Kumar Rath, S/o. Late Suresh Rath, At- Badikata, PS- Bausuni, Dist-Boudh, has sworn an affidavit on dt.25.02.2026 and has reported to IIC, Bausuni, PS, Boudh on dt.01.03.2026 regarding loss of original link Regd Sale Deed No.10371900478, Vol-10, dt.07.03.2019 of Registering Office Boudh and original link Regd Sale Deed No.10371900478, Vol-10, dt.07.03.2019 of Registering Office Boudh.
Prabira Kumar Rath, S/o. Late Suresh Rath, has applied to the LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD. Angul to avail loan on the above property by mortgaging the said property documents.
All concerned therefore, having any claim over the property purchased under the said document Regd Sale Deed No.10371900478, Vol-10, dt.07.03.2019 of Registering Office Boudh, is required to file his claim with the undersigned within 15(Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice failing which it will be presumed that, the property having link with the said document/s is/are free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as a mortgager and the company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15(Fifteen) days of publication of this notice.
Angul (Bikram Keshari Pattanaik) Advocate, LIC Housing Dt. Finance Ltd. At-House No-13, Dinabandhu Villa, Mausima 08.03.2026 Chhak, Bhubaneswar, Khordha. Mobile No.9337395558.

FOCUS MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

ENERGY WARFARE



In a tightly interconnected economy, regional wars rarely remain regional when energy flows are at stake

As the US-Israeli war with Iran escalates, the infrastructure and transit routes that sustain global energy flows are increasingly drawing fire, rattling financial markets. But the biggest risk is not necessarily a sustained loss of the physical supply of oil. It is that the tightly integrated energy system on which almost every country relies could experience a massive financial and geopolitical shock.

The initial trigger was the US-Israeli strike on Iran's main oil shipping terminal on Kharg Island, the departure point for nearly all of the Islamic Republic's crude exports. Roughly 10% of Iran's GDP is directly tied to oil revenues, so targeting this single export node is not merely a tactical blow; it strikes at the regime's primary source of foreign currency and fiscal stability.

But Iran has responded in kind. The closure of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz — through which nearly one-fifth of the global trade in oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) passes — transforms a direct military exchange into a global risk event. With traffic halted, shipping capacity has contracted, war-risk insurance premiums have spiked, and energy markets have been adjusting accordingly.

The increased pressure on Saudi refining capacity directly affects downstream fuel markets, not just the crude supply. Refineries such as Ras Tanura are bottlenecks in the global fuel chain. When they are threatened or temporarily shut down, diesel and jet-fuel markets can tighten even if oil production itself remains intact. The effect is immediate and product-specific.

The disruption to Qatari LNG facilities operates differently. Although LNG markets are more flexible than pipeline systems, supply remains concentrated. Qatar alone is expected to account for roughly one-quarter of the global LNG market in the coming decade. The market is therefore highly sensitive. Already, LNG futures have surged by roughly 50% in intraday trad-

ing, reflecting an immediate repricing of geopolitical risk even without physical disruption.

Since the sharp reduction in Russian pipeline gas deliveries in 2022, Europe has become structurally dependent on seaborne LNG imports, with Qatar among its key long-term suppliers. Any sustained disruption to Qatari exports would therefore directly affect European gas balances, as well as those of major Asian importers.

These examples all underscore the structural fragility of the global energy trade. Even a temporary closure of the Strait of Hormuz is sufficient to raise shipping costs, insurance premiums, and forward contracts, embedding a systemic risk premium in global gas markets.

Moreover, these developments could draw additional regional players more directly into the conflict. After all, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf producers face a strategic dilemma: A failure to respond to attacks on their energy infrastructure could invite further targeting; but any escalation could widen and prolong the war. In any case, the stakes could not be higher, because the region's energy facilities are not peripheral assets. They are central to national revenue, political stability, and geopolitical influence.

True, Iran's leverage is not unlimited. The Strait of Hormuz is a critical chokepoint, but it is also heavily patrolled. Its narrow geography does mean that even limited missile or drone

attacks on commercial vessels can disrupt traffic. But the US maintains a significant naval presence in the Gulf. If Iran tried to effect a prolonged blockade, it could invite overwhelming retaliation against its naval assets and coastal infrastructure. In that sense, its threats to close the Strait may be aimed at raising risk premiums, rather than representing a sustainable military strategy. Even if traffic resumes quickly, this episode will have demonstrated that it doesn't take much interference to produce outside financial effects.

Then there is the broader macroeconomic backdrop. The global economy is already heavily burdened by elevated public debt, persistent inflationary pressures, and uneven growth. A sustained disruption to Gulf exports would push oil and LNG prices sharply higher, with immediate inflationary consequences.

The implications for emerging markets are especially worrisome, because energy often accounts for a substantial share of their total import bill. Higher dollar-denominated prices, combined with currency depreciation, could trigger balance-of-payments strains and sovereign-risk repricing. By targeting infrastructure that affects not only its immediate adversaries but also global consumers, Iran is attempting to broaden the economic costs of confrontation. The objective is not necessarily to shut down global supply, but to generate

sufficient instability to force a wider diplomatic or strategic recalculation.

This strategy has many historical parallels. The 1973 OPEC oil embargo fundamentally reshaped Western foreign policy; Iran's previous attacks on Saudi oil facilities in 2019 briefly rattled markets without generating sustained shortages; and Russia's weaponization of gas flows prior to 2022 demonstrated how quickly energy interdependence can become a source of geopolitical leverage.

The current crisis shares elements of each of these episodes, but it is unfolding in a more financially integrated and faster-moving global economy. Energy prices will have a bearing on inflation data, central-bank policymaking, and political approval ratings within weeks, if not days. The sheer speed of these ramifications further increases the strategic value of disruption, as well as raising the stakes for regional actors whose own economies depend on stable export revenues.

Again, the economic logic of this escalation does not depend on a sustained blockade or large-scale supply collapse. It depends on universal vulnerability. When infrastructure concentration meets geopolitical tension, markets transmit stress rapidly across regions. If energy infrastructure continues to be targeted, the risk will extend beyond prices. Prolonged instability in Gulf energy assets could alter investment decisions, insurance markets, and diplomatic alignments.

The ongoing escalation is a test not just of military deterrence but of how resilient the global energy system is to deliberate political shock. In a tightly interconnected economy, regional wars rarely remain regional when energy flows are at stake.

The writer is Director of the Yannay Institute for Energy Security at the School of Sustainability at Reichman University.

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SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

IEA can't dictate India's energy policy

India's energy policy cannot be dictated by Euro-centric carbon targets designed for wealthy, post-industrial economies. The recent conflict involving Iran and US-Israel has already exposed India's energy vulnerability. How long can India keep its kitchens burning and its trucks moving if global supplies are disrupted? The answer is sobering. India has barely 21 days of LPG storage and roughly 74 days of crude oil cover. Nearly 90 percent of crude requirements are imported, leaving the economy exposed to geopolitical shocks. Thin strategic reserves make energy security fragile.

This vulnerability reflects a broader policy drift — partly driven by copying Western energy prescriptions that do not suit India's economic realities. The International Energy Agency (IEA) has been ignoring the vulnerabilities of countries like India struggling to progress. Or is it a Western weapon? Countries such as Germany and France industrialised for two centuries using coal, oil and gas. Their per-capita incomes are high, their energy demand largely saturated and their grids stable. Having al-

ready built wealth, they can now afford costly transitions to electric vehicles, battery storage and carbon taxes. India cannot.

Diesel vehicles have been found to have longer life and have better fuel efficiency than petrol as also the new diesel is far less pollutant. India needs to scrap the impractical policy of junking of diesel vehicles as per age and not efficiency. It's an unpragmatic decision that harasses India's poor and the middle class the most. Public discourse often portrays diesel as the villain of India's energy story. In reality, it remains the backbone of the economy. Diesel moves nearly 70% of India's freight, powers tractors and irrigation pumps in agriculture, runs buses and supports backup power for industries. Since the shift to Bharat Stage-VI standards in 2020 — equivalent to Europe's Euro-6 norms — sulphur content has dropped from 50 parts per million to just 10 ppm, an 80% reduction.

From an efficiency standpoint, diesel remains difficult to replace. A litre of diesel typically delivers 10 to 15% more usable energy and better mileage than petrol. For heavy vehicles such as trucks, buses and tractors,

this translates directly into lower fuel consumption per kilometre and reduced logistics costs. In a country where transportation costs feed directly into the prices of food, construction materials and consumer goods that efficiency acts as an important anti-inflation buffer. There is also a crucial foreign-exchange dimension to the diesel debate and rupee slide. India imports crude oil but refines it domestically at scale, extracting multiple petroleum products from each barrel. By maximising the use of diesel already produced in Indian refineries, the economy extracts greater value from the same import bill.

India also extracts significant economic value from refining crude domestically. Major Indian refiners operate a sophisticated refining network that supplies domestic demand while exporting surplus fuel — often more than 600,000 barrels of diesel per day to markets in Asia, Africa and Europe.

Replacing this infrastructure overnight with battery-based systems is neither economically nor technologically feasible. EVs depend on imported lithium, cobalt and rare minerals.

Large-scale electrification also requires massive investments. In effect, dependence on oil could simply be replaced with dependence on imported minerals. Moreover, battery manufacturing and disposal carry their own environmental costs. Mining lithium and cobalt is resource-intensive, and recycling infrastructure remains limited worldwide.

Energy transitions succeed only when alternatives become genuinely affordable, reliable and scalable. Until that point, fossil fuels — particularly diesel — will remain central to India's development story. Energy policy, in other words, must follow economic reality rather than moral signalling. Decarbonisation can proceed through efficiency improvements and gradual diversification but forcing abrupt transitions before alternatives become viable is damaging both economic stability and social welfare. Fossil fuels may not represent the distant future of global energy, but for a developing economy striving to sustain growth and mobility, they remain indispensable.

INF A



Care not for time and success. Act out thy part, whether it be to fail or to prosper

SRI AUROBINDO



Global Permit Raj

The insults heaped on India by senior officials of the Trump administration, including the PoTUS himself, that have become all too frequent of late, show New Delhi and its foreign policy in a poor light in this fast evolving new world order. Ever since Donald Trump has returned to the White House, his administration has adopted a policy towards India that many perceive as being outright dismissive. From calling India a "dead economy" to slapping sweeping 50 per cent tariffs on Indian exports to America, including a 25 per cent punitive tariff for buying Russian oil, the US has resorted to economic and geopolitical bullying of India on a scale never seen before. On top of this, the phrasing taken up by top US officials in reference to India such as describing New Delhi's purchase of oil from Russia as something Washington has "allowed," and "permitted" and calling Indians "good actors," carries an unmistakably insulting and patronising undertone.

What surprises most is the silence of top people in the government of India toward this non-stop verbal assault by the US. This is the same government that had repeatedly denied any American involvement, which was claimed by Trump himself, in the ceasefire between India and Pakistan after a four-day military confrontation in May last year. Now that seems to have completely changed for India and the policymakers.

For decades, India has maintained strategic autonomy, the ability to engage competing powers without being drawn into their rivalries, as the cornerstone of its foreign policy. Unfortunately, recent developments imply this carefully cultivated image is beginning to fray. The sinking of the Iranian warship IRIS Dena, which had just participated in a naval exercise hosted by India, has become an awkward symbol of New Delhi's growing diplomatic ambiguity. Although India cannot be blamed for any action of foreign powers in open sea during ongoing hostilities between two other nations, its silence after the attack is deafening. The vessel, torpedoed by a US submarine near Sri Lanka while returning from the India-hosted MILAN Naval Exercise, left over 80 sailors dead.

However, the problem for India lies not merely in that incident but in the symbolism surrounding it. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi pointedly referred to the warship as "a guest of India's Navy," suggesting that a vessel welcomed by India had been destroyed within a maritime region where New Delhi claims growing strategic responsibility. For India that often describes itself as a "net security provider" in the Indian Ocean, the optics are clearly disconcerting. When confronted by a reporter, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar reacted rather cautiously to the sinking of IRIS Dena and avoided direct criticism of the US. He in fact said that while India considers itself a "net security provider" in the Indian Ocean, that "does not override the realities of the region," a statement seen as an acknowledgment or acceptance of presence of strong American naval power inside India's claimed water territory.

This diplomatic embarrassment comes at a particularly sensitive moment. The widening confrontation involving Israel and the US against Iran has already spilled into sea lanes that are crucial for India's energy security. At this time, it is ridiculous to notice Indian TV channels showing stories about India's energy resilience when everyone knows there exists no such thing. Plus New Delhi's response has appeared uncertain and hesitant rather than purposeful. The timing of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Israel, just 48 hours ahead of the launch of Israel and America's war on Iran, has only reinforced the international perception that India is incapable to take any decisions in its own interest and is therefore drifting closer to one geopolitical camp while continuing to insist on its "strategic autonomy." The contradictions appearing out of India's foreign policy have resulted in a posture that satisfies neither side. This explains why Washington speaks in patronising terms about "allowing" India to purchase Russian oil, while Tehran questions India's reliability after the sinking of IRIS Dena.

Foreign policy credibility depends on diplomatic clarity, not rhetoric and optics. The directionless diplomacy pursued by India over the last decade has left New Delhi caught between competing great-power alignments, while reducing the country into a minor player in a ruthless geopolitical pecking order that has evolved recently.

WISDOM CORNER

Truth, like gold, is to be obtained not by its growth, but by washing away from it all that is not gold

LEO TOLSTOY

What we call the beginning is often the end. And to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from

TS ELIOT

Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate

ALBERT SCHWEITZER

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1796: Napoleon Bonaparte, future emperor of France, married Marie-Joséphe-Rose Tascher de La Pagerie, better known today as Empress Joséphine. (He had the marriage annulled in 1810 so that he could marry the Austrian archduchess Marie-Louise.)
- 1831: The French Foreign Legion was founded by King Louis-Philippe to support the conquest of Algeria, which the French had invaded the previous year.
- 1934: Yuri Gagarin, who in 1961 became the first man to travel in space, was born in Russia.
- 1945: The US Army Air Forces firebombed Tokyo, destroying a quarter of the city, killing at least 80,000 civilians, and leaving a million people homeless.
- 1959: Barbie, a toy doll that became an international sensation despite criticism (mainly from mothers who criticized the doll for having "too much of a figure"), was introduced by Mattel, Inc.

LOL



GIVING AWAY A HORSE

A retiring farmer in preparation for selling his land, needed to rid his farm of animals. So he went to every house in his town. To the houses where the man is the boss, he gave a horse. To the houses where the woman is the boss, a chicken was given. He got toward the end of the street and saw a couple outside gardening. "Who's the boss around here?" he asked.

"I am," said the man. "I have a black horse and a brown horse," the farmer said, "which one would you like?" The man thought for a minute and said, "The black one." "No, no, no, get the brown one," the man's wife said. "Here's your chicken," said the farmer.



Shivaji Sarkar

ENERGY TRANSITIONS SUCCEED ONLY WHEN ALTERNATIVES BECOME GENUINELY AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE AND SCALABLE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Camel in the tent

Sir, True to the parable, 'Camel in the tent', the BJP camel has kicked out the owner of the tent, the JDU (Nitish Kumar) and has occupied their entire tent in Bihar. The BJP has forced Nitish to step down as CM and has pushed him to the Rajya Sabha and has grabbed the CM seat to be occupied by a BJP candidate. However, the development in Bihar has not come as a surprise to the people of the country who had been witnessing such crude manifestations and betrayal of their major allies by the saffron dispensation, to capture power in different states. Next, we are going to witness the AIADMK being swallowed by the BJP which has forced them to join their ND Alliance to contest in the ensuing Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu. By pawning the AIADMK at the altar of the BJP for his personal benefits, it's leader E Palaniswami (EPS) has committed the gravest mistake and has also done injustice to the party and its cadres for which history will never forgive him. The only way left for the dedicated cadres of the AIADMK to save the party from extinction, is to see that all the BJP candidates are defeated en-masse, in the ensuing elections and a new leader with backbone is elected in the place of EPS..

Tharcus S. Fernando, CHENNAI

Breach of propriety

Sir, The reported obstructions to President Droupadi Murmu's attendance at the 9th International Santal Council conference near Bagdogra expose a troubling breach of constitutional propriety. When the Head of State — herself a member of the Santal community — finds attendees barred from a venue and permission withheld without explanation, it is not merely an administrative failure, it is a signal that identity-based solidarity can be treated as a political inconvenience. The President's dignified restraint, invoking sisterhood even as she noted the anomalies, only sharpens the contrast with the conduct on the ground. Democratic governance demands that the First Citizen's engagements be facilitated, not frustrated.

Gopalaswamy J, CHENNAI

SAMRUDDHI'S SPEED TRAP

Death toll climbs on Maha's super-way

Mumbai-Pune Expressway fares better

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 8: Accidents and deaths due to them rose sharply on the Nagpur-Mumbai Samruddhi Mahamarg in 2025, while minor mishaps on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway saw an increase amid a marginal decline in overall crashes, officials said Sunday citing provisional data of the Maharashtra highway police.



The Samruddhi Mahamarg recorded 185 accidents in 2025, a 35 per cent increase from the 2024 figure of 137, as per the highway police data

The Samruddhi Mahamarg recorded 185 accidents in 2025, a 35 per cent increase from the 2024 figure of 137, as per the highway police data.

Fatal accidents on the corridor, which connects Vidarbha's largest city to the country's financial capital, rose from 96 in 2024 to 128 in 2025, while the number of deaths increased from 126 to 152, reflecting a rise of 33 per cent and 21 per cent, respectively.

Accidents involving serious injuries also doubled from 23 to 46. The number of persons seriously injured in such accidents surged from 50 to 140, the data showed.

The six-lane access-controlled Samruddhi Corridor was opened to traffic in phases since December 2022, with the entire stretch getting commissioned last year. An Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) is currently under implementation to improve monitoring and enhance road safety. Incidentally, the Maharashtra transport commissioner's office did not mention the rise in accidents and fatalities on Samruddhi Mahamarg in its press release issued January 22 this year though it highlighted the decline in serious accidents and fatalities on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway, the country's first access-controlled corridor.

While informing that fatalities on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway had dropped by 22 per cent during the period, the release attributed this reduction to sustained road safety interventions, stricter enforcement and awareness drives. The Mumbai-Pune Expressway recorded 187 accidents in 2025, slightly lower than 191 in 2024, marking a 2 per cent decline. However, minor injury accidents increased by 12 per cent, from 25 to 28, while the number of persons sustaining minor injuries rose sharply by 42 per cent, from 65 to 92.

Accidents without injuries also increased from 44 to 58, a rise of 32 per cent. Fatal accidents on the nearly 95-km-long Expressway declined from 74 in 2024 to 60 in 2025, while the number of deaths fell from 90 to 68, official data showed.

Serious injury accidents also dropped from 48 to 41, with the number of persons seriously injured marginally decreasing from 143 to 140.

The Mumbai-Pune Expressway became operational in 2002, substantially reducing travel time between Maharashtra's two largest cities. Authorities implemented an Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) on the route in 2024 to monitor traffic violations, manage congestion and strengthen emergency response through surveillance cameras and speed detection systems.

Across Maharashtra, road accidents rose for the sixth consecutive year in 2025, with the state reporting 36,450 crashes compared to 36,118 in 2024 and 35,243 in 2023, as per the provisional data.

However, fatalities recorded a marginal dip to 15,549 in 2025 from 15,715 in 2024, while 15,366 people lost their lives in road accidents in 2023, the data showed.

The state transport department has set a target of reducing road fatalities by 50 per cent by 2030.

UP govt to instal biogas plants in 300 cow shelters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, March 8: The Uttar Pradesh government is planning to install biogas plants in more than 300 cow shelters across the state to link livestock protection with modern technology and rural employment, according to an official statement.

The initiative will use cow dung and cow urine to produce clean energy, organic manure and other by-products. Officials said the project aims to create employment opportunities in rural areas while strengthening cow protection efforts.

Shyam Bihari Gupta, Chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Gau Seva Ayog, said the project aims to connect "Gau Sanrakshan" with a self-reliant rural economy through a scientific approach.



According to the statement, the project is being led by Yashraj Gupta, an alumnus of Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, who partnered with a team of engineers to develop technology-driven solutions for cow shelters.

Gupta recently met Ayog officials in Jalaun district with

four colleagues to finalise the implementation strategy. Officials said Gupta left a software job to work on the project aimed at promoting a cow-based rural economy. He said effective application of modern technology to cow-based resources can significantly boost rural incomes and contribute to

sustainable development, the statement said.

The project will be implemented initially in cow shelters in Jalaun district. Biogas plants there will produce organic manure, bio-CNG and electricity. After successful implementation, the model will be expanded to more than 300 shelters across the Uttar Pradesh.

The project will also promote the "Panchagavya value chain," involving products derived from cow urine, dung, milk, curd and ghee for industrial use and marketing, it said.

Syam Bihari Gupta said the government wants cow shelters to evolve into centres for livestock protection as well as energy and organic manure production. This transition is expected to generate employment and increase incomes of farmers in rural areas.



Women participate in a 'Saree Walkathon 2026' on the occasion of International Women's Day, in Thane, Maharashtra, Sunday. Participants walked in traditional sarees to promote empowerment and handloom traditions

UP to provide financial support to girls from birth till grad: CM Yogi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, March 8: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Sunday said the state government is working to make girls self-reliant and will provide them a comprehensive package of financial assistance from birth until graduation to support their education.



Addressing a programme organised on the occasion of International Women's Day, the chief minister launched the mobile application of the Rozgar Sangam portal, distributed appointment letters to newly selected sevikas and attended the Pink Rozgar Mahakumbh 2026. "Daughters will no longer be dependent on anyone. From birth to graduation, the government will provide a package to support their education," he said. Adityanath said financial assistance would begin immediately after the birth of a girl child once her name is registered in the official birth

registration system.

"As soon as the birth of the girl is registered, the amount meant for the birth of the child will be transferred directly to her bank account", he said.

The chief minister said the government would also provide funds to ensure that the girl child receives all required vaccinations. He said that the financial assistance would continue at different stages of education. When a girl enrolls in Class 1, the amount will be credited to her bank account after registration. Similarly, when she passes Class 5 and takes admission in the next class, financial support will again be transferred.

Tigers, animal stories of Tadoba NP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tadoba National Park (Maharashtra), March 8: There was a time the extinction of tigers was predicted in India; the number of the big cat at this national park had reduced to just 30 a decade ago. Conservation efforts reversed the trend, and today Tadoba and its neighbouring area have 200 tigers.



While most tourists come to Tadoba to spot tigers, the park is a playground of many other animals who can also thrill safari-goers.

Here is a look at the most prominent animals of Tadoba
DEER: The deer family includes sambar deer, spotted deer and barking deer. Male deer possess antlers that reach full size during the mating season and shed annually. These antlers may be branched and are composed entirely of bone without keratin, the material found in our hair and fingernails.

Sambar deer have a unique way of warning others about danger. On detecting a threat, the first response is not to run away but to seek cover, or to get a clear view of the potential

danger. Their reaction involves raising their tail in an alert position. If they find the threat to be real, they stamp their front feet and give out a loud "honking" alarm call. It is a sure-shot confirmation of a tiger's presence, just as the spotted deer's barking is.

BARKING DEER: Barking deer, also known as the muntjac, emit a sound similar to a dog's barking. It is considered one of the oldest known deer species in the world. When it moves, the barking deer displays a spring-like gait. It holds the distinction of having the smallest chromosome number among mammals.

ANTELOPES: Antelope species of Tadoba are mainly the blue bull and the four-horned antelope, or chausingha. Antelopes are characterised by their

permanent horns, which are not branched like deer horns but assume unique and bizarre shapes. These horns consist of a bone covered with keratin.

INDIAN GAUR: Often mistaken for a buffalo, the Indian gaur is not related to it. With a male weighing up to 1,000 kilograms, the Indian gaur is the largest member of the bovine family. While females and calves are not as dark as the males, all of them have white socks like markings on their feet. They assemble in a strong matriarchal society where an older female leads the group, and males mainly associate during the breeding season.

SLOTH BEAR: They climb trees in search of their favourite honey, and their claw marks are often seen on the trunks of these trees. Unlike other animals whose four paw marks are all similar, the bear have longer and flatter hind feet, leaving human like marks on the mud. Their front feet leave marks similar to those of carnivores. The reason is that like humans bears can stand on their hind feet, hence evolution gave those feet different adaptability shape.

Maha to plant 300cr trees to increase forest cover: Fadnavis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 8: Maharashtra will plant 300 crore trees to increase the state's forest cover to 33 per cent and will incorporate arboriculture into government policy to ensure conservation of trees, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said Sunday.

undertake conservation measures with the help of advanced technology.

He said modern tools now make it possible to scan cities and create digital twins for scientifically planning tree plantations. "Technology can help determine whether a tree is likely to fall, whether it needs protection, and whether its branches pose any danger," he said.



achieve the target of 33 per cent forest cover in the state.

According to Maharashtra Economic Survey 2025-26, the

state's total forest cover accounts for 16.5 per cent of its geographical area of 3,07,713 sq km. This remains significantly below the 33 per cent benchmark set under the National Forest Policy, 1988.

The new plantations will be carried out using scientific data, taking into account agro-climatic conditions, soil types and the suitability of various tree species for different regions, the chief minister said.

Arboriculturists, startups and technologists will be involved to implement this initiative, he added.

Fadnavis also said that permission from the Bombay High Court is required to cut mangroves. Al-

though some mangroves have been cleared for development projects, mangrove parks have been created as compensatory measures, he said.

SAMBALPURI BASTRALAYA HLC SOCIETY LTD.,
AT/PO/DIST.-BARGARH, HT&N DEPT. GOVT. OF ODISHA, PIN-768028
e-mail:- sambalpuribastralayaabgh@gmail.com
Website:- www.sambalpuribastralaya.com
Tender Notice No.446 Dated: 25.02.2026

QUOTATION CALL NOTICE
No.31001126/2526: Sealed quotations are invited from the Insurance Companies registered with IRDA for insurance coverage of Properties/Assets of Sambalpur Bastralaya Handloom Coop. Society Ltd., Bargarh at different premises against the following risk for the period from dt. 01.04.2026 to 31.03.2027.

I. Fire & Allied perils, II. Burglary & House-Breaking, III. Fidelity Guarantee, IV. Electronic Equipment Insurance (EEI), V. Money Insurance (Cash-in Safe & Transit), VI. Exhibitions insurance. The interested Insurance Companies are required to submit their lowest premium rate along with details terms and conditions in a sealed cover for each category of Insurance policy, as per the applicable policy conditions. The sealed quotation must reach the office of the **Managing Director** on or before dt. 18.03.2026 upto 2 P.M. Quotations received after the stipulated date and time shall not be entertained. The quotation will be opened and finalized by the Committee constituted for the purpose at 3.30PM on 25.03.2026. For details information and scheduled of assets, interested bidders may visit our official website: www.sambalpuribastralaya.com

The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the quotations without assigning any reason therefor.

By order of Managing Director,
Sd/- S.L.Singh, Secretary

OIPR-31001/31040/1/25-26/0005

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KUCHINDA
E-mail: eerw_kuchinda@yahoo.com
Identification No. Online Tender/22/RWD, Kuchinda/2025-26
Letter No.2946 Date: 07.03.2026

1. The Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Kuchinda behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids to be received in ONLINE MODE only for Roads Work.

2. No. of Work : 01 No.

3. Nature of Work : Road Repair

4. Class of Contractor : "D", "C"

5. Approx Value of Work : 17.94

6. Tender Cost : Rs. 6000/-

7. Availability of Bid documents in the website : 09.03.2026 at 11 AM to 16.03.2026 at 5.00 PM

8. Last Date & Time for seeking clarification : 14.03.2026 at 5.00 P.M.

9. Date of opening of Bid : 17.03.2026 at 11.00 AM

10. Other details can be seen in the Bidding documents from the website: <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
Rural Works Division,
Kuchinda

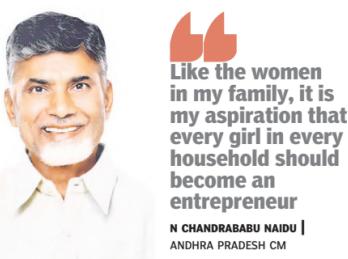
OIPR-25001/25151/1/25-26/0021

OHPC
DIST: KALAHANDI-768026, ODISHA, E-mail: sgmel_uhep@ohpcitd.com / sgmeluhep@gmail.com
ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LTD. (A GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA UNDERTAKING)
Regd. Office OSPH & W.C. Building, Vanivihar Chhax, Jangpath, Bhoingar, Bhubaneswar-751022
Tel: 91-0674-2542953, 2542902, 2545525, 2542226, Fax: 2542102, E-Mail: ohpc.com@gmail.com / md@ohpcitd.com
WEB: www.ohpcitd.com, CIN: U41010R1995GC003963

NOTICE INVITING TENDER No. UIHEP-56/2025-26, DATE 06.03.2026
No.32001176/2526: Sealed Tenders are invited in two part i.e. (i) Techno Commercial bid & (ii) Price bid in separate sealed envelopes from the reputed original equipment manufacturers/ channel partners / reputed supplier / service provider having similar works experience for the work as mentioned below.

Description of Work	Cost of tender paper (Non-refundable) in Rs.	EMD in shape of DD/ Banker's Cheque only (Refundable) in Rs.	Period of tender download of tender document	Last date & time of receipt of tender	Date & Time of Techno Commercial Bid
Providing water connectivity to Fire-fighting System of ICT-1 400KV Switchyard of UIHEP, Mukhiguda	11,800/- (inclusive of GST)	70,250/-	From: 11.03.2026 to 31.03.2026 upto 12.00 Hrs.	31.03.2026 (upto 13.00 Hrs.)	31.03.2026 at 16.30 Hrs.

For details of the tender documents, terms and conditions please visit our website www.ohpcitd.com
OIPR-32001/32136/1/25-26/0042 Sd./- Unit Head, UIHEP, Mukhiguda



Like the women in my family, it is my aspiration that every girl in every household should become an entrepreneur
N CHANDRABABU NAIDU |
ANDHRA PRADESH CM

GOVT LAUNCHES LOGO DESIGN CONTEST FOR VB G RAM G ACT

The Rural Development Ministry said a logo design competition for the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act (VB G RAM G) has been launched. The competition is live on the government's citizen engagement platform MyGov, the ministry said in a post on X on Saturday, inviting people to submit creative designs reflecting the vision of rural development and employment generation



of the day quote

The expansion of the metro network will ensure safer and easier for daily travel women
REKHA GUPTA | DELHI CM



The exorbitant hike in international airfares due to the ongoing war and instability in the Middle East is extremely worrying. On several routes, fares have risen three to four times, making it difficult for Indians stranded abroad -- especially students and workers -- to return home
ASHOK GEHLOT | FORMER RAJASTHAN CM



No person is superior because of his caste; a person becomes superior because of his qualities, this was the belief Savarkar held. The entire life of Savarkar is an example of sacrifice, penance, and dedication. No family has sacrificed as much for the country as that of Savarkar
NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER



It's Modi who insulted Prez earlier, never us: Mamata

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, March 8: Taking the unprecedented verbal battle between Mamata Banerjee and President Droupadi Murmu and its subsequent political and administrative dust-up a notch higher, the West Bengal Chief Minister Sunday accused PM Narendra Modi of "insulting" the country's highest Constitutional chair, rebutting his attack against the TMC government on the same grounds. To support her claim, Banerjee held up an enlarged photograph of the PM remaining seated at an event with veteran BJP leader LK Advani, with the President standing next to them.

The photograph was purportedly of the March 2024 event of President Murmu awarding Advani at his New Delhi residence with the nation's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna.

"The picture shows that the PM is seated when the President is standing. We never do that. It is the BJP which carries the culture of insulting the President, not us," she claimed, while displaying the photograph as "evidence".

Earlier in the day, Modi lashed out at the TMC government over the treatment meted out to President Murmu, saying the "enlightened people" of the state will never forgive the party for "insulting" a woman tribal leader and the President of the country.

Modi's remarks came after President Murmu expressed displeasure over the change of venue of a conference of the tribal Santal community in the north Bengal town of Siliguri on Saturday and the absence of Banerjee and her cabinet ministers during her visit. Speaking from the platform of the ongoing anti-SIR dharna in central Kolkata, Banerjee asserted there was no breach of protocol at the President's programme, adding that the responsibility of mismanagement at the function, if any, lay with its private organisers and the Airports Authority of India who provided the venue of the event.

"The PM had put out a tweet on Saturday, and I have responded to it. I said the programme wasn't organised by the state, it was arranged by a private organisation. The state had sent a letter stating that the private body lacks the capability of organising such an event. They did not involve us," she said. Despite the input that the organisers are incapable, it was the choice of the President to accept that invitation, the chief minister said. "How can we be made responsible for the allegation that people did not turn up at the event? The responsibility lies with the organisation which planned it. They never asked us to send our people to the venue, except providing us with information about the function,"



Mamata Banerjee dances during a sit-in for the third consecutive day, in Kolkata. Banerjee staged the sit-in to protest against the LPG price hike on the occasion of International Women's Day

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BJP hits back

New Delhi: The BJP Sunday lashed out at Mamata Banerjee over her remarks about President Droupadi Murmu and asked the West Bengal Chief Minister to stop talking about saving the Constitution if she "cannot respect" the President of the country. "Under Mamata Banerjee's rule, only 'ghuspathiye' (infiltrators) are welcomed. Doors are open for them," senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad told a press conference at the party headquarters here. Banerjee Saturday accused President Murmu of speaking "on BJP's advice", questioning her "silence" on "atrocities" against tribals in states such as Manipur and Chhattisgarh.

Banerjee said. She was speaking barely an hour before the Centre-set 5 pm deadline of the state government to respond to the "violations" of the rules related to protocol, venue and route arrangements during the President's visit ended.

EAM to make statement in LS on situation in West Asia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 8: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will make a statement in the Lok Sabha regarding the situation in West Asia Monday.

The second half of the Budget session of Parliament will begin Monday. According to the revised list of business of the Lok Sabha for March 9 circulated Sunday evening, "Dr S Jaishankar to make a statement regarding the situation in West Asia."

Till Saturday, the Opposition-backed resolution seeking removal of Om Birla as the Lok Sabha speaker was the only listed official agenda for Monday. The Opposition has

demanding a discussion on the situation in West Asia in the House. India is continuously monitoring the evolving situation in West Asia, especially in the context of the safety of its citizens stranded in the region.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has said more than 52,000 Indians have returned to the country following the partial opening of the airspace across the region.

The security situation in West Asia remains precarious as the US and Israel continue their bombardment of Iranian targets while Tehran retaliates with strikes against Israeli positions and US military bases across the region.

The Ministry of External Affairs has said more than 52,000 Indians have returned to the country following the partial opening of the airspace across the region



Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi interacts with female students while having a meal on the occasion of International Womens Day, in Kerala

Students skip 'Vande Mataram' at Nagaland varsity convocation

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA



Dimapur, March 8: Amid ongoing controversy over singing of Vande Mataram at government functions in Nagaland, students and scholars of Nagaland University reportedly boycotted the rendition of the national song during the 8th convocation of the university.

A video circulating on social media showed the students and scholars seated when the song was played at the beginning and conclusion of the convocation at the Lumami campus of the university in Zunheboto district Friday.

Vice President CP Radhakrishnan was in attendance as the chief guest of the ceremony.

The Nagaland University Students' union (Lumami Campus) reportedly protested the playing of the song at the directive of the Naga Students' Federation (NSF).

The NSF, ruling Naga People's Front (NPF) and some church organisations in Nagaland opposed the Ministry of Home Affairs directive issued earlier this year mandating the playing or singing of Vande Mataram before the national anthem at official events and educational institutions.

The NSF maintained that the directive disregards Naga cultural sensitivities, religious beliefs and constitutional protections under Article 371(A).

The NPF opposed the playing of the song in schools and legislative proceedings, calling it "forceful imposition", while Christian organisations such as the Nagaland Joint Christian Forum (NJCF) argued that parts of the song conflict with Christian beliefs. The issue al-

A video circulating on social media showed the students and scholars seated when the song was played at the beginning and conclusion of the convocation at the Lumami campus of the university in Zunheboto district Friday

so came up in the Nagaland Assembly March 3. Several MLAs opposed the playing of the national song, calling it "unfair" for a Christian majority state, while BJP legislator and Tourism and Higher Education minister Temjen Inma Along urged the members to view the national song in its historical and secular context.

The NSF condemned Along for defending the recitation of Vande Mataram in the Assembly, saying it was "deeply regrettable" he continued to justify and normalise its imposition despite unequivocal opposition expressed earlier.

Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio later said the issue of recitation of Vande Mataram be referred to a select committee of the Assembly for detailed examination, including legal consultation, before arriving at a considered decision.

ED to challenge interim bail granted to Al Falah chairman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 8: The Enforcement Directorate is expected to challenge the interim bail granted by a local court to Al Falah University group chairman Jawad Ahmed Siddiqui stating he can influence the probe as "more aspects" of the case are still under investigation, officials said.

A court in Delhi granted two-week interim bail to Siddiqui, 61, Saturday in a money laundering case linked to alleged generation of illicit funds, from the fees paid by students of his Faridabad-based educational institution, by allegedly misrepresenting the accreditation and recognition of his colleges.

The money laundering case against Siddiqui and the varsity stems from two Delhi Police FIRs pertaining to alleged fraud with the students.

'India to lead global homoeopathy with quality standards'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 8: India, home to one of the world's largest homoeopathy ecosystems, is set to emerge as a global leader in the sector, driven by strong clinical expertise, large-scale practitioner networks, and internationally recognised quality certifications and standards.

According to industry reports, the country has over 2.5 lakh registered homoeopathy practitioners, nearly 300 teaching institutions, and millions of patients relying on homoeopathy as their primary or complementary system of medicine.

The global homoeopathy market is valued at over USD 8 to 10 billion, with Europe accounting for a significant share, historically dominated by Germany. Experts believe that

quality-backed Indian brands are now well-positioned to challenge this dominance.

"The key differentiator lies in the certified quality and scientific validation," said Dr Pradeep Prajapati, Director of the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA).

He added that the AYUSH Premium Mark, launched by the Ministry of AYUSH, represents global-level compliance in manufacturing, safety, and quality management for AYUSH products.

The NABL (National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories) certification ensures internationally benchmarked accuracy, reliability, and reproducibility in testing and quality control aligned with ISO standards recognised across Europe and beyond, Dr Prajapati explained.



Rajeshwar Tiwari, a senior representative from the Ministry of AYUSH, said India has unmatched clinical data, practitioner strength, and patient diversity in homoeopathy.

"When this experiential advantage is supported by certified quality frameworks like AYUSH Premium and NABL,

For decades, the German homoeopathy brands have enjoyed a premium global reputation, often being perceived as the gold standard in quality, consistency, and research-backed manufacturing, AYUSH experts said

However, they said that India is not only on track to match but even surpass them, driven by two powerful quality frameworks - the AYUSH Premium Mark and NABL accreditation

has become India's first homoeopathy company to receive both the AYUSH Premium Mark and NABL certification.

Adesh Sharma, CEO of Adven Biotech, said AYUSH Premium and NABL are not just certificates; they are global passports for Indian homoe-

opathy. He added that India stands to gain strategically. "Germany may have legacy, but India has scale, talent, raw material strength, and now certified quality."

When Indian brands combine NABL-backed testing accuracy with AYUSH Premium manufacturing standards, we can offer products that are globally trusted yet significantly more accessible. This is how India doesn't just compete with German homoeopathy; we outperform it."

Experts point out that this transformation is critical at a time when global consumers are becoming more discerning. Markets in Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa are demanding evidence of quality, safety, and consistency, not just tradition.

national



In every university I visit, I see more daughters receive gold medals. This is proof that given the opportunity, daughters can excel. However, we must also acknowledge the harsh reality that even today, many women face social stereotypes, economic inequalities, and psychological barriers

EC TOP BRASS TO REVIEW POLL READINESS IN WB MARCH 9-10

The election commission top brass led by Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar will embark on a two-day visit to West Bengal to assess poll readiness in the state, officials said Sunday. The top poll officials, who will arrive at Kolkata Sunday night, will interact with political parties, civil and police officials on Monday and Tuesday, they said



of the day note

Today, J&K stands at a pivotal juncture. Over the past five-six years, we have ushered in transformative changes, rendering the system transparent and dedicating it to public service. Entire machinery now operates not for the benefit of a select few, but for every individual across UT

Yes, our party will contest the upcoming assembly polls in West Bengal. Whether we will go alone or form an alliance with some political parties will be decided very soon

The BJP government committed atrocities against farmers in Gujarat by throwing them in jail at Haddad in Botad district last year for raising their voice. The farmers of Gujarat are crying tears of blood. In some places, there's no drinking water, in others, no irrigation water. Prices are capped, and farmers don't get fair prices for their crops

Bulldozer action in Uttam Nagar

As the demolition action against the accused, perhaps the first such instance in Delhi in recent years, was carried out, the police cordoned off the area and a large number of residents gathered nearby to watch the operation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

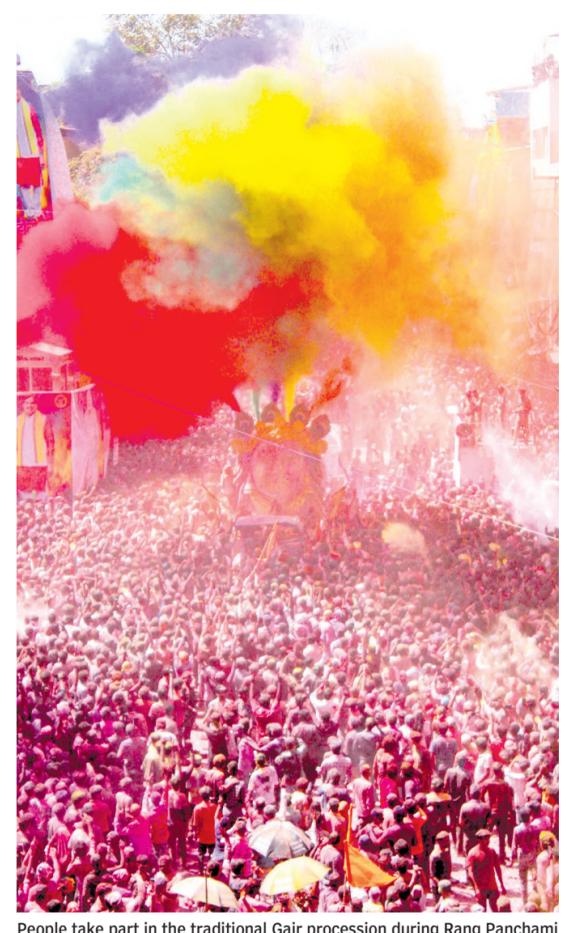
New Delhi, March 8: Authorities Sunday demolished alleged "illegal" portions of a house linked to one of the accused in the Uttam Nagar Holi clash case in which a 26-year-old man was killed, even as the victim's family demanded a CBI probe and strict action against all those involved in the incident. A team of MCD officials reached the JJ Colony locality with bulldozers and razed parts of the house belonging to Nizamuddin, the father of accused Umardeen, sources said, while police and paramilitary remained deployed in strength to prevent any flare-up in the area that has been gripped by tension since the March 4 incident.

As the demolition action against the accused, perhaps the first such instance in Delhi in recent years, was carried out, the police cordoned off the area and a large number of residents gathered nearby to watch the operation. While the MCD remained tight-lipped over the action, an official of the civic body, requesting anonymity, said it was part of a civic exercise to remove encroachments built over drains that obstruct

HOLI CLASH KILLING



known each other for nearly five decades and had earlier been involved in disputes over issues such as parking and garbage disposal in the locality. Tarun sustained fatal injuries during the attack. The killing sparked anger among residents, with an agitated mob damaging vehicles and setting some of them on fire on Friday, prompting authorities to increase security deployment across the area. Senior police officers said the area has been divided into zones, sectors and sub-sectors to ensure effective monitoring and to maintain law and order. Police personnel could be seen patrolling the lanes of the locality and making announcements through loudspeakers, appealing to residents to remain calm and not pay heed to rumours. Authorities said strict vigil is being maintained to ensure that no attempt is made to disturb communal harmony or the law and order situation in the area. Police teams are also keeping an eye on social media posts. Meanwhile, the demolition drive carried out by the civic authorities drew mixed reactions from residents and the victim's family.



People take part in the traditional Gair procession during Rang Panchami celebrations, in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. The historic procession features traditional stick dances and colourful street celebrations

PM inaugurates 2 new Delhi Metro corridors



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 8: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday inaugurated two new Delhi Metro corridors and laid foundation stone for three more metro lines, providing direct connectivity to several important locations in the national capital. He also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of projects worth ₹15,200 crore under the central government's General Pool Residential Accommodation (GPRA) redevelopment plan. The total cost of all projects is around ₹33,500 crore. The two new Delhi Metro corridors inaugurated by the prime minister were the Majlis Park-Maujpur Babarpur (Pink Line) corridor of around 12.3 km and the Deepali Chowk-Majlis Park (Magenta Line) corri-

dor of around 9.9 km. These corridors will benefit several areas of Delhi, including Burari, Jagatpur-Wazirabad, Khajuri Khas, Bhajanpura, Yamuna Vihar, Madhuban Chowk, Haiderpur Badli Mor, Bhalaswa and Majlis Park. Modi laid the foundation stone for three new corridors under Phase V-A of the Delhi Metro, covering a route length of around 16.1 km. The three new corridors are R K Ashram Marg to Indraprastha, Aerocity to Indira Gandhi Airport Terminal-1 and Tughlakabad to Kalindi Kunj. These corridors will provide direct connectivity to several important locations in the capital and improve connectivity for those travelling between Noida, south Delhi and the airport.

Palaniswami hits back at MK Stalin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Erode (Tamil Nadu), March 8: Hitting back at Chief Minister M K Stalin, AIADMK chief Edappadi K Palaniswami Sunday alleged that the ruling DMK is "slave" to its ally, the Congress party. Addressing a poll rally here at Perunthurai, Palaniswami said the Congress-DMK were engaged in a war of words for about 20 days over seat sharing and connected matters. Eventually, the Congress party intimidated its ally, the DMK, and secured 28 seats for the Assembly polls to be held in April-May this year, he alleged. People have not forgotten that even when DMK patriarch M Karunanidhi was alive, the Congress party intimidated and made DMK a "slave" and forged an alliance with it. This was achieved by conducting "raids" while seat-sharing talks were going on, he claimed. However, his party, the AIADMK, is an independent party which chose to fight the 2024 LS polls on its own. Now, in order to dislodge the "anti-people" DMK from power, his party has formed an alliance and it is robust, transparent and cordial unlike the DMK-led alliance, he said.

Mercury above normal across northern states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 8: Day temperatures hovered above the seasonal average across northern states Sunday, even as the weather department has predicted that a fresh western disturbance would bring wet spells in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir next week. In the national capital Delhi, the maximum temperature was recorded at 35.6 degrees Celsius, 7.2 notches above normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 16.7 degrees Celsius, 2.7 notches above the usual. The city had experienced its hottest day in the first week of March in the last 50 years Saturday, with the day temperature hitting 35.7 degrees Celsius. Among the hill states, Himachal Pradesh witnessed "severe heat wave" in Dharamsala and Bhunter, while "heat wave" was experienced in Sundernagar. The minimum temperatures for most of the stations in the state were above normal by 3-7 degrees, while maximum temperatures were above normal by 3-12 degrees.



The Shimla Met office has issued a yellow warning for heat wave in three districts on Monday -- in Kangra, Mandi and Kullu. Kashmir too witnessed above normal day temperatures Sunday, with the departures ranging from 9.4 to 10.7 degrees Celsius. Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 24.3 degrees Celsius, 9.6 degrees above normal. Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir's Anantnag, which serves as one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath Yatra, registered a high of 20.8 degrees Celsius, 9.4 degrees above average. The famous ski resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir recorded a maximum temperature of 14.2 degrees Celsius, 9.6 degrees

more than the season's average. In the desert state of Rajasthan, mercury touched the 40 degrees Celsius mark at two places, while it was closer to the figure in many others. Pilani in Jhunjhunu district was the hottest in the state, recording a maximum temperature of 40.2 degrees Celsius, followed by Barmer at 40 degrees Celsius. Bikaner recorded 39.4 degrees Celsius, Churu (39.1 degrees), Jaisalmer (39.2 degrees), Jodhpur city (38.8 degrees), Fatehpur-Sikar (38.5 degrees), Vanasthali and Phalodi (38.2 degrees each), Jaipur (37.1 degrees) and Sri Ganganagar and Jhunjhunu (37.4 degrees each). According to the India Meteorological Department, hot weather conditions are likely to continue in several parts of Rajasthan over the next few days. Temperatures were above normal in Punjab and Haryana as well. Hisar in Haryana was the warmest in the two states, recording a maximum temperature of 37.5 degrees Celsius, which was six notches above normal.

POST OF THE DAY

Iran is facing Economic sanctions from decades now, but still has better public infrastructure than our 4th largest economy India. Imagine the Corruption in our country

SHORT TAKES

- J&K Cong protests LPG price hike
Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir Congress protested against the LPG price hike here on Sunday, saying this "anti-poor" decision by the government will add to the financial burden on the common man. Led by PCC president Tariq Hamid Karra and working president Raman Bhalla, the protesters also criticised the Indo-US trade deal, alleging that it will adversely impact the country's economy, according to a party spokesperson.
Three killed in car-truck collision
Bangalore: Three men were killed after their car ramed into the rear of a moving truck near here in the early hours of Sunday, police said. The three deceased are in the 22-23 age group, while another person in the car sustained severe injuries and is undergoing treatment at a hospital. The police suspect the car heading towards Kanakapura was speeding.
Passenger booked for smoking beedi on flight
Panaji: A passenger has been booked for allegedly smoking a 'beedi' (hand-rolled cigarette) inside a toilet of a Delhi-Goa flight, police said Sunday. The incident took place Saturday, when the accused Ashish, a Delhi resident, was travelling on Akasa Air flight QP-1625 from the national capital to the coastal state, they said. During the flight, the passenger allegedly smoked a beedi inside the aircraft lavatory and was also found in possession of a lighter, which could pose a risk to the safety of the aircraft and passengers on board, the airline said in its complaint, according to a police official.

Two killed after ship rams fishing boat off Kerala coast; 9rescued

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, March 8: Two crew members of a fishing boat have been killed after a ship ramed their vessel off the Kollam coast, police officials said Sunday. The bodies of the deceased were recovered by the coast guard and will be brought to Vizhinjam Monday, the coastal police said. The fishing boat, St Joseph, had 11 crew members, all from other states, and was engaged in deep-sea fishing. The vessel had left Shakthikulangara harbour in Kollam Friday. The accident occurred Saturday when the boat was anchored for fishing, and the ship, MT Solis, rammed into it about 120 nautical miles off the coast. The impact caused severe damage to the boat, and it sank in an official said. Nine crew members of the boat were rescued immediately by the ship involved in the accident, and later they were transferred to the Indian Coast Guard Ship Anagh.

Leaders exalt women's contribution, role in development

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 8: Leaders across the country Sunday lauded the growing contribution of women across sectors on International Women's Day, which was also marked by announcements by state governments focused on financial assistance for women. President Droupadi Murmu exhorted women to realise their full potential, while Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised that empowerment of women is at the core of his government's various schemes and initiatives. Speaking at an event organised here by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the president said the occasion was not only to honour women's achievements but also to reaffirm the nation's commitment to their empowerment. Conveying greetings to all women, Modi said the achievements of India's 'Nari Shakti' are a source of pride. Union Minister for Women and Child Development Annpurna Devi, who participated in the women-led walk -- titled 'Shakti Walk - She Leads

Several programmes were organised and initiatives undertaken on the occasion to celebrate women and their achievements in diverse ways
An all-women crew -- comprising the loco-pilot, assistant loco-pilot, train manager, ticket checkers and personnel of the Railway Protection Force -- operated a passenger train on the Ranchi-Irigan
In Thane district's Dombivli, meanwhile, a 'lezim' dance performance by 9,111 women created a new Guinness World Record, officials said



of India Surya Kant batted for greater institutional reforms in the judiciary to bring more women into the legal field and said that high court collegiums should consider meritorious women members of the Bar for judgeship as a norm and not as an exception. Marking the day, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi posted a video of his interaction with

students from Kerala on his YouTube channel. He was seen telling the students in it: "I grew up in a family where the women were the bosses." Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge took to X and said, "Women are not merely participants in development. They are its driving force. Through their wisdom, resilience, compassion, and deter-

mination, women strengthen communities and build stronger nations." The AAP government in Punjab announced a new scheme under which ₹1,000 per month will be given to all women except Scheduled Caste women, who will be getting ₹1,500 monthly. Providing monthly assistance of ₹1,000 per woman was a key poll promise of the ruling party before the 2022 Punjab Assembly polls. In Uttar Pradesh, more than 5,000 women received job offers through various participating organisations at a women's day programme. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath distributed appointment letters to 94 newly recruited Mukhya Sevikas and honoured outstanding women employees and meritorious girl students with the Nari Shakti Awards. In Assam, meanwhile, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said nearly 40 lakh 'Orunodoi' beneficiaries will receive ₹9,000 each next week, as he emphasised that women empowerment has been central to Assam's growth story.



It is important that we are producing weapons together with the Netherlands - and we will certainly continue and expand this joint work

BALENDRA SHAH'S RSP MAKES HISTORY

The newly formed Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) of rapper-turned-politician Balendra Shah has secured a landslide victory in Nepal's general elections, decimating the established parties in the politically fragile Himalayan nation



of the day quote

The only way to defeat these enemies is by unleashing the power of our militaries. We have to use our military. You have to use your military



DONALD TRUMP | PRESIDENT, US

We hope that negotiations with Italy will be concluded and that we will have signed (a deal) for the acquisition of 2+2 frigates by April



NIKOS DENDIAS | DEFENCE MINISTER, GREECE

Alongside the episodes of violence and devastation and the widespread climate of hatred and fear, there is also growing concern that the conflict could spread and that other countries in the region, including dear Lebanon, could once again sink into instability



POPE LEO IV | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

War paralyses global oil flows

REUTERS

Marietta/New York, March 8: The US-Israeli war with Iran could leave consumers and businesses worldwide facing weeks or months of higher fuel prices even if the week-old conflict ends quickly, as suppliers grapple with damaged facilities, disrupted logistics, and elevated risks to shipping. The outlook poses a global economic threat and a political vulnerability for US President Donald Trump leading into the midterm elections, with voters sensitive to energy bills and unfavorable to foreign entanglements.

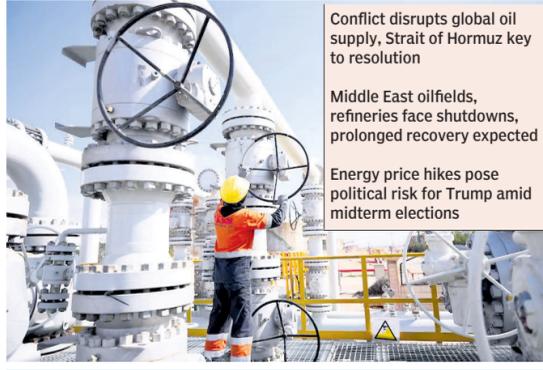
"The market is shifting from pricing pure geopolitical risk to grappling with tangible operational disruption, as refinery shutdowns and export constraints begin to impair crude processing and regional supply flows," JP Morgan analysts said in a research note Friday.

The conflict has already led to the suspension of around a fifth of global crude and natural gas supply, as Tehran targets ships in the vital Strait of Hormuz between its shores and Oman, and attacks energy infrastructure across the region.

Global oil prices have surged more than 25% since the start of the war, driving up fuel prices for consumers worldwide.

A nearly complete shutdown of the Strait means the region's giant oil producers - Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq and Kuwait - have had to suspend shipments of as much as 140 million barrels of oil - equal to about 1.4 days of global demand - to global refiners.

As a result, oil and gas storage at facilities in the Middle East Gulf are rapidly filling, forcing oil fields in Iraq and Kuwait to cut oil production, with the United Arab Emirates likely to cut next, analysts, traders



Conflict disrupts global oil supply, Strait of Hormuz key to resolution

Middle East oilfields, refineries face shutdowns, prolonged recovery expected

Energy price hikes pose political risk for Trump amid midterm elections

Sri Lanka to grant 1 month visas to distressed Iranian sailors: Min

Colombo: Sri Lanka will grant free one-month visas to a group rescued from Iranian vessels, allowing them to remain in Sri Lanka under humanitarian protection, a senior minister said Sunday. Speaking on the matter, Minister of Public Security Ananda Wijepala said similar decisions could be taken in the future if necessary, stressing that such measures are not intended to support or harm any particular party.

Oilfields forced to shut in across the Middle East as a result of the shipping disruptions could take a while to return to normal, said Amir Zaman, head of the Americas commercial team at Rystad Energy.

"The conflict could be ended, but it could take days or weeks or months, depending on the types of fields, age of the field, the type of shut-in that they've had to do before you can get production back up to what it once was," he said.

Iranian forces, meanwhile, are targeting regional energy infrastructure - including refineries and terminals - forcing them to shut down too, with some of those operations badly damaged by attacks and in need of repairs.

fineries and terminals - forcing them to shut down too, with some of those operations badly damaged by attacks and in need of repairs. Qatar declared force majeure on its huge volumes of gas exports Wednesday after Iranian drone attacks and it may take at least a month to return to normal production levels, sources told Reuters.

The White House has justified the attack on Iran, saying the country posed an imminent threat to the United States, although it has not provided details. Trump has also said he was concerned about Iran's efforts to obtain a nuclear weapon.

Russia says int'l law effectively dead, calls for UNSC P-5 summit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, March 8: Russia has said international law is effectively dead amid escalating tensions in West Asia following the US-Israeli strike on Iran, and called for reviving President Vladimir Putin's proposal to convene a summit of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the current global situation underscores the need to revisit Putin's proposal, first made before the COVID-19 pandemic, for a summit of the P-5 - Russia, the US, China, France and the UK -- to discuss global security and stability.

"We have all lost what we call international law... I don't even understand how anyone can be called upon to follow the norms and principles of international law. It effectively no longer exists," Peskov said in an interview with the state-run Rossiya TV.

"We cannot tell anyone to follow international law, follow which law? Nobody can formulate today what it is," he said.

Referring to the sharp escalation following the US-Israeli attack on Iran, Peskov said the situation in the region has become significantly destabilised.

"The region has become significantly destabilised, and the cumulative effect of the vast number of regional conflicts and unresolved issues is resulting in both economic and political consequences," he said.



China spurns G2 global co-governance

Beijing: China Sunday rejected the G2 concept of global co-governance between Beijing and Washington, saying that managing international affairs requires the collective efforts of all nations. Last year, US President Donald Trump described the meeting with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping in South Korea as a "G2 meeting", saying the two countries could work together for their benefit and that of the world.

Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the US should clarify its broader plans and explain how they relate to existing international norms.

"We talk a lot about wanting to define what kind of world we live in... We believe the US should explain its plans and how this all relates to what previously defined certain norms," he said in a programme on state TV.

SHORT TAKES

Putin blames West for Ukraine crisis

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin has blamed Western countries for triggering the Ukraine crisis, saying the conflict stemmed from their support for the change of power in Kyiv. Putin made the remarks in an interview for the state television programme "Moscow, Kremlin, Putin", excerpts of which were aired on the Rossiya 24 channel Sunday.

583 Afghan Taliban operatives killed

Islamabad: Pakistan's security forces have killed 583 Afghan Taliban operatives in the ongoing military operation launched along the border last month, according to an official data released Sunday. Pakistan launched Operation Ghazab lil-Haq Feb 26 after the Afghan Taliban attacked 53 locations along the border.

Colombians vote in legislative contest

Bogota: Colombians were heading to the polls Sunday to elect a new Congress and choose three of the presidential candidates who will contest elections this May, a vote that will shape the next president's ability to push through legislation and fulfill their agenda.

Gen Z probe commission submits report to Nepal government

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, March 8: A high-level commission to probe the killings, arson and damages during the Gen Z protests in September last year submitted its report to Nepal's interim government Sunday, blaming lack of good governance and inefficiency by the then administration.

As the probe report was submitted to the interim Prime Minister Sushila Karki at the PM Office at Singhdurbar, neither the commission chief nor the government released any names of persons responsible for shooting at Gen Z protesters and other related issues.

A total of 76 people were killed during the two day protest, 22 youths September 8 while 54 others on the next day.

A week after Sushila Karki took over as the interim prime minister, a decision by the cabinet September 21 led to the formation of the judicial inquiry commission led by former Supreme Court justice Gauri Bahadur Karki to probe into the



incidents related to the September Gen Z protests.

The incident occurred mainly due to lack of good governance and inefficiency shown by then government administration, chair of the commission, Gauri Bahadur Karki, said.

People were frustrated due to politicisation of government institutions, including bureaucracy and judicial bodies, he said.

The Commission prepared the report fulfilling their duty honestly and whatever facts they received during the investigation were included in the report without any prejudice, he said, and pointed out, "Now it is up to the government to implement the recommendations."

The county may witness another Gen Z movement if the government failed to implement it, he added.

FAMILIES URGE MALAYSIA TO EXTEND SEARCH

Renewed hunt for missing Flight MH370 comes up empty

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kuala Lumpur, March 8: Twelve years after Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 vanished with 239 people aboard, a renewed deep-sea search in the southern Indian Ocean has so far failed to locate the missing aircraft, Malaysian authorities said Sunday, as families pressed for the effort to continue.

The Air Accident Investigation Bureau said in a statement that a seabed search conducted by marine robotics company Ocean Infinity between March 2025 and January 2026 surveyed thousands of square kilometres of ocean floor but has not produced any confirmed findings of the aircraft wreckage.

Malaysia gave the nod to the Texas-based company last year to renew the search for Flight 370 under a "no-find, no-fee" contract at a new 15,000-square-kilometre site in the southern Indian Ocean where it was believed to have



crashed. Ocean Infinity will be paid \$70 million only if wreckage is discovered.

The search was carried out for 28 days in two phases - March 25-28 last year and Dec 31, 2025, to Jan 23 this year, covering about 7,571 square kilometres (2,923 square miles) of seabed, the bureau said. Weather periodically disrupted operations, it said.

"The search activities un-

FAMILIES URGE MALAYSIA TO EXTEND SEARCH

Renewed hunt for missing Flight MH370 comes up empty

dertaken have not yielded any findings that confirm the location of the aircraft wreckage," it said in a statement. It didn't give details on when the search will resume.

The Boeing 777 plane vanished from radar shortly after taking off March 8, 2014, carrying 239 people, mostly Chinese nationals, on a flight from Malaysia's capital, Kuala Lumpur, to Beijing. Satellite data showed

which draws on everything from grape-growing to pin factories.

"No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable," he says in one of his best-known quotes.

Advocates of free-market eco-

nomics have long claimed him as their spiritual father, while some more recent readings even peg him as a moderate progressive - something akin to a left-leaning, modern-day European social democrat.

"You can find a 'Smith' to support anything you want to say," King's College London research associate Leo Steeds said of the Scottish Enlightenment thinker.

Smith also accepted that there were certain circumstances when tariffs were called for, either because the terms of trade were unfair or for reasons of security - arguments increasingly heard in the United States, Europe and other trading blocs.

From 1776 to 2026: Adam Smith's lessons for the global economy

REUTERS

London, March 8: Tax the rich. Trash the tariffs. End monopolies.

Such are the rallying calls of many of today's most heated economic debates. They could also come straight from the pen of revered economist Adam Smith, hailed by some as the "father of capitalism" and others as an early progressive.

Smith knew nothing of Donald Trump or tech billionaires when he railed against trade protectionism and extreme affluence in "The Wealth of Nations", the best-read economics book in history, which celebrates its 250th birthday Monday.

"It is the maxim of every prudent master of a family never to attempt to make at home what

it will cost him more to make than to buy," the Scot wrote in the seminal work, for example.

"Would it be a reasonable law to prohibit the importation of all foreign wines, merely to encourage the making of claret and burgundy in Scotland?" he adds.

The foundational text of classical economics was published March 9, 1776, the same year as the US Declaration of Independence, 13 years before the French Revolution, and amid the early convulsions of the Industrial Age.

Yet it's not hard to find parallels between the doctrines the book denounces - such as rival mercantilist empires seeking to minimise imports and maximise exports - and President Trump's trade tactics and "America First" credo today.



And while Smith is most often cited for his free markets and free trade zeal, when it comes to distribution of wealth, he could almost be channelling Bernie Sanders or Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, leftist US lawmakers.

"It is not very unreasonable that the rich should contribute to the public expense, not only in proportion to their revenue, but something more than in that proportion," Smith writes in the 1,000-page-plus tome,

which draws on everything from grape-growing to pin factories.

"No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable," he says in one of his best-known quotes.

DEBATES RAGE ON WHAT SMITH MEANT

Many scholars of the book - full name "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" - say it remains uncannily relevant to the economic issues of our time, though debates continue to rage about what Smith was actually saying.

Advocates of free-market eco-

nomics have long claimed him as their spiritual father, while some more recent readings even peg him as a moderate progressive - something akin to a left-leaning, modern-day European social democrat.

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'Wealth of Nations' marks 250th anniversary March 9. Debate over legacy of Smith's ideas continues. But his ideas on trade, wealth, labour still resonate



This week, movements in global crude oil prices and further geopolitical developments in West Asia will remain critical external variables influencing market direction. The week will also feature key macroeconomic releases that could shape near-term sentiment
AIT MISHRA | SVP, RESEARCH, RELIGARE BROKING

WTO MEET TO TACKLE KEY ISSUES
 WTO reforms, agriculture-related matters, dispute settlement and the e-commerce moratorium are expected to be discussed by trade ministers of 166 countries during the four-day ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation in Yaounde, Cameroon, an official said. The 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) will take place from March 26 to 29, 2026, in Yaounde, Cameroon



of the day **note**

Silver too is passing through a consolidation phase but trading with high volatility as gains are capped by consolidative moves in gold and industrial metals like Copper and Zinc
PRANAV MER | VP, EBG - COMMODITY & CURRENCY RESEARCH, JM FINANCIAL SERVICES

There is a need to relax criteria for India's PLI scheme for automobiles to enable electric vehicle start-ups to benefit and contribute to the country's green mobility journey
SAURAV KUMAR | FOUNDER & CEO, EULER MOTORS

While women represent roughly one-third of India's technology workforce, representation drops significantly at senior levels, with only about 7 per cent in executive roles and around 13 per cent at director levels
RESHMA SAHJ | SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF TECHNOLOGY, AP MOLLER-MAERSK

SHORT TAKES

Top eight firms see ₹2.81 lakh cr erosion

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most-valued firms eroded by Rs 2,81,581.53 crore last week, with the State Bank of India taking the biggest hit, in tandem with a weak trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark tanked 2,368.29 points, or 2.91 per cent. From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries and Infosys were the only gainers. The market valuation of State Bank of India tumbled Rs 53,952.96 crore to Rs 10,55,567.27 crore. ICICI Bank's valuation eroded by Rs 46,936.82 crore to Rs 9,40,049.82 crore and that of HDFC Bank dived Rs 46,552.3 crore to Rs 13,19,107.08 crore. The valuation of Larsen & Toubro tanked Rs 45,629.03 crore to Rs 5,43,208.36 crore. The market capitalisation (mcap) of Bajaj Finance dropped by Rs 28,934.56 crore to Rs 5,91,136.03 crore and that of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) diminished by Rs 28,492.44 crore to Rs 9,25,380.15 crore. However, the market valuation of Reliance Industries jumped Rs 14,750.39 crore to Rs 19,01,583.05 crore. The mcap of Infosys climbed Rs 3,459.99 crore to Rs 5,30,546.54 crore. Reliance Industries remained the most valued domestic firm followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, TCS, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, Infosys, and Hindustan Unilever.

OpenAI Robotics head resigns after US deal

Washington: Caitlin Kalinowski, head of robotics and consumer hardware at OpenAI, announced her resignation Saturday, citing concerns about the company's agreement with the Department of Defense. In a social media post on X, Kalinowski wrote that OpenAI did not take enough time before agreeing to deploy its AI models on the Pentagon's classified cloud networks. "AI has an important role in national security," Kalinowski posted. "But surveillance of Americans without judicial oversight and lethal autonomy without human authorization are lines that deserved more deliberation than they got." Reuters could not immediately reach Kalinowski for comment, but she wrote on X that while she has "deep respect" for OpenAI CEO Sam Altman and the team, the company announced the Pentagon deal "without the guardrails defined," she posted. "It's a governance concern first and foremost," Kalinowski wrote in a subsequent X post. The company Saturday reiterated that its "red lines" preclude use of its technology in domestic surveillance or autonomous weapons.

MIDDLE EAST CRISIS DEEPENS

INDIA RAMPS UP ALTERNATIVE OIL PURCHASES



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 8: India has started securing additional crude oil supplies from alternative global sources as the conflict involving Iran continues to disrupt energy flows in West Asia.

Indian refiners are negotiating cargoes from countries such as the United States, Russia and producers in West Africa to ensure stable fuel supplies if the geopolitical tensions persist, according to the sources.

The move comes as tensions in the region have raised concerns about disruptions in oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz, a key maritime route used by global energy markets. Nearly half of India's crude oil imports passed through the strait in February.

India imports around 88 per cent of its crude oil requirement, making stable supply routes critical for the country's energy security.

To prepare for possible disruptions, refineries have postponed planned maintenance shutdowns and are maintaining normal processing rates so that enough fuel can be produced to meet demand in the near term.

"Non-strait sources are fully operational and we are sourcing more supplies from non-conflict zones," as per the sources, adding that about 60 per cent of India's crude imports came from outside the Strait of Hormuz in 2025.

After the escalation in the Middle East conflict, that share has increased to nearly 70 per cent.

The supply situation has also been supported by a temporary waiver issued by the US Treasury Department, which allows the sale and delivery of sanctioned Russian crude that had already been loaded onto

S Korea mulls adopting oil price cap system for first time in 30 years

The government is considering adopting a price cap system for oil for the first time in nearly 30 years, sources said Sunday, amid concerns over rising energy prices following the escalating conflict in the Middle East. Officials began reviewing the possibility after surging global crude prices were reflected almost immediately in domestic fuel prices, rather than after the typical two-week lag, following US-Israeli strikes on Iran and Tehran's retaliatory attacks in the region. South Korea, which depends heavily on energy imports, is particularly vulnerable to external price shocks, which often drive inflation, reports Yonhap news agency. The review is being conducted under Article 23 of the Petroleum and Alternative Fuel Business Act, which allows the industry minister to designate a maximum sales price when oil prices fluctuate sharply and threaten economic stability. However, the provision has effectively remained dormant since the country liberalised oil prices in 1997.

ships before March 5.

The waiver is valid until April 5 and allows cargoes already in transit to be delivered without violating sanctions.

Meanwhile, Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has said India's energy supply situation remains stable despite the geopolitical tensions.

Speaking to reporters, Puri said the country is successfully managing the challenge of ensuring energy availability, affordability and sustainability in the current global environment.

"Energy imports into the country are in full flow from all non-Hormuz routes. The energy requirements of our citizens are being fully met. India is in a comfortable position and there is no room for anxiety or speculation," he said.

Govt forms committee for SEZ reforms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 8: The government has set up a 17-member committee to suggest larger reforms in the policy for special economic zones (SEZs), an official said.

It will submit a concept paper or roadmap or suggestions or amendments within six months along with its recommendations for broad-based and comprehensive reforms to formulate a SEZ 2.0 policy.

It will undertake a background study focused on the harmonisation of various prevalent export promotion schemes, including SEZs, export-oriented units (EOUs), MOOWR (Manufacturing and Other Operations in Warehouse), Advance Authorisation, EPCG (export promotion for capital goods), and Duty Free Import Authorisation (DFIA).

The committee's composition includes representatives from commerce, customs, Niti Aayog,

Global tensions spur FPI exit

FOREIGN PORTFOLIO INVESTORS WITHDRAW RS 21K-CR IN LAST FOUR SESSIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 8: Foreign investors pulled out Rs 21,000 crore (around \$2.3 billion) from Indian equities over the last four trading sessions amid deteriorating global risk sentiment triggered by the West Asia crisis.

The latest sell-off comes after foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) infused Rs 22,615 crore into Indian equities in February, the highest monthly inflow in 17 months.

Prior to that, FPIs had been net sellers for three consecutive months. They withdrew Rs 35,962 crore in January, Rs 22,611 crore in December, and Rs 3,765 crore in November, according to data from the depositories.

The latest outflows occurred

The latest sell-off comes after FPIs infused ₹22,615 crore into Indian equities in February, the highest monthly inflow in 17 months



during March 2-6, when FPIs sold equities worth about Rs 21,000 crore in the cash market. March 3 was a trading holiday on account of Holi.

Market experts attributed the pullout primarily to the rising geopolitical tensions in West Asia. The US and Israel launched a major attack on Iran February 28 which killed Iran's

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, triggering conflict in the region.

Vaqarjaved Khan, Senior Fundamental Analyst at Angel One, said fears of potential disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz pushed Brent crude prices above \$90 per barrel, triggering a global risk-off sentiment.

Other factors contribut-

Brent crude trading above \$90 per barrel is negative for the Indian economy and equity markets

VK VIJAYAKUMAR | CHIEF INVESTMENT STRATEGIST, GEOJIT INVESTMENTS

ing to the outflows include rupee depreciation beyond the 92-per-dollar level, elevated US Treasury yields drawing capital back to safe-haven assets, and mixed early outlook for Q4 FY26 corporate earnings, particularly margin pressures in the IT and consumption sectors, he added.

Despite the FPI selling, the market has continued to find support from domestic institutional investors (DIIs) and steady inflows through mutual fund systematic investment plans (SIPs).

Equity MF allocations rise from 10% to 32% among Indian women

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 8: Equity mutual fund allocations among Indian women have risen from about 10 per cent to 32 per cent over five years, while fixed deposit shares fell from around 45 per cent to 20 per cent, a report said Sunday.

The report from wealth management firm Equirus Wealth said that alternative assets such as PMS and AIFs have grown from about 3 per cent to 7 per cent. Around 75-90 per cent of women now hold assets through market corrections rather than exiting in panic, it said, adding that around 55 per cent selectively add capital during market dips, reflecting growing conviction.

Around 35-50 per cent of women investors either do not use AI tools or use them only for learning and monitoring.

The report drew on interactions with roughly 55,000 women investors and over 100 relationship managers spanning all age cohorts. The wealth management firm indicated a shift from fixed deposits, gold and property towards diversified, allocation-driven portfolios anchored around long-term financial goals. "Indian women investors are becoming more informed, confident and strategic in shaping their financial futures," said Ankur Punj MD-Business Head, Equirus Wealth.

GRIDCO celebrates International Women's Day

BHUBANESWAR: GRIDCO celebrated

International Women's Day with enthusiastic participation of women employees, highlighting the spirit of empowerment, equality, and recognition of women's contributions in the workplace. The programme was graced by Satyapriya Rath, Managing Director (Finance & Corporate Affairs); Kshirod Chandra Nanda, Director (Commercial); Debashis Das, Director (Trading & Business Development); Giris Taaty, CGM (Finance); Baishnab Charan Padhiary, and other senior officials.

Addressing the gathering, Rath emphasised the importance of empowering women and creating an inclusive and supportive work environment. He appreciated the valuable contributions made by women employees towards the growth and success of the organization and encouraged them to continue striving for excellence. Speaking on the occasion, he said, "Women play a vital role in strengthening organizations and society. Their dedication, resilience, and leadership continue to inspire progress, and GRIDCO remains committed to fostering an environment where women can grow, lead, and achieve their full potential." The directors also shared their views on the significance of the occasion and acknowledged the vital role played by women in shaping a progressive and equitable society. The programme featured fun and engaging activities along with interactive sessions, creating an atmosphere of celebration and camaraderie among the participants. The celebration concluded with an interactive session, providing an opportunity for all participants to interact and celebrate the achievements and contributions of women. GRIDCO reaffirmed its commitment to promoting gender equality and fostering an environment where women can grow, lead, and excel in all spheres of professional life.



OHPC observes International Women's Day



BHUBANESWAR: Odisha Hydro Power Corporation Ltd celebrated International Women's Day 2026 with enthusiastic employee participation. Asha Hans, former professor of political science and founder director, School of Women's Studies, Utkal University graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Sandeep Patnaik, Director (HR); Amiya Kumar Mohanty, Director (Operation) and Rajib Lochan Panda, Director (Projects) along with other senior officials of OHPC were present during the inaugural session of the programme. Dutee Chand, noted athlete and a colleague of OHPC, also joined the celebration. Addressing the gathering, Patnaik emphasised the importance of women's empowerment and gender equality. He highlighted the growing and significant role of women in leadership and decision-making across various sectors and reaffirmed OHPC's commitment towards creating an inclusive and supportive workplace environment. The programme concluded on a vibrant and inspiring note, reaffirming OHPC's commitment to the International Women's Day 2026 theme, "Rights. Equality. Empowerment. For All Women and Girls," and its continued efforts towards promoting dignity, equal opportunity and meaningful participation of women in all spheres of the organization and society.

Tata Power-led DISCOMS back women's career comeback

BHUBANESWAR: Reinforcing its commitment to diversity, inclusion and women empowerment, Tata Power-led Odisha DISCOMS celebrated the 'Nua Arambha - New Beginning' initiative on the occasion of International Women's Day. The programme aims to support women who wish to restart their professional journey after a career break, enabling them to re-enter the workforce with renewed confidence and opportunities for growth. Now in its second season, the initiative continues to create meaningful opportunities for women professionals to restart their careers and contribute to the power distribution sector in Odisha. As part of the initiative, seven women professionals have been onboarded across different roles and professional profiles in the four Odisha DISCOMS, marking an important step towards strengthening gender diversity within the organisation. The programme was graced by Monica Singhania, Professor, Faculty of Management Studies, Delhi, and Director on the Boards of TPNODL and TPWODL; Gajanan Kale, Chief - Odisha Distribution Business; Arvind Singh, CEO, TPCODL; and Shyam Sunder Choudhury, Chief BHR, along with members of the senior leadership team of the Odisha DISCOMS.



NEXPERIA DISPUTE ESCALATES AGAIN

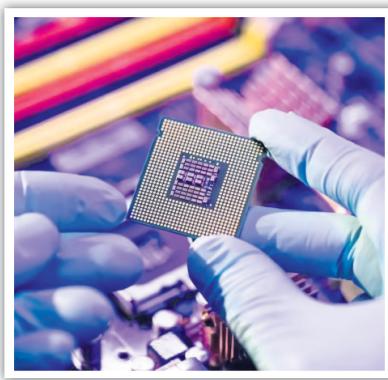
REUTERS

Beijing, March 8: China's commerce ministry raised the possibility of another global semiconductor supply chain crisis due to "new conflicts" between Dutch chipmaker Nexperia and its Chinese subsidiary.

Production across the global auto industry was disrupted in October when Beijing imposed export controls on Chinese-made Nexperia chips after The Hague seized the company from its Chinese parent Wingtech. Nexperia's chips are widely used in cars' electronic systems.

While the chip shortage has eased after diplomatic negotiations, the conflict between Nexperia's Dutch headquarters and its China-based unit has

China warns of global chip crunch



NEXPERIA CHINA UNIT ACCUSES DUTCH HQ OF DISABLING CHINA STAFF OFFICE ACCOUNTS
SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTIONS HIT AUTO INDUSTRY DURING PREVIOUS DISPUTE
NEXPERIA CHIPS ESSENTIAL TO CARS' ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS

only intensified, with the former supporting the removal of Wingtech's control and the latter demanding this be restored. Beijing's warning came a

day after Nexperia's Chinese packaging arm accused Netherlands-based headquarters of disabling office accounts for all employees in China.

"(This has) provoked new conflicts and created new difficulties and obstacles for (company-to-company) negotiations," China's commerce ministry said in a statement published on its official website.

"Nexperia Netherlands has seriously disrupted the company's normal production and operation, and if this triggers a global semiconductor production and supply chain crisis again, the Netherlands must bear full responsibility for this," the ministry added.

In a statement Friday Nexperia's Dutch entity did not deny the IT action, but disputed the Chinese subsidiary's allegation that this had affected production at the company's assembly and testing facility in China's

Guangdong province. Nexperia's Chinese subsidiary responded to the removal of Wingtech's control in September by declaring itself independent of its Dutch parent. Both entities have since traded accusations of bad-faith negotiating, while the Dutch headquarters has suspended wafer supply to the Guangdong plant.

Efforts from Beijing, The Hague, and Brussels to push both to a mediated resolution have done little to resolve the impasse.

Beijing has accused The Hague of not doing enough to force compromise from Nexperia's Netherlands headquarters, or end court proceedings in Amsterdam that transferred Wingtech's shares to a Dutch lawyer in October.

Air India to operate 78 extra flights on 9 routes

NEW DELHI: Indian carrier Air India announced Sunday that it will operate 78 additional flights on nine routes between March 10 and March 18, 2026, to support passengers amid the ongoing situation in West Asia. The carrier is deploying extra capacity to New York (JFK), London (Heathrow), Frankfurt, Paris, Amsterdam, Zurich, Colombo and Male, adding 17,660 seats on the nine routes in both directions, the release from Air India said. The trips include Delhi-New York (JFK), Delhi-London (Heathrow), Mumbai-London (Heathrow) for "boosting much-needed capacity when travel options for passengers remain constrained," it said. Further planes will fly from Frankfurt, Paris, Amsterdam, Zurich, Male and Colombo to Delhi. The additional flights on the European routes will operate with B787-8 and those to Male and Colombo will be operated with A320neo aircraft. The flights to New York (JFK) are subject to the requisite regulatory approvals and would operate with Air India's B777-300ER aircraft. Due to continuing airspace restrictions in other parts of West Asia, the airlines will operate additional non-scheduled flights on March 8, the airline had said in another statement.

HAT-TRICK OF FIRSTS FOR MEN IN BLUE

If the 2007 T20 World Cup victory was a watershed moment for Indian cricket, which gave birth to a behemoth like the IPL, the 2024 T20 World Cup win was a soothing balm to the heartbreak of the 2023 ODI World Cup final loss. The 2026 title triumph is an assertion that in talent, India are light years ahead of other teams

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ahmedabad, March 8: The ghosts of the past were finally laid to rest at the Narendra Modi Stadium as India delivered a masterclass against New Zealand to retain their ICC T20 World Cup title with a 96-run win Sunday.

In a poetic reversal of fortune at the very venue that once hosted their most bitter defeats in 2023, the Men in Blue stood tall, transforming the world's largest cricket arena into a cauldron of pure jubilation.

India were the favourites to lift the title as they entered the tournament in scintillating form that has seen them win 48 of their last 56 T20I games dating back to October 2023. And producing a dominant series win against New Zealand ahead of the marquee event, they lived up to the tag.

The Men in Blue had a strong and steady campaign leading to the final of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026, achieving seven wins in eight matches. Their journey started with a 29-run win against the United States national cricket team at the Wankhede Stadium February 7.

They then dominated the Namibia with a convincing 93-run victory in Delhi February 12. One of their most important wins in the group stage came when they defeated their arch-rivals, the Pakistan, by 61 runs in Colombo February 15. The team continued to build momentum with a 17-run win over the Netherlands in Ahmedabad February 18.

India's only defeat in the tournament came against South Africa in Ahmedabad February 22. However, this loss did not derail their campaign. The team responded strongly, beating Zimbabwe by 72 runs in Chennai February 26. They then overcame the West Indies team by five wickets in Kolkata March 1, securing a spot in the semi-finals, where the Suryakumar Yadav-led side beat England by seven runs in a thrilling contest.

With this victory, India has rewritten the record books. Take a look at the milestones the Men in Blue conquered in their title defence.

First team to defend T20 World Cup

Entering the 2026 tournament as defending champions, India carried the momentum of their historic 2024 campaign—a victory that marked their second T20 World Cup title since the inaugural 2007 triumph. By clinically dismantling New Zealand in the final, the Men in Blue have now achieved what no other men's side in history



PC: BCCI (X)



has: a successful title defense. This back-to-back glory cements their status as the format's undisputed powerhouse. This latest milestone follows their record-breaking 2024 run, where India redefined dominance by winning eight consecutive matches to lift the trophy. In doing so, they became the first team in the tournament's history to complete an entire World Cup campaign undefeated.

First men's team to lift T20 WC crown on home soil India's victory in Ahmed-

abad marks a watershed moment in the tournament's history: they are now the first men's team to lift the T20 World Cup trophy on home soil. Since the inaugural 2007 edition in South Africa, the coveted silverware has consistently eluded the host nations. From the Caribbean to Australia, and across previous editions in Asia, the "home-ground advantage" had



historically proven to be a burden rather than a blessing. Until Sunday's final, the list of hosts who fell short was long and distinguished, including South Africa (2007), England (2009), Sri Lanka (2012), and Australia (2022). Even in

that long-standing hoodoo.

First team to win three T20 World titles

By defeating New Zealand in the final, India has etched its name into the history books as the first nation to win the Men's T20 World Cup three times. This unprecedented "treble" places them in a league of their own.

While the West Indies first broke new ground in 2016 by becoming the first two-time

champions, and England later joined that elite club, India's 2026 victory represents a new pinnacle for the shortest format of the game.

The journey to this third star began with their iconic victory in the inaugural 2007 edition, followed by a masterful undefeated run to their second title in 2024. Now, by clinching their third trophy in the tournament's 10th edition, the Men in Blue have officially established a cricketing dynasty.



Puerto Rican singer Ricky Martin performs before the start of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 final cricket match between India and New Zealand at Narendra Modi Stadium, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, Sunday



Indian cricketers MS Dhoni and Rohit Sharma, ICC Chairman Jay Shah and others bring the tournament trophy on the field before the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 final cricket match



Cricket fans celebrate India's victory over New Zealand in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026, in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, Sunday

FIVB Beach Pro Tour Challenge wraps up Sen misses 2nd shot at history

RISHABH PAREKH, OP

Bhubaneswar, March 8: The FIVB Volleyball World Beach Pro Tour Challenge 2026 concluded in spectacular fashion Sunday at the Dutee Chand Athletic Stadium, KIIT Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar, bringing together the best of the best for a thrilling final day of world-class beach volleyball.

The day began with USA's Hughes/Batenhorst claiming the women's bronze after defeating compatriots Myszkowski/Kan 2-1 in an all American battle. While in the women's finals, Durish/Koenig secured the gold with a straight-sets vic-



tor over Japan's Shiba/Reika. In the men's section, Israel's Elazar/Cuzmiciov dominated Denmark's Brinck/Houmann 2-0 to bag a comfortable bronze. Belgium's Vercauteren/

Van Langendonck clinched the men's gold with a 2-0 win against Czech Republic's Sepka/Dzavoronok. The Belgian pair dominated the first set before the Czech duo fought back

to 20-20 in the second, but the Belgians sealed victory at 22-20 with a decisive final rally.

The closing ceremony commenced at 6:00 PM with a welcome and congratulatory address by Achyuta Samanta, Founder of KIIT, KISS & KIMS, Board Member - Strategic Council of the Volleyball Federation (FIVB), Chief Patron of the Volleyball Federation of India and President of the Odisha Volleyball Association. He congratulated the winning teams and appreciated the outstanding level of competition witnessed throughout the tournament.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, March 8: Indian badminton ace Lakshya Sen went down to familiar foe Lin Chun-Yi in the men's singles final of the All England Open here Sunday as the country's wait to see a champion again at the prestigious tournament continued.

The 24-year-old Indian fought hard but could not overcome the challenge of the left-handed Taiwanese shuttler, losing the intense title clash 15-21 20-22.

It was Sen's fifth straight defeat to Lin and second runner-up finish at the tournament. He had made the final in 2022 as well, but could not cross



the finish line. Sen, who battled through blisters and cramps during a gritty semifinal win Saturday, produced a spirited campaign through the week, defeating a string of high-

er-ranked opponents before falling short in the title clash against Lin. Only two Indians - Prakash Padukone (1980) and P Gopichand (2001) - have won the men's singles title at All England Open in history.