

Rupee breaches 94

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 23: The rupee extended its losing streak for the fourth consecutive session, settling 23 paise lower at 94.01 Thursday and breached the 94-level for the second time in a month amid soaring crude oil prices as West Asia peace talks moved to an uncertain trajectory.

Massive selling of domestic equities and incessant withdrawal of foreign funds amid rising worldwide demand for the American currency further weighed on the domestic unit, which has lost over 1 per cent in a week, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 94.03 and hit an intra-day low of 94.17 against the greenback. It also touched the day's high of 93.98 before ending at 94.01 against the US dollar, logging a loss of 23 paise from the previous closing level.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



When Trump called us a hellhole, which model did he mean... Gujarat or Bengal?

Entrepreneurs inspire youth to dream big: CM



SUCCESS MANTRA: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi delivers his speech at Business Eminence Awards 2026 organised by *Dharitri* and *OrissaPOST* at Swosti Premium in Bhubaneswar, Thursday, as Industries Minister Sampad Chandra Swain and the newspapers' Editor Tathagata Satpathy look on

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 23: Highlighting that Odisha is rapidly emerging as a hub for industry, investment, technology and innovation, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said Thursday that entrepreneurs are not just successful businesspersons but role models whose stories inspire the younger generation to dream big and

achieve success through discipline, honesty and hard work. Speaking as the chief guest at the Business Eminence Awards 2026, organised by *Dharitri* and *OrissaPOST* at Swosti Premium here, the CM highlighted Odisha's shift from a state known primarily for its rich culture, heritage, and natural resources to one emerging as a major force on the global industrial and technological map.

"We are at a transformative juncture. Odisha is no longer limited to its cultural identity and natural wealth—it is becoming a key player in global industry and technology," he said. The CM attributed the state's growth trajectory to its inherent strengths, including abundant natural resources, a long coastline, strategic geographical location, a skilled youth population, stable governance, and

the resilient spirit of its people. Outlining an ambitious roadmap, Majhi said Odisha aims to build a \$500 billion economy by 2036 and expand further to a \$1.5 trillion economy by 2047, positioning itself as a major growth engine of a developed India. He noted that both large industries and small enterprises are being encouraged under the government's policies. This balanced approach, he said, is

drawing investors from across the country and abroad. Congratulating the organisers, Majhi praised the newspapers' Editor Tathagata Satpathy for instituting the awards that recognise entrepreneurs contributing to the state's economic and industrial growth. He said such recognitions go beyond celebrating success, highlighting the courage, perseverance, and innovation of in-

dividuals who inspire society. About Dharitri, Majhi said it has consistently reflected the aspirations of modern Odisha particularly the youth. Under Satpathy's leadership, he added, it has evolved into a widely relevant platform with a distinctive style and broad readership. He lauded the launch of the awards during the challenging period of the Covid-19 pandemic, calling it a visionary initiative that honoured entrepreneurs who sustained businesses and protected livelihoods during uncertain times. Highlighting infrastructure and policy support, the CM said Odisha is benefiting from strong backing under PM Narendra Modi's 'Purvodaya' vision. The CM said, "The focus remains on creating an investment-friendly ecosystem that generates employment and benefits people across sectors." Praising the awardees, he said, "You (entrepreneurs) are not just successful businesspersons but role models whose stories inspire the younger generation to dream big and achieve success through discipline, honesty, and hard work." Concluding his address, the CM called for collective efforts from government, industry, academia, media, and citizens to build a prosperous, self-reliant, and resilient Odisha. Attending the event as the chief speaker, Industries Minister Sampad Chandra Swain said Odisha is rapidly emerging as a preferred investment destination due to its industry-friendly environment and progressive policies. **Contd...P5**



No. 19001/30/2627

ଜାତୀୟ ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ଦିବସ- ୨୦୨୬

ରାଜ୍ୟସ୍ତରୀୟ ସମାରୋହ



ଶ୍ରୀ ନରେନ୍ଦ୍ର ମୋଦୀ
ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ

ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଅତିଥି

ଶ୍ରୀ ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ

ଗରିମାମୟ ଉପସ୍ଥିତି

ଶ୍ରୀ ଜନକ ବର୍ଦ୍ଧନ ସିଂହ ଦେଓ
ଭପ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା



ଶ୍ରୀ ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

ଶ୍ରୀ ରବି ନାରାୟଣ ନାଏକ
ମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଗ୍ରାମ୍ୟ ଉନ୍ନୟନ, ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ଓ ପାନୀୟ ଜଳ

ଡ. ମୁକେଶ ମହାଲିଙ୍ଗ
ମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଓ ପରିବାର କଲ୍ୟାଣ, ସଂସଦୀୟ ବ୍ୟାପାର, ଇଲେକ୍ଟ୍ରୋନିକ୍ସ ଓ ସୂଚନା ପ୍ରଯୁକ୍ତିବିଦ୍ୟା

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ସଂସଦ, ବଲାଙ୍ଗିର

ଏବଂ ବିଧାୟକ ବୃନ୍ଦ, ବଲାଙ୍ଗିର

ଜାତୀୟ ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ଦିବସ ପାଳନ ଅବସରରେ

- ଅନ୍ତ୍ୟୋଦୟ ଗୃହ ଯୋଜନାରେ ୫୦,୦୦୦ରୁ ଊର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ହିତାଧିକାରୀଙ୍କୁ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ କରକମଳରେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଦେଶ ବଣ୍ଟନ ଓ ୨୦୦ କୋଟି ଟଙ୍କାର ପ୍ରଥମ କିସ୍ତି ରାଶି ପ୍ରଦାନ ।
- ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ଓ ପାନୀୟ ଜଳ ବିଭାଗର ଆଭ୍ୟନ୍ତରୀଣ ଅଡ଼ିଟ୍ ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟାକୁ ଅନଲାଇନ୍ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ପରିଚାଳନା ନିମନ୍ତେ "ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ସମୀକ୍ଷା" ପୋର୍ଟାଲର ଉନ୍ନୋଦନ ।
- "ବିକଶିତ ଗାଁ, ବିକଶିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶା" ଅଭିଯାନରେ ଗ୍ରାମୀଣ ବିକାଶ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ମୋଟ ୨୧,୮୦୫ଟି ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହୋଇଛି ।
- ସର୍ବ ଭାରତୀୟ ସ୍ତରରେ ଚଳିତ ବର୍ଷ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ୫ଟି ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠାନ ବିଭିନ୍ନ କ୍ଷେତ୍ରରେ ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ସେବା ପାଇଁ ପୁରସ୍କୃତ ହୋଇଛନ୍ତି ।
- ଜିଲ୍ଲା ପରିଷଦ ବୈଠକକୁ ପାରଦର୍ଶିତାର ସହିତ ପରିଚାଳନା କରିବା ନିମନ୍ତେ "ଇ-ପଞ୍ଚାୟତ ସଭା" (ଜିଲ୍ଲା ପରିଷଦ) ପୋର୍ଟାଲର ଉନ୍ନୋଦନ ।
- ବିଗତ ୨ ବର୍ଷରେ ଗ୍ରାମୀଣ ଆବାସ ଯୋଜନାରେ ୪.୭୭ ଲକ୍ଷ ଗୃହ ନିର୍ମାଣ ହୋଇଅଛି ଯେଉଁଥିରୁ ୨୦୨୫-୨୬ ଆର୍ଥିକ ବର୍ଷରେ ୨.୫୮ ଲକ୍ଷ ଗୃହ ନିର୍ମାଣ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ କରାଯାଇଛି ।
- ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ୨୧,୦୩୩ଟି ଗ୍ରାମକୁ ପାଇଁ ଯୋଗେ ପାନୀୟ ଜଳ ଯୋଗାଇ ଦିଆଯାଉଛି । ସେହିପରି ୭,୦୯୯ଟି ଗ୍ରାମକୁ ସର୍ବସାଧାରଣ ପାଇଁ ଚ୍ୟାପ୍ (Stand Post) ଯୋଗେ ଜଳ ଯୋଗାଇ କରାଯାଉଛି । ଆଗାମୀ ୨୦୨୭ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ସମସ୍ତ ଗ୍ରାମକୁ ପାଇଁ ଯୋଗେ ଜଳ ଯୋଗାଇ ଦିଆଯିବ ।
- ୨୦୨୫-୨୬ ବର୍ଷରେ ୨୦୦ ଗ୍ରାମ ପଞ୍ଚାୟତ ୧୫୦ ପ୍ରମାଣପତ୍ର ହାସଲ କରିଛନ୍ତି ।

୨୪ ଅପ୍ରେଲ ୨୦୨୬ | ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ୫ ଘଟିକା | ଗାନ୍ଧୀ ସ୍ମୃତିୟମ, ବଲାଙ୍ଗିର

ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ଓ ପାନୀୟ ଜଳ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର

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leisure



WOMEN IN MOTION AWARD FOR JULIANNE MOORE AT CANNES

The Academy Award-winning actress and activist Julianne Moore is set to be feted with the Women in Motion award at this year's Cannes Film Festival. The Women in Motion award celebrates female artists whose careers and commitment have advanced the role of women both in cinema and in society

ANNE HATHAWAY ON HER 'LONGEST AWKWARD PHASE'

Anne Hathaway, who is awaiting the release of her upcoming film *The Devil Wears Prada 2*, has shared that her awkward phase lasted decades. Owing to her stress and anxiety around communicating, she found solace in acting, where she could memorise all of her lines, reports *People* magazine



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
 Today you will have to give in to your spouse's demands for improving the environment at home. In your own interest it will be advisable, says Ganesha, to hasten the measures needed to be taken and stay focussed on them as you are the one who is guilty of neglect.

TAURUS
 Ganesha sees you taking a day off from your work and immersing your self in domestic activities. A lot of time will be spent blissfully with your family folk chatting away or doing this and that. The idea of getting your interiors redone and give your house a new look will surely occur to you. Instead of doing things on your own, it is very likely you will engage a professional for the job.

GEMINI
 You will be faced with a slew of demands from various people today, and you will find it difficult to meet all of them. However, you will be able to meet the requirements that need to be met to salvage the day. People will praise your intelligence and creativity, says Ganesha.

CANCER
 You will tackle with ease, even the most confounding challenges. You may be the scapegoat, fears Ganesha, as it shakes you and lowers your self-confidence. But shake off your weaknesses and obtain lots of energy.

LEO
 You are advised to be more attentive to your work today. You will try to do the best work possible by putting in your maximum efforts. However, the results might turn out to be lower than your expectations. You need to be wary of excessive expenses or financial loss today. You need to escape losses today by keeping your wits above you, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
 Ganesha foretells that your writing abilities will help you give vent to your emotions without hurting others. You will finish all your incomplete tasks successfully. Ganesha says that you will experience success in everything that you choose to do today.

LIBRA
 Ganesha says today is a good day to renovate your home. You will be able to decorate your home artistically because of your designing skills. The atmosphere at your home will be a happy one with the arrival of guests. You will make plans to go for a picnic with close friends or relatives. Ganesha wishes you all the very best for your future.

SCORPIO
 It's time to influence people and win their hearts whether it's your crush, love or your boss. You may be eager to express your feelings for them. At work, you are likely to work actively and kick start the projects in the pipeline. Ganesha, advises you to keep your eyes and ears open.

SAGITTARIUS
 Tough times do not last, but tough people do, remember this fact and move ahead in life. Try to make the complicated life simpler by your optimistic approach. Speak up when it is required and don't get bogged down by unnecessary pressure.

CAPRICORN
 The hassle and bustle around you will not disturb you today. You've been holding your emotions in your heart and they have started suffocating you. Such an uncomfortable situation may hamper your logical reasoning power and make you feel trapped. But, this too shall pass. You will easily come out of the negative zone and move ahead on the path, foretells Ganesha.

AQUARIUS
 You will go through some heavy mood swings today. And the people who know you well will get shocked and find it difficult to deal with you. Keep your guards on, and don't take uncalculated decisions, advises Ganesha, rather get your current assignments cross the finishing line.

PISCES
 There is a thick chance that your day will be profitable on the monetary front. Money may pour in from business or even through overseas investments. Your knack for good public relations and networking will work to your benefit and good deals will come from far and unexpected sources as well. Reap the benefits and make the most of your contacts, says Ganesha.

Alia's big wish

Mumbai: Alia Bhatt recently shared a heartfelt glimpse into her personal life, expressing a strong hope for her daughter Raha Kapoor. In a candid conversation, the actor revealed that she would love to see her three-year-old grow up to become an athlete.

Alia spoke fondly about Raha's natural energy and spirited personality, describing her as highly active and competitive even at a young age. She noted that her daughter's constant movement and enthusiasm already hint at an inclination towards sports. For Alia, the idea of Raha becoming an athlete is rooted not just in physical ability but also in the values that sports instill, discipline, resilience and teamwork.

She also connected this aspiration to her own belief in collaboration and collective effort. Whether in parenting or filmmaking, Alia emphasised the importance of working together, learning from different perspectives and embracing challenges. She shared that she appreciates environments where opinions are exchanged freely rather than simply agreed upon.

Through her words, Alia painted a picture of a mother who encourages individuality and strength, hoping her daughter channels her boundless energy into a path that builds confidence, independence, and a strong sense of self.

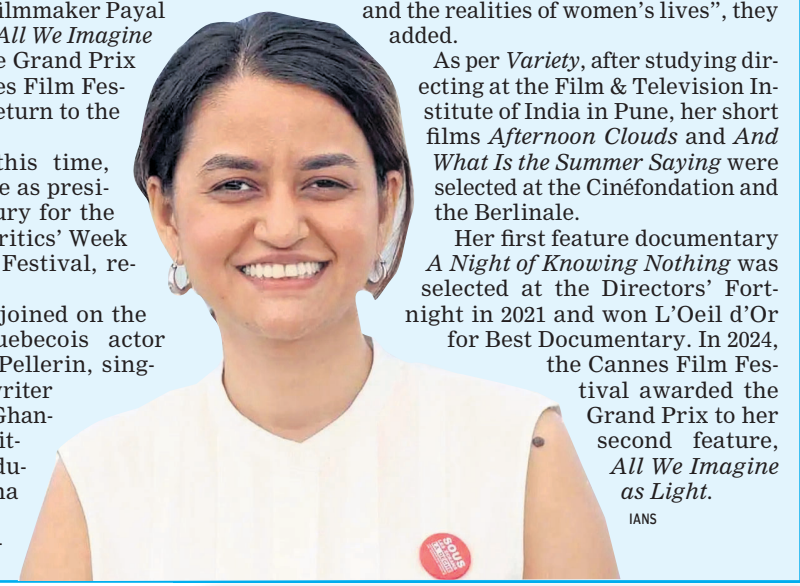


Payal set for Cannes return

Los Angeles: Indian filmmaker Payal Kapadia, whose film *All We Imagine as Light* bagged the Grand Prix at the 77th Cannes Film Festival, is set to return to the festival.

However, this time, she will serve as president of the jury for the 65th edition of Critics' Week in Cannes Film Festival, reports *Variety*.

She will be joined on the jury by Quebecois actor Théodore Pellerin, singer-songwriter Oklou, Ghanaian-British producer Ama Ampadu and jour-



nalist and director of the Bangkok World Film Festival Donsaron Kovitvanitcha.

Payal Kapadia has, over the course of six short and feature-length films, "crafted a body of work where poetry contrasts with her unflinching political take on her country" Critics' Week said in a statement.

"This duality underpins the power of her cinema, a universe that summons all forms to convey folk myths, and bring to the fore invisible lives, class struggle, and the realities of women's lives", they added.

As per *Variety*, after studying directing at the Film & Television Institute of India in Pune, her short films *Afternoon Clouds* and *And What Is the Summer Saying* were selected at the Cinéfondation and the Berlinale.

Her first feature documentary *A Night of Knowing Nothing* was selected at the Directors' Fortnight in 2021 and won L'Œil d'Or for Best Documentary. In 2024, the Cannes Film Festival awarded the Grand Prix to her second feature, *All We Imagine as Light*.

IAN S

Sai talks typecasting



Mumbai: Actress Sai Tamhankar, who is currently seen on the show *Matka King*, has spoken about how, while typecasting remains a huge challenge in the Hindi film industry, it often stems from success itself, where memorable performances lead to repeated offers of similar roles.

Sai, who has showcased her talent in diverse projects such as *Love Sonia*, *Bhakshak*, *Agni*, *Ground Zero*, *Navarasa* and *Dabba Cartel*, to name a few, said that turning down work to avoid being pigeon-holed into an image is one of the toughest parts of being an actor.

Asked how she navigates being typecast and have there been moments where she had to say no to avoid being boxed into a certain image, Sai told this news agency: "Yes, there's a stark silver lining of typecast."

"The thing is, once you do something which is a hit or admired by people, your character is a hit, admired by people, probably the people who cast you again or ask you again for the same thing or same kind of thing, they are probably playing it safe and rightfully so."

However, she thinks for an actor, it is very tough to keep saying no to work. "The only way to escape or to avoid being typecast is saying no to similar work. And that is the toughest part of an actor's job. Especially for me, it's very tough for me to say no to work," said Sai.

IAN S

Mumbai: Actress Rashami Desai has spoken up on her epiphany about life when she realised that there's more to life than just the work.

In an emotional moment on *Rashami Ke Dil Se Dil Tak*, the actress was seen getting emotional as she reflected on life beyond work and her growing desire to build a family of her own. The heartfelt exchange unfolded during a special interaction on the podcast with Dipika Kakar and Shoab Ibrahim, whose bond left a lasting impact on Rashami.

Witnessing Dipika's strength and positivity, especially in the face of personal health struggles, deeply touched Rashami during the podcast.

What moved her even more was the unwavering support Shoab extends to Dipika, a partnership rooted in love, strength, and companionship, something that became a defining moment for Rashami on the show.

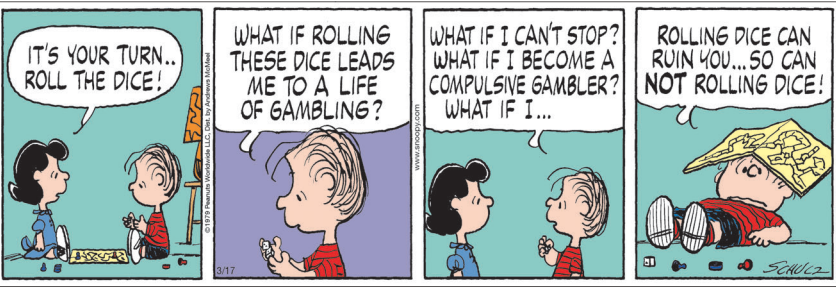
Speaking on the podcast, Rashami shared, "Seeing Dipika and Shoab together really moved me. The way a family, your partner, your child, becomes your strength in the toughest times is something I felt very deeply. It made me realize that there is so much more to life than just work".



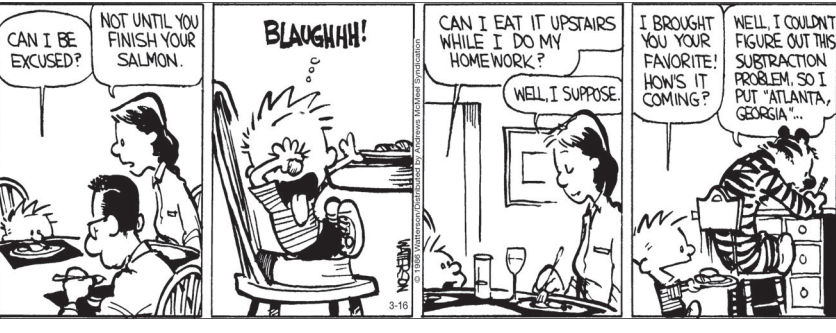
Rashami reflects on life beyond work

IAN S

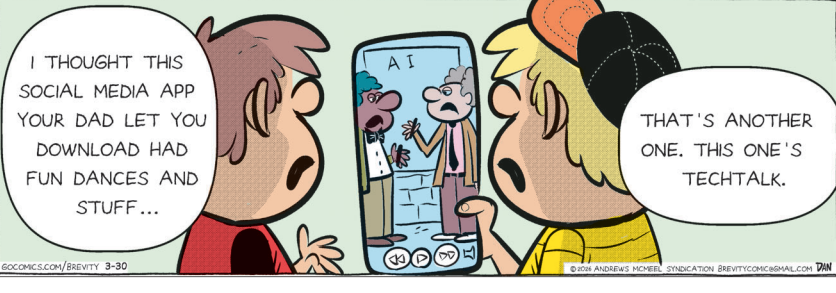
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

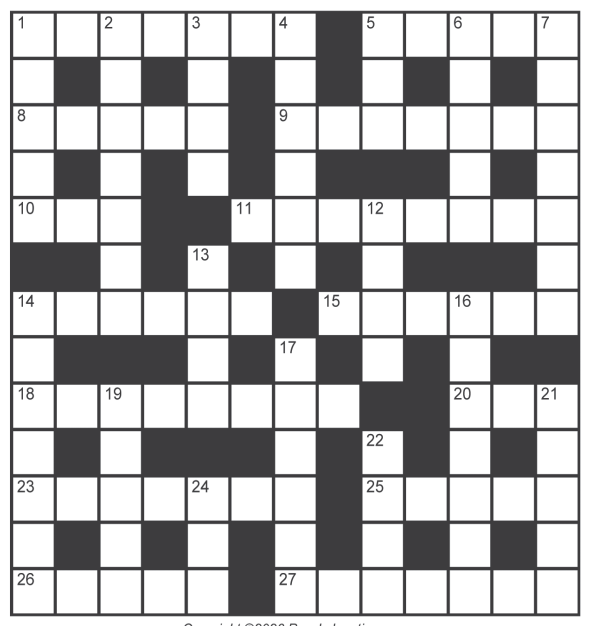


BREVITY



FUN POST

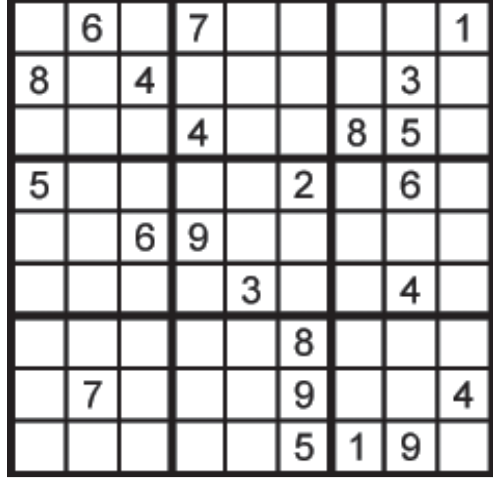
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Seaport
 - 5 Renaissance fiddle
 - 8 Eskimo boat
 - 9 Pimiento powder
 - 10 Apply gently
 - 11 Gulf of Venice neighbor
 - 14 Persian Gulf kingdom
 - 15 See eye to eye
 - 18 French pastry
 - 20 Captain's journal
 - 23 Contemptible
 - 25 Sufficient
 - 26 Poison ivy result
 - 27 Game break (4-3)
 - Down**
 - 1 Harrier, e.g.
 - 2 Storm follower, at time
 - 3 Sturdy trees
 - 4 River feature
 - 5 Cemetery inits.
 - 6 Constructed
 - 7 *Canterbury Tales* author
 - 12 Links club
 - 13 Coffee grinder
 - 14 Heyerdahl's transport (3,4)
 - 16 Odysseus's detainer
 - 17 Cloak-and-dagger word
 - 19 Go to pieces
 - 21 Belgian urban centre
 - 22 Raffia, e.g.
 - 24 True laurel

SUDOKU

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

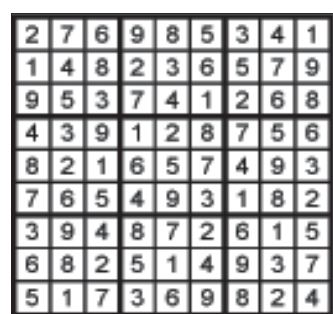


SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Govt issues SOP for safety of Census staff

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 23: Following reports of attacks on officials engaged in the first phase of Census work, the Revenue and Disaster Management (R&DM) department Thursday issued a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the safety and security of the on-duty functionaries.

In a letter to all District Collectors, SPs and municipal commissioners, Additional Chief Secretary Arabinda Padhee said, "In the past few days, certain untoward incidents have been reported, raising concerns regarding the safety and security of Census functionaries and adversely affecting the Census operations."

Keeping the matter in view, Padhee said the state government has issued the SOP to ensure the safety and security of Census functionaries, particularly at the Enumerator and Supervisor (E&S) levels, and to facilitate smooth and timely completion of Census work.

"The SOP must be strictly adhered to during the Census operations," he said.

Padhee mentioned that during the first phase of Census 2027, under which the E&S undertake Houselisting and Housing Census till May 15, the E&S visit households to collect data on housing conditions, household amenities, and assets possessed by them.

Suggesting that the authorities ensure that the E&S must wear their official ID cards at all times and carry their appointment letters during field duties, the SOP said that they should avoid working during peak heat hours (11am to 3pm) and take necessary precautions to prevent dehydration and heat-related illnesses.

ORS may be supplied/carried whenever feasible or can be provided by the district administration. All other precautionary measures to avoid heat stroke should be taken by the E&S, it said.

CBSE Class X 2nd board exams from May 15-21

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: The CBSE Thursday announced that the second board examinations for Class X will be held from May 15 to May 21.

According to the datesheet issued by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the examination cycle will begin with the mathematics (standard and basic) paper May 15, followed by English (communicative) and English (language and literature) May 16. The science examination will be conducted May 18.

A cluster of language and elective subjects, including Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Bangla, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Gujarati and several foreign languages, has been scheduled for May 19. The other subjects lined up on the same day include home science and select vocational courses. On May 20, students will appear for Sanskrit, painting, information technology and artificial intelligence papers, followed by social science, the last exam, May 21.



MANIPUR UNREST: Security personnel inspect a burnt motorcycle following tension in Kanglatongbi area of Imphal West district in Manipur, Thursday. Supporters of a shutdown called by the United Naga Council allegedly detained two teenagers from Kuki community for violating the bandh and set the motorcycle they were riding on fire

Record turnout in Bengal, Tamil Nadu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata/Chennai, April 23: West Bengal (WB) registered a record voter turnout of 92.72 per cent in the first phase of Assembly polls Thursday amid sporadic incidents of violence, while Tamil Nadu (TN) recorded unprecedented voting of 85.14 per cent as the BJP pushed to unseat Mamata Banerjee in Bengal and expand in the South.

In the first phase, 152 constituencies in WB went to polls, while voting for the 234-member TN Assembly was held in one go. The elections are taking place against the backdrop of a massive political row over the SIR of the electoral rolls, a major flashpoint between the BJP and opposition parties, including the Trinamool Congress (TMC).

In WB, the BJP is eyeing to wrest power from Banerjee-led TMC, which seeks a fourth straight term in a state the saffron party has never governed, and in TN, key contenders are the ruling DMK and main opposition AIADMK, while actor-politician Vijay-led TVK and Tamil nationalist Seeman-led NTK are putting up a determined fight.

Termining the massive voter turnout in Bengal "an overwhelming mandate for change", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that May 4, when votes will be counted, would mark the "ex-



Enthusiastic voters at a booth in West Bengal, Thursday

piry" of the "TMC's 15-year-old syndicate system and maha jungle raj" in WB, while Banerjee asserted that polling held so far in the first phase indicates "the TMC is already in a position to

WB - 92.72%
TN - 85.14%

win", and her party predicts a win in 125-134 seats out of 152 constituencies.

The second phase for the remaining 142 of 294 seats in WB will be held April 29. The counting for four states and one UT - Kerala, Assam, WB, TN and Puducherry - will be held May 4.

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar said the voter turnout in the first phase of the WB Assembly polls was the state's "highest-ever percentage since Independence".

Polling across 152 constituencies in 16 districts remained

brisk through the day, with long queues at booths, particularly in rural belts, reflecting intense mobilisation by both camps in what is being seen as a crucial early test of strength.

Reports of clashes, allegations of intimidation and attacks on candidates - including two from the BJP - from several constituencies prompted the Election Commission to seek detailed reports even as it maintained that polling in WB was "largely peaceful".

In TN, the contest is primarily between the DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance against the AIADMK-led NDA. CM MK Stalin centred his campaign around the "Dravidian Model" of governance and accused the AIADMK of being controlled by the BJP in Delhi. AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami is fighting to return to the treasury benches after five years.

Trump calls India, China 'hellholes', then retracts

AGENCIES

Washington, April 23: United States President Donald Trump has amplified a provocative critique of birthright citizenship by sharing a video of prominent conservative author and radio host Michael Savage, who claimed the current legal system allows immigrants to exploit American laws by arriving in the "ninth month of their pregnancy".

In the footage, Savage argued that such practices create a loophole where "a baby here becomes an instant citizen, and then they bring the entire family in from China or India or some other hellhole on the planet."

The footage, originally aired on Newsmax series The Savage Nation, was highlighted by the "Commentary Donald J Trump Posts From Truth Social" account, which serves as a platform dedicated to reposting the President's social media activity.

In the clip, Savage expressed deep frustration with the judicial process, stating, "Today's brief, abbreviated discussion will be about the arguments that I just listened to before the Supreme Court about birthright citizenship. I was somewhat incensed by listening to the arguments because all I heard was legalese being banded back and forth."

Focusing his criticism on the legal representation involved, Savage remarked that "the

INDIA: REMARKS 'INAPPROPRIATE'

New Delhi: India Thursday described as "uninformed" and "inappropriate" a social media repost by US President Donald Trump that referred to India and some other countries as "hellholes" in the context of immigration.

"We have seen the comments, as also the subsequent statement issued by the US embassy in response," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

"The remarks are obviously uninformed, inappropriate and in poor taste. They certainly do not reflect the reality of the India-US relationship, which has long been based on mutual respect and shared interests," he said.

person bringing the arguments in favour of flooding America with illegal aliens to change the demographics forever was a Chinese American who looks to me like the classic ACLU attorney. Very smart, very evil, and very devious."

However, Trump later put out a message saying, "India is a great country with a very good friend of mine at the top," the spokesperson of the US embassy said.

The spokesperson's statement came in response to queries from the Indian media about the controversy.

8 killed as vehicle plunges into gorge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Tehri (Uttarakhand), April 23: Eight people died and two others suffered injuries when a utility pickup vehicle skidded off the road and fell into a 300-metre deep gorge near Chamba in Tehri district Thursday, officials said.

The accident occurred around 2:15pm near Nail village on the Chamba-Koti Colony Road. The victims, all of them from Thyoldhar village in the Ghansali, were returning home from a funeral, when the driver lost control of the vehicle, Tehri District Magistrate Nitika Khandelwal said. The accident was reported to the police via the Dial 112 emergency service, after which two ambulances and rescue teams



were immediately dispatched to the spot. The police and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) teams recovered eight bodies and took the injured to a nearby hospital. The victims were returning home after performing the last rites of 65-year-old Sampat Lal in Haridwar.

The deceased included Sampat Lal's son Prem Lal and driver Shiv Singh.

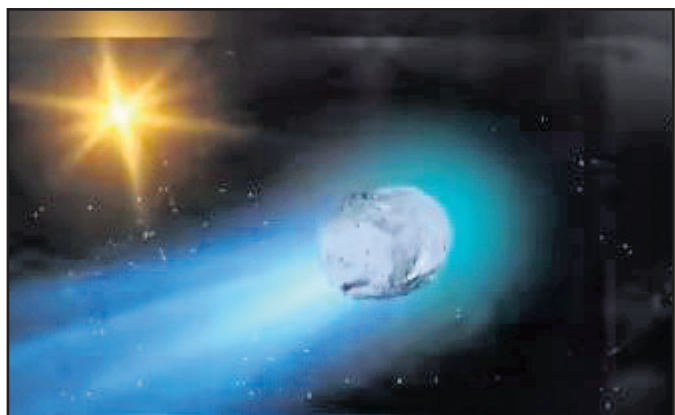
Interstellar visitor linked to galaxy's remote edge

AGENCIES

Cape Canaveral, April 23: A comet which drifted past Earth last year from another star likely originated in a cold, remote part of the galaxy where no solar system had yet formed, astronomers said Thursday.

Comet 3I/Atlas is only the third confirmed interstellar visitor, and it may also be the oldest. Scientists believe it could be up to 11 billion years old, more than twice the age of sun.

Last October, a team led by the University of Michigan studied the comet at Chile's ALMA observatory in Atacama Desert. The errant but harmless iceball was discovered last



summer, giving NASA and the European Space Agency plenty of time to aim multiple space telescopes at it as it zoomed

past Mars in October and made its closest approach to Earth in December. It's now well past Jupiter on its way out of our

solar system for good, still visible only to the professionals.

The scientists detected extremely high amounts of deuterium, or heavy hydrogen, in the comet's water. According to Teresa Paneque-Carreno of the University of Michigan, this shows that the comet evolved in a far colder environment than our own cosmic neighbourhood, before stars of our solar system even existed.

While our sun may have been encircled by other young stars as it formed, she suggested that this comet's home star may have been more isolated, resulting in less heating and colder temperatures.

The results were reported in

Nature Astronomy.

The comet's specific origin remains uncertain. Hubble Space Telescope estimated the size of its nucleus to be between a quarter mile and 3.5 miles (440 metres and 5.6 km. It's traveling at 1,37,000 mph (2,20,000 kph).

Linking all these "puzzle pieces together may give an idea of how planet-forming conditions were at these early times," Paneque-Carreno wrote in an email. Oumuamua, the first known interstellar object to stray into our celestial backyard, was found by a Hawaiian telescope in 2017. Comet 2I/Borisov, named for the Crimean astronomer who discovered it, appeared in 2019.

Barabati Stadium, five others get NGT notice

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: National Green Tribunal (NGT) has issued notices to six cricket stadiums across the country, including Barabati Stadium in Cuttack, asking them to explain why their activities should not be stopped for failing to disclose the source of water used to maintain the pitch and grounds.

The apex green body had asked several cricket stadiums to provide information to the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA), which is tabulating the information disclosed by them.

The six stadiums are: Arun Jaitley Stadium (Delhi), Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium (Raipur), Sawai Mansingh Stadium (Jaipur), Dr DY Patil Stadium (Mumbai), Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium (Lucknow), and Barabati Stadium (Cuttack).

Earlier, NGT heard a plea against use of groundwater or freshwater to maintain cricket grounds instead of the sewage treatment plant (STP)-treated water, and against not installing rainwater harvesting systems for groundwater storage, discharge and restoration.

FOCUS POLITICS

A TRUST DEFICIT



Ultimately, delimitation is not just a technical exercise in redrawing boundaries. It is a test of India's federal compact. Mishandled, it could harden regional fault lines into political fractures

Reading the inscrutable mind of PM Narendra Modi is always a hazardous exercise. Which is why it remains unclear why the BJP-led government chose this moment to revisit the implementation of the women's reservation law, passed with much fanfare in 2023. Was it aimed at short-term electoral gains in West Bengal? A diversion from economic anxieties amid a volatile West Asia crisis? Or an attempt to reclaim the narrative and reinforce Modi's projection as a champion of nari shakti?

Whatever the intent, the political consequences have been significant. What began as a debate over women's representation has quickly reopened a far more contentious question: delimitation—and with it, the spectre of a North-South divide that India has long sought to contain.

Telangana CM Revanth Reddy has warned that any move to disadvantage southern states could trigger an "unprecedented agitation." Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin, in the midst of a high stakes election, has struck a similar note. Is this political alarmism? Or a reflection of a deeper structural anxiety?

The uncomfortable answer is: both. Start with the numbers. Population growth in northern states has far outpaced that of the south over the past five decades. Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka invested early in public health, education and family planning, stabilising population growth well before much of the Hindi heartland. If constituencies are redrawn strictly on the basis of population—as the Constitution envisages—the south's share of Lok Sabha seats will inevitably decline after the 2026 Census. This is demographic reality, not political rhetoric.

But delimitation itself is not illegitimate. It rests on the democratic principle of equal representation—one person, one vote. The freeze on parliamentary seats was always a temporary political compromise, not a per-

manent arrangement. Sooner or later, representation had to catch up with population shifts. The real problem lies elsewhere: in politics, and in trust.

When Home Minister Amit Shah floated the idea of a 50% uniform increase across states in Lok Sabha seats, it could have been the basis of a workable compromise—expand the pie so that no region loses out in absolute terms. But the proposal came late, and sounded reactive. In a reform of this scale, consensus and credibility built through a painstaking outreach to all stakeholders matters.

This is where the Modi government misstepped and got its timing wrong. A pre-emptive all-party consultation, involving CMs across regions, could have built trust and shared ownership. Instead, the impression—fair or otherwise—is of decisions being framed first and explained later. In a federal system, perception is power. And the perception of unilateralism feeds a deeper southern anxiety: that a numerically dominant north could, over time, reshape national priorities. Yet, reducing this to a simple north versus south binary is both lazy and misleading.

Even as the south fears political marginalisation, it has quietly consolidated influence elsewhere. Economically, southern states are India's growth engines, contributing disproportionately to GDP, exports and tax revenues. Cities like

Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad are deeply embedded in global innovation networks. If Parliament reflects population, the economy increasingly reflects performance—and here, the south leads.

Social indicators tell a similar story. On literacy, healthcare and human development, the south consistently outperforms much of the country. It now faces a paradox: the prospect of losing political weight because it succeeded where others lagged. That is not an easy argument to sell politically. At the same time, India's lived reality resists neat regional divides. Cultural and social integration is deepening in ways politics often overlooks.

Consider the near-devotional following of Ranchi's MS Dhoni in Chennai through the Chennai Super Kings. Or the pan-India success of RRR, which transcended language barriers to become a shared cultural moment. Add migration flows—north Indians in southern tech hubs, southern professionals moving north—and the picture that emerges is of an India far more interconnected than its politics admits. But cultural cohesion cannot substitute for political reassurance.

The BJP, to its credit, has made a concerted push to expand in the south—electorally and organisationally. Yet optics have limits. Symbolism—whether sartorial or rhetorical—cannot address a structural trust deficit. PM Modi dressed

in a traditional mundu visiting the Gurvayur temple is a fine photo-op but not enough to overcome deep-rooted apprehensions.

Because the unease over delimitation is not just about seats. It is about voice—about whether regions that have contributed significantly to India's growth will retain commensurate influence in shaping its future. That question demands more than reassurance. It demands imagination.

Can India evolve a hybrid model of representation—one that, while anchored in population, acknowledges performance, fiscal contribution or human development in some limited way? Any such idea will be contested. But refusing to engage with the question risks deepening the divide. Ultimately, delimitation is not just a technical exercise in redrawing boundaries. It is a test of India's federal compact. Mishandled, it could harden regional fault lines into political fractures. Managed with sensitivity, it could strengthen the Union by making it more inclusive and consultative.

The women's reservation debate may have been the trigger. But it has exposed something deeper: a growing unease over how power will be distributed in the years ahead. This is not just about arithmetic. It is about trust. And in a country as diverse as India, once trust frays, no formula—however mathematically sound—can hold the system together.

Postscript: Revanth Reddy has suggested an alternative delimitation model—expand representation at the state and local levels rather than in Parliament. India, he argues, needs more MLAs and corporators to deliver better governance, not necessarily more MPs. It's an idea worth debating—if only because it may be less combustible and polarising than reopening a north-south divide.

The writer is a senior journalist and author.



Rajdeep Sardesai

IN A COUNTRY AS DIVERSE AS INDIA, ONCE TRUST FRAYS, NO FORMULA—HOWEVER MATHEMATICALLY SOUND—CAN HOLD THE SYSTEM TOGETHER



Todd G. Buchholz

BLOCKING TWO NARROW WATERWAYS—THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ AND THE TAIWAN STRAIT—CAN SEND THE ECONOMY BACK IN TIME, IF NOT TO THE STONE AGE THAT US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP HAS BEEN THREATENING TO BOMB IRAN BACK TO

SPECTRUM WEATHER

Early summer & impending El Nino

India is likely to see below-average monsoon rains for the first time in three years in 2026, the government stated recently, stoking concerns over farm output and growth in Asia's third largest economy as it battles inflation due to the West Asian conflict. It is well-known that the monsoon is the lifeblood of the country's nearly \$4 trillion economy, delivering almost 70% of the rainfall needed to water farms and replenish aquifers and reservoirs.

As per IMD, the monsoon is expected to reach 92% of the long-period average (LPA) this year. This happens to be the lowest in nearly three decades though an updated outlook is expected in the last week of May. "Currently weak El Niño-like conditions are transitioning to neutral conditions, but after June it's very likely that El Niño will develop," observed Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, IMD Director General.

In the past, 70% of El Niño years since 1980 corresponded with poor summer monsoons in the country. Experts are of the opinion that the ongoing West Asian crisis coupled with lower rainfall may have an adverse

impact on farm yields as well as GDP growth.

Between 1901 and 2018, India's average annual temperature increased by about 0.7°C. New temperature-breaking records have been witnessed with 2016, 2020 and 2024 being the hottest years in the present century. However, changing global climate and rapid anthropogenic activities can increase and amplify heatwaves' intensity, frequency and duration, and related events.

Heatwave like conditions this year arrived earlier than expected, raising concerns among meteorologists, health experts, and policymakers. Several regions across northern, central, and western India have already begun experiencing unusually high temperatures weeks before the traditional peak summer period. In fact, reports indicated that February 2026 was the 5th warmest on record since 1901.

IMD's summer 2026 prediction covers maximum and minimum temperatures—meaning nights won't cool down either. High-risk heatwave zones such as Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Bihar, Odisha, and Andhra Pradesh may, like

2024, push peak power demand to a then-record 250 GW. The geography is mapped; the trend is clear. What matters now is what happens when the heat hits at scale. March is when India's wheat crop enters its final ripening stage and temperatures spiking above 35°C cause heat damage lowering yields.

Power planners project peak daytime demand at 275-285 GW this summer. Cooling load alone adds 50-55 GW. Despite 65 GW of renewables added since 2024, a 10-12 GW supply gap persists during evening peaks.

Rising global temperatures, reduced rainfall, weak weather systems, and urban heating effects are all contributing to the early surge in temperatures. With the hottest months still ahead, preparation and awareness will be critical. Crop loss or lesser yields may be an area of concern which needs to be seriously examined. Water availability remains a big problem and if rainfall is not adequate, this may accentuate conditions in the agricultural sector.

India needs to check pollution more seriously as its flagship, National Clean Air Programme continues to be limited in its scope as it covers

only a fraction of polluted cities and over 60% of funds are reportedly directed toward dust reduction. Structural impediments—vehicular emissions, industrial output, coal dependence and agricultural burning—remain inadequately addressed. Thus, it is necessary that pollution control must be regionally coordinated and urban planning must integrate air quality considerations to reduce heat conditions, at least in cities and urban areas.

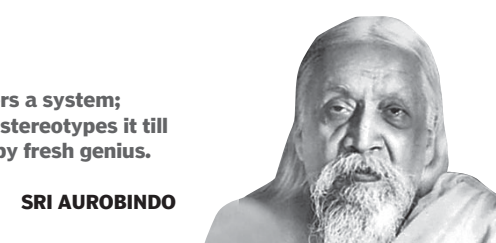
Governments, communities, and individuals must take proactive steps to protect health, manage water resources, and adapt to increasingly extreme summer conditions. As climate patterns continue to change, early heatwaves may become more common, making long-term climate adaptation and sustainable urban planning increasingly important for India's future. But unfortunately, in the urban sector or even in the rural areas, green cover is steadily withering and this needs to be checked. India must draw up an effective plan to counter extreme heat as well as manage situations where rainfall is scant.

INFA



Dhurjati Mukherjee

INDIA MUST DRAW UP AN EFFECTIVE PLAN TO COUNTER EXTREME HEAT AS WELL AS MANAGE SITUATIONS WHERE RAINFALL IS SCANT



Genius discovers a system; average talent stereotypes it till it is shattered by fresh genius.

SRI AUROBINDO

Tale of Two Straits

Most schoolchildren learn that the Earth is roughly 25,000 miles around (40,000 kilometres). They do not learn that the global economy depends on just 100 of those miles.

Blocking two narrow waterways—the Strait of Hormuz and the Taiwan Strait—can send the economy back in time, if not to the Stone Age that US President Donald Trump has been threatening to bomb Iran back to, then at least to the mid-20th century, before the Rolling Stones first hit the airwaves.

Over the past month and a half, Iran has turned the Strait of Hormuz, which is about 21 miles wide at its narrowest point, into a floating shooting gallery. Shipping traffic has plunged, with tankers loitering nervously while Iranian speedboats and drones play pirate. The standstill has throttled the world economy, as a large share of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas transits through the Strait.

This is not just a Middle East quagmire. It's a live-fire dress rehearsal for conflict in Asia, offering China a battle plan for Taiwan. The Taiwan Strait, which is about 81 miles wide at its narrowest point, is like the Persian chokepoint but for semiconductors. Taiwan's TSMC fabricates more than 90% of the world's most advanced chips—the "brains" of AI data centres, fighter jets, and smartphones.

The United States, alarmed at the national-security vulnerabilities posed by foreign chips, passed the 2022 CHIPS and Science Act to lure producers to build factories stateside. Despite plans for new fabrication facilities in Texas, Ohio, and New York, the US still depends heavily on chip imports—as do most other countries. Thus, a Chinese blockade or invasion of Taiwan would starve the 21st century's technological nervous system. Global losses could hit \$10 trillion. That is not a recession; it is a supply-chain cardiac arrest.

President Xi Jinping does not want to be remembered in China's 4,000-year history as the guy who built better car batteries than Elon Musk. Tesla knockoffs are mere trinkets. Xi wants to achieve what Mao Zedong promised: one China, no asterisks, no renegade island thumbing its nose at the Communist leadership. He wants to break a 75-year stalemate by dragging Chiang Kai-shek's heirs back into the fold.

Deterrence evaporates if Xi believes that America might hesitate, muddle through, or bargain following an attack on Taiwan. If the world's mightiest navy cannot reliably escort tankers past a battered regional power, whose own fleet has been reduced to cigarette boats you would rent on a summer holiday in Nantucket, why would Xi conclude that the US will risk aircraft carriers, submarines, and thousands of American lives to break a Chinese blockade of Taiwan?

In such a case, Taiwan suddenly looks less like a fortress and more like a question mark. Game theorists call it a question of "credible commitment"—your opponent must believe that you will follow through, or the payoff matrix collapses.

History is a harsh tutor to the hesitant. When Mussolini tested the League of Nations over Ethiopia and found it toothless, Hitler took note. After Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser seized the Suez Canal in 1956, Britain and France folded when Eisenhower arched a skeptical brow. More recently, Russian President Vladimir Putin goose-stepped into Crimea after President Obama blinked when Syrian President Bashar al-Assad used chemical weapons—allegedly a red line. Credibility, once squandered, cannot be easily restocked at the corner market.

The remedy is straightforward, painful, and overdue. America must reopen the Strait of Hormuz decisively and visibly: escorts, mine-sweepers, strikes on launch sites, and seizure or annihilation of Iran's tollbooth islands, Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs. Once the Strait is secure, the US should send in the tall ships that grace New York Harbor every Fourth of July. Nothing says "open for business" like 18th-century sailboats cruising through the shipping lane past smoldering Iranian artillery nests.

In the longer term, the US must accelerate shipbuilding, replenish precision munitions, and support more pipelines in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and beyond. In 2020, Greece, Egypt, the Palestinian National Authority, and Israel—governments that rarely agree on anything—established the East Mediterranean Gas Forum with other regional powers to exploit newly discovered gas fields. Unfortunately, President Joe Biden's administration withdrew US support for the proposed pipeline from Israel to Europe. But this is precisely the type of project that could reduce dependence on the Strait of Hormuz.

The choice is stark: reopen the Strait by force or watch Xi pencil in a Taiwan invasion date, all while European diplomats issue strongly worded epistles. By rebuffing Trump's calls for backup, Europe has revealed itself as a free rider, loath to defend the global economy. And this despite America long serving as the world's marine-traffic cop, keeping sea lanes open so that European and Asian countries—including China—could gorge on cheap energy and hawk their wares on any continent.

The good news is that the US still has the world's most lethal navy and the economic muscle to outlast any rival. Iran handed the Trump administration the equivalent of a practice test. Taiwan is the final exam. Xi and his leadership team have been studying Trump's steps before the Iran war and throughout. With the stakes so high, Trump's mercurial mind and unpredictable moves may be less a flaw than a strategic asset.

The writer is a former White House director of economic policy under President George HW Bush and managing director of the Tiger hedge fund.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

I do not like the man who squanders life for fame; give me the man who living makes a name

EMILY DICKINSON

Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end

VIRGINIA WOOLF

I have learned over the years that when one's mind is made up, this diminishes fear; knowing what must be done does away with fear

ROSA PARKS

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
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Horrific crime

Sir, The rape and murder of an IRS officer's daughter in Delhi has sent shockwaves across the nation, exposing alarming gaps in urban safety. Reports of the accused committing similar crimes in quick succession within the NCR point to a dangerous pattern that demands the strongest legal response. Beyond punishment, systemic prevention is critical. Mandatory police verification of domestic workers and service providers must be strictly enforced across all residential societies. A robust identification or coding system—similar to structured vendor tracking models used in sensitive regions—should be implemented nationwide to ensure traceability and accountability. District authorities must conduct surprise inspections to ensure compliance. Protecting vulnerable groups—children, elderly and those living alone—cannot be left to chance; it must be guaranteed through strict enforcement, vigilance and zero tolerance for lapses.

RS Narula, PATIALA

A silent crisis

Sir, Work-related stress has emerged as a serious global health concern, with a recent report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) estimating that more than 840,000 people die every year due to health conditions linked to psychosocial risks at work. These risks arise not from physical hazards, but from the way work is organized and experienced, including excessive workload, long working hours, job insecurity, and workplace harassment. Continuous exposure to such stressful conditions can gradually damage both mental and physical health. The report highlights that chronic work stress is strongly associated with cardiovascular diseases such as heart attacks and strokes, as well as mental health issues like anxiety, depression, and burnout. Over time, these conditions can become severe and even life-threatening, showing how deeply workplace environment can influence overall wellbeing. The findings underline the need for urgent attention from employers, governments, and society to create healthier work environments. Promoting better work-life balance, ensuring job security, and supporting mental health at workplaces are essential steps to reduce this silent crisis. Without such measures, work-related stress is likely to continue affecting millions of lives worldwide each year.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Berhampur bizman murder: Niece, nephew, 7 others held



PNN & AGENCIES

Berhampur, April 23: The Police Thursday arrested nine people, including two family members of the deceased, for their alleged involvement in the abduction and murder of a real estate businessman in Ganjam district, an officer said. The police arrested the accused a day after recovering the highly decomposed body of the victim, identified as Sudhir Kumar Patra (47) of Satyanarayanpur, near Gopalpur under Sorada police station limits. The arrested persons included Nibedita Patra (23) and Tushar Patra (19), the niece and nephew of the deceased, respectively. They are the main accused in the sensational case, involving kidnapping for ransom, criminal conspiracy, extortion, destruction of evidence and murder, said Niti Sekhar, Inspector General of Police

(IGP), southern range, here.

While Nibedita has completed her post-graduation, her brother is studying his second year in BBA, he said.

Preliminary investigation has revealed that the property dispute between the families of the deceased and his brother's was the main cause behind the murder, the police said.

The dispute arose after the death of Sudhir's brother in June last year. Nibedita, the prime accused, along with her brother, engaged contract killers for the murder of Sudhir, the IGP said. Kalu Charan Pradhan (28), a male friend of Nibedita, assisted her in arranging the contract killers, he said.

The police said the deceased was allegedly kidnapped by the accused persons April 15 evening from Dura at gunpoint, while he was returning his home.

They took him near Mathura in Polasara and then changed

the vehicle and took him to Ramapada forest near Buguda. The victim was brutally assaulted with a wooden plank to terrorise him, said Ganjam SP Subhendu Patra, who is also in-charge SP Berhampur.

The assault was recorded on video and sent to his wife. The accused demanded a ransom of ₹2 crore from her, he said. Due to his severe injuries, Sudhir succumbed at the spot. After his death, they transported the body in the car and threw it near Ketamani hill to conceal evidence and fled to different places, the police said.

Two cars, a country-made 7.65mm pistol and 14 mobile phones were seized from the accused persons. They changed their SIM cards frequently during the period, said the SP.

He said that some more persons were also involved in the murder, and a search was on to nab them.

Mercury breaches 44 deg C

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 23: Heat-wave conditions continued to prevail in the state Thursday, with the mercury soaring to 44 degrees Celsius at two places in the western region, the IMD's Bhubaneswar centre said.

Industrial town Jharsuguda and coal town Talcher recorded a maximum temperature of 44 degrees Celsius, according to the evening bulletin.

As many as 24 places in the state recorded temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius or above during the day.

Titlagarh registered 43.8 degrees Celsius, followed by Angul and Dhenkanal at 43.5 degrees Celsius each, and Hirakud at 43.4 degrees Celsius. Sambalpur and Paralakhemundi recorded 43 degrees Celsius each.

Bargarh logged 42.6 degrees Celsius, while Sundargarh, Nupada and Rourkela recorded 42.5 degrees Celsius each.

Capital city Bhubaneswar sizzled at 42.1 degrees Celsius while neighbouring Cuttack registered 41.8 degrees Celsius, the bulletin said.

Other places where temperatures touched 40 degrees Celsius or above include Bolangir (42.3), Subarnapur (42.3), Bhawanipatna (42), Boudh (41.4), Nayagarh (41), Khurda (41), Jagatsinghpur (41), Keonjhar (40.9), Phulbani (40.6) and Jajpur (40.6).



CM distributes 4,623 appointment letters



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 23: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Thursday distributed appointment letters to 4,623 candidates at the 15th recruitment fair held at Kalinga Stadium, saying the initiative reflects the state's push to expand employment and strengthen public service delivery.

Addressing the gathering, he stressed that government jobs should be viewed as a platform for public service rather than merely a source of income. Calling employees the "face of governance," he urged the new recruits to ensure welfare benefits reach the grassroots.

Of the total recruits, 4,113 were appointed in the School and Mass Education department. The rest include 154 in Forest, Environment and Climate Change; 143 in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME); 77 in Steel and Mines;

70 in Fisheries and Animal Resources Development; 52 in Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water; and 14 in Skill Development and Technical Education.

Highlighting employment figures, Majhi said that since June 2024, the state has created 44,082 government jobs and facilitated 92,000 private-sector jobs, underscoring a sustained push to boost youth employment.

He outlined five key principles for recruits; zero tolerance for corruption, prioritising citizens' concerns, alignment with government policies, timely service delivery, and professionalism in public dealings. He also stressed transparency, accountability, and respect for women in official conduct.

Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram, who attended the event, lauded the state's employment initiatives and urged the youth to embrace public service as a noble responsibility.

Entrepreneurs inspire youth to dream big: CM

CONTINUATION FROM P1

Swain, who also holds the SD&TE portfolio, thanked the newspapers' Editor and Chief Executive, Adyasha Satpathy, for organising the award ceremony that recognises entrepreneurs contributing to Odisha's growth.

He said business offers flexibility, independence, and opportunities for innovation, while entrepreneurs also serve as social leaders by creating jobs and driving positive societal change.

Swain added that, under the leadership of the CM, the state is achieving new milestones in industrialisation.

He noted that the state has secured the top rank under India Skills and that two new World Skill Centers will be set up in Sambalpur and Berhampur.

Swain also said the state government is extending financial assistance to budding entrepreneurs to strengthen Odisha's startup ecosystem.

Earlier, in her welcome address, the newspapers' Chief Executive said, "We started the Business Eminence Awards in 2021 during the Covid-19 period with the aim of encouraging entrepreneurs who take risks, create opportunities, and generate employment for many others."

In his vote of thanks, the newspapers' Editor praised the CM and the Industries Minister for promoting entrepreneurship and congratulated the award winners for contributing to Odisha's development.

Altogether 18 entrepreneurs were felicitated on the occasion.

The mega event was sponsored by MGM Minerals Ltd, Jindal Steel, AM/NS India, IMFA, MCL, Paradeep Phosphates Ltd, Narayani Motors (P) Ltd, DION Group, WEFIE Internet and TEAM Admark.

Nearly 11K consumers get zero energy bill

SAMBALPUR: Nearly 11,000 consumers in western Odisha reported 'zero electricity bills' in March 2026 after adopting rooftop solar systems under PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, officials said. As many as 10,885 households achieved zero bills during the month, driven by installations carried out through TP Western Odisha Distribution Ltd's (TPWODL) 1-kW Utility Led Aggregation (ULA) model, which has accelerated solar adoption in the region. According to a company statement, 18,830 consumers had installed rooftop solar systems in western Odisha as of March 2026, indicating a growing shift towards sustainable and self-reliant energy consumption. The figures showed that around 60 per cent of consumers with rooftop solar installations are now receiving zero electricity bills, while the remaining 40 per cent have reduced their monthly bills by over 80 per cent. In March alone, 1,428 consumers recorded zero bills under the model, underscoring direct financial benefits of decentralised solar energy.

761 tortoises seized at Andhra border

KALIMELA: Forest department officials seized a massive consignment of tortoises at the Motu border checkpoint in Malkangiri district Wednesday. A total of 761 tortoises, weighing approximately 2.3 tonnes (2,305 kg), were confiscated. Authorities estimate the market value of the haul to be around ₹7 lakh. According to officials, the tortoises were being transported from Andhra Pradesh into Odisha in a Bolero vehicle. Upon suspicion, forest staff stopped and inspected the vehicle, uncovering the illicit cargo. The driver and the vehicle were taken into custody. Investigations revealed that the destination of the consignment was Shaktipada Gain, a wildlife trader from MPV-83 village in the Motu police station area. Gain, identified as the prime accused, is currently absconding. Forest officials confirmed that efforts are underway to trace and apprehend him. Motu Forester Murulidhar Anugula stated that the crackdown forms part of a wider campaign against wildlife trafficking. He added that enforcement will be intensified to curb illegal trade in protected species.



ROOFTOP SOLAR ADOPTION

Odisha voters cast vote in WB polls

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhograi, April 23: Voters from about 12 villages in Balasore district and some border villages in Mayurbhanj district, reportedly cast their votes for the Assembly polls in West Bengal Thursday.

As per reports, more than 300 voters from Ward No-18 of Shankhamedi village under Balasore's Bhograi block reportedly voted in the Ramnagar Assembly constituency under West Bengal's East Midnapur district. They cast their votes at polling stations in Bagbrajkishorepur and West Santeshwarpur primary schools.

Similarly, voters from border villages including Udaypur, Sahabajpur, Dakshina Sarisa, Bajitpur, Narasinghpur, Ganeshwarpur, Panishandha, Upula and Sagada Sahi are said to have bypassed security arrangements to vote in West Bengal constituencies.

In the Jaleswar Assembly constituency, voters from Raibania and other adjoining villages also reportedly cast

votes in polling stations of West Midnapore district, sources said.

The border dispute between Odisha's Balasore district and West Bengal's Purba (East) Midnapore district has been persisting since 1978. However, villagers claim the dispute started much earlier. According to local residents, the Odisha government has stopped collecting land revenue from Sankhamedi since 1962, leaving them in a legal limbo.

Bhograi MLA Goutam Buddha Das emphasized that Sankhamedi was, and remains, an integral part of Odisha. He called for an immediate secretary-level meeting between both states to reach a permanent border settlement.

However, the reality on the ground suggests West Bengal's tightening grip. Ward member Ajay Jena confirmed that all eligible voters in the village recently cast their ballots for the Ramnagar Assembly seat in West Bengal's East Midnapur district, signaling a shift that may be difficult to reverse without swift intervention.

MALAVIYA NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, JAIPUR
Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur 302017
Admission to Ph.D. and Masters Degree Programmes 2026-27
F.4/A-1-1/2026-27/Acad/Ph.D/01
Online Applications are invited for admission to Ph.D. and M.Tech./M.Plan. (Sponsored (Full Time/Part Time) & Full Time Self-Financed) in all the Departments/Centres for Odd Semester 2026-27 (July 2026). For more information visit www.mnit.ac.in. The last date for submission of online application is 07th May 2026.
cbc 21312/11/0003/2627

National Human Rights Commission, India
Short Films Competition-2026
Entries are invited from the Indian citizens for the NHRC's 'Short Films Competition-2026' advocating promotion and protection of human rights.
For details download the application form, terms and conditions from the NHRC website www.nhrc.nic.in and send the entry only online at email address: nhrshortfilm@gmail.com. The last date to receive entries is 30th June 2026.
For clarifications, if any, please write to the Deputy Director (Media & Communication), NHRC, at the email address as above.
cbc 53101/11/0003/2627

TATA MEMORIAL CENTRE
A Grant-In-Aid Institution of the Department of Atomic Energy, Govt. of India
TATA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL PAREL, MUMBAI - 400 012
Tata Memorial Centre (TMC), Mumbai invites applications from Indian Nationals for the following SRships, Fellowships and M.Sc. courses.
Senior Resident, 1 Year TMC Fellowship and 2 years HBNI Fellowship in various departments.
LAST DATE FOR ONLINE APPLICATION FOR ADVT. No. 64/2026: 20.05.2026.
M.Sc. Courses Affiliated to HBNI:
M.Sc. Medical Radiology Imaging Technology
M.Sc. Nursing (Oncology Nursing)
Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) in Oncology
M.Sc. Nuclear Medicine & Molecular Imaging Technology
M.Sc. Clinical Research
M.Sc. Public Health & Epidemiology
M.Sc. Patient Navigation (Oncology)
Masters of Hospital Administration
LAST DATE FOR ONLINE APPLICATION FOR PG COURSES 30.05.2026.
For further information and Online Application visit our website <http://tmc.gov.in> (SRship/Fellowship in career section and M.Sc Courses in Training Programmes).
cbc 48149/11/0002/2627

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, SAMBALPUR IRRIGATION DIVISION, SAMBALPUR
E-mail id : sidsambalpur@gmail.com
e-Procurement Notice No. SESID-02/2026-27
Bid Identification No. SESID-02(01-19)/2026-27
No. 1419 /Date. 22.04.2026
No.32001/112/2627 : Bid documents consisting of work, estimated amount put to tender, cost of tender paper, EMD, time of completion, class of contractor, the set of terms & conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in> in complete online process only.

1	Nature of Works	: Canal and Road Works
2	Nos. of Works	: 19 (Nineteen) Nos.
3	Bid Identification No.	: SESID-02(01)/2026-27 to SESID-02(19)/2026-27
4	Estimated Cost	: 8.47 to 12.49 Lakhs
5	Earnest Money Deposit	: Referred to DTCN
6	Cost of Tender Paper	: Referred to DTCN
7	Period of Completion	: Referred to DTCN
8	Date and Time of availability of Bid Document in the Portal	: Dt : 29.04.2026 at 11.00 AM to Dt : 08.05.2026 upto 17.00 PM
9	Last Date/Time for receipt of Bids in the Portal	: Dt : 08.05.2026 upto 17.00 PM
10	Date of Bid Opening	: Dt : 11.05.2026 at 11.00 AM
11	Clarification seeking Date	: Dt : 29.04.2026 at 11.00 AM to Dt : 06.05.2026 upto 17.00 PM
12	Date of Lottery (if required)	: To be intimated later
13	Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Superintending Engineer, Sambalpur Irrigation Division, Sambalpur A/P/O-Khetrajpur - 768003, Dist.-Sambalpur [Email id : sidsambalpur@gmail.com]

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in said website.
Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Sambalpur Irrigation Division, Sambalpur
OIPR-32001/32530/1/26-27/0002

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to all concerned that, Bikram Keshari Mallik, S/o. Siba Prasad Mallik, At- Ainhapali, P.O.- Budharaja, P.s- Ainhapali, Dist- Sambalpur has sworn an affidavit on dt.20.04.2026 and has reported to OIC, Ainhapali, Sambalpur on 22.04.2026 regarding loss of original Regd Sale Deed No. Regd Sale Deed No.11621104319 dt.06.09.2011 of Registering Officer, Sambalpur.
Bikram Keshari Mallik has availed loan from the LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD., Sambalpur on the above property by mortgaging the said property document.
All concerned therefore requested to inform the signed below if they find the said document Regd Sale Deed No. Regd Sale Deed No.11621104319 dt.06.09.2011 of Registering Officer, Sambalpur. The undersigned within 15(Fifteen) days from the date of publication.
(A.K.Depta), Advocate, LIC, HFL Sambalpur At/P.O.-Modipara, Sambalpur, Odisha Dt.22.04.2026 Mobile No.9437158519.

Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Ltd.
REGISTERED OFFICE: The Ruby, 10th Floor, 29 Senapati Bapat Marg, Dadar (W), Mumbai-400028. Tel: 022-66581300/www.arcil.co.in CIN:U65999MH2002PLC134884. Website: www.arcil.co.in
DEMAND NOTICE
Whereas the Authorised Officer of Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Limited hereinafter referred to as "Arcil" is a securitization and Reconstruction company incorporated under the companies Act, 1956 and registered with the Reserve Bank of India under section 3 of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of security interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act") and whereas the Borrower/Co-Borrowers as mentioned of the below chart obtained loans from Vistar Financial Services Pvt Ltd (VFSP), and whereas Arcil has acquired the financial assets relating to the loan accounts mentioned of the below chart and Whereas Arcil, being the secured creditor under the Act, and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 2 of the security interest(Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued demand notice calling upon the Borrowers/Co-Borrowers as to repay the amount mentioned in the notices with further interest thereon within 60 days from the date of notice, but the notices could not be served upon some of them for various reason.

Account No	Name of the Borrowers and Co-Borrowers	Total Loan Outstanding (in INR) / as on	Demand Notice Date
0186SB ML01235	1. Mr./Mrs. DINABANDHU KHUNTIA 2. Mr./Mrs. JAYANTI KHUNTIA	Rs. 3,32,651.9 30-01-26	24-02-26
Description of the Secured Asset: Property with Mutation ROR NO-537/117, Plot No-753, situated at Mouza- Nayapada, Tahasil- Basta, PS- Basta, Dist- Balasore, Area-0.0400 dec, Kism-G.B(Homestead). Boundaries: North: Graveyard, South: Harendra nath Mallik, East: Madan Sahu, West: Nayaganj.			
0187SB ML01140	1. Mr./Mrs. RABINDRA BEHERA 2. Mr./Mrs. SWAPNA BEHERA	Rs. 7,96,564.32 30-01-26	24-02-26
Description of the Secured Asset: Property situated at Khata No-833/7136, Plot No. 1103/4620 & 1105/4621, Ac.0.012 Dec, Mouza-sasibhusanapur, Tahasil Berhampur, Dist-ganjam, Pin- 760003. The Total Area Of The Site/Land is 523 Sqfts. Boundaries: North: Road, South: Lane, East: House Of Sankar Mahanty, West: House Of Ramhari Sawai.			
0187SB ML01374	1. Mr./Mrs. SUSANTA KUMAR JENA 2. Mr./Mrs. KABITA JENA 3. Mr./Mrs. TAPTAPANI JENA	Rs. 3,02,979.54 30-01-26	24-02-26
Description of the Secured Asset: Property located within the limits of the Kukudakhandi Tahasil, Being Khata No-558/331, Plot.No. 1255/3490, Kisma-gharabani, With An Area Of Ac.0.030 Decimal. Boundaries: North: Road, South: Land Of Banamali Karji, East: House Of Ramhari Jena, West: House Of Ranjan Jena.			
0192SB ML01271	1. Mr./Mrs. SUBHASMITA NAIK 2. Mr./Mrs. SUSANTA NAYAK	Rs. 87,554.39 30-01-26	24-02-26
Description of the Secured Asset: Property with Khata No- 469/2304, Plot No.2007/4827, Kisma -Homestead, situated at Village/Mouza -Panchagan under Jatani - Tahasil, Revenue Mandal - Jatani, P.S. Bhubaneswar, District - Khordha in the State of Odisha. The Total Area of the Site/Land: Ac. 1000 Sq.ft Boundaries: North: Sub Plot No-b, South: Rest Part Of This Plot, East: Road, West: Rest Part Of This Plot.			
0192SB ML00865	1. Mr./Mrs. BIRENDRA KUMAR SAHOO 2. Mr./Mrs. PREMALATA SAHOO 3. Mr./Mrs. ATHANI SAHOO	Rs. 5,36,081.48 30-01-26	24-02-26
Description of the Secured Asset: Property situated at Khata- 366/121 Plot no-1382/1738, Village/Mouza- JAYAPUR, P.S.- SATYABADI, Tahsil- SATYABADI, District- PURI, Odisha, PIN-752014, measuring Ac.0.0300dcm. Boundaries: North: Madhab Sahoo, South: Vendor, East: Surendra Nath Kar, West: Road.			
0207SB ML01435	1. Mr./Mrs. BISWARANJAN DAS 2. Mr./Mrs. RAJASHREE PARIDA	Rs. 5,56,220.6 30-01-26	24-02-26
Description of the Secured Asset: Property with Khata-821/5139, Plot - 1355/6406, Ana A 0.08 Dec, located at Mouza Samarapur, Takasil Bhadrak, Dist Bhadrak. Boundaries: North: Rest Land of this plot, South: South Land of this plot, East: plot No. 1356, West: plot No. 1356.			
0207SB ML01581	1. Mr./Mrs. DEEPAK KUMAR SETHI 2. Mr./Mrs. TAPAS KUMAR SETHI 3. Mr./Mrs. DUSHASAN SETHI 4. Mr./Mrs. TARUNA KUMAR SETHI	Rs. 1,96,258.82 30-01-26	24-02-26
Description of the Secured Asset: Property belonging to Taruna Kumar Sethi, Deepak Kumar Sethi, Tapas Kumar Sethi, situated in Bhadrak Registration District, Basudevpur Sub Registration District, Basudevpur Taluk, in Kanthi Sahi Survey ward 143/50, Plot No 661/848 Khata No 143/50 Mz Kanthi Sahi Ps Basudevpur Thana No 55 Dist Bhadrak Odisha 756165 Nr Kanthi Sahi Up School. Boundaries: North: Road, South: Seller, East: Purchaser Tapas Sethi, West: Canal.			
0207SB ML01914	1. Mr./Mrs. SK FARUK RAZA 2. Mr./Mrs. RASIDAN BIBI 3. Mr./Mrs. SEK MUNERALI	Rs. 7,81,627.69 30-01-26	24-02-26
Description of the Secured Asset: Property located at Khata No-319/139, Plot No-1515/3302, Mouza- Mirzapur, Tahasil-Bhadrak, PS-Bhadrak No.107, Dist-Bhadrak, Area- A0.060 Dec. Kismam Type: Homestead. Boundaries: North: Sayed Golam, South: Sk Rosan, East: Sayed Golam, West: Public Road.			
Notice, is therefore given to the Borrowers/Co-Borrowers, calling upon them to make payment of the aggregate amount against the respective Borrower/Co-Borrower, within 60 days of publication of this notices the said amount is found payable in relation to the respective Loan account as on the date. It is made clear that if the aggregate amount together with further interest and other amounts which may be payable till the date of payment, is not paid, Arcil shall be constrained to take appropriate action for enforcement of security interest upon properties as described. Steps are also being taken for service of notice in other manners as prescribed under the Act and the rules made hereunder.			
Place: Bhubaneswar, Balasore Berhampur		Sd/- Authorized Officer Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Limited, Arcil - Trust - 2026 - 024	
Date: 24-04-2026			

4 VSSUT students face action over ragging

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, April 23: Four students of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VS-SUT), Burla, face disciplinary action after a ragging-related incident. The university's anti-ragging cell recommended financial penalties and undertakings from parents instead of grade reductions to protect the students' future.

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Deepak Kumar Sahu clarified it was not organised ragging but a minor dispute near the campus gate two weeks ago that escalated into a scuffle before security intervened. A committee comprising the Sambalpur Sub-Collector Pushpanjali Panda, police, faculty, and student welfare representatives investigated, hearing accounts from both senior and junior students. Action was recommended against four seniors.

The incident began when seniors questioned two first-year mechanical students about untied shoelaces, leading to heated arguments and damage to a mobile phone. Security staff diffused the situation, prompting a formal inquiry.

S. E. RAILWAY - TENDER
Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer, South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur acting for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender for the following work:
E-Tender Notice No.: M. BGY_VZR_COACH_CLNG_2026, Dated: 16.04.2026. Brief description of name of work with its location: Interior cleaning of coaches at Bangriposi (BGY) & Bhanpur (VZR) for a period of three years on outcome basis. Advertised Value: ₹ 29,96,490.48. Earnest Money: ₹ 59,900. Date & Time for closing of e-tender: 08.05.2026 at 16.00 hrs. Website particulars & details: www.ireps.gov.in. Bidding Start Date: 24.04.2026. (PR-81)

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. ST-01-TELE-ZONAL-CTC-557, Dt: 16.04.2026
Name of the Work: TELECOM ZONAL WORK EACH COSTING RS.5,00,000/- OR LESS IN THE SECTION UNDER JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER/CUTTACK OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION, EAST COAST RAILWAY FOR ONE YEAR.
Tender Value: ₹ 47,02,311.42, EMD: ₹ 94,100/-
Bidding Start Date: 24.04.2026, **Tender closing date & time:** at 1100 hrs. of 08.05.2026.
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website www.ireps.gov.in
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (S&T) Khurda Road
PR-75/R/26-27

EAST COAST RAILWAY
File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/26-27
E-Tender/07/2026 Dt: 17.04.2026
(1) Tender No. e-Tender-CENKUR-382-2025 Dt: 10.04.2026
Description: PROVISION OF LIMITED HEIGHT SUBWAY (LHS) FOR BALANCED PORTION FROM R1 TO R4 KM. 443/35-37 AT DHENKANAL STATION YARD IN CUTTACK-TALCHER LINE OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx cost of the work: ₹ 210.01 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 4,20,000/-
(2) Tender No. e-Tender-CENTKUR-21-2026 Dt: 10.04.2026
Description: PAINTING OF RAILS, LUBRICATION OF ERCS & SEALING OF LINER CONTACT AREA AND OTHER ENABLING WORKS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER/DHENKANAL OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx cost of the work: ₹ 183.57 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 3,67,200/-
(3) Tender No. e-Tender-SouthKUR-22-2026 Dt: 10.04.2026
Description: THROUGH BRIDGE MISCELLANEOUS MAINTENANCE OF BRIDGES (MINOR, MAJOR & IMPORTANT) LIKE PARAPET WALL, BALLAST RETAINERS AND REPAIRS PLASTERING TO EXPOSED REINFORCEMENT ETC. UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER/CUTTACK OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx cost of the work: ₹ 298.98 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 5,98,000/-
Completion period: 12 months (for SI. No. 1,3 & 4) & 10 months (for SI. No. 2).
Tender closing date & time: at 1500 hrs. of 04.05.2026 (for all tenders).
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website www.ireps.gov.in
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (Engg) Khurda Road
PR-71/R/26-27



Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, along with Sampad Chandra Swain, Minister for Industries, Skill Development and Technical Education, OrissaPOST & Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy and Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy, lights the lamp marking the commencement of Business Eminence Awards 2026



MOHAN CHARAN MAJHI
CHIEF MINISTER,
ODISHA



SAMPAD CHANDRA SWAIN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
INDUSTRIES, SKILL DEVELOPMENT & TECHNICAL
EDUCATION MINISTER, ODISHA

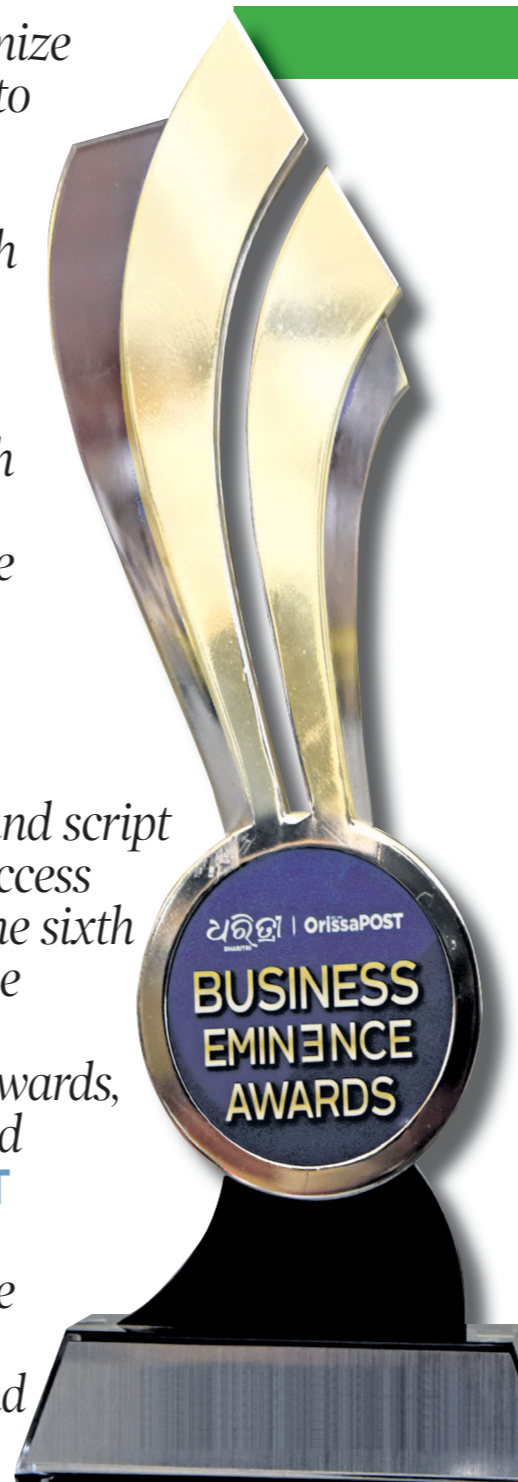


ADYASHA SATPATHY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE,
ORISSA POST & DHARITRI



TATHAGATA SATPATHY
EDITOR,
ORISSA POST & DHARITRI

They alchemize adversity into opportunity, striding forward with a lucid vision and unshakable resolve. With tireless perseverance and an indomitable spirit, they transcend challenges and script enduring success stories. At the sixth edition of the Business Eminence Awards, Dharitri and OrissaPOST pay a grand tribute to the enterprising brilliance and visionary leadership of the state's most illustrious business icons



AND THE AWARDEES ARE...



DURGA PRIYADARSHINI
GAUMAYA AGRO PRIVATE LIMITED



SUMAN DALMIA
INDIAN PUBLIC SCHOOL



BHALA CHANDRA MOHANTY
ORICLEAN PRIVATE LIMITED



CHANDRA PRAKASH BHARTIA
JAGDAMBA POLYMERS LIMITED



DIPTIMAYEE MOHANTY
ARYAVART ANCIENT ACADEMY



DR. ALOK SRIVASTAVA
APOLLO HOSPITALS



HARSHIT LODHA
JAIBABA AUTOMOBILES



JIBAN KUMAR BADU
ORISSA TRANSFORMERS PRIVATE LIMITED



KARIM KABIRUDDIN
HEALTH FOOD PRODUCT PRIVATE LIMITED



MANOJ NAYAK
KALINGA BIOMEDICAL



PREETI PALLAVI PATNAIK
ODYSSA COFFEE



NIGAMJYOTI PATHY
NAMASTE BARIIPADA



SAMBIT RANJAN SAHOO
ORGANIC MAA



PRIYADARSHI MOHAPATRA
CUREBAY TECHNOLOGIES PRIVATE LIMITED



SAILESH SARAWGI
ODISSI JEWELLERY



SANJEEV HANS
SHUBH LAABH JEWELLERS



SASHIKANT BARIK
ACRERISE



SOMDUTT BEHURA
KT GLOBAL SCHOOL

NB: PICTURES ARE NOT IN ANY SPECIFIC ORDER



Esteemed guests present at Business Eminence Awards 2026 organised by OrissaPOST & Dharitri



Just spoke to Mamta didi on the phone. Expressed complete solidarity and support. She is fighting one of the most difficult battles, which is also one of the most important battles for Indian democracy
ARVIND KEJRIWAL | AAP NATIONAL CONVENER

DELHI LIKELY TO GET BJP MAYOR 2ND YR IN A ROW

The BJP and the Indian National Congress Thursday filed nominations for the posts of mayor and deputy mayor in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, while the Aam Aadmi Party for second year in a row stayed away from the contest for the top two positions



of the day note

Election Commission: (West Bengal Election). Experiment in disenfranchisement. The CEC must be awarded with a Padam Bhushan!
KAPIL SIBAL | FORMER LAW MINISTER

We have heard of the incident 5,000 years ago when the Kauravas disrobed Draupadi in full court. A few days ago, the same drama was repeated in the Lok Sabha. Back then, it was the Kauravas, and now it was the Congressmen. There is no difference between the two
MOHAN YADAV | MP CM

Nearly 2,500 government posts across Goa will be filled soon through the Staff Selection Commission (SSC)
PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

SHORT TAKES

Heatwave intensifies across Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: The IMD has issued an orange alert warning of heatwave conditions in parts of Kerala, prompting authorities to urge extreme caution amid soaring temperatures and high humidity. According to a press release, heatwave conditions are likely at isolated places in the districts of Kollam, Thrissur, and Palakkad Thursday and Friday. Maximum temperatures are expected to reach around 41 degrees Celsius in Palakkad, 40 degrees Celsius in Kollam and Thrissur, and about 38 degrees Celsius in Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, Ernakulam, and Kozhikode during April 23-24, around 4 to 5 degrees Celsius above normal.

Lawyer jumps to death in court premises

Kanpur: A 24-year-old lawyer Thursday ended his life by jumping from the fifth floor of the court building here, police said. A two-page suicide note he left behind revealed incidents from his childhood and adolescence due to which he felt humiliated and ashamed, they said. Priyanshu Srivastava was rushed to Ursula Horsman Memorial (UHM) hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead. The incident triggered chaos in the court premises, with hundreds of lawyers gathering at the spot.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Arun Kumar Agrawalla, S/o Mohan Lal Agrawalla resident of At-Prakatnath Lane, Kathagada Sahi, Buxibazar, Cuttack Urban, PIN-753001, Odisha, India declare by this Affidavit No.105, dated 16.04.2026. That now onwards I shall be known as Arun Kumar Agarwala, S/o Mohan Lal Agarwala for all future purposes.

TO-LET

To-let for office and shop space available 1150 Sq.ft. in front of Bhawani Mall, Plot No. C-41, Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Contact: 9777915245, 9811268396, 9861151831.

30 MINUTES OF HORROR

Chilling details emerge in IRS officer's daughter murder case



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: He raped a woman whose husband he knew in Alwar at night, went to Delhi the next morning, sneaked into a house he had worked in and headed straight to the rooftop study where he allegedly sexually assaulted and killed the daughter of his former employer.

That's how the horror story proceeded, police said Thursday following initial investigations into the rape and murder of the 22-year-old daughter of an Indian Revenue Service officer in south Delhi's upscale Kailash Hills.

Piecing together the chilling details of the Wednesday morning murder, police officials said Rahul Meena is a man without remorse, a 19-year-old who allegedly attacked two women back to back and brutally killed one of them. Meena, who was arrested Wednesday and produced before court Thursday, is showing little signs of contrition and has changed his statement repeatedly, officials privy to his interrogation said. The tone was different in court.

"Mujhse apradh ho gaya... Galti ho gayi (I committed a crime, a mistake)," the teen domestic help said before Judicial Magistrate Deepika Thakaran who allowed the Delhi Police's plea seeking four days of custody.

Police take Amritpal on two-day remand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dibrugarh(Assam), April 23: The Punjab Police took Amritpal Singh, Chief of Waris Punjab De, into custody here Thursday following the expiry of his detention term under the National Security Act (NSA).

A team from the Punjab Police executed the arrest at Dibrugarh Central Jail in connection with the 2023 Ajnala police station attack case.

The NSA detention of Singh, an Independent MP from Khadoor Sahib, ended at midnight Wednesday.

He was moved from the jail to the Dibrugarh Police Station for a two-day remand under heavy security. Singh was escorted by an 11-vehicle convoy, comprising Punjab Police, Assam Police, and Assam Police commandos.

Post-mortem confirms strangulation as the cause of death for the IRS officer's daughter

Multiple abrasions and a nasal-bone fracture indicate a violent struggle and assault

Accused, a former domestic help, allegedly entered the house with a spare key

The victim was allegedly raped while unconscious, and the accused stole cash and jewellery

Accused arrested and suspected of involvement in another rape case

dial interrogation. Meena had worked with the IRS officer's family for eight months and had been sacked a month ago for financial wrongdoings.

According to police sources, he not just knew the layout of the apartment but also the morning routine of the young woman's parents who had left early morning for the gym.

He entered the house using a spare key and went straight to the study where he knew he would find their daughter, an IIT graduate preparing for the civil services exams. He attacked her and then dragged her blood-soaked body down the stairs.

Meena allegedly strangled

the victim with a mobile phone charging cable before hitting her with a heavy object, rendering her unconscious.

"The investigation suggests that the accused raped the victim while she was still unconscious. He then dragged her down the stairs to another room where a locker was kept, and attempted to open the biometric lock using her fingerprint, but it did not open," a police official said.

He then broke the locker open using a screwdriver, stole cash and jewellery, changed his blood-stained clothes and slippers and fled the scene, about 30 minutes before the victim's parents returned home.

According to police, the accused was inside the house for about 30 minutes. CCTV footage and eyewitness accounts show that Meena entered the colony around 6.30 am, sneaked into the house at 6.49 am and left at 7.20 am.

The killing, which exposes security gaps even in gated localities, came to light when the victim's parents returned home and found her lying in a pool of blood, with her clothes torn and her belongings scattered all around.

Dr Sudhir Gupta, head of the Forensic Department at AIIMS-Delhi, said the victim was taken to the Fortis Escorts Hospital in Okhla where she was declared brought dead.

The attack was brutal. The post-mortem report showed multiple abrasions and abraded contusions on both arms, hands and legs, besides a nasal-bone fracture.

Gupta said the external examination revealed multiple injuries consistent with resistance. A dissection of the neck showed extensive damage to the muscles. All internal organs were found congested, consistent with asphyxial death due to strangulation.

Mirzapur: 11 killed in multi-vehicle crash

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mirzapur (UP), April 23: Eleven people, including children, were killed in a multi-vehicle collision triggered by a suspected brake failure in a truck in Uttar Pradesh's Mirzapur district, police said Thursday.

The accident was reported around 8.30 pm Wednesday, following which police and fire brigade teams rushed to the spot and launched a rescue operation with the help of locals, SP Aparna Rajat Kaushik said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has condoled the loss of lives in what he called an "extremely tragic and heart-rending" incident.

Police said the collision occurred on a stretch of National Highway-135 descending from the Dramandanj valley towards Lasoda, about 50 km from the district headquarters.



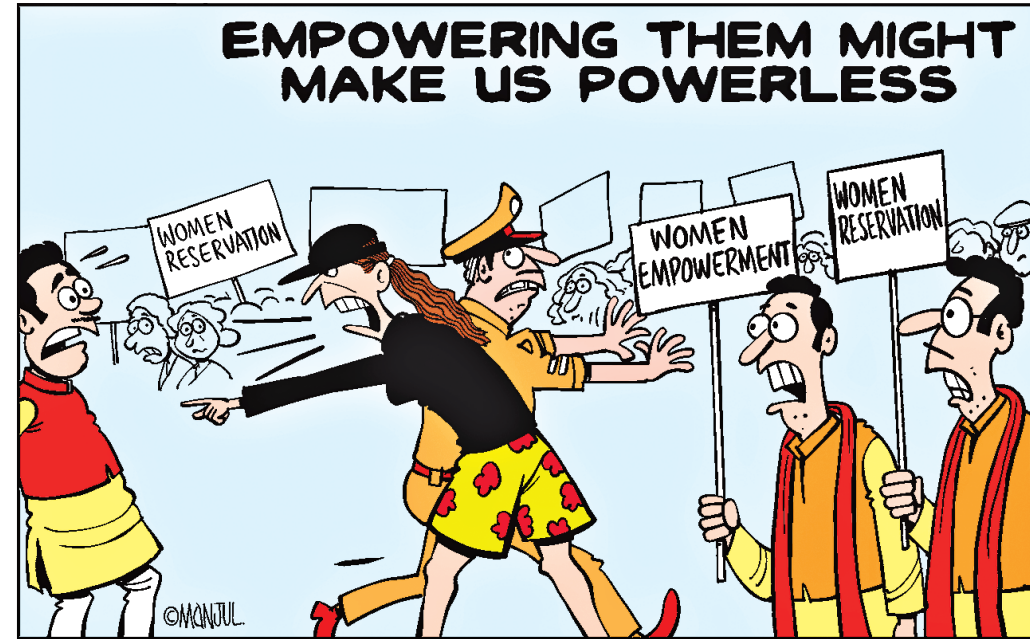
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

According to preliminary findings, a truck travelling downhill is suspected to have suffered a brake failure before ramming into another truck moving ahead of it.

A car travelling between the two trucks was crushed in the impact. In the chain collision that followed, another car caught fire after being hit, Kaushik said.

"Police, along with locals, pulled out the victims trapped in the mangled vehicles. So far, 11 deaths have been reported," the SP said. District Magistrate Pawan Gangwar told PTI that seven of those killed were from

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



SC stays conviction, life term of Amit Jogi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: In a major relief to Amit Jogi, the Supreme Court Thursday stayed the Chhattisgarh High Court verdict, which had handed down life imprisonment to the son of former chief minister Ajit Jogi in the 2003 murder case of NCP leader Ramavtar Jaggi.

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ramavtar Jaggi was shot dead in Raipur June 4, 2003, when Ajit Jogi was the chief minister of Chhattisgarh. The Chhattisgarh High Court, April 2, convicted Jogi and directed him to surrender before jail authorities in three weeks to undergo life imprisonment in the case. On May 31, 2007, a trial court held that the prosecution had successfully proved the charges against 28 accused. A bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and Vijay Bishnoi took note of the submissions of senior advocates Vivek Tankha and Kapil Sibal, appearing for Jogi, while staying his conviction and the sentence in the case.

EAM: India-Africa ties a message of stability in turbulent world



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: As the world navigates through complex geopolitical challenges, the India-Africa partnership assumes particular significance, and it will be a message of "stability" and "reliability" in a turbulent and uncertain world, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said Thursday.

Addressing a gathering at the unveiling of the logo, theme and website for the upcoming India-Africa Forum Summit-IV, Jaishankar also asserted that together, India and Africa are not just development partners, but also "partners in shaping a better world".

His comments come in the backdrop of multiple conflicts in various parts of the world, including the one in West Asia that has stretched for more than 50 days with global ramifications. The logo for the upcoming summit features a lion, superimposed on an image depicting interlocked maps of India and Africa.

It carries the theme 'Enduring Partnership Shared Vision' and the date of the summit, May 28-31. Jaishankar said the upcoming summit presents a "unique opportunity" to further "deepen our engagement".

It will offer a platform to shape the next phase of the partnership, "one that is more ambitious, more inclusive and more future-oriented".

"As the world navigates through complex geopolitical and geoeconomic challenges, our partnership assumes particular

significance. "It will be a message of stability in a turbulent world, of reliability in an uncertain one, and of solidarity in difficult times," Jaishankar said.

"Together, India and Africa are not just development partners, but also partners in shaping a better world," he asserted.

The event was attended by several ambassadors and diplomats from various African countries. Jaishankar also underlined that India has expanded its diplomatic footprint in Africa in recent years by opening 17 new missions across the continent, taking the number of Indian missions in Africa to 46.

He emphasised that Africa occupies a "central place" in India's foreign policy today, and New Delhi's engagement with it is guided by a clear vision, rooted in the principle of equality, and of mutual respect and shared progress.

"We gather here to mark the next chapter in the enduring partnership between India and Africa through the India-Africa Forum Summit framework," he said. The India-Africa relationship is rooted in "our civilisational linkages", nurtured over centuries through cultural exchanges and human interactions, the external affairs minister said.

Underlining that the story of India's freedom struggle is also closely linked with Africa, he said, "Our shared history of struggle, solidarity, resilience and aspirations continues to shape our partnership."

The minister underscored that the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision and Africa's Agenda 2063 are complementary roadmaps towards prosperity and progress through sustainable growth and inclusive development.

Jaishankar also said that the engagement between India and Africa has grown across key pillars with numerous high-level political interactions, with India consistently supporting Africa's rightful place in global governance.

States ask Centre to amend forest laws to protect grasslands

Grasslands and rangelands (a broader land category including grasslands, shrublands, and deserts) have a sequestration (removal) potential of about 2.3 to 7.3 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent per year, the SC-NBWL was informed during the recent meeting

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: Karnataka, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir have highlighted the need to conserve grasslands by amending India's forest conservation laws.

At a recent meeting of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SC-NBWL), representatives from these states "emphasised that suitable amendments/clarifications in guidelines under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam

Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, may be required

to enable/recognise grassland restoration under compensatory afforestation mechanisms".

Compensatory afforestation is a legal mechanism that promotes afforestation and regeneration activities to compensate for forest land diversion for non-forestry uses.

According to the minutes of the meeting, the states asserted that grasslands are an essential ecosystem requiring protection and restoration,



while balancing conservation priorities with grazing requirements and livelihood dependencies.

However, Mohan Pargaian, a retired Indian Forest Service (IFS) officer, raised concerns regarding the states' recommendation, saying it seems to

be more about afforestation targets than ecological restoration.

Speaking to PTI, Pargaian said, "When it comes to compensatory afforestation, states are facing a land crunch. This is because non-forest land is becoming scarce and expen-

sive, and the number of projects which involve diversion of forest land is rising. Due to this, states are not able to meet their afforestation targets. As a result, it appears that they want to use grasslands for compensatory afforestation."

Such a move could severely harm grasslands, the former forest official said. "Not all land is meant to be planted with trees. Ecologically open lands like grasslands and scrublands have their own native ecosystems, which would be negatively affected by afforestation. For instance, if you take a savanna and plant a dense forest there, the entire ecology will change," Pargaian added.

He also said if states want to conserve grasslands, they can do so on their own without needing permission from the

Centre or tweaking the legislation.

Grasslands and rangelands (a broader land category including grasslands, shrublands, and deserts) have a sequestration (removal) potential of about 2.3 to 7.3 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent per year, the SC-NBWL was informed during the recent meeting.

According to the minutes, "These ecosystems hold nearly one-third of terrestrial carbon, with about 90 pc of this carbon stored below ground."

For instance, the restored grassland in Banni in Gujarat can sequester about 525 tonnes of CO2 equivalent per hectare, which shows potential co-benefits of grassland restoration for biodiversity conservation, land degradation neutrality, and climate resilience.

national



Women and girls are the most unsafe under the BJP government. Incidents of rape, murder and atrocities against women are increasing. The BJP government has done nothing for women's health, education and dignity. Women need 'sarakshan' along with 'aarakshan'

AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

NATIONAL PANCHAYATI RAJ DAY TO BE CELEBRATED TODAY

The central government will celebrate National Panchayati Raj Day across the country April 24, marking 33 years of the landmark 73rd Constitutional Amendment that granted constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), an official statement said



of the day note

Maharashtra is emerging as a global investment hub driven by industry-friendly policies, and that it remains a preferred destination for foreign investors

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHARASHTRA CM

No, there has been no opposition from the BJP. The local BJP does not take decisions on such matters. I am the in-charge here, so I know. This decision is taken by the central government, by the central unit, by the national BJP. As of now, no specific discussion has taken place in this regard, and no discussion has happened on any particular name

RADHA MOHAN DAS AGRAWAL | BJP NATIONAL GENERAL SECY & K'TAKA IN CHARGE

House to house, four people are walking and giving Rs 5,000 for one vote. In the Karur Assembly constituency, they are boldly going and giving a half-gram gold coin to a voter. All of this didn't happen in a single day. This money has come from somewhere. It has been hidden somewhere. They have micro-managed it somewhere

K ANNAMALI | FORMER TN BJP PRESIDENT

POST OF THE DAY

Before the state elections, BJP announced many freebies for Bihar. Increasing pension from RS 400 to RS 1,100

alone has created an additional monthly burden of 1,150cr. Now, Bihar govt is cash strapped. They have asked the RBI for 12,000cr loan!! Situation now - > Social Security Pensions for 1 crore elderly, widow and disabled, is due for March and April > Student Credit card scheme for 58,000 students is due > Road, bridge and other development projects are stalled Note: The state's total liability already exceeds 3,70,000cr!!

@PunsterX

SHORT TAKES

CBI arrests Tis Hazari Court reader

New Delhi: The CBI Thursday arrested a reader in the court of an additional sessions judge in Tis Hazari court in an alleged bribery case, officials said. The accused had allegedly demanded a bribe of Rs 30,000 from a lawyer for "facilitating the allowance of the bail application of her client". "The Central Bureau of Investigation has arrested the accused Reader to ASJ-02, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi, while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 20,000 from the complainant in a bribery case," a CBI spokesperson said.

Non-bailable warrant against Gautam Khattar

Panaji: A local court has issued a non-bailable warrant against right-wing speaker Gautam Khattar who is wanted by Goa Police in a case related to his alleged offensive remarks against St Francis Xavier. Judicial Magistrate First Class, Vasco, has issued a warrant against Khattar who failed to appear before the investigating officer despite a notice being issued to him, Superintendent of police (Crime Branch) Rahul Gupta told reporters Thursday. Goa police are searching for Khattar since last Saturday. Police Wednesday arrested his brother Madhav Khattar from Uttarakhand and he has been remanded by a court in police custody for four days, said SP Gupta. A video of Gautam Khattar making objectionable statements against St Francis Xavier, whose Holy Relics are preserved at Basilica of Bom Jesus Church, Old Goa, went viral, leading to outrage.

SABARIMALA CASE

Respect all views except WhatsApp University: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: The Supreme Court Thursday said it respects the views of all eminent authors and thinkers, but it cannot accept information from 'WhatsApp University'. The observation by a nine-judge Constitution bench came while hearing petitions related to discrimination against women at religious places, including the Sabarimala Temple in Kerala, and on the ambit and scope of religious freedom practised by multiple faiths.

The bench comprised Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices BV Nagarathna, MM Sundresh, Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Aravind Kumar, Augustine George Masih, Prasanna B Varale, R Mahadevan, and Joymalya Bagchi. Senior advocate Neeraj Kishan Kaul, appearing for the head of the Dawoodi Bohra community, referred to an article written by Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, which talked about judicial restraint in matters of religious relief.

At this juncture, CJI Kant said, "We respect all eminent persons and jurists but personal opinion is personal opinion." Kaul said there was no harm in drawing from all sources. "If knowledge and wisdom come from any source, any country, any university, it should be welcomed. We are far



No ban on entry of muslim women in mosques: AIMPLB

NEW DELHI: Urging the courts not to judicially determine religious practices, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) Thursday told the Supreme Court that Islam does not restrict women from coming to the mosque for namaz, but it is preferable that they stay at home. Senior Advocate M R Shamsad, appearing for the AIMPLB, told a nine-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant that women are allowed to offer namaz in the mosque subject to some discipline. The issue, he submitted, has come up before the bench because a writ petition was filed seeking that women be allowed to pray in mosques.

too rich as a civilisation not to accept all forms of knowledge and information," Kaul said. Justice Nagarathna, in a lighter vein, remarked, "But not from WhatsApp University." Kaul said he is not getting

into that. "I am not into which university is good or bad, which is really inconsequential to this debate... The point is simply that wherever knowledge and information come from, they must be accepted," Kaul said. The hearing was underway at the time of filing of this report. The top court Wednesday said it was very difficult, if not impossible, for a judicial forum to define parameters to declare a particular practice of a religious denomination as essential and non-essential.

A five-judge Constitution bench, by a 4:1 majority verdict in September 2018, lifted a ban that prevented women between the ages of 10 and 50 years from entering the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple and held that the centuries-old Hindu religious practice was illegal and unconstitutional.

Bikaji foods founder Shiv Ratan Agarwal passes away at 75

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: Shiv Ratan Agarwal, who built a humble, family-run namkeen business into one of India's most recognisable packaged snack brands Bikaji, taking the gritty flavours of Bikaner to supermarket shelves across the country and beyond, died Thursday.

The 75-year-old complained of uneasiness and was rushed to a private hospital in Chennai, where he breathed his last, family sources said. He was in Chennai after his wife recently underwent heart bypass surgery there.

Born into the famous Haldiram family, Agarwal, who studied only till Class VIII, spread the bhujia empire from the bylanes of Bikaner to supermarket shelves across continents.

His rise tracked India's own consumption boom. He moved decisively from loose, unbranded snacks to packaged products, betting early on branding, scale and distribution at a time when much of the sector remained fragmented. Under his watch, Bikaji expanded aggressively beyond its Rajasthan base, investing in factories, supply chains and exports - while fiercely protecting the taste profiles that made its bhujia and sweets staples in Indian households.



BENGAL POLLS

TMC already in position to win, says Mamata



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 23: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Thursday asserted that polling held so far in the first phase of the Assembly polls indicates the TMC is already in a position to win.

Banerjee, also the Trinamool Congress supremo, said at a rally in Bow Bazar area of Kolkata that she will conquer Delhi taking along all Opposition parties, after winning the election.

A voter turnout of 89.93 per cent was recorded till 5 pm, as polling was underway in 152 of the 294 Assembly seats in phase 1. The next round will take place April 29, while counting will be held May 4.

"From my understanding of people's mind, we are already in a position to win given the polling held so far today," Banerjee said.

"I am not interested in any post, I don't want the chair. I only want the end of BJP government in Delhi," she said. Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking at a rally in Krishnanagar, congratulated

the people of West Bengal for the massive turnout in the first phase of the polls, terming it an "overwhelming mandate for change".

Banerjee, however, asserted that people voted in good numbers to protest the deletion of names in the SIR exercise, claiming that her efforts led to inclusion of 32 lakh names in the voter list.

"On the day of the polls, you (PM) are saying you will win; can you say this?" Banerjee said, adding, "How can the BJP be so naive?"

Responding to Modi's remarks that the BJP's Bengal unit would hold victory celebrations May 4 after the counting of votes gets over, and the party would distribute among people not just sweets, but also 'jhalhuri', the CM said: "I will send 'bhelpuri' (popular street food) to you, it is available in Delhi." The PM had savoured 'jhalhuri' (another popular street snack) at an unscheduled stop during his visit to Jhargram last week.

At the Krishnanagar rally Thursday, Modi also said: "I have heard that even 'jhalhuri' has given certain individuals a thunderous jolt. I had 'jhalhuri', but it seems that the TMC leaders are feeling heat of the chillies."

Replying to the PM, Banerjee said "we are used to jhalhuri's spiciness". Speaking at another rally in Tollygunj constituency, Banerjee said she has always championed the cause of people and will continue to do so.

NCERT Class IX maths textbook showcases mathematical heritage

The 196-page Part 1 textbook, comprising eight chapters and to be implemented from the 2026-27 academic session, places greater emphasis on indigenous contributions, unlike the previous book which contained limited references to ancient Indian mathematics and largely focused on procedural learning



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: The newly-introduced NCERT Class IX mathematics textbook 'Ganita Manjari' features references to ancient Indian mathematical systems and embeds historical context within core concepts, marking a shift from earlier editions. The 196-page Part 1 textbook, comprising eight chapters and to be implemented from the 2026-27 academic session, places greater emphasis on indigenous contributions, unlike the previous book which contained limited references to ancient Indian mathematics and largely focused on procedural learning.

While the earlier textbook presented topics such as number systems, integers and irrational numbers in a largely definition-based format, the new book integrates these concepts with historical narratives, linking them to ancient texts and scholars. For instance, the revised textbook credits the Sindhu-Sarasvati civilisation with early "grid-based thinking" and describes it as an example of systematic spatial planning.

It says "grid-based thinking" and geometry, which require defining specific points in space, "indeed has deep roots in Bharat" with first systematic use of grids occurring thousands of years ago "on a massive urban scale in the Sindhu-Sarasvati Civilisation, where city streets were constructed with striking precision in North-South and East-West directions at uniform distances of 10 metres apart. This was a coordinate system in practice."

The textbook also states that ancient Indian mathematician Baudhayana later used East-West and North-South lines for his "deep geometric constructions, developing the Baudhayana-Pythagoras Theorem and thus laying the foundation of coordinate geometry."

In the same chapter, titled "Orienting Yourself: The Use of Coordinates", the textbook states the 'Ujjayina' was described in the early "Siddhantas" of ancient Indian polymath Bhaskara as "the point marking the central longitude meridian from which all other locations were measured" -- as early as 4th century BCE. The book credits Brahmagupta with formalising key concepts, stating he "formalised the notion and use of zero and negative numbers as algebraic entities" in modern coordinate systems, with the 'origin' at zero and the 'negative axes' representing values less than zero.

It also states that the Rigveda "set the stage for the number system based on powers of 10", linking it to the evolution of the decimal place value system. The earlier textbook treated zero as a mathematical concept without elaborating on its historical origins.

The earlier textbook briefly mentioned Aryabhat mainly for his approximation of 'pi' value and his work as an astronomer-mathematician, with limited context.

The new textbook places his contribution in a broader framework, highlighting his description of pi as "Asanna" (approximate) as an early insight into mathematical approximation.

Bank of India E-Auction Sale Notice. Includes details of the auction, terms and conditions, and contact information for the Bank of India.

international



Let's hope a serious relation between Ukraine and the European Union has been established

ROBERT FICO | PRIME MINISTER, SLOVAKIA

TURKEY TO BAN SOCIAL MEDIA FOR UNDER-15

Turkish lawmakers passed a bill late Wednesday that includes restricting access to social media platforms for children under 15, state media reported.



of the day quote

It is much more quicker for citizens to be part of public sector services. For us, Vietnam is one of the priority countries in the region

MARGUS TSAHKNA | FOREIGN MINISTER, ESTONIA

Over the past few months, I have been setting out the need for a new UK approach to development one moving from traditional aid grants to long-term partnerships that bring investment, expertise and international finance reform together

JENNY CHAPMAN | MINISTER FOR DEVELOPMENT, UK

We will give them until the end of July. We will wait until then, and at that point, the Mauritian government will have to decide on the way forward depending on what happens in the United Kingdom

GAVIN GLOVER | ATTORNEY GENERAL, MAURITIUS

SHORT TAKES

UK, France sign 3-year channel pact

Zuydcoote (France): Britain and France signed Thursday a new multimillion-euro deal aimed at reducing the number of migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats, with increased police patrols and enhanced surveillance in northern France.

Israeli fire kills 5 in Gaza, West Bank

Cairo/Gaza: Israeli airstrikes killed at least four Palestinians in Gaza Thursday, while soldiers shot and killed a 15-year-old child during an army raid in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Argentina blocks media access to Casa Rosada

Buenos Aires: The government of Argentina's President Javier Milei blocked the entry of accredited journalists to government house Casa Rosada Thursday, citing an incident of "illegal espionage."

HORMUZ CRISIS

Iran seizes control as talks collapse

REUTERS

Dubai/Islamabad, April 23: Iran flaunted its tightened grip over the Strait of Hormuz Thursday with video of its commandos storming a huge cargo ship, after the collapse of peace talks that Washington had hoped would open the world's most important shipping corridor.

Iranian state television broadcast footage overnight of masked troops pulling up in a grey speedboat alongside the MSC Francesca, climbing a rope ladder to a shell door in the hull and jumping through brandishing rifles.

The footage, presented with an action-movie-style soundtrack and no commentary, also included views of another ship, the Epaminondas. Iran said it had captured both Wednesday, accusing them of trying to cross the strait without permits.

The war, launched by the US and Israel February 28, has been paused since a ceasefire April 8 but Israel warned Thursday that it was ready to restart attacks.

Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz said Israel was waiting for a "green light" from the US to resume the war, saying that if it did, it would begin by targeting Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei and "return Iran to a dark age".

"This time the attack will be different and deadly, delivering devastating blows in the most sensitive places," he said in a statement released by his office.

STRUGGLE FOR THE STRAIT With the attacks on hold, attention has shifted to the shipping lanes off the coast of Iran.

Tehran says it will not consider opening the Strait of Hormuz, normally the route for a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas, until the US lifts its blockade of Iran's shipping, which Washington imposed during



Iran demands US lift blockade before resuming talks

Iranian speedboats able to harass shipping in Strait of Hormuz

Extension of Israel-Lebanon ceasefire to be discussed

Lebanon to seek ceasefire extension

BEIRUT/JERUSALEM: The United States will host a second meeting between Lebanese and Israeli envoys Thursday, with Beirut seeking the extension of a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah, a day after Israeli strikes killed at least five people including a journalist.

Trump and his military officials have said Iran's navy is "at the bottom of the sea," but Tehran's speedboats show that it can still wreak havoc on shipping.

Washington, which has been confronting Iranian ships in international waters to enforce

Ex-Philippine prez Duterte to face trial

REUTERS

The Hague, April 23: Judges at the International Criminal Court confirmed murder charges against former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte as crimes against humanity Thursday, paving the way for a trial.

The judges said there were "substantial grounds" to believe Duterte, 81, played a key role in the murders of 76 people and the attempted murder of two others as part of his so-called "war on drugs", which prosecutors say killed thousands of civilians in the Philippines.

"The available evidentiary material shows the existence of a common plan between Mr Duterte and his co-perpetrators to kill alleged criminals in the Philippines, including those

perceived or alleged to be associated with drug use, sale or production, through violent crimes including murder," the court said.

In pre-trial hearings, his lawyers argued that Duterte's public statements that he would stop drugs and criminality in the Philippines and would tell security forces to go out and kill criminals were just rhetoric, meant to instil fear.

PHILIPPINES LEADERSHIP SAYS TRIAL WILL BENEFIT BOTH SIDES

In the Philippines, the office of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. issued a statement to say that it respected the ruling and justice must be served.

"Both sides stand to benefit from this. Justice for the accused if he is innocent, or justice for the victims if their rights were indeed abused," the statement said.

EU APPROVES UKRAINE LOAN

REUTERS

Ayia Napa, Cyprus, April 23: The European Union formally approved Thursday a 90-billion-euro (\$105-billion) loan to Ukraine and new sanctions against Russia, ahead of an informal summit of the bloc's leaders in Cyprus which Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will attend.

The loan is set to cover two-thirds of Ukraine's needs for the next two years. Economists had said Ukraine would start to run out of money by June if the EU loan was not disbursed by then, requiring deep cuts to public services.

"We are on our way to Cyprus with good news," European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said.

"While Russia doubles down on its aggression, we are doubling down on our support to the brave Ukrainian nation enabling Ukraine to defend



itself and putting pressure on Russia's war economy."

THROWING UKRAINE A LIFELINE

EU ambassadors had already approved the loan and the sanctions package Wednesday after Hungary lifted its veto, paving the way for Thursday's formal approval.

"This package will strengthen our army, make Ukraine more resilient, and enable us to fulfill our social obligations

Two trains collide in Denmark; 18 injured



REUTERS

Copenhagen, April 23: Two local trains collided head-on north of the Danish capital Copenhagen Thursday, injuring 18 people, five of them critically, emergency services said.

Two yellow and grey trains stood at the site, both with visible damage to the front and facing each other on a tree-lined stretch of track, with rescue services describing "chaotic" scenes inside the carriages.

"The two trains collided head-on, causing large damage to them and sending broken glass flying everywhere," fire and rescue service leader Christoffer Buhl Martekilde told reporters.

EARLY MORNING CRASH

A police spokesperson said it was too early to say what had caused the crash, on the Gribbskov train line linking the towns of Hillerod and Kagerup, adding there would be an extensive investigation.

A total of 37 people are believed to have been on board the two trains at the time of the crash, which occurred shortly before 6:30 am (0430 GMT), the police said.

While health services attended to the injured, those

who were not physically hurt were also offered assistance, said transport group Movia, parent company of rail operator Lokaltog.

"The serious train accident on the Gribbskov Line deeply affects us at Movia, and our thoughts go out to the injured, their relatives and Lokaltog's employees," Movia board Chair Kenneth Gotterup said in a statement.

Emergency services scrambled 18 vehicles and 47 rescue workers to the crash site. Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said he had contacted acting Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen to offer assistance.

Danish police said they had declined the Swedish offer to assist as local resources were sufficient.

"There are injuries among the passengers. Everyone is out of the trains, so no one is trapped... Large resources have been dispatched to the scene," a spokesperson told Reuters earlier. Denmark's worst railway disaster this century occurred in 2019, when a high-speed train hit an obstacle on a bridge during a storm, killing eight people and injuring many more in what police said was a difficult rescue operation.

HEAD-ON COLLISION ON LINE BETWEEN TOWNS OF HILLEROD AND KAGERUP. CRASH HAPPENED AROUND 6:30 AM, WITH 37 PEOPLE ON BOARD TWO TRAINS. SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER OFFERS ASSISTANCE TO DENMARK.

US reclassifies certain marijuana products as a less-dangerous drug

REUTERS

Washington, April 23: The US Department of Justice said Thursday it would immediately loosen restrictions on some marijuana products and move quickly to reclassify the drug as less dangerous, in one of the biggest changes to US drug policy in decades.

The move does not legalize marijuana across the United States, but it is likely to reshape the \$47 billion industry, which has faced continued barriers at the federal level, even as all but two US states have legalized it in some form for medical use and nearly half have legalized it for recreational use as well.

State-regulated medical marijuana products now would be moved from a group of drugs classified as highly addictive, such as heroin, to

a less restrictive category for products that have a low to moderate potential for abuse, including common painkillers, ketamine and testosterone. Marijuana products approved by the US Food and Drug Administration also would be moved to that category.

Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche said the US government would also fast-track a broader effort that would reclassify all uses of the psychoactive plant as less dangerous.

The measures are likely to lower barriers for research, ease tax burdens and make it easier for firms to secure funding.

"This rescheduling action allows for research on the safety and efficacy of this substance, ultimately providing patients with better care and doctors with more reli-



able information," Blanche said in a statement.

The move follows a December executive order from President Donald Trump directing the Justice Department to loosen marijuana restrictions.

The measure is expected to

boost the growing cannabis industry in the United States, benefiting companies like Canopy Growth, Tilray Brands, Trulieve Cannabis.

In addition to selling medical marijuana and consumer-focused products with cannabis,

some of these companies are also researching their pharmaceutical uses for pain management, cancer symptoms, anxiety and other disorders.

US-listed shares of cannabis companies jumped between 6% and 13% following the decision.

"Today marks a pivotal moment for the United States. With President Trump's action to reschedule cannabis, federal

policy is finally aligning with science, medicine, and most importantly, patient needs," said Irwin Simon, CEO of marijuana company Tilray Brands.

Marijuana's status as a Schedule I drug, meaning it has a high potential for abuse and no accepted medical use, has been widely criticized as anachronistic, particularly as it makes inroads at the state level.

Some 24 states and the District of Columbia have legalized it for recreational purposes, while 40 have fully legalized it for medical purposes and another eight allow some medical uses, according to the Congressional Research Service. Only two states - Idaho and Kansas - do not allow any legal use.

Legal sales are expected to top \$47 billion in 2026, according to market researcher BDSA.

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT TO EXPEDITE BROADER MARIJUANA RESCHEDULING HEARING. MOVE EXPECTED TO BOOST CANNABIS INDUSTRY BY EASING TAXES AND FUNDING ACCESS. PRIOR CLASSIFICATION EQUATED IT WITH DRUGS LIKE HEROIN. MARIJUANA STILL NOT FULLY LEGAL ACROSS THE UNITED STATES.

business

of the day **QUOTE**

What SUVs did to the car market, this (scrambler bike) has the potential to do with the motorcycle market. So, we are creating the SUV of motorcycles -- that is the category we are creating

ANUPAM THAREJA | CLASSIC LEGENDS CO-FOUNDER

As we deepen capital and expand access, it is important to ensure that our financial system remains resilient and stable. A strong financial system must be capable of supporting growth during favorable times, while also withstanding shocks during periods of uncertainty

M NAGARAJU | FINANCIAL SERVICES SECRETARY

With strong order intake, a healthy pipeline, and a clear strategic direction as a business creativity partner, LTM is well placed for sustainable growth

VENU LAMBU | LTM CEO & MD

SHORT TAKES

Union Bank Q4 profit up 9.8%

Mumbai: State-owned Union Bank of India Thursday reported a 9.83 per cent rise in March quarter's consolidated profit after tax (PAT) at ₹5,503.61 crore on lower provision and improved asset quality. The city-headquartered bank posted a 6.6 per cent year-on-year rise in the standalone profit at ₹5,316 crore for the quarter. Its core net interest income (NII) declined 1.14 per cent on-year to ₹9,406 crore during the quarter on the back of narrowing of net interest margin to 2.64 per cent from 2.87 per cent, and a 9.74 per cent growth in advances. Managing director and chief executive Asheesh Pandey said the bank's credit growth is slower than the industry's 15.6 per cent for fiscal 2025-26, and it aims to match that or take a notch above in FY27. Pandey said the bank has a corporate loan book pipeline of ₹55,000 crore in the current financial year, and ₹30,000 crore of sanctions.

Infosys Q4 net profit rises 20.8%

New Delhi: IT major Infosys Thursday reported a 20.8 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to ₹8,501 crore in the January-March quarter of FY26. The Bengaluru-headquartered firm had posted a net profit of ₹7,033 crore in the same period of FY25. The company's revenue from operations increased 13.4 per cent to ₹46,402 crore in Q4 FY26 compared to ₹40,925 crore in the year-ago period. In the full 2025-26 fiscal year, Infosys' net profit climbed 10.20 per cent to ₹29,440 crore from ₹26,713 crore in 2024-25. Its revenue from operations in FY26 rose 9.6 per cent to ₹1,78,650 crore. For FY27, Infosys has given a revenue growth forecast of 1.5 to 3.5 per cent in constant currency. "We delivered a resilient performance in FY26 with growth of 3.1 per cent, with strong large deal wins of USD 14.9 billion, reflecting the robustness of our enterprise AI value proposition and market share gains in large transformation opportunities. The simplicity and strength of our AI services strategy across six areas is gaining traction in the market, further strengthened by strong ecosystem AI partnerships enabling clients to get value from AI," Infosys CEO and MD Sali Parekh said.

Sensex tanks 852 pts as crude hits \$100

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 23: Stock markets fell for the second consecutive day Thursday, with the benchmark Sensex tumbling 852.49 points, as crude oil prices once again breached the USD 100 per barrel mark amid stalled US-Iran negotiations.

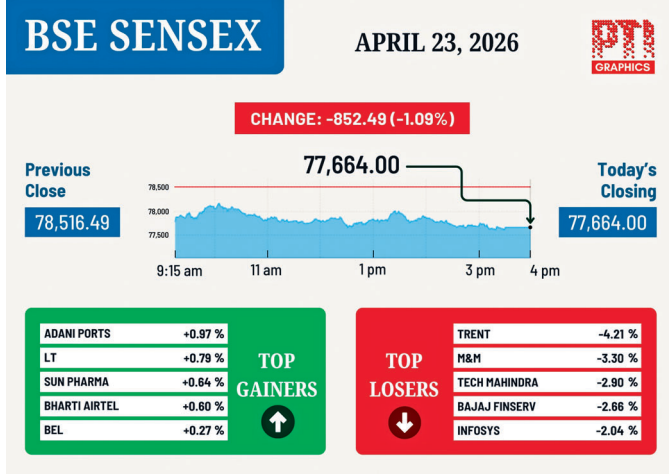
Sustained foreign fund outflows, along with a weak trend in Asian and European equities, also unnerved investors.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 852.49 points, or 1.09 per cent, to settle at 77,664. During the day, it slumped 942.31 points, or 1.20 per cent, to 77,574.18.

A total of 2,517 stocks declined, while 1,762 advanced and 170 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 205.05 points, or 0.84 per cent, to end at 24,173.05.

"Indian equity markets extended their decline, turning decisively negative as geopolitical tensions intensified. Sentiment deteriorated following stalled Iran peace talks despite US President Donald Trump



announcing an indefinite ceasefire extension, which lacked clear confirmation from Iran. Escalating concerns around tightening control over the Strait of Hormuz and the continuation of the US naval blockade pushed the Middle East situation back to a critical juncture," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

From the Sensex pack, Trent, Bajaj Finserv, Tech Mahindra, Mahindra & Mahindra, Infosys

and HDFC Bank were among the major laggards.

In contrast, Adani Ports, Larsen & Toubro, Sun Pharma, Bharti Airtel and Bharat Electronics were the winners.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, traded 1.89 per cent higher at USD 103.8 per barrel.

"Indian markets extended their losing streak, with the Nifty witnessing back-to-back bearish sessions and correcting over 400 points across the last two trading days. The price

action reflects a clear shift in market tone - from resilience to risk aversion - as global uncertainties intensify and domestic triggers fail to provide immediate support," Hari Prasad K, Research Analyst and founder, Livelong Wealth, said.

The BSE MidCap Select index declined 0.39 per cent, and the SmallCap Select index dipped 0.34 per cent.

On the sectoral front, PSU Bank dropped 2.36 per cent, Auto (2.27 per cent), Realty (1.91 per cent), Consumer Discretionary (1.71 per cent), Consumer Durables (1.63 per cent) and Bankex (1.46 per cent).

On the other hand, Healthcare jumped 1.66 per cent, Capital Goods (0.40 per cent), Power (0.40 per cent) and Industrials (0.11 per cent).

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹2,078.36 crore Wednesday, according to exchange data.

The rupee extended its losing streak for the fourth consecutive session, settling 33 paise lower at 94.11 (provisional) Thursday.

HSBC DOWNGRADES INDIA TO 'UNDERWEIGHT'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: HSBC downgraded Indian equities to "underweight" from "neutral" - its second cut in less than a month - as it expects surging energy prices triggered by the Middle East war to threaten the durability of the country's earnings recovery.

Brent crude is up 42% since the war started in late February and is currently trading above \$100 a barrel, raising inflation and growth risks for the world's third-largest oil importer.

"India now looks less attractive than North East Asian peers in the current macro setting," HSBC said in a note Thursday, with the benchmark Nifty 50 and Sensex falling 6.7% and 7.9% so far this year - among the worst performing markets globally.

HSBC expects oil and gas markets to remain tight through most of the June and Septem-

ber quarters. Against that backdrop, it expects consensus earnings forecasts for 2026 - currently at 16% year-on-year growth - to be revised lower. A 20% increase in crude prices could knock off 1.5 percentage points in earnings growth.

The brokerage said that although domestic equity valuations have corrected from their peaks, they may appear expensive again as earnings downgrades filter through.

It also flagged foreign investor concerns, including rupee depreciation risks, if oil prices stay elevated amid growing concerns related to the impact of artificial intelligence on Indian software services. Despite the downgrade, the brokerage maintained that selective opportunities remain in sectors such as private banking, base metals and healthcare, even as the broader market outlook turns cautious.

Oil cos losing ₹20 per litre on petrol, ₹100 on diesel: Govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: State-owned fuel retailers are incurring losses of about ₹20 per litre on petrol and roughly ₹100 per litre on diesel as pump prices remain frozen for nearly four years despite a surge in global oil prices, the government said Thursday, signalling there is no immediate plan to raise retail fuel rates.

Dismissing reports of a potential ₹25-28 per litre increase in petrol and diesel prices after assembly elections, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) said in a post on X that "there is no such proposal under consideration by the government".

At a news briefing on developments in West Asia, Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary in Mo-

PNG, said international prices of crude oil (raw material used to make fuel like petrol and diesel) and LPG rates have been very volatile, yet the government has not increased prices.

Crude which was USD 70 per barrel last year, averaged over USD 113 this month, she said. "There is a huge increase... in spite of that the government has not increased prices and the effort of the government has been to keep the prices stable."

Retail petrol and diesel prices have remained frozen since early April 2022 - a period during which oil prices rose in some months and fell in other times. When prices fell, state-owned oil firms made handsome profits, which they used to set off losses when rates rose.

Sharma said despite the increase in oil prices after war

RBI bulletin: West Asia conflict may pose challenges to economy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 23: Persistent conflict in West Asia and supply chain disruptions could pose challenges to the domestic economy in the form of higher energy costs, input cost pressures, disruption in trade flows and financial market spillovers, an RBI bulletin said Thursday.

The conflict in West Asia has intensified pressures on the global supply chains in March with some easing observed in the first half of April, said an article on 'State of the Economy' published in the Reserve Bank's April bulletin.

Domestic economic activity displayed resilience in many segments, with a slowdown in a few others, it said.

The intensity and duration of the conflict, as well as the resultant damage to energy and other infrastructure, add risk to the inflation and growth outlook, it added.

"If the conflict persists and supply chains are not restored early, it may create challeng-

es to the domestic economy in the form of higher energy costs, input cost pressures, disruption in trade flows and financial market spillovers, the article said.

Though inflation remains within the tolerance band, upside risks have increased, driven by supply-side disruptions, including weather-related uncertainties, it pointed out.

"Possible second-round effects with the supply shock transforming itself into a demand shock also warrant careful and continuous assessment. The temporary two-week ceasefire between the US and Iran has, however, provided some breather to the global economy," it said.

The strong macroeconomic fundamentals should support the Indian economy to maintain its resilience to withstand such shocks, according to the article.

The RBI said the views expressed in the Bulletin article are of the authors and do not represent the views of the central bank.

West Asia war: Rice exports dip 7.5% to \$11.53bn in 2025-26



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: The country's rice exports dipped 7.5 per cent to USD 11.53 billion in 2025-26 due to a contraction in shipments to major destinations including the Middle East countries, according to the commerce ministry data.

The exports in March declined 15.36 per cent to USD 997.53 million.

Shipments to Middle East region nations, including Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Oman have been impacted due to the war between US-Israel and Iran.

Iran is India's top basmati rice export destination, but the shipments are witnessing growing stress on order flows, payment cycles, and ship schedules due to the prevailing instability.

As per reports, importers have conveyed their inability to honour existing commitments and remit payments to India, creating uncertainty for exporters.

In 2024-25, India exported 20.1 million tonnes of rice valued at USD 12.5 billion, reaching more than 172 countries.

India is one of the world's largest producers and exporters of rice. It produced around 150 million tonnes of rice in 2024-25 from nearly 47 million hectares, accounting for about 28 per cent of global output.

Average yields have improved from 2.72 tonnes per hectare in 2014-15 to about 3.2 tonnes per hectare in 2024-25, driven by improved seed varieties, better agronomic practices, and expanded irrigation coverage.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds unveils Bridal Show Campaign



CUTTACK: Malabar Gold & Diamonds unveiled its 'Bridal Show Campaign' at its Cuttack Showroom. This campaign started April 23 and will run till May 3. As a part of its flagship bridal jewellery campaign for this year, the brand rolled out exclusive bridal jewellery collections in gold, diamond, polki, precious gemstones and more. The show was launched by Suravi Priyadarshini, Odia actress and model. It will provide an exceptional opportunity for customers to invest in jewellery that blends craftsmanship with value. The brand is also offering an advance booking facility under which customers can book jewellery by paying minimum 10% advance and get it at the booked rate or prevailing rate, whichever is lower. Commenting on the launch of Bridal Show, MP Ahmed, Chairman of Malabar Group said, "Bridal Show Campaign has emerged as the most popular bridal jewellery campaign among the new-age brides due to the unique design innovations we introduce every year and attractive offers. In line with our mission to offer exquisite designs to new-age brides across regions, we have launched some truly exceptional bridal jewellery collections. With our quality and purity assurance, our bridal jewellery collections will continue to enthral brides."

Rakesh Kumar Singh appointed new Regional Head, Central Bank of India



BHUBANESWAR: Rakesh Kumar Singh joined as the new Regional Head of Central Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Region. Prior to this assignment, he was serving as the Regional Head of the bank's Regional Office in Gorakhpur. Singh began his banking career with Central Bank of India in 1995 as a clerk at Chhattisgarh. With over 31 years of rich experience in the banking sector, he has served in various states including Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. Out of his total experience, he has spent 24 years in branch level and seven years in administrative offices, gaining extensive expertise in both operational and managerial roles. As the new Regional Head of Bhubaneswar Region, Singh has emphasized strengthening the bank's priority sectors such as MSME, Retail Banking, and Agriculture. He stated that customer satisfaction will remain his top priority. He also plans to expand the bank's presence in Odisha by opening more branches and improving the visibility and outreach of the bank across the region.

Bank of Baroda holds annual felicitation event



SAMBALPUR: Bank of Baroda, Sambalpur Region organised its annual felicitation programme for FY26 here. The chief guest of the occasion was Sarat Kumar Panigrahi, General Manager, Bank of Baroda, Bhubaneswar Zone. The program commenced with welcome speech by Debiprasad Mohanty, DGM & Regional Head, Sambalpur Region. Mohanty appreciated the remarkable performance and achievements of the region during FY26. He also praised the dedicated efforts of all Branch Heads for their valuable contributions and encouraged everyone to continue working together as a strong team in FY27 to achieve even greater success. Addressing the gathering, chief guest Panigrahi appreciated the excellent work carried out by Sambalpur Region. He highlighted the immense business potential of the region and discussed key areas of improvement - Customer Service, Growth in Digital Banking, CASA Mobilization, Recovery Management, Strengthening Retail and MSME business. On this occasion, top-performing Branch Managers and Business Correspondents were felicitated for their exceptional performance and significant contributions across various business parameters during FY26.



India's billionaire population may rise 51% by 2031: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 23: India is projected to have 25,217 ultra-high net worth individuals and 313 billionaires by 2031, spurred by wealth creation across technology, industrials and capital markets, according to Knight Frank.

Ultra-high Net Worth Individuals (UHNWIs) are defined as those having a net worth of USD 30 million and above.

At present, there are 19,877 UHNWIs and 207 billionaires

in India.

On Thursday, real estate consultant Knight Frank released its 20th edition of The Wealth Report 2026, stating that there has been "dramatic acceleration" in global wealth creation despite substantial geopolitical uncertainty, concerns over rising interest rates and uneven economic performance.

"India's UHNWI population is forecast to rise from 19,877 today to 25,217 by 2031, underscoring its growing role in the global wealth landscape. This



reflects extraordinary wealth creation across technology, industrials and capital markets,"

the consultant said. Mumbai accounts for 35.4 per cent of the UHNWI population

in India. India now has the sixth-largest UHNWI population in the world.

Globally, the UHNWI population has increased to 713,626 from 551,435 in 2021.

Knight Frank said that India's billionaire count rose 58 per cent over the past five years to 207 in 2026, placing the country 3rd globally after the United States (914) and China (485).

The country's billionaire population is forecast to rise by 51 per cent from 207 in early 2026 to 313 by 2031.

Shishir Bajjal, International Partner, Chairman & Managing Director, Knight Frank India, said, "The expansion of India's wealth club mirrors its economic evolution as it becomes a more entrepreneurial economy maturing into one with deeper capital pools, more sophisticated financial markets and a growing cohort of globally connected founders and investors."

Digitalisation, listed equities, private capital and family-owned businesses all play a role, he added.

CSK hammer MI in one-sided clash

Sanju Samson, Akeal Hosein power CSK to massive 103-run win over MI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 23: Sanju Samson carried his bat with a splendid 101 not out, while Akeal Hosein's stunning 4/17 powered Chennai Super Kings to a crushing 103-run victory over a listless Mumbai Indians in their Indian Premier League clash here Thursday.

Samson stood tall with a 54-ball 101 (10x4s, 8x6s) in the first half, which took a faltering CSK to a challenging 207/6.

In reply, Mumbai Indians endured a horror start, slumping to 11 for three inside the first three overs, and never recovered as they were bowled out for 104 in 19 overs, their biggest defeat in the IPL.

Backed by a partisan crowd that made it feel more like Chepauk than the Wankhede Stadium, CSK produced a clinical all-round performance despite the absence of MS Dhoni.

In a season marred by poor returns in the powerplay, Mumbai Indians endured their worst start yet, crawling to 29 for



A horror start notwithstanding, MI still had plenty of batting left in the form of last game's centurion Tilak Varma, Suryakumar Yadav and Hardik Pandya, but none could spark a fight-back. Tilak and Suryakumar

looked more intent on rebuilding than counter-attacking, stitching a 56-ball 73-run stand for the fourth wicket, but the effort only allowed the asking rate to spiral further out of reach.

Suryakumar's 30-ball 35, laced with five fours, was scratchy by his standards, with

the India T20I skipper even missing his trademark flick off the pads twice.

On one occasion, he was left writhing in pain after being struck by an Anshul Kamboj delivery, and on the other, he thumped the ground in frustration as his bat slipped out of his hands while attempting the shot.

The floodgates reopened once again when Tilak, who scored 37 off 29 with five fours, played one back onto his stumps to become Hosein's third victim in the 12th over. Hosein then completed a fine spell by dismissing Suryakumar, whose top-edged sweep was safely pouched at deep backward square leg.

Noor Ahmed then delivered a decisive double-wicket over, removing the out-of-sorts Hardik Pandya (1) and Sherfane Rutherford (0) to virtually seal the contest, leaving Mumbai Indians reeling at 87 for seven.

Brief Scores:
Chennai Super Kings: 207/6; 20 overs (Sanju Samson 101 not out, Ruturaj Gaikwad 22, Dewald Brevis 21; Ashwani Kumar 2/37, AM Ghazanfar 2/25, Jasprit Bumrah 1/31) beat **Mumbai Indians:** 104; 19 overs (Akeal Hosein 4/17, Noor Ahmed 2/23) by 103 runs.

TEAMS	P	W	L	NRR	PTS
PBKS	6	5	0	1.420	11
RR	7	5	2	0.790	10
RCB	6	4	2	1.171	8
SRH	7	4	3	0.820	8
CSK	7	3	4	0.118	6
DC	6	3	3	-0.130	6
GT	6	3	3	-0.821	6
MI	7	2	5	-0.736	4
LSG	7	2	5	-1.277	4
KKR	7	1	5	-0.879	3

New 'Rafa' dedicates debut win to footballer Bellingham

With the victory, Jodar became just the third Spaniard - after Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz - to earn a main-draw win in Madrid before turning 20



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Madrid, April 23: After clinching a first-round win on debut at the Madrid Open, Spain's newest tennis sensation Rafael Jodar raised his arms and opened them wide to imitate the goal celebration England and Real Madrid soccer star Jude Bellingham.

The 19-year-old Jodar, a Madrid native and a Real Madrid fan, then wrote "Hey Jude" on the lens of one of the TV cameras.

Bellingham, who was in the stands Wednesday, smiled and applauded. The two then met briefly and posed for a photo doing Bellingham's goal celebration together.

"I talked to him after the match, asked him if he had liked it," Jodar said. "I didn't know that he was going to be here, it meant a lot to me. He's a great person. I'm very grateful that he came. He's an example for me, he's my favorite soccer player."

Jodar had met Bellingham and other Real Madrid players when he was honored by the club at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium following Jodar's title at the 2024 US Open Boys' championship.

On Wednesday, he needed 2 1/2 hours to rally past Jesper de Jong 2-6, 7-5, 6-4 at the Caja Magica center court in the Spanish capital.

With the victory, Jodar became just the third Spaniard - after Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz - to earn a main-draw win in Madrid before turning 20.

"I was really looking forward to competing here, but I knew I had to play a solid match from start to finish," Jodar said. "I'm happy because this victory allows me to play another match here." Jodar, who earlier this month won in Marrakech for his first ATP Tour title, was outside the top 600 in the rankings just a year ago. He entered the top 100 in March, and is now No 42.

Proteas whitewash eves 3-0

Wolvaardt ton sets up crushing series win for South Africa against India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Johannesburg, April 23: India scored their highest-ever total against South Africa but still suffered a nine-wicket thrashing at the hands of the home team with skipper Laura Wolvaardt leading the way with a splendid ton in the third women's T20 International against South Africa here Wednesday.

South Africa thus took an unassailable 3-0 lead to clinch the five-match series. The remaining two WT20Is in Johannesburg and Benoni is now rendered inconsequential.

Put in to bat, India made 192 for 4 - their highest ever against South Africa - with captain Harmanpreet Kaur and opener Shafali Verma scoring 66 and 64 respectively.

But, South Africa captain Wolvaardt slammed 115 off just 53 balls while her opening partner Sune Luus struck 64 not out off 42 deliveries against a hapless Indian bowlers to easily chase down the target of 193



with 21 balls to spare and take an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match series. South Africa reached 193 for 1 in 16.3 overs.

This was the third highest successful run chase in women's T20I history after West Indies and England overhauled 212 and 198 against Australia and India respectively in 2023 and 2018.

Wolvaardt, who has been in top form in the series having made 51 and 54 in the first two matches, struck as many as 14

boundaries and five sixes while toying with the Indian bowlers. Luus, who had made 13 and 57 in the first two matches, hit six boundaries and two sixes.

The South African duo were together for 183 runs for the opening wicket before Wolvaardt got out in the 16th over.

Veteran India all-rounder Deepti Sharma failed yet again with the ball as she continued to search her first wicket in the series. She returned with figures of 0/46 in 3.3 overs on Wednesday.

Earlier, captain Harmanpreet Kaur and opening batter Shafali Verma struck a half century each as India produced a far better batting performance to post 192 for 4.

Brief Scores:
India: 192 for 4 in 20 overs (Shafali Verma 64, Harmanpreet Kaur 66; Nonkululeko Mlaba 2/31) lost to South Africa: 193 for 1 in 16.3 overs (Laura Wolvaardt 115, Sune Luus 64 not out; Shreyanka Patil 1/30) by 9 wickets

Barcelona's 9-point lead in vain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Madrid, April 23: Barcelona restored its nine-point lead over Real Madrid in the Spanish league with a 1-0 win over Celta Vigo during which Lamine Yamal and Joao Cancelo were injured before halftime.

Yamal was hurt while converting a penalty that secured Barcelona's eighth straight league victory.

Spain forward Yamal and Portugal defender Cancelo had to be replaced with apparent muscle ailments that raise concerns ahead of the World Cup in June. There were no immediate details about the severity of their injuries.

Yamal converted his penalty in the 40th minute and immediately looked to the bench and signalled that he was hurt. He dropped to the ground as his teammates arrived to celebrate, then appeared to grab the back of his left leg.

Yamal left the field on his own after being attended by doctors. He talked briefly with coach Hansi Flick on the sidelines before walking into the locker-room tunnel by himself.

INJURY BLOWS



Cancelo had already been replaced in the 24th for an apparent muscle injury to his right leg. The match was stopped for about 15 minutes shortly after Yamal converted the penalty because a fan had to be attended by doctors in the stands.

Madrid had moved within six points of the lead with a 2-1 home win against Alaves on Tuesday.

There are six rounds left. **Atletico's slump** Atletico Madrid's league struggles continued with a 3-2 loss at Elche, its fourth-consecutive match without a victory in the competition.

The visitors were a man down from the 30th after Thiago Almada was sent off for grabbing an opponent inside

YAMAL TO MISS REST OF SEASON DUE TO INJURY, EYES FIFA WORLD CUP COMEBACK
JOAO CANELO REPLACED IN THE 24TH MINUTE FOR AN APPARENT MUSCLE INJURY TO HIS RIGHT LEG

the area. It was Atletico's first match since losing the Copa del Rey final to Real Sociedad in a penalty shootout. Before that, Diego Simeone's team had eliminated Barcelona in the quarterfinals of the Champions League.

Atletico has only one win in its last eight matches in all competitions - 2-0 at Barcelona in the first leg. It advanced to the semifinals despite a 2-1 loss at home.

Andre Silva scored twice for Elche, including the 75th-minute winner. He had already converted a first-half penalty caused by Almada's foul.

Elche is out of the relegation zone with the victory, its third in four matches. Sociedad's Copa celebrations were marred by a 1-0 loss to visiting Getafe, which moved into sixth place with its seventh win in 10 matches.

Odisha Roll Ball team departs



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 23: The Odisha State Senior Boys Roll Ball Team has departed for Shillong, Meghalaya, to participate in the National East Zone Roll Ball Championship scheduled for April 24-25, 2026. The team left with high hopes and strong determination to perform well and represent the state with pride at the zonal level competition.

A formal send-off and felicitation ceremony was organized prior to their departure. The event was graced by Director of Sports Dr. Yeddula Vijay, IAS, along with Administrator-cum-Additional Secretary Shri Bijay Kumar Swain, OAS, Odisha Roll Ball Association

founder Shri Partha Sarathi Jena also present, encouraging the players and wishing them success in the tournament.

The squad will be led by captain Prithviraj Aryan Jena, with Kautav Pattnaik serving as vice-captain. The team comprises a balanced mix of experienced and emerging players, including Swastik Praharaj and Kamal Kumar Das as goalkeepers, along with Ansuman Patra, Sai Sriyanshu Rout, Ankit Nayak, Rajeev Sahoo, Pratik Arnav Jena, Ayush Jena, and Arman Subudhi.

With a strong lineup and dedicated leadership, the Odisha team aims to deliver an impressive performance in Shillong and make their mark in the East Zone championship.

Olympic cricket coming to Knight Riders home

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Los Angeles, April 23: ICC CEO Sanjog Gupta Thursday termed the "ground breaking" of the cricket venue for the 2028 Olympics as the fulfilment of a long awaited "promise", noting that the facility, which also serves as the home ground of the Los Angeles Knight Riders, will bring the sport to the global showpiece.

"This is a moment in history because what we are breaking ground on today is not simply a cricket field. We are breaking ground on a promise. A promise that took 128 years to keep," Gupta said.

Gupta was speaking at the ground breaking ceremony of the venue for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics. Gupta said cricket's return to the Olympics after more than a century marked recognition of the sport's global appeal, following the International Olympic Committee

(IOC) approving its inclusion in the Los Angeles Games.

"That's how long the world's second most popular sport, a game played and passionately followed by more than 2.5 billion people, has been missing from the Olympic stage.

"When the International Olympic Committee formally approved cricket's inclusion in the Los Angeles 2028 Games, it wasn't just a scheduling announcement. It was a recognition that the Olympics should reflect the sports that billions of people love," he said.

"The International Cricket Council humbly accepted that recognition with our full commitment."

Cricket returns to the Olympics for the first time since 1900. ICC chairman Jay Shah welcomed the development and said, "These are very exciting times for the game of cricket as it makes giant strides in establishing itself as a global sport.



SANJOG GUPTA | CEO, ICC

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"Our focus has been on expanding the footprint of cricket and being part of the Olympic movement is something that brings both pride and dreams with it. "The groundbreaking marks an important milestone

in cricket's return to the Olympics and is a proud moment for all ICC Members and stakeholders worldwide. We're confident this venue will take centre-stage during the Games and leave a legacy for cricket in the USA."