



PC's disclosure

Actor Priyanka Chopra opens up about the circumstances that led to her shifting focus from Bollywood to Hollywood

LEISURE | P2



NCERT book row

SC directs Centre and states to disassociate from three experts behind controversial NCERT Class VIII chapter on judiciary corruption

NATIONAL | P8



Bleeding money

Investors' wealth erodes by ₹5.14L-cr as stock markets fall after a day's breather amid growing tensions in West Asia

BUSINESS | P11



IPL amid war

Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru will take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL 2026 opener in Bangalore March 28

SPORTS | P12

Resolution for Birla's removal defeated in LS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: The resolution seeking the removal of Om Birla as Speaker was Wednesday defeated in Lok Sabha by a voice vote.

Amid protests and sloganeering by the Opposition seeking an apology from Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Jagdambika Pal, who was in the chair, announced that the no-confidence motion was defeated.

Pal urged the Opposition to take their seats so that he could put the motion to vote. But as the protests continued, he sought the vote of the House and the resolution was rejected by a voice vote, following which he adjourned the House for the day.

Earlier, the Home Minister hit out at the Opposition for bringing the motion for the removal of Birla as Speaker.

The Opposition objected to certain remarks of Shah and started shouting slogans, disrupted the proceedings and sought an apology from him.

Responding to the two-day-long debate, Shah asserted that the House will be run by its own rules and not by the rules of a party. It is not an ordinary occurrence as after nearly four decades, such a motion has been brought against the Speaker, he said.

The Home Minister said it was unfortunate for parliamentary politics that some opposition parties were questioning the integrity of the speaker.

Shah said the BJP has been in the Opposition for the longest period of time, but the party has never brought a no-confidence motion against any speaker.



RIPPLE EFFECTS OF WAR: People gather to secure their LPG cylinders at a cooking gas depot near Jharpada Special Jail in Bhubaneswar amid concerns of LPG shortage amid war in the Middle East, Wednesday

MANORANJAN MISHRA, OP

Day after quitting BJD, Jena joins BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 11: A day after quitting the Opposition BJD, former MP Rabintra Kumar Jena Wednesday joined the ruling BJP, citing the absence of a succession plan in the regional party.

Jena, along with his supporters from Balasore, Bhadrak, and Mayurbhanj districts, joined the saffron party at its state headquarters here.

He was welcomed by BJP state president Manmohan Samal and other senior leaders, who offered him a saffron scarf.

The former Balasore Lok Sabha MP, in a letter to BJD president Naveen Patnaik said he quit the regional party on personal grounds and prevailing situation. Jena, who was also the BJD's Balasore district former president, was with the party for around 12 years.

"I have respect for Patnaik. But age is not with him for politics. Patnaik has no succession plan to take the party forward. Regional parties without succession plans often fail to meet people's aspirations," he said.

He thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP state president Manmohan Samal, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, and other senior leaders, and expressed commitment to the development of north Odisha.

Brace for \$200/barrel: Iran

IEA agrees to release record 400 million barrels of oil from emergency reserves in effort to calm surging prices

REUTERS

2 Indians die, 1 missing as merchant vessels attacked

New Delhi: Two Indians were killed, and one went missing, when merchant vessels came under attack during the ongoing war in West Asia, an External Affairs Ministry spokesperson said Wednesday. India, he said, remains committed to the welfare of citizens residing in the Gulf region. India deplored the escalating attacks on commercial shipping in West Asia after a Thai-flagged bulk carrier bound for Gujarat's Kandla Port was targeted by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Three vessels were struck by projectiles in the Strait of Hormuz Wednesday, according to the UK's maritime agency. PTI

Dubai/Tel Aviv, March 11: Iran's military command said Wednesday the world should be prepared for oil to hit \$200 a barrel, as three more ships came under attack in the blockaded Gulf.

Iran fired at Israel and targets across the Middle East Wednesday, demonstrating it can still fight back and disrupt energy supplies despite what the Pentagon has described as the most intense US-Israeli strikes yet.

Oil prices that shot up earlier this week have eased and stock markets have rebounded, with investors betting for now that US President Donald Trump will find a quick way to end the war he began alongside Israel nearly two weeks ago.

But so far there has been no let-up on the ground, or any sign that ships can safely sail through the Strait of Hormuz, where a fifth of the world's oil has been blockaded behind a narrow channel along the Iranian coast in the worst disruption to energy supplies since the oil shocks of the 1970s.

"Get ready for oil to be \$200 a barrel, because the oil price depends on regional security which you have destabilised," Ebrahim Zolfaqari, spokes-

person for Iran's military command, said in comments addressed to the United States.

After offices of a bank in Tehran were hit overnight, Zolfaqari also said Iran would respond with attacks on banks that do business with the United States or Israel. People across the Middle East should stay 1,000 metres from banks, he added.

A senior Israeli official told Reuters Israeli leaders now privately accepted that Iran's ruling system could survive

the war. Two other Israeli officials said there was no sign Washington was close to ending the campaign.

In the latest public display of defiance, huge crowds of Iranians took to the streets Wednesday for funerals for top commanders killed in airstrikes. They carried caskets and brandished flags and portraits of slain Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and his son and successor, Mojtaba.

An Iranian official told Reuters that Mojtaba Khamenei had been lightly wounded early in the war, when airstrikes killed his father, mother, wife and a son. He has not appeared in public or issued any direct message since the war began.

A source also said Israel believed he had been lightly hurt.

Reliance will invest in US oil refinery: Trump



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington/New Delhi, March 11: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries will partner in building the first new oil refinery in the US in 50 years, US President Donald Trump said, calling it the biggest in US history.

The new refinery will be located in Brownsville, Texas, and will be designed to run entirely on US shale oil, according to America First Refining (AFR) -- the firm piloting the project.

Reliance has signed a 20-year agreement to purchase fuels produced at the refinery, with groundbreaking for the project scheduled in the second quarter of 2026.

While Trump in a social media post on Truth Social named Reliance as partner in

the project that he said was "A HISTORIC \$300 BILLION DOLLAR DEAL," AFR without naming the company said it has received a 9-figure investment from a global supermajor at a 10-figure valuation.

Reliance did not immediately offer any comments.

Once completed, it would be the first new major refining project in the US since Marathon's Garyville, Louisiana, facility came online in 1977.

Neither Trump nor AFR gave financial details of the project or completion timelines.

The project may cost up to USD 4.5 billion, according to industry experts.

This will be the first oil refinery that Reliance will build in the US. It operates the world's biggest refining complex at Jamnagar in Gujarat with a capacity to process 1.24 million barrels of crude oil.

Reliance has had longstanding commercial presence in the US through energy trading, technology partnerships and investments. The group has periodically tapped US capital markets and continues to deepen ties with US companies in energy, materials, and digital infrastructure.

LORDS A-LEAVING

Britain to rid Parl of hereditary nobles after 700 yrs

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, March 11: Centuries of British political tradition will end within weeks after Parliament voted to remove hereditary aristocrats from the unelected House of Lords.

On Tuesday night members of the upper chamber dropped objections to legislation passed by the House of Commons ousting dozens of dukes, earls and viscounts who inherited seats in Parliament along with their aristocratic titles.

Government minister Nick Thomas-Symonds said the change put an end to "an archaic and undemocratic principle."

"Our parliament should always be a place where talents are recognised and merit counts," he said. "It should never be a gallery of old boys' networks, nor a place where titles, many of which were handed out centuries ago, hold power over the will of the people."

important role in Britain's parliamentary democracy, scrutinising legislation passed by the elected House of Commons. But critics have long argued that it is unwieldy and undemocratic.

The case of Peter Mandelson, who resigned from the Lords in February after revelations about his friendship with the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, drew renewed attention to the upper chamber and the problem of lords behaving badly.

The chamber currently has more than 800 members, making it the second-largest legislative chamber in the world after China's National People's Congress.

For most of its 700-year history, its membership was composed of noblemen - almost never women - who inherited their seats, alongside a smattering of bishops. In the 1950s, these were joined by "life peers" - retired politicians, civic leaders and other notables appointed by the government, who now



make up the vast majority of the chamber.

Roughly 1 in 10 members are currently hereditary peers.

In 1999, the Labour government of then-Prime Minister Tony Blair evicted most of the 750 hereditary peers, though 92 were allowed to remain temporarily to avoid an aristocrats' rebellion.

It was another 25 years before Prime Minister Keir Starmer's

current Labour government introduced legislation to oust the remaining "hereditaries."

The lords put up a fight, forcing a compromise that will see an undisclosed number of hereditary members allowed to stay by being "recycled" into life peers.

The bill will become law once King Charles III grants royal assent - a formality - and the hereditary peers will leave

at the end of the current session of Parliament this spring, completing a political process begun a quarter century ago. In Lords terms, that is speedy.

Labour remains committed to eventually replacing the House of Lords with an alternative second chamber that is "more representative of the UK." If past experience is anything to go by, change will come slowly.

"So, here we are at the end of well over seven centuries of service by hereditary peers in this Parliament," Nicholas True, the opposition Conservative Party leader in the Lords, told the chamber.

"Many thousands of peers served their nation here and thousands of improvements to law were made," he said. "It wasn't all a stereotypical history of reaction in ermine. Many of those people, no doubt, were flawed but for the most part, they served their nation faithfully and well."

Man opens fire at Farooq Abdullah, J&K Dy CM; held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, March 11: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah and Jammu and Kashmir Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary escaped unhurt in an attack by a gunman outside a marriage hall in the outskirts of Jammu Wednesday night, officials said.

The accused, Kamal Singh Jamwal, a resident of Purani Mandi, was overpowered by security guards and was whisked away for questioning, they said.

The incident took place at posh Greater Kailash locality of Jammu when Abdullah and

the deputy Chief Minister were coming out of a marriage function, the officials said.

They said the accused, who is in his 70s, was waiting outside the venue and tried to fire on Abdullah. However, two police personnel, an inspector and a sub-inspector, overpowered him but he still managed to fire one shot before he was disarmed and taken into custody.

No one was injured in the firing, the officials said, adding Jamwal was allegedly in an inebriated condition.

Abdullah and Choudhary had come to greet party leader B S Chouhan on the marriage of his son, the officials said.

leisure



STEVE CARELL: NO TIME FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

American actor Steve Carell, who is known for his work in *The Office*, isn't really bothered about his social media presence. The actor has said that he doesn't have time for social media and believes no one would care if he started sharing posts about his life, reports *Female First UK*.

RITA TALKS ABOUT BEST ADVICE SHE EVER GOT

British actress Rita Ora has shared the best advice that she has ever received. The actress said that being told to freeze her eggs in her 20s was "the best advice." The 35-year-old actress first froze her eggs when she was 24 before doing it again three years later.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today, you may want to wear your power suit, says Ganesh. If you notice people bending and bowing a bit, understand that your hard work has paid off! If not, then you need to get more organised. Either way, there's work to be done.

TAURUS
The competitive streak in you might relent today as you look for a lifestyle that is more relaxed and laid-back. The rat race is tiring and you will feel the urge to get away, far from the maddening crowd and the never-ending routine. Matters pertaining to your home may also occupy some of your time today, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
An extremely productive and fulfilling day awaits you. Along with your daily routine, you will also concentrate on your household issues. You will feel the need to have someone to call your own. You may find yourself in two minds over things like marriage and partnership. It is a good day to sell something, says Ganesh.

CANCER
An awareness of optimism and idealism will mark your activities this day. You may benefit by traversing from one terrain to another. You will be liberal and generous with ideas; your internal beauty will blossom.

LEO
You are fond of travelling. You will make plans for a trip or a journey and will include your family and friends in your schemes. For those in artistic fields, you will receive critical acclaim. A progressive day awaits, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
It is not the time to rest on your past laurels, and you will have to carry on with your work unabated. You will have to keep your focus steady and remain organised to get the same level of success that you had in the recent past. Ganesh advises you not to neglect your relationships, as they are the cornerstones of your success and tranquillity.

LIBRA
If there's a knock on your door today, there's a very strong possibility it might be a marriage proposal. Don't get startled, and grab opportunities that come knocking (literally!). The stars send you a partner who shall be your match in every way. Have a long and happy married life, says Ganesh.

SCORPIO
You are in a dilemma and feel like standing at a crossroads of life. Some important decisions of life need time and that's what you want right now. However, keep personal life and work separate to avoid confusion and disturbance. As per Ganesh's advice, it's all right if decision making takes some time, but avoid taking hasty decisions.

SAGITTARIUS
The pressing needs of your loved ones call for extra attention today. A small party at home may see a group of friends and relatives dine together. This may find you in a chatty mood. Ganesh says an intimate tête-à-tête with your better half would fare you well.

CAPRICORN
The day will sail smooth, but your mind will wreak havoc by forcing you to act on the spur of the moment, says Ganesh. However, this will not ruin your reputation with bosses and peers. You may also see some of your dreams come true, but don't fly too high; you may climb up the ladder of success but with every step you leave behind there is always one more to go.

AQUARIUS
Your dream house or car may well be on its way! The stars proclaim that it's a good time to acquire new assets. So bring out those attractive brochures and check out your loan prospects. A perfect way to end an exciting day will be an evening at a quiet temple, says Ganesh.

PISCES
A good day awaits you. You will finish your work and beat your deadlines by miles on account of the luck favouring you. There are chances that a family holiday, which has been in the planning for a long time, will eventually come to fruition today, says Ganesh.

Priyanka's startling revelation

Mumbai: Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas has opened up about the circumstances that led to her shifting focus from Bollywood to Hollywood, explaining that her decision was driven by a desire to explore new opportunities and avoid remaining in an uncomfortable professional situation. She recalled that one of her earliest experiences of working in films came with the Tamil movie *Thamizhan*, where she starred opposite Vijay. According to Chopra, witnessing the massive crowds that gathered for the actor gave her an early glimpse into the scale of stardom in Indian cinema. Talking about her later career decisions, the actor said she prefers to move on rather than remain in situations that feel limiting. "I'm

someone who doesn't like staying in the s*** because you get used to the smell," she said during the conversation, while explaining her approach to difficult phases in life. Chopra clarified that the decision to pursue opportunities abroad was not about rejecting Bollywood, but about expanding her career. She also confessed that she felt "pushed into a corner" within the industry due to limited opportunities and internal politics, which eventually motivated her to explore work in the United States. AGENCIES



Hansika officially divorced

Mumbai: Actor Hansika Motwani and businessman Sohael Khaturiya have been granted a divorce by the Bandra Family Court in Mumbai. Her lawyer, Adnan Shaikh, confirmed the news to media. The couple filed for separation by mutual consent, with the actor forgoing alimony in the process. The reason for their separation has also been revealed in their plea. Adnan reportedly told the court that Hansika and Sohael lived together for a short period but realised there were differences in their temperaments, opinions and lifestyles, which led to disagreements. "The divorce was granted by mutual consent after both parties acknowledged that the marriage had irretrievably broken down," said the lawyer in a statement. **Hansika report-**

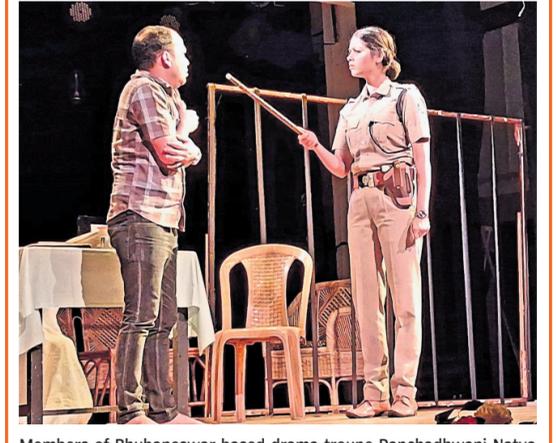
edly approached Sohael seeking an amicable separation, and the businessman also consented to the dissolution of the marriage. "It is pertinent to clarify that our client has made no claims whatsoever for alimony or maintenance, as her sole intention was to bring a dignified and peaceful closure to the marriage. Our client now wishes to move forward with her life and professional commitments," said the lawyer. AGENCIES



THEATRE CORNER



The artistes of Ananya theatre troupe performed Odia play *Abanchhita Kurukhetra* on the last evening of its three-day drama festival at Rabin-Dr Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Wednesday. PIC: BIKASH NAYAK



Members of Bhubaneswar-based drama troupe Panchadhvani Natya Parishad staged Odia play *Bhinna Eka Sahajatri* on the third evening of four-day state level drama festival, being organised by Panchamavada at Bhanja Kala Mandap, Thursday. Written by Panchanan Dash, the play was directed by Malaya Kumar Mohanty.

SONA TAKES A DIG AT BADSHAH

Mumbai: As he is facing a lot of backlash for his latest track titled *Tateeree*, singer Sona Mohapatra too has taken a sharp dig at rapper Badshah, criticising what she described as the repeated use of misogynistic tropes in pop music and calling on artists to take greater responsibility for the cultural influence they wield. Without holding back, Sona wrote on Instagram that such content was "not the first time we've seen this template," referring to a pattern where a male performer "puffs up his chest, flexes masculinity, objectifies women and projects himself as some irresistible



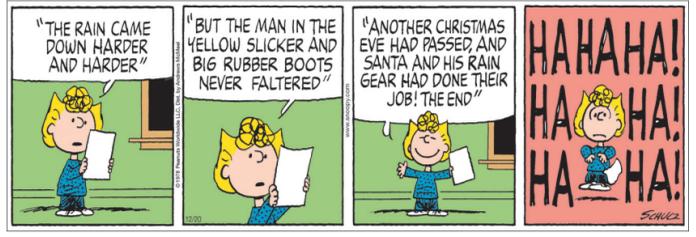
hero while women exist merely to drool around him." She further mocked the lyrical swagger she believes



dominates such songs, describing it as "tu mujhpe marti hai, mujhpe jaan chidakti hai" type of flights of

rubbish swag," adding that it reflects the "laziest trope in pop culture" rather than genuine creativity. Sona said that simply calling oneself a "son of Haryana" does not justify problematic portrayals. She pointed out that Haryana already struggles with serious gender issues. She shared: "Artists shape imagination. You can challenge misogyny or profit from it. The songstress went on to caption the post: "Now young girls in uniforms as props ... Stop this nonsense, India deserves better." IAN S

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

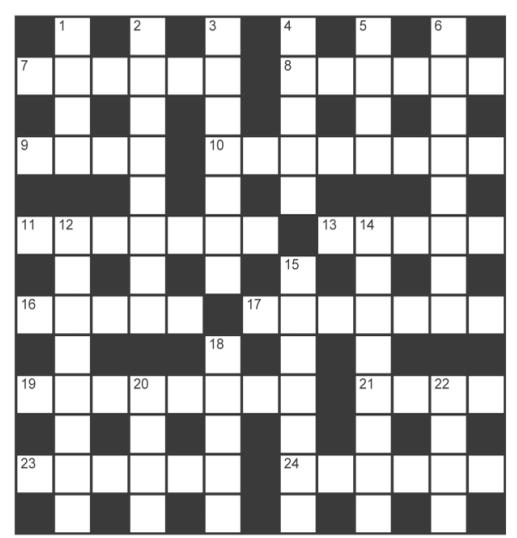


BREVITY



FUN POST

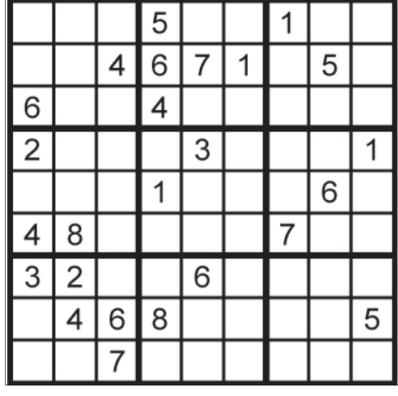
CROSSWORD



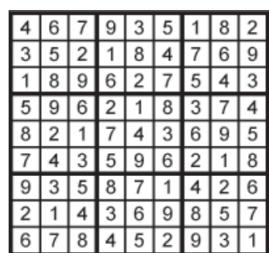
- Across**
- 7 Steam
 - 8 Tarzan, for one (3-3)
 - 9 Hops kiln
 - 10 Playful Pacific mammal (3,5)
 - 11 Looks up to
 - 13 Eucalyptus eater
 - 16 Trent or Tyne, e.g.
 - 17 He was for the birds
 - 19 "Farewell" (2,6)
 - 21 Beige
 - 23 End of a threat (2,4)
 - 24 Shallow-water echinoderm
 - Down**
 - 1 Semarang locale
 - 2 Herbivorous land turtle
 - 3 Flying toy
 - 4 Long-tailed parrot
 - 5 Nudnik
 - 6 Napoleon's undoing
 - 12 Rum cocktail
 - 14 Great wealth
 - 15 Make haste (5,2)
 - 18 Rival of Paris
 - 20 Fish caught in pots
 - 22 Destroy

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

White House: US' allies in India are good actors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York/Washington, March 11: The US "temporarily permitted" India to "accept" Russian oil already on ships to ensure energy supplies amid the conflict with Iran, a top White House official said, underlining that America's allies in India are "good actors".

The US last week said it was issuing a temporary 30-day waiver to allow Indian refiners to purchase Russian oil in the backdrop of the escalating West Asia conflict.

White House Press Secretary's comments drew sharp criticism in India, with the Congress saying that her remarks were a "capitulation certificate" to the PM

she said.

Leavitt's comments drew sharp criticism in India, with the Congress saying that her remarks were a "capitulation certificate" to PM Narendra Modi.

"After the US Treasury Secretary, it is now the turn of President Trump's press secretary to give Mr Modi a capitulation certificate,"

Congress general secretary in charge of communications Jairam Ramesh said.

About the 30-day waiver, Bessent last week said in an interview to Fox Business, "The world is very

well supplied in oil. Yesterday, the Treasury (Department) agreed to let our allies in India start buying Russian oil that was already on the water."

"The Indians had been very good actors. We had asked them to stop buying sanctioned Russian oil this fall. They did. They were going to substitute it with US oil. But to ease the temporary gap of oil around the world, we have given them permission to accept the Russian oil. We may unsanction other Russian oil," he had said.

President Donald Trump, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and the whole national security team "came to this decision because our allies in India have been good actors and have previously stopped buying sanctioned Russian oil", White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt told a press conference Tuesday.

"So as we work to appease this temporary gap of oil supply around the world because of the Iranians, we have temporarily permitted them (India) to accept that Russian oil. And this Russian oil was already at sea,"



'TITANIC' AGAIN: A man clicks photos of Titanic-style satirical statue of President Donald Trump with Jeffrey Epstein near the US Capitol

PTI PHOTO

K'mal: 10 Maoists with ₹1.15cr bounty surrender

AGENCIES

Phulbani, March 11: Ten Maoists carrying a combined bounty of ₹1.15 crore surrendered before Odisha Police in Kandhamal district Wednesday, officials said.

Among those who surrendered are CPI(Maoist) State Committee Member (SCM) Sanu Pottam alias Nitu, who carried a bounty of ₹55 lakh.

"Ten Maoists, six women and four men, surrendered before senior officers, including ADG (Anti-Naxal Operation) Sanjeeb Panda, CRPF IG Amitendra Nath Sinha and IG (Operations) Deepak Kumar, at a programme in Reserve Police Lines, Phulbani," they said.

Besides Nitu, who hails from Chhattisgarh, the other surrendered Maoists were Santai Salam, Laxmi Madavi (alias Anupa), Sunil Telam, Manjula Punem, Rambati Ayam, Ganesh Kunjam, Sushila Dudi, Sharir Kuhudam, and Chodi Yodi. An Odisha Police statement said, "The surrendered Maoists carried a combined reward of ₹1.15 crore."

IN A 1ST, SC ALLOWS PASSIVE EUTHANASIA

Apex court asks Centre to consider enacting comprehensive legislation on the emotive issue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: In a first, the Supreme Court Wednesday allowed the withdrawal of artificial life support for a 32-year-old man who has been in a coma for 13 years, saying that the government should consider bringing comprehensive legislation on passive euthanasia.

A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and KV Viswanathan directed AIIMS-Delhi to ensure that life support is withdrawn with a tailored plan so that dignity is maintained. Passive euthanasia is the intentional act of letting a patient die by withholding or withdrawing life support or the treatment necessary to keep him alive.

The patient, Ghaziabad's Harish Rana, who was a B.Tech student at Panjab University and a football-loving sporty young man, suffered head injuries after falling from the fourth floor of his paying guest accommodation in 2013 and has been in a coma since.

"In the facts and circum-

stances of the present case, we record our satisfaction that the twin legal requirements for the withdrawal and withholding of medical treatment have been unequivocally met. First, it is established that the Clinically Assisted Nutrition and Hydration currently being administered to the applicant constitutes 'medical treatment', the bench said.

"Secondly, it has been conclusively determined that the continued administration of the same is no longer in the 'best interests' of the applicant. In light of the unanimous consensus arrived at by the parents/next of kin and the constituted medical boards respectively, we are of the opinion that the medical treatment ought not to be prolonged any further," it said in a 338-page judgment.

"The right to die with dignity is inseparable from the right to receive quality palliative and End-of-Life care. It is imperative to ensure that the withdrawal

process is not marred by pain, agony, or suffering," it added.

The SC noted that Rana survived only through clinically administered nutrition via percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy tubes, and medical boards had unanimously concluded that continuation of treatment merely prolonged biological existence without any possibility of recovery.

When primary and secondary boards had certified withdrawal of life support, there was no need for judicial intervention, the SC said. It made a special mention of Rana's parents, expressing its appreciation to them for showing immense love and care for their son. "His family never left his side," it said. The order allowing passive euthanasia is in line with the court's 2018 Common Cause judgment, which was modified in 2023 and recognised the fundamental right to die with dignity.

"We urge the Union Government to consider enacting a

comprehensive legislation on the subject in line with the vision of the bench in Common Cause. Such legislation would provide clarity, coherence, and certainty in matters that are deeply practical and emotionally sensitive," the bench said.

Rana's family had said that allowing withdrawal of artificial life support would restore his dignity after years of irreversible suffering. Shortly after the SC pronounced its judgment, a crowd gathered outside the Brahm Raj Empire society in Ghaziabad, where the family now lives.

Rashmi Nandakumar, the lawyer who represented the Ranans in the SC, told PTI over the phone that the family members were not in a position to comment before the media.

Local residents spoke about how the family had gone out of their way to get their son treated. Ashok Rana and his wife Nirmla Rana had sold their house in Delhi to meet the medical expenses of their son, neighbours told the media.



HARISH RANA (FILE)

NHRC seeks reports on lack of basic amenities in Cuttack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Wednesday asked the state government to furnish reports within four weeks on the alleged lack of basic amenities in and around Ward-56 of the Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC).

The apex rights body's move came while hearing a plea filed by advocate Akshaya Kumar Pandey and a few residents of the locality.

In the petition, they alleged that though Ward-56 has been a part of the civic body for decades now, over 50,000 residents continue to suffer due to a lack of basic amenities such as drainage, pucca roads, streetlights and bus services.

They also raised concerns over the unsafe condition of the Kuakhai river bridge, unrestricted heavy vehicle movement on it, and the alleged negligence of authorities towards the issue, which they claim violates their fundamental and human rights.

Seeking urgent intervention

The NHRC move came while hearing a plea filed by advocate Akshaya Kumar Pandey and a few residents of Ward-56 under the Cuttack Municipal Corporation

They alleged that though Ward-56 has been a part of the civic body for decades now, over 50,000 residents continue to suffer due to a lack of basic amenities such as drainage, pucca roads, streetlights and bus services

from the NHRC, the petitioners urged the rights body to issue directions to the authorities concerned to provide essential facilities and ensure the safety of residents at the earliest.

"These issues directly implicate Article 21 of the Constitution of India, which guarantees the right to life and personal liberty," the NHRC observed.

The apex rights body asked the Chief Secretary, Director General of Police, Principal Secretary of the Commerce and Transport department, Cuttack Collector, and CMC Commissioner to submit reports on the issue within four weeks.

Aravallis lost 13.8% soil/yr during 2017-2024

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Built-up areas in India's Aravallis have increased 53 per cent, resulting in a 13.8 per cent rise in average soil lost per year during 2017-2024, even as forest cover has increased in the country's oldest mountain range over the time period, a study has found.

Assessing land use and land cover patterns between 2001 and 2021, researchers from O.P. Jindal Global University and the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur found that steep slopes, susceptible soils and mining areas are strongly associated with erosion hotspots.

Increased soil erosion in the Aravalli Mountain System, despite a significant rise in afforestation, highlights that local conservation efforts cannot compensate for massive land conversion, according to findings published in the journal Geographies.

The Aravallis are primitive mountains where soils are deep and ecosystems intricate and delicately balanced, the researchers said.

The range is among India's most mineral rich mountain systems, hosting a wide range of metallic and non-metallic minerals and serving as a cornerstone of India's mineral resource base. The team analysed moderate



Increased soil erosion in the Aravalli Mountain System, despite a significant rise in afforestation, highlights that local conservation efforts cannot compensate for massive land conversion, according to findings published in the journal Geographies

resolution data recorded during 2001-2020 to identify long-term trends, with high resolution data of 2017 and 2024 selected to accurately measure erosion trends. The two years represent current and divergent meteorological conditions, they said.

The study revealed "an evident growth in overall forest cover at a broad spatial scale".

However, fine-scale measurement showed erosive processes and a sharp growth in built en-

vironments and a subsequent depopulation of rangelands and croplands.

The trend is similar to that seen in ancient mountain systems worldwide, the researchers said.

"LULC (land use and land cover) has changed rapidly, with built-up areas increasing by 53 per cent at the expense of rangelands and croplands. These drivers resulted in a 13.8 per cent increase in the mean annual soil loss be-

tween 2017 and 2024, from 1.59 to 1.81 t/ha/yr (tonnes per hectare per year), while forest cover has increased over the timescale, as is evident in this study," the authors wrote.

According to the authors, the conversion of semi-natural vegetated surfaces into built, impervious surfaces has a direct and detrimental effect on the land's natural defence mechanisms.

The team added that a lack of forest does not afflict landscapes, but through the disintegration and transformation of the larger, stabilizing land matrix, ecosystems downstream are affected.

Human-caused erosion of the landscape was found to be accompanied by an increase in climatic erosivity between 2017 and 2024.

The interdependence of human activity and climate change, in which human activity increases exposure and climate change increases hazards, is characteristic of the contemporary degradation of vulnerable ecosystems across the globe, the authors said.

"As a result, a 13.83 per cent increase in mean soil erosion rates became a direct and foreseeable effect," they said.

"These results highlight the fact that local conservation benefits, such as afforestation, can be swamped out by large, unsustainable land conversion processes," the team wrote.

TEARFUL TRIBUTE

Late Lalita Rani Mishra
W/o. Late Lalitmohan Mishra, Balangir
DOB : 24.10.1951 / DOD : 01.03.2026

Your unwavering love, devotion, sacrifice, dedication and charitable thoughts will be unforgettable. Your ever-bright face will remain etched in our minds and inspire us to move forward in life. We pray to Lord Sri Jagannath for the peace of your soul.

✦ **CONDOLENCES** ✦

Shishir, Sampa, Shreyans, Dipti, Sanjay, Saurabh, Saunak, Jyoti, Manoj, Aum friends and relatives

Flat No. - G/01, Kanhaiya, Brajdharm Housing Society
Dhaturapara, Sambalpur - 768002, Contact: 9674650905, 9437427813, 9439225639

BJD protests over rising LPG, essential commodities prices

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 11: Members of the women, youth and student wings of the Opposition Biju Janata Dal (BJD) staged a protest at Master Canteen Square here Wednesday against the recent hike in prices of LPG cylinders and essential commodities.

The demonstration was organised by Biju Mahila Janata Dal, Biju Yuba Janata Dal, and Biju Chatra Janata Dal, where participants symbolically prepared tea on earthen chulhas as part of their protest to highlight the burden of rising cooking fuel costs on households.

Senior BJD leader Lekhasri Samantsinghar criticised the Central government over the sharp rise in LPG cylinder prices and other essential commodities.

She said the price of domestic LPG cylinders has increased by around ₹60, while commercial cylinders have seen a rise of ₹119. At the same time, cooking oil prices have surged to nearly ₹170 per litre, adding to the financial burden on common households. The BJD leader alleged that the situation reflects the absence of a strong economic and energy security policy in the country. Samantsinghar said that if domestic prices are being severely impacted by international developments, it indicates that the government has not ensured adequate safeguards for the country's essential supplies.

According to the senior BJD leader, when global oil prices had earlier fallen, the government did not significantly reduce the prices of LPG and other commodities. However, whenever international prices increase, the burden is immediately passed on to the public.

"The elected government has the responsibility to ensure food security, price stability, and economic protection for the people, but the Centre has failed to address these concerns," she said.

BJD Rajya Sabha MP Sasmit Patra Wednesday stated that the protests are being organised to draw attention towards the



Protestors symbolically prepared tea on earthen chulhas to highlight burden of rising LPG costs on households

BJD leaders said the price of domestic cylinders has increased by about ₹60, while commercial cylinders have become costlier by ₹119

burden of rising fuel costs on ordinary households.

Patra also questioned the response of the state government, stating that since it claims to be part of a 'double engine government', it should clarify what steps are being taken to protect citizens from price escalation.

He said LPG directly impacts household kitchens, and therefore, the government must clarify the status of petroleum products and cooking gas availability in the country.

"The government should clearly state the position regarding oil and LPG availability. Silence will only lead to unnecessary speculation among citizens," Patra added.

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"The government should clearly state the position regarding oil and LPG availability. Silence will only lead to unnecessary speculation among citizens," Patra added.

BMC makes U-turn on firewood amid commercial LPG crisis

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: With the hotel and restaurant industry reportedly getting hit by shortage of LPG cylinders amid the Middle East war, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Wednesday said it is considering allowing eateries to use charcoal and firewood stoves, which were previously banned by the civic body.

Speaking to reporters here Wednesday, BMC Mayor Sulochana Das said the ongoing war in the Middle East has affected the supply of LPG cylinders.

"We had imposed restrictions on firewood and coal cookers due to air pollution. However, the war situation has affected small-scale vendors and eateries due to the shortage of LPG, impacting their livelihood," the Mayor said.

"We are considering allowing firewood and coal cookers for eateries until the war situation becomes normal and the supply of LPG is restored. Today we will hold a meeting on sanitation with all corporators where we will discuss this proposal for the temporary use of coal stoves," she added.

A final decision is expected after the meeting concludes.

Earlier, the civic body had banned the use of firewood and coal cookers to curb air pollution in the city January 5. The BMC is now considering temporarily lifting the ban following the LPG shortage triggered by the Middle East war.

Prof. Nabeen Chandra Nayak: Scholar, healer & enduring icon

Yasobant Das

Prof. Nabeen Chandra Nayak came from an illustrious lineage, being born to Dr. Balamukunda Nayak of Cuttack, a name respected for intellect, integrity, and service. Among three brothers—Naresh, Nabeen, and Nihar—each carved a distinct place in life through dedication and excellence in their chosen vocations. The four sisters, Uma, Sushama, Pratima, and Surama, all happily married, lived fulfilling lives and have since departed from this world. With the passing of Nabeen Babu in January 2026, the chapter of Dr. Balamukunda Nayak's remarkable family closed, leaving behind a legacy of learning, humility, and grace.

A man of rare brilliance, Prof. Nayak pursued his higher studies at Lucknow and very early in his career joined the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. In the Department of Pathology, he steadily rose through merit and scholarship to become Professor of Hepatopathology. Revered nationally and internationally for his work on liver diseases, his research and clinical insights, particularly in pediatric liver disorders, opened new pathways in diagnosis and understanding. His contribution to child liver pathology stands today as a guiding light for younger generations of doctors and researchers.

Prof. Subrat Acharya, former head and a towering figure at AIIMS, described Prof. Nayak



PROF. NABEEN CHANDRA NAYAK

as an international icon in the diagnosis of liver disease, whose contributions to research and development were truly humongous. To him, Nabeen Babu was not merely a great scientist but a gentleman par excellence, combining academic rigor with rare human warmth.

Prof. Mihir Mohapatra recalled that the entity Non-Cirrhotic Portal Fibrosis was jointly attributed to Prof. Nayak, Prof. Tandon of India, and Prof. Okuda of Japan, who together not only characterized the disease but also suggested therapeutic approaches that brought hope and cure to suffering patients. Such collaborative work placed Prof. Nayak firmly on the world map of hepatopathology.

Prof. Ramnath Misra, the eminent rheumatologist and immunologist, who spent a short but memorable period under him, described Prof. Nayak as a "larger-than-life personality"—immaculately dressed, always graceful, often seen with his trademark earphones, gently listening to Talat Mahmood melodies between demanding

schedules. He was respected by all, feared by none, and, remarkably, had no enemies—only admirers.

Yet, what truly distinguished Nabeen Babu was not merely his academic eminence but the depth of his humanity. He carried his genius with extraordinary humility. For him, every patient was equal—whether affluent or destitute, influential or unknown. Compassion guided his practice, and empathy shaped his conduct. At AIIMS, he was respected alike by professors, administrators, nurses, technicians, and support staff.

As a teacher, he possessed the rare gift of making the most complex concepts simple. His soft, pleasant voice and clarity of thought made even difficult pathology understandable to the weakest student. His personal life reflected the same quiet dignity. His beloved wife, Vijay Laxmi Nayak, predeceased him, and he bore that loss with silent strength. His daughters, Madhulekha and Madhabika are fortunate to have been nurtured by such exemplary parents.

Despite an intensely demanding professional life, whenever he visited Odisha, he made it a point to touch every home with affection. Medical science has been enriched by Prof. Nabeen Chandra Nayak—a scholar, a healer, a teacher, and above all, a true gentleman and enduring icon.

The writer is a Senior Advocate.

Bank retirees protest, seek pension revision

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: Hundreds of retired bank employees staged a sit-in protest at Lower PMG Square here Wednesday, demanding immediate revision of their basic pension and resolution of other long-pending issues.

They later met Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati at Lok Bhawan and submitted a memorandum addressed to PM Narendra Modi, urging the Central government to revise the basic pension of bank retirees and resolve their pending demands at the earliest. The protest was organised by the All Odisha Bank Retirees' Federation, the state committee of the All India Bank Retirees' Federation (AIBRF), as part of a nationwide agitation programme that includes sit-ins, demonstrations and hunger strikes.

More than 1,000 retired pensioners Bank of India, UCO Bank, Punjab National Bank, Central Bank of India, Canara Bank, Indian Bank and Union Bank joined the demonstration and highlighted the financial hardships faced by the retirees.

Leaders of the association said that while salaries and pensions of Central and state government employees are revised periodically, the basic pension of bank retirees has not been revised for nearly 30 years. They also pointed out that pension revisions have already taken place Reserve Bank of India and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), but similar revisions have not been implemented in many nationalised and private banks.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate (P), Rourkela, Dt.10.03.26, I, LADU KISHOR SAHOO, R/o. Sector-02, P.O. Rourkela-06, P.S. Sector-03, Dist.-Sundargarh, Odisha, PIN-769006, declare that, I have changed my name from NADU KISHOR SAHU to LADU KISHOR SAHOO. Henceforth I shall be known as LADU KISHOR SAHOO for all purposes. LADU KISHOR SAHOO

Govt appoints 3 officers to aid stranded Odias in Middle East

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The state government has appointed three contact officers to coordinate rescue and safety measures for Odias stranded in the Middle East amid the ongoing conflict in the region.

The decision was taken at a review meeting held at Lok Seva Bhawan here Wednesday, chaired by Chief Secretary Anu Garg.

Sucharita Sarangi, Chief Resident Commissioner in New Delhi, and the Additional Chief Resident Commissioner joined the meeting virtually. Among those present were Vijayaketan Upadhyaya, Secretary of the Odia Language, Literature and Culture Department and Director of the Directorate of Odisha Parivar, and Prithish Panda, appointed as the nodal officer for rescue operations.

The Office of the Resident Commissioner in New Delhi has been designated as the nodal office for the matter. The

office will coordinate with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and regularly update the Government of Odisha on developments regarding the rescue and safety of Non-Resident Odias. The Protector of Emigrants, a Government of India agency responsible for the welfare of overseas Indians, will also remain in touch with Odias working abroad and assist in rescue and protection efforts.

Considering the volatile situation in the Middle East, Anu Garg directed all concerned departments and officials to remain alert and continue their work with vigilance.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi expressed deep concern over reports of several Odia people stranded in the Middle East due to the ongoing conflict in the region.

Emphasising the need to ensure their safe return, the Chief Minister directed Chief Secretary Anu Garg to closely monitor the situation and

take necessary steps for their evacuation. According to the CM's Office, Majhi instructed Garg to keep track of developments and coordinate measures to facilitate the safe return of Odia citizens from the affected countries.

So far, the OPD has received nearly 200 phone calls from Odias currently in the Middle East seeking assistance. The directorate has been coordinating with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to facilitate their safe return to India. MEA has also set up a dedicated control room and issued a toll-free helpline number 1800-118-797 for assistance.

Officials from OPD are in touch with representatives of Odia associations in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Bahrain to gather updates on the ground situation. According to information provided by the Ministry of External Affairs, around 65,000 Indians have safely returned to the country from the Middle East through special flights so far.

U'khand Guv lauds Odisha's culture, traditions & heritage



POST NEWS NETWORK

Dehradun, March 11: A media delegation from Odisha, led by officials of the Press Information Bureau (PIB), interacted with Uttarakhand Governor Gurmit Singh at Lok Bhawan during an official visit here Tuesday.

During the interaction, the governor spoke warmly about his connection with Odisha, praising the state's rich culture, traditions and spiritual heritage. He also shared his experience of visiting Srimandir, describing it as spiritually enriching and memorable.

Singh also highlighted the similarities between Uttarakhand and Odisha, noting that both states are deeply rooted in religious traditions.

"Uttarakhand is widely known as 'Dev Bhoomi' because of its large number of

ancient and sacred temples. Similarly, Bhubaneswar—the Capital of Odisha—is popularly known as the "Temple City" due to its many historic temples and strong spiritual heritage," he noted.

The governor further pointed out that both states have frequently faced natural calamities over the years. "While Uttarakhand experiences disasters such as landslides and floods in its mountainous terrain, Odisha regularly confronts cyclones and other natural challenges along its coast," Singh said.

The governor also praised President Droupadi Murmu, saying her rise to the country's highest constitutional office serves as a powerful inspiration for millions, particularly young people and women across the nation.

KIIT to host Femina Miss India Grand Finale

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: The 61st edition of Femina Miss India Grand Finale will be hosted at KIIT Deemed to be University in April, marking a first for both the institution and Odisha. KIIT will become the first university in India to host the prestigious beauty pageant, which will also be organised in eastern India for the first time. The decision was formalised through the signing of a MoU between KIIT and the Femina Miss India Organisation in Mumbai Wednesday.

The MoU was signed in Mumbai in the presence of KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta. The signatories included VC Saranjit Singh, Director General of the KIIT School of Architecture SS Ray and Rohit Gopakumar, whose organisation conducts the Femina Miss India pageant.

Speaking on the occasion, Achyuta Samanta said hosting such a prestigious national event is a matter of pride and honour for KIIT, KISS and the people of Odisha.

Spl road safety drive from March 21

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: In an effort to curb rising road accidents and ensure stricter compliance with traffic rules, the State Transport Authority (STA) has directed all Regional Transport Officers (RTOs) and Additional RTOs across Odisha to conduct a special enforcement-cum-road safety awareness drive from March 21 to March 31.

According to the order, road accidents and fatalities in the state continue to be a matter of serious concern. Authorities have reported frequent violations such as triple riding on two-wheelers, riding without helmets, wrong-side driving and other unsafe practices. In several cases, heavy transport vehicles such as tippers, dumpers and Hyva trucks have also been found operating without valid driving licences or proper authorisation, posing significant safety risks on the roads.

To address these issues, enforcement activities will be intensified across all jurisdictions, with special focus on accident-prone stretches, national and state highways, mining and industrial corridors, major urban arterial



roads, busy junctions, market areas and bus stands. Transport authorities will deploy teams at vulnerable locations to check violations that directly impact road safety.

During the drive, officials will closely monitor offences such as over-speeding, drunk driving, overloading of goods and passenger vehicles, carrying passengers in goods vehicles, driving without a valid or appropriate class of licence, and movement of over-dimensional cargo without necessary permission and safety compliance.

Special attention will also be given to heavy transport vehicles operating in the mining and construction sectors. Enforcement teams will verify the validity of driving licences, proper authorisation to operate transport vehicles, overloading and other statutory safety compliances to ensure lawful and safe operations.

Each RTO office has been

directed to prepare a local enforcement plan identifying vulnerable corridors, team deployment and checking schedules. Authorities have also been instructed to conduct enforcement operations during evening and night hours.

The Transport Department will coordinate with district police and traffic authorities to strengthen enforcement measures, particularly for drunken driving checks, speed monitoring and traffic regulation at critical locations.

Alongside enforcement, the campaign will also focus on public awareness. Various road safety programmes such as blood donation camps, eye-testing camps, driver and helper counselling sessions, and interactions with transport unions and vehicle owners' associations will be organised. Awareness meetings will also be conducted in schools, colleges and public places, supported by information campaigns through banners, leaflets, public announcements and social media.

Officials have been asked to submit daily reports on enforcement activities, while a consolidated report on the outcomes of the drive will be submitted to the STA by April 1.

Cyber fraud racket busted; 3 arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

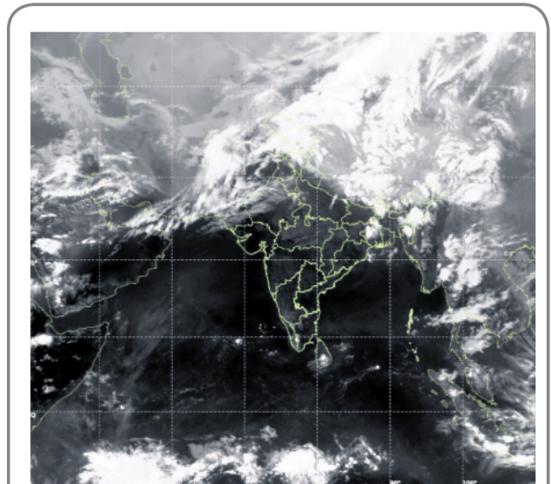
Bhubaneswar, March 11: Police have busted a cyber fraud syndicate operating in the City and arrested three persons for allegedly creating and managing mule bank accounts used in online financial scams, officials said Wednesday.

The arrests were made in connection with a case registered at Chandrasekharpur police station March 11, 2026, under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Information Technology Act, 2000. The accused have been identified as Jitendra Kumar Rout (26), Shiba Sankar Dalkua (22) and Goutam Sahoo (19).

According to police, the complaint was filed by Sub-Inspector Debadatta Samantaray of Chandrasekharpur police station regarding the operation of the syndicate.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the gang had been active in the Chandrasekharpur area for nearly a year. The accused allegedly targeted unsuspecting individuals, particularly residents of slums and nearby neighbourhoods, promising them easy earnings of ₹2,000 to ₹5,000 in exchange for opening bank accounts in their names.

| MARKET WATCH | | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|---------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| CURRENCY | | BOURSES | | COMMODITIES | |
| INDEX | VARIATION | INDEX | VARIATION | INDEX | VARIATION |
| DOLLAR | 92.07 ▲ 0.09 | SENSEX | 76863.71 ▼ 1342.27 | GOLD | ₹161,799 ▼ ₹1504 |
| EURO | 107.04 ▼ 0.22 | NIFTY | 23866.85 ▼ 394.75 | SILVER | ₹267,342 ▼ ₹10,508 |



| WEATHER | | | |
|----------|-------|-------|--|
| | BBSR | CTC | FORECAST |
| Max Temp | 33.3° | 32.0° | Light to Moderate rain or thunderstorm |
| Min Temp | 23.3° | 21.6° | |
| Humidity | 84% | 89% | |
| Rainfall | Nil | Nil | |

MIDDLE EAST WAR IMPACT

LPG crisis pushes firewood demand



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, March 11: With the Middle East crisis showing no sign of abatement and pushing the energy crisis further, hoteliers, restaurant owners as well as households in Keonjhar are now worried about the availability of commercial LPG cylinders, even as panic buying continues in most parts. This has revived the demand for firewood and charcoal in this district.

Firewood and charcoal have long been used for cooking in school hostels, roadside eateries and small hotels across rural and urban areas of the district. In several villages, many families still rely on firewood as their primary cooking fuel.

However, over the past decade, a large section of urban middle-class and upper middle-class families shifted completely to LPG. With fears of supply disruptions and rising prices, many of them are now searching for traditional clay hearths or iron stoves as a backup option.

Residents believe the situation could also affect community feasts, political gatherings

and cultural events, which require large-scale cooking arrangements.

Despite regulations and awareness campaigns, forests in Keonjhar district continue to face pressure from firewood collection. Due to weak enforcement, many roadside hotels and eateries in the town continue to rely on firewood. It is also widely used during weddings, religious rituals and other social ceremonies.

There are allegations that authorities have adopted a lenient approach to firewood collection in the name of supporting the livelihoods of forest-dwelling communities. As a result, many government and private hostels in the district still use firewood for cooking. Some establishments say it is cheaper than LPG.

Meanwhile, tribals depending on minor forest produce are making hay as demand for firewood surges.

Sita Naik, a forest dweller who sells firewood in the town, said the work involves significant hardship. "We carry heavy loads of firewood from forests and hills with great difficulty.

Earlier, we often had to wait long for customers and sometimes sold it at low prices to hotels. Now the demand has increased and we are able to sell the wood more quickly," she said.

Former MLA Pranaballabh Nayak warned that the district's forests and environment are already under strain. If the Middle East conflict continues and LPG prices rise or supplies decline, more families may return to firewood-based cooking, which could accelerate deforestation.

Environmentalist Bimbahar Behera said large quantities of wood stored in Forest department depots often go to waste due to poor management.

"If the wood stored in these depots is properly managed and sold as fuel, the government could generate revenue and reduce pressure on natural forests," he said.

Experts warn that unless reliable alternative fuel arrangements are ensured, the growing dependence on firewood could pose a serious threat to Keonjhar's forests and fragile environment.

631 Indian flapshell turtles seized; 7 held

PNN & AGENCIES

Malkangiri, March 11: The Forest department Wednesday seized 631 Indian flapshell turtles near the border with Andhra Pradesh during a special operation in Malkangiri district, an officer said.

Acting on a tip-off, Forest department personnel of Motu range under Malkangiri forest division conducted a raid and seized the turtles stored in 38 plastic trays, said Malkangiri Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Sai Kiran.

Two persons from Korkulla village of Krishna district in



Andhra Pradesh had illegally transported the turtles in a van to the Odisha border for trading and selling them to

five persons from the state, Kirana said.

All seven people involved in the illegal wildlife trade were arrested, and the van, six mobile phones and two motorcycles were seized from their possession.

A wildlife offence case has been registered, and further investigation is in progress, said the DFO.

Earlier, March 2, the forest officials had seized 210 live Indian flapshell turtles being allegedly smuggled in a vehicle to Malkangiri district from neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.

WOMAN AXED TO DEATH BY NEPHEW

POST NEWS NETWORK

Tensa, March 11: A 40-year-old woman was allegedly hacked to death by her nephew following a domestic dispute at Sanua village under Koida police station in Sundargarh district Tuesday night.

The deceased was identified as Tapaswini Sethi, 40. According to police, the incident occurred after an argument broke out between the woman and her nephew over some family issue.

In a fit of rage, the accused allegedly attacked Tapaswini with an axe, leaving her dead on the spot.

On being informed, police rushed to the scene and recovered the body which was later sent to Koida hospital for postmortem. Koida police have registered a murder case and launched an investigation into the incident. The accused fled the scene after committing the crime. Police said efforts are underway to trace and apprehend the accused.

Adani set to take over Odisha's lone maritime training institute

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paradip, March 11: Odisha's only maritime training institute, closely linked to the state's long seafaring tradition, is set to be privatised with the management likely to be handed over to the Adani Skill Development Centre (ASDC) under a public-private partnership (PPP) model.

Sources said discussions and reviews on the proposal have reached the final stage at the government level, and the process is likely to be completed by the end of March.

This finds mention in a letter (No. 811) issued February 20, 2026, by the Directorate of Ports and Inland Water Transport, Odisha.

It may be noted that Odisha Maritime Academy (OMA) at Paradip was founded April 3, 1993, when the then chief minister

Biju Patnaik laid its foundation stone. The academy began its courses later that year.

The institute has facilities to train and accommodate 40 students at a time, with 20 seats reserved for candidates from Odisha and 20 for students from other states. As each course runs for six months, about 80 students get the opportunity to study there annually. However, facilities for female students have not yet been introduced.

The academy is currently run by the state Commerce and Transport department. A 15-member governing body oversees its functioning. The body is chaired by the department secretary with secretary of the Skill Development and Technical Education department, chairman and financial adviser of Paradip Port, CEO of Dhamra Port, the managing

director of Gopalpur Port, a director of the Shipping Corporation of India, a commandant of the Coast Guard and representatives from several shipping companies as its members.

The proposed privatisation has drawn criticism from the Opposition as Congress leader Niranjan Nayak alleged that the government is working in favour of corporate interests.

"While speaking about Odia identity, the government is effectively selling the state's cultural legacy," he said, adding that the party would oppose the move through democratic means.

According to the same official letter, the 47-year-old Sailor Training Centre at Chandbali in Bhadrak district is also likely to be privatised.

Efforts to obtain a response from Commerce and Transport Minister Bibhuti Bhushan Jena on the matter were unsuccessful.

5 held for attacking block chairman in Ganjam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, March 11: Police on Wednesday arrested five persons for their alleged involvement in the attack on a Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader and chairperson of the Sheragada panchayat samiti in Odisha's Ganjam district.

The victim, Krushna Chandra Nayak, 60, sustained serious head injuries in the attack on Tuesday. He was initially admitted to MCKG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur and later shifted to a hospital in Bhubaneswar for further treatment. Family sources said his condition remains critical.

The arrested persons have been identified as Sibananda Gouda (21), Kanha Barada (25), Raja Barada (23), another Kanha Barada (24), and Jitendra Moharana (39), police said.

Ganjam Superintendent of Police Subhendu Kumar Patra said efforts are underway to arrest other persons

allegedly involved in the attack.

According to police, a preliminary inquiry suggests that a dispute over certain work triggered the incident. The matter escalated during a discussion when a heated argument broke out. The accused allegedly attacked Nayak using chairs, police said, adding that the exact cause of the assault is under investigation.

Leader of Opposition and BJD president Naveen Patnaik alleged that the attack was carried out by BJP workers. Patnaik visited the hospital and inquired about Nayak's health condition.

Local BJD leaders staged a protest in front of Sheragada police station on Wednesday, demanding the arrest of all those involved. The issue was also raised in the Assembly during Zero Hour. Meanwhile, BJP leader Kanhu Charan Pati said police had already taken swift action by arresting five persons and assured that others involved would also be apprehended.

Keonjhar man dies from snakebite

ANANDAPUR: A 45-year-old man died after being bitten by a venomous snake while attempting to rescue it from a fishing net in Keonjhar district Wednesday. The deceased was identified as Sujit Naik of Kalara Gadia under Gahisapura police limits in Anandapur sub-division. Naik had gone to Baitarani River to retrieve fishing net Wednesday, when he found a venomous snake trapped in it. While trying to free the reptile, the snake bit him. He died on the way to a hospital in Cuttack.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
CORRIGENDUM No: 1
Dtd: 10.03.2026 to Notice No. CAQ/C/BBS/Works/Peer Review of DPRs/01, Dated: 16.02.2026

The following modifications have been made in the above notice no. which may please be noted.

Last Date for submission of application: 17.03.2026

All other information including mode of submission of application is available in East Coast Railway's official website www.eastcoastrail.indianrailway.gov.in

Chief Administrative Officer (Con)/PR-300/C/25-26
Bhubaneswar

NOTICE

By virtue of Reconstituted deed of partnership between Bikram Parida and Rabindra Pradhan on dt.02.02.2026 the office address of the partnership firm M/S EMPOWER SECURITY & CONSULTANCY SERVICES has changed to New address At- B-45, BDA HIG Duplex Colony, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar, Dist- Khordha, PIN-751003 from old address At-Plot No.N6/300, IRC Village, Jayadev Vihar, Po-RRL, Bhubaneswar, Dist- Khordha, Odisha, Pin No.751013.

Sd/-Sri Bikram Parida
Sri Rabindra Pradhan (Partners)

Bank of India
Zonal Office: Bhubaneswar Zone, 1/1D, Star House, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015, Mob.: 7008973027

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE
E-Auction Sale Notice Under Rule 8(6) of security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

(E-Auction) Sale of secured movable / immovable Assets under SARFAESI Act, 2002

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE / IMMOVABLE ASSETS UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002 READ WITH PROVISO TO RULE 8(6) / 9(1) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002.

Whereas, the Authorised Officer of **Bank of India** had taken possession of the following property/ies pursuant to the notice issued under Sec 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 in the following loan accounts with right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS", "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WITHOUT ANY RECOURSE BASIS" for realization of Bank's dues plus interest as detailed hereunder and whereas consequent upon failure to repay the dues, the undersigned in exercise of power conferred under section 13(4) of the said Act proposes to realize the Bank's dues by sale of the said property/ies. **The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website <https://baanknet.com>**

| Sl. No. | BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrower/ Guarantor / Mortgagee / Total Dues | Description of the Properties | Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1. | ARB, CUTTACK, PH.: 8249067773 / 7008973027 / Borrower: M/s. Maa Tarini Fly Ash Bricks, Prop.: Mrs. Sujata Swain, At: Plot No.: 1187, Khata No.: 210/27, Mouza: Bajabati, P.O.: Thanual, Haridaspur, Dist.: Jajpur, PIN-755024 / Guarantor: Mr. Sunil Kumar Swain, S/o.: Golakha Bihari Swain, At: Nuagaon, P.O.: Jaraka, Haridaspur, P.S.: Dharmasala, Dist.: Jajpur, PIN-755024 / Total Dues: ₹1,95,97,000/- + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid. | Equitable Mortgage of Land and Fly Ash Bricks Plant having Factory Shed: 11,900 Sqft. Staff Room: 700 Sq.ft., Office Room: 690 Sqft at P.S./Tahasil: Dharmasala, Dist.: Jajpur, Odisha, Standing in the name of Mrs. Sujata Swain, W/o.: Mr. Sunil Kumar Swain, situated over Mouza: Jhadasohala, Khata No.: 129/25, Plot No.: 5/324, Area: Ac.0.170 Dec. i.e. 7405.20 Sqft and amount repaid. | ₹1,59,76,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹15,97,600/- / ₹50,000/- |
| Date & Time of E-Auction: 30.03.2026 From 11.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M. with unlimited extension of 10 (Ten) minutes each. | | | |
| Last Date and Time for submission of EMD and Documents in their wallet by 30.03.2026 i.e. Before E-Auction Date & Time in the Portal. | | | |
| Inspection will be provided to the prospective bidders on any working day before 26.03.2026 with prior appointment of the authorised officer | | | |
| *Successful Bidder to deposit 25% of the bid amount by next working day which includes EMD money. The balance amount to be paid on or before 15th Day of confirmation of sale. | | | |
| TERMS & CONDITIONS: 1) For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer to the link: https://baanknet.com . Prospective bidders may also contact the Authorised Officers / Branch as mentioned in above list. 2) This is a statutory 15 days sale notice to the above mentioned borrower/guarantor/mortgagor under Rule 9(1) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002. 3) This is a 15 days notice to the borrower / guarantor / mortgagor of the above said loan about holding of this sale on the above mentioned date. 4) All expenses relating to the stamp duty and registration of Sale Certificate/conveyance, if any, shall be borne by the successful bidder. 5) The Authorized Officer will not be held responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrance, property tax or any other dues to the Government or anybody in respect of the property under sale. 6) The Authorized Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject any bid or adjourn/postpone/cancel the sale without assigning any reason thereof. It may be noted that nothing in this notice constitute or deemed to constitute any commitment or representation on the part of the bank to sell the property. | | | |
| STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 9(1) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002. | | | |
| Borrowers/Mortgagors are hereby notified to pay the total dues along with up to date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of E-Auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/ sold and balance dues, if any, will be recovered with interest & cost. | | | |
| Place: Bhubaneswar | | | Authorised Officer Bank of India |
| Date: 12.03.2026 | | | |

No. W-57

1st National Lok Adalat, 2026
Scheduled to be held on 14.03.2026 (2nd Saturday)

Kind Attention

- Do you have any pending litigation before a Court of Law or a dispute with anyone ?
- Then, you can take help of a Lok Adalat which provides a platform for resolution of disputes through conciliation and mutual settlement.
- The 1st National Lok Adalat will be conducted in the premises of Hon'ble High Court of Orissa and Courts functioning at District and Taluk level on **14.03.2026 (2nd Saturday)**.
- In the aforesaid National Lok Adalat, Criminal Compoundable Offences as well as, Plea Bargaining Cases, N.I. Act cases under Section 138, Bank Recovery Cases, Motor Accident Claim Cases, Compoundable Traffic Challans, Labour Dispute Cases, Disputes related to Public Utility Services such as Electricity & Water Bills cases etc. (excluding non-compoundable), Matrimonial Disputes (except divorce)/Family disputes, Land acquisition cases, Service matters including Pension Cases, Revenue and other ancillary matters (pending before Hon'ble High Court of Orissa, District Courts and State/District/Taluka Authorities), IPR Matters/Consumer Matters, other matters pending before any other quasi-judicial authority and other Civil Cases (rent, easementary rights, injunction suits, specific performance suits etc.) can be taken up and resolved through mutual settlement.
- Not only cases pending in the Courts but also N.I. Act cases under Section 138, Money Recovery Cases, Labour Disputes, Disputes related to Public Utility Services (excluding non-compoundable cases), Matrimonial disputes (except divorce)/Family disputes and others at Pre-litigation stage (not pending before Courts) can be settled in the said National Lok Adalat.
- The parties settling their disputes through Lok Adalat do not have to incur any expenditure and the decision arrived at is valid, conclusive and executable.
- The parties are entitled to get back the Court fees already paid; in case the matter is settled through Lok Adalat.
- The Lok Adalat provides a golden opportunity to the litigants for settlement of long-standing disputes in the Court of Law without incurring any expenditure.
- For detailed inquiry, you can contact District Legal Services Authority or Taluk Legal Services Committee.

Member Secretary
Odisha State Legal Services Authority
'Aain Seva Bhawan', Sector-1, CDA, Cuttack
Mob.: 9438578586/8249542259
e-mail id: oslsa2020@gmail.com

OIPR-

REGIONAL OFFICE : BHUBANESWAR
1st Floor, Bivab Gulmohar, Behera Sahi, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751012

DEMAND NOTICE
(For Immovable Properties)

Demand Notice u/s. 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 is issued by **Bank of Baroda** as Secured Creditor against the following Borrower of the Branch.

| Branch Name/ Name of the A/c. | Name & Address of Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagee(s) | NPA Date/13(2) Date/Reason for Return of Notice | Facility / Limit (in ₹) | Rate of Interest | Total Dues as on 05.01.2026 (inclusive of interest upto 05.01.2026) |
|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------|------------------|--|
| BANKUAL BRANCH / | Borrowers: Mr. Priyabrata Mallick and Mrs. Swarnaprabha Mallick, Plot No - 4695, Adimata Colony, Near Medicine Store, Mancheras Railway Colony, Tahasil:-Bhubaneswar, Dist-Khordha, Pin-751017 | 10.09.2025 Receiver Refused | ₹ 27.78 lacs | 8.15% | ₹11,19,079/- as on 05.01.2026 (inclusive of interest upto 05.01.2026) with further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus all cost, charges & expenses till date of payment. |

Description of Mortgaged property: Equitable mortgage of immovable property located at Dist-Puri, Tahasil-Pipili, P.S-Pipili, P.S No.77, under the jurisdiction of SRO Pipili, Mouza-Kakudi Kusanga, Plot No - 428/1385, Sub plot No- 9, Khata No- 404/487 corresponding to Khata no 404/329, Plot No. 428 with admeasuring area of Ac.0.029.84 Decl 1300 Sq Ft, Kissam-Gharabari, Bounded By:- North:- Sub-plot No 8, South:-Sub-plot no 10, East:-Road, West:-Plot No - 428/1153.

You have committed default in repayment of loan mentioned above with further interest at the agreed rate availed from our **Bankual Branch** as mentioned above. The Bank has issued notice under the said Act to you to repay the outstanding amount in the above mentioned table. The Demand Notice send to you by registered post but is has been returned with the reason mentioned above. Again you have committed default in payment. You are called upon to pay the dues together with interest within **60 days** from the date of this notice failing which Bank will be constrained to exercise Right to Enforcement of Security Interest as against the secured asset given in the schedule of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of security Interest Act, 2002. We hereby give you a notice that in terms of sub-section 13 of the said Act, you are barred from transferring the secured asset mentioned above by way of sale, lease or otherwise other than in the ordinary course of business without prior written consent of the Bank. We further invite your attention to sub section (8) of section 13 of the said Act in terms of which you may redeem the secured assets. If the amount of dues together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank is tendered by you, at any time before the date publication notice for public action/inviting quotations/ tender / private treaty. Please no the that after publication of the notice as above, your right to redeem the secured assets will not be available. This Notice is without prejudice to any other right, remedy available to the Bank including initiation of legal action.

Date : 11.03.2026, Place : Bhubaneswar

Authorized Officer, Bank of Baroda

FOCUS **INEQUALITY**

THE BILLIONAIRE BOOM



Fortunes and fault lines move together in a world of plenty and pleasure controlled by so few, while the vast majority of people struggle to fulfil their basic needs for a dignified living

In the middle of all the chaos in the world, Forbes magazine did not forget to celebrate its ritual of publishing its 40th annual World's Billionaires List on 10 March 2026. The list not only reveals the continuing billionaire boom in the numbers and the growing concentration of power and wealth, but also highlights the rise of global inequality. Fortunes and fault lines move together in a world of plenty and pleasure controlled by so few, while the vast majority of people struggle to fulfil their basic needs for a dignified living.

According to the Forbes list, there are 3,428 billionaires in the world, and their combined net wealth has increased from \$1 trillion in 2000 to \$20.1 trillion in 2026. In the last year alone, billionaires' wealth increased by \$4 trillion. In 2026, 400 billionaires were added to the list—the highest since the publication of the list began in 1987. This means the world has produced more than one billionaire per day over the past year while millions of people lost their jobs. In this year's list, there are 20 billionaires with 12-figure fortunes as members of the \$100 Billion Club, collectively owning \$3.8 trillion, while 700 million people struggle to survive on \$2.15 per day.

These billionaires are not merely the products of their own talent, hard work, creative abilities or family linages, just as the 700 million people living in poverty do not suffer because of a lack of hard work, skills, or talent. The concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, and the suffering of marginalised masses, are products of the marketisation of politics in which people's labour generates profits for billionaires. States and governments cre-

ate policies that facilitate the concentration of wealth by perpetuating conditions of poverty and inequality under the exploitative working conditions of capitalism, which defines and dominates the political economy of capitalist development across much of the world. Corporate-driven states and governments are responsible for producing these billionaires, who in turn control the state directly and indirectly—through funding, promoting propaganda for electoral manipulation, owning media, consultancies, public relations and advertisement industries and influencing policymaking to serve their interests at the expense of the people.

Geographically speaking, out of a total of 3,428 billionaires, more than half (1,757) are from the United States (989), China (539), and India (229). American billionaires own the lion's share of global billionaire wealth—\$8.4 trillion out of the total combined billionaire wealth of \$20.1 trillion. These three countries face enormous challenges of rising wealth inequality amid a continuing billionaire boom,

which creates very different life experiences based on ownership, access to power, and the everyday struggle to survive the pressures of marginalisation. The ten richest Indian billionaires alone own more than \$1 trillion, while India's GDP today is around \$4.51 trillion. This not only reveals the scale of wealth ownership and inequality, but also reflects the nature of the state and government in India, which appears to stand with the billionaire class while leaving the working masses to face a deepening cost-of-living crisis.

The profit-making market machine is never dull for these individual billionaires, as the state and government stand firmly behind them. Meanwhile, working people make all the money: they produce all the goods and provide all the services, harvest all the food, and construct all the schools, colleges, universities, roads and communication networks, houses, and hospitals. Yet they themselves often suffer from hunger, homelessness, illiteracy, and ill health. These conditions are not accidental; they are the outcome

of the design of the capitalist system. In this process, billionaires have effectively transformed democracy into a form of billionaire oligarchy and society into an orderly marketplace of commodities, where profit over people has become the rule rather than merely an outcome.

The Forbes list not only reveals the scale of wealth concentration as a form of economic injustice rooted in different regimes of capitalist exploitation, but also points to the political structures that facilitate such an economic system—one that benefits 3,428 billionaires who are not blessed by gods or goddesses, but by the policies of states and governments across the world. In a world of 8.3 billion people, only a tiny fraction—the 3,428 billionaires—live lives of extraordinary privilege, while the vast majority struggle to manage and survive in 2026.

This billionaires club represents a class network of collaboration and cooperation without territorial boundaries, fuelling the forward march of right-wing reactionary forces and their war-mongering imperialist agendas. As cheerleaders of capitalism, they preside over a system that ruins the lives and livelihoods of people in order to amass wealth, undermines citizenship rights, and erodes economic justice—thereby breeding inequality and exploitation, the very lifeblood of capitalism. Therefore, the struggle against the capitalist system remains central to ensuring a more equitable distribution of wealth and to building an egalitarian society grounded in fairness and justice in all its forms.

The writer teaches at the London Metropolitan University.



Bhabani Shankar Nayak

OUT OF A TOTAL OF 3,428 BILLIONAIRES, MORE THAN HALF ARE FROM THE UNITED STATES, CHINA, AND INDIA



Brahma Chellaney

Great powers study each other closely. What works for one becomes a template for others, now and in the future. In this sense, what is happening to Cuba is not a one-off tragedy; it is a rehearsal and a test

Cuba & Taiwan

Since returning to office last year, US President Donald Trump has ordered military strikes from the Caribbean and eastern Pacific to Africa and the Middle East, targeting alleged drug-smuggling boats and suspected terrorist groups. He has attacked Venezuela and kidnapped its leader, Nicolás Maduro. And he has joined Israel in a large-scale assault on Iran that amounts to a major escalation from last year's strikes, which supposedly "obliterated" the country's nuclear facilities. Meanwhile, he is tightening a noose around Cuba, in the hopes that the resulting humanitarian crisis will open the way for a "friendly takeover" of the island by the United States.

As Trump acts with open contempt for international law, China is taking notes. The Cuba model, in particular, offers a useful blueprint for Chinese President Xi Jinping to apply in pursuing his "historic mission" of "reunification" with Taiwan. This is a live demonstration of how a superpower can strangle a country into submission.

Modern societies depend on a handful of critical systems such as food, water, transportation, and communications. But one system rules them all: energy. Electricity powers water pumps, refrigeration, health care, digital networks, and industrial and agricultural production. Once the grid begins to fail, so do all other critical systems—and social stability. This makes countries that depend heavily on imported fuel to generate electricity fundamentally vulnerable.

For Cuba, which has long depended primarily on oil purchased from Venezuela and Mexico, Trump has exploited that vulnerability by imposing a complete blockade on fuel deliveries. Millions of people have lost access to electricity. Water-pumping stations have shut down. Tractors and delivery trucks sit idle, leading to food-price spikes, food shortages, and rising hunger. Hospitals struggle to function amid intermittent blackouts.

The suffering is the point: it is the lever Trump is using to apply pressure to the regime, whose fall, Trump glibly maintains, is imminent.

For Xi, such a coercive siege of Taiwan might be more appealing than a full-scale amphibious invasion across the Taiwan Strait, which would be fraught with logistical challenges and likely draw in the US and Japan. Instead of firing missiles at Taipei or storming Taiwan's beaches, China could declare a maritime quarantine or customs-inspection regime around the island, with Chinese coast-guard vessels stopping energy tankers bound for Taiwanese ports for "safety checks" or "anti-smuggling operations."

Even modest disruptions could quickly create supply bottlenecks. Given that Taiwan imports nearly all of its fuel (mostly liquefied natural gas), and maintains barely two weeks' worth of reserves, a line of LNG tankers waiting offshore could trigger cascading shortages within weeks. Like Cuba, Taiwan would face blackouts, which would disrupt its water and health-care systems. Industrial production, including the semiconductor plants that power the global digital economy, would grind to a halt. The goal would not be immediate surrender, but rather gradual exhaustion.

This gradualism is essential. A single dramatic act would jolt the international system, forcing others to respond. But a steady rise in "routine" ship inspections, producing increasingly long delays and escalating economic and social pain, offers no such shocking moment. Each step appears insufficient to justify a major military response. This is no Trumpian innovation: Xi is a master of such tactics, which have enabled him to make major strategic gains, such as in the South China Sea and the Himalayas, without firing a single shot.

In Taiwan's case, China could simply wait until the economic and humanitarian crisis that it created became severe enough to justify moving in to "stabilize the island" and "rescue its people." As with Trump's "friendly takeover," which makes geopolitical coercion sound like corporate restructuring, the logic is that of a protection racket: create the problem, then step in to "solve" it.

All this could unfold under a shroud of legal ambiguity. While a formal naval blockade would be regarded as an act of war under international law, a quarantine or inspection regime could be presented as law enforcement, rather than military action. China's government—which insists that Taiwan is a Chinese province, not a sovereign state—would likely portray maritime inspections as an internal matter of administrative enforcement.

Would Japan and the US risk war with a major nuclear power and the world's second-largest military spender over actions portrayed as customs enforcement? Would they want to take responsibility for a crisis-stricken Taiwan? The answer may well be no, especially at a time when the US is hemorrhaging blood and treasure, owing to Trump's multiplying military adventures abroad.

Other countries would be even less likely to jump to Taiwan's defense. Just as the US is using tariff threats to prevent third countries, such as Mexico, from providing oil to Cuba, China could leverage its central role in global trade and its chokehold on rare-earth supplies to deter opposition to a siege of Taiwan.

Great powers study each other closely. What works for one becomes a template for others, now and in the future. In this sense, what is happening to Cuba is not a one-off tragedy; it is a rehearsal and a test. If the world sits silently by as Trump strangles Cuba, with its 11 million people, Xi will see little reason not to apply the same strategy against 23 million Taiwanese.

The writer is Professor Emeritus of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research and Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin.

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WISDOM CORNER

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude.

MAYA ANGELOU

Our virtues and our failings are inseparable, like force and matter. When they separate, man is no more.

NIKOLA TESLA

We cannot change anything until we accept it. Condemnation does not liberate, it oppresses.

CARL JUNG

SPECTRUM POLICY

Protecting Odisha's GI heritage

Sambalpuri weaving is older than most Indian institutions we treat as sacred. The double ikat technique practiced in Bargarh and Nuapatna predates the Constitution, the Railways, and certainly predates any government scheme designed to protect it. For centuries, the craft sustained itself not through state patronage but through an unspoken contract between the weaver, the community, and the buyer. Trust embedded in thread.

That contract is being broken. Quietly, efficiently, and largely without consequence. Search any major Indian e-commerce platform for Sambalpuri sarees today. The results are dominated by power-loom copies, priced at Rs 400 or Rs 600, carrying regional labels that actual weavers spent generations earning. Nobody is being prosecuted. Nobody in the digital supply chain is being held responsible. The GI tag that Sambalpuri fabric carries, a legal instrument meant to protect geographical origin, has essentially become decorative in the online marketplace.

The numbers behind this are not disputed. National surveys on handloom sector viability have consistently recorded that

nearly six in ten weavers across India have lost measurable market share to machine-made imitations over the last decade. In Bargarh district, where the craft is not a cottage industry but the primary economy for nearly 30,000 families, weavers earn between Rs 250 and Rs 350 daily. Skilled, experienced, irreplaceable workers paid less than what a food delivery rider earns in an urban tier-two city on a slow afternoon.

This is the context inside which the state's Digital Odisha push is happening. The state has real digital ambitions. Start-up Odisha, Mo Sarkar, ONDC integration, broadband reach into districts that previously had nothing. These matter. But somewhere in the enthusiasm for digitisation as progress, a harder question is being avoided: digitisation for whom?

Because right now, the digital economy is working exceptionally well for counterfeiters. It has lowered their distribution costs, expanded their reach, and given them access to the same marketplace branding that genuine weavers use. The playing field is not level. It is tilted, and the tilt has been engineered by policy neglect.

The authentication tools to

address this are not experimental. AI-driven digital watermarking, already standard in pharmaceutical exports and premium fashion supply chains, can be adapted to embed cryptographic provenance into every GI-certified textile at the point of registration. A buyer anywhere in the world scans a code and knows exactly which cluster produced the fabric, under which certified weaver's registration. Telangana ran a version of this for Pochampally ikat from 2021, and early data showed certified weavers recovering a 15 to 18% price premium through verified channels alone. Odisha has the institutional scaffolding, the GI registrations, and the digital infrastructure to replicate this. What it has not produced is the policy decision to do so.

The middleman problem compounds everything. Field research across Odisha's weaving districts shows rural craft producers consistently capturing only 20 to 25% of the final retail price of their own work. The rest is extracted across intermediary layers whose only real advantage is information: who is buying, at what price, through which platform. Generative AI tools built for Odia-language,

low-literacy interfaces can close that gap. The transactional infrastructure for direct artisan-to-buyer commerce already exists in India's digital public stack. But without GI-authenticated digital storefronts and weaver-facing pricing tools, that infrastructure serves the aggregator, not artisan.

Odisha needs a GI Data Governance Policy. Not a paragraph inside an IT roadmap, but a standalone legal framework with teeth. Mandatory digital registration of certified artisans, criminal liability for counterfeit digital listings, a grievance process that does not require a lawyer or a data plan to navigate and a state-backed authenticated marketplace that routes buyers directly to verified producers.

The craft is not dying from irrelevance. It is being starved by a policy environment that celebrates digital growth without asking who it is actually growing for. That question deserves a serious answer. Before the looms go quiet for reasons that have nothing to do with skill.

The writer is a policy researcher working on governance, development policy, and AI ethics.



Sagari Gupta

RIGHT NOW, THE DIGITAL ECONOMY IS WORKING EXCEPTIONALLY WELL FOR COUNTERFEITERS

Tamil Nadu politics

Sir, For decades the political landscape in Tamil Nadu has been dominated by the Dravidian ideology, which strongly emphasizes Tamil identity, language, and culture, often positioning itself against the "North Indian" or "Hindi-imposing" influence of the BJP. The state has a well-entrenched, long-standing, and highly competitive two-party system (DMK and AIADMK) that has ruled for over 50 years, making it extremely difficult for a third party to gain a foothold. The inherent clash between the Tamil narrative of Dravidian politics and Hindutva's religious narrative has stymied the BJP's progress in the state. Efforts to appropriate Tamil culture, such as the Kashi Tamil Sangamam and praise of Thirukural and Thiruvalluvar, have hardly yielded the anticipated electoral results for the saffron party. Consequently, the BJP and Sangh Parivar have not evolved into a substantial force, capable of challenging the entrenched dominance of the Dravidian political parties in Tamil Nadu. No wonder Chief Minister MK Stalin has been consistently criticizing the BJP-led Centre for undermining federalism and ignoring TN interests, affirming the DMK's continued dominance.

Ranganthan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Exam integrity

Sir, News reports about a QR code on some question papers of the Class 12 CBSE mathematics paper redirecting to a YouTube video of an English song has triggered confusion, curiosity and discussion among the teaching fraternity, students and parents. Normally a QR code is set by the board on papers as part of security features to verify the genuineness and to ensure the integrity of question papers. The Central Board of Secondary Education has issued a clarification stating that the security of the question papers remains uncompromised. The board has stated that the matter has been viewed seriously and necessary steps are being taken by it to ensure that such issues are not repeated in future. The nation's prime education board should be more careful in designing question papers and ensuring proper QR codes to avoid such embarrassments. Let us not forget that the public have become more tech savvy and are much more responsive to cyber related matters.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

TRIBAL COUNCIL ELECTION UNREST

Meghalaya postpones Garo Hills polls

The controversy erupted after objections were raised by groups in the Garo Hills over the participation of non-Garo communities in the nomination process for the tribal council polls



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong, March 11: The Meghalaya government Wednesday postponed the April 10 elections to the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC) in view of recent violence that claimed two lives in the region, as mobile internet services were suspended in five districts.

Curfew has also been imposed in West Garo Hills and East Garo Hills districts, a day after the Meghalaya High Court struck down a notification making Scheduled Tribe certificates compulsory for filing nominations for the GHADC polls that led to the violence.

The notification sought to bar non-tribals from contesting the GHADC elections in a departure from the practice that continued for over seven decades. "Dear friends, looking at the current situation in Garo Hills and understanding the difficulties people are facing at the moment, the Government of Meghalaya has decided to postpone GHADC elections," the chief minister said in a video clip.

He said the decision was taken after reviewing the current law and order situation in the Garo Hills and considering the difficulties being faced by the people.

The Meghalaya High Court

HUNDREDS HOLD PROTEST IN MANIPUR

IMPHAL: Hundreds of people, mostly women, staged a demonstration here Wednesday, demanding identification of illegal immigrants through NRC or any other exercise before the census in Manipur, police said. A scuffle broke out between demonstrators and security personnel when the agitators tried to march outside the Khairamband market, one of the largest women-run markets in the country, prompting the police to fire several rounds of tear gas shells to disperse the mob, a senior officer said. Three women sustained minor injuries during the protest, he said. During the protest march, the demonstrators held placards with "Identify outsiders" written on them and raised slogans like "No NRC, No Census". They attempted to march outside the market areas but were stopped by security forces. "When they tried to breach police barricades, security personnel fired several rounds of tear gas shells to disperse the protesters," the officer said. In another development, volunteers of 'Campaign for Just and Fair Delimitation' locked the office door of the State Academy of Training at Takyel in Imphal West district. They claimed that the census-related training was underway at the academy office. The JFD members demanded that displaced persons return to their original homes before the census is conducted.

Tuesday cancelled a notification issued by the GHADC making ST certificates compulsory for election nominations, and observed that it bypassed proper legislative procedures.

The notification was issued by the chief executive member of the council following a resolution of the Executive Committee last month.

However, the high court noted that the Executive Committee could only propose rule changes, which must be approved by the District Council and the Governor before taking effect.

"The notification cannot pass legal scrutiny and is set aside and quashed," the court said, disposing of the writ petition. Home Principal Secretary FR Kharkongor said that mobile internet services were

suspended across five districts in western Meghalaya after several incidents of violence linked to the tribal council elections threatened to disrupt public order.

The suspension covers the districts of West Garo Hills, East Garo Hills, South Garo Hills, North Garo Hills and South West Garo Hills, and will remain in force until further orders, he said.

The order was issued after reports from the police and deputy commissioners indicated that incidents over the GHADC polls could disturb public peace and tranquillity in various parts of the Garo Hills region.

Social media platforms "are likely to be used for transmission of information through pictures, videos and text, having

the potential to cause serious breakdown of law and order," Kharkongor said in the order.

Meanwhile, curfew has been imposed in West Garo Hills and East Garo Hills districts following violent protests linked to the GHADC election process.

Two persons were killed in police firing at Chibinang in West Garo Hills Tuesday during clashes that erupted amid protests by sections of the Garo community against the attempt of non-Garo candidates in the filing of nominations.

Several incidents of arson, assault on civilians and the gathering of large crowds were reported in Tura and other locations across the region, officials said.

Former MLA E Mominin was also allegedly assaulted by a group of protesters during the unrest, and the Leader of Opposition Mukul M Sangma lodged an FIR accusing him of making provocative speeches, following which the violence spread.

The controversy erupted after objections were raised by groups in the Garo Hills over the participation of non-Garo communities in the nomination process for the tribal council polls.

In an order, the district magistrate of South West Garo Hills prohibited the sale of petrol and diesel in jerry cans, bottles and other containers with immediate effect in the district to prevent any disruption of law and order.

However, the issuance of diesel for mobile towers and road construction companies will continue as per the standing order of the Deputy Commissioner (Supply), the order said.

While the GHADC primarily represents the Garo tribe under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, non-Garo residents have in the past participated in the electoral process in constituencies where they are eligible voters, officials said.

UP cabinet moves to amend discriminatory leprosy law

Under the proposed amendment, provisions related to leprosy will be removed from Section 21 of the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Beggary Act, 1975

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, March 11: The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet Tuesday gave its approval to drop objectionable references to leprosy-affected people in the state's anti-beggary law in line with a direction of the Supreme Court to stop discrimination against them.

Under the proposed amendment, provisions related to leprosy will be removed from Section 21 of the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Beggary Act, 1975 (Uttar Pradesh Bhikshavriti Pratishedh Adhiniyam). Additionally, these provisions will be aligned with the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, so that the law conforms to modern health and human rights standards, the UP government said in a statement.

Section 21 of the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Beggary Act, 1975 pertains to "detention of persons suffering from certain diseases".

Arunachal CM to raise Changlang boundary row with Assam

Itanagar: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu Wednesday informed the Assembly that the state government will take up the issue of alleged violation of the status quo along the inter-state boundary in Changlang district with the Assam government after the Assembly elections in the neighbouring state. Responding to a question by BJP MLA Laisam Simai during Question Hour, Khandu said he would also direct Changlang deputy commissioner and SP to coordinate with their counterparts in Assam's Dibrugarh district to prevent any escalation of law-and-order problems in the disputed areas. Simai alleged that despite Arunachal Pradesh maintaining status quo in the disputed area, officials from the neighbouring state had made unauthorised visits to the zone on 17 occasions and had even assaulted local residents. "Even if there are any discrepancies, we can look for out-of-the-box solutions through discussion with Assam, but officially we cannot do anything," Khandu said.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

This amendment is expected to help eliminate discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and ensure that they are able to live with dignity and respect in society.

Following the cabinet approval, the proposed Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Beggary (Amendment) Bill, 2026, will be presented in the state legislature, the statement said.

The Supreme Court July 30, 2025, had called upon the states to summon special one-day assembly sessions or enact an ordinance to amend discriminatory, derogatory and demeaning provisions in various laws against leprosy-affected persons.

A bench of Justice Surya Kant (now the Chief Justice) and Justice Joymalya Bagchi said the Centre and states will be doing great service to these people by removing such discriminatory and demeaning provisions of law.

"States can call upon a special assembly session or a one-day session instead of waiting for a regular monsoon session or winter session and remove or amend the discriminatory provisions against leprosy-affected persons. Where it is not possible to call for a session an ordinance can be enacted. The state government will be doing great service to them, the bench said.

The top court was dealing with a batch of PILs, including one initiated in 2010 in which the bench had earlier directed the states to form a committee to identify provisions in various laws, etc., which discriminate against leprosy-affected or cured persons, and take steps for their removal so that they conform to constitutional obligations.

Additional advocate general Garima Prashad informed the bench that the Uttar Pradesh government has identified three laws which need to be "corrected".

The petitioners, including the Federation of Leprosy Organisation (FOLO) and legal think-tank Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, have contended that over a hundred provisions existed, both in central and in state laws which discriminated against persons affected by leprosy in ways that caused stigmatisation and indignity to them.

Pothole jolt 'revives' woman declared brain-dead in UP

The incident, which occurred on the Bareilly-Haridwar stretch of National Highway-74 near Hafizganj, has sparked local discussions -- both about the state of road infrastructure and what many initially described as a 'miraculous' recovery



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pilibhit, March 11: A 50-year-old woman in Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit district, who had been declared "brain-dead" and sent home with little hope of survival, showed signs of life after an ambulance carrying her hit a pothole on a national highway.

Doctors subsequently resumed treatment and the woman made a full recovery nearly 12 days later. The incident, which occurred on the Bareilly-Haridwar stretch of National Highway-74 near Hafizganj, has sparked local discussions -- both about the state of road infrastructure and what many initially described as a "miraculous" recovery.

However, a neurosurgeon who later treated the woman said her revival was not a miracle but likely the result of treatment for a suspected toxic insect or snake bite.

Vinita Shukla, a senior assistant in the copy section of Pilibhit's judicial courts, had fallen unconscious February 22 while doing household chores, her family said.

According to her husband, Kuldeep Shukla, she had earlier complained of high blood pressure and taken medication before suddenly collapsing. She was taken to the Autonomous State Medical College in Pilibhit, but the doctors there referred her to Bareilly in view of her critical condition.

"The family then admitted her to a private hospital in Bareilly, where she remained on ventilator support for three days. Doctors later told the family that she had little chance of survival and discharged her with a referral note," he said.

Kuldeep said that February 24, he was bringing his unconscious wife back home in an ambulance and had informed relatives to prepare for her last rites. "Near Hafizganj, the ambulance suddenly hit a large pothole, and the vehicle shook violently. Shortly afterwards, my wife began breathing normally again," he told reporters, adding that he immediately asked relatives to halt the funeral preparations.

He then rushed her to Neurocity Hospital in Pilibhit for emergency

treatment. Family members said that after intensive care at the facility for nearly 12 days, Vinita returned home Monday.

"She is now conscious and is able to speak with us," Kuldeep said. Dr Rakesh Singh, a neurosurgeon at Neurocity Hospital, told PTI that the woman was brought to him unconscious but was still breathing faintly.

"During physical examination, we noticed a mark on her leg, suggesting a bite from a venomous snake or insect," he said, adding that her condition appeared to be linked to neurotoxin poisoning rather than high blood pressure.

He said based on a medical assessment, doctors administered treatment consistent with toxin exposure, which eventually led to significant improvement.

Singh said earlier tests at the Bareilly hospital had shown an absence of brainstem reflexes, and that her Glasgow Coma Scale (level of consciousness) score had dropped to three from the normal level of 15, indicating deep unresponsiveness.

"Her pupils were dilated, suggesting severe neurological suppression. Further tests revealed a high presence of neurotoxins in her blood and lymphatic system," he said.

According to the doctor, targeted treatment for the toxin helped in her recovery over the course of nearly 12 days.

While the family described the incident as nothing short of a "miracle", the doctor maintained that the woman's improvement was "the result of timely medical intervention following the suspected toxic bite".

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
PHULBANI (R&B) DIVISION, PHULBANI
e-Procurement Notice / Invitation for Bids (IFB)
Bid Identification No. SE-(R&B)-PLB- 13/ 2025 - 26
Letter No. 1683 / Dtd. 07.03.2026
No.34001/190/2526 : The Superintending Engineer, Phulbani (R&B) Division, Phulbani on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites Percentage rate bids in online mode for the following work:
• Name of the Work: PROVISION FOR ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE OF FIRE FIGHTING AND ALARM SYSTEM AT M.C.H. BUILDING, DHH PHULBANI IN THE DISTRICT OF KANDHAMAL.
• Value of Work : Rs. 24,11,379.00/-
• Class of Contractor : "M" // "HT" or Above
• Period of Completion : 12 (Twelve) Calendar Months
• Availability of Bid Documents in Portal : From 10.00 AM of 11.03.2026 to 5.00 PM of 25.03.2026
• Date of Opening of Bids : 11.30 Hours on 26.03.2026
Further details, addendums, corrigendums or cancellations can be seen from the e-procurement portal website: <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>
Sd/- Superintending Engineer
Phulbani (R&B) Division
OIPR-34001/34066/1/25-26/0001

Office of the Superintending Engineer,
Potteru Canal Division, M.V-79
At-M.V-79, PO-Lachhipeta, Dist: Malkangiri (Odisha).
'e' mail id :- eeepcdbhuba65@gmail.com
QUOTATION CALL NOTICE NO.-03/2025-26 dtd.10.03.2026
No.32001/196/2526 : Sealed quotations are invited from interested reputed Travel Agencies / Tour operators / Private individuals having valid GST / GeM registration number/PAN card, first track banking facility etc. for providing Non-AC/AC diesel driver vehicle or BS-VI compliant Diesel vehicle (TUV300/ Bolero / Sumo Gold / Eriga / Any other equivalent Model) having seating capacity not more than ten including driver, which shall conform to the Terms & Conditions of the quotation call notice for the official use of the different offices of Potteru Canal Division, M.V-79 on monthly rent basis for the period from 04/2026 to 03/2027 (for the financial year 2026-27)
1. Date and time of availability of quotation documents for sale:-From dtd.16/03/2026 to dtd.25/03/2026 during office hours and on working days only.
2. Date and time of receipt of quotation documents:- From dtd. 16/03/2026 to dtd. 25/03/2026 (during office hours and on working days only).
3. Date and time of opening of quotation documents:- on 26.03.2026 at 11.00 A.M.in the office chamber of the Superintending Engineer, Potteru Canal Division, M.V-79.
Please visit the office of the undersigned or website <http://www.odisha.gov.in> / <http://www.dowrodisha.gov.in> for details.
Sd/- Superintending Engineer,
Potteru Canal Division, M.V-79
OIPR-32001/32551/1/25-26/0001

ODISHA GRAMEEN BANK
REGIONAL OFFICE, PIPLI, AT/PO: PIPLI, DIST.: PURI, PIN-752104
DEMAND NOTICE

1. Under section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (SARFAESI Act) read with Rule 3(1) of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, (Rules)
2. Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Odisha Grameen Bank under SARFAESI Act and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of Rules, issued Demand Notices under section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors listed hereunder. Hereinafter referred to as the "said Borrowers" to repay the amounts mentioned in the Notice, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the Notice, as per details given below.
The said notices have returned undelivered by the postal authorities or have not been acknowledged by the Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors. Hence the Bank by the way of abundant caution is effecting this publication of the Demand Notice. The undersigned has, therefore, caused their Notices to be pasted on the premises of the last known addresses of the said Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors as per the said Act. Copies of the said Notices are available with the undersigned and the said Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors, May, if they so desire, collect the said copies from the undersigned on any working day during normal office hours.
3. Against the above background, Notice is hereby given, once again, to said Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantors to pay to Odisha Grameen Bank within 60 days from the date of publication of this Notice, the amount indicated herein below together with future interest at contractual rates and rests from the date mentioned below till the date of payment under the loan & other documents. As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to Odisha Grameen Bank by the respective Borrowers.

| A/c. No. / Name of Address of Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagor(s) | Date of Notice Outstanding dues* | Description of the Property/ies |
|--|--|--|
| A/c. No.: 010913008000024 (Term Loan) / Borrower & Mortgagor: 1) Mr. Swarnaprava Prusty, W/o- Ramesh Chandra Prusty, Plot No.: LIV-225, Phase-IV, Dumduma Housing Board Colony, Dumduma, Dist.: Khurda, PIN-751019 / Guarantor: 2) Mr. Bhabani Sankar Samantaray, S/o- Minaketan Samantaray, LB-110, Unit-8, Brit Colony, Bhubaneswar, Nayapalli, Dist.: Khurda, PIN-751012. | 10.03.2026 ₹ 6,94,387.00 as on 09.03.2026 | Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building over Mouza: Dumduma, Khata No.: 516, Plot No.: 745 (P), LIV-225, Phase-IV, Area: 1000 sqft., standing in the name of Swarnaprava Prusty. |
| A/c. No.: 010913008000003 (Term Loan) & 010913008000009 (Term Loan) / Borrower & Mortgagor: 1) Mr. Ramakanta Acharya, S/o- Late Bijay Kumar Acharya, At: Bijay Bhaban, Plot No.: 3931, Upparsahi, Badagada, Bhubaneswar, PO: Badagada, Dist.: Khurda / Guarantors: 2) Mrs. Kadambini Acharya, W/o- Ramakanta Acharya, At: Bijay Bhaban, Plot No.: 3931, Upparsahi, Badagada, Bhubaneswar, PO: Badagada, Dist.: Khurda, 3) Mr. Gyana Ranjan Das, S/o- Late Dhuleswar Das, At/PO: Madhab, PS: Niali, Dist.: Cuttack, 4) Mr. Basanta Kumar Lenka, S/o- Suratha Bihari Lenka, At: Upparsahi, PO: Badagada, Dist.: Khurda. | 10.03.2026 ₹ 317.00 + ₹ 10,80,525.29 = ₹ 10,80,842.29 as on 09.03.2026 | Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building over Mouza: Badagada, Khata No.: 1494/4233, Plot No.: 3931/8755, Area: Ac.0.095 dec., standing in the name of Ramakanta Acharya. |

* Payable with further interest at contractual rates / rests as agreed from the date mentioned above till date of payment.
4. If the said Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors / fail to make payment to Odisha Grameen Bank as aforesaid, then Odisha Grameen Bank shall proceed against the above secured assets under section 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act and Rules entirely at the risk of the said Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors as to the costs and consequences.
5. Further, attention is invited to provisions of the sub-section (8) of the section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
6. You are prohibited under the SARFAESI Act from transferring the secured assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of Odisha Grameen Bank, any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the Act or Rules shall be liable for imprisonment and/or fine as given under Section 29 of the Act.
Place: Pipli, Date: 11.03.2026 **Sd/- Authorised Officer, Odisha Grameen Bank**



Earlier, people wandered in search of oxygen cylinders, now they are wandering for cooking gas cylinders

DELHI WAS MOST POLLUTED CITY DURING '24-25: STUDY

Delhi was the most polluted city during 2024-25, recording the highest annual PM2.5 levels and extended periods of "severe" air quality in winter while Patna was the second-most polluted city, according to a new analysis by Climate Trends



of the day note

If Maharashtra were an independent country, it would rank among the world's top 30 economies. With sustained growth momentum, Maharashtra is on track to become India's first trillion-dollar sub-national economy in the coming years

Many people believe that if a cylinder runs out, they may have to wait up to 25 days for a new one. Such messages have triggered widespread panic

A good telecon with Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov of Russia. Shared our assessments on the West Asia conflict and related diplomatic efforts. Also took stock of our bilateral cooperation agenda

SNIPPETS

Transfer excise policy case to an 'impartial' bench: Kejriwal urges Delhi HC Chief Justice

New Delhi: Former Delhi chief minister and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal, along with other accused in the excise policy case, Wednesday urged the Chief Justice of Delhi High Court, D K Upadhyaya, to transfer CBI's plea against their discharge in the case by the trial court from Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma to another judge, according to the party. In a representation to the chief justice, Kejriwal claimed he has a "grave, bona fide, and reasonable apprehension" that the hearing in the matter would not be impartial and neutral.

IDFC First Bank 'fraud': ED registers case

Chandigarh/New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate registered a money laundering case and conducted searches at multiple locations on Wednesday in connection with alleged embezzlement of Rs 590 crore from the Haryana government's accounts maintained with IDFC First Bank in Chandigarh, official sources said.



Tulips bloom at the Tulip Garden ahead of its opening for the public, in Srinagar

NCERT BOOK ROW

Disassociate from authors of judiciary chapter: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Acting tough against three experts involved in drafting of a controversial chapter in NCERT's Class VIII social science book containing "offending" contents on corruption in the judiciary, the Supreme Court Wednesday directed the Centre and all state governments to disassociate from them.



THE SC HAS DIRECTED THE CENTRE TO FORM A PANEL TO FINALISE LEGAL STUDIES CURRICULUM IN NCERT TEXTBOOKS. THE SC EXPRESSED CONCERNS OVER 'OFFENDING' CONTENT RELATED TO CORRUPTION IN THE JUDICIARY FOUND IN AN NCERT CLASS VIII SOCIAL SCIENCE TEXTBOOK. IT ALSO DIRECTED GOVERNMENTS AND UNIVERSITIES TO FORTHWITH DISASSOCIATE THE THREE EXPERTS WHO DRAFTED THE CONTROVERSIAL CHAPTER. THE GOVERNMENT ASSURED THE COURT THAT A PANEL OF DOMAIN EXPERTS WILL VET ALL FUTURE PUBLICATIONS TO PREVENT SIMILAR ISSUES

governments and Union Territories, universities, and public institutions receiving government funds to "disassociate three of them forthwith and not to assign any responsibility which incur fully or partially public funds". It said this order, however, shall be subject to their approaching the top court for modification along with an explanation, if any, they wish to tender. The bench, also comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi, said it was

"equally perturbed" with the stand taken by NCERT director in his affidavit that the chapter has been "duly rewritten". The bench said the Centre should also revisit the composition of National Syllabus and Teaching Learning Material Committee (NSTC), especially those with whom the offending chapter was digitally shared by members of textbook development team. It noted that after it had passed the February 26 order in the matter, some elements in "so-called social media" had acted and reacted irresponsibly. "We firmly believe in catching the bull by the horn. We accordingly direct the Government of India to identify such sites, the persons behind running those sites and furnish their full details to enable us to take suitable action," it said, adding that law must take its own course against "mischievous mangers". The bench directed the Centre to constitute a committee of domain experts which may preferably include one former senior judge, one eminent academician and one renowned practitioner in law.

SHORT TAKES

ED summons ex Bengal edu secy

Kolkata: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned former West Bengal Education secretary Manish Jain and expelled Trinamool Congress leader Kuntal Ghosh in connection with the School Service Commission (SSC) recruitment case, officials said Wednesday. Both Jain and Ghosh have been asked to appear at the ED office next week for questioning, they said.

Three killed as 2 bikes collide

Kushinagar (UP): Three men were killed and another seriously injured after two motorcycles collided head-on on a four-lane road in Uttar Pradesh's Kushinagar district, police said Tuesday. The accident occurred around 11 pm under the Ghazipur temple under the Tamkuhiraj police station area, they said.

Woman crushed to death with stones

Ranchi: A 40-year-old woman was crushed with stones to death Wednesday in Jharkhand's Sahibganj district over a land dispute between two neighbours, a senior police official said. Three members of a family, including two women, have been arrested in this connection so far, he said.

Student found dead in hostel

Silchar (Assam): A Class IX student of a residential school in Assam's Cachar district was found dead in his hostel, in a suspected case of suicide due to ragging, police said Wednesday. The body of the boy, identified as Arindam Das from a village near Silchar town, was found hanging in the bathroom of the hostel of the school located in Pailapool in Lakhimpur police station area this morning, an officer said.

FDI easing not for Chinese firms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Overseas companies having Chinese shareholding of up to 10 per cent will be eligible to invest in India under the automatic route across sectors; however, the relaxed FDI norms will not apply to entities registered in China/Hong Kong or other countries sharing land borders with India, a senior official said Wednesday.

The government, however, also announced an expedited mechanism for clearance to foreign direct investment (FDI) proposals of companies from China and other countries sharing land borders with India, across a wide range of sectors. Earlier, foreign firms with shareholders from these land border nations owning even a single share had to seek mandatory approval to invest in India in any sector. The Union Cabinet March 10 made changes in the press note 3 of 2020 in this regard. Under the press note, investors from countries sharing land borders with India had to seek mandatory approval to invest in any sector. "All the restrictions for investors from land bordering countries (LBCs) are still applicable. There is no relaxation so far as entities or investors in LBCs are concerned. This relaxation is only for entities in non-LBCs and having beneficial owners from LBCs below 10 per cent and non-controlling stake... so there are no relaxations so far as investments from LBCs are concerned," Joint Secretary in the department for promotion of industry and internal trade (DPIIT) Jai Prakash Shivahare told reporters here. He further explained that if a firm from a country sharing a land border with India provides technology and holds even one per cent stake, through which it may exercise some form of control, the investment will still require approval through the government route.

28 Indian ships with 778 crew stuck in Persian Gulf



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: As many as 28 Indian vessels with 778 seafarers onboard are stuck in the Persian Gulf, a government official said Wednesday. Of these, 24 vessels are on the western part of the Strait of Hormuz with 677 seafarers, while 4 vessels with 101 persons are on the eastern side, Rajesh Kumar Sinha, Special Secretary in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, said in a media briefing. "We are monitoring all the vessels actively for their safety and security. Authorities, ship managers and recruitment agencies...are closely coordinating with Indian embassies and local authorities to ensure safety and render medical assistance to them," the official said. The ministry continues to closely monitor the prevailing and evolving maritime situation in the Persian Gulf region and has strengthened monitoring and preparedness measures in view of the evolving maritime situation in the West Asia region to ensure the safety of Indian vessels and seafarers, Sinha said. Regular interaction with industry and stakeholders is being undertaken to provide all assistance to the industry and seafarers. Advisories have been issued by DG Shipping directing all Indian flag vessels and Indian seafarers to adopt enhanced

'Welfare of Indian diaspora in West Asia utmost priority'

NEW DELHI: Amid the widening military conflict in West Asia, the Indian government Wednesday said the welfare of about one crore Indian diaspora in the Gulf region is its utmost priority. Two Indians were killed, and one went missing when the merchant vessel they were on board came under attack during the West Asia crisis, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at a news briefing Wednesday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has spoken to several leaders in the region, including leaders from the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan and Israel, while External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has also been in regular touch with his counterparts in these countries, as also Iran.

security measures and strictly comply with reporting protocols, including submission of real-time details. Major ports have implemented operational measures, including continuous monitoring of vessel movement in coordination with shipping lines and vessel agents, real-time assessment of developments in the region, and regular reporting of vessels and cargo status. Dedicated 24-hour control rooms are operating in the ministry and the DG of Shipping. The DG Shipping is also maintaining contact with ship owners, operators, and assemblies of the seafarers to provide timely updates and necessary assistance.

CloudSEK warns of 'Digital Lutera' toolkit targeting UPI users

ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, THE FIRM HAS IDENTIFIED AT LEAST 20 ACTIVE GROUPS ON MESSAGING PLATFORM TELEGRAM, EACH WITH OVER 100 MEMBERS, WHERE A TOOLKIT BY THE NAME OF "DIGITAL LUTERA" IS BEING DISCUSSED, DISTRIBUTED, AND OPERATIONALISED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Online fraudsters are using new technology that bypasses security features of UPI apps to carry out financial transactions, cyber intelligence firm CloudSEK claimed in a report. According to the report, the firm has identified at least 20 active groups on messaging platform Telegram, each with over 100 members, where a toolkit by the name of "Digital Lutera" is being discussed, distributed, and operationalised. "This is not just another UPI malware variant. Digital Lutera represents a structural attack on device trust. When the operating system itself is manipulated, traditional safe-

guards like SIM-binding and app signature checks become unreliable. If left unaddressed, this could industrialize account takeovers at scale across the digital payments ecosystem," CloudSEK, Threat Researcher, Shobhit Mishra said. CloudSEK claims to have done an analysis of one such group alone which indicates that transactions worth Rs 25-30 lakh were processed over just two days, highlighting how quickly the fraud model is scaling and the number of victims' connections. UPI custodian National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) said that the digital payment has robust checks in place to handle "such risks". "NPCI has examined the re-



Representational image

port and clarifies that robust checks and safeguards are already in place to address such risks. UPI is designed with multiple layers of security and authentication mechanisms to ensure that transactions re-

main safe and secure," an NPCI statement said. NPCI said that it continues to work closely with banks and ecosystem partners to monitor risks and strengthen security measures, ensuring that digital

payments remain safe and reliable for users. SIM-binding has been treated as a proof that a bank account is securely tied to a specific device. UPI apps process transactions after verifying the SIM of the phone number with which the account associated with it is installed in the mobile phone. CloudSEK said the attack typically begins when a user unknowingly installs a malicious APK disguised as something routine, such as a traffic fine notice or a wedding invitation. Once installed, the malware gains access to the victim's phone's SMS permissions. Once the Digital Lutera toolkit is installed, attackers use

a specialised android framework tool on their own device to manipulate system-level identity and SMS functions. The attacker is then able to intercept registration messages meant for the banks and OTPs are silently forwarded to Telegram channels controlled by the attackers. The cyber intelligence firm said that after manipulating the android device, it makes the UPI app believe that messages for verification have genuinely emanated from the smartphone. CloudSEK said that it has informed relevant regulators and financial institutions to help them prepare and take proactive mitigation measures as part of responsible disclosure.

national



During the period of the YSRCP government, even if all forms of liabilities are taken into consideration, the increase is... ₹3.31 lakh crore. As against that, the liabilities contracted to date (including gross off-budget borrowing) by the TDP alliance government are ₹3.2 lakh crore

CENTRE ORDERS TAKEDOWN OF 3,100 TELEGRAM CHANNELS

The central government Wednesday directed instant messaging platform Telegram to disable over 3,100 channels within three hours for violating various provisions of the Copyright Act, 1957



of the day quote

I ask the chief minister, how many (promises) have actually reached the people? Whether it is the complete waiver of jewel loans or the reduction in fuel prices to the promised extent, this government has consistently betrayed the trust of the electorate

So, I don't think there will be any shortage of LPG. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when there were widespread concerns about oxygen availability, the Prime Minister personally coordinated efforts to ensure supply across the country

You have the opportunity to serve continuously for over 30 years. This opportunity should make you even more responsible. You must cultivate humility and humanity

No need to panic: PM on energy crisis

The PM's comments came in the wake of the commercial LPG short supply and opposition criticism over the issue and also amidst fears of a possible shortage of or spurt in prices of petrol and diesel in the coming days

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tiruchirappalli (Tamil Nadu), March 11: Amid the LPG shortage triggered by the West Asia conflict, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday appealed to people to not panic and assured public interest will be protected. At a poll rally here, he tore into the DMK.

Addressing the NDA meeting in poll-bound Tamil Nadu, he slammed the ruling DMK over alleged corruption, dynasty politics and broken promises.

The PM expressed confidence of tackling the LPG crisis, where short supply of commercial LPG has crippled the country's hotel sector.

"I would like to appeal to people, let us only spread correct, verified information," he said, apparently referring to the LPG crisis. The conflict has affected whole world's energy supply chain, he said. "Today, I would like to speak to the people of Tamil Nadu about the conflict in West Asia. It has affected the whole world's energy supply chain. We believe in the ideology of India first. There is no need to panic or pay attention to rumours. In any situation, we have seen how our government always puts interests of India above everything," he said.

"During Covid pandemic, 140 crore Indians showed the world how mature our nation is. I am



Modi boosts NDA campaign in Kerala

Kochi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday boosted the BJP-led NDA's election campaign in poll-bound Kerala by attacking LDF-UDF politics, accusing the Congress of using the West Asia conflict for "political gains", and reaching out to the Dheevera community. Modi's visit to Kerala to attend a series of programmes was marred by political controversy, with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and other LDF ministers boycotting the Prime Minister's official event to inaugurate infrastructure projects after state PWD Minister P A Mohammed Riyas was not invited. Riyas's exclusion prompted the CPI(M) to hurriedly hold inauguration ceremonies for two National Highway 66 six-laning projects in north Kerala that the Prime Minister was scheduled to launch.

confident that as a nation, we will navigate every situation successfully," he said.

The PM's comments came in the wake of the commercial LPG short supply and opposition criticism over the issue and also amidst fears of a possible shortage of or spurt in prices of petrol and diesel in the coming days.

Addressing the mega rally, attended by all NDA constit-

uents, Modi slammed the DMK rule in Tamil Nadu and said that people wanted a government that worked for every family, and not just for one family.

Earlier, Modi unveiled inaugurated ₹5,650 crore projects and said these projects would create thousands of jobs for the youth of the state.

Sharpening his attack against the DMK, he said, "In

WEST ASIA CRISIS

Kharge seeks discussion in Parl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: The Congress Wednesday demanded a full-fledged discussion in Parliament on the West Asia crisis that has led to energy shortage, saying the people of the country deserve to know the truth.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the energy crisis is deepening in the country and people are being made to suffer the hardships.

"The Modi Government's fake 'source based' assurances expose its utter incompetence. The Union Government pre-empt about the impending war in West Asia. Yet it did nothing to secure India's energy supply," he said in a post on X.

"The country deserves the truth. We demand a full discussion on this crisis in Parliament and the Prime Minister must answer the nation," the Congress chief said.

He claimed that the farmers are first in the line to suffer as fuel shortages hit agriculture and fertilizer supply.

Rationing of LPG cylinders has begun, he said, claiming that long queues for refills are being witnessed at gas agencies.

Acute shortage of commercial cylinders - wait of up to 25 day for domestic cylinders, he



said, adding that restaurants and small eateries are shutting down and hoarding and black marketing is spreading.

"60,000 tonnes of Basmati exports stuck. Wheat exports disrupted. Medicine prices likely to surge as raw material costs rise nearly 30 percent.

"Textile sector facing cascading cost pressures. Aviation fuel rising. Air travel becoming costlier. Steelmakers under severe input cost pressure.

"From ceramics and glass to FMCG and automobiles, every sector is feeling the heat. Every product likely to become costlier," Kharge claimed in his post.

Noting that this pattern of denial is not new, he said during demonetisation, "We were told cash shortages would end in 50 days" and said people were told that the prime minister was ready for any punishment they give.

POST OF THE DAY

We are planning cities on Mars, building AI for everything, and smarter phones every year. Meanwhile people still want clean water, affordable healthcare, and birds singing in the morning.

SHORT TAKES

Kumbh Mela woman marries boyfriend

Thiruvananthapuram: Monalisa Bhonsle, a young woman who shot to fame during the Prayagraj Kumbh Mela, tied the knot with her friend, a Muslim man, at a temple in nearby Poovar, hours after seeking police protection to evade the family's pressure. With a captivating smile and beautiful eyes, the Indore girl had shot to fame after a virtual content creator shared a video of her selling rudraksh garlands at Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh last year.

Shiv Pratap sworn in as T'gana's 5th Guv

Hyderabad: Shiv Pratap Shukla was sworn in as the fifth Governor of Telangana Wednesday. Telangana High Court Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh administered the oath of office to Shukla at Lok Bhavan here. Shukla took oath in Telugu. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy and his Cabinet colleagues were among those who attended the swearing-in ceremony. Shukla, who earlier served as the Himachal Pradesh Governor, was accorded a warm welcome on his arrival here Tuesday by Reddy.

Delhi blast: Custody of 2 accused extended

New Delhi: A Delhi court Wednesday extended by five days the custodial interrogation of two terror operatives allegedly involved in the Red Fort area blast conspiracy. Special Judge Pitambar Dutt extended the NIA custody of Zameer Ahmad Ahangar and Tufail Ahmad Bhat after conducting the proceedings in-camera. Ahangar from Ganderbal and Bhat from Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, were formally arrested by the NIA in February for their active involvement in the conspiracy related to the Delhi blast.

108 Naxals surrender



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jagdalpur (Chhattisgarh), March 11: In a remarkable success of the government's fight against Left Wing Extremism, 108 Maoists carrying a collective reward of ₹3.95 crore surrendered in Chhattisgarh's Bastar district Wednesday, officials said.

Besides a huge stock of weapons, ₹3.61 crore in cash and one kg of gold valued at about ₹1.64 crore were recovered from Maoist dumps, the highest seizure of cash and valuables from a single location in the history of anti-Naxal operations in the country, Inspector General of Police, Bastar Range, Sundarraj Pattilingam told PTL.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has set a deadline of March 31, 2026, for the eradication of Naxalism from the country. Among the surrendered Naxalites, six were divisional committee members carrying a reward of ₹8 lakh each, as per officials.

The cadres, belonging to the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) of Maoists, turned themselves in at Jagdalpur, the Bastar district headquarters, Pattilingam said.

DKSZC formation of outlawed CPI (Maoists) orchestrated several deadly attacks in south Bastar in the past.

Information provided by the surrendered cadres helped security forces achieve significant successes, including the recovery of weapons, cash and other materials from Maoist dumps, the official said.

A total of 101 weapons were seized, including AK-47, INSAS and SLR rifles, light machine guns, .303 rifles and barrel grenade launchers, dealing a significant blow to the already weakened military capability of the Maoist organisation, Pattilingam said.

Among those who surrendered were several key cadres, including divisional committee members Rahul Telam, Pandru Kovasi and Jhitrui Oyam from the West Bastar division, Ramdhar alias Biru from the East Bastar division and Mallesh from the North Bastar division.

Others included Muchaki, commander of the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) battalion, and Kosa Mandavi, a divisional committee member from the Andhra-Odisha Border area of Maoists, the official said.

The large-scale surrender indicated that Maoist ideology was weakening and even members within the organisation were questioning its relevance, Pattilingam said.



People carry a symbolic coffin during a procession to commemorate the martyrdom of Ali ibn Abi Talib, in Lucknow

Former diplomat Sandhu sworn in as Delhi LG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Former diplomat Taranjit Singh Sandhu was sworn in as the 23rd Lieutenant Governor of Delhi in a ceremony held at Lok Niwas Wednesday.

Chief Justice of Delhi High Court Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya administered the oath of office and secrecy to Sandhu in the presence of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta

and other dignitaries.

The chief minister noted that Delhi represents a shared heritage of all. She expressed confidence that the Sandhu's extensive administrative experience would provide momentum to ongoing development projects in the city.

The event was attended by Union Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, External Affairs minister S Jaishankar, United States Ambassador to India

Sergio Gor. Also present were several diplomats, judges and Member of Parliament from Delhi, Punjab and other states.

Speaking to reporters after the ceremony, Sandhu described Delhi as his "Karmbhumi", noting that he attended college and university in the city before serving here as a foreign service officer. "There are many stakeholders and its duty of all of us to work together for development of Delhi," he said.

Oppn collects signatures to seek removal of CEC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Signatures have been collected by the Opposition for a notice seeking a motion for the removal of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar on the ground of "partisan and discriminatory conduct in office" among other charges, sources said Wednesday.

The notice is likely to be submitted to both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha in a day or two, the sources added.

According to a highly placed source, seven charges are listed against the CEC in the notice and they range from "partisan and discriminatory conduct in office" to "deliberate obstruction of investigation of electoral fraud" and "mass disenfranchisement" among others.

A senior MP of the Opposition familiar with the develop-

ments said they have finished collecting signatures and the notices are more likely to be submitted Thursday.

Another senior Opposition leader said the notice might be submitted Thursday or Friday in both Houses.

Around 120 MPs have so far signed the notice to be submitted in the Lok Sabha and around 60 MPs have signed the notice to be submitted in the Upper House, the sources added. According to rules, at least 100 MPs must sign a notice seeking the removal of the CEC in the Lok Sabha and the required strength in the Rajya Sabha is 50.

The notice has been signed by members from all INDIA bloc parties, the sources added. MPs from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which is no longer officially part of the bloc, have also signed the notice, another



source said.

This is the first time a notice will be given seeking the removal of the CEC. Opposition parties have accused the CEC of aiding the ruling BJP on several occasions, especially over the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral

rolls, which they have alleged is aimed at helping the ruling party at the Centre.

Concerns have especially been expressed over the conduct of the exercise in West Bengal, with TMC supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee accusing the poll panel of

deleting genuine voters.

The process for removing the CEC is similar to that for the removal of a Supreme Court or high court judge and only grounds of proven misbehaviour or incapacity can lead to impeachment.

A motion for removal may be introduced in either House of Parliament and must be passed by a special majority -- a majority of the total membership of the House and a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting.

According to the law on the appointment of CEC and election commissioners, "CEC shall not be removed from his office except in the like manner and on the like grounds as a judge of the Supreme Court", and the other election commissioners shall not be removed from office "except on the recommendation of the CEC".

AI Express plane suffers nose-wheel damage at Phuket

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 11: An Air India Express Boeing 737 MAX plane, carrying 138 people, made a hard landing at Phuket airport Wednesday, and its two nose wheels got detached, leaving the aircraft stuck on the runway for hours, officials said.

Passengers were deplaned and taken to the terminal building. There was no injury to any person, a senior DGCA official said. According to the officials, airport operations were temporarily suspended as the aircraft was stuck on the runway and was later towed to the bay. The aircraft VT-BWQ operated the flight IX938 from Hyderabad to Phuket. "The nose wheels have been installed on the aircraft involved in the incident



at Phuket airport, allowing normal airport operations to resume," an Air India Express spokesperson said in a statement. It could not be immediately ascertained for how many hours the aircraft was stuck on the runway, as well as for how long the airport operations were suspended. Following the incident, the two pilots have been derostered, one of the officials said, adding that there were 138 people, including 6 crew members. The aircraft was involved in a suspected hard landing with a bounce on runway 9 at the Phuket airport, the DGCA official said.

A hard landing in aviation parlance is usually an unintentional landing where an aircraft hits the ground with excessive vertical speed and force. "Aircraft is stuck on the runway, both nose wheels got detached," the DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) official said earlier in the day. The official said both nose wheels of the aircraft were replaced as part of routine maintenance March 8.

An investigation would be carried out by the appropriate authority after consultation with the Thai aviation authorities, the official said.

international



This war must be stopped before it grows and the region as a whole is thrown into the fire. If diplomacy is given a chance, it is very possible to achieve this

TAYYIP ERDOGAN | PRESIDENT, TURKEY

JAPAN MARKS 15 YEARS SINCE TSUNAMI DISASTER

Japan marked the 15th anniversary of the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster on its north-eastern coast Wednesday as the government pushes for more use of atomic energy. The magnitude 9.0 earthquake and tsunami March 11, 2011 ravaged parts of the region, caused more than 22,000 deaths and forced nearly half a million people to flee their homes, most of them due to tsunami damage



of the day quote

The EU intends to provide 100 million euros (\$115.85 million) in humanitarian aid to Lebanon

URSULA VON DER LEYEN | EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT



They emphasised their support for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and BRICS contribution to efforts to de-escalate the situation and create conditions for achieving a sustainable settlement based on a balance of the legitimate interests of all parties

SERGEI LAVROV | FOREIGN MINISTER, RUSSIA



We are in a moment of grave peril for the Middle East and, actually I believe, for the wider world

TOM FLETCHER | UN AID CHIEF



Vessels hit in Strait of Hormuz

REUTERS

Dubai, March 11: Three more vessels have been hit by unknown projectiles in the Strait of Hormuz, maritime security and risk firms said Wednesday, bringing the number of ships struck in the region since the Iran conflict began to at least 14.

Shipping along the narrow strait has come to a near standstill since the United States and Israel began strikes on Iran February 28, preventing exports of around a fifth of the world's oil supply and sending global oil prices surging to highs not seen since 2022.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards have warned that any ship passing through the Strait will be targeted. US President Donald Trump has threatened to ramp up US attacks on Iran if it continues to obstruct the strait.

The Thai-flagged Mayuree Naree dry bulk vessel was struck by "two projectiles of unknown origin" while sailing through the Strait Wednesday, causing a fire and damaging the engine room, the ship's Thai-listed operator Precious Shipping said in a statement.

"Three crew members are reported missing and believed to be trapped in the engine room," Precious Shipping said. "The company is working with the relevant authorities to rescue these three missing crew members," it said, adding that the remaining 20 crew members had been safely evacuated and were ashore in Oman.

Images provided by the Thai navy showed smoke pouring out of the back of the ship.

Iran's Guards said in a statement carried by the Tasnim news agency that the ship was "fired upon by Iranian fighters", suggesting the first direct engagement by the Guards who have previously fired missiles or drones.

The US Navy has refused near-daily requests from the shipping industry for military escorts through the Strait of Hormuz since the start of the war on Iran, saying the risk of attacks is too high for now,

■ Thailand-flagged bulk carrier damaged off Oman

■ Most crew evacuated, three feared missing

■ Japan-flagged container ship and Greek-owned bulk carrier sustain minor damage



As many as 150 US troops wounded so far in Iran war



Washington: As many as 150 US troops have been wounded in the 10-day-old war with Iran, two people familiar with the matter told Reuters Tuesday. The casualty figure has not been previously reported. Prior to Reuters' publication of the figure, the Pentagon had only disclosed eight US personnel seriously injured. In a statement after Reuters published its report, the Pentagon estimated the figure to be approximately 140 wounded and said the vast majority of them were minor. "Since the start of Operation Epic Fury, approximately 140 US service members have been wounded over 10 days of sustained attacks," said chief Pentagon spokesperson Sean Parnell. He said 108 of the wounded service members had already returned to duty.

Iran to target US-Israeli economic, banking interests in region

Dubai: Iran will target economic and banking interests linked to the US and Israel in the region, after an attack on an Iranian bank, a spokesperson for Tehran's Khatam al-Anbiya military command headquarters said Wednesday. An administrative building linked to Bank Sepah, one of the country's largest public banks and with historical links to the military, was hit overnight in Tehran, according to the semi-official Mehr news agency. "Following their failed campaign, the terrorist US army and cruel Zionist regime (Israel) have targeted one of the country's banks," state media quoted Ebrahim Zolfaqari as saying. "With this illegitimate and uncommon action, the enemy is forcing our hand to target economic centres and banks linked to the US and Zionist regime in the region," he added.



sources familiar with the matter told Reuters. Trump has said the US is prepared to provide naval escorts whenever needed.

TWO OTHER SHIPS SUSTAIN MINOR DAMAGE

Earlier Wednesday, the Japan-flagged container ship ONE Majesty sustained minor damage from an unknown projectile 25 nautical miles (46 km) northwest of Ras Al Khaimah

in the United Arab Emirates, two maritime security firms said. Its Japanese owner Mitsui O.S.K. Lines and a spokesperson for Ocean Network Express (ONE), its charterer, said that the vessel was struck while at anchor in the Gulf and an inspection of the hull had revealed minor damage above the waterline.

All crew are safe, they said, adding that the vessel remains

Iran's new supreme leader 'lightly injured' but active: Official

REUTERS

Dubai, March 11: Iran's newly-appointed Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei was lightly injured but is continuing to operate, an Iranian official told Reuters Wednesday after state television described him as war wounded.

Khamenei has not been seen by Iranians, or issued any public statement or message, since his selection Sunday by a clerical assembly and is widely rumoured to have been wounded in the Israeli and US strikes.

Seen as a hardliner close to the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, Khamenei was the leading contender to succeed his father Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed in the first wave of strikes February 28.



The official did not give details about when Khamenei was injured or why he had not made any statement to the public since his appointment.

The first air strikes in the war were aimed at decapitating Iran's leadership, and besides his father, they killed Khamenei's mother, sister and wife, state television said.

"His Eminence Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei is today the heir to the blood of his martyred father, his martyred mother, his martyred sister and his martyred wife," a news anchor read out on state television, using Khamenei's full titles and honorifics.

fully operational and seaworthy. The owner said the cause of the incident remained unclear and was under investigation.

A third vessel, a bulk carrier, was also hit by an unknown projectile approximately 50 miles northwest of Dubai, maritime security firms said.

Drone strikes near Dubai airport deepen Gulf aviation chaos



Dubai, March 11: Two drones fell near Dubai's main airport and Bahrain evacuated some planes Wednesday, as attacks on infrastructure across the Gulf continued to disrupt air traffic, hampering efforts to restore flights as the war on Iran entered a 12th day.

The US-Israel war against Iran has led to tens of thousands of flight cancellations, reroutings and schedule changes worldwide, shutting much of the Middle East's airspace - including Qatar's - due to missile and drone threats.

That has plunged aviation into its worst crisis since the pandemic, as Dubai International Airport (DXB), the busiest hub for global passengers, and other regional airports are critical transit points for long-haul travel.

The conflict has also disrupted a key oil export corridor, leading to a spike in jet fuel prices, pushing fares higher on some routes and deepening concern about a broader hit to travel demand. Time-sensitive air cargo was also heavily affected.

Highlighting the ripple effects of the conflict beyond the Middle East, the government in Vietnam warned Wednesday that domestic airlines may be at risk of fuel shortages

Middle East airspace closures drive up cancellations, costs

Oil corridor impact spikes jet fuel, worsens industry turmoil

Vietnam warns of possible fuel shortages from next month

es as soon as next month.

Bahrain's Civil Aviation Affairs said Wednesday that several Gulf Air aircraft without passengers, and some cargo airplanes, were relocated to alternative airports to "ensure the continuity and efficiency of air operations" during the crisis.

Tracking data on FlightRadar24 showed several passenger jets moving to locations in Saudi Arabia over the past 24 hours.

Dubai's media office confirmed two drones fell near Dubai airport, but said air traffic was operating as normal. Reuters witnesses said there was no visible damage to the airport. Four people were injured.

The attack marked a renewed threat after DXB airport sustained damage on the first day of the conflict, alongside Abu Dhabi and Kuwait's international airports.

There were no crew injuries and no listing.

The Guards' statement included a reference to another ship, which it said was hit by projectiles - usually a reference to drones - Wednesday morning. Reuters was not immediately able to confirm that report.

6 DIE IN SWISS BUS BLAZE

REUTERS

Kerzers, Switzerland, March 11: Six people died and three were injured in a bus fire in a small Swiss town believed to have been caused by a man on board who set fire to himself, authorities said Wednesday.

Swiss investigators said they saw no evidence that the man, who one official described as "disturbed" and was likely among the dead, had intended to commit any kind of terrorist attack.

The bus was engulfed in flames Tuesday evening on a road near the centre of Kerzers, a town of about 5,000

inhabitants in the western canton of Fribourg, about 20 km (12 miles) from the Swiss capital Bern, police said.

"As for the motive, there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that this could be a terrorist act," said Raphael Bourquin, attorney general of the canton of Fribourg.

The victims were aged between 17 and 65 years old, the authorities said, without giving details on nationalities.

SUSPECT HAD BEEN REPORTED MISSING

The suspect, a man of Swiss origin who has not been identified, is believed to have boarded the bus with bags before

dousing himself in flammable material and starting the blaze, officials said. He was understood to be in his 60s and had been reported missing by his family, they added.

Investigators were going through CCTV footage as well as social media posts to understand the man's motives, and further searches and interviews would take place, officials said.

Three injured people were taken to hospital.

Passengers were seen escaping from the burning bus, panicked and injured. Video after the flames were extinguished showed the charred remains of the yellow vehicle.



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his daughter Kim Ju Ae observe a missile test launch conducted by the Choe Hyon naval destroyer at an unknown location in North Korea

Israel surpasses UK as 7th largest global arms exporter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jerusalem, March 11: Propelled by growing demand for air defence systems, Israeli defence industries have registered impressive gains, surpassing Britain to become the 7th largest global arms exporter during 2021-25, according to a report.

Israel's leading news portal 'Times of Israel', in a detailed report based on the findings of the Swedish research institute SIPRI, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Tuesday reported that India remains Israel's largest purchaser of defence

equipment.

According to SIPRI, Israel exports arms primarily to India (56%), Germany (21%), and the US (7.8%), the report said.

SIPRI published its global arms export and import report Monday, comparing the arms exports of various countries in the years 2016-2020 to 2021-2025.

Israel's share of global arms exports climbed to 4.4% in recent years (2021-2025), up from 3.1% in the previous period (2016-2020).

Israel is now the world's seventh-largest arms exporter and, for the first time, has surpassed Britain in weapons exports, the report said.



Britain's share of global exports currently stands at 3.4%. The US leads the chart of arms

exporters, followed by France (9.8%), Russia (6.8%), Germany (5.7%), China (5.6%), Italy

(5.1%) and then Israel (4.4%).

Israel is also the 14th-largest arms importer in the world, with most of the weapons purchased from the United States (68%), followed by Germany (31%), and a small fraction from Italy (1%).

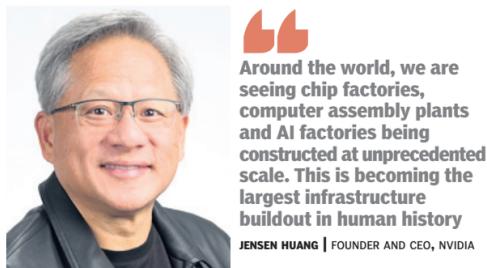
"The total volume of the global arms trade rose by 9.2% in 2021-2025 compared to 2016-2020. European nations more than tripled their weapons imports, effectively becoming the world's largest arms-importing region," the report said.

"This growth was driven by the global sales of air defence systems," as per the report. Among other findings, SI-

PRI's report reveals that Israeli arms sales to Britain persisted despite domestic British criticism of Israel and announcements regarding the suspension of negotiations to upgrade the trade agreement between the two nations.

Besides India, the other significant buyers of Israeli arms include South Korea, Germany, the Philippines, Singapore and Morocco.

Iran, Israel's arch-rival, ranks 25th on the list of the world's largest arms exporters, with 73% per cent of its arms sales going to Russia, 17% to Venezuela and 9% to the Houthis in Yemen.



“Around the world, we are seeing chip factories, computer assembly plants and AI factories being constructed at unprecedented scale. This is becoming the largest infrastructure buildout in human history”
JENSEN HUANG | FOUNDER AND CEO, NVIDIA

CRED GETS PAYMENT AGGREGATOR NOD

India's Cred, backed by Tiger Global and Peak XV, has received approval from the country's central bank to operate as a payment aggregator, the fintech firm said Wednesday. The licence would allow Cred to sign up merchants, collect payments on their behalf across payment instruments, and handle settlement and refunds. The company managed payments worth Rs 8.5 trillion (\$92.40 billion) for 15 million users in the fiscal year ended March 2025, the firm said



West Asia conflict poses downside risk; India GDP growth seen at 7.1% in FY27: Crisil Intelligence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 11: Conflict in West Asia, if prolonged could pose a downside risk to India's economic outlook due to its impact on crude oil and commodity prices, according to a report by Crisil Intelligence.

In its base case, the report expects India's real GDP growth to moderate to 7.1 per cent in FY27, which is still healthy and slightly above potential.

The growth will be supported by robust private consumption and a mild pick-up in private investment.

Private investment sentiment is improving with a recovery in private capex underway, driven by emerging sectors, according to the report.

It also expects export growth to maintain momentum, supported by lower US tariffs relative to FY26, steady global growth and robust services exports even as frontloading benefits fade.

The retail inflation is likely to rise to 4.3 per cent on average in FY27 from an estimated 2.5 per cent in FY26. As food prices are expected to remain benign, assuming a normal monsoon in 2026, inflation should normalise from its current lows.

"The reduced weight of food in the new CPI 2024 series should contain the upside to headline from normalising food inflation," the report added.

Headline retail inflation is likely to remain close to the central value of the RBI's tolerance band. This would allow the central bank to hold the repo rate and focus on transmitting the 125 bps rate cut implemented in calendar year 2025, Crisil said.

The report expects that policy rates will remain steady in FY27; the cumulative rate cut of 125 bps undertaken in calendar year 2025 will continue to be transmitted to bank lending and deposit rates.

ELECTRIC PLATES, MICROWAVES, FIREWOOD

LPG crunch bites restaurants

Concerns over possible shortages have triggered panic buying and hoarding in some places

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: From induction cooktops and microwaves to firewood and solar options, restaurants, street food vendors and catering businesses across the country are scrambling for alternatives as a shortage of commercial LPG cylinders begins to disrupt kitchens amid the widening conflict in West Asia.

With the government prioritising domestic cooking gas supply to households as the war disrupts global fuel lifelines, businesses dependent on commercial LPG -- from small eateries to high-end restaurants -- are watching the situation anxiously, with some even staring at possible closure in the days to come.

In national capital Delhi, irregular LPG supply has gripped kitchens across the city and many restaurants are left with stock for a day or two, fearing temporary closure and concerns over staff wages. Industry representatives say many eateries in the capital are trying to manage the situation through adjustments.

At the famous 'Chappan Dukan' street food hub in Madhya Pradesh's Indore, vendors have begun swapping traditional gas burners for electric appliances to keep the city's food culture alive. The shopkeepers say they will also consider adopting solar-powered appliances if necessary.

Gunjan Sharma, president



of the city's 56-shop Chaat Chowpaty Traders Association, told PTI, "The supply of commercial LPG cylinders has been stopped. Therefore, we have purchased electric appliances and started using them."

Similar improvisations are being attempted elsewhere, with the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) asking catering units in its western zone to switch to microwave ovens and induction plates. In a communication issued March 10, the IRCTC asked operators of food plazas, refreshment rooms and

India consumes about 31.3 million tonne of LPG annually. As much as 87% of this is in the domestic sector, i.e. household kitchens, and the rest in commercial establishments such as hotels and restaurants

Of this total requirement, as much as 62% is met through imports. The US-Israel attacks on Iran and Tehran's retaliation have shut the Strait of Hormuz, a key sea route through which India gets 85-90% of its LPG imports from West Asian nations, including Saudi Arabia and Qatar

'Jan Ahaars' to switch to alternative arrangements to maintain seamless catering services for travelling passengers.

Restaurant owners and vendors in places like Puducherry and Rajasthan said their kitchens are under strain as supplies dry up, forcing them to reduce working hours to manage operations. Roadside restaurants remained closed in most parts of Puducherry, while eateries have reduced their menu in some other parts.

The disruption in supply has begun to hit businesses across Rajasthan. Restaurant owners said the shortage is already affecting kitchens, while expenses on weddings are also

Oil Ministry assures normal LPG supply

New Delhi: Amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, a senior Oil Ministry official Wednesday said that there is no need for panic booking of LPG cylinders, and that the normal delivery cycle of two-and-a-half days is being maintained. India's crude oil supplies remain secure, Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, told reporters at a briefing. Crude oil is being sourced from non-Strait of Hormuz routes, she said. Government measures have led to a 25 per cent rise in LPG production, according to the ministry. She said that there is no need for panic booking of cooking gas cylinders and assured that the normal delivery cycle for domestic households remains at two-and-a-half days. "Feedback suggests that some panic booking and hoarding behaviour by miss-information. I want to clarify that our normal deliver cycle for domestic LPG remains around two-and-a-half days, so I request...there is no need for customers to rush-book the cylinders... there is no need for panic booking," she said. State governments have been asked to take preventive actions to prevent hoarding and black marketing of fuel, according to the ministry. "India's crude supply remains secure. Our daily consumption is about 55 lakh barrels...through diversified procurement, the volumes we have secured today exceed what would normally have arrived through the Strait of Hormuz during this period," she said. India imports crude from nearly 40 countries. The oil marketing companies have secured various crude cargoes from different sources, and as a result of this diversification, about 70 per cent of India's crude imports are now coming from routes outside the Strait of Hormuz, compared with about 55 per cent earlier, she added. "As I speak to you today, about two LNG cargoes are headed for India, and they will arrive within a few days, which will further strengthen the crude supply position in the country," Sharma said.

set to increase. According to the Jaipur Catering Dealers Committee, the city has nearly 6,000 to 7,000 restaurants and dhabas that depend on commercial LPG cylinders. Additionally, several hostel kitchens, mess facilities and highway eateries also use commercial cylinders for daily cooking. The wedding industry is also worried as the disruption comes during an active wedding season.

"The current wedding season continues till March 15 and will resume again after a month's gap. Because of the LPG shortage, the cost of a wedding could rise by Rs 25,000 to Rs 30,000," Ravi Jindal, president of Rajasthan Tent Dealers Association, said.

galore, panic enquiries for domestic LPG cylinders have risen over the last few days, dealers said, adding that stocks are adequate as of now.

In West Bengal, long queues were seen outside gas agency offices and at LPG dispensation centres for auto-rickshaws, most of which run on liquefied petroleum gas, in Kolkata and several other cities, including Siliguri and Jalpaiguri.

Authorities have also begun cracking down on hoarding and black-marketing.

The Indian Oil Corporation, which supplies LPG cylinders to almost 85 per cent of North-east India, said it has adequate stocks to meet the demands and its nine bottling plants in the region were operating at full capacity.

SHORT TAKE

Domestic coal stock enough for 88 days

New Delhi: Amid escalating tensions in West Asia threatening global energy supplies, the government Wednesday said it is fully prepared to meet any unprecedented surge in coal demand, with overall coal stocks at about 210 million tonne -- adequate for around 88 days. This year, coal production and supply have outpaced consumption, leading to record-high stocks at thermal power plants and coal mines. Supplies to the non-regulated sector are up nearly 14 per cent over the previous year. Pithead coal stocks at mines of Coal India Ltd (CIL) stood at 106.78 million tonne (MT) April 1, 2025, rising to 121.39 MT as of March 9 this year. Further, there is around 6.07 MT of coal at the mines of Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), another 15.12 MT at captive, commercial mines, and about 14 MT in transit, totalling 156.58 MT, the highest ever. This stock is in addition to the coal which is already available at power plants, which is around 54.05 MT as March 9, 2026, adequate for nearly 24 days at the present rate of consumption. "The overall coal stock available in the country is about 210 MT, which would be adequate for about 88 days," the coal ministry said in a statement. The coal production in the country continues at the same pace, building stocks at the mine end, for maintaining adequate supply to the consumers as per their requirements, with the support of railways.

Induction cooktops, electric kettles sales surge

Sales of induction cooktops and electric kettles have surged in the wake of cooking gas supply concerns due to the war in West Asia, according to industry players. Tata Group's Croma said it has observed a threefold jump in demand for induction cooktops over the past few days, while Stovekraft Ltd, the company behind the popular kitchen appliance brand Pigeon, noted that its average weekly online sales have jumped four times.

India's Russian oil purchase surges 50% in March

India's purchase of Russian crude oil has surged 50 per cent in March as New Delhi tapped alternate sources to make up for the shortfall arising from disruption in the Middle East amid a widening military conflict. India bought about 1.5 million barrels of Russian oil this month, up from 1.04 million bpd in February, ship tracking data showed. India, the world's third-largest crude importer, sources 88 per cent of its oil needs from abroad. It consumes 5.8 million barrels per day, of which 2.5-2.7 million barrels came from Middle East countries.

Silver slides ₹4,275 to ₹2.75 lakh/kg

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Silver price declined by Rs 4,275 to Rs 2.75 lakh per kilogram in the national capital Wednesday, while gold gained Rs 900 to Rs 1.65 lakh per 10 grams amid geopolitical tensions in West Asia.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the white metal plunged by Rs 4,275, or 1.53 per cent, to Rs 2,75,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) from Tuesday's closing level of Rs 2,79,275 per kg.

However, gold moved higher, with 99.9 per cent purity increasing by Rs 900, or 0.54 per cent, to Rs 1,65,600 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). The yellow metal had settled at Rs 1,64,700 per 10 grams in the previous market session.

Analysts said renewed safe-haven demand amid intensifying geopolitical tensions supported gold prices, even as silver came under pressure.



"Gold traded with a positive bias on Wednesday supported by renewed safe-haven demand amid escalating tensions in the Iran conflict and heightened geopolitical uncertainty," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. He added that the ongoing escalation will continue to act as a tailwind for traditional safe-haven assets like gold.

However, bullion was trading lower in the overseas trade. Spot gold was marginally down at \$5,189.05 per ounce, and silver slipped \$1.59, or 1.8 per cent, to \$86.69 per ounce.

BLOODBATH ON D-STREET

Investors' wealth erodes by ₹5.14L-cr

Sensex, Nifty plunge nearly 2% on surging crude prices, intensifying West Asia tensions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Investors' wealth eroded by Rs 5.14 lakh crore Wednesday as stock markets fell after a day's breather due to a surge in global crude oil prices amid growing tensions in West Asia.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 1,342.27 points or 1.72 per cent to settle at 76,863.71. During the day, it dropped 1,446.72 points or 1.84 per cent to 76,759.26.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies faced an erosion of Rs 5,14,063.2 crore to Rs 4,41,90,196.39 crore (\$4.81 trillion). Brent crude, the global oil



benchmark, jumped 5.76 per cent to \$92.86 per barrel.

"Markets plunged sharply on Wednesday, losing over one and a half per cent and resuming their corrective phase amid weak global cues and heightened geopolitical tensions. Concerns over potential disruptions to crude oil supply, rising

inflationary pressures and the possible impact on economic growth kept participants cautious," Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Additionally, continued foreign institutional investor selling and weakness in the rupee further dampened risk appetite,

he added. From the 30-Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, Maruti, Bharti Airtel, Trent and Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the major laggards.

NTPC, Sun Pharma and Power Grid were the gainers.

Among BSE sectoral indices, auto tumbled 3.06 per cent, bankex (2.06 per cent). Private Banks index (2.03 per cent), BSE Top 10 Banks (2.03 per cent), financial services (1.99 per cent), consumer discretionary (1.89 per cent) and PSU Bank (1.87 per cent).

In contrast, BSE energy, healthcare, utilities, oil & gas and power were the gainers.

The BSE midcap select index tanked 1.55 per cent, and the smallcap select index declined 0.61 per cent.

A total of 2,380 stocks declined, while 1,881 advanced and 153 remained unchanged on the BSE.

ProBiking showroom opens in Sambalpur

The outlet showcases an exciting lineup of motorcycles from KTM and Triumph

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, March 11: RM Motors proudly announced the grand inauguration of its new ProBiking Showroom in Sambalpur, featuring the globally renowned motorcycle brands KTM and Triumph motorcycles. The new showroom aims to bring premium motorcycling experiences closer to enthusiasts across Western Odisha.



segment in the region.

The ProBiking showroom showcases an exciting lineup of motorcycles from KTM and Triumph, including popular models such as the Speed 400 and Scrambler 400X from Triumph, along with KTM's

renowned Duke, RC, and Adventure series. The facility has been designed to offer customers a premium showroom experience along with professional service support and genuine accessories.

Speaking on the occasion,

General manager Manas Mohanty said the new ProBiking showroom reflects the company's commitment to offering premium products and superior service to riders in Sambalpur and nearby regions.

Branch manager Gurudev Pradhan also highlighted that the showroom will serve as a hub for the growing community of motorcycle enthusiasts in the region, providing customers access to world-class motorcycles, expert guidance, and a vibrant riding culture.

With the launch of this new facility, RM Motors continues to strengthen its presence in Odisha while promoting the spirit of performance motorcycling through KTM and Triumph.

Bank of Baroda introduces bob Women Sapphire Savings Account

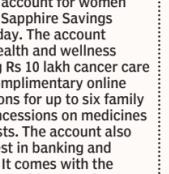
FOR THE WOMAN WHO DESERVES MORE



Bhubaneswar: Bank of Baroda announced the launch of an exclusive premium savings account for women - the bob Women Sapphire Savings Account Wednesday. The account offers a host of health and wellness benefits including Rs 10 lakh cancer care coverage plan, complimentary online doctor consultations for up to six family members and concessions on medicines and pathology tests. The account also offers the very best in banking and lifestyle benefits. It comes with the bob Bhoomi RuPay Select Debit Card that provides premium lifestyle privileges such as access to domestic airport lounges, complimentary gym membership, health check-up, spa/salon session and OTT subscriptions. Account holders will also receive a 50% first-year fee waiver in the form of reward points on the BOBCARD Tiara Credit Card, a premium, women-centric credit card. Further, bob Women Sapphire Savings Account holders will benefit from discounted locker charges, a 50% waiver on home loan processing charges, along with a wide range of other banking privileges. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Debadatta Chand, Managing Director & CEO, Bank of Baroda said, "The bob Women Sapphire Savings Account reflects Bank of Baroda's commitment to creating meaningful, women-centric financial solutions. By combining wellness benefits with premium banking and lifestyle privileges, our aim is to address the evolving aspirations of women, while strengthening our engagement with the growing high-value women's deposit segment."

Punjab & Sind Bank expands footprint with Bolangir branch

FOR THE WOMAN WHO DESERVES MORE



Bolangir: Strengthening its presence in Odisha and reaffirming its commitment to financial inclusion Punjab & Sind Bank inaugurated its new branch at Bolangir. The branch was inaugurated by the Managing Director & CEO of the bank, Swarup Kumar Saha, during his visit to the state. Speaking on the occasion, Saha highlighted the bank's strong commitment towards expanding its banking network in Odisha and providing greater access to financial services across the state. He emphasized that the opening of the branch is part of the bank's broader strategy to deepen its presence in emerging regions and contribute to the state's economic growth. He stated that Punjab & Sind Bank will continue to play a proactive role in supporting key sectors such as agriculture and MSMEs, which are crucial for employment generation and rural development. The bank is also focusing on promoting Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and strengthening financial support to rural entrepreneurs, farmers, and small businesses. Saha further noted that the bank's expansion initiatives are aligned with the vision of "Viksit Odisha 2036", aimed at fostering inclusive growth and empowering local communities through accessible banking and credit facilities.



RCB to host SRH in opener

IPL first phase scheduled March 28 amid travel concerns caused by war in West Asia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru will take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL 2026 opener in Bangalore March 28 as the BCCI announced the first phase of the tournament schedule amid concerns around players' travel arrangements due to the ongoing West Asia conflict.

All matches scheduled at the Chinnaswamy Stadium remain subject to clearance from the Karnataka government appointed expert committee, which is scheduled to meet March 13 to assess venue preparedness in the wake of the deadly stampede at the stadium last season.

The BCCI announced the schedule of the first 20 games Wednesday and will unveil the full schedule once the dates of elections in three states -- Tamil Nadu, Assam and West Bengal -- are announced.

Besides the state elections, the escalating conflict in West Asia will also be at the forefront of BCCI officials' minds. The war has wreaked havoc to international travel with operations of major airports like Doha and Dubai being heavily restricted.

As a result of that, some of the squad members of South Africa and West Indies are yet to reach home a week after the completion of their T20 World Cup campaign.

It remains to be seen if IPL bound players of those two na-



INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE 2026

tions report to their respective teams in time.

"There was a substantial delay in departure of West Indies and South Africa players. It would be a tough task to get them back to India on time. Plus the airfares have gone up substantially due to the war in West Asia," a team official told PTI.

Additionally, hotels across India are facing cooking gas shortage due to the raging conflict and on Tuesday, the central government invoked Essential Commodities Act to ensure uninterrupted supply of domestic cooking gas.

Chennai Super Kings CEO Kasi Viswantham told PTI that he is expecting his players from the West Indies and South Africa -- Akeal Hossein and Dewald Brevis, to join the team well before their IPL opener.

"We are expecting no delays from their end," he said.

The second game of the open-

A total of 20 matches will be played across 10 venues: Bengaluru, Mumbai, Guwahati, New Chandigarh, Lucknow, Kolkata, Chennai, Delhi, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad

ing weekend will see Mumbai Indians host Kolkata Knight Riders at the Wankhede Stadium and the opening weekend will not feature any double-headers.

A total of 20 matches will be played across 10 venues: Bangalore, Mumbai, Guwahati, New Chandigarh, Lucknow, Kolkata, Chennai, Delhi, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad.

"During the season, Royal Challengers Bengaluru will

play five home matches in Bangalore and two in Raipur. Punjab Kings will play four home matches in New Chandigarh and three in Dharmsala, while Rajasthan Royals will play three home matches in Guwahati and four in Jaipur," said the BCCI in a statement.

"During this period (the first 16 days), the tournament will feature four double-headers, with the afternoon matches beginning at 03:30 PM IST and the evening matches commencing at 07:30 PM IST.

"Following the opening encounter on Saturday, Mumbai Indians will take on Kolkata Knight Riders at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Sunday. The matches scheduled in Bangalore are subject to clearance from the Expert Committee constituted by the Government of Karnataka," the BCCI added.

FIH HOCKEY WC QUALIFIERS

Navneet's treble seals semis berth for India

Women in Blue will now take on Italy Friday to seal their spot in the final

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, March 11: The Indian Women's Hockey Team secured a dominant 4-1 victory against Wales in a Pool B clash at the FIH Hockey World Cup Qualifiers 2026 Hyderabad, Telangana.

Navneet Kaur (29', 34', 55') led the attack with three goals while Sakshi Rana (7') also contributed at the GMC Balayogi Hockey Ground (Gachibowli Hockey Complex) Wednesday evening. Though India had secured a semi-final berth ahead of the fixture, the result ensured they finished as table-toppers. India will now take on Italy March 13 to seal their spot in the final.

India's speed was on full display in the first quarter as they put immense pressure on their opponents with quick breakaways, despite a high press from the Welsh team. The hosts took the lead as early as the seventh minute when Salima Tete

orchestrated a move down the right flank before Sakshi Rana unleashed a powerful reverse hit from the edge of the circle to give India the advantage.

India carried the momentum into the second quarter. In a penalty corner, Navneet powered a low shot into goal to double India's lead.

India stayed on the prowl in the third quarter. In the 34th minute, a silky run from Sakshi earned India a penalty corner and Navneet Kaur made no mistake in completing her brace and making it 3-0.

It was Betsan Thomas (39') who cut down the deficit for Wales, making the most of momentary lapse by India in the circle, she threaded the ball into the net from a tight angle to make it 3-1.

In the final quarter, Wales had a chance to turn up the pressure on the hosts when they were awarded a penalty stroke in the 50th minute, but Wales Captain Elizabeth Bingham's shot was off target. Navneet then went on to complete her hat-trick converting a penalty stroke in the 55th minute.



WC winning India receive ₹25 crore as prize money

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, March 11: Champions India received \$2,639,423 (approx ₹25 crore), the biggest share from the prize money pool after winning the men's T20 World Cup at home as the ICC Wednesday announced the distribution of a record \$11.25 million players' prize fund following the tournament's conclusion.

India beat New Zealand by a comprehensive 96-run margin to lift their second successive trophy.

The total purse reflects the significant increase in ICC tournament prize money introduced in 2024, aimed at boosting financial rewards for players and supporting the global growth of cricket.

Runners-up New Zealand national cricket team earned \$1,422,692 (Rs 13 crore approx), while semi-finalists South Africa and England received Rs 9.24 crore and \$8.96 crore respectively.

Among other top finishers, West Indies cricket team was awarded \$538,269, while Pakistan team which played all its matches in Sri Lanka received \$522,692.

Further down the distribution list, Zimbabwe national cricket team was allocated \$491,538 and Sri Lanka received \$475,962.

Four more teams - Italy, Netherlands, United Arab Emirates and Nepal - each received \$256,154.

Finally, Canada, Namibia and Oman were each awarded \$225,000. The ICC said the prize-money distribution highlights its ongoing effort to increase financial incentives for players and strengthen cricket's development across its member nations participating in global tournaments and supporting the growth of the game across its member nations.

WORLD PARA ATHLETICS GP

Praveen Kumar leaps to gold as India shines

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 11: India's star high jumper Praveen Kumar soared to yet another gold, dominating his event as the hosts collected multiple medals on the opening day of the World Para Athletics Grand Prix here Wednesday.

Praveen, the 2024 Paris Paralympics gold medallist, dominated the men's T44 high jump, clearing 1.96m to take the top podium spot. Fellow Indians Unni Renu (1.86m) and Banti (1.83m) secured silver and bronze respectively in an event largely dominated by Indian participation, with limited foreign entries.

Shailesh Kumar clinched gold in the men's T42 high jump with a leap of 1.84m, while Ramsingbhai Gov Padhiyar (1.65m) and Lokesh Mantra (1.60m) secured silver and bronze respectively, completing an Indian clean sweep in the event.



In the women's 100m T35/T37 event, Preeti Pal, a double bronze medallist at the Paris Games, clinched gold after clearing 14.46 seconds, pushing Margarita Mataeva to second place (16.25s), while Karina Machulska took bronze in 17.38 seconds.

This marks Preeti Pal's second major medal in less than a year after she had secured silver at the World Para Athletics Championships at the same venue last year.

In the men's discus throw F11/F12, Monu won gold with a throw of 34.30m, Praveen Sharma took silver with 32.96m, and Sanjay Reddy Neelam secured bronze with 30.15m, giving India another podium sweep.

Indian athletes also dominated the men's discus throw F37 event, where Haney won gold with a throw of 59.95m, while Rishi Raj Rathore secured silver with 46.25m and Bhavishay took bronze with 45.35m.

Nat'l Rugby 15s C'ship: Hurricanes, Gymkhana set up men's final clash



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 11: Defending champions Delhi Hurricanes and Bombay Gymkhana Rugby Club booked their places in the Men's Final of the National Rugby 15s Championship 2026 - Division 1 after contrasting semi-final victories at the Kalinga Stadium here Wednesday.

In the first semi-final, defending champions Delhi Hurricanes delivered a dominant performance to defeat Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) 83-0, showcasing their attacking depth and clinical finishing.

The second semi-final saw a

closely contested battle between Bombay Gymkhana and Future Hope Harlequins, with the Mumbai side edging out a 13-3 victory.

Earlier in the day, the Plate Semi-Finals saw Bangalore RC register a 26-0 victory over Rebels RC. In the other Plate Semi-Final, Calcutta Cricket and Football Club (CC&FC) defeated Sergeant Institute Rugby Club 13-3.

Attention will first turn to the Women's Finals Day Thursday, where defending champions Odisha RC will take on Future Hope Harlequins in the Women's Final, while CC&FC and Delhi Hurricanes will face off in the third-place playoff.

War hits FIFA WC as Iran bows out

REUTERS

Tehran, March 11: Iran cannot participate in the 2026 World Cup after co-host the United States launched airstrikes against the country alongside Israel, killing its leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, sports minister Ahmad Donyamali said Wednesday.

The United States and Israel launched airstrikes on Iran nearly two weeks ago, killing the Islamic Republic's supreme leader, leading to a region-wide conflict in the Gulf.

"Considering that this corrupt regime has assassinated our leader, under no circumstances can we participate in the World Cup," the minister told state television.

The 48-team World Cup will be held in the United States, Mexico and Canada from June 11 to July 19. "Our children are not safe and, fundamentally, such conditions for participation do not exist," Donyamali said.

"Given the malicious actions they have carried out against Iran, they have forced two wars on us over eight or nine months



Considering that this corrupt regime has assassinated our leader, under no circumstances can we participate in the World Cup. AHMAD DONYAMALI | SPORTS MINISTER

■ 48-team tournament to be hosted by US, Canada and Mexico

■ Iran sports minister says 'under no circumstances can we participate'

■ Iranian team scheduled to play all three group games in US

■ US and Israel began strikes on Iran February 28

and have killed and martyred thousands of our people. Therefore, we certainly cannot have such a presence."

More than 1,300 Iranian civilians have been killed since the US and Israeli airstrikes began on February 28, according to Iran's UN ambassador, Amir Saeid Irvani.

IRAN DRAWN TO PLAY IN LA AND SEATTLE

In the draw last December, the Iranians were grouped with Belgium, Egypt and New Zea-

land. All three of their Group G matches were scheduled to take place in the US, two in Los Angeles and one in Seattle.

Iran, who dominated the Asian qualifying rounds to qualify for the tournament in March last year, was the only nation missing from a FIFA planning summit for World Cup participants held last week in Atlanta. Reuters has contacted the Iranian Football Federation for comment, while there was no immediate comment from FIFA on a replacement if Iran

followed through with a boycott.

FIFA regulations for the World Cup state that any team that withdraws from the tournament "no later than 30 days before the first match" will be fined at least 250,000 Swiss francs (\$320,800) by the FIFA Disciplinary Committee.

"Disciplinary sanctions may include the expulsion of the participating member association concerned from subsequent FIFA competitions and/or the replacement of the participating member association with another member association," FIFA's regulations say.

INFANTINO SAYS PRESIDENT TRUMP WELCOMES IRAN TEAM

Earlier, FIFA President Gianni Infantino said he had met US President Donald Trump, who told him he welcomed Iran's participation in the 2026 Soccer World Cup.

Trump had previously said "I really don't care" if Iran participated at the World Cup or not, but Infantino said he had a productive discussion with the president.

Bayern, Atletico run riot, Liverpool stumble, Barca stalled

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

UCL ROUND OF 16



Paris, March 11: Bayern Munich and Atletico Madrid took giant strides toward the Champions League quarterfinals with big wins Tuesday. Liverpool and Barcelona still have work to do.

Bayern thrashed Atalanta 6-1 without top scorer Harry Kane in the starting lineup. And Atletico made under-pressure Tottenham coach Igor Tudor pay for his bold call to drop first-choice goalkeeper Guglielmo Vicario by racing to a 3-0 lead inside 15 minutes. The Spanish giant eventually won 5-2.

Liverpool needs to overturn a 1-0 defeat to Galatasaray in next week's second leg at Anfield and Barcelona needed Lamine Yamal's penalty with the last kick of the game to rescue a 1-1 draw at Newcastle.

Goals galore
Even without the prolific Kane, Bayern all but sealed its place in the last eight with a dominant win at Atalanta.

England captain Kane has

scored 47 goals this season for club and country but was only fit enough to make the bench and in his absence Michael Olise scored twice. Serge Gnabry and Nicolas Jackson each scored and set up goals.

England captain Kane has scored 47 goals this season for club and country but was only fit enough to make the bench and in his absence Michael Olise scored twice. Serge Gnabry and Nicolas Jackson each scored and set up goals. Josip Stanistic and Jamal Musiala were also on target for the German champion.

Tottenham endured a nightmare start in Madrid, with backup keeper Antonin Kinsky substituted in the 17th minute after his mistakes led to two of Atletico's three early goals.

Spurs coach Tudor had opted to leave out first choice Vicario - a decision that backfired spectacularly. Kinsky was making his Champions League debut and his slip and miskick in the sixth gave Marcos Llorente the chance to open the scoring.

Antoine Griezmann made it 2-0 for Atletico before Kinsky miskicked again and Julian Alvarez slotted into an empty net. Kinsky looked inconsolable when he was replaced by Vicario, who conceded just five minutes after coming on - Robin Le Normand scoring Atletico's fourth.

According stats provider Opta, this was the first time in Tottenham's history that it has lost six games in a row. **Barcelona leaves it late**

Five-time European champion Barcelona was seconds away from defeat when Malick Thiaw brought down Dani Olmo in the box.

Referee Marco Guida pointed to the spot and 18-year-old Yamal had the composure to beat Aaron Ramsdale with the home

Night of giants and underdogs



Bayer Leverkusen vs Arsenal Bodo/Glimt vs Sporting CP



Paris Saint-Germain vs Chelsea Real Madrid vs Manchester City

fans baying for him to miss. His goal was timed at 96 minutes and the fulltime whistle was blown immediately after his spot kick. **Galatasaray holds advantage against Liverpool**

First it was Juventus, and now Liverpool. Galatasaray is cutting a swath through Euro-

pean soccer's giants.

A 1-0 first-leg win in Istanbul gave the Turkish champion the advantage in this round-of-16 tie. Mario Lemina's seventh-minute header secured the win for Galatasaray, which stunned Juventus with a 7-5 aggregate victory in the playoffs.