

HERE . NOW

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16 PAGES | ₹5.00



Orissa POST

HERE . NOW

15 Years

of ink, integrity, and impact

To Our readers

We are grateful to you for walking this journey with us. Your curiosity, your trust, and your engagement have guided every headline we wrote and every story we pursued. This milestone belongs to you as much as to us. Thank you for turning every page with us.

— EDITOR

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

ORISSA



Kantabaunsuni Devi: Epitome of nature worship

The presence of the deity in the bamboo groves drives home the message where development can co-exist with environment which makes it a biodiversity hotspot and a powerful centre of faith for devotees who believe the deity fulfils their wishes



the bamboo grove and no major development work should be undertaken there. However, the temple management committee has arranged a gate outside and constructed a few rooms for visitors. Cutting bamboo in the area is strictly prohibited.

Pousha festival rush

The annual festival of Goddess Kantabaunsuni is celebrated with great

enthusiasm here on the last Tuesday of every Pousha month. Thousands of devotees from across the district, along with local residents, participate in the celebration.

On the occasion, tribal devotees observe a fast and offer prasad to the goddess. The temple premises are beautifully decorated, and a fair along with cultural programmes is organised. A large fair contin-

ues throughout the night, drawing a huge gathering of devotees.

Priest Jagannath Bodo Nayak said that for decades Goddess Kantabaunsuni has been worshipped as a deity who fulfils the wishes of devotees. Members of Nayak family have traditionally been serving as priests at the shrine for generations.

WITH INPUTS FROM AMITABHA BEHERA, KORAPUT

SUMAN MOHANTY, OP

siding in thorny bamboo groves.

Local tribal communities and hill dwellers worship the goddess as an incarnation of Goddess Durga. According to their belief, offering prayers to the deity brings fulfillment of wishes such as marriage, childbirth and prosperity.

Due to this belief, devotees not only from Koraput district but also from other regions and neighbouring states visit the shrine to seek the goddess's blessings.

Unique feature of the roofless temple

The temple is an exception despite NALCO ushering in major developments in the Damanjodi area. This temple retains its primitive appearance, undisturbed by mans interference.

One needs to know that the tribes and others consider each and every bamboo in the forest as sacred sanctum of Goddess Durga. And the loosely dangling long bamboos in the bamboo bushes resembling like swords are revered as Lord Shiva or lingam, the consort of Goddess Durga. The bamboos here were all formed on its own. There are no other bamboo trees in entire Panchpatmali hill area.

One of the distinctive features of the temple is that it has no roof. The idol of the goddess is installed under the open sky. A large number of devotees visit the shrine every Tuesday and Saturday.

Devotees offer lamps, incense sticks, sacred food, bangles, red cloth and bells while praying to the goddess for the fulfillment of their wishes. As part of a local tradition, devotees tie red clothes and bells to bamboo clumps to seek the fulfillment of their wishes.

To reach the temple, visitors have to pass through a narrow path surrounded by hundreds of bamboo clumps.

Temple priest Arjun Dami said the goddess' seat must remain within



OUR CENSUS, OUR DEVELOPMENT

(First Phase of Census 2027)

Houselisting and Housing Census by the Government of India is about to begin in your State/Union Territory. Before this, a 15-day special facility is being provided where you can fill in your information online yourself.

I am Pragati



I am Vikas



SELF-ENUMERATION

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- 5 Fill in information related to the house and family
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- 7 Keep the SE ID safe
- 8 Provide the SE ID to the enumerator when they visit
- 9 The enumerator will confirm the information

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- Time-Saving
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Remember: Self-enumeration is a special facility

If you are unable to self-enumerate, do not worry; an enumerator will definitely visit your home during the scheduled period to record the information

All your information will remain completely confidential and secure

Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Goa, Karnataka, Sikkim, Lakshadweep, Odisha and Mizoram

Self-Enumeration

1st - 15th April

Houselisting

16th April - 15th May

Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu

Self-Enumeration

5th - 19th April

Houselisting

20th April - 19th May

LET US FULFILL OUR RESPONSIBILITY AND PARTICIPATE IN THE CENSUS

[f](#) [X](#) [i](#) [v](#) CensusIndia2027

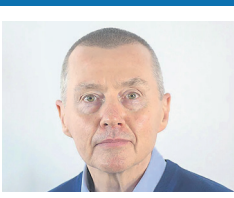
Vir Vikram Yadav new DGCA chief

New Delhi: Senior bureaucrat Vir Vikram Yadav has been appointed the chief of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) as part of a senior-level bureaucratic reshuffle effected by the Centre Tuesday. Yadav, a 1996-batch IAS officer of Odisha cadre, succeeds incumbent Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, who has now been appointed as Additional Secretary, Department of Personnel and Training. Yadav is an Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.



IATA chief Walsh is IndiGo CEO

New Delhi: The country's largest airline, IndiGo, Tuesday announced the appointment of William Walsh, a pilot and current chief of the global airlines' grouping IATA, as its next CEO. The appointment comes less than three weeks after the sudden exit of Pieter Elbers against the backdrop of massive operational disruptions at the airline in December last year. An airline industry veteran, Walsh, popularly known as Willie, was formerly CEO of British Airways and IAG.







MESSAGE OF HON'BLE GOVERNOR OF ODISHA ON THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION OF ODISHA DIVAS-2026

On the auspicious occasion of Odisha Divas-2026, I greet the people of the State and extend them my good wishes. On this day, I call upon all to stay committed to build a Samruddha and Viksit Odisha.

(Signature)
(Hari Babu Kambhampati)

OIPR-15001/15001/2/25-26/0012

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଦିବସ ଅବସରରେ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା

ଜୟ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ!

ଆଜି ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଦିବସ । ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଅସ୍ମିତା ଓ ସ୍ୱାଭିମାନର ଦିବସ । ଏହି ଅବସରରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ତଥା ଦେଶ ଓ ବିଶ୍ୱର କୋଣ ଅନୁକୋଣରେ ରହୁଥିବା ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଓ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ଜଣାଉଛି ।

ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପ୍ରଦେଶ ଗଠନ ପାଇଁ ତ୍ୟାଗ ଓ ବଳିଦାନ ରଖୁଥିବା ସମସ୍ତ ବରପୁତ୍ରମାନଙ୍କ ନୀତି ଓ ଆଦର୍ଶ ଆମକୁ ପିଢ଼ି ପରେ ପିଢ଼ି ଅନୁପ୍ରାଣିତ କରି ଆସୁଛି ଓ ଆସୁଥିବ । ଏହି ଅବସରରେ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ପ୍ରତି ମୋର ଗଭୀର ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାଞ୍ଜଳି ଅର୍ପଣ କରୁଛି ।

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଆଜି ନୂଆ ଆଶା, ନୂଆ ଭରସା ଓ ଗଭୀର ଆତ୍ମବିଶ୍ୱାସର ସହିତ ଆଗକୁ ବଢୁଛି । ୨୦୩୭ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ଆମେ ସମୃଦ୍ଧ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଗଠନ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ରଖୁଛୁ । ଆଗାମୀ ଦଶ ବର୍ଷ ପ୍ରତ୍ୟେକ ଓଡ଼ିଆଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ସଂକଳ୍ପର ବର୍ଷ ହେଉ ।

ଆସନ୍ତୁ, ଆମେ ସମସ୍ତେ, ସମୃଦ୍ଧ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଗଠନର ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ପୂରଣ ପାଇଁ ଦୃଢ଼ ସଂକଳ୍ପବଦ୍ଧ ହୋଇ କାମ କରିବା ।

ବନ୍ଦେ ଉତ୍କଳ ଜନନୀ ।

(Signature)
(ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ନାୟକ)
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

15001/12/2526




90 YEARS OF ODISHA

90 YEARS OF TRUST



ଉତ୍କଳ ଦିବସର ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ

A Legacy of Shared Journey and Trust.
Odisha & Khimji - Shining Since 1936.

BANDE UTKALA JANANI

Oppn mocks SCs, STs by calling them weak: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday launched a sharp attack on the Opposition, accusing it of undermining Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) by branding leadership from these communities as "weak."

Addressing the Assembly, CM said that during this Budget session, the Opposition had failed to engage constructively inside the House while remaining "overactive outside." He alleged that repeated disruptions prevented meaningful debates on key public issues.

"The Assembly is meant for dignified discussion, criticism and debate. Unfortunately, the Opposition chose chaos over cooperation," Majhi said. "By calling a Chief Minister from a tribal background weak, they are indirectly insulting the SC and ST communities."

The Chief Minister claimed that nearly half of the Assembly session's productivity was lost due to persistent protests and disruptions. According to him, the government had been ready to discuss all issues, but the Opposition's "intolerant attitude"



stalled proceedings.

He further criticised the Opposition for staging protests outside the House instead of participating in discussions. "Important matters concerning the people could not be taken up because of their behaviour," he added. Majhi also questioned the Opposition's past record, citing earlier incidents and alleging selective outrage. He accused them of raising issues now while remaining silent during previous controversies.

"Their moral stand is questionable. They speak loudly today but forget their own actions when they were in power," he said.

Taking a swipe at recent political developments, the Chief Minister remarked on the growing proximity between Biju Jana-

ta Dal (BJD) and the Indian National Congress. "They are now protesting together like brothers. While alliances are part of democracy, they should first ensure unity within their own parties," he said, hinting at internal dissent among Opposition legislators.

Responding to concerns raised by Opposition members over rising public debt, Majhi stated that Odisha's finances remain under control.

He informed the House that by February 2026, the state's total public debt stood at approximately ₹1.25 lakh crore. Against a planned borrowing of ₹46,400 crore for the 2025-26 financial year, the government had raised funds responsibly and repaid ₹17,746 crore during the same period.

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The creation of Odisha as a separate province April 1, 1936, marked the culmination of decades of effort by visionaries who fought to protect the language, culture and identity of Odias. With the state approaching nine decades since its formation, cultural organisations and educational institutions are increasingly making efforts to highlight the historical significance of the day.

The state government is set to celebrate Odia Pakhya—a grand cultural initiative aligning with Utkal Divas from April 1 to April 14. The fortnight-long festivities, coordinated by multiple departments, aim to rekindle pride in Odia heritage while encouraging citizen engagement across the state.

Themed 'A Cultural Revival', Odia Pakhya 2026 is designed not just as a festival but as a movement to strengthen cultural identity and community participation.

The celebrations will kick off with state-level Utkal Divas celebration at Suando in Puri and Krushi Shiksha Sadan, Bhubaneswar. 'Khadi Chuan' Day, with primary school enrollment campaigns, will follow April 2. April 3, 'Our Attire, Our Identity' campaign will promote traditional Odia dress through selfies and competitions, while April 4 will see a statewide drive for installing Odia signboards in shops, markets and government offices. April 5 will feature a heritage



Kharvela Bhawan decked up with lights on the eve of Utkal Divas in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

run organised by Sports & Youth Services, and Higher Education departments to familiarise young people with state's historic sites. April 6 will focus on statewide cleanliness and maintenance drives at temples and heritage sites. Children's Day April 7 will include storytelling, writing competitions on Odia language and literature, and 'Know Our Budget' initiative to raise public finance awareness. April 8 will mark the blood donation drive in collaboration with the Red Cross and Health and Family Welfare department, while April 9 will launch the 'Let's Buy Books' campaign featuring book fairs and exhibitions. April 10 is dedicated to state's folk arts, honouring traditional artists, and April 11 will

see Odia Literary Academy host the 'Amrut Pidhi Saraswat Ceremony' to celebrate literary contributions. April 12 will feature the 'Bandaniya Baraputra' programme with essays, oratory competitions, and floral tributes to notable personalities, followed by April 13's 'Our Taste, Our Food' festival promoting traditional Odia cuisine. The grand finale April 14 will celebrate the Odia New Year at Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology, with awards for cultural competitions, traditional Pana drinks, and a special programme on 'Odia Language, Information & Technology' to promote digital literacy in Odia.

Health and Family Welfare department held a preparatory meeting chaired by department

Secretary Ashwati S. "As we mark the 90th year of Odisha's identity, we must move beyond being a mineral hub to becoming a global knowledge economy. Odisha needs empowered minds, climate resilience, and inclusive prosperity. By 2036, we can set a global benchmark for sustainable development and Odia pride," educationist NK Pujari said.

"When youth move out of the state, maintaining Odia identity becomes a struggle. Our language is declining, and connection to traditions is fading. We need encouragement and empowerment to embrace our culture so that Odisha's legacy shines on global stages," Anindita Mishra, a student highlighted.

Pratibha Ray among 3 for Akademi Fellowship

Bhubaneswar/New Delhi: In a significant recognition of literary excellence, the Sahitya Akademi has announced its prestigious fellowship for three eminent writers, including Odia author Pratibha Ray, at the Akademi's general council meeting recently. The fellowship, regarded as the highest literary honour conferred by the Sahitya Akademi, is reserved for the most distinguished figures in Indian literature—often described as an honour for the 'immortals' of the literary world. The Akademi function under Centre's Ministry of Culture and represents the country's premier literary institution. Alongside Ray, the fellowship will also be conferred on noted Hindi writer Lakhmi Khilani and eminent Urdu author Abdus Samad.

BDA inks pact for new City in Bhubaneswar



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) Tuesday signed an agreement with Singapore-based Surbana Jurong to prepare a comprehensive master plan for a proposed New City in Bhubaneswar.

The ambitious project, spread over nearly 800 acres across Gothapatna, Malipada and Daspur, aligns with the state's long-term vision document Viksit Odisha 2036. It aims to develop a multi-economic growth zone with modern urban infrastructure and inclusive development.

The agreement was signed by BDA Secretary Manas Ranjan Padhi and Surbana Jurong Deputy Director Manideep Dutta in the presence of senior officials, including Deputy Commissioner and Nodal Officer (New City) Bhabataran Sahu, Associate Town Planner Omkar Mohanty, Assistant Town Planner Manasi Mohanty and PMU Team Leader Ajay Jha.

Officials said the New City will be developed as a tran-

sit-oriented urban hub, focusing on efficient public transport, reduced travel time and integrated mixed land use. The plan also emphasises affordable housing under the "Housing for All" concept, catering to all income groups.

BDA Vice-Chairman Chanchal Rana said the project will feature modern infrastructure such as Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) facilities, innovation hubs and advanced data centres. He added that special emphasis will be placed on creative placemaking, including central forest parks, gateway plazas and vibrant public spaces to foster community interaction.

The project will also integrate green and smart infrastructure to enhance livability. BDA has been designated as the nodal agency for its implementation. Once completed, the New City is expected to guide Bhubaneswar's expansion, curb unplanned growth, create employment opportunities and attract investments, while promoting sustainable and inclusive urban development.

Maoist surrender window closed: Police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 31: Asserting the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) no longer poses a threat in the state, Odisha Police Tuesday said the surrender window for the remaining Maoists has been closed with the deadline ending March 31.

Additional Director General of Police (Anti-Naxal Operations) Sanjeeb Panda said only a handful of Maoists remain active in Kandhamal district, and security forces will now focus on eliminating them.

"Only about eight to nine Maoists are left in Kandhamal district. Now that the surrender deadline is over, we will focus on tracking them down to achieve complete success," he told reporters.

His remarks came a day after Union Home Minister Amit Shah declared that the country has become free of Naxal violence.

Panda said the mission to end LWE by March 31 was challenging but was achieved through coordinated efforts of security forces, the state government and public cooperation.

Dubey's Biju remark triggers outrage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: A controversial remark by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey on former chief minister and freedom fighter Biju Patnaik has sparked a political storm in the state, drawing sharp criticism from political leaders, social activists and netizens. Dubey alleged that Biju Patnaik acted as a link between former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the CIA during the 1962 war with China.

BJD president and former CM Naveen Patnaik condemned the statement as "outrageous" and suggested the MP should consult a mental health professional.

In an attempt to clarify, Dubey took to X, saying his remarks were aimed at highlighting the "misdeeds of the Congress" and not intended to malign Biju Patnaik.

Political analyst Naba Kishore Pujari termed the allegations "baseless" and politically motivated, accusing the BJP of tacitly backing the MP to divert parliamentary scrutiny. He underscored Biju Patnaik's legacy as a patriot, pilot and architect of modern Odisha, dis-



missing the "CIA link" claim as a distortion of history for political gain.

Netizens flooded social media defending Biju Patnaik. Young resident Nishant Nihar wrote, "Nobody comes to Odisha and slanders Biju Babu. He is not just a leader; he is an emotion for every Odia."

Social activist Sudarshan Chhotaray praised Biju Patnaik as a strong leader and lamented that such baseless attacks came from a member of the ruling party.

Human Rights activist Pradipta Nayak termed any attempt to tarnish Biju Patnaik's image "deeply unfortunate and unacceptable," urging BJP leaders to focus on development

over controversies. Literary figures like Kedar Mishra and public affairs expert Subhankar Bera said documented history affirms Patnaik's heroism, and denying it reflects intellectual failure.

History professor Atashi Patnaik noted that during World War II, Biju Babu served in the Royal Indian Air Force and civilian aviation networks, earning honours such as the Order of Lenin and the Jubilee Medal "50 Years of Victory in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945" from Russia.

In 1947, at Jawaharlal Nehru's request, he undertook a daring mission to Java, Indonesia, rescuing leaders like Sukarno and Sutan Sjahrir.

State Congress chief Bhakta Charan Das termed Dubey's remarks "completely unacceptable," while senior leader Bijay Mohapatra demanded an immediate apology, calling them "false, deceitful and unbecoming of a parliamentarian."

Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan also described the statements as "negative and unacceptable," warning against politicising the issue and stressing that it insults Biju Patnaik's legacy.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate, Jaleswar, Affidavit No: 1304, dated: 30/03/2026, I, NIROJ KUMAR PRADHAN, S/o - Gaya Prasad Pradhan, Address : Vill- Munutunia, P.O- Munutunia , P.S- Raibania , Dist - Balasore , Pin -756033 declare that I have changed the name of my son from R.N. Shritam Kumar to R N Shritam Kumar . Henceforth, he shall be known as R N Shritam Kumar for all purposes. NIROJ KUMAR PRADHAN

LOST

I, Abinash Samal, legal owner of the property vide Plot No. 909, Khata No 512/233 Mouza -Gangapatna, Bhubaneswar - 752054, Khordha, Odisha, hereby declare that the link original sale deed and ROR (Record of Rights) in the name of Bibhudutta Panda (Seller) related to Plot No. 909, Khata No 512/233, Mouza - Gangapatna, Area -0.837dcm1 has been lost somewhere during the process of transfer. If anyone found then they are requested to kindly contact at below mentioned address. Brajesh Kumar Mishra Advocate Phone Number: +91 94380 08708 Email: brajeshbm@gmail.com

IN 3 YEARS, WILD ANIMAL ATTACKS LEAVE 523 DEAD

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 31: A total of 523 people have lost their lives and 1,391 have been injured in attacks by wild animals, including elephants, in Odisha over the past three years, Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia told the Assembly Tuesday.

Replying to a written question by BJP legislator Padmalochan Panda, Singkhuntia said that 175 people were killed and 408 others were injured by wild animals in different forest divisions of Odisha during the financial year 2022-23. The figures rose to 186 deaths and 445 injuries during 2023-24.

Similarly, wild animals killed 162 people and injured 538 individuals in the state during 2024-25, he said.

According to the data submitted by the Forest Minister, 92 people lost their lives in conflicts with wild animals in the Dhenkanal forest division, while 54 such deaths were reported in the Angul forest division during the three-year period.



4 Royal Bengal Tigers, 264 elephants, 25 leopards, and 1,426 other wild animals were killed in different forest areas of Odisha during the three-year period

Other forest divisions that reported higher numbers of deaths due to wild animal attacks include Keonjhar (52), Baripada (36), Sambalpur (34), and Bonai (33). Notably, Odisha has 43 forest divisions.

Similarly, the highest number of injuries—155—were reported in the Keonjhar forest division, followed by Dhenkanal (113), Khurda (87), Redhakhol (77), Khariar (66), and Deogarh (65), he stated.

Further, Singkhuntia said that 264 elephant deaths were reported in the state during the three-year period. Of these, 132 died due to natural causes, while an equal number were attributed to unnatural causes.

During this period, four Royal Bengal Tigers, 25 leopards, and 1,426 other wild animals were killed in different forest areas of Odisha, of which 447 were killed by poachers, he added.

Road safety drive extended till April 10

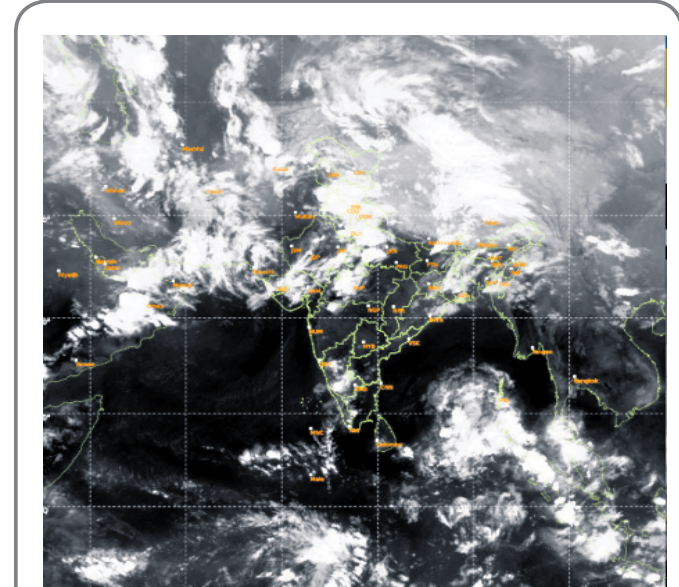
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: The state government has extended its ongoing special road safety drive till April 10, stepping up efforts to curb the rising number of road accidents across the state. The campaign, launched March 21, is being conducted under the direction of Commerce and Transport Minister Bibhuti Bhushan Jena.

As part of the crackdown, officials have announced stricter checks on vehicle compliance. While verification of Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificates was relaxed till April 1, enforcement will resume strictly from April 2. Authorities will conduct PUC checks along with other provisions under the Motor Vehicles Act.

The initiative adopts a two-pronged approach—awareness and enforcement. Authorities are conducting road safety campaigns across Odisha to promote responsible driving, while enforcement agencies have been directed to take strict action against violators, particularly reckless and non-compliant drivers. Odisha has witnessed a steady rise in road accidents in recent years, prompting the government to adopt stricter safety measures.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	93.89 ↓ 0.45	SENSEX	71947.55 ↑ 1635.67	GOLD	₹146,635 ↑ ₹994
EURO	108.08 ↓ 0.06	NIFTY	22331.40 ↓ 488.20	SILVER	₹238,060 ↑ ₹9099



WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	34.8°	33.6°	Light to Moderate rain or thunderstorm
Min Temp	25.2°	23.4°	
Humidity	85%	83%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	



SHOCKING ARSON: Three two-wheelers and an SUV parked near the boundary wall of Orissa High Court in Cuttack were reduced to cinders after a woman allegedly set the vehicles ablaze due to unknown reasons, Tuesday. OP PHOTO

2 asphyxiated in septic tank

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kuchinda, March 31: Despite frequent incidents of labourers dying in septic tanks due to oxygen deprivation, there remains a lack of awareness among homeowners and contractors about the need for proper safety measures. This concern was highlighted again Tuesday, when two persons were asphyxiated and as many were rendered critical while removing the centering of a septic tank in Keshabahal village under Mahulpali police limits in Sambalpur district.



(6 & 7/26) were registered at Mahulpali police station and the bodies sent for postmortem.

The deceased were identified as Sushil Naik, 35, and Bhikari Charan Behera, 55, of the village. Two labourers – Hemant Behera, 33, and Anand Majhi, 30 – were rescued in critical condition and admitted to Kuchinda hospital.

According to reports, Lokanath Behera of Keshabahal had constructed a new septic tank. The workers arrived there to open the centering of the tank Tuesday. Sushil first entered the tank but did not come out for a long time. Then Anand entered the tank, followed by Hemant, Lokanath's son. When none of them came out, Lokanath's brother Bhikari also entered the tank but didn't come out.

US WARSHIP IN INDIAN OCEAN

AGENCIES

Washington, March 31: As speculation is rife over a possible US ground invasion in Iran, the amphibious assault ship USS Tripoli, believed to be carrying around 1,800 Marines, is in the Indian Ocean, US Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a social media post Monday.

A photo showed the 45,000-tonne warship steaming in the Indian Ocean Sunday, according to the CENTCOM post. It did not indicate how far the ship is from Iran.

The Tripoli is carrying troops from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), based in Okinawa, according to photos from March 26 posted on a Defense Department website. The photos show Marines participating in a "ship defense exercise".

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The Tripoli is carrying troops from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), based in Okinawa, according to photos from March 26 posted on a Defense Department website. The photos show Marines participating in a "ship defense exercise".

Trump: Go get your own oil

Dubai: US President Donald Trump Tuesday said nations upset by high fuel prices should "go get your own oil" as Iran maintains its chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz. Trump expressed his frustration toward allies that have been unwilling to help the US reopen the critical passageway in a social media post. "Go get your own oil," Trump wrote. He also said they should buy from the US because "we have plenty".

CAG: 7 SPSEs incurred ₹794.98cr loss in FY23

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 31: Seven state public sector enterprises (SPSEs) incurred a loss of ₹794.98 crore during FY 2022-23, up from ₹453.11 crore in FY 2021-22, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) said Tuesday.

The CAG audited the financial performance of the SPSEs for the financial year 2022-23 and mentioned its findings in a report, which was tabled in the Assembly Tuesday.

"Of the 29 SPSEs audited, seven incurred a loss of ₹794.98 crore during the 2022-23. These seven SPSEs had incurred a loss of ₹453.11 crore during 2021-22," the auditor said.

Out of the total loss of ₹794.98 crore, the loss of ₹788.73 crore was mainly contributed by GRIDCO Limited (Rs 778.18

crore) and Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (Rs 10.55 crore), it said.

The other loss-making SPSEs are: Odisha Rail Infrastructure Development Limited, Odisha Tourism Development Corporation Ltd, Kalinga Studios Limited, Odisha Sports Development and Promotion Company Ltd and GEDCOL SAIL Power Corporation Ltd, the report said.

The CAG has also found several loopholes in state PSU Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC). The OMC has 36 mining leases as of March 2025. While 18 are operative, the remaining 18 have been inoperative for the last several years.

The audit found that OMC had paid a penalty of ₹3,761.88 crore for producing 29.47 million tonne during 2017-22 in excess of quantities permitted under environment and forest clearances.

8 KILLED IN BIHAR TEMPLE STAMPEDE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bihar Sharif (Bihar), March 31: At least eight devotees, mostly women, were killed and eight injured in a stampede at a temple in Bihar's Nalanda district Tuesday, officials said.

The incident took place due to heavy rush of devotees at Sheetla Mata temple, under the jurisdiction of Deep Nagar police station, Tuesday morning, an officer said.

Bihar Sharif Assistant Su-

PM announces ₹2L and CM ₹6L ex gratia for next kin of deceased

perintendent of Police Noorul Haque said, "At least eight devotees, mostly women, died in the stampede at Shitala Mata temple Tuesday morning. Eight devotees were also injured in the incident. Police personnel and officials of the district administration have reached the spot, and the rescue work is on."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the loss of lives

in the stampede and announced an ex gratia of ₹2 lakh for the families of the deceased and ₹50,000 for those injured.

"The mishap in Nalanda district, Bihar, is deeply painful. I extend my condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. Prayers for the speedy recovery of those injured," the PM said in a message.

He announced that an ex gratia of ₹2 lakh from PMNRF

would be given to the next of kin of the deceased and ₹50,000 to the injured.

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar expressed grief over the deaths of devotees in the stampede and announced ₹6 lakh ex gratia for the kin of the deceased.

The Station House Officer (SHO) of the Deep Nagar police station was suspended with immediate effect for the dereliction of duty.





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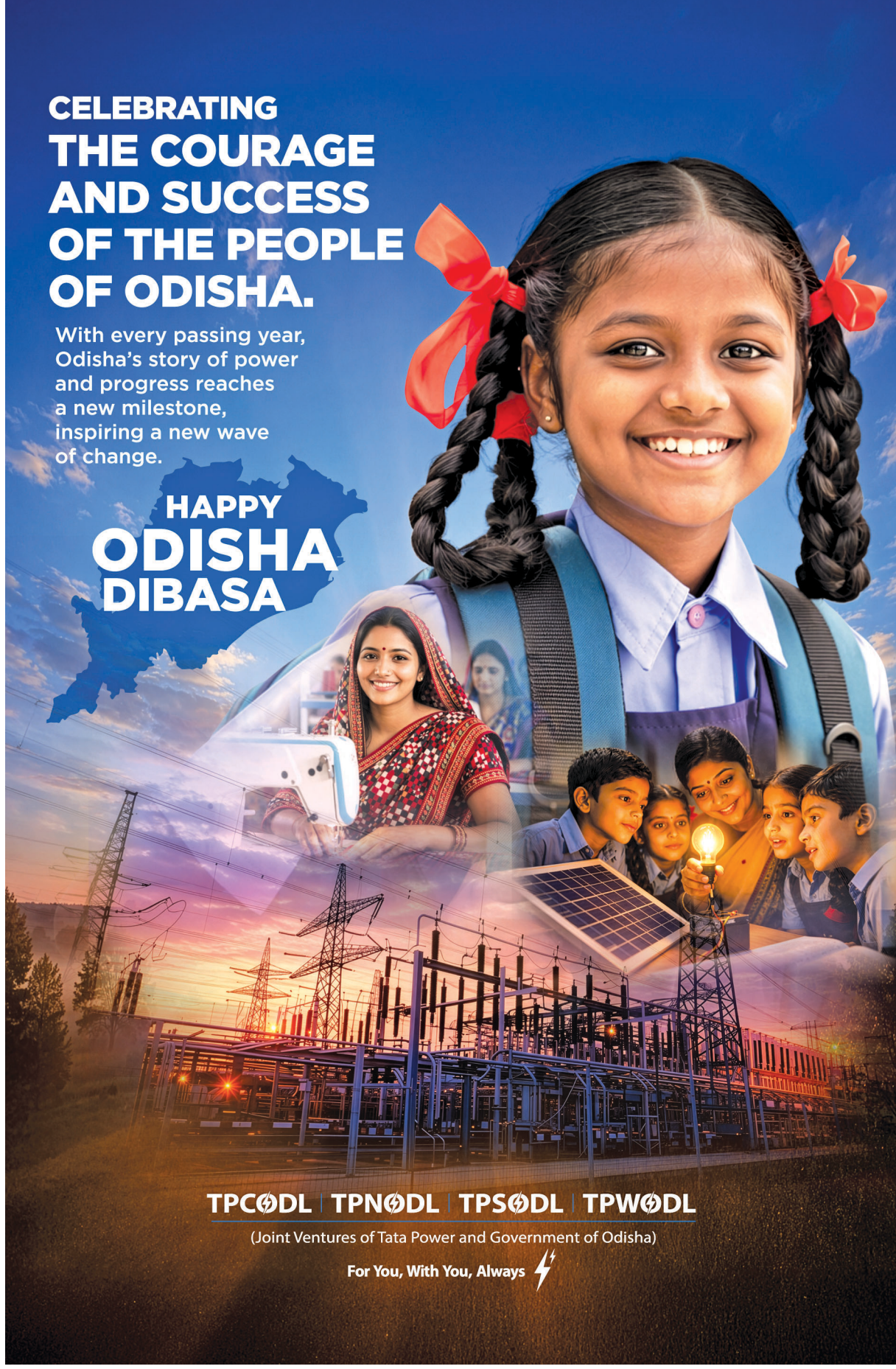
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FOCUS SOCIETY

BATTLE FOR ATTENTION



Paradoxically, technologies designed to reduce cognitive load are increasing it. Instead of freeing up time for reflection, they compress decision cycles and multiply interruptions

more precise than anything previously possible. It also blurs the line between authentic and synthetic information, further destabilizing trust.

Paradoxically, technologies designed to reduce cognitive load are increasing it. Instead of freeing up time for reflection, they compress decision cycles and multiply interruptions. The consequence is a gradual shift from deliberate, top-down attention toward reactive, bottom-up processing – a transformation with profound implications for democracy, markets, and strategic decision-making.

Over the next decade, three futures are conceivable. In the first, fragmentation intensifies, personalized information bubbles become total, and shared reality dissolves. In the second, regulation imposes partial constraints, stabilizing the system without altering its core incentives. In the third, and most ambitious, scenario, attention becomes a consciously managed resource. Institutions redesign their information environments, and AI is repurposed not to capture attention, but to protect and enhance it.

The stakes are enormous. Attention determines what societies perceive, what they ignore, and ultimately what they decide. It shapes elections, economic activity, and conflicts. It governs the ability to detect weak signals, to anticipate crises, and to act rationally under uncertainty.

In this sense, attention is not just an individual faculty. It is a collective infrastructure – a form of cognitive capital that can be strengthened or degraded. The question is no longer whether attention will be contested – it already is – but whether we will continue to treat it as an exploitable resource or begin to govern it as a strategic asset essential to the survival of open societies.

The writer is the Founding President of the European Bank for Reconstruction & Development.

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sophisticated tools to capture and retain it.

Modern neuroscience has provided the playbook. The amygdala responds instantly to threat, ensuring that emotionally charged content spreads faster than neutral information. Dopamine-driven reward circuits encourage compulsive checking, the mechanism behind notifications and infinite scrolling. Meanwhile, the prefrontal cortex – the seat of judgment and critical thinking – requires sustained, uninterrupted attention, a condition that digital environments systematically erode.

The result is a structural asymmetry. It is far easier to hijack attention than to sustain it. Social media platforms have industrialized this asymmetry. Designed to maximize engagement, they privilege bottom-up attention – what shocks, entertains, or outrages – over reflective thought. As Tristan Harris, the co-founder of the Center for Humane Technology, has argued, thousands of engineers now diligently apply their skills to exploiting cognitive vulnerabilities, creating systems that compete directly with human self-control.

But the battle for attention is no longer confined to commerce. It has become geopolitical. For the first time in history, political and economic actors rely on the same global communication infrastructure. Governments, corporations, activist groups, and in-

telligence agencies all compete within the same digital arenas, using the same tools and targeting the same audiences.

Different regions have developed distinct models of attention control. The US relies on globally dominant private platforms, whose algorithms shape information flows worldwide. China has built a sovereign digital ecosystem, tightly controlling domestic attention while projecting influence abroad through platforms like TikTok. Europe, lacking major platforms, exerts influence primarily through regulation – seeking to constrain the excesses of the attention economy rather than dominate it.

In this new landscape, influence is less about persuasion than about redirection. One of the most powerful strategies is “agenda shifting”: not winning an argument, but changing the subject. By flooding attention with new controversies, actors can bury inconvenient truths or fragment public discourse. This tactic has been used by state and non-state actors alike, from coordinated disinformation campaigns to viral conspiracy movements.

Artificial intelligence is now accelerating these dynamics dramatically by reducing the cost of producing persuasive, emotionally engaging content. Generative AI can create text, images, and videos at scale and tailored to individual psychological profiles, enabling a form of cognitive targeting that is faster, cheaper, and

In the 21st century, power no longer lies only in territory, capital, or technology. It lies in something far more elusive and finite: human attention. The jury verdict in a US civil suit which found Meta and YouTube liable for deliberately addicting young users, leading to numerous mental health problems, is probably just an early skirmish in what promises to be a long war.

Attention is not merely a psychological convenience; it is a biological function. Neuroscience defines it as the process by which the brain selects, prioritizes, and sustains focus on a fraction of the information available to it. At every moment, we are immersed in a storm of signals, yet only a few reach conscious awareness.

This filtering is governed by two systems: a fast, reflexive, “bottom-up” attention driven by novelty, fear, and emotion; and a slower, deliberate, “top-down” attention that enables reasoning and strategic thought. The imbalance between these two systems is now the fault line of modern civilization.

For millennia, societies have sought to capture attention. Orators mastered rhetoric to move crowds. Religious institutions created rituals and edifices designed to command awe. Political regimes deployed spectacle – from Roman games to revolutionary propaganda – to shape collective focus.

The printing press, radio, and television expanded the scale of influence, but they did not fundamentally alter the nature of attention itself. What has changed today is the precision and intensity with which attention can be engineered.

The digital age has transformed attention into a commodity. As early as 1971, the American psychologist Herbert Simon warned that “a wealth of information creates a poverty of attention.” That paradox now defines our world. Every platform, brand, and political actor competes for a limited cognitive resource, using increasingly



Jacques Attali

ATTENTION DETERMINES WHAT SOCIETIES PERCEIVE, WHAT THEY IGNORE, AND ULTIMATELY WHAT THEY DECIDE



Never grumble. All sorts of forces enter you when you grumble and they pull you down.

THE MOTHER

Trump Trapped

It is the fifth week running since US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu launched the war against Iran. But till date no clear strategy and goal for the unprovoked and one-sided war have been defined. The US is relentlessly continuing its strikes on Iranian civilian targets and building up forces in the region with the customary Trumpian equivocations about whether it wants a ceasefire leading to peace or total “obliteration” of Iran. This war, started by Trump and Netanyahu has, over this brief period of time, become the war of Iran and not war on Iran.

The US President has clearly understood that this war is not an easy cake walk like Venezuela and that he has been trapped by Israel as Iran continues to launch missile and drone attacks on Israel and neighbouring Gulf states. Making matters even worse, Tehran’s proxies in the region – the Houthis and Hezbollah – have joined the war in support of Iran. On the other hand, the virtual closure of the Strait of Hormuz has already shot up oil prices with cascading effects on the global economy – affecting fuel, fertiliser and supply chains. The shortage is increasingly assuming serious proportions in Asian factories and European diesel markets. Vague, contradictory and unconfirmed reports of talks on negotiations between Iran and the US on clinching a peace deal may be doing the rounds but there is no sign that the US is winning and Iran collapsing. Obvious question could be who is the initiator of the talks.

Trump’s bravado and false claims of destroying Iran notwithstanding, it appears the two sides are now engaged in a war of attrition, each hoping to wear the other down and force it to agree to a deal on its own terms. No wonder the USA is sticking to its 15-point peace deal and Iran to its five-point one. But neither seems to be willing to budge from their respective stand. At the same time each of the warring nations is touting its successes and pointing to their opponent’s failures. The truth is, however, buried in propaganda. And that is perpetuating the conflict.

In the first place this war should never have been started for the simple reason that there was no immediate threat and the objectives are as clear as mud. In fact, the US began the war when negotiations on Iran’s nuclear programme were about to yield positive results. Only Trump and Netanyahu have to bear the responsibility for the bloodshed, loss of thousands of lives and destruction of homes and infrastructure. Trump continues to chase the mirage that he can force a regime change in Tehran. At times, he says the entire Iranian leadership has been eliminated and then claims the new leadership is good enough, while the reality is the son of the killed supreme leader is now in charge and under him the country of Iran is perhaps growing even more hawkish.

The conflicting statements of Trump tend to create the impression that he is caught in such a trap that he cannot escalate the war with a daily expense of over \$1 billion and the possibility of heavy casualties in US ranks that would cause serious adverse reactions in his own country. Nor can he stop this war which would cause a serious loss of face for him personally as also the US’ military prowess, but also put Iran in a position of strength that he never desired.

Meanwhile, the foreign ministers of Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey met in Islamabad on 29 March to work out a ceasefire agreement and also curb Israeli and Iranian dominance after the war. The group’s first goal is to persuade all sides to stop the escalation and agree to a ceasefire, according to Gulf observers. They are also reportedly trying to convince Iran to allow some vessels to go through the Strait of Hormuz under the protection of a friendly country. They can act as a primary interlocutor with Iran keeping indirect negotiating channels open between Tehran and Washington.

In this there appears to be some progress. Without diplomacy or restraint, the economic crisis will deepen and US soldiers may be embroiled in a blood-letting reminiscent of the US war in Vietnam.

WISDOM CORNER

The snow goose need not bathe to make itself white. Neither need you do anything but be yourself.

LAO TZU

Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul - and sings the tunes without the words - and never stops at all.

EMILY DICKINSON

To understand the heart and mind of a person, look not at what he has already achieved, but at what he aspires to.

KAHLIL GIBRAN

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1815:** Otto von Bismarck, the founder and first chancellor (1871-90) of the German Empire, was born.
- 1924:** Adolf Hitler was sentenced to five years in prison for his role in the Beer Hall Putsch; he ultimately served only nine months, during which time he wrote much of Mein Kampf (“My Struggle”).
- 1939:** General Franco proclaims victory in the Spanish civil war. The dictator ruled Spain until his death in 1975. His regime was responsible for gross human rights violations, including murdering numerous political opponents.
- 1945:** U.S. troops landed on the Japanese island of Okinawa during World War II, marking the beginning of the Battle of Okinawa.
- 1976:** Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, and Ronald Wayne formed Apple Computer Inc., and it became one of the world’s leading tech companies.
- 1979:** Following overwhelming support in a national referendum, Ruhollah Khomeini declared Iran an Islamic republic; it marked the end of the Iranian Revolution.
- 1999:** Canada’s Northwest Territories were divided to create Nunavut. Starting in the mid-1970s, the Inuit (who are indigenous to the land) began petitioning the Canadian government for greater control over their affairs. A 1992 vote allowed the territories to be divided, and two parliamentary acts were approved the following year: the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act, which allowed the Inuit to control more than 135,000 square miles of land (350,000 square km) while receiving monetary compensation from the government, and the Nunavut Act, which established Nunavut as a self-governing territory. Today, the Inuit comprise roughly 86 percent of Nunavut’s population.

LOL

MOVE YOUR CARS

It had been snowing for hours when an announcement came over the intercom: “Will the students who are parked on University Drive please move their cars so that we may begin plowing.” Twenty minutes later there was another announcement: “Will the nine



hundred students who went to move fourteen cars return to class.”

IN JEST THIS

Be careful what we entrust to robots

The snow goose need not bathe to make itself white. Neither need you do anything but be yourself.

Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul - and sings the tunes without the words - and never stops at all.

To understand the heart and mind of a person, look not at what he has already achieved, but at what he aspires to.



Melvin Durai

WE MIGHT NOT MIND A ROBOT CUTTING OUR GRASS, BUT WOULD WE WANT A ROBOT CUTTING OUR HAIR?

During a recent public dance demonstration in China’s Shaanxi province, a humanoid robot performed kicks and twirls to the delight of adults and children. But things went awry when the robot strayed to the edge of the cordoned-off area. As it made a twirl, it slapped a young boy.

The robot was arrested and charged with battery. It appeared before a judge and made a plea -- to have its battery charged. The judge had no mercy, giving it the harshest sentence ever imposed on a humanoid: “No battery charge for three months, no public dancing for six months, and no Netflix for one year.”

Actually, I do not know if the robot faced any consequences for its actions. In a video shared widely online, the robot’s handlers immediately directed it toward the center of the performance area, where it continued dancing, seemingly unaware that it had not only struck a child

but damaged the reputation of the entire robotic community. (The child, thankfully, seemed to be mostly stunned, not seriously hurt.)

According to news reports, the robot appeared to be a G1 humanoid, created by Chinese tech firm Unitree Robotics for research, education and commercial applications. I’m not sure which of those applications pertains to public dancing, not to mention public violence.

What’s clear to me is that if a robot can strike a child, some parents will not want robots near their children, while others will wonder if robots can be used to discipline their children.

Father: “You’d better behave yourself or I’m going to summon the robot.”

Teenaged son: “No, not the robot! I don’t want to be slapped.”

Father: “It won’t slap you. I’ve programmed it to use a belt.”

Son: “Oh no, you’ve programmed it to leave a welt. That’s child abuse!”

Father: “You said the same thing when I smacked your butt with my hand.”

Son: “Those were the good old days. Such pleasant memories.”

Thankfully for children everywhere, it will be a long time before robots are sophisticated enough to punish them, not to mention affordable enough. The G1 humanoid costs about \$13,500 (Rs 12.5 lakh). That’s a lot of money to spend on a machine that might accidentally slap you.

The child in Shaanxi province was hardly the first victim of a robot. Just a few months ago, a Chinese man was demonstrating how a Unitree robot could mimic his kickboxing movements. But the robot got a little too close to the man, and when the man kicked his leg into the air, the robot kicked the man in a very sensitive area below his belt.

The video of this incident went viral online, causing men everywhere to grimace, many wondering what kind of an idiot would teach a ro-

bot to kickbox.

It’s only a matter of time, of course, before robots are trained for combat. Many countries are reluctant to send their soldiers to war, but if they had a platoon of humanoids, casualties would be minimized. If a robot were killed in combat, it would not leave behind a grieving widow.

But we need to be careful what tasks we entrust to robots. We might not mind a robot massaging our close family members, but would we want a robot massaging them? No, that would be too close for comfort.

We might not mind a robot performing an operation for us, but would we want a robot performing an operation on us? No, a robot holding a scalpel would be scary.

We might not mind a robot cutting our grass, but would we want a robot cutting our hair? No, a robot in a barbershop gives me a fear that I might leave with just one ear.

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

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Selective morality

Sir, This refers to “The responsibility to protect,” **Orissa POST**, March 31. The United Nation’s doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), once projected as a moral cornerstone of global governance, appears increasingly hollow in the context of the United States and Israel conflict with Iran. Conceived to prevent mass atrocities, R2P now stands exposed as a selectively applied principle, shaped more by geopolitical expediency than humanitarian urgency. Its credibility had already been eroded in earlier crises. In Syria, despite catastrophic civilian suffering, global powers failed to act decisively under R2P. In Yemen, prolonged humanitarian devastation drew little meaningful intervention. Similarly, in Myanmar, the persecution of the Rohingya highlighted the doctrine’s inability to protect vulnerable populations when strategic interests intervene. Even in Libya, where R2P was invoked, its implementation led to regime change chaos, further discrediting its intent. In the present conflict, the silence around R2P reinforces the perception of a double standard. Reduced to a tool of convenience, it risks being seen not as a universal safeguard, but as an instrument of selective morality.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Heat stress on animals

Sir, As summer is almost at its peak, the threat of heatwaves is looming large. Animals and birds in the zoos are highly vulnerable to heat vagaries. Dehydration and electric imbalance are common conditions that affect zoo inmates; heat exhaustion and heatstrokes can be fatal. Many zoos in India are ill-equipped to handle the sweltering heat. Sprinklers to spray cool water on cages have to be made available in every zoo. Fans and air coolers should be kept functional. “Nut grass” covering of enclosures help due to their heat withstanding property. Misting – spraying liquid droplet sprays – is handy as are rain guns. The importance of balanced diet for animals and birds cannot be lost on the zoo officials. Animals should be consistently fed with the triplet of water melons, electrolyte powder and vitamins. Foods mixed with ice-cakes are provided to them in a lot of zoos to cool them down.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA



On this proud occasion of Utkal Divas, Odisha shines as a rising agricultural powerhouse, where tradition meets innovation and the spirit of the soil fuels a new era of prosperity. With record-breaking production, expanding global exports, and a bold, future-ready investment roadmap, the state is redefining what it means to nurture growth from the ground up. From empowering millions of farmers through transformative schemes to embracing diversification, mechanisation, and sustainable practices, Odisha's agriculture story is one of resilience, ambition, and inclusive progress. Rooted in its rich agrarian heritage yet driven by modern vision, Odisha stands tall as a beacon of food security, farmer empowerment, and sustainable development for the nation.

Seeds of Change, Harvests of Hope

ODISHA'S Agri Ascent



With a strong commitment to transforming the agricultural landscape, the state government has outlined an ambitious and well-structured financial roadmap for the Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment Department for 2026-27. An impressive outlay of ₹15,039.89 crore has been approved, with a major share of ₹13,932.16 crore dedicated to the effective implementation of development programmes and farmer-centric schemes, alongside ₹1,107.72 crore for administrative support. The steady rise in budgetary allocation, showing a 13.40% increase over 2024-25 in 2025-26 and a further 14.12% growth in 2026-27, reflects a clear and sustained focus on boosting productivity, strengthening rural livelihoods, and ensuring inclusive growth for the farming community across Odisha.

exported 155.6 metric tonnes of fruits and vegetables since May 2024 to 10 countries, including the UK, France, Germany, UAE, and Qatar.

AGRICULTURE AND ALLIED EDUCATION (ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW COLLEGES)

In a significant push to strengthen agricultural education and research, the state government has initiated the establishment of several new institutions. These include a College of Fisheries in Sonepur, a College of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry in Chiplima (Sambalpur), and new Colleges of Agriculture in Bolangir and Mayurbhanj. A budgetary allocation of ₹50 crore has been made to support these initiatives, aimed at building skilled human resources and advancing innovation in

AGRICULTURE GROWTH

Odisha's agriculture sector has demonstrated remarkable progress, outpacing the national average in the 2025-26 advance estimates. While India's agricultural growth stands at 3.1%, Odisha has achieved an impressive 5.3%, reflecting the state's sustained focus on productivity and farmer welfare. The state has also recorded historic highs in production, with foodgrain output exceeding 150 lakh metric tonnes and horticulture production crossing 156 lakh metric tonnes—both surpassing previous records. Diversification efforts have borne fruit with the successful introduction of strawberry as an exotic crop, now cultivated across more than 1,000 hectares. Strengthening its global footprint, Odisha has



the agriculture and allied sectors.

The state continues to implement a wide range of farmer-centric schemes to boost agricultural productivity, income, and sustainability.

Under the **Samrudha Krushak Yojana**, farmers receive enhanced support with paddy procurement at ₹3,100 per quintal, above the Minimum Support Price. During Kharif 2024-25, the state procured 73.45 lakh metric tonnes of paddy



from 16.60 lakh farmers, disbursing ₹5,876.57 crore as input assistance. In the Rabi season, 19.18 lakh metric tonnes were procured from 3.12 lakh farmers, with ₹1,534.43 crore provided as as-

ONGOING DEPARTMENTAL SCHEMES

sistance. For 2026-27, a substantial ₹6,088.40 crore has been earmarked under the scheme.

To strengthen post-harvest infrastructure, the state has supported cold storage development by issuing work orders to 10 entrepreneurs for facilities with a combined capacity of 29,785 metric tonnes. A budget

The **Shree Anna Abhiyan** has been expanded to 177 blocks across all 30 districts, promoting millet cultivation. The programme targets procurement of 8 lakh quintals of ragi in the current year, supported by a budget of ₹400 crore for 2026-27.

Through the **Odisha Balabhadra Jaivik Chasa Mission**, organic farming is being promoted in districts such as Kandhamal, Koraput, and Mayurbhanj. The "Amruta Anna" initiative under this mission focuses on producing aromatic organic rice for religious offerings at the Shree Jagannath Temple. A budget of ₹28.49 crore has been allocated for the programme.

Farm mechanisation has seen significant progress, with farm power availability rising from 0.62 kW/ha in 2000-01 to 2.61 kW/ha in 2024-25. The state aims to further increase this to 3.50 kW/ha by 2036 and 4.50 kW/ha by 2047. Awareness campaigns are being conducted through multiple melas, and in 2025-26, subsidies worth ₹511.01 crore have already benefited over 58,000 farmers. A provision of ₹650 crore has been made for 2026-27.

The **Mukhyamantri Krushi Udyog Yojana (MKUY)** is fostering agri-entrepreneurship, with 1,622 enterprises receiving subsidies of ₹246.52 crore during 2025-26. The scheme has been allocated ₹441.36 crore for the current financial year.

The **Agriculture Production Cluster (APC)** programme is being implemented in 100 backward blocks across 16 districts, focusing on women Self-Help Groups. It has successfully marketed 17,311 metric tonnes of produce worth ₹63 crore. For 2026-27, ₹38.49 crore has been allocated.

To promote sustainable livelihoods, the state is expanding coffee plantation in districts such as



of ₹63 crore has been allocated for this initiative.

Under **PM-KISAN**, the state undertook a special saturation drive, adding more than five lakh new farmers. A total of 34.24 lakh beneficiaries received the 22nd installment March 13, 2026, ensuring timely income support.

The **CM-KISAN** scheme has expanded its reach to include small and marginal farmers in urban areas. The programme now benefits over 51 lakh farmers, including 39,239 landless households and 3,236 PVTG farmers. For 2026-27, ₹2,030.10 crore has been allocated to sustain this support.

The **Krusha Vidhya Nidhi Yojana (KBNY)** continues to encourage agricultural education. In 2024-25, 13,923 students received scholarships, and around 69,000 students have been selected this year, with ₹291 crore earmarked for disbursement.



Koraput and Kandhamal. During 2025-26, 6,688 hectares of shade plantation and 763 hectares of coffee plantation were developed. A budget of ₹150 crore has been set aside for this initiative.

The **Comprehensive Rice Fallow Management** programme, one of India's largest regenerative agriculture initiatives, encourages the cultivation of pulses and oilseeds in fallow lands after paddy harvesting. A total of ₹329.10 crore has been allocated to support this transformative initiative.

Together, these initiatives underline Odisha's commitment to inclusive, sustainable, and growth-oriented agricultural development, positioning the state as a leader in the sector.

OIPR-

Minor from Andhra Pradesh gangraped in Berhampur



Accused Arjun Nayak and Aditya Nayak

Berhampur, March 31: A minor girl from Andhra Pradesh was allegedly drugged and gangraped in Berhampur, police said Tuesday. Three persons including a minor have been arrested in this connection. Two of the accused, identified as Arjun Nayak (22), and

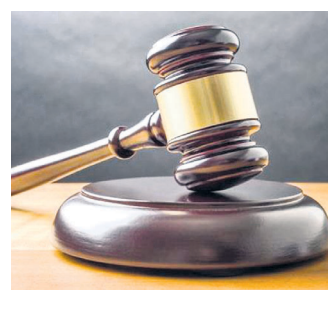
Aditya Nayak (19), of Lanjipalli, were forwarded to court in connection with a case registered at Gosaninuagaon police station (111/26). The third accused, a minor boy has been produced before the Juvenile Justice Board. Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M said the victim has undergone medical examination and was produced before

the Child Welfare Committee. A DSP-rank officer is investigating the case. Police said the girl had fled her home in Andhra Pradesh March 24 after alleged sexual abuse by her stepfather, against whom a separate case has already been registered. She reached Berhampur by train and was staying near the railway station, working at a tea stall. The minor boy allegedly took her to an abandoned place March 29 night where Arjun and Aditya were present. They allegedly gave intoxicants to the minor boy and the girl, after which both lost consciousness. The accused duo then allegedly raped the girl. Locals later found her lying in the area and informed the police who rescued the girl. Based on her statement, a case was registered and the accused were subsequently apprehended.



PROMOTING EDUCATION: Students of Gobindpur Government UP School in Keonjhar town take out a rally as part of 'Asa School Jiba' campaign aimed to prevent school dropouts and reintegrate children into formal education, Tuesday

MAN GETS LIFE TERM FOR RAPING STEPDAUGHTER



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, March 31: A special POCSCO court in Jharsuguda Tuesday sentenced a man to life imprisonment for raping his four-year-old stepdaughter, while awarding two years' rigorous imprisonment to the child's mother for failing to report the crime. The verdict was delivered by Additional District and Sessions Judge-cum-Special POCSCO Judge Pooja Sarangi in a case registered at Brajarajgarh Police Station. The court convicted the main accused, Pankaj Podh, under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. Podh was sentenced to life imprisonment and fined

₹10,000, with an additional one-year rigorous imprisonment in case of a default in payment. Co-accused Anu Bag, the victim's mother, was convicted under provisions of the BNS, POCSCO Act and the Juvenile Justice Act for not reporting the offence despite having knowledge of it. She was sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment along with a fine. According to the prosecution, the incident took place June 27, 2025, during Rath Yatra, when the accused took the child out on the pretext of showing her the festival and sexually assaulted her. The crime came to light the next day after the child complained of pain and was taken to hospital, where doctors informed police. A case was registered June 30, and a chargesheet was filed promptly. Based on the evidence, the court convicted the main accused, Pankaj Podh, under Sections 65(2), 64(2)(f) and 115(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Section 6(1) of the POCSCO Act. The victim's mother, Anu Bag, was convicted under Section 115(2) of the BNS, Section 21 of the POCSCO Act and Section 75 of the Juvenile Justice Act.

Sexagenarian murdered over witchcraft suspicion; four held



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, March 31: Deep-rooted superstition continues to haunt parts of Sundargarh district, as an elderly man was allegedly killed and his wife injured in a brutal attack over suspected witchcraft practice, Monday night. The incident occurred in Kendakhole village under Sadar police limits, where a group of villagers allegedly assaulted an elderly couple, suspecting them of practicing witchcraft. The deceased has been identified as Mahadeb Pradhan (65). His wife, Amila Pradhan, sustained injuries in the attack

and is undergoing treatment. Police said a team reached the spot Tuesday morning, seized the body and sent it for post-mortem. A case has been registered and four persons have been arrested in connection with the murder. The accused have been identified as Kumud Bag (37), Lab Kujur (22), Shiva Pradhan (40), and Pramod Bag (35). Police have also seized weapons used in the crime, including a blowpipe, sticks and a knife. According to police, Mahadeb and his wife lived alone in the village, as their only daughter has been married off and resides in Balijuri village. The couple's daughter, Jayanti Bag, said she received information about the incident over the phone late at night. She rushed to her parental home early Tuesday, shifted her injured mother to hospital and lodged a written complaint with police. Sadar SDPO Nirmal Mohapatra, along with a scientific team, visited the crime scene and began an investigation. During interrogation, the accused reportedly confessed to carrying out the attack over suspicion of witchcraft. Police have registered a case (185/2026) and further investigation is underway.

Man kills wife, attempts suicide over money

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, March 31: A man allegedly killed his wife over a monetary dispute and later attempted suicide in Kalahandi district, police said Tuesday. The incident occurred at Sanyasi Kundamal village under Junagarh police limits. The accused, identified as Pramod Chandan (57), allegedly murdered his wife Kasturi (54), and buried her body in their farmland. According to police, the couple frequently quarrelled over money related to paddy earnings, which had reportedly been spent during their son Yuvraj's marriage. The couple had gone to their field Monday for work when an argument broke out again over the same issue. In a fit of rage, Pramod allegedly attacked Kasturi with a spade, killing her on the spot. He then buried the body near a haystack in the field and returned home. Later that night, he allegedly consumed poison in a reported suicide attempt and confessed the crime to his son. He was first taken to Ju-



nagarh Community Health Centre and later shifted to the district headquarters hospital in Bhawanipatna, where he is undergoing treatment under police custody. Initially, the accused misled police by claiming he had disposed of the body in a canal. After a search yielded no results, he revealed the actual burial site in the field, from where police recovered the body and sent it for post-mortem. A case (173/26) has been registered at Junagarh police station, and further investigation is underway, police said.

LPG pain: Koraput eateries cook up innovation

NARENDRA RAUT, OP

Koraput, March 31: At a time when cooking gas crisis continues to disrupt daily life in Koraput, small business owners are being forced to rethink survival strategies. At the bustling Gunthaguda Chowk, where roadside eateries serve as lifelines for locals and travelers alike, one hotel owner's resilience has turned adversity into innovation. Gitanjali Patnaik, who runs a modest yet popular hotel at the chowk, has adopted alternative cooking methods to keep her kitchen running. With LPG cylinders becoming increasingly difficult to procure, she, like many others in the area, has resorted to traditional and improvised solutions. "Due to the scarcity of gas these days, we have started using wooden bundle chulhas for cooking. Along



with that, we are also using what is commonly known as a rocket chulha, or engine oil chulha," she said. While the idea of an engine oil chulha may raise eyebrows, Patnaik assures that it has proven to be both efficient and economical. According to her, the cost of operating these alternatives is significantly lower as compared to conventional gas cylinders.

"The production cost is much cheaper than gas. It helps us continue our business without incurring heavy expenses," she said. The innovation has not only helped her sustain operations but has also provided relief to other hotel owners in the locality. Many have begun adopting similar methods, finding them practical in the face of ongoing shortages. What stands out,

Patnaik noted, is that despite initial concerns, the engine oil chulha functions without emitting unpleasant smell or excessive smoke, maintaining hygiene standards essential for food preparation. However, beneath this story of adaptability lies a deeper concern. The ongoing gas shortage has exposed the vulnerability of small-scale food businesses that rely heavily on timely supply of essential resources. For many, switching to alternatives is not a choice but a necessity. As Koraput grapples with this issue, voices like Patnaik's highlight both the struggles and the spirit of local entrepreneurs. While these temporary solutions offer relief, many hope for a more stable and reliable system that ensures uninterrupted access to basic cooking fuel in the days ahead.

Sonepur DRCS suspended over recruitment row

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, March 31: The Odisha government Tuesday suspended Sanjay Kumar Tripathy, District Registrar of Cooperative Societies (DRCS) in Subarnapur following allegations of irregularities in recruitment at a Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society (PACS) in the district. The action was taken under provisions of the Odisha Civil Services rules on the direction of the governor. During the suspension period, Tripathy will be attached to the office of the Sambalpur DRCS, and he has been directed not to leave without prior permission. The move comes after reports of alleged nepotism in

appointments at the Marudugochha PACS in Tarbha block surfaced. Officials, including the secretary, a peon and a night watchman, allegedly secured jobs for their sons and relatives through voluntary retirement schemes, enabling immediate appointments on the same day. District Collector Nruparaj Sahu had sought an explanation from Tripathy and reviewed related files after the issue surfaced. Although the appointments were later cancelled, the matter triggered protests among local farmers and residents. Following an inquiry that indicated violations of government norms, including bypassing due recruitment procedures, the collector recommended disciplinary action.

Cargo services at Jharsuguda airport soon



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, March 31: Cargo operations are set to begin soon at Veer Surendra Sai Airport in Jharsuguda, airport Director Upendra Nath Dhaundia said Monday. A high-level committee led by J.P. Baxla, regional director of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), Bhubaneswar, inspected the airport's security arrangements. The team included senior officials from the Airports Authority of India, intelligence agencies and various airline service providers. The committee conducted a detailed assessment of the feasibility of handling cargo through the passenger terminal. It expressed satisfaction with the existing security protocols and required infrastructure after a comprehensive review. Dhaundia said cargo operations will be launched on a small scale in the initial phase. The process to start the service has reached its final stage, and necessary approvals are expected soon. Initially, cargo movement will be limited due to infrastructure constraints, with plans for expansion based on demand in the future. The introduction of cargo services is expected to enhance logistics capacity in western Odisha and provide a boost to local industries and trade, the airport director added.

10 sentenced to life in 2019 murder case

KEONJHAR: A district and sessions court in Keonjhar Tuesday sentenced 10 persons to life imprisonment in a murder case linked to a dispute over sharing money from the sale of a bull. District and Sessions Judge G.C. Behera also imposed a fine of ₹10,000 on each convict. Failure to pay the fine will result in an additional six months in jail, the order said. The incident occurred in 2019 in the Patna police station area. The convicts are Dhaneswar Majhi (22), Balaram Majhi (45), Kadam Majhi (70), Mirza Majhi (45), Bhajajhari Majhi (22), Mangata Majhi (25), Sukadev Majhi (22), Benju Majhi (21), Ma Sanga Majhi (25), and Shyamundar Majhi (58). According to the prosecution, a stray bull had wandered into Phulpahali Bhalughar Saha. Complainant Fagu Majhi sheltered the animal and later sold it for ₹8,000 as no owner came forward to claim it. Villagers questioned his father, Kade Majhi, and demanded the money at a meeting July 25, 2019. When he failed to produce it, he was allegedly dragged to the spot and assaulted. His body was found the next evening.

Youth killed chasing cattle-laden vehicle

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bahanaga, March 31: A youth was killed and another sustained critical injuries after being hit by a speeding cattle-laden vehicle while chasing it on National Highway 16 near Barikpur under Soro police limits in Balasore district Tuesday. The vehicle was later apprehended by the police, while the driver fled the spot. Members of a cow protection group and Bajrang Dal staged a protest later in the day, placing the body on the highway near Khantapada police station and demanding compensation. Reports said that cow vigilantes chased the vehicle early

in the morning following information about an alleged cattle smuggling. Two youths Krupa-sindhu Behera and Lambodhar Mohapatra of Aلسuan village under Kasaba Jaypur panchayat chased the vehicle on a motorcycle before it rammed them near Khantapada on NH-16. Locals rushed the injured to Soro hospital, where doctors declared Behera dead. Mohapatra, who sustained critical injuries, was shifted to Balasore and later referred to SB Medical College and hospital in Cuttack for advanced treatment. Khantapada police seized the vehicles and registered a case in this connection. Further investigations are on.

'Chaitra Mangalabara' festival at Tara Tarini ends

POST NEWS NETWORK

Purushottampur, March 31: The annual 'Chaitra Mangalabara' festival of Maa Tara Tarini, the presiding deity of Ganjam district, concluded peacefully Tuesday, drawing thousands of devotees from across the region. On the final day, the twin goddesses were adorned in the Basanti Durga attire, offering a special darshan that left devotees deeply emotional. Many offered prayers and vowed to return next year after seeking blessings on the auspicious occasion. Temple rituals began early, with doors opening at around



2.30am, followed by traditional ceremonies including mangal aarti, abhishek and other rites. By 4:30am, the deities were pre-

sented for public viewing. Tonsuring rituals also commenced early, with devotees fulfilling vows for themselves and their children. Pilgrims reached the hilltop shrine either by climbing the 999 steps or using buses and ropeway services. Elaborate arrangements were made to ensure smooth conduct of the festival. Local officials and police authorities supervised the event, while volunteers and temple servitors assisted in managing the large turnout. The successful conclusion of the yatra was widely appreciated by devotees and authorities alike.

A QUIETER SPRINGTIME DURGA PUJA

MRUNAL MANMAY DASH, OP

Every spring, long before the thunder of drums and the fanfare of Sharadiya Durga Puja, Cuttack's lanes quietly come alive with the mellower, more intimate celebration of Basanti Durga Puja. Held in the Odia month of Chaitra (March-April), Basanti Puja is not just a smaller cousin of the grand autumn festival; it is, by tradition, the original seasonal worship of Goddess Durga, preserved in Cuttack with a mix of ritual rigour and community warmth.

Historical and mythological roots

Scriptures and local priests trace Basanti Durga Puja to the legendary King Suratha, who is said to have first worshipped the Goddess in spring to regain his kingdom and spiritual clarity. Tradition teaches that this Basanti (springtime) worship was the true season for Durga's invocation, later eclipsed by the autumn Sharadiya Puja that became popular after Lord Rama's legendary Akal Bodhan (untimely worship) to seek Her blessings before battling the demon King Ravana. In Cuttack, where Durga Puja in public mandaps dates back about 500 years, Basanti Puja is seen as a revival of that older, more "season-correct" layer of devotion.

Spring rituals and the Bel tree

Basanti Durga Puja in Cuttack is typically a five-day affair, beginning with the Sasthi Puja and culminating in a grand Visarjan (immersion) procession. One of the most distinctive features is the 'Bela Barani' or 'Bilwadhivasa' ritual, in which a wood-apple (Bel) tree or sapling is worshipped as the symbolic body of the Goddess before the main prana pratishtha (invocation of life) in the idol. This act of venerating the bilwa plant, rather than starting with the usual ghata (brass/metal pot) for Bodhan, sets Basanti Puja apart from the later addition of Sharadiya rites.

As in the autumn festival, devotees observe Ashtami as the peak day, complete with Sandhi Puja at the cusp of Ashtami and Navami, when 108 lamps are lit to honour the moment Durga vanquished the demon

Mahishasura. Yet the atmosphere in spring is quieter, more intimate, with smaller crowds and a focus on Vedic and tantric chants than on the commercial-cultural spectacle of October.

Special pujas in Cuttack's mandaps

This year, around 18 mandaps across Cuttack joined the Basanti Durga Puja, each adding its own nuance to the city's spiritual tapestry. The Ring Road puja pandal in CDA, for instance, installed an idol of Bharat Mata, blending nationalist symbolism with traditional Durga worship. The Marwadi Club mandap at Manik

Ghose Bazaar chose to consecrate Goddess Vaishno Devi, underscoring the community's syncretic devotion and regional diversity.

One of the more distinctive choices was the Machhua Bazaar mandap, which worshipped Sarpa Durga, the serpent-associated form of the Goddess, emphasising protection from snakebites and other hidden dangers. Other long-standing venues such as Balu bazaar, Mangalabag, and Chandni Chowk continue to honour the classic Mahisasura-Mardini Durga, yet their ritual order remains rooted in the Basanti kalpa, with



public attention forcing mandaps to observe in a grand manner. However, Cuttack city continues to observe the spring-time puja of Maa Durga keeping our tradition alive."

Many devotees in Cuttack see Basanti Puja as a "return to the roots": a chance to reconnect with the pre-colonial, seasonal rhythm of Durga worship, untouched by the modern commercialisation of the autumn festival. Yet both forms now coexist in the city's calendar, each feeding a different need; the first in spring offering a quieter, more contemplative devotion, and the second in autumn turning the streets into a roaring celebration of faith, art and communi-



spring-specific mantras and offerings. The Cuttack Mahanagar Shanti Committee coordinates and regulates Basanti Durga Puja by aligning all puja committees under a common schedule for rituals and immersion, ensuring smooth traffic and crowd management. It acts as a bridge between puja organisers, police, and the municipal administration, helping to prevent disputes, maintain law and order, and uphold communal harmony during the five-day spring festival. Through timely meetings and standardised guidelines, the committee enables the 18 mandaps citywide to celebrate Basanti Durga Puja in a festive yet disciplined manner.

Dipayan Patnayak, Joint Secretary of Cuttack Mahanagar Shanti Committee said, "The committee members visit every puja mandap in the city to take stock of the situation and to resolve any dispute that may have arisen. They ensure the puja gets complete with the immersion of the idols in a peaceful and seamless manner."

Speaking about the significance of Basanti Durga Puja, Patnaik said, "Originally, Durga Puja was observed only during spring time in all our Odia families. But later on, the Sharadiya puja gained popularity and attracted



ty. In this duality, Cuttack's Basanti Durga Puja remains a living testament to how an ancient tradition can bloom softly, even in the shadow of a louder festival.




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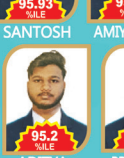

127 MBBS ADMISSIONS IN -2025

AIIMS, KALYANI	AIIMS, KALYANI	AIIMS, KALYANI	AIIMS, DEOGRAH	AIIMS, BBSR
 SOURAV RANJAN JAIPUR M. : 9337135920	 AMIT ANSUMAN BHADRAK M : 8260552053	 G.S TANISHA SAMBALPUR M : 6370203229	 SOUMYA RANJAN KENDRAPARA M: 9853490176	 ASHUTOSH (SC) SAMBALPUR M : 9438110102







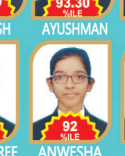
2025 : 127 MBBS ADMISSIONS






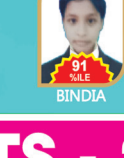

AIIMS 5 STUDENTS	SCB, CUTTACK 11 STUDENTS	MKCG, BERRAMPUR 17 STUDENTS	VIMSAR, BURLA 6 STUDENTS	PRM, BARIAPADA 10 STUDENTS	FM, BALASORE 7 STUDENTS
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OUR INCREDIBLE ACHIEVERS IN AIIMS

 KAMALAKANTA AIIMS BBSR	 RAHUL AIIMS RAIPUR	 SUBREE SANGITA AIIMS DELHI	 OM PRAKASH AIIMS GORAKHPUR	 SWAGATIKA AIIMS GORAKHPUR	 DEVASIS AIIMS BBSR	 ASHRBAD AIIMS GORAKHPUR
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IIT & NIT RESULTS

 TARINI IIT VARANASI M. : 982700100	 SAMIR NIT ROURKELA M. : 9427026233	 SAILENDRI NIT ROURKELA M. : 905454000	 BISMAY BIEHOR IIT PATNA M. : 7077212007	 TAPAS IIT KHARAGPUR M. : 905004023	 ADITYA IIT DELHI M. : 909640740	 JANMEELAYA IIT MADRAS M. : 924870401
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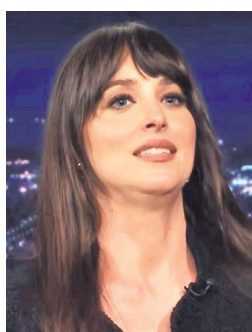
 GOUTAM IIT PATNA	 PRIYANSHU IIT BBSR	 AMAN NIT ROURKELA	 SRIMAN NIT ROURKELA	 SANTOSH NIT ROURKELA	 OM PRAKASH NIT ROURKELA	 TRUPTI NIT ROURKELA
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OUR CHSE RESULTS - 2025

100% RESULT

 ABINASH PANDA R. NO. : 312CZ142 MOB. : 8926374475	 ANANYA ANUPRITA R.NO. : 321C2001 M. : 6372522094	Above 95% 14 STUDENTS	Above 560 51 STUDENTS	Above 90% 199 STUDENTS	Above 89% 236 STUDENTS	Above 88% 285 STUDENTS
Above 500 536 STUDENTS	Above 80% 714 STUDENTS	Above 75% 902 STUDENTS	Above 70% 1023 STUDENTS	Above 60% 1120 STUDENTS		

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DAKOTA RECALLS BEING TAGGED AS 'POMPOUS'

Hollywood star Dakota Johnson took a stroll down memory lane and recalled how she was called "pompous". "I did an audition and the feedback I got was that because I had gone and introduced myself and shook everyone's hand, that I was, like, pompous," she shared.

ZENDAYA: HOPE PEOPLE DON'T GET SICK OF ME

Actress Zendaya has a jam-packed year with many releases throughout 2026. "I just hope people don't get sick of me, and I really appreciate everyone who supports any of the movies (and) supports my career in any kind of way," she said in an interview with Fandango.



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ARIES
Good news may bring cheer to you today! A job, a wedding, some profit... it could be personal or professional. Giving your best is almost a habit with you, says Ganesh, and it will pay off today.

TAURUS
Luck is a four-leaf clover in your pocket. You might get the long desired success in education related matters today – a favourable result of a competitive examination, maybe. You will proudly smile at your power of resilience and sense of proportion, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
It is a day filled with joy and happiness on the home front. You will spend a lot of time with children. You will complete long pending household projects as well as take an interest in ironing out differences between family members, says Ganesh.

CANCER
There is a chance today to benefit from women-folk. Though you are methodical and disciplined in your work, you will feel rudderless. Yet you will get relief from this monotony and feel jovial, says Ganesh.

LEO
You will feel a little uneasy today. You will feel that nothing is going right. You will try to organise yourself and concentrate your scattered energies today. This phase of uncertainty will be gone in a few days, assures Ganesh.

VIRGO
You will enchant people with your adaptability and your desire to get with your surroundings. For those who are in love, something unexpected may take place, but there is no need to panic as by and by things will turn out to be in your interest. You will spend quality time with your family. Ganesh advises you to strengthen bonding in the family by taking on responsibility and honouring your family traditions.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will be able to spend ample time with your loved ones and may even take them out for lunch or dinner which will bring you more closer to them. You will even try to please them by showering them with gifts and presents today.

SCORPIO
There's always a first time, and today is the day when you would seal a profitable deal for your new business venture. However, close the deal only if it is beneficial for a long term. Be cautious and watch your steps carefully to avoid any unfortunate situation.

SAGITTARIUS
You are a social butterfly as you attend a series of parties and events today, says Ganesh. You may even bump into old pals and relive good ol' days. Also, you meet your extended family! It's time for soiree and merry-making.

CAPRICORN
Print and electronic media will attract your attention, if you're just planning to begin your career. Your spiritual and philosophical approach give you inner peace, and also inspire you to visit a holy place. Overall, you will have a balanced day, today, says Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
You will try everything to please your colleagues and bosses, but they will still have something negative to say about your performance. In order to be in the good books of everyone you end up hurting your own interests, feels Ganesh. The second half of the day promises to be relaxing, thanks to your sweetheart who will make special efforts to lighten your burden of work.

PISCES
If you are the leader of a project or a team, then today is your day. Your enthusiasm and creativity will give a sense of purpose and direction to your colleagues. You are more concerned about the means rather than the ends. Today is a good day to progress on the work-front. While no remarkable events are likely to occur in your personal life, your family will expect you to pay attention to their needs, says Ganesh.

Akshay's dig at VFX-heavy action films



Mumbai: Akshay Kumar has weighed in on the growing dependence on VFX and AI in action cinema, expressing his preference for raw, practical stunts over digitally enhanced sequences. In a recent interaction with Press Trust of India, the actor, who is known for his action sequences, opened up about how the landscape of action filmmaking has evolved over the years—and why he believes authenticity is getting lost in the process.

"There is a huge difference in the way action films are being made today. Earlier, the action would be real; now, everything is done in VFX. It's not fun as it feels fake. I want to make a film, which is real," Akshay said, highlighting his concern over the increasing use of computer-generated effects.

Known for performing many of his own stunts, the actor emphasised his desire to return to a more grounded style of action filmmaking. "If I'm jumping, then I'm jumping for real and not using VFX, or if I'm kicking, then I'm kicking for real, not like 15 people helping me kick people."

He went on to add, "I want to make an action film without the use of VFX. I'm saying this in the era of AI, and people may think what they wish to, but I want to do an action film that is a real action film."

No comparisons in life please: Shweta

Mumbai: Actress Shweta Tripathi, who is known for her work in *Masaan* and the crime drama series *Mirzapur*, does not appreciate comparisons in life.

The actress attended the International Film Festival Delhi (IFFD) 2026 in the national capital Tuesday. She spoke with the media stationed at the venue, and shared that she doesn't compare her characters.

She said, "No, like there should be no competition in your children, you should not be choosy, your characters are also like that, every work of yours is special. So you should not compare yourself, and in fact, not just with your characters, I think in life,

comparison for me is not a value."

Earlier, the actress travelled to Amsterdam to attend a live concert by the Oscar and Grammy-winning music composer Hans Zimmer. The actress had a long-standing wish to watch him perform live. Zimmer is known for shaping the contours of Hollywood, and adding depth to stories through his music. For Shweta, film music has always been more than just something that plays in the background.

IAN S



Bhumi's optimism

Mumbai: Actress Bhumi Pednekar, who recently attended the International Film Festival Delhi (IFFD) 2026, believes that while the space for women-led narratives may be shrinking in mainstream cinema, the rise of OTT platforms has opened up stronger and more meaningful opportunities for female actors.

OTT, especially for women, the narrative has become a lot stronger because a lot of those shows, a lot of those films are led by women, which is maybe shrinking in mainstream cinema," Bhumi, who started her film journey in an unconventional role in the 2015 film *Dum Laga Ke Haisha*, said.

"Unfortunately, it's really heartbreaking that that's happening," added the actress, who was then seen in meaningful cinema such as *Toilet: Ek Prem Katha*, *Shubh Mangal Saavdhan*, *Bala* and *Saad Ki Aankh*.

She acknowledged that digital platforms have emerged as a powerful alternative, offering rich and diverse roles driven by women. According to her, this shift has allowed actresses to explore more layered and courageous roles.

"But at the same time, there's a rise of these platforms where we get great opportunities. So absolutely, I think women have always been a lot more courageous, and they are a lot more brave while choosing their scripts."

"And I think OTT just kind of gives them the right platform," concluded Bhumi.

IAN S

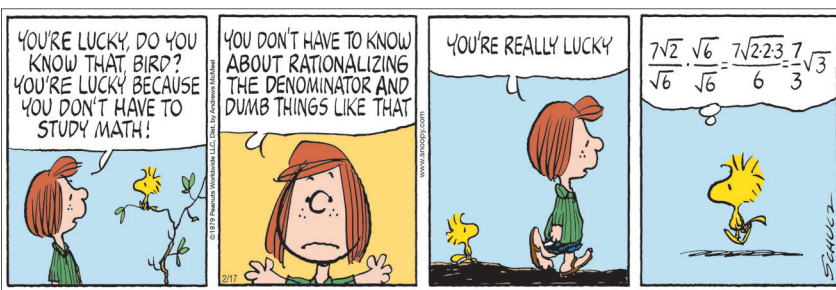
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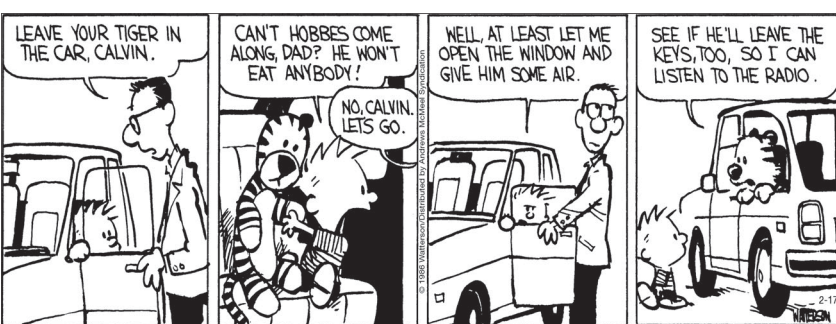
Artists of Puri-based theatre troupe Rangashala performed Odia play *Adrushya Nata* on the last evening of the event at Rabindra Mandap, Tuesday. Written by Harihar Mishra, the drama was directed by Bikram Kumar Sahoo. The festival *Purva Rangawas* organised by Department of Language, Literature & Culture, Govt of Odisha in collaboration with Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi and Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre (Kolkata), Ministry of Culture, Govt of India.

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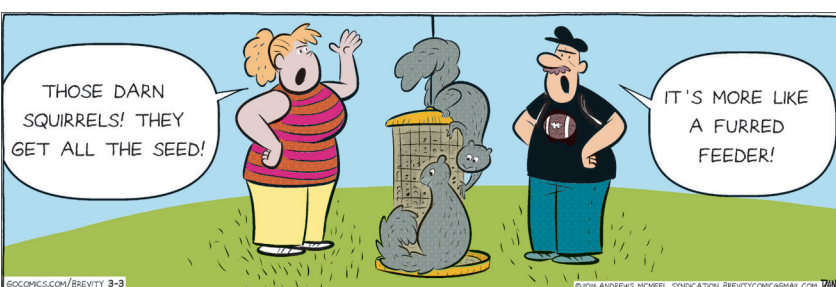
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

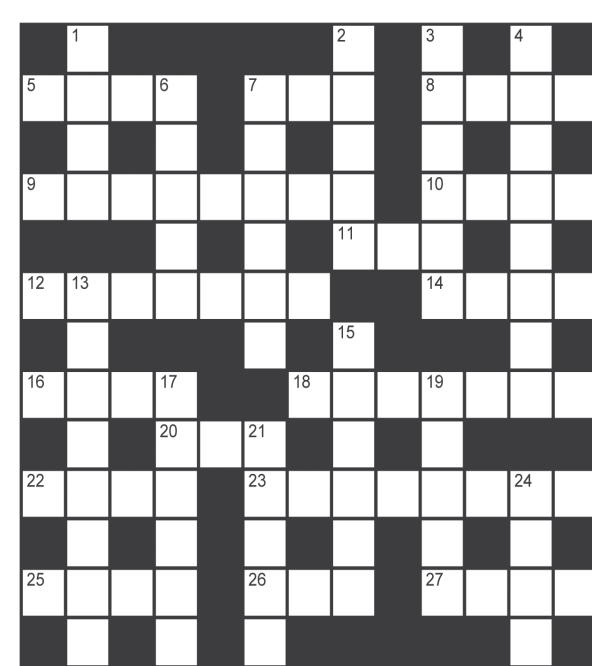


BREVITY



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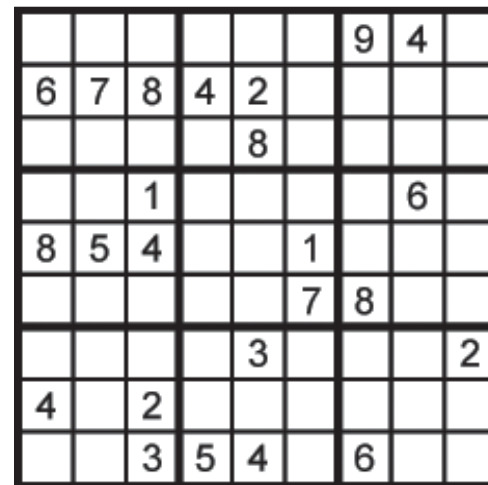
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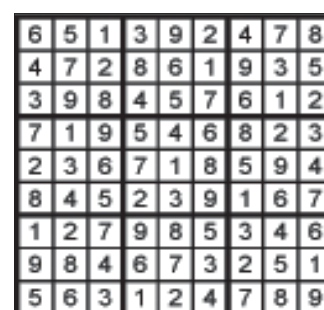
- Across**
- 5 Stag
 - 7 Cookie holder
 - 8 "What a shame!"
 - 9 Informed
 - 10 Fired
 - 11 Objective
 - 12 Slender tower with balconies
 - 14 Egg part
 - 16 Medal recipient
 - 18 Spirits
 - 20 Tie the knot
 - 22 Wee warbler
 - 23 Words to a pest (3,5)
 - 25 Hawaiian island
 - 26 Young fox
 - 27 Musical chairs goal
 - 4 Napoleon's undoing
 - 6 Divided land
 - 7 Quartz variety
 - 13 Frozen dessert (3,5)
 - 15 Mercury, for one
 - 17 Confesses (4,2)
 - 19 Cantina pots
 - 21 Male duck
 - 24 Hereabout

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

15th Anniversary national

of the day quote

For the first time, a bottom-up approach has been adopted, with vehicles now being provided to station house officers at the ground level instead of only senior officers

The issue of recruitment has already been discussed in detail during this session. We all want the process to be transparent and time-bound. However, time-bound should not mean rushing matters and ending up in court the next day

The Congress has committed an unpardonable crime by including Zubeen's name and his death in its election manifesto. If the Congress wants to pay real tribute to Zubeen, they can hire a lawyer... they can bring Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who can argue the case free of cost in the fast-track court

POST OF THE DAY

I post against Israel. I post against Trump. I post against America. I post against Pakistan. I post against Gulf states. I post against many countries. Many of those countries are not even democratic. But I have never received any notice that their governments asked to remove my posts.

SHORT TAKES

Kidney transplant racket: 5 docs among 6 arrested

Kanpur (UP): Uttar Pradesh Police has identified four more suspects as it widened its probe into an illegal kidney transplant racket operating through multiple private hospitals in Kanpur. Earlier Tuesday, the police arrested five doctors and the alleged kingpin of the racket, officials said.

CBI arrests MCD dy commissioner

New Delhi: The CBI has arrested two senior officials of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), including a deputy commissioner, for allegedly demanding Rs 4 lakh to make a favourable report for two suspended employees of the civic body, officials said Tuesday.

Student ends life

Faridabad: A 16-year-old student allegedly committed suicide by hanging at his home in Faridabad after getting low marks in his Class XI examination, police said Tuesday. The deceased, identified as Ayush, lived with his parents in a rented accommodation in the Gandhi Nagar area, they said, adding that the results of his Class XI examinations were announced Monday and he had scored low marks in some subjects, which left him distressed.

Rahul raises BJP-Left 'deal'

Rahul Tuesday attended poll rallies in Kannur, and at Kallachi, Perambra and Koyilandy in Kozhikode district, where he reiterated his charge that the Congress-led UDF is fighting the combined forces of the LDF and the BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kannur/Kozhikode (Kerala), March 31: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Tuesday again targeted the BJP and Left front, alleging a "partnership" between them and said Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants the ruling LDF to win the Assembly election during his poll campaigns in north Kerala.

In Kannur, two former CPI(M) leaders - V Kunhikrishnan and T K Govindan - who are contesting as independents with the support of the UDF were also present on the stage. "This election is a fight between two ideologies - that of the Left Front led by CPI(M) and that of the UDF. For the first time, we are seeing a partnership between the BJP and the Left Front," he said.

Leander Paes joins BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 31: Swapping diving volleys for a political pitch, Indian tennis great Leander Paes Tuesday joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), signalling the start of a new chapter after a career that defined Indian tennis across generations.

The 51-year-old Paes has joined the ruling party ahead of assembly elections in West Bengal where Trinamool Congress is in power. Interestingly, Paes had joined Mamata Banerjee's party in 2021 and campaigned for it during the Goa elections in 2022. For over three decades, Paes was the face of Indian tennis. He was one of few tennis players from the country who thrived on big occasions and hostile crowds.



It possible that a Left party combines with a Right-wing party? This is like a puzzle," Gandhi said. "Some answers to the puzzle are sitting on the stage. There are two veteran leaders from CPI(M) here today. Why are they sitting on our stage and not campaigning for CPI(M) and the chief minister?" he asked.

Gandhi alleged that what is today called the Left Front is no longer a Left or even a centrist formation. "In fact, they are partnering with the BJP because they are corporate parties. They are no longer parties of the people. The proof is sitting on the stage now. People with Left-minded thinking are with the Congress, and the party is supporting them," he said.

Questioning the BJP's stand

in Kerala, Gandhi said while the prime minister speaks about religion, temples and God elsewhere, he does not raise the Sabarimala gold loss issue in the state.

He alleged that CPI(M) leaders were involved in the gold loss at Sabarimala and accused the BJP of "remaining silent" on the issue.

"The so-called defender of Hinduism does not speak about Sabarimala when he comes to Kerala. He wants the Left Front to win the election in the state," Gandhi said.

He further said Left leaders contesting elections as independents with the support of the UDF show that the CPI(M) is no longer a true Left party.

Gandhi said the reason is that the BJP wants the CPI(M) in power in Kerala.

I-T dept notifies all 7 ITR forms for AY 2026-27

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 31: The Income Tax department has notified all income tax return forms for the assessment year (AY) 2026-27.

While ITR forms 1-4, filed by small and medium taxpayers, were notified March 30, ITR forms 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7, as well as ITR-U (for filing updated returns), were notified Tuesday.

With the ITR (income tax return) notification, individuals, businesses and other entities can start filing I-T returns for the income earned in the financial year 2025-26.

The last date of filing ITR for individuals and those who do not have to get their accounts audited is July 31. AKM Global Partner-Tax Sandeep Sehgal said ITR-1 appears to have widened its scope for AY 2026-27 by permitting certain taxpayers to report income from up to two house properties. Earlier, the form was generally understood to be restricted to income from one house property only, often requiring taxpayers with a second house property to migrate to ITR-2 or ITR-3.

"By doing this, it could help taxpayers to reduce the compliance burden in such cases wherein they were required to disclose the income of two house properties in ITR 2 or ITR 3," Sehgal said.

IMD: East, central & northwest to witness more heatwave days



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 31: Above-normal heatwave days are likely over some parts of east, central and northwest India and the southeast Peninsula between April and June even as above-normal rainfall is expected in April, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in its monthly forecast Tuesday.

Between April and June, maximum temperatures are expected to be normal to below normal over many parts of the country except most parts of east and northeast India, as well as eastern parts of central India and adjoining peninsular regions where above-normal maximum temperatures are expected.

"During the hot season (April-May-June), above-normal minimum temperatures are likely over most parts of the country except some regions of Maharashtra and Tel-

angana, where normal to below normal minimum temperatures are likely," said the IMD.

The department also stated that in April, monthly maximum temperatures are likely to be normal to below normal over many parts of the country.

However, above-normal maximum temperatures are expected over many parts of east and northeast India and some parts of northwest India and southern peninsular India during the month.

Also, above-normal monthly minimum temperatures are most likely over most parts of India, except for some isolated pockets over south peninsula where normal minimum temperatures are likely during April.

Normal to above-normal rainfall is likely over most parts of the country except Northeast India, where below-normal rainfall is expected over many parts in April.

Long period average (LPA) of rainfall over India during April based on data from 1971 to 2020 is about 39.2 mm.

The IMD added that currently, neutral El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions are prevailing over the equatorial Pacific Ocean.

SNIPPETS

35 Naxalites surrender in Chhattisgarh

RAIPUR: A total of 35 Naxalites surrendered before security forces across five districts in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region Tuesday, just hours before the Centre's March 31 deadline to eliminate Left Wing Extremism (LWE) ends, officials said. Of them, 25 cadres, including 12 women, belonging to the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) of Maoists, surrendered in Bijapur district under the police's 'Poona Margem' (from rehabilitation to social reintegration) initiative, Inspector General of Police (IGP) of Bastar Range, Sundarraj Pattingam, said. These 25 cadres were carrying a cumulative reward of Rs 1.47 crore, he said. In a major breakthrough, security forces also recovered 93 weapons, Rs 2.90 crore in cash and 7.20 kg of gold valued at around Rs 11.16 crore from Maoist dumps in Bijapur in recent

Ashwini Bhide becomes 1st female civic commissioner of Mumbai

MUMBAI: Senior IAS officer Ashwini Bhide, who played a key role in developing Mumbai's metro rail network, Tuesday became the first woman commissioner of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) which was established more than 150 years ago. She took charge from senior bureaucrat and outgoing civic commissioner Bhushan Gagrani, who retired Tuesday, at a ceremony at the BMC headquarters in south Mumbai in the evening. The Mumbai civic body, set up in 1872, is one of the oldest local self-governing bodies in India and is also the richest municipal corporation, boasting of a Rs 80,952 crore budget in the financial year 2026-27.

Bagdogra-Delhi flight makes emergency landing

LUCKNOW: A Delhi-bound Air India Express flight from West Bengal's Bagdogra made an emergency landing at the Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport here after a smoke alarm, sources said Tuesday. The flight (IX1523), operated by an Airbus A320 aircraft, was diverted to Lucknow Monday evening after the pilot issued a "Mayday" call -- an internationally recognised distress signal used in life-threatening emergencies -- after the crew detected smoke in the avionics bay. However, Tuesday evening, another airline source said it was not a "Mayday" call but a "PAN-PAN" call, declaring urgency and seeking priority landing. According to sources, the Air Traffic Control in Lucknow was alerted about the diversion, and the aircraft landed safely at around 5.18 pm.

BENGAL POLL

BJP trying to include outsiders: Mamata

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, March 31: In a strongly-worded letter to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee Tuesday accused the BJP of attempting to illegally include voters from outside West Bengal to the poll-bound state's electoral rolls in bulk by means of Form 6 applications.

Banerjee termed the move "another coordinated attempt by the BJP, in conjunction with the Election Commission of India, to interfere with the democratic rights of the people" after the "flawed and seemingly targeted SIR caused severe hardship to millions, pushing many to the brink of disenfranchisement".

The Trinamool Congress chief shot the letter in less than 24 hours after the party's national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee Monday alleged that nearly 30,000 Form 6s were submitted by the BJP in a day to make

residents of other states voters of West Bengal.

Mamata Banerjee's letter claimed receipt of "credible reports" that a large number of Form 6 applications were being "submitted by BJP agents at the office of the chief electoral officer (CEO) and across several districts".

Stating that these do not seem to be routine applications for voter inclusion but "a mischievous ploy to include non-residents in the electoral roll", the chief minister requested the CEC not to entertain any such applications for inclusion after the publication of the final electoral roll February 28.

"There are serious concerns that these applications may pertain to individuals who are not genuine residents of Bengal and who have no legitimate connection to the state. Similar patterns were reportedly observed before elections in Bihar, Haryana, Maharashtra and Delhi," the TMC chief wrote to Kumar.

Vijay booked for poll code breach during campaign

Chennai: TVK chief Vijay and his party cadres have been booked under various sections of BNS 2023, including alleged violation of MCC regulations during his campaign in the city for the April 23 polls, police sources said Tuesday. The Peravallur police booked cases under sections of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023, NS 126 (2) voluntarily causing obstruction from proceedings, Section 189 (2) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 223 BNS 3(A) and 3 (5), sources said. The alleged Model Code of Conduct of violations include party cadres gathering before the time permitted by the officials to hold the campaign, thereby causing inconvenience to the public. As many as 30 sound systems were used to conduct a roadshow of Vijay, and it was alleged that the rally caused disturbance to the public and prevented a smooth flow of vehicles, they said. Actor-Politician Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam is making its poll debut in the 2026 Assembly polls. Vijay commenced his election campaign from Perambur, one of the two constituencies where he is contesting the election.

Table with 5 columns: Sl. No., Name of the Range, Year, Type of Vehicle, Registration No. It lists various vehicles owned by a person in Odisha.

EAST COAST RAILWAY e-Tender Notice No. e-Tender-Elect-G-95-25. Description of work: AUGMENTATION OF POWER SUPPLY ARRANGEMENT WITH REPLACEMENT OF OVER HEAD LINE TO UNDERGROUND CABLING SYSTEM IN ROAD SIDE STATIONS OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION. Approx. Cost of the work (₹): 5,11,49,173.66, EMD (₹): 4,05,800.00. Completion period: 06 Months.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA Office of the Superintending Engineer Kanpur Rehabilitation, Camps & Building Division, At/PO-Basudevpur, Dist.-Keonjhar, PIN-758047. Bid Identification No. SE, KRC & BD-25/2025-26. Email - eekrcb@basudevpur@gmail.com. Table with columns: Sl. No., Name of work, Approx. value of work, E.M.D./Bid Security, Cost of Bid document, Period of Completion, Class of Contractor, Name & address of the Division.

OFFICE OF THE DMO (MS) CUM SUPERINTENDENT, DHH, BALASORE. Ph.No.06782-262098, E-mail: hbtbalasore@gmail.com. Letter No.2161/DMO/DHHL5HB Date:26.03.2026. OFFICE OF THE DMO (MS) CUM SUPERINTENDENT DHH, BALASORE. TENDER DOCUMENT FOR SUPPLY OF (A) Lab Chemical, Reagents & Consumables (B) Housekeeping and Sanitary Items (C) Office Stationary and Consumable Items (D) Printing Materials (E) Electronics and Electrical Items (F) Instruments and Equipments & Furnitures (G) Water Purifier and Consumable Items. For, DMO (MS) cum Superintendent DHH, Balasore for a period of One Year (2026-2027).

PUBLIC NOTICE. Notice is hereby given to the general public at large that disputes relating to the ownership, management, administration and control of the hotel property known as "The Chariot Resort and SPA", situated at Sipasurabali, Ballapanda, Puri, Odisha, in the name of the Company, Brijsons Hotel Private Limited, are presently pending adjudication before the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Kolkata, The Hon'ble High Court of Judicature at Kolkata. It is also matter of record that Mr. Brij Bhairi Mishra, son of late Beni Madhav Mishra is wrongfully holding himself out to be a director and/or authorised representative of the Hotel at various places and with third parties without any authority despite having been removed as Director of the Company on and from 14th August 2024 and such removal is also subject matter of challenge before the Hon'ble NCLT, Kolkata Bench along with various other issues including wrongfully and illegally appointment of his wife Mrs. Parvati Mishra as Additional Director. We make it clear and put the public on notice that save and except who has been specifically authorised by the Brijsons Hotel Private Limited, no person, firm, company, association, or body of individuals claiming to be promoters, directors, partners, proprietors, shareholders, managers, agents or representatives of the said hotel is authorised to enter into any agreement, booking, lease, licence, sale, transfer, assignment, memorandum of understanding, or any other transaction or dealing of whatsoever nature or representing in respect of the said hotel or any part thereof. As such, the general public at large and all concerned are hereby cautioned not to deal in any manner whatsoever with any person or entity claiming ownership, management or control over the said hotel without any specific authorisation by the Brijsons Hotel Private Limited. Any of such dealings, if undertaken, shall be entirely at the sole and absolute risk, cost and consequences of the concerned parties and shall be subject to the final outcome of the pending judicial proceedings. This notice is issued without prejudice to all legal rights, remedies, claims and contentions of the undersigned under law and equity. Date: 01st April 2026. Place: Puri, Odisha. Issued by: Sd/- Gobinda Chandra Nayak Director | DIN: 09837862 Brijsons Hotel Private Limited



MARKET MAYHEM
The current bearish trend is largely externally driven rather than fundamentally broken. Elevated crude oil prices, geopolitical risks in the Middle East, and sustained FII selling have created a risk-off environment
PONMUDI R | CEO - ENRICH MONEY

INDIA'S MONTHLY DATA USE HITS 31 GB

India's average monthly mobile data consumption per user crossed the 31 GB mark in 2025, up from 27.5 GB in 2024, according to a report by telecom gear maker Nokia. The 13th edition of Nokia's annual Mobile Broadband Index (MBI) said pan-India monthly 5G data traffic surged 70 per cent year-on-year to reach 12.9 exabytes (EB) in 2025. With this, 5G now contributes nearly 47 per cent of the country's overall mobile broadband traffic



War triggers ₹51L-cr wipeout

Since the West Asia conflict started February 28, investors have fled riskier assets due to the cascading effect of the war on crude oil prices and markets globally

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 31: Dalal Street investors have lost a whopping Rs 51 lakh crore from their wealth since the West Asia conflict began late last month, with the BSE benchmark Sensex tumbling over 11 per cent during this time, as investors fled riskier assets due to the cascading effect of the war on crude oil prices and markets globally.

Markets also faced the blow of foreign fund exodus from domestic equities.

Since the West Asia conflict started February 28, the BSE benchmark has crashed 9,339.64 points or 11.48 per cent.

Tracking the sharp fall in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies fell by Rs 51,09,498.82 crore to Rs 4,12,41,172.45 crore (\$4.36 trillion) this month.

From its all-time high of 86,159.02, the BSE benchmark index is down 14,211.47 points or 16.49 per cent.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, surged 4.15 per cent to \$117.46 per barrel.

Foreign investors have withdrawn over Rs 1 lakh crore from domestic equities in March, making it the worst monthly outflow, weighed down by escalating tensions in West Asia and a weakening rupee.

Pabitra Mukherjee, Associate Vice President, Technical Research, Bajaj Broking, said, "The four-week period after the onset of the conflict has witnessed the most intense wave of risk aversion since the glob-



MARKET MAYHEM
The four-week period after the onset of the conflict has witnessed the most intense wave of risk aversion since the global market turmoil triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. During this phase, FIIs have been the dominant force behind market weakness, driving sustained selling pressure

PABITRO MUKHERJEE | ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT, TECHNICAL RESEARCH, BAJAJ BROKING

al market turmoil triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. During this phase, FIIs have been the dominant force behind market weakness, driving sustained selling pressure."

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) executed an unprecedented sell-off in Indian equities during March 2026, marking one of the largest monthly capital outflows in recent his-

MARKET MAYHEM

Sensex tanks over 11% since start of West Asia war

Mcap of BSE-listed companies at Rs 4,12,41,172.45cr

FPIs withdraw over Rs 1L-cr in March, making it the worst monthly outflow

tory, he added. "The primary catalyst for this large-scale withdrawal has been escalating geopolitical tensions in West Asia, which have heightened global uncertainty and risk aversion," Mukherjee said.

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended the last trading session of the 2025-26 fiscal year over 2 per cent lower Monday.

"Escalating tensions in West Asia continued to weigh heavily on markets, as the ongoing US-Israel conflict with Iran entered its fifth week and expanded across the region," Siddhartha Khemka - Head of Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

Oil prices hold above \$100, Wall Street rebounds

Wall Street rebounded in premarket trading on Tuesday and oil prices held above \$100 as the US and Iran exchanged military strikes in the fifth week of the war. Futures for the S&P 500 and Dow Jones Industrial Average each rose 0.9 per cent before the opening bell, while Nasdaq futures climbed 0.8 per cent. Brent crude futures inched up slightly to \$107.56 a barrel Tuesday, while benchmark US crude rose 83 cents to \$103.71 per barrel. Oil prices have surged in March, with Brent crude prices rising more than 40 per cent since the start of the Iran war. Average US gas prices Tuesday glided past \$4 a gallon, the first time since 2022, as global energy prices soar. Also Tuesday, official data showed that Europe's inflation rate in March jumped to 2.5 per cent, up from February's 1.9 per cent. At midday in Europe, Britain's FTSE 100 rose 0.9 per cent, France's CAC 40 was up 0.5 per cent, while Germany's DAX was trading 0.6 per cent higher. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 was down 1.6 per cent to 51,063.72. Losses after the Iran war began on Feb. 28 have wiped out the gains it made from the beginning of the year. South Korea's Kospi lost 4.3 per cent to 5,052.46. Hong Kong's Hang Seng edged up 0.2 per cent to 24,788.14, while the Shanghai Composite index fell 0.8 per cent to 3,891.86.

Oracle lays off 12K employees in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 31: US-based IT firm Oracle is believed to have laid off approximately 12,000 staff in India, with another round of layoffs expected within a month, impacted employees said Tuesday.

Globally, the company has fired around 30,000 employees.

"In India, around 12,000 employees have been laid off. The company is planning another mass layoff within a month," said two people impacted by the retrenchment, including one from the company's human resource department.

The company has approximately 30,000 employees in India, including those affected by the layoffs. Oracle declined to comment on the development.

The company has offered 15 days' salary to each employee who has completed a year of service in India, in addition to one month of unpaid wages till termination date, leave encashment, gratuity based on eligibility and pay for a one-month notice period. Oracle has also offered a two-month salary as a top-up. However, the severance package is available for those who voluntarily and amicably resign from the company.

AVIATION HEAVYWEIGHT

IndiGo names Willie Walsh as new CEO



REUTERS

New Delhi, March 31: Indian airline IndiGo pulled off a coup Tuesday by naming Willie Walsh, one of the industry's highest-profile figures, as chief executive, as it grapples with regulatory scrutiny and operational challenges exacerbated by the Iran war.

Walsh, 64, has most recently been leading the International Air Transport Association industry body through a period of aircraft delivery delays and mounting cost pressures, and is a previous CEO of British Airways. His term at IATA ends July 31 and he is expected to join IndiGo by August 3 at the latest, the airline said in a statement.

"(Walsh's) experience in managing

large scale airline operations and navigating complex market dynamics make him ideally suited to strengthen and lead IndiGo," chairman Vikram Singh Mehta said.

Before joining IATA, Walsh built a long career in commercial aviation, starting as a cadet pilot at Aer Lingus in 1979 before becoming its CEO in 2001. He became CEO at British Airways in 2005, steering the airline through the global financial crisis and overseeing its 2011 merger with Iberia to create IAG. Walsh earned a reputation as a combative leader during labour disputes at BA and later directed blunt criticism at governments over their handling of the Covid-19 pandemic after taking charge of IATA in April 2021.

IndiGo's shares are down 22% so far this year, making it one of the biggest losers on India's blue-chip Nifty 50 index. It is currently valued at Rs 1.52 trillion (\$16.17 billion).

IndiGo has about a 65% share of India's aviation market, the world's fastest-growing. The carrier cancelled more than 4,500 flights in December in what was the biggest crisis in its 20-year history.

Royal Enfield Guerrilla 450 Apex debuts at Jaibaba Automobiles



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 31: Jaibaba Automobiles, an authorised Royal Enfield dealership, celebrated the grand launch of the much-awaited Guerrilla 450

(2026 edition) in an event marked by enthusiasm and camaraderie Tuesday.

The occasion was graced by renowned riders Dr Kirti Ketan Pradhan and Satwik Samal, members of the Jaibaba Tribe,

Dealer Principal Harshit Lodha, SM Satya Dhal, and the entire Jaibaba team.

Addressing the gathering, Harshit Lodha shared key updates about the 2026 lineup, announcing the introduction of the new Apex variant featuring upgraded specifications. The model also arrives in three fresh colour options—Apex Red, Black, and Green—along with an additional new shade, Twilight Blue.

The pricing for the all-new Guerrilla 450 starts at Rs 2.49 lakh (ex-showroom) for the Apex Red variant and goes up to Rs 2.72 lakh for the top-end Brava Blue variant.

The celebration concluded on a festive note with a cake-cutting ceremony, followed by high tea, as attendees came together to mark the successful launch.

INDIA'S 1ST IRANIAN OIL CARGO SINCE 2019 HEADED TO GUJARAT COAST

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 31: India's first Iranian crude oil cargo since 2019 may be headed towards a port in Gujarat, according to ship tracking data.

Indian refiners have been looking to purchase a few cargoes of Iranian oil on water following the recent sanctions waiver by Washington.

"The Indo-Iranian oil trade has flickered back to life. Following the US administration's decision to grant a 30-day window for Iranian oil "on the water" due to regional conflict, the vessel Ping Shun is now en route to Vadinar (in Gujarat) with 600,000 barrels

of crude. This is the first such delivery since May 2019 and comes at a critical time for Indian refiners facing tightening inventories," said Sumit Ritolia, Lead Research Analyst, Refining and Modelling at commodity market analytic firm Kpler.

While the identity of the buyer is unknown, Vadinar is home for 20 million tonne a year oil refinery of Russian oil giant Rosneft-backed Naraya Energy. It also is the landing point for crude oil that goes to hinterland refineries such as Bina refinery of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL).

India's oil ministry has so far maintained that techno-com-

mercial feasibility will drive the decision on resuming buying Iranian crude.

Historically, India was a major buyer of Iranian crude, importing significant volumes of Iranian light and heavy grades due to strong refinery compatibility and favourable commercial terms. Following sanctions tightening in 2018, imports ceased from May 2019, with volumes replaced by Middle Eastern, US and other grades. At peak, Iranian crude accounted for 11.5 per cent of India's total imports. While the US waiver allowed countries to purchase those barrels, it is unclear how payments will be made.

Advertisement for IGCH (Odisha Knowledge Corporation Ltd) featuring a map of India and portraits of individuals. Text includes: "ଈଶ୍ଵରୀୟ ଇନ୍ଫର୍ମେସନ୍ ଅଫ୍ ଗ୍ୟାଣ୍ଠୋଏଣ୍ଟେଲେଜି ଏଣ୍ଡ ହେପାଟୋଲୋଜି", "ଉତ୍କଳ ଦିବସର ଦ୍ଵାର୍ଦ୍ଧିକ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଓ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ".

Advertisement for OS-CIT (Odisha State-Certificate in Information Technology) featuring 12 pillars of skills and 100+ AI tools. Text includes: "AI Powered 12 Pillars of OS-CIT AI Flavoured", "100+ AI Tools Master the Future of Technologies", "OS-CIT is an Essential Computer Course for Government & Other Jobs. JOIN NOW!", "ODISHA KNOWLEDGE CORPORATION LTD. For More details Contact : 0674 - 3520021", "Scan QR Code OR send 'Hi' to 7735552044 to know more about OS-CIT".

Connolly shines on debut

The southpaw slams 72 as Punjab Kings beat Gujarat Titans by three wickets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mullanpur, March 31: Young southpaw Cooper Connolly marked his IPL debut with a decisive 44-ball 72 after Yuzvendra Chahal's artistry with the ball to power Punjab Kings to a three-wicket victory over Gujarat Titans here Tuesday.

After PBKS opted to field first, leg-spinner Chahal (2/28 in 4 overs) brought his years of experience to the fore to stymie GT in the middle overs and limit them to 162/6.

Seamer Vijaykumar Vyshak grabbed 3/34 for PBKS.

After almost losing their way with the bat due to Prasadh Krishna's (3/29 in 4 overs) excellent bowling, PBKS completed the chase of 163 with five balls to spare. Connolly and Prabhsimran Singh (37 off 24 balls) laid the foundation for the win with a 76-run partnership for the second wicket.

Earlier, skipper Shubman



Gill (39 off 27 balls) and Jos Buttler (38 off 33 balls) were the chief contributors for GT in an insipid batting display.

PBKS' start was not good as Kagiso Rabada cramped Priyansh Arya for room with his pace and line to dismiss the

opener after debutant fast bowler Ashok Sharma went back a few steps to pull off a good catch at midwicket.

Connolly and Prabhsimran then meant business as they went about their task in a professional manner to keep their

team ahead, the two hitting a flurry of fours and sixes to flatten the GT bowlers.

Rashid Khan gave GT hope with the wicket of Prabhsimran, the batter failing to clear Prasadh Krishna at long-on. Shreyas Iyer pulled Ashok

Disappointed with his performance, Gukesh to play fewer events

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, March 31: Reigning world champion D Gukesh Tuesday decided to scale back his tournament schedule following a disappointing performance this season, opting to play only two Grand Chess Tour events in 2026 to prioritise training and preparation for his title defence.

Gukesh's inconsistent run has seen him endure an early exit as top seed at the Chess World Cup in November 2025 at home. It was followed by lowly finishes at the World Rapid and Blitz Championships in December, a 10th-place result after tie-breaks at the Tata Steel Chess Tournament, and a ninth-place result at the recently concluded Prague Chess Festival.

"My performance in the last few events has been quite disappointing, not just for me, but for all of you who support me," wrote Gukesh on X, "something he does not do very often."

"In order to find my best form my team and I have decided that I should compete with slightly less intensity over the next few months. Consequently, we feel it is in my best interest to skip long events away from home to allow for more dedicated training time," he added, indicating his priority from now on would be preparing to defend the world title he won by beating Ding Liren of China in Singapore in 2024.

The decision could prove to be a strategic pause to reset after a string of early exits, though it is certain to draw close attention from the chess fraternity. Gukesh's opponent for the FIDE World Chess Championship later this year is currently being decided at the FIDE Candidates Tournament in Cyprus, where eight competitors are battling it out, with the winner earning the right



to challenge him for the title.

Gukesh added that he had requested the organisers of the Grand Chess Tour to allow him to play only two events this season, a request they supported.

"With this in mind, I approached the Grand Chess Tour organisers and asked to play only two European Rapid & Blitz events. They were very supportive and understanding, and we agreed that I would participate in the Rapid & Blitz tournaments in Warsaw and Zagreb this year."

"I'm very grateful for their support. Respectfully, I am not planning to play any other events during the Grand Chess Tour schedule and will certainly be back for the full Grand Chess Tour in the future," he added. With Gukesh opting not to play the full Grand Chess Tour, the organisers have brought in reigning World Cup champion Javokhir Sindarov as his replacement.

"Reigning World Cup champion Javokhir Sindarov will join the 2026 Grand Chess Tour as a full tour participant, replacing Gukesh Dommaraju, who has withdrawn from the full tour to focus on training but will still compete in select Grand Chess Tour events in Warsaw and Zagreb."

"Sindarov will compete in Warsaw, Bucharest and both Saint Louis events, bringing his dynamic play and recent World Cup-winning form to the Tour," wrote Grand Chess Tour on X.

Gukesh will next play in the Euro 26,000 Masters Chess Menorca in Spain from April 7-12.

KHELO INDIA TRIBAL GAMES

Athletes take Odisha's medal tally to 36

POST NEWS NETWORK

Raipur, March 31: Continuing their remarkable performance at the 1st Khelo India Tribal Games 2026, KIIT & KISS athletes added further glory to Odisha's campaign with outstanding achievements in athletics.

Basanti Majhi clinched a prestigious gold medal, while Kabita Tadingi secured a silver medal in the 100m hurdles, reinforcing the dominance of KIIT-KISS athletes on the national stage.

Adding to the medal tally, the KIIT & KISS contingent secured

a silver medal in the Women's 4x100m relay, with Jamuna Tudra, Rameswari Gond, and Basanti Majhi playing key roles in the podium finish, showcasing excellent teamwork and coordination.

With these latest successes, Odisha has further strengthened its 2nd position in the overall medal standings, increasing its tally

to 37 medals with 13 gold, nine silver, and 15 bronze. KIIT & KISS athletes continue to be central to this achievement, contributing an impressive 18 medals, including seven gold, three silver, and eight bronze.



Cue-king Advani bags Nat'l 9-ball pool trophy on debut

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ludhiana, March 31: Iconic Indian cueist Pankaj Advani delivered another superb performance to clinch his maiden National 9-ball pool title here Tuesday.

The multiple-time world champion, representing the Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB), outplayed Nitin Sharma of Chandigarh 11-6 in the race-to-11 final in front of an appreciative crowd.

"I can't believe it, this is a very different title," said Advani. "It means so much to me winning a sport which is outside of my comfort zone! To be an underdog and eventually go on to lift the trophy is some-



thing I never imagined in my wildest dreams would happen."

Winner of 28 world titles in billiards and snooker, Advani showed he is equally skilful in this high-speed version of cue sports, recovering from a slow start that left him trailing 1-3 to draw level at 3-3.

He kept his opponent quiet with some clever safety play, and when the champion erred, Nitin failed to capitalise.

TODAY'S MATCH

TIME: 7:30 PM
 Star Sports channels & Jio Hotstar

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)/(9)(1) 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 PROVISIO 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 Borrowers/ Partners / Mortgagee / Total Dues	Description of the Properties	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount
1.	ARB, CUTTACK, PH.: 8249067773 / 7008973027 / Borrower: M/s. Tapaswini Food Products, Address-1: At: Gilinasi, P.O.: Siala, Krushnaprasad, Dist.: Puri, Odisha, Address-2: At: Plot No.: 1890, Srianagar, Old Town, Bhubaneswar, Odisha / Partners: 1) Mr. Lalit Mohan Pradhan, 2) Mrs. Tapaswini Parida , Both are at Plot No.: 1890, Srianagar, Old Town, Bhubaneswar, Odisha / Total Dues: ₹2,51,37,000/- + interest, costs and expenses less any part amount repaid.	Equitable Mortgage of Land, shed & Industrial Building situated at Khata No.: 109/113 of aggregate Total Area: Ac.4.100 Dec, 1) Plot No.: 10/949, Area: Ac.0.820 Dec, 2) Plot No.: 10/952, Area: Ac.0.820 Dec, 3) Plot No.: 10/953, Area: Ac.0.820 Dec, 4) Plot No.: 10/954, Area: Ac.0.820 Dec, 5) Plot No.: 10/956, Area: Ac.0.410 Dec, 6) Plot No.: 10, Area: Ac.0.410 Dec, KISSam: Gharabari situated at Mouza: Gilinasi, Tahasil: Krushnaprasad, Thana: Krushnaprasad, Dist.: Puri, Odisha, standing in the name of M/s. Tapaswini Food	₹62,65,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹6,26,500/- / ₹ 50,000/-
2.	ARB, CUTTACK, PH.: 8249067773 / 7008973027 / Borrowers: 1) M/s. Shreen Industries, Prop.: Mr. Sandip Das Mohapatra, At: IID Centre, Somanathpur, PS.: Remuna No.: 130, Dist.: Balasore, 2) Mr. Sandip Das Mohapatra, S/o.: Dr. Banabihari Mohapatra, At: Ranipatna, Daraji Pokhari, PO.: Nayabazar, PS.: Sahadevkhunta, Dist.: Balasore / Total Dues: ₹73,40,000/- + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.	Equitable mortgage of IDCO Lease Hold Factory Land & Building located at Mouza: Telgadia, P.S.: Remuna (Thana No.: 130), Tahasil: Remuna, Dist.: Balasore, KISSam: Karakhana, Leased by IDCO & Mortgaged by M/s. Shreen Industries, Prop.: Mr. Sandip Das Mohapatra, Khata No.: 1, Plot No.: 41, Area: Ac. 0.11 Dec., Plot No.: 46, Area: Ac. 0.02 Dec., Plot No.: 49, Area: Ac. 0.04 Dec. & Plot No.: 50, Area: Ac. 0.08 Dec., Total Area: Ac. 0.25 Dec. i.e. 10,890 Sqft. , Bounded by East: Plot No.: D/43, West: Plot No.: D/41, North: IDCO Road, South: Plot No.: D/15	₹42,24,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹4,22,400/- / ₹ 50,000/-
3.	ARB, CUTTACK, PH.: 8249067773 / 7008973027 / Borrowers: 1) M/s. Shreen Industries, Prop.: Mr. Sandip Das Mohapatra, At: IID Centre, Somanathpur, PS.: Remuna No.: 130, Dist.: Balasore, 2) Mr. Sandip Das Mohapatra, S/o.: Dr. Banabihari Mohapatra, At: Ranipatna, Daraji Pokhari, PO.: Nayabazar, PS.: Sahadevkhunta, Dist.: Balasore / Total Dues: ₹73,40,000/- + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.	All that part & parcel of Machine and Equipments i.e.: 1) CUP Manufacturing Machinery, 2) Automatic Paper Cup Forming Machine, 3) Ancillary Machine and Hydraulic Double Die Machine, Situated over Khata No.: 1, Plot No.: 41, 46, 49, 50, Mouza: Telgadia, P.S.: Remuna (Thana No.: 130), Tahasil: Remuna, Dist.: Balasore, owned & Hypothecated by M/s. Shreen Industries, Prop.: Mr. Sandip Das Mohapatra	₹2,16,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹21,600/- / ₹ 20,000/-

Date & Time of E-Auction: 28.04.2026 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 by 28.04.2026 i.e. Before E-Auction Date & Time in the Portal.

Inspection will be provided to the prospective bidders on any working day before 27.04.2026 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/mortgagee under Rule 9(1) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002. 3) This is a 15 days notice to the borrower / guarantor / mortgagee 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/Mortgagees 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: 01.04.2026

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

E-AUCTION SALE OF VEHICLE

Applications are invited from interested bidders for purchase of following vehicle, seized by the Bank on "As is where is", "As is What is" & "Whatever there is" basis as per terms and conditions listed below. This public Notice will be treated as a notice to the Borrowers/ Guarantors/Mortgagees of the loan. They are hereby advised to liquidate their entire dues before the auction date, failing which the vehicle will be auctioned and balance dues, if any will be recovered from them with interest and cost.

Sl. No.	Branch Name / Contact No.	Name of the Borrower	Vehicle Details	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount	Parking Yard Details
1.	BIJU PATNAIK PARK / Mob: 9692218310	Mrs. Priyanka Priyadarshini Jena	CITROEN C3, 1.2 PETROL, Regd. No.: OD-02-CD-9394, Year of Manufacturing: 2022	₹1,60,000/- / ₹16,000/- / ₹5,000/-	M/s. City Investigation & Detective, At/Mouza: Sijua, Khata No.: 158/139, Plot No.: 394/605, Near King Club, PO: Patrapada, PS: Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, Dist.: Khurda, Mob: 9337692882

Date of Auction: 08.05.2026 From 10.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M., E-Auction Portal- <https://baanknet.com>

Last Date of submission of EMD, Application & Documents: 01.04.2026 to 08.05.2026 From 10.00 A.M. to 02.00 P.M.

Terms and Conditions: Interested bidders can inspect the vehicle at the premises of the stock yard as mentioned above on 01.04.2026 to 07.05.2026 from 10.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M.. The successful bidder has to deposit 25% of bid amount within one day after bid is successful and the balance amount within 15 days failing which the money deposited by the successful bidder would be forfeited. The cost of transfer of ownership & statutory dues/all misc. charges, if any is to be borne by the successful purchaser. Successful Bidder is fully responsible for taking delivery of the vehicle from stockyard after full payment is made within a period of 15 (fifteen) days. Vehicle will be auctioned on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" & "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis. However the Bank reserves the right to accept/reject/cancel the auction sale process of the vehicle at its own discretion at any point of time. There will be bidding in the auction and the highest bidder will be declared as successful bidder. **For further information & clarification contact: Mr. Prasant Kumar Mahapatra, Mob.: 7008973027. This is also a 30 days sale notice to the Borrower(s)/Legal Heir(s) of the aforesaid loan accounts for settlement of their outstanding dues with the bank and to participate in the public auction/ e-auction on the above mentioned date.**

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 01.04.2026 Zonal Manager, Bank of India

Bank of India
 Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli Bhubaneswar, Odisha, PIN-751015

DEMAND NOTICE

Notice under Section 13(2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 for Enforcement of Security Interest

The Bank has granted following various credit facilities to the under mentioned Borrower & the amount outstanding dues mentioned below has not been paid in time. Therefore Demand Notice under Sec. 13(2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 was issued by the Authorized Officer following Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagee(s) of the Bank of India, **Paradeep Branch** but the same could not be served on the below mentioned party. Therefore, the contents of the same including the amount outstanding, Loan amount and details to the secured assets are herein furnished below.

PARADEEP BRANCH/ Name & Address of the Borrower(s) / Mortgagee(s)	Nature / Limit	Date of NPA / Date of Demand Notice	Amount as per Notice under SARFAESI Act	Description of mortgaged Property
Borrower: Mr. Sekh Basir Ali, S/o- Sheikh Gousi, Village: Paradeepgarh, PO: Paradeepgarh, PS: Paradeep Lock, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha, PIN-754141.	Term Loan (5103261000009) / ₹ 15,00,000/-	18.04.2025 / 17.03.2026	₹ 5,03,777/- as on 17.03.2026 + interest & expenses thereon	All the part and parcel of Land and Building situated over Khata No.: 321, Plot No.: 1221, Area: Ac.0.11dec., KISSam: Gharabari at Mouza: Paradeepgarh, PO: Paradeepgarh, SRO: Kujang, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha, standing in the name of Mr. Sekh Basir Ali. Bounded by- North: Anabadi Govt. Land, South: Seller (SK Muslim), East: Bansidhar Sethy and West: Road.
Borrower: M/s Paradeep Supply Agency, Prop.: Mr. Sekh Basir Ali, S/o- Sheikh Gousi, Village: Paradeepgarh, PO: Paradeepgarh, PS: Paradeep Lock, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha, PIN-754141.	Cash Credit (51033011000054) / ₹ 30,00,000/-	18.04.2025 / 17.03.2026	₹ 30,97,810.59 as on 17.03.2026 + interest & expenses thereon	(1) Hypothecation of stocks and book debts, (2) All the part and parcel of Land/ Land and Building situated over Khata No.: 321, Plot No.: 341, Area: Ac.0.09dec., Plot No.: 342, Area: Ac.0.02dec. and Plot No.: 344, Area: Ac.0.02dec., Total Area: Ac.0.13dec. , KISSam: Gharabari at Mouza: Paradeepgarh, PO: Paradeepgarh, PS: Paradeep Lock, SRO: Tirtol, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha, standing in the name of Mr. Sekh Basir Ali. Plot No.: 344 bounded by- North: Road, South: Rev. Plot No. 343, East: Rev. Plot No. 341, West: Rev. Plot No. 345, Plot No.: 342 bounded by- North: Rev. Plot No. 341, South: Rev. Plot No. 1219, East: Road, West: Rev. Plot No. 343, Plot No.: 341 bounded by- North: Road, South: Rev. Plot No. 342, East: Road, West: Rev. Plot No. 344.

As the above mentioned Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagee(s) of the Paradeep Branch have defaulted in repayment of the principal loan/ facility in installments/ interest/ both, the account has been classified as NPA, in accordance with the directions or guidelines issued by the RBI. In spite of our repeated demands you (borrower) have not paid any amount towards the amount outstanding in your account, you have not discharged your liabilities. Hence, we are now constrained to make this publication of Demand Notice, required u/s 13(2) of the said Act and Rule 3 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. You are hereby called upon to pay the aforesaid amount alongwith further interest, cost, incidental Expenses, Charges etc. within a period of 60 days from the date of Notice, failing which we will take necessary action under the provisions of sec 13(4) of the said Act, against all or any one or more of the secured assets including taking necessary action under the provisions of sec 13(4) of the said Act, against all or any one or more of the secured assets including taking possession of your secured assets and sale them. If the dues are not fully recovered in the course of these actions against secured assets, then the Bank reserves the right to take action by filing recovery action against you before Debts Recovery Tribunal/Court for recovery of the same. It may be noted that under the provisions of section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act, right of redemption is available to you, by paying the dues of the Bank together with all cost, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank at any time, before the date of publication of notice for public auction or inviting quotations or tender from public or private treaty for transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale of the secured assets. Please take note that as per sub section (13) of the aforesaid Act, after receipt of this notice, you are restrained from transferring or creating any encumbrances on the aforesaid secured assets whether by way of sale, lease, license, gift, mortgage or otherwise. **This notice is issued without prejudice to the rights of the Bank available under any other law.**

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 31.03.2026 Authorized Officer, Bank of India



Israel will destroy all homes in Lebanese villages near the border and 600,000 people who fled the south will not be allowed home until northern Israel is secure
ISRAEL KATZ | DEFENCE MINISTER, ISRAEL

25 SANCTIONED RUSSIAN SHIPS PASS THROUGH UK WATERS
More than two dozen ships sanctioned for being part of Russia's so-called shadow fleet have passed through UK waters since Prime Minister Keir Starmer last week authorised the military to detain vessels used by Moscow to export oil



Iran strikes fully loaded oil tanker off Dubai coast

US says coming days in Iran war will be decisive, urges Tehran to make a deal



OIL PRICES HEAD FOR RECORD MONTHLY GAIN

The month-old conflict has spread across the region, killing thousands, disrupting energy supplies and threatening to send the global economy into a tailspin. Crude oil prices briefly spiked again after the attack on the tanker, which can carry around 2 million barrels of oil worth more than \$200 million at current prices.

Authorities in Dubai said the fire on the Kuwait-flagged Al-Salmi had been brought under control following a drone attack, with no oil leak and no injuries to the crew. Kuwait Petroleum Corp, the ship's owner, said the vessel's hull was damaged, and photos of the Al-Salmi confirmed this.

LSEG Data showed the vessel was heading to Qingdao in China, and was carrying 1.2 million barrels of Saudi crude oil and 800,000 barrels of Kuwaiti crude, according to monitoring service TankerTrackers.com.

INTERNATIONAL ATTEMPTS AT MEDIATION

US General Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters in Washington that the US was continuing to degrade and destroy Iran's capabilities.

He said the US military was continuing to strike key manufacturing and research sites and had taken out over 150 Iranian naval vessels. Hegseth said US strikes were causing widespread desertions in Iran.

With attacks showing no sign of easing, Pakistan is seeking to mediate in the war. Its foreign minister, Ishaq Dar, was due to discuss the conflict during a visit to China Tuesday after hosting talks with Turkey, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

NEW ATTACKS

The war has continued to spread, with Iran-aligned Houthis in Yemen entering the war by firing at Israel, and Turkey reporting Monday that a ballistic missile launched from Iran had entered Turkish airspace before being shot down.

The war has also revived conflict between Israel and the Iran-backed Lebanese group Hezbollah, while Iran, which has the highest casualty toll in the war, has fired at targets in Gulf Arab states, where the US has military bases.

Ukraine strikes Russia's Ust-Luga port again

REUTERS

Moscow, March 31: Ukrainian drones Tuesday struck Russia's Baltic Sea port of Ust-Luga for the fifth time in 10 days, and industry sources told Reuters an oil loading terminal was hit, likely adding to Russia's difficulties in exporting crude.

Kyiv has stepped up attacks on Russia's oil export infrastructure over the past month, launching its heaviest drone strikes of the more than four-year war against the Baltic ports of Ust-Luga and Primorsk.

At least 40% of Russia's oil export capacity has been halted due to drone attacks, a disputed strike on a major pipeline and the seizure of tankers, according to Reuters



calculations based on market data.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Monday that some of Kyiv's allies had sent "signals" about the possibility of scaling back its long-range strikes on Russia's oil sector as global energy prices have surged due to the Iran war.

TRANSNEFT OIL TERMINAL HIT

Regional governor Alexander Drozdenko said three people, including two children, were treated for injuries and several buildings had been damaged in the overnight attacks. In a message on Telegram at 0409 GMT, he said air-raid alerts in the region had been lifted but gave no details on damage to the port.

He later said that the aftermath of the attack on Ust-Luga had been "eliminated" or dealt with. He said the supply of hot water and heating to residential and other units in the region were restored.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called the strikes "terrorist attacks," adding that Russia was working on protecting its critical infrastructure.

Indian-origin man shot dead in Canada's Surrey

Ottawa: A man, known to be of Indian origin, has been killed in Canada's Surrey in an incident of shooting allegedly related to organised crime, local media reported. The shooting incident was reported from a townhouse complex in Surrey's Sullivan Heights Saturday night, in which a man was shot dead, Global News reported. The Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) said in an update Monday that the victim has been identified as 27-year-old Jasman Sekhon, CTV News reported. "Sekhon had previous interactions with the police and was believed to be involved in the drug trade. Early indications suggest this was a targeted incident related to organised crime," the report said, quoting the IHIT's statement.

Jerusalem/Washington, March 31: US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Tuesday the next few days in the war against Iran would be decisive and warned Tehran that the conflict would intensify if it did not make a deal.

Hegseth issued his warning hours after Iran set ablaze a fully loaded oil tanker off Dubai, its latest attack on merchant vessels in the Gulf or in the Strait of Hormuz since the United States and Israel attacked Iran February 28.

US President Donald Trump threatened Monday to obliterate Iran's energy plants if it does not agree to a peace deal and open the strait, a vital waterway for global oil shipments that has effectively been blocked by Iran. Trump criticised countries that have not helped in the war Tuesday, including France and Britain, saying they should find "some delayed courage" to take the strait and get their own oil. Sources told Reuters France had not allowed its airspace to be used to transport US weapons for use in the war.

Hegseth, who said he visited US troops in the Middle East Saturday, said Trump was willing to make a deal and talks were ongoing and gaining strength, but that the US was prepared to continue the war if Iran did not comply.

"We have more and more options, and they have less ... in only one month we set the terms, the upcoming days will be decisive," Hegseth said in Washington. "Iran knows that, and there's almost nothing they can militarily do about it."

Huge tanker hit and set ablaze off Dubai coast
Blaze extinguished, no oil leak or injuries
Pakistani minister visits China in mediation efforts
Trump makes new comments on the war on social media

ବନ୍ଦେ ଭାରତ ଜନନୀ

ଓ.ସି.ପି.ଏଲ୍. ପରିବାର ତରଫରୁ ସମଗ୍ର ଓଡ଼ିଶାବାସୀଙ୍କୁ ପବିତ୍ର ଉତ୍କଳ ଦିବସର ହାର୍ଦ୍ଦିକ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ଓ ଅନେକ ଅନେକ ଶୁଭକାମନା

Odisha Coal and Power Limited
OCPL
(A Government of Odisha Company)

ଅଧିକାରୀ - ପ୍ରମୁଖ ଚାଖାର, ଚନ୍ଦ୍ରଶେଖରପୁର, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର | ଇମେଲ୍: info@ocpl.org.in | <https://www.ocpl.org.in>

Wishing the beloved people of Odisha

Happy Utkal Divas 2026

Sri Rajib Lochan Mohanty
FOUNDER

M/S. M. G. MOHANTY
Sustainable Mining Since 1981

MGM GREEN ENERGY
Sustainable Energy

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Organelle Farms
Organic Farming & Whole Foods

Jana - Swasthya
Social Commitments

Jana-Posana
Social Commitments

RAIDIHI'S LAST STRINGS: THE FADING SOUL OF 'KANDHEI NACHA'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

In an age of screens and speed, Raidihi in Dhenkanal district moves differently. Here, art is slow. It is carved, painted, rehearsed, and remembered. 'Kandhei Nacha' (Puppet Dance) is not just performance—it is a careful composition of movements, music, and storytelling, shaped over decades by hands that refuse to let it fade.

In the quiet heart of Odisha, where life drifts gently with the wind and the rustle of trees, lies Raidihi—a village where stories are not written, but performed. They flicker in lamplight, dance in shadows, and sway from delicate strings.

As dusk descends and oil lamps begin to glow, the ancient art of 'Kandhei Nacha' awakens. Wooden figures come alive, their movements guided by skilled hands, their voices echoing generations of memory.

THE BIRTH OF A DREAM

Raidihi's puppetry tradition was not born of inheritance, but of inspiration. In 1952, a group of villagers travelled to Ganjam, where they witnessed a mesmerising puppet performance. The figures laughed, wept, and told stories with astonishing life. The villagers returned home without puppets—but with a vision.

What followed was not imitation, but creation. They carved their own figures, built their own stage, and crafted stories rooted in their land. Over time, Raidihi transformed into a vibrant centre for 'Suta Kandhei'—string puppetry. What began as curiosity slowly became culture, identity, and livelihood.

Seventeen active troupes carry forward this legacy, performing across



the state—from Sambalpur and Mayurbhanj to Puri and Balasore. Each performance, or play (nataka), requires about 8-10 artistes working in perfect harmony: hands guiding strings, voices singing age-old songs, and hearts breathing life into stories.

Through their performances, they retell epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata, alongside folk tales that blur the line between myth and memory.

ART AS INHERITANCE

In Raidihi, puppetry is not just a profession—it is a way of life.

Families are deeply intertwined with the craft. Artistes like Sushant Kumar Dhal and Subhash Jena travel from village to village, sustaining both tradition and livelihood.

In a deeply symbolic custom, fathers gift puppet sets to their daughters at marriage—not as toys, but as tools of independence and dignity.

Sushant Kumar Dhal explains that the tradition has been passed down from his father, and he hopes his children will carry it forward. Crafting a single puppet takes three to four days, reflecting the patience and skill the art demands. Over the years, he has performed across numerous villag-

es, keeping the tradition alive among diverse audiences. Occasionally, the government engages artists like him to promote public welfare schemes.

Despite this, income from puppetry remains modest. Yet for Sushant, the art is more than a livelihood—it is an emotional inheritance.

Similarly, Subhash Jena and his family of four remain deeply involved in the craft, traveling across districts such as Sambalpur, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Balasore, Jajpur, Khurda, and Puri to perform.

Pushpalata Jena, daughter of a President's Award-winning puppeteer Raghunath Pradhan, highlights another reality. Creating a full set of puppets requires wood costing nearly Rs 10,000 and takes around 10 days of labour. However, government support remains limited.

A TRADITION UNDER STRAIN

Despite its rich heritage, the art form stands at a fragile crossroads. The rise of digital entertainment has dimmed the glow of traditional stages. Audiences are shrinking. Earnings are uncertain. Recognition is scarce. For many ar-



tistes, sustaining this tradition has become an act of quiet sacrifice.

The younger generation watches from a distance—caught between pride in their heritage and the pull of modern opportunities.

There is a growing call to recognise Raidihi as a "Heritage Puppet Village"—a step that could bring visibility, tourism, and institutional support.

According to Basudev Dhal, member of Dhenkanal Heritage Walk who promotes the art of the district, along with local residents, have urged authorities to grant this recognition. Such a designation could unlock government grants, boost cultural tourism, and help sustain the tradition.

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Ball tampering: Fakhar handed two-match ban

Lahore: Fakhar Zaman has received a two-match suspension in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) after being found guilty of a Level 3 breach under Article 2.14 of the tournament's Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) confirmed the decision Tuesday following the Lahore Qalandars vs Karachi Kings fixture held Sunday, March 29, at Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore.

WC playoffs: Four-time champion Italy fight to end 12 year absence

Zenica: It's a decisive day for one of soccer's historic powers. Struggling Italy visits Bosnia and Herzegovina in the European qualifying playoffs Tuesday with the four-time champion desperate not to miss out on a third straight World Cup. Italy was eliminated by Sweden and North Macedonia in qualifying playoffs for the last two World Cups and has not appeared at soccer's biggest event since 2014. Italy's World Cup struggles began soon after its last title in 2006: The Azzurri were eliminated from the 2014 and 2018 finals at the group stage.



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ASIAN SQUASH 2025 Abhay, Anahat bag top honours



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, March 31: India's Abhay Singh has been honoured as the Men's Player of the Year 2025 by the Asian Squash Federation, while teenage prodigy Anahat Singh secured the top accolade in the girls' junior category.

The Indian men's team was also recognised, earning the Team of the Year award after finishing with a bronze medal at the World Junior Team Championships 2025 in Egypt, as per the ASF's official announcement. Currently ranked World No 25, Abhay has built an impressive résumé with multiple medals at the Asian Games and titles at the Asian Squash Championships. He was also part of the Indian squad that secured the country's first-ever World Cup mixed team title last year.

Anahat, ranked World No 20, has similarly excelled on the international stage, claiming medals at both the Asian Games and Asian Championships. In 2025, she earned a bronze medal at the World Junior Championships in Cairo and contributed to India's gold-winning campaign at the mixed team World Cup. The last time Indian players featured among the ASF award winners was in 2022, when former India No 1 Saurav Ghosal and Joshna Chinappa took home the men's and women's top honours respectively.

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