



Sam's journey

Actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu offers a glimpse into her evolving mindset and life journey

LEISURE | P2



Ceasefire violation

Israeli military expands strikes into eastern Lebanon, escalating hostilities despite a standing ceasefire agreement

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Historic deal

Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd will acquire US-based Organon & Co in one of the largest acquisitions by Indian firms overseas

BUSINESS | P11



Glory on tracks

India's Johann Emmanuel makes history, winning Qatar Superstock 600 title with dominant double victory

SPORTS | P12

Four of Mumbai family die after eating watermelon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 27: A couple and their two minor daughters died due to suspected food poisoning from eating watermelon following a family get-together at their home in south Mumbai, police said on Monday.

The victims, Abdullah (40), his wife Nasrin (35), and daughters Zainab (13) and Ayesha (16), reportedly fell ill shortly after a family get-together they hosted at their JJ Marg residence on April 25, an official said.

The family consumed a main course of 'chicken pulav' along with five other guests, and once the visitors left, they consumed watermelon and began experiencing vomiting and giddiness, he said.

The official said that the couple and the children were first rushed to a private hospital, but as their condition worsened, they were shifted to JJ Hospi-



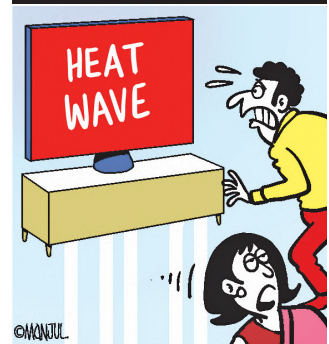
tal, where all succumbed on Sunday.

Abdullah, the head of the family, was the last to die around 10.30 pm on Sunday.

Prima facie, it appears to be a case of food poisoning from the watermelon, as those who ate only the 'pulav' did not face any health issues, the official said.

A post-mortem was conducted, and the histopathology report is awaited to confirm the cause of death, he said, adding that a case of accidental death has been registered and a further probe is underway.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Just a few more days... On May 4, all that heat will cool off



RISKY RITUAL: A performer blows fire during a religious procession in Ajmer, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Iran offers to reopen Hormuz on conditions

The latest proposal by Iran to ease tensions by reopening the Strait of Hormuz in exchange for relief from US economic pressure has generated cautious optimism worldwide. While it could stabilise energy markets and reduce immediate conflict risks, key issues, especially Tehran's nuclear programme, remain unresolved

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cairo, April 27: Iran has offered to end its chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz in exchange for the US lifting its blockade on the country and an end to the war, while proposing that discussions on the larger question of its nuclear program would come in a later phase, two regional officials said Monday.

US President Donald Trump seems unlikely to accept the offer, which was passed to the Americans by Pakistan and would leave unresolved the disagreements that led the US and Israel to go to war Feb 28.

With a fragile ceasefire in



place, the US and Iran are locked in a standoff over the strait, through which a fifth of the world's traded oil and gas passes in peacetime. The US blockade is designed to prevent Iran from selling its oil, depriving it of crucial revenue while also potentially creating a situation where Tehran has to shut off production because it has nowhere to store the oil.

The strait's closure, meanwhile, has put pressure on Trump, as oil and gasoline prices

have skyrocketed ahead of crucial midterm elections, and it has pressured his Gulf allies, which use the waterway to export their oil and gas.

The closure has also had far-reaching effects throughout the world economy, raising the price of fertilizer, food and other basic goods. The proposal would push off negotiations on Iran's nuclear program to a later date. Trump said one of the major reasons he went to war was to deny Iran the ability to

develop nuclear weapons.

The two officials, who had knowledge of the proposal, spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the closed-door negotiations between Iranian and Pakistani officials this weekend. The Axios news outlet first reported Iran's proposal.

It came as Iran's foreign minister visited Russia, which has long been a key backer of Tehran. It's unclear what, if any, assistance Moscow might offer now. P10

5 dead, 5 critically injured in Karanjia road mishaps

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada/Karanjia, April 27: Five persons were killed and five others critically injured in two separate road mishaps near Karanjia in Mayurbhanj district Monday, police said.

In one incident, a scooter and a Mahindra Scorpio SUV collided head-on near Baunshashol on National Highway 220 under Karanjia police limits. The SUV, reportedly speeding and heading from Jharkhand towards Ghatgaon for a visit to the Tarini temple, rammed the scooter.

A couple, identified as Santosh Nayak, 48, and his wife Kabita, 45, of nearby Pantha area, died on the spot while returning home from Karanjia hospital. Five occupants of the SUV were critically injured. Both vehicles were badly damaged. Locals rescued the injured persons and admitted them to a nearby hospital.

In another incident, three occupants of a car were killed after it collided a private bus near Kadadiha on National Highway 53, connecting Karanjia and Thakurmunda. The car was traveling from Dharmasala in Jajpur district to Rairangpur, while the bus



was coming from Karanjia towards Udala.

The deceased were identified as Neelamani Sahu of Chandikhole, and Mibu Bala and Pradeep Balasamanta of Dharmasala in Jajpur district.

Karanjia police, led by SDPO Nabakrishna Nayak, reached the spot and launched an investigation. Forest and Environment Minister Ganeshwar Ram Singh Khuntia also visited the mishap site and facilitated the transfer of the injured persons to the hospital.

India, New Zealand ink FTA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: India and New Zealand Monday inked a free trade agreement (FTA), aimed at boosting two-way commerce and investments.

The pact was signed by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and visiting New Zealand's Trade and Investment Minister Todd McClay.

The FTA provides duty-free access for 100 per cent of India's exports to New Zealand, covering all tariff lines or produce categories, and is expected to significantly boost MSMEs and employment by enhancing competitiveness in labour-intensive sectors such as textiles, apparel, leather, footwear, gems and jewellery, engineering goods, and processed foods.

Earlier, New Zealand main-

tained peak tariffs of up to 10 per cent on key Indian exports, like ceramics, carpets, automobiles, and auto components.

With zero-duty market access from entry into force as New Zealand's other trade partners, Indian products will be fully competitive in that country, enjoying a level playing field.

Significantly, India also secured duty-free inputs for its manufacturing sector, including wooden logs, coking coal, and waste and scraps of metals, lowering production costs and enhancing the global competitiveness of the Indian industry.

India has offered tariff liberalisation on 70.03 per cent of tariff lines covering 95 per cent of bilateral trade value, while keeping 29.97 per cent of tariff lines excluded to protect India's sensitive sectors. P11

12,000-yr-old fossil bed discovered in TN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: A fossil bed belonging to the middle-to-late Holocene period, approximately 8,000 to 12,000 years ago, was discovered at Panaiyur area in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi district, Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav said Monday.

The site was revealed after torrential rains in 2023, and subsequently, the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) conducted a survey at the spot, he said.

"The assessment confirms a newly discovered fossil bed dating back to the Holocene period (8,000-12,000 years ago), which significantly enriches the Quaternary fossil record of India. This discovery is important be-

cause it helps us better understand India's ancient wildlife, environment, and climate," the Environment minister said in a post on X.

He also stated that the Environment Ministry commended ZSI's swift and exemplary scientific response in safeguarding India's natural heritage.

Scientists involved in the study say the fossils could provide valuable insights into the type of species that once inhabited the region, as well as the environmental conditions that prevailed during the late Holocene.

By analysing the fossil composition, researchers can determine whether the area was once dominated by forests, grasslands, or even influenced



by marine conditions. The discovery is particularly significant because fossil

records from this period in southern India remain relatively underexplored.

Experts believe the newly identified site could help fill critical gaps in understanding how ecosystems in the region responded to past climate changes.

Researchers also highlighted that these findings point to the role of natural events, such as heavy rainfall, in uncovering hidden geological treasures. However, they stressed the importance of protecting these sites from damage, as exposed fossils can deteriorate quickly if not preserved properly.

The Thoothukudi fossil bed is expected to undergo further scientific analysis, including detailed excavation and dating studies, to build a clearer picture of the region's ancient past.

leisure



MATTHEW LILLARD ON HOLLYWOOD RETURN

Matthew Lillard believes nostalgia has played a major role in his recent Hollywood comeback. The actor, known for playing Shaggy in the live-action *Scooby-Doo* films, said audiences and studios are looking back at earlier pop culture moments with fresh interest

HUDSON GETS REAL ABOUT AWARDS SEASON BURNOUT

Kate Hudson took a much-needed break after the Oscars buzz, stepping away from the spotlight following her Best Actress nomination for *Song Sung Blue*. After awards season ended, she prioritised family, spending spring break with her kids and shutting down work completely to reset and enjoy uninterrupted time together



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ARIES
A plain Jane day. Work goes on as usual, and there is progress. But as Ganesh says, it's an ordinary day. Hum, whistle, doodle, and sip your green tea. While day dreaming, start planning your dream home. After all, that's where the first plan takes shape.

TAURUS
This is a bright, rosy day for students and scholars, particular who are engaged in, or are looking forward to higher studies, specializing in a particular professional stream. This a great day for making plans for higher studies abroad. Do not miss this opportunity. Plans made today are likely to materialize.

GEMINI
The day will be dedicated to spending quality time with children, predicts Ganesh. You will be overloaded with household responsibilities and will find it tough to deal with them. However, you will manage to do well and will be satisfied with the outcome. Avoid getting too sentimental if you are a parent; also, you may have to act tough with your kids, suggests Ganesh.

CANCER
Today, it will be all about finding your comfort zone, and spending the day there. You are likely to spend most of the day with your close friends. Your smooth demeanour will help you breeze through all business deals. The opposite sex may find you irresistible.

LEO
Most battles are fought and won inside our head. Hence, Ganesh urges you to maintain a positive outlook today. The stars grant you the ability to double your efforts, and allow your imagination to take flight and chart new routes to success. This should curb your frustration of the last few days.

VIRGO
You will charm people with your flexibility of thought and willingness to adjust today. Those under the spell of love will see an unexpected turn of events; but don't panic, as things will eventually work out in your favour. Some quality family time is also on the cards.

LIBRA
Ganesh has a feeling that today may not be the best day to undertake any government dealings. Call it red-tapism, or bureaucratic procrastination, but it is highly unlikely that such tasks shall be fruitful today. This may test your patience, and in doing so, bring out your competency and efficiency to the fore, especially if you happen to be a public servant. Touché!

SCORPIO
It is about time you learn to deal with frustration in a more healthy manner. The right choice is always the hardest to make. Do not let sentiments sway you into hasty choices because they may feel right, but might also be extremely impractical.

SAGITTARIUS
You will enjoy the magic of the Midas touch today, feels Ganesh. In business, sheer brilliance will help you derive the best possible results in productivity and clinching new contracts. Your approach, in general, will be methodical, disciplined and systematic for most part of the day.

CAPRICORN
You have always been generous by nature, but your benevolent attitude will do you no good, warns Ganesh. People will try, almost blatantly, to take advantage of you, and for once, you will feel that being crafty and unrelenting would have helped kept those blood-sucking leeches at bay.

AQUARIUS
You zoom in on research and development today. Your fabulous work speaks volumes and your commitment pays off. You're keen to play Romeo today, and all your gimmicks and surprises will work wonders! Love on, says Ganesh.

PISCES
You set impeccable standards for yourself, but what keeps your subordinates from grumbling about it is the efforts you make to help them achieve perfection in their endeavours, says Ganesh. You inspire, they aspire.

Samantha on self-growth

Hyderabad: Samantha Ruth Prabhu is embracing reflection and growth as she turns 39, sharing a deeply personal note ahead of her birthday through the viral "What Stayed, What Left" trend. Posting a series of striking images, the actress offered a glimpse into her evolving mindset and life journey.

She began by revisiting her early days, writing that what stayed was her love for her craft and her relentless drive, while what left was the need to wait to be chosen. The note reflected her growing independence and confidence in shaping her own path.

Opening up about setbacks, Samantha shared that when life did not go as planned, she held on to her instincts but let go of the illusion of control. This shift, she explained, helped her accept uncertainty and trust herself more deeply.

On discovering her voice, she revealed that her truth remained constant, while she shed the habit of holding back. Today, she stands grounded in purpose, having left behind the urgency and rush that once defined her.

On the personal front, Samantha married filmmaker Raj Nidimoru in December 2025. Professionally, she is now gearing up for the release of her upcoming film *Maa Itni Bangaaram*, directed by Nandini Reddy, set to hit screens May 15, 2026.

AGENCIES



Rasha's fitness mantra

Mumbai: Rasha Thadani is steadily building her own identity, and for her, dance lies at the core of both fitness and mental well-being. While she carries forward a rich legacy from Raveena Tandon, Rasha views dance not merely as performance, but as a discipline that nurtures the body and mind alike.

Ahead of International Dance Day, the young actor shared that she considers dance her "favourite sport," emphasising that movement itself is the foundation of fitness. For her, staying active is not limited to the gym; instead, it is about blending structured workouts with expressive movement. Whether rehearsing or simply dancing for joy, she finds it both physically engaging and emotionally uplifting.

Rasha explained that her understanding of fitness deepened once she began working. The demands of shoots, performances, and constant public appearances pushed her to prioritise overall well-being. She believes fitness goes beyond aesthetics; it is about strength, stamina and maintaining mental balance in a high-pressure environment.

Dance, in this journey, becomes her anchor. It allows her to release stress, stay energised and remain connected to herself, making it an essential part of her routine rather than just a skill or hobby.

AGENCIES



Characters that attract Raashii

Mumbai: Actress Raashii Khanna has an exciting filmography to her credit with interesting roles in both Bollywood and the South film industry.

Monday, Raashii opened up through her social media post about the kind of characters she is drawn to.

The *Farzi* actress mentioned in the caption of her Instagram update that she finds herself pulled towards the characters who seem to be all sorted from the outside, but are burdened by something much heavier underneath.

"I have always been drawn to characters who look like they are holding it together but are carrying something much heavier underneath. Some things don't leave you. They just change the way you move. Coming soon! (sic)," Raashii penned on the photo-sharing app.

Coming to her professional commitments, Raashii will soon be seen playing a crucial role in the forthcoming OTT series *Lukkhe*, slated to reach the audience on Prime Video May 8.

Apart from Raashii, Rapper King, Lakshvir Singh Saran, Nakul Roshan Sahdev, Kritika Bharadwaj, Shivankit Parihar, Yograj Singh and Ayesha Raza Mishra have also been roped in for significant roles in the drama.

Set against the backdrop of Chandigarh, where rap culture, ambition and crime all come together, *Lukkhe* will share the gripping tale of revenge and redemption.

IAN5

Mumbai: Actress Preity Zinta, who is currently riding high on the success of her team, the Punjab Kings' success at the IPL, has spoken about how she doesn't want to be tagged as a "trophy".

Preity Monday treated her fans and followers on X, formerly called Twitter, for a question and answer session titled "#pzchat".

A user asked Preity if she had seen the "banger" tweet, which read: "There's a reason why she hasn't won a trophy cuz she is the trophy."

To which, Preity sweetly replied: "Thank you that's very sweet, but honestly speaking, no woman wants to be a trophy. Trophy's are owned women are not! Trophies are kept in glass cupboards and a women's place is in your life & in your heart Filmy question ke liye filmy answer for you Ting!"

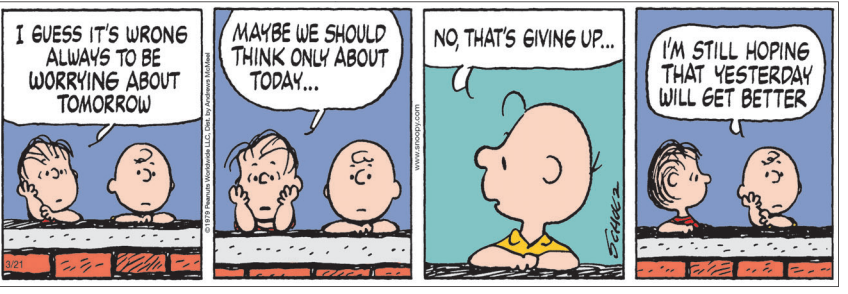
Another user then asked her: "What's one thing that stood out about your characters to say yes to signing Vibe & Lahore 1947? #pzchat."

Responding to the question, Preity said: "I always wanted to do a period film, that's why I signed Lahore 1947, and of course, it's with my one of my favourite directors, Raj Kumar Santoshi and Sunny (Deol) is always a pleasure to work with."

IAN5

'No woman wants to be a trophy'

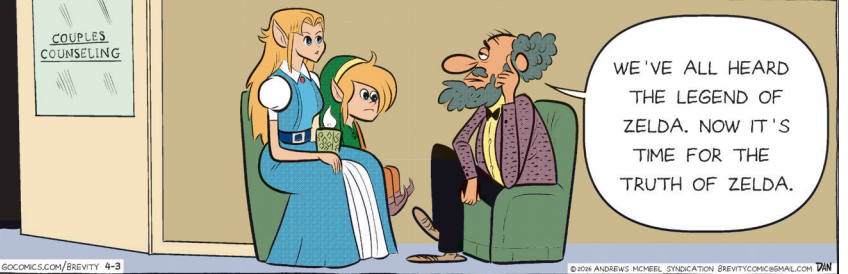
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

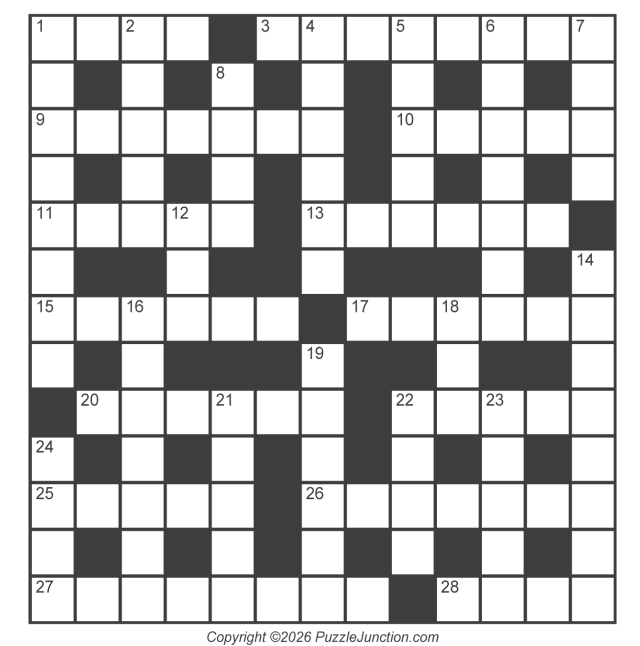


BREVITY



FUN POST

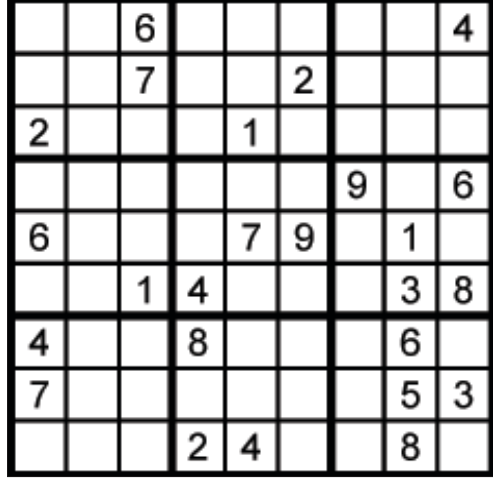
CROSSWORD



- Across
- 1 Celestial bear
 - 3 Intuitive feeling
 - 9 Mixer
 - 10 Toast maker
 - 11 Vacuous
 - 13 Soothsayer
 - 15 Hardy's chum
 - 17 Plaster of Paris
 - 20 Buddha, e.g.
 - 22 Corolla part
 - 25 Irascible
 - 26 Mongoose-like animal
 - 27 Delirium
 - 28 Orpheus's instrument
 - 12 Road crew supply
 - 14 Brunch order
 - 16 James Joyce novel
 - 18 Cobbler
 - 19 Seafood entree
 - 21 Culinary herb
 - 22 "Not guilty," e.g.
 - 23 Hungarian wine
 - 24 Eczema symptom
- Down
- 1 London accessory
 - 2 Blind followers
 - 4 Constrictive
 - 5 Leg bone
 - 6 Sewing machine parts
 - 7 Shipshape
 - 8 Vortex

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



COOLING OFF: A boy surfs on a hot summer day at Versova Beach, in Mumbai, Monday

PLEA AGAINST SIR EXCLUSION IN BENGAL

Accord out-of-turn hearing: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: The Supreme Court (SC) Monday asked the appellate tribunal to accord out-of-turn hearing and decide an appeal filed by a man challenging the deletion of his name from the voter list after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in West Bengal (WB).

A bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi passed the order while hearing the plea seeking a direction for restoration of the petitioner's name in the electoral roll of Diamond Harbour constituency in the poll-bound state.

While the first phase of the WB Assembly polls was held April 23, the second phase is scheduled April 29. The votes will be counted May 4.

"The petitioner, being aggrieved by his exclusion from the voter list in the SIR process, is said to have already approached the appellate tribunal on April 2, 2026. We dis-



pose of the instant writ petition with a request to the appellate tribunal to accord out-of-turn hearing and decide the petitioner's appeal at the earliest," the bench said.

On April 24, the SC asked the appellate tribunals to give out-of-turn hearing to those who make out a case of urgent hearing against deletion from electoral rolls after the SIR in WB.

The bench was then hearing a batch of petitions, including

the one filed by CM Mamata Banerjee, related to the SIR in the state.

Earlier, the SC ordered that persons, whose pleas were allowed by the appellate tribunals before April 21 or 27, must be permitted to vote in the first or second phase of Assembly elections, respectively.

It, however, had clarified that mere pendency of appeal before the appellate tribunals would not give anyone a right to vote.

Approximately 700 judicial officers from WB and neighbouring Odisha and Jharkhand were deployed to deal with around 60 lakh claims and objections of those who were deleted from voter lists during the SIR in the state.

Later, the Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court, at the direction of the SC, set up as many as 19 tribunals headed by former HC chief justices and judges to decide appeals against deletion of names from the voter lists.

Denied withdrawal, man brings sister's remains to bank

PNN & AGENCIES

Patana, April 27: In an incident that has highlighted the lack of clear and accessible communication for underprivileged customers navigating the complexities of the banking system, a 50-year-old tribal man brought the skeletal remains of his sister to a bank branch in Malipasi village under Patana block in Keonjhar Monday, after being repeatedly denied permission to withdraw money from her account.

Reports said that Jitu Munda of Dianali Chaturisahi under Erndei gram panchayat had been trying to withdraw ₹19,300 from the account of his sister, Kala Munda, maintained at the Malipasi branch of Odisha Grambank (OGB). Kala, 56, died January 26, 2026, and was buried in accordance with local customs. However, bank officials refused to release the funds, stating that the account holder has died, and asked Jitu to produce a death certificate and other documents as proof of her demise. Being illiterate and unfamiliar with banking procedures, Jitu failed to understand the requirements and returned disappointed on multiple occasions.

A hapless Jitu exhumed Kala's skeletal remains and carried them in a sack on his shoulder for 4 km to the bank in an attempt to prove her death to officials. "I have gone to the bank several times, and the staff there told me to bring the account holder to withdraw the money. Though I told them that she had died, they did not listen and insisted on bringing her to the bank. Out of frustration, I



dug up the grave and brought her skeleton as proof," Jitu told reporters.

Patana IIC Kiran Prasad Sahu, who reached the bank after receiving information about the incident, said, "Jitu is an illiterate tribal man. He does not understand what a legal heir or nominee is. The bank officials failed to properly explain the procedure for withdrawing money from a deceased person's account."

Following the incident, the police assured Jitu that they would facilitate the withdrawal of the money from his sister's account. The skeletal remains were later reburied at the graveyard in the presence of police.

Block Development Officer Manas Dandapat said he had not been approached regarding the legal heir certificate for the late Kala Munda. "I came to know about the matter only today. We will see what can be done to resolve the issue," he said.

Meanwhile, bank sources said that the nominee listed in Kala's account has also died, and Jitu is the sole claimant to the money.

After the incident, the local administration directed bank officials to resolve the issue at the earliest.

BJD urges Speaker to disqualify 8 MLAs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 27: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Monday urged Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy to disqualify eight suspended MLAs citing that they have indulged in anti-party activities and also violated the decision of the party during and after the recently held Rajya Sabha elections.

A delegation of the party MLAs led by Opposition Chief Whip Pramila Mallik met the Speaker at her chamber on the Assembly premises and submitted a petition.

"We have urged the Speaker to disqualify the membership of the eight MLAs who openly acted against the party's whip," Mallik told reporters.

These eight MLAs had cross-voted in favour of BJP-supported Independent candidate Dilip Ray in Rajya Sabha elections, leading to his victory in the biennial polls March 16, she said.

"Since the eight MLAs on their own disassociated from the party, they should be disqualified according to the provisions of the law. These legislators should either resign from their Assembly seats or face removal," Mallik said, adding that if they truly believe they are enjoying public support, they should contest byelections.

Stating that all eight lawmakers were elected to the Assembly by using the party symbol, Mallik said they should seek a fresh mandate and get elected without the BJD's conch symbol.

Notably, a total of 11 MLAs, eight from BJD and three from Congress, had cross-voted in the RS elections, following which the demand of their disqualification is being made by two parties. Both the parties have suspended them on charge of anti-party activities. Before suspending the MLAs, the BJD had issued a show-cause notice to the six MLAs - Naba Kishore Mallick (Jayadev), Souvic Biswal (Choudwar-Cuttack), Subasini Jena (Basta), Ramakanta Bhoi (Tirtol), Chakramani Kanhar (Baliguda) and Devi Ranjan Tripathy (Banki). Later, they were placed under suspension.

The other two - Arvind Mohapatra (Patkura) and Sanatan Mahakud (Cham-pua) - were also suspended.

Discipline, infra key focus in Lingaraj panel report

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 27: The Sattwalipi Committee of Lingaraj Temple has submitted a set of recommendations focusing on discipline in rituals, strengthening the administration and repair of the sanctum sanctorum of the historic shrine.

The committee's second in-

terim report was presented to Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan. The panel, comprising Justice Durga Prasanna Choudhury as chairman and Professor Prafulla Kumar Mishra as a member, has put forward around 16 key proposals.

The recommendations focus on ensuring discipline in temple rituals and improving overall management.

In a first, AI image shows Pompeii victim's survival bid

REUTERS

Rome, April 27: Archaeologists in Italy's Pompeii have for the first time used artificial intelligence (AI) to reconstruct the appearance of one of the victims of the volcanic eruption that destroyed the ancient Roman city nearly 2,000 years ago.

The AI-generated image, released by the Pompeii Archaeological Park Monday, shows a man ducking for cover while holding a large bowl over his head, with a flaming Mount Vesuvius in the background.

It is based on the recent discovery of the remains of a male adult, just outside one of the southern gates of the city, which were lying next to a terracotta mortar that he



Pompeii AI reconstruction shows a man's final attempt to survive the Vesuvius eruption

presumably used as protection. Archaeologists believe that the man was killed by a shower of volcanic rocks, in the early hours of the second day of the eruption, while trying to escape towards the sea. He was also carrying a lamp

and 10 bronze coins, the park said. "If used well, artificial intelligence can contribute to a renewal of classical studies, illustrating the classical world in a more immersive way," the head of the archaeological park, Gabriel Zuchtriegel, said in a statement.

The once-thriving city of Pompeii, about 25 kilometres (15 miles) south-east of Naples, was buried in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79, preserving buildings, objects and graffiti under metres of ash.

Rediscovered in the 18th century, it is now one of the world's most significant archaeological sites, and one of the most popular tourist sites in Italy, with 4.3 million visitors in 2024, according to the latest statistics.

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Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone

No. 10001/86/2627

ଅଶୁଭାତ ସତର୍କତା

ଲକ୍ଷଣ

- ପ୍ରବଳ ଝାଳ ବୋହିବା
- ମୁଣ୍ଡ ବୁଲାଇ ଅନ୍ଧାର ଦିଶିବା ଓ ବାନ୍ତି ଲାଗିବା
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- ଚର୍ମ ଶୁଷ୍କ, ଲାଲ ଓ ଉତ୍ତପ୍ତ ହେବା
- ଅଚେତ ହେବା କିମ୍ବା ବାତ ମାରିବା

ସତର୍କତା

- ଦିନ ୧୧ଟା ରୁ ୩ଟା ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଖରା ତାତି ଅଧିକ ଥାଏ। ଏହି ସମୟ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ବାହାରକୁ ଯାଆନ୍ତୁ ନାହିଁ। ଜରୁରୀ କାମ ଥିଲେ ବାହାରକୁ ଯିବା ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଯଥେଷ୍ଟ ପାଣି ପିଅନ୍ତୁ ଓ ସାଥରେ ଛତା, ଚପଲ ଓ ପିଇବା ପାଣି ନିଅନ୍ତୁ
- ଧଳା ରଙ୍ଗର ଢିଲା ପୋଷାକ, ଛତା ଓ ଜୋତା ବ୍ୟବହାର କରନ୍ତୁ
- ମଝିରେ ମଝିରେ ଛାଇରେ ବିଶ୍ରାମ ନିଅନ୍ତୁ
- ଖରାରେ କଠିନ ପରିଶ୍ରମ କରନ୍ତୁ ନାହିଁ। ଅଧିକ ଦୂର ଚାଲନ୍ତୁ ନାହିଁ
- କୌଣସି ପ୍ରକାର ମାଦକ ଦ୍ରବ୍ୟ ସେବନ କରନ୍ତୁ ନାହିଁ

ପ୍ରତିକାର

- ଅଶୁଭାତ ଆକ୍ରାନ୍ତକୁ ଖୋଲା ଓ ଥଣ୍ଡା ଯାଗାକୁ ନେଇଯାଆନ୍ତୁ, ଓ.ଆର.ଏସ୍./ ଚିନି ଲୁଣ ସର୍ବତ୍ର/ ସାବାପାଣି ପିଆନ୍ତୁ
- ପୋଷାକ ଯଥାସମ୍ଭବ ଖୋଲି ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ
- ମୁଣ୍ଡ ଧୋଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ, ଓଦା କପଡ଼ାରେ ପୋଛନ୍ତୁ
- ରୋଗୀକୁ ପଖା/ କୁଲର/ ଏସି ପବନରେ ଶୁଆଇ ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ ଓ ପାଣି ସିଞ୍ଚନ କରନ୍ତୁ
- ଅବସ୍ଥାରେ ଉନ୍ନତ ନହେଲେ ତୁରନ୍ତ ଡାକ୍ତରଖାନା ନେଇ ଚିକିତ୍ସା କରାନ୍ତୁ

ବୟସ୍କ ତଥା ଅସୁସ୍ଥ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ଏବଂ ଗର୍ଭବତୀ ମହିଳାଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଅଶୁଭାତର ଆଗଙ୍କା ଅଧିକ

ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଓ ପରିବାର କଲ୍ୟାଣ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର

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SERC staff protest layoffs, seek dues

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 27: As many as 198 outsourcing employees of the 112 State Emergency Response Centre (SERC) staged a protest at Kaushal Bhawan here Monday after allegedly being laid off without prior notice following the end of their contract.

The employees alleged that when they reported for duty, they were informed that their services had been terminated as their contractual tenure had expired.

According to the employees, they were hired under an outsourcing arrangement and had been serving for the past five years. As their tenure ended Sunday, they alleged they were removed from service without any prior notice from the department. After learning of the development, the employees tried to speak with 112 Control Room Administrative Officer Deepak Nayak, but he allegedly refused to hold discussions with them.

"We were laid off without any notice. We have families and have been working here for the last five years. Our salaries for the past two months are also pending. We want our dues to be cleared and our contracts



- Employees say they were engaged under an outsourcing arrangement and had been serving for the past five years
- They allege they were removed from service Sunday after their tenure ended, without any prior notice from the department
- Protesters warned of intensifying their agitation if their demands are not met

renewed," said one of the protesters, Kisan Chand.

Another agitator, Laxmipriya Sahoo, said, "Our job period has ended, but we were not given any prior notice before termination. We were also denied entry into the building to collect our belongings. We need justice and renewal of our jobs."

The employees alleged that a new agency has been engaged for the service along with a fresh batch of workers to replace them.

It may be noted that the employees had staged a similar protest April 11, pressing a

10-point charter of demands that included timely monthly salary disbursement, wage revision from ₹12,000 to ₹30,000, regular deposit of EPF and ESI contributions, initiation of job regularisation, reinstatement of employees dismissed over the past year, and improved shift timings with an end to workplace harassment.

The employees have warned of intensifying the agitation if their demands are not met. The protest has also raised concerns over possible disruption of emergency response services across the state.

Man arrested for illegal LPG trade

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 27: Chandrasekharpur police arrested a man from the Chunukoli slum area for allegedly illegally selling LPG cylinders at ₹3,000 to 3,500 each, officials said Monday.

The accused has been identified as Manoj Kumar Sahu, a resident of Cuttack.

According to police, the accused allegedly procured LPG cylinders from people by paying them ₹500 as commission and later sold the cylinders at inflated prices.

Police seized 11 filled LPG cylinders and eight empty cylinders from his possession. They also recovered several gas books and receipts during the raid. Police said Manoj had earlier worked as a gas delivery agent manager and allegedly procured gas service books from customers.

"We have seized the cylinders from his possession. He used to purchase them for around ₹1,800 and sell them at inflated prices ranging from ₹3,000 to ₹3,500 each. We have also seized the gas-laden vehicle and arrested the accused," said Zone-6 ACP Manas Ranjan Pradhan.

Mangrove edu takes root in coastal schools

POST NEWS NETWORK

Astaranga, April 27: A school-level awareness programme on mangroves and coastal ecology was organised recently in the Devi River Mouth region of Puri district, with participation of 62 students from wetland- and mangrove-dependent communities.

Held at Jhadling Upper Primary School and nearby institutions, the one-day programme featured classroom sessions and interactive activities. Using illustrated materials, facilitators explained how mangroves thrive in saline coastal zones, how their specialised root systems stabilise shorelines, and how they help reduce the impact of cyclones, tidal surges and erosion.

Students were introduced to the biodiversity sustained by mangroves—fish, crabs, birds and reptiles—and their role in supporting local livelihoods such as fishing and resource collection. Discussions also focused on threats such as plastic pollution, habitat degradation and changing coastal conditions. Odisha Paryavaran Sanrakshan Abhiyan (OPSA)



Managing Trustee and coastal youth leader Soumya Ranjan Biswal sensitised students to the ecological and protective role of mangroves, linking conservation with community well-being.

Essay writing, drawing competitions and student presentations were also held during the programme, with teachers noting active participation and improved awareness of local environmental issues.

The programme is being implemented by OPSA in partnership with Hughes Systique Private Ltd under its CSR initiative, with a focus on awareness-build-

ing, behavioural change and community participation.

The broader "Million Mangroves by 2030" mission, spearheaded by OPSA in collaboration with Odia daily Dharitri and English daily OrissaPOST, is progressing through sustained CSR partnerships, public engagement and community involvement.

In a region frequently exposed to cyclones and coastal changes, such initiatives highlight how early environmental awareness among students can lead to wider community action for protecting fragile mangrove ecosystems.

KIIT signs pact with Army for edu support

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 27: KIIT Deemed to be University (KIIT-DU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Army to provide higher education opportunities to serving and retired Army personnel, along with their wards, in engineering and medical programmes.

The MoU was formalised between Brigadier Thakur Mayank Sinha, Brigadier Welfare, Army Headquarters, representing the Indian Army, and KIIT-DU Vice Chancellor Saranjit Singh in Bhubaneswar.



The agreement provides a 50 per cent concession in tuition fees for serving and retired Indian Army personnel and their wards for all courses other than medical programmes, and a 10 per cent concession for medical courses. In addition, wards of Indian Army personnel who attained Veergati (Martyrdom) will receive a 100 per cent tuition fee scholarship for all programmes except Medical Science and Dental Science.

For admission to Medical and Dental Science programmes, wards must fulfil NEET eligibility criteria. For all other courses, Army personnel and their wards must qualify through the KIIT Entrance Examination (KIITEE).

Speaking on the occasion, Registrar Jnyana Ranjan Mohanty welcomed the distinguished guests to the MoU signing ceremony. Vice Chancellor Singh said the prime objective of the agreement is to ensure quality education and financial support for the wards of Indian Army personnel. Brigadier Sinha appreciated the infrastructure and facilities provided by KIIT and KISS, and thanked founder Achyuta Samanta for recognising the contribution of Indian Army personnel in nation-building and extending the concessions.

CM lauds Japan envoy for spotlighting dalma

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 27: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday praised, Japan's Ambassador to India Ono Keiichi for highlighting state's staple food dalma on his social media platform.

Ono had earlier, in a post on X, stated, "Enjoyed #Dalma in #Odisha. Delicious, and a wonderful reflection of Odisha's rich culinary culture! He also attached three pictures while eating dalma."

During his visit April 24 to Sambalpur, where JSW Group and Japan's JFE Steel Corporation formalised a joint venture to invest over ₹32,000 crore for the expansion of a steel project in Sambalpur, Ono Keiichi was offered dalma in the meal.

He expressed appreciation for Odia cuisine and highlighted the state's vibrant food culture after relishing a traditional meal featuring rice and dalma - a wholesome signature dish prepared with lentils, vegetables, and subtle spices that embodies the region's culinary traditions.

The diplomat's social media post drew attention and reflected the envoy's genuine fondness for local flavours. His



earlier posts have also shown appreciation for other Odia delicacies, like 'chhena poda', reflecting a personal interest in Indian regional cuisines.

While appreciating the guest's gesture, Majhi said, "Delighted to see you enjoying the flavours of Odisha, Ambassador Ono San! Dalma is the heart of our kitchen, and we are honoured by your kind words. May our bond continue to grow over many more such meals. Ono San, Arigatou Gozaimasu!"

The CMO in a release said that traditional Odia food was served to the Ambassador at the event in Sambalpur.

"The Ambassador was very happy with the taste of traditional Odia food. He especially liked the taste of dalma," it said.

Spl school staff seek CM nod on pending demands

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 27: Employees of Special Schools under the Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department, along with members of the Odisha Special Schools Teachers and Employees Association (OSSTEA), submitted a fresh appeal to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday, seeking immediate intervention to address their long-pending service, retirement and welfare-related issues. They also staged a protest at Lower PMG here.

OSSTEA president Suresh Chandra Debata said the memorandum urged the Chief Minister to convene a high-level meeting of all concerned departments to ensure social security and safeguard the



dignity of retired and serving staff members, who are facing severe hardship.

The representation also referred to earlier communications from the Chief Minister's Office, verbal assurances from the Chief Minister, and letters from senior ministers and officials on the issue.

Among their key demands, the employees sought amendment of the existing Grant-in-

aid (GIA) guidelines issued in 2022 in line with the Odisha Education Act, 1969, particularly regarding education for children with disabilities.

They also demanded framing and implementation of service rules for employees of 100 per cent non-government aided Special Schools, including leave, recruitment, service conditions, retirement benefits and cadre rules. They

urged that these provisions be brought at par with employees of aided schools and Madrasas under the School and Mass Education department.

The employees also sought immediate release of pension, gratuity and other retirement benefits for retired staff members, many of whom they said are facing financial distress.

They demanded clearance of pending MACP arrears, approved by the Finance department in 2017 but allegedly stuck at the departmental level for eight years, and urged abolition of the contractual system in Special Schools across the state.

Debata said employees have been serving children with visual, hearing and intellectual disabilities for decades and appealed to the Chief Minister for urgent redressal of their legitimate demands.

IGNOU Bhubaneswar to host placement drive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: The Regional Centre of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Bhubaneswar, in collaboration with RC Rairanpur and Trainguru Educare Private Ltd, will organise a campus placement drive April 30 at the IGNOU Regional Centre here. Reporting time for candidates is 9:30am. The drive is open to all undergraduate students, including diploma and ITI candidates, as well as applicants from technical and non-technical streams. It offers freshers an opportunity to enter the corporate sector and begin their professional careers. The recruiting organisation for the drive is Modine Thermal Private Ltd, a globally recognised leader in thermal management solutions. The company specialises in advanced heating and cooling technologies for automotive, industrial and commercial applications, and is known for its focus on sustainability, engineering excellence and modern manufacturing practices.

Collectors told to clear land cases by May 30

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 27: The Revenue and Disaster Management department has issued fresh instructions to all District Collectors for disposal of all pending abatement and land record correction cases by May 30. The department has also directed Collectors to submit detailed reports in the prescribed format by June 15.

In a letter to district administrations, Additional Chief Secretary Arabinda Padhee stressed the need for prompt action to update land pattas and Records of Rights (RoR) in accordance with the provisions of the Right to Fair Compensation

and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013.

The department noted that despite earlier directives, many cases related to land revenue waivers and record corrections remain pending, delaying the regular updating of land records. To clear the backlog, collectors have been asked to fix monthly targets and ensure necessary corrections through tehsildars.

As per the directive, Sub-Collectors will supervise the process, while Revenue Divisional Commissioners (RDCs) will review progress every two months. The Board of Revenue will conduct quarterly reviews

and submit consolidated reports to the department.

The government has also expressed concern that outdated records may lead to unauthorised or disputed sale of land already acquired. Collectors have therefore been directed to expedite all pending abatement proposals and carry out timely record corrections in cases recommended by Land Acquisition Officers (LAOs).

The state government said the move is aimed at ensuring transparent, efficient and accountable revenue administration through timely updating of land records and proper implementation of land acquisition procedures.

Odisha launches lifeguard training at Konark

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 27: In a unique initiative aimed at strengthening beach and water safety, a comprehensive residential lifeguard training programme was launched at the Odisha State Watermanship and Lifeguard Institute (OSWALI), Konark, with the first batch commencing Monday. The initiative marks the start of an intensive capacity-building exercise for lifeguards across the state.

The programme will be conducted in 11 continuous batches, each lasting 12 days, over nearly one and a half months. A total of 176 government and private lifeguards will be trained during this phase. The curriculum has been designed to equip participants with critical skills such as rescue techniques, CPR and first-aid, open water operations, disaster response, tourist safety protocols, and watersports safety standards.

Earlier this year, the Department of Tourism (DoT) took a major step towards positioning the state as a safe and premier adventure tourism destination by formalising strategic partnerships to strengthen wa-



ter-based tourism and safety infrastructure. In this regard, the department signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the National Institute of Water Sports (NIWS), Goa, and Odisha Fire & Emergency Services (OFES) to boost capacity building, enhance safety standards, and bring advanced technical expertise to Odisha's rapidly expanding watersports ecosystem.

The initiative forms part of a

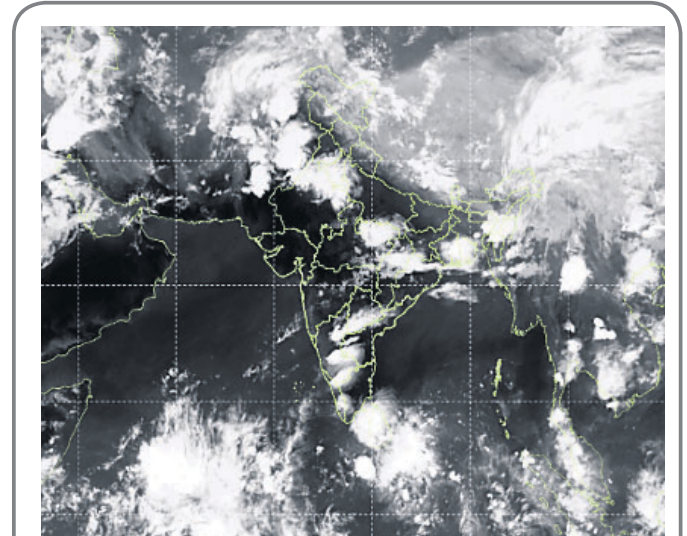
broader statewide vision to train nearly 2,000 lifeguards over the next two to three years, creating a strong and scalable safety ecosystem for Odisha's coastal and inland water tourism. The collaboration with NIWS will ensure that all training modules meet national standards and certification protocols.

To support scientific deployment and long-term planning, comprehensive mapping of

waterbodies, including their usable stretches, has already been completed across all 30 districts of the state. Based on this data, the process of preparing a district-wise pool of interested youth for lifeguard training is currently underway, enabling systematic capacity building and deployment across major tourism zones such as beaches, lakes, dams and riverfronts.

The lifeguards trained in this phase will be strategically deployed at key tourist destinations including Puri, Chandrabhaga and other prominent beaches. The continuous batch model adopted for the programme is expected to accelerate capacity building and significantly strengthen Odisha's beach and water safety network ahead of the peak tourist season.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	94.12 ↓ 0.11	SENSEX	77303.63 ↑ 639.42	GOLD	₹151,467 ↓ ₹1232
EURO	110.69 ↑ 0.37	NIFTY	24092.70 ↑ 194.75	SILVER	₹241,625 ↓ ₹3,011



WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	36.5°	36.8°	Light to moderate rain or thunderstorm likely to occur
Min Temp	27.6°	25.4°	
Humidity	80%	81%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Gyanranjan Das, S/o-Sulabh Charan Das, Vill-Patarajpur, PO/PS-Balichandrapur, Dist.-Jajpur, PIN-754205, Odisha are by this affidavit No.-279, Dt.-22.04.2026 that now onwards I shall be known as Gyana Ranjan Das for all future purposes.

Unrest over Kutrumali mines public hearing

POST NEWS NETWORK

Thumal Rampur, April 27: Tension has been mounting in western Odisha ahead of a public hearing on a proposed large-scale bauxite mining project in the Kutrumali Hills, a resource-rich region on the border of Kalahandi and Rayagada districts, after environmental clearance procedures were initiated by the state pollution regulator.

The Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB) has scheduled a public hearing for May 12 on a proposal by M/s Kalinga Alumina Limited, associated with Adani Enterprises, which plans to extract around 4 million tonnes (4.0 MTPA) of bauxite annually from the Kutrumali block and establish an 800 tonnes-per-hour (TPH) crushing unit.

The project has triggered strong opposition from local tribal and Dalit communities, who describe it as a direct assault on their "Jal-Jami-Jangal" (water, land and forest) rights and their traditional dependence on local natural resources. Residents from villages including Kutrumali, Lelingpadar, Rakhiguda and Bhikapanga, under Thumal Rampur and Kashipur tehsils have raised concerns over displacement, environmental destruction and loss of livelihoods.

Under a 2006 notification of the Ministry of Environment,



Forest and Climate Change, the public hearing is part of the mandatory environmental clearance process. However, the proposed venue and manner in which the hearing is set to be conducted have drawn sharp criticism from local communities and activists.

Instead of holding the hearing in the affected villages, the administration plans to conduct it at the block headquarters under heavy police deployment. Locals have termed the move exclusionary and undemocratic, alleging that it restricts meaningful participation and amounts to a "murder of democratic values." Community representatives further argue that mandatory Gram Sabha consent is being bypassed, with the process seen as favouring corporate interests over indigenous rights.

Environmental experts and activists warn that large-scale mining in the Kutrumali Hills could severely disrupt perennial streams originating in the

region, threatening agriculture, biodiversity and water availability in downstream areas. They also stress that the hills are ecologically sensitive and hold deep cultural and spiritual significance for indigenous communities, forming an integral part of their identity and heritage.

Police deployment is expected at the hearing venue amid concerns of protests and possible unrest. While officials have not commented on allegations of procedural bias, they maintain that the public consultation will be conducted in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements.

The issue has intensified the broader debate in the region over development versus indigenous rights, with tensions rising as both supporters and opponents prepare for the upcoming hearing. Local groups have warned that continued disregard of community concerns could lead to a larger mass movement in the coming days.

Job fraud: Ex-DHH official arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Deogarh, April 27: Police in Deogarh district have arrested a former accounts officer of the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) for allegedly cheating 12 job aspirants of ₹15.60 lakh on the promise of securing them employment, officials said.

The accused, identified as Parameswar Nayak, a former accounts manager of the district hospital and currently posted in Kandhamal district, was arrested by Adarsha police station and produced before a court. He was remanded to judicial custody after his bail plea was rejected.

According to police, Nayak allegedly collected ₹1.30 lakh each from 12 candidates, totalling ₹15.60 lakh, in July 2025, promising appointments as attendants, sweepers and supervisors at the hospital within 15 days. However, he failed to provide appointment letters and allegedly delayed the process on various pretexts.

Investigators said the accused was later transferred to Kandhamal district in November 2025 and allegedly remained unresponsive to the job aspirants. The case came to light after Lakshmi Priya Behera, a resident of Kurad village in Deogarh district, lodged a written complaint at Adarsha police station March 15.

Police registered a case under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, including provisions related to cheating and criminal breach of trust, and launched an investigation. Further investigation is underway, police said.



Rengali Canal office sealed over unpaid contractor dues

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kamakhyanagar, April 27: A commercial court in Cuttack Monday ordered the sealing of the Rengali Left Bank Canal Division office in Dhenkanal district after authorities failed to clear long-pending dues owed to a contractor.

Court officials sealed the office of the Superintendent Engineer at Kamakhyanagar in compliance with strict directions issued by the Cuttack Commercial Court.

According to reports, the contractor had undertaken canal construction work worth about ₹9 crore in 2004. However, the project was halted midway after the department failed to provide the full work site. Payments due to the contractor were also withheld.

Seeking redress, the contractor approached arbitration,



where dues of approximately ₹52 lakh and ₹29 lakh for two works were recognised. With accumulated interest, the total outstanding amount has now risen to over ₹3 crore, company representatives said.

The irrigation department challenged the claims in various courts, including the district court, high court and

Supreme Court, but failed to obtain relief. Despite directions from the apex court, the dues remained unpaid, prompting the contractor to move the commercial court in Cuttack.

After nearly two years of proceedings, the court ordered attachment of the office. The premises were sealed in the presence of officials Monday.

YOUTH, SISTER-IN-LAW KILL SELVES IN BALASORE

Balasore: A youth and his sister-in-law committed suicide by hanging at Sahada village under Chandipur police limits in Balasore district Monday when no one else was at home, police said. The deceased were identified as Rabi Majhi (23), and Muni Murmu (18), both residents of the village. Police recovered the bodies and sent them for postmortem to the district headquarters hospital. An unnatural death case has been registered. According to Rabi's father, he had married in Tentulimunda village under Mayurbhanj district. Later, he developed a relationship with Muni, his wife's cousin, and the two had been living together in Chennai. After his wife learned about the relationship, she left for her parental home. A few days ago, Rabi and Muni returned from Chennai and were staying at his house in Sahada village. The incident occurred when an argument reportedly broke out between them, following which both hanged themselves Monday. Family members found them and rushed them to the district headquarters hospital, where doctors declared them dead.

Couple held with peacock meat in Debrigarh Sanctuary



Sambalpur: Forest officials arrested a couple for allegedly trespassing and poaching inside Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary under the Hirakud Wildlife Division in Sambalpur district, officials said Monday. The accused were identified as Surendra Khadia (40), and Rashmi Khadia (30) of Lavantikra village. The couple was produced in court Monday. A night patrol team apprehended them Sunday and seized a large quantity of peacock meat along with snares, country-made ammunition, traps, an axe and iron knives, informed Divisional Forest Officer Anshupragya Das Monday. The night patrol team, received a tip-off about peacock hunting in the sanctuary. Acting on the intel, officials raided the

village on the sanctuary's fringes and detained the couple. The couple admitted to have poached peacock during questioning. They told investigators they found a peacock nest while collecting firewood in the forest and set a synthetic snare to trap the bird for meat and to sell its feathers. Peacocks, which nest on the ground, are particularly vulnerable during the egg-laying season in summer, making them easy targets for poachers. Forest officials said local eco-development committees have been alerted to step up vigilance to protect birds such as peafowl, cuckoos and junglefowl in the Debrigarh area. The informer who tipped off the department will be rewarded, Das said.

NIT Rourkela gets patent for spice adulteration test system



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, April 27: Researchers at the National Institute of Technology Rourkela have been granted a patent for a system that can rapidly detect and quantify adulteration in spices and other food products using infrared spectroscopy and machine learning.

The technology combines Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy with advanced algorithms to identify adulterants and measure their concentration within seconds, offering an alternative to conventional laboratory methods that are time-consuming and resource-intensive.

Unlike existing techniques that typically indicate only the presence of adulteration, the new system provides quantitative results, making it suitable for real-time use in quality control laboratories and food processing units, the institute said.

The research, published in

the journal Food Chemistry, was carried out by assistant professor Sushil Kumar Singh, the late Poonam Singha and M.Tech. scholar Rishabh Goyal from the Department of Food Process Engineering. The team has also secured a patent titled "Method and System for Detecting and Quantifying Adulteration in Food Stuff."

In one application, the system detected sawdust in coriander powder with about 92% accuracy, demonstrating its ability to identify common adulteration practices in spices.

Singh said the technology could be integrated into industrial workflows to enable rapid screening and improve compliance with food safety standards, particularly in cost-sensitive markets such as India.

The researchers said they plan to collaborate with industry partners for pilot testing and expand the system's capability to detect a wider range of food adulterants.

Child trafficking attempt to Andhra Pradesh foiled; 13 rescued from bus

Malkangiri: Allegations of child trafficking and forced religious conversion have resurfaced in Malkangiri district after police rescued 13 minors from a private bus Monday. The bus named Sai Krishna, was en route to Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh when authorities intercepted it near the Malkangiri police station following a tip-off to the Child Helpline 1098. A joint team of police and Childline officials stopped and searched the vehicle, rescuing 14 children in total, including 13 minors. The incident has sparked concern in the area, and an investigation is underway. Preliminary findings suggest the children were lured with promises of participating in a dance programme but were actually being taken to receive religious instructions in Christianity. Police said the rescued children are safe and their parents have been informed. All the children are currently housed at the Malkangiri police station and will be handed over to their families after a decision by the district Child Welfare Committee. Authorities are probing whether a larger network is involved in the case as police and Childline officials launched an investigation.

Four arrested in Deogarh gang-rape

POST NEWS NETWORK

Deogarh, April 27: Police arrested four men in connection with the alleged gang-rape of a young woman in Barkote under Deogarh district.

The accused, identified as Udia Dhibar (26), Doctor Bhuyan (33), Manoj Mahakul (22) and Kengalu Nayak (28), were taken into custody and produced in court Monday. Their bail applications were denied, and they have been remanded to judicial custody.

Authorities confirmed that a fifth suspect remains at large.

According to police reports, the incident occurred on the night of April 20 when the victim was returning home from a relative's house. She was allegedly assaulted by five men, who also filmed the attack and circulated explicit images on social media.

The survivor lodged a complaint at Barkote police station Sunday, leading to the registration of case (174/26). Station Officer Sushant Badhei stated that further investigation is under way.

House Sparrow Census 2026: 83,576 birds spotted in Odisha

DWARKA PRASAD PATNAIK, OP

Chhatrapur/Bhubaneswar, April 27: Census for house sparrows was conducted for the first time in Odisha by a Bhubaneswar-based organization, Wildlife Odisha Foundation (WOF) recently for the year 2025 - 2026.

During the census, a total of 83,576 house sparrows were spotted across the state. Subarnapur district topped the chart with 30,000 birds. The activity was done using modern day scientific method.

While the population in western Odisha districts is high, the number drops sharply across the coastal and southern districts in the state, which was concerning, the foundation reported.

Chairman of the WOF Prasant



Kumar Dhal said that the presence of the house sparrows along the western districts largely due to the weather conditions is a welcome sign for the wildlife lovers.

The foundation has made an appeal to the public to take efforts in conservation and protect of the

tiny birds helping their population rise. Public and government must work in coordination towards sustainable conservation of the sparrows that possess high risk of extinction, Dhal added.

Notably, specially designed wooden shelters and earthen pots were distributed by wildlife conservators and volunteers to protect the sparrows from adverse conditions that can be seen outside the residences of various villages and townships.

The survey and census was carried out by scientists, district representatives and volunteers across Mayurbhanj, Ganjam, Khordha, Koraput, Sambalpur, Balangir, Subarnapur, Jharsuguda, Cuttack, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapada, Bhadrak and Balasore districts in the state.

भारतीय खेल प्रधिकरण
SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
खेल विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS
(An Autonomous Body under Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports)
(युवा कार्यक्रम और खेल मंत्रालय के तहत एक स्वायत्त निकाय)
(HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION)
SAI-Head Office Building, SAI-Headquarter,
Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium Complex (East Gate-No.10)
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003
F.No. : 01-04001(01)/13/2024-HO-Personnel Division/256 Date : 21.04.2026

CORRIGENDUM
SUB: EXTENSION OF CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION TO THE POST OF ASSISTANT COACH ON REGULAR BASIS.
In partial modification to the Addendum issued vide F.No. 01-04001(01)/13/2024-HO - Personnel Division/237 dated 25.03.2026, the closing date for submission of online applications for the post of Assistant Coach on regular basis is hereby extended up to 05.05.2026 (05:00 PM). The remaining clauses stand valid.
2. The details and application link are available on the website of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports www.yas.nic.in & SAI i.e. www.sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in.
Sd./J. Executive Director
(Human Resources Division) Sports Authority of India
cbc 47103/11/0005/2627

भारतीय खेल प्रधिकरण
SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
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(Human Resources Division-II)
HEAD OFFICE, GATE NO.10 (EAST GATE),
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU STADIUM, LODHI ROAD,
NEW DELHI-110003
File No. : 01-04001(03)/4/2026-66 Date : 21.04.2026

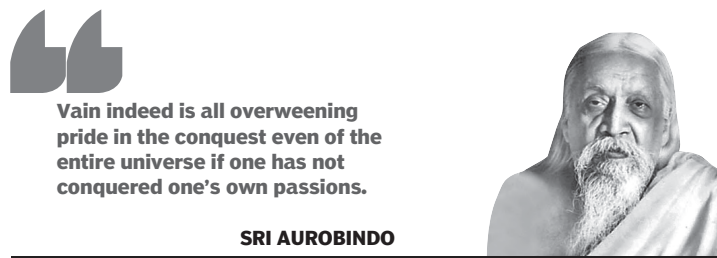
SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA RECRUITMENT DEPUTY DIRECTOR (ON DEPUTATION) BASIS
The Sports Authority of India (SAI), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, invites applications for 20 Posts of Deputy Director in Pay Matrix Level-11 on deputation basis for a period of 3 years at its Head Office, New Delhi and various field units. Eligible officers may submit applications in the prescribed format, along with required documents, to the **Director (Human Resources Division-II), SAI, J.N. Stadium Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003**. Last date for receipt of applications is 21-05-2026 (5:00 PM). Detailed advertisement, eligibility criteria, proforma and instructions will be available on the SAI website (www.sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in).
cbc 47103/11/0006/2627

No.13001/305/2627
OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, LOISINGHA (BALANGIR)
Email ID : nac.loisingha@odisha.gov.in
No.75 Date. 21.04.2026

QUOTATION CALL NOTICE
Sealed quotations are invited from the intending registered local ALFs/Mission Shakti Groups/ NGOs/ Civil Society for opening and management of "Drinking Water Kiosks (Jalachhatra)" during summer season-2026 in Loisingha NAC area at different points. The quotation should reach to N.A.C, Loisingha Office by hand or registered post on or before Dt. 28.04.2026 up to 01.00 PM and it will be opened on the same day at 04.00 PM. The detailed documents, terms and conditions etc. may be collected from this office in working hours. The authority reserves the right to accept/ reject any or all quotations without assigning any reason thereof.
Sd./- Executive Officer
NAC, Loisingha
OIPR-13001/13271/1/26-27/0001

भारतीय खेल प्रधिकरण
SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
खेल विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS
(An Autonomous Body under Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports)
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(Human Resources Division-II)
HEAD OFFICE, GATE NO.10 (EAST GATE),
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU STADIUM, LODHI ROAD,
NEW DELHI-110003
File No. : 01-04001(03)/4/2026-66 Date : 10.04.2026

Sports Authority Of India Recruitment DIRECTOR (ON DEPUTATION) basis
The Sports Authority of India (SAI), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, invites applications for 16 Posts of Director in Pay Matrix Level- 12 on deputation basis for a period of 3 years at its Head Office, New Delhi and various field units. Eligible officers may submit applications in the prescribed format, along with required documents, to the Director (Human Resources Division-II), SAI, J.N. Stadium Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003. Last date for receipt of applications is 10-05-2026 (5:00 PM). Detailed advertisement, eligibility criteria, proforma and instructions will be available on the SAI website (www.sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in).
cbc 47103/11/0004/2627



SRI AUROBINDO

Tehran & Moscow

Iran has made an intelligent move to send its Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin. The aim seems to be to force the US to return to the negotiating table on mutually agreed terms instead of letting US President Donald Trump dictate terms to it. Trump's offer, after cancelling a visit by his top negotiators to Pakistan, effectively means Iran has to swallow its pride and surrender to him in the wake of the US blockade of ships moving to and from Iranian ports. A sort of diplomatic war of attrition is going on between the US and Iran during the ongoing ceasefire. Dialogues started in Pakistan between the top leaderships of the two countries have not made much headway, though efforts for a peaceful settlement of the conflict are not abandoned. Trump categorically said there is no point in sending his team for the negotiations since according to him there is a difference of opinion within the Iranian leadership. He scrapped plans to send Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and adviser Jared Kushner to Islamabad citing "tremendous fighting and confusion" within Tehran's leadership. That could be a ruse as Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian has articulated the country's stand that Tehran will not enter negotiations while the blockade remains in place. The US Central Command (CENTCOM) said forces were continuing to implement the blockade, preventing vessels from entering or leaving Iranian waters. American forces have, so far, directed 38 ships to turn around or return to port, CENTCOM said on X.

As the fate of the peace talks hangs in the balance due to the inflexible positions the US and Iran have taken, Iran decides to bring in another influential global player - Putin - to offset any strong arm tactic Trump would like to adopt to coerce Iran to agree to peace on his terms, though his bargaining power has to a great extent been built by Iran's counterattacks with drones and missiles.

At this crucial juncture, Iran's Foreign Minister arrived in Moscow 27 April for talks with Putin. Tehran has already intensified diplomatic efforts to end the United States-Israel war on Iran. Araghchi's Moscow visit comes following his meetings in Muscat with Omani officials, as Iran seeks to rally regional and international support for renewed negotiations. In Moscow, he told Iranian media that he had travelled to Russia "with the aim of continuing close consultations between Tehran and Moscow on regional and international issues." He deliberately sent a clear message to the US that his meeting with Putin "will be a good opportunity to discuss developments in the war and review the latest situation." He exuded confidence that these consultations and coordination between the two countries in this regard will be of particular importance.

Washington and Tehran agreed to a temporary ceasefire on 8 April following more than a month of fighting that began with the US and Israeli attacks on Iran. The truce, mediated by Pakistan, has since been strained by disputes over shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and the US blockade on Iranian ports. As the stalemate continues Russia is now poised to play a central role in any next phase of the conflict. There are now two scenarios - diplomatic settlement and resumption of confrontation. Russia is going to play a key role when it comes to both which is why Iran's Foreign Minister is in Moscow for consultations over most probably both. As is known Iran has several demands and is trying to prioritise them based on the situation. There could be an extension of the ceasefire or another confrontation.

Time is running out. With the prices of crude and LPG in the international markets on the rise neither the US nor Iran can afford to let the conflict drag on indefinitely. A midpoint in their negotiations has to be found without any further delay. Iran is in a vantage position after deflating Trump's ego and warmongering. It has no reason to agree to abject surrender, while the US has to go the extra mile for peace as it was responsible, along with Israel, for the one-sided war with Iran.

WISDOM CORNER

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

My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style.

MAYA ANGELOU

Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough.

OPRAH WINFREY

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1758: James Monroe, who was the fifth president of the United States (1817-25) and who asserted a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy in the Monroe Doctrine, was born in Virginia.

1926: Harper Lee—who won national acclaim for her novel To Kill a Mockingbird (1960)—was born in Monroeville, Alabama.

1945: Dictator Benito Mussolini was executed after he was captured while trying to flee Italy.

1952: The Allied occupation of Japan came to an end after seven years of rapid social and economic change that followed the country's surrender in World War II.

1967: At the height of the Vietnam War, boxer Muhammad Ali refused to be drafted into the U.S. Army, citing religious reasons; his subsequent conviction on criminal charges was eventually overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court.

1969: After voters rejected a referendum outlining his proposed political reforms, Charles de Gaulle resigned as president of France. He died the following year.

1986: A group of archaeologists announced their discovery of more than 400 artifacts in Chinese tombs nearly 2,000 years old. Among their notable finds was one scrap of paper showing waterways, mountains, and roads. It turned out to be the world's oldest surviving paper map fragment, and it forced a rewriting of the history of papermaking.

MOMENT OF ACCOUNTABILITY

FOCUS CUSTODIAL KILLINGS

The death penalty awarded to nine policemen for the custodial killings of a trader and his son earlier this month will stand out as the biggest strike for accountability and against injustice in a system that has mostly trivialised the lives of those held in custody, who are also invariably among the weakest and poorest members of society. On 6 April, Judge G Muthukumar of the First Additional District and Sessions Court, Madurai delivered one of India's most consequential verdicts on custodial violence. The court sentenced nine policemen to death for the 2020 custodial torture that took the lives of P Jayaraj and his son J Bennicks at Sathankulam Police Station in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi district. A mandatory process of reviewing the death sentence has been initiated by the Madras High Court, with a hearing set for 30 April.



Lekha Rattanani

CUSTODIAL DEATHS HAVE RARELY RECEIVED THE ATTENTION OR PUNISHMENT THEY DESERVE

The verdict from the Madurai court which has been described by Amnesty International as "a rare moment of accountability" refers to the case of 19 June, 2020, when Jayaraj and Bennicks were picked up on the charge of keeping their mobile accessories shop open beyond COVID-19 curfew hours. Public outrage over their deaths led the state government to hand over the case to the CBI. The CBI probe built on the testimony of eyewitnesses and forensic evidence led the agency to conclude that several rounds of "merciless beating" with lathis inside the station, caused the death of Bennicks on 22 June, 2020, and his father a day later. The prosecution used this to argue that the ghastly crime which had "shocked the collective conscience of society" was supported by the testimonies of three direct eyewitnesses. Jayaraj and Bennicks were



The signals this verdict sends out will hopefully serve to warn law enforcers across the country that the law will catch up with them too and make them pay a heavy price for crossing boundaries

ordinary people leading everyday lives, restricted by the pandemic. They had no previous conviction, no criminal record or any previous brush with the law. This is probably why their deaths led to huge protests and an outpouring of anger that forced a higher level of investigation into what the Madurai court judge G Muthukumar called a "betrayal by those meant to uphold the law."

Custodial deaths have rarely received the attention or punishment they deserve. Many cases have gone unrecorded with the culprits walking away with impunity. In India, it is only in 2025 that 21 policemen and officers involved in custodial deaths received life sentences. Earlier, in 2018, a trial court in Kerala awarded the death penalty to two policemen for custodial torture and murder, the first in Indian legal history. The two policemen were acquitted by the Kerala High Court in 2024.

The effect of the award of a death sentence to as many as nine policemen in one go can be electrifying in the way it can jolt a system that has resisted all reform. The signals this verdict sends out will hopefully serve to warn law enforcers

across the country that the law will catch up with them too and make them pay a heavy price for crossing boundaries. Society has to begin seeing custodial deaths and their attendant fake encounters and extra judicial killings as cold-blooded murders for which the nation must have zero tolerance. Those in uniform involved in these cases must be seen as serial killers who have betrayed their uniform, broken the oath to serve the Constitution and contributed to a total breakdown of due process. This one judgement will go a long way to send all these messages and deserves to be discussed and made mandatory reading in police training. But India needs to do much more to control the menace of custodial torture and deaths. One option is to make heads of districts personally and directly responsible for any custodial death in their jurisdictions, thus using the strict hierarchy of the system to serve the public good and ensure that any case of torture and death in custody will bring its consequences not only on the operators but will also reach their leaders.

Without strong measures, the problem of custodial deaths cannot be addressed.

According to figures submitted by the National Human Rights Commission to the Lok Sabha in 2022, there were 2307 custodial deaths, 2152 judicial and 155 in police custody in 2021-22.

Indian thinkers, academics, law and order experts and civil society will have to come together to make concerted attempts to call out and not celebrate all kinds of extra judicial action that thrive under the system. Consider that some of the low-ranking officers who became celebrities for leading "police encounters" in Mumbai and have since retired are now busy building their social media profiles. One officer known for over 100 "encounter killings" manages to get invitations to social functions where he is treated as a hero. Recently, politicians including a former Chief Minister and many Bollywood celebrities attended the lavish wedding of the son of another low-ranking officer who has claimed celebrity status and managed ties with the film industry. Do note that Mumbai's law and order was not improved by encounters. Instead, gangs in the wild became gangs in the police, two groups who took their leads and indeed orders from gangsters and did hatchet jobs for them and turned policing into a new way of making money.

In the end, the message from the court is simple but powerful: violation of due process increases crime and criminal activity and does nothing but build new criminals hiding behind uniforms and using their force against some of the weakest in the nation. If India has to become a thriving economy and a respected democracy, this cannot be allowed to continue.

The writer is the Managing Editor of The Billion Press.

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SPECTRUM HABITATION

Why do slums keep cropping up?

The standard policy response to slums—relocate people, bulldoze the settlement, and build public housing elsewhere—is older than the slums themselves. It has never worked.

The logic seems straightforward. Slums are viewed as unsanitary, unsafe, and visually jarring. If you want to build a modern, orderly city, you should remove them. But people do not live in slums by choice. They do so because there are no affordable alternatives near their jobs and essential services. Destroying their homes without addressing the conditions that drove them there merely shifts the problem to a different—often worse—place.

Experience bears this out. In 1968-75, Brazil's military government launched an aggressive slum-demolition campaign in Rio de Janeiro, forcing nearly 50,000 families into housing projects on the city's periphery. The residents of Catacumba favela, which housed nearly 15,000 people on prime real estate in Lagoa before its destruction in 1970, experienced a decline in household income, higher commuting costs, and reduced access to jobs following their relocation. Meanwhile, the overall favela population continued to grow.

A similar pattern has been documented in Addis Ababa, Lagos, and Mumbai, with slums eliminated in one place merely reappearing elsewhere, often nearby. Even when eradication was abandoned as an official policy, as in Brazil, new informal settlements kept emerging.

In new research, I and my co-authors, Pedro Cavalcanti and Alexander Monge-Naranjo, examine the emergence and persistence of slums in Brazil using detailed data on labour markets, housing, and education. We find that slums are not simple poverty traps; under the right conditions, they can also be stepping stones.

For families with very low levels of education, slums can provide an entry point into urban economic life. Compared to rural areas, they offer better access to jobs and schools. Put simply, slums can help households get onto the first rungs of the economic ladder but prevent them from climbing higher. While some households manage to improve their economic circumstances enough to leave the slums, many—often those with intermediate levels of education—do not. And there are always more low-educated rural households moving in, often motivated by the desire

to improve their children's educational prospects. In fact, our research shows that schooling plays a key role in slum formation; households with low years of schooling want their children to have better lives, but cannot afford to live in cities.

These findings help to explain why slums persist despite the economic opportunities they provide. They are not static communities. Slums are dynamic systems that are continuously renewed. Instead of attempting to eliminate slums through demolition and forced relocation—a recipe for failure—policymakers should address the deeper mismatches between job proximity, housing affordability, and access to quality education.

To this end, improving schools within slums is essential, though it might attract new migrants, causing slums to grow. Countries at earlier stages of development—when most people live in rural areas—should thus place a high priority on improving rural schools, so that migration to cities reflects opportunity, rather than desperation. Better-prepared migrants are more likely to enter formal housing markets rather than informal settlements.

As urbanisation progresses, the emphasis must shift to integrating slum residents into the

formal economy, especially by getting their children into higher-quality schools. Such policies must be sustained across generations to enable households to build up enough human capital to sustain upward mobility and break the cycle of informality.

But education is just the first step. If formal urban housing remains prohibitively expensive, even upwardly mobile families will struggle to leave slums behind. Because the market does not supply affordable housing where it is needed, and long daily commutes are unrealistic, governments must intervene with a coherent strategy that accounts for both education and housing.

Slums persist not because they are desirable, but because they are necessary. As long as people lack better options, they will continue to flourish. The task for policymakers is not to eliminate slums by diktat, but to make them obsolete over time by promoting the educational opportunities and spatial integration their residents need.

The writer is Assistant Professor of Economics at the São Paulo School of Economics at Getulio Vargas Foundation.

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Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Farming breakthrough

Sir, This refers to "Andhra eyes apple farming after Rayalaseema success," Orissa POST, April 27. The successful cultivation of apple in Anantapur district by a farmer KV Ramana Reddy is a remarkable breakthrough for cultivators across India. For decades, apple farming was seen as the preserve of the cooler climates of Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. This success proves that determined experimentation and modern farming methods can rewrite old assumptions. By adopting suitable varieties, efficient irrigation, and scientific orchard practices, Ramana Reddy has shown that even semi-arid regions can grow premium horticulture crops. His achievement offers hope to farmers in other states who depend on low-income traditional crops and face climate uncertainties. Apples can provide better market returns, diversification, and long-term stability. This is more than a personal success story. It signals the future of Indian agriculture, where innovation matters more than geography. With proper research support, marketing links, and extension services, many farmers can follow this inspiring model.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Master craftsman

Sir, The passing away of India's ace photographer Raghu Rai has created a void in the world of photography. Perhaps no other photographer would have captured India with all its vibrancy, energy and stillness as Raghu Rai. His scintillating snapshots of Indian life are the most outstanding works captured through lens in the post-independent era. He was a master craftsman and has carved a niche of his own as a master storyteller through his photographs. Raghu Rai was a poet among photographers who wrote heart touching verses through the frames he captured. Whether it is pictures of legends like Indira Gandhi, Dalai Lama and Satyajit Ray or the quieter and reflective pictures of rivers, hills, ghats and monuments or the hustle and bustle of street life or news photography each and every picture spoke stories, spoke about time and exposed life as it is. His photo of "Burial of an Unknown Child" is a haunting image that captures the horror of the 1984 Bhopal Gas tragedy and exposes the reality of chemical death in modern world.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

BARAMATI'S POWER STRUGGLE

Pawar family's third gen fuels succession debate

As the 2029 horizon approaches, the Baramati electorate finds itself at a crossroads. With four high-profile grandsons of the Pawar lineage vying for influence, the battle for Baramati's leadership is no longer just about party politics -- it is a deeply personal struggle for the family's legacy



As the third generation of the Pawar family steps into the limelight, local political circles are abuzz with one central question: Who will ultimately lead Baramati -- NCP(SP) MLA Rohit Pawar, NCP MP and Ajit Pawar's elder son Parth Pawar, Ajit Pawar's nephew Yugendra Pawar, or Jay Pawar?

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Baramati, April 27: The political landscape in Baramati is witnessing renewed internal churn following a statement by Jay Pawar, the younger son of former NCP chief and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister, late Ajit Pawar, triggering fresh speculation over succession within the influential Pawar family.

Jay Pawar Thursday remarked, "The people of Baramati desire that I contest the 2029 Assembly elections," a comment that has reignited the "brother-versus-brother" narrative within Maharashtra's most prominent political dynasty.

As the third generation of the Pawar family steps into the limelight, local political circles are abuzz with one central question: Who will ultimately lead Baramati -- NCP(SP) MLA Rohit Pawar, NCP MP and Ajit Pawar's elder son Parth Pawar, Ajit Pawar's nephew Yugendra Pawar, or Jay Pawar?

The transition of power within the family has become increasingly complex as each member carves out their own niche.

Rohit Pawar, though his current constituency is Karjat-Jamkhed in Ahilyanagar district, has significantly increased his presence in Baramati.

He took the lead despite representing the NCP(SP) faction, negotiating with Congress leaders to withdraw their candidate, Akash More, in favour of ensuring a unified front for the election of NCP president Sunetra Pawar in the Baramati by-election.

"While my work remains in Karjat-Jamkhed, Baramati is my political foundation. I first won my Zilla Parishad seat from the Shirsufal-Gunvadi block here," Rohit Pawar noted, signalling that he hasn't forgotten his home turf.

Following his election to the Rajya Sabha, Parth Pawar has been active behind the scenes. However, his direct approach has occasionally sparked controversy. His stern warning to the Congress party -- "The consequences will be felt across Maharashtra" -- led to a public reprimand from veteran leader Sharad Pawar. Consequently, while Parth Pawar was kept away from public rallies to avoid backlash, he continued to manage the campaign ma-

chinery from the shadows.

After contesting against Ajit Pawar in the previous Assembly elections, Yugendra Pawar has emerged as a serious contender. Despite his defeat, he has maintained a consistent public outreach program. While many see him as a future leader of Baramati, Yugendra has adopted a conciliatory tone regarding the family rift, stating, "Now is not the time for this discussion; we must not create conflict between brothers."

Jay Pawar's recent assertion regarding his 2029 candidacy has been the catalyst for the current debate. His statement suggests an ambition to formally enter the legislative fray, directly challenging the established order within the family.

The reactions to Jay Pawar's statement highlight the widening rift. Rohit Pawar has acknowledged the possibility of another "Pawar vs Pawar" battle. Yugendra Pawar is calling for restraint and family unity.

Hajj arrangements over in Kerala; first flight April 30

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Malappuram (Kerala), April 27: Arrangements for this year's Hajj camps have been completed at all three embarkation points in Kerala, state Hajj Committee Chairman Hussain Saqafi Chullikkode said Monday.

The first Hajj flight from the state will depart from Kochi April 30, while the state-level inauguration of the Hajj camp will be held April 29 in Kochi, he said in a press conference here.

As in previous years, Kochi, Kozhikode and Kannur have been designated as embarkation points, according to an official statement.

A total of 13,194 pilgrims have been selected from Kerala for the pilgrimage this year. Of them, 7,943 will depart from Kochi, 4,279 from Kannur and 944 from Kozhikode, it said.

Additionally, 28 pilgrims from Kerala will travel via embarkation points in other states. Pilgrims from Lakshadweep (107), Puducherry (39), Tamil Nadu (263), Karnataka (239), Uttar Pradesh (5), Maharashtra (2) and Telangana (2) will also depart from Kerala's embarkation points.

The first flight, operated by Flynas, will depart from Kochi at 2.10 pm April 30 carrying 430 pilgrims to Jeddah, it said.

This year, the Hajj Committee has introduced a new 'Short Hajj' package of 25 days, compared to the usual 40-45 days, aimed at pilgrims seeking a shorter stay, the statement detailed.

Hajj camps are being set up with extensive facilities, including canteens for pilgrims, at all three embarkation points.

In Kochi, arrangements are being made at the CIAL Academy, while in Kannur, a specially prepared venue near the international airport will host the camp.

Coordination meetings involving various departments and agencies have been held under the respective district collectors to ensure smooth conduct of the camps. A Hajj cell has also been constituted with designated officials to oversee documentation and camp operations.



A tiger yawns while cooling off in a pool amid heat during the summer season at Maharaj Bagh Zoo, in Nagpur, Maharashtra, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Kerala mulls peak hour power cuts as demand surges to record highs

KSEB is all set to regulate power supply for 15 to 30 minutes in select areas

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram April 27: Kerala has moved to formalise power restrictions amid an unprecedented surge in electricity demand, with peak load management now effectively translating into scheduled, short-duration outages across parts of the state.

The Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) is all set to regulate power supply for 15 to 30 minutes in select areas, particularly during peak evening hours between 6 p.m. and 11 p.m., with advance intimation via SMS wherever feasible.

The decision follows mounting public anger over frequent, unannounced nighttime disruptions that had already become routine. Officials acknowledged that demand has far exceeded projections, putting severe strain on the transmission and distribution network and leading to voltage drops in some regions.

The spike has been driven by an intense summer and a shift in household energy use. A cooking gas shortage linked to geopolitical tensions in West Asia has pushed more consumers towards electricity-based alternatives, especially induction cookers.

Combined with increased use of cooling appliances, this has sent consumption soaring. Data from KSEB underscores the scale of the crisis.

On April 18, the state recorded an all-time high daily consumption of 117.16 million units. Peak demand between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. touched a historic 6,033 MW, while April 23, demand briefly surged to 6,195 MW at 10.30 p.m., the highest ever recorded.

To bridge the gap, the state has been permitted to procure 250 MW from the power exchange through short-term contracts at up to Rs 10 per unit.



The (West Asia) war must end, and the rains must arrive. Even a single day of rainfall could bring noticeable relief

K KRISHNANKUTTY | ELECTRICITY MINISTER, KERALA

While this is expected to provide temporary relief, officials admit it is not a long-term solution. Hydropower reserves, a critical buffer for Kerala, are also under stress.

Reservoir levels have dropped to just 30 per cent of capacity, with water sufficient to generate 1,279.59 million units, enough for roughly 51 days at the current average daily hydel output of 25 million units.

This is significantly lower than last year's 1,641.42 million units, though still better than the 2017 low of 868.62 million units. The KSEB has urged consumers to reduce usage during peak hours, advising against evening use of high-load appliances such as air conditioners, water heaters, washing machines and EV chargers.

Setting AC temperatures at 24-26 degrees Celsius and switching off non-essential devices could help ease the strain.

When the heat rises, so do snakebites

Kerala is confronting an unusual and deeply unsettling consequence of its soaring temperatures, a sharp spike in snakebite incidents across the state. What was once considered an occasional rural hazard has, in recent days, turned into a widespread public safety concern cutting across districts, age groups, and even the perceived safety of homes. On a single day, 23 people required ambulance assistance for snakebites, while several others reported suspected encounters. From Alappuzha to Kozhikode, Malappuram to Thiruvananthapuram, the pattern is strikingly similar, snakes emerging from their natural habitats and entering human spaces. Experts and local observers point to the relentless rise in mercury levels as the trigger. With ground temperatures climbing to uncomfortable highs, snakes are being forced out of their burrows in search of cooler environments. Unfortunately, that often means shaded yards, cluttered compounds, and increasingly, the interiors of homes. The human stories behind the numbers are sobering. In Kayamkulam, two young children were among five bitten. In Kozhikode, a young man discovered that he had been bitten only after spotting a snake on his bed. In another chilling incident, a family found multiple venomous snakes hidden across rooms in their house, one on a bed where children had been sleeping moments earlier. These are not isolated episodes but signs of a shifting ecological balance where human and wildlife boundaries are blurring under climate stress.

At 46.9 deg C, Akola hottest in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nagpur, April 27: Akola in Maharashtra has recorded the highest temperature in the country at 46.9°C, while Nagpur and several other parts of Vidarbha reeled under a severe heat wave, MeT officials said Monday.

Heat wave conditions are expected to persist across parts of the state's Vidarbha region till Tuesday, as maximum temperatures may reach 45 to 46 degrees Celsius and touch 47 degrees Celsius at isolated locations, they said.

On Sunday, Akola recorded 46.9 degrees Celsius, the highest temperature in the country,



BRUTAL HEAT WAVE

followed by Amravati at 46.8 degrees Celsius, according to the India Meteorological Department's Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) in Nagpur.

Wardha sizzled at 46.4 degrees Celsius, Yavatmal logged

46 degrees Celsius, Nagpur scorched at 45.4 degrees Celsius, while Chandrapur recorded 45 degrees Celsius, as per the data.

Akola, Amravati, Wardha, Yavatmal, Chandrapur and

Nagpur experienced heat wave conditions, while several other districts reported above-normal temperatures, RMC scientist Dr Praveen Kumar told PTI.

The prevailing above-normal and persistently high temperatures over Vidarbha can be attributed to an anticyclonic circulation over Maharashtra and adjoining areas. At the same time, hot and dry northwesterly winds have been continuously affecting the region, he said.

In addition, weak western disturbances and the absence of moisture incursion or any significant weather systems have contributed to the intensification of heat over the region, the official said.

Women-led Mumbai film nears iconic debut

"Mast Mahila Mandali" (Cool Ladies Club), the film documents the makers' own lives, struggles and lived realities, will premier before 1,200 viewers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 27: In 2024, ten women from working-class neighbourhoods in Mumbai participated in a smartphone-based filmmaking experiment that centred on their lives and everyday happenings.

Two years later, the community-driven film, "Mast Mahila Mandali" (Cool Ladies Club), has found its way to a special screening at iconic Regal Cinema, scheduled for April 28, marking a significant moment in community-led documentary filmmaking.

"Mast Mahila Mandali" (Cool Ladies Club), the film documents the makers' own lives, struggles and lived realities, will premier before 1,200 viewers. The women, Anjum Sheikh, Darshana Maykar, Gauri

FROM BASTIS TO SCREEN



Rane, Kavita Khonme, Nazneen Siddiqui, Rohini Kadam, Rehana Sheikh, Sheetal Navle, Kavita Ghughe and Vaishali Mane, have co-produced the project and decided independently how to represent themselves on screen.

The women are associated with NGO, CORO India, and are part of its 'Right to Pee' campaign. The organisation has worked in Maharashtra and Rajasthan for 38 years on community-based initiatives.

"This is a milestone in our organisation's history. Women from these communities are screening a film they have made themselves in a historic theatre. They are not here as subjects, but as creators," said Supriya Jaan, CORO's head of grassroots knowledge initiatives and executive producer of the film.

The film has emerged from a two-year learning and training process led by Shilpa Gulati, a National Award-winning filmmaker and professor at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. "Regal Cinema is a fitting venue to bring a film made in Mumbai back to its people. Documentary distribution in India faces several challenges, and this is an attempt to overcome them. A screening of this scale and nature has not been attempted before," said Gulati, who has also co-directed and edited the film.

More than 1,000 people have already registered for the special screening, and organisers expect a full house. Family members of the filmmakers, residents of their neighbourhoods, grassroots leaders, representatives from the development sector, academics and members of Mumbai's film fraternity will attend the event.

Kerala girl's silver lining at European Math Olympiad

Thiruvananthapuram: Class 12 student Sanjana Philo Chacko from Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram has brought laurels to the country by winning a silver medal at the European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad (EGMO) 2026 held in Bordeaux, France. Sanjana, who has consistently excelled in mathematics, was part of the four-member Indian team selected after a rigorous multi-stage national selection process. The European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad is a premier international competition aimed at encouraging young women to pursue mathematics at higher levels. Participants from across the world compete in challenging problem-solving tests that require deep analytical thinking and creativity.



**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
JEYPORE (R&B) DIVISION, JEYPORE**
ID: ee.randbjyp@gmail.com
e-Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No.S.E.(R&B)-04/2026-27/JYP(K)
No.2974, Date:27.04.2026

No.34001/131/2627: Bid documents consisting of work, Estimated Cost, Cost of Tender Paper, EMD, Time of Completion, Class of Contractors and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. Website i.e. www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

- Name of the Work : Building Works as mentioned in DTCN
- No. of Works : 02 Nos
- Estimated Cost : Rs.19.16 to 43.15 Lakhs
- Period of Completion : 4 (Four) Months
- Date & Time of Bidding : From 11.00 hours of 06.05.2026 Upto 17.00 hours of 15.05.2026
- Last date & time for receipt : 17.00 hours of 15.05.2026 of bids in portal
- Bids received online shall be opened on : 11.00 hours of 16.05.2026
- Name & Address of the Officer Inviting Bid : Superintending Engineer, Jeypore (R&B) Division, Jeypore

Further details can be seen from the www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Jeypore (R&B) Division
OIPR-34001/34027/1/26-27/0003

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, DRAINAGE DIVISION, KHORDHA									
e-Procurement Notice No.01-DD-KHR) of 2026-27									
Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Name of Work	Cost of Work (Rs. in Lakhs)	Bid Security (Rs.) E.M.D.	Cost of Bid documents (Rs)	Class of Contractor	Bid documents available online for bidding	Date of opening of Technical Bid	Period of completion of work
EE, Drainage Division Khordha	EE-DD-KHR-01/2026-27	IMPROVEMENT TO KULASARA NALLA, NILAPALI NALLA, RAMACHANDRAPUR NALLA AND PARICHALA NALLA OF MANDAKINI DRAINAGE SYSTEM	70.32	70,400/- (On Line)	10000/- (On Line)	"B" Class	28.04.2026 At 11.00 Hours	12.05.2026 At 17.00 Hours	09 (nine Calendar Months)
	EE-DD-KHR-02/2026-27	CONSTRUCTION OF FLD OVER KANKARAJHARA NALLA NEAR VILLAGE BAGHAMARI IN RANAPUR BLOCK	74.15	74200/- (On Line)	10000/- (On Line)	"B" Class	28.04.2026 At 11.00 Hours	12.05.2026 At 17.00 Hours	09 (nine Calendar Months)
	EE-DD-KHR-03/2026-27	CONSTRUCTION OF FLD OVER SULLA NALLA AT R.D.3750M NEAR VILLAGE BEGUNJIAPATANA IN NAYAGARH BLOCK UNDER NAYAGARH CONSTITUENCY	76.22	76300/- (On Line)	10000/- (On Line)	"B" Class	28.04.2026 At 11.00 Hours	12.05.2026 At 17.00 Hours	09 (nine Calendar Months)

e-mail ID : eedd@khorda@gmail.com
Further details conditions can be seen from Govt. website www.tenderorissa.gov.in
OIPR-32001/32458/1/26-27/0001

Sd./- Executive Engineer, Drainage Division, Khordha



The Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) hopes that poor people are not made to suffer under encroachment drives. They should first be provided an alternative space before action is taken by the government in accordance with law
CHIRAG PASWAN | UNION MINISTER

DEAD BODIES RECOVERED FROM HOUSE COMPOUND

Police Monday recovered two bodies buried in the compound of a house in Nedumkandam in this hill district while searching for a missing woman and her son who had been staying there, officials said



of the day quote

Brothers and sisters, go and vote on the 29th, do not worry about the goons. The Election Commission has made extensive security arrangements, and I am telling you that even though the BJP will come to power, central forces will remain here for 60 days



AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

It is my responsibility. This soil belongs to all equally. Leaders from Delhi and Gujarat are now asking for proof of our citizenship after 79 years of Independence



ABHISHEK BANERJEE | SENIOR TMC LEADER

Jammu and Kashmir is now rising with renewed strength to reject the drug menace that corrodes our society. We vow to shield our youth from its grip. I assure the people that the spirit of our land will not be stifled. This is the hour for society to awaken, to fight and to prevail



MANOJ SINHA | J&K LT GOVERNOR

SHORT TAKES

Speeding motorcycle jumps signal; kills 3

Mumbai: A 19-year-old motorcyclist with a woman pillion rider crashed into a pedestrian, leading to the death of all three in an accident at Marine Drive in south Mumbai in the early hours of Monday, police said. The crash occurred around 5.40 am at the Parsi Gymkhana junction signal on N S Road, while the pedestrian was crossing the road, an official said.

5 workers die as crane collapses

Hyderabad: Five migrant labourers were killed and 12 others injured when a crane collapsed at a prefabricated structure manufacturing unit in Shankarpally near here Monday evening, police said. The incident occurred in Mahalingapuram village amid strong winds and rains. As many as 17 workers took shelter in a shed when the crane fell on it. The workers hailed from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha. The exact cause of the crane collapse is under investigation.

Youth Congress, NSUI protest against Trump

New Delhi: The Indian Youth Congress and the NSUI staged protests in Delhi Monday against US President Donald Trump for sharing a social media post on birthright citizenship that described India as a "hellhole". The Youth Congress workers took out a protest march in central Delhi near Teen Murti Circle.

Robbers loot ₹50L cash from SBI branch

Surat: In a daylight heist, a gang of armed robbers targeted a branch of State Bank of India (SBI) in Gujarat's Surat city Monday, looting ₹50 lakh in cash after threatening the staff and customers at gunpoint, police said.

CBI books IRS officer

New Delhi: The CBI has booked a deputy commissioner of customs for allegedly seeking a bribe in the form of 250 grams of gold coins to de-freeze bank accounts of a businessman's jewellery company, officials said Monday. In the FIR, the CBI has named 2014-batch IRS officer Vikas Pal, then posted in Chennai, and his alleged accomplice Mohammed Sabahuddin in the case.

AAP MPs' EXIT

RS records changed, party to move court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: AAP will move court if the seven former party MPs are not disqualified under the anti-defection law, said Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh Monday, as the chairman of the Upper House accepted their merger with the BJP.

Reacting to the chairman's decision, he alleged that the objections raised by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and its demand for their disqualification under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution had not been considered.

"It has been brought to my notice that the party position of the AAP as reflected in the official records, documents, and publications of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat has been altered unilaterally, without any prior intimation to, or concurrence of, the party or its Floor Leader in the House," Singh wrote in his letter to the Secretary General of the Rajya Sabha.

"The Chairman has taken cognisance of the letter submitted by those seven MPs and based on that, accepted their merger. The objection raised by us and the disqualification we sought under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution have not even been considered," Singh said.

He said the party was hopeful that once its letter is examined, the Chairman would act in favour of the Constitution and democracy by disqualifying the seven members.

"If that does not happen, we will approach the court. It is wrong to break a party in this



Raghav compares AAP to toxic workplace

New Delhi: Defending his decision to exit Aam Aadmi Party along with six other MPs, Raghav Chadha Monday alleged that AAP had become a "toxic workplace" where leaders are "silenced" and "stopped" from working. One or two persons can be wrong, but not everyone who left the party, he asserted in a video message while referring to questions on his move to "break relationship" with AAP. AAP's Delhi unit chief Saurabh Bharadwaj hit back, saying Chadha has received backlash for his move as instead of respectfully leaving AAP he conspired with the BJP to harm the party which "gave him everything".

manner," he said.

Singh had written to the Rajya Sabha Chairman Sunday, seeking the disqualification of the seven members and arguing that their move violated the anti-defection provisions under the Constitution.

Seeking clarity, he posed a series of questions to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat. "On what date and on what basis has the party position of the AAP been altered in the records and publications of the Rajya Sabha Secretariat, and which is the competent authority that has approved or sanctioned such

alteration? What are the specific reasons recorded there-of?" he asked.

Singh also sought details regarding the procedure adopted before effecting such changes in the absence of any consultation with the party. Additionally, he demanded clarity on the current officially recorded position of the AAP in the Rajya Sabha, including the number of Members reflected under the party's name and the designation of the Floor Leader.

Calling for swift action, he urged the Secretary General to immediately intervene, conduct a thorough inquiry into the matter, and provide a detailed written response at the earliest, along with copies of all relevant orders, directions, and communications on the basis of which the party's position was altered.

The AAP Friday suffered a jolt when seven of its 10 Rajya Sabha MPs - Raghav Chadha, Ashok Mittal, Sandeep Pathak, Harbhajan Singh, Rajendra Gupta, Vikramjit Sahney and Swati Maliwal - quit and merged with the BJP, alleging that the party had strayed from its principles, values and core morals.

'SARKE CHUNAR' ROW

Sanjay Dutt apologises

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: Actor Sanjay Dutt Monday appeared before the National Commission for Women (NCW) in connection with the controversy over the song 'Sarke Chunar Teri Sarke' and submitted a written apology, expressing regret for any "unintended" harm caused to society.

During the hearing, held under NCW chairperson Vijaya Rahaatkar, the commission raised concerns over alleged vulgarity and indecent representation of women in the song from the movie "KD The Devil" and questioned issues of intent, awareness and accountability.

The chairperson emphasised whether adequate due diligence was undertaken before participating in content that could be perceived as promoting objectification of women, while also underlining the



responsibility of senior and influential public figures in ensuring that their work remains within the bounds of legal and societal standards. As a corrective measure, Dutt committed to sponsoring the education of 50 tribal girl children as part of efforts towards social welfare and women's empowerment, the NCW said in a statement.

Actor Nora Fatehi, who was also summoned, could not appear as she is currently abroad and has sought a fresh date for the hearing.

PRE-POLL VIOLENCE IN WB

TMC MP attacked, CISF jawan shot



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 27: A TMC MP was allegedly attacked and a CISF jawan was shot in separate incidents of violence in southern West Bengal, where elections will be held in the second phase Wednesday.

In Hooghly district, Arambagh MP Mitali Bag Monday alleged that BJP workers vandalised her vehicle at Goghat while she was on her way to attend a rally of party leader Abhishek Banerjee.

Bag claimed that she came under attack near a BJP office and suffered injuries from the shattered windowpane of her vehicle. She alleged that despite being a woman and a Dalit people's representative, she was targeted by "hooligans sheltered by the fascist BJP". She was later admitted to the Arambagh hospital for treatment. Banerjee, who visited Bag at the hospital, condemned the attack, stating that the people of Bengal would give a befitting reply to the BJP. The BJP denied the allegations, calling the episode a "drama" and instead accusing TMC sup-

porters of attacking its leader.

An Election Commission official said a report had been sought on the matter, and CCTV footage from the area was being examined. Central forces were also deployed at the spot, he said. In another incident, a CISF jawan was injured in a firing outside the residence of BJP candidate Pawan Singh in the Bhatpara area of North 24 Parganas district late Sunday night. The injured personnel, identified as Yogesh Sharma, sustained a bullet injury in his leg and was hospitalised. The poll panel has sought a report on the incident.

Police said four people, including a TMC councillor, were arrested in connection with the incident. In the Habra constituency of the district, eight crude bombs were recovered from the premises of a school designated as a polling booth, triggering panic in the area. The explosives were detected during a security check at Habra Dakshin Nimna Buniyadi Prathomik Vidyalaya and were later defused, police said.

SNIPPETS

Kerala fireworks blast toll rises to 17

Thrissur: One more person who was hospitalised following the Mundathikode fireworks explosion died at Thrissur Medical College Monday, police said. With this, the death toll in the incident has risen to 17. According to Thrissur Medical College police, the deceased has been identified as Rakesh (29) of Kundannur, Thrissur, who was engaged in fireworks manufacturing at Mundathikode, where the explosions occurred April 21. Rakesh was active in Thrissur Pooram and Pulikali (tiger dance) circles. Police said Rakesh attempted to escape from the fireworks manufacturing unit after noticing the explosion, but suffered serious burn injuries and was admitted to Thrissur Medical College.

Tiger electrocuted; 25th big cat death in MP since January

Bhopal/Seoni: A sub-adult tiger was found electrocuted, and its carcass dumped into a farm well in Seoni district of Madhya Pradesh, taking the number of big cat deaths in the state to 25 since January, forest officials said Monday. The farmer, who owns the well, has been arrested, a day after the carcass was recovered. Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) L Krishnamoorthy told PTI that the tiger, aged around one-and-a-half to two years, was electrocuted in a revenue area under the South Seoni forest division. Postmortem of the carcass was conducted as per National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) guidelines. Officials said field-level inquiry found evidence of electrocution, with burnt wires, pegs, and other electrical material recovered from a spot about 50 metres from the well. Sub-divisional forest officer Yogesh Kumar Patel said the carcass was dumped into the well after electrocution by unidentified persons. The carcass was spotted April 26 by labourers working in a farmer's field, who alerted authorities.

Two arrested after woman shot dead during religious ceremony in Shimla

Shimla: Two persons have been arrested after a 26-year-old woman was shot dead during a religious ceremony at a village in Shimla, police said Monday. The accused have been identified as Rajat Sohta (28) and Amit alias Rohit Bhapta (32), both residents of Rohru. The incident occurred Sunday during a consecration ceremony of a newly constructed temple of a local deity in Kulgaon village. While everyone was dancing, the accused fired a bullet -- prima facie, as part of the celebration, according to the police. The bullet hit Ritika, a resident of Chidgaon in Rohru, and killed her on the spot, police said, adding that the accused then fled the scene. Police reached the village as soon as information about the incident was received and recovered the body. Crucial evidence was collected from the spot, and the weapon used in the incident was also seized, police said. After a search, the two accused were taken into custody, they added.



A man splashes water on his face to get respite from the heat on a hot summer day, in Bikaner, Rajasthan

PTI PHOTO

Bulandshahr triple murder accused injured in encounter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bulandshahr (UP), April 27: A person involved in the murder of three members of a family following an argument over smearing cake during a birthday party here was injured in an encounter when he attempted to flee police custody, officials said Monday.

The case stems from an incident that happened in the Bulandshahr district at a gym Saturday night, where a birthday party was being held for gym trainer Jeetu.

The celebration took a tragic turn after an altercation over to smearing of cake escalated into the killing of three people -- Amardeep (30), Manish (28), and Akash (18), the officials said.

All three belonged to the same family, officials said. A family member of the victims, Sanjay, said Manish was his younger brother, Akash his nephew and Amardeep his uncle's son.

Khurja Circle officer Shobhit Kumar said that while all angles are being probed, prima facie it has come to light that the argument broke out over smearing of cake.

A case was registered in connection with the incident, and three accused -- Rupesh, Mayank and Naresh -- were arrested and questioned, police said.

During interrogation, Mayank revealed that he had hidden an illegal firearm under a flyover. Acting on his disclosure, a police team took him to the spot Monday for recovery of the weapon, they said.

According to the police, Mayank attempted to escape from custody and opened fire at the team using the concealed weapon with an intent to kill.

The police retaliated in self-defence, during which the accused sustained a bullet injury in his leg and was subsequently overpowered and arrested, officials said.

CO Kumar said an illegal .315 bore country-made pistol and an empty cartridge were recovered from the accused.

SC questions charge of rape in live-in relationship

The observation was made by Justice BV Nagarathna while hearing a petition filed by a woman accusing a man of rape, assault, and exploitation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: Where is the question of an offence when a relationship is consensual? the Supreme Court Monday asked a woman who had challenged an order of the Madhya Pradesh High Court that had quashed an FIR against her former live-in partner in a case of alleged sexual assault on a false promise of marriage.



A bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan noted that the woman lived together with the man and also had a child from him.

"Where is the question of offence when there is a consensual relationship? They were living together and she also

brother-in-law.

The court was also told that the accused had promised to marry her and sexually exploited her.

Justice Nagarathna then asked, "Why did she go and live with him before marriage?"

"She lived with him. She had a child from him. He walks out because there is no marriage bond. Legal bond is not there. He walks out, that is the risk in a live-in relationship. So once he walks out, it does not become a criminal offence," she said.

The woman's lawyer submitted that the accused was already married and had concealed this fact.

"See, if there was marriage, the question of her rights would have been better. She could have filed regarding bigamy.

She could have filed for maintenance. She would have got those reliefs. Now since there is no marriage, they live together, this is the risk. They can walk out any day. What do we do?" Justice Nagarathna said.

She suggested that the woman could pursue remedies, such as maintenance for the child, and asked the parties to go for mediation.

"Even if he goes to jail, what will she gain? We can think of some maintenance for the child. Child is now seven years (old). At least, some monetary compensation can be made for the child," Justice Nagarathna said.

The apex court issued a notice in the matter and asked the parties to explore if a settlement could be reached between the petitioner and the accused.



Even if they (congress) did not want to support the resolution, they could have put forward their views. But their decision to stage a walkout (boycott) reflects their anti-women mindset. They do not want that women should get their rights

RESULTS OF GUJ LOCAL BODY ELECTIONS TO BE OUT TODAY

Counting of votes for local body elections held in Gujarat a day before will be held April 28, with the outcome of one of the largest electoral exercises expected to reflect the general mood of voters ahead of the next year's assembly elections



of the day uote

There is nothing to do with ideology in changing a company. But if someone agrees with the ideology of a political party, only then does he join it

Till very recently, the BJP had serious questions on their (MPs) integrity and claimed to have solid evidence on them but all that is now conveniently forgotten. The ED was raiding some of these MPs until recently but one can bet that those will also come to a stop now

This is a party that has lost a prime minister to the bullets of terrorists, and despite that, they are making such statements. This is not 'mohabbat ki dukaan' but 'samvidhan ka apmaan' and 'nafrat ke bhaijaan'. This is the true face of the Congress party

Shah: Central forces will stay in WB for 60 days after polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 27: Central forces will remain in West Bengal for 60 more days after the assembly polls, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said Monday and asked voters to cast their votes without fear of "Didi's goons" in the final phase, a remark signalling the Centre's commitment to prevent possible post-poll violence.

Shah made the remarks while addressing a gathering on the last day of the election campaign after leading a massive roadshow in Behala, where voting will take place Wednesday during the second and final phase of the West Bengal assembly polls.

Voting was held in 152 constituencies April 23 during the first phase of elections for the 294-member Assembly. A record 93 per cent voter turnout was registered in the first phase. Votes will be counted May 4.

"Brothers and sisters, go and vote on the 29th, do not worry about Didi's (Mamata Banerjee's) goons. The Election Commission has deployed CAPF at every nook and corner, and I am telling you that even though the BJP will come to power after the elections, central forces will remain here for 60 more days," he said.

The road show, organised in support of BJP candidates for Behala Purbia and Behala Paschim, turned the south Kolkata neighbourhood into a sea of saffron on the final day of campaigning. Standing atop an open-hood vehicle, Shah waved at supporters and showered flower petals on crowds lining both sides of the road.

Asserting that there was a strong wave in favour of the BJP, Shah said that once voted to power, the party would take strict ac-



tion against infiltrators and those involved in political violence.

Earlier this month, Election Commission officials said that as many as 500 CAPF companies will remain deployed across West Bengal for post-poll law and order duties even after the declaration of results. They will stay "till further orders of the EC," they said.

Each CAPF company comprises around 100 personnel. A record 2,450 central paramilitary companies, comprising nearly 2.5 lakh personnel, have been deployed across the state for the assembly polls. Of these, 2,321 CAPF companies have been deployed for the second phase of polling.

Amit Shah's statement that CAPF would remain in West Bengal for "60 more days" even after polling is widely viewed through the prism of the 2021 post-poll violence in the state.

After the results of the 2021 Assembly elections were declared May 2, widespread violence was reported across several districts, with allegations of murders, arson, looting, assaults, sexual violence and forced displacement of opposition workers, particularly involving clashes between BJP and TMC supporters.

Cong leader's remarks on US shooting spark row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: The BJP Monday asked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to condemn his party MLA Vijay Wadetiwar's remarks, alleging the legislator justified the shooting at an event attended by US President Donald Trump in Washington and was "praying for a similar attack" on Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In a video shared by the ruling party, the Maharashtra MLA purportedly says, "As you sow, so shall you reap. Whatever one does, one has to face the consequences," while alleging that Trump, during his tenure in the highest office, has sought to dominate other countries and has "disturbed" global peace. He allegedly went on to add that a "similar sentiment" exists in India.

Trump, First Lady Melania Trump, Vice President J D Vance and other top officials were evacuated unharmed from the annual dinner of the White House Correspondents' Association at Washington Hilton after a man armed with multiple weapons fired shots outside the hotel ballroom.

Posting a video clip of Wadetiwar's remarks, BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla alleged that the Congress has gone beyond political criticism and has endorsed the attack.

"In opposing Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Congress party is now going against the country. Vijay Wadetiwar has justified the shooting attempt on Trump and said that a similar sentiment exists in India. In a way, he is hoping that such an incident happens here too," he said in a video post on X.

Poonawalla also accused the MLA of making controversial



Maharashtra MLA Vijay Wadetiwar's remarks on the Trump shooting have sparked controversy

The BJP accuses Wadetiwar of justifying the attack and hoping for a similar incident targeting PM Modi

BJP leaders are demanding an apology from the Congress party and Rahul Gandhi

The controversy highlights the escalating political tensions and accusations between the BJP and Congress

remarks earlier, including on "Operation Sindoor", and allegedly giving a clean chit to Pakistani terrorists in the 26/11 attacks.

"He has now gone beyond and made the most obnoxious comment," he said.

The BJP spokesperson accused the Congress leaders, including its president Mallikarjun Kharge, of repeatedly using abusive language against Prime Minister Modi, saying such statements reflect a "dangerous and irresponsible mindset".

"You can hate the BJP, but why would you want such things to happen in this country? And why would you pray or hope for it?"

"They have abused the prime

minister over 150 times and issued threats against him. And now they have stooped to this. Only because they oppose the BJP, they would even justify such incidents involving someone holding a constitutional position," he said.

In another post on X, he also referred to alleged remarks by Kharge in which he described the BJP and the RSS as "poisonous snakes" that must be finished and called Modi a "terrorist".

Demanding an apology, Poonawalla said this reflects the "true face" of the Congress and amounts to an insult to the Constitution.

"This is a party that has lost a prime minister to the bullets of terrorists, and despite that, they are making such statements. This is not 'mohabbat ki dukaan' but 'samvidhan ka apmaan' and 'nafrat ke bhaijaan'. This is the true face of the Congress party," he said.

"Another BJP national spokesperson, Pradeep Bhandari, called the Congress a "front of the tukde-tukde gang (anti-nationals)".

"Congress is an urban naxal party. If Congress cannot defeat Prime Minister Narendra Modi democratically, it now wishes for an attack on him," he said in a post on X.

EXCISE CASE

Kejriwal refuses to appear before Justice Sharma

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal has written to Delhi High Court Justice Swarna Kanta Sharma, saying he will not appear in the excise case personally or through a lawyer before her, the party said Monday.

Pointing to a "grave miscarriage of justice", Kejriwal, in a four-page letter, said he has "serious and unreconciled" concerns regarding the matter.

Kejriwal later posted a video message on X, in which he said that his fight is "not about winning or losing, but about right and wrong".

He also said he is preparing to go to the apex court against the earlier order given by Justice Sharma in the matter.

"People can ask me that if I am unsatisfied with the resusculation order, then why do I not approach the Supreme Court? I am preparing for that, this is a very sensitive case."

"Keeping in mind the law, respect and public trust in judiciary, I am taking one step at a time. I am not taking this step in ego, rebellion or as an insult to judiciary," Kejriwal said in his video. The Delhi chief minister wrote in the letter, "I have decided that I shall not participate in the further proceedings in this matter, either in person or through counsel. I do not take this step lightly."

"The principle that justice must not only be done, but must also be seen to be done, is among the most sacred assurances that a court gives to a citizen in a democracy," he said in a statement.

The assurance cannot be honoured by asking the citizen to ignore what "anyone can plainly see" in a case like this, he added in the letter.

POST OF THE DAY

Maharashtra is burning. According to regional media, seven people have died of a suspected heat stroke. It includes a 9-month old baby in Latur. She was found unresponsive in her cradle while her mother was busy with work. Most of the victims are farmers, or people living in rural areas. The temperatures are consistently above 40, and we're not even in May. What's worse is we do not seem to have a proper action plan, and we're brazenly chopping trees and screwing up the environment instead.

Govt asks states to step up fire safety in healthcare facilities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: The Centre has asked states and Union Territories to operationalise dedicated Heat Stroke Management Units at all health facilities and ensure adequate preparedness of ambulance services in view of the expected above-normal heatwave days during the summer season.

In a letter to chief secretaries of all states and UTs, the Union Health Secretary Punya Salila Srivastava reiterated the need for the timely dissemination of early warnings and real-time reporting of heatstroke cases on the Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP) portal.

The communication, dated April 23, referred to the India Meteorological Department's updated seasonal outlook for the hot weather season from April to June 2026 and the monthly outlook for April 2026.

dination with the Directorate General Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guards under the Ministry of Home Affairs, covering district-level health facilities and hospitals attached to medical colleges.

The theme for this year is "Safe School, Safe Hospital & Fire Safety Aware Society Together for Fire Prevention", aimed at reinforcing awareness, preparedness and adherence to prescribed safety measures across all levels of healthcare delivery. The ministry has shared key resources, including a day-wise schedule of activities, an updated fire safety assessment checklist and a fire safety pledge to be administered across institutions to build collective commitment.

It has also asked healthcare facilities, especially medical colleges, district hospitals and multi-specialty hospitals, to conduct fire safety assessments using the updated checklist and submit reports through the Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP).



West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee with party leaders and workers during a roadshow amid the ongoing West Bengal Assembly elections, in Kolkata

Health Ministry issues nationwide heatwave alert

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

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SHORT TAKES

St Xavier row: Cong MLA files fresh plaint

Panaji: A Goa Congress MLA Monday lodged a fresh complaint against right-wing Speaker Gautam Khattar, arrested over his alleged derogatory statements about St Francis Xavier, citing an old video of him making remarks against the patron saint of the coastal state. In a police complaint filed at Panaji police station, MLA Carlos Alvares Ferreira highlighted a video posted by Khattar on Facebook in October 2025, in which he allegedly made statements against St Xavier.

Cyprus Prez to visit India next month

Ahmedabad: India can expect a stronger presence in Europe through Cyprus, whose President Nikos Christodoulides will arrive in Mumbai next month, a visit which will boost bilateral ties, High Commissioner Evagoras Vryonides said Monday. President Christodoulides will visit Mumbai May 20 and then head to New Delhi May 22, Vryonides, Cyprus's High Commissioner to India, said.

3 child marriage bids foiled

Beed: The police in Maharashtra's Beed foiled three child marriages in the district in one week and rescued three girls, an official said Monday. The anti-human trafficking unit (AHTU) of the Beed police Sunday foiled a child marriage bid in Dahiphal in Beed tehsil, where a 15-year-old girl was reportedly being married off to a 24-year-old man, the official said.

'Marathi must for all commercial vehicle drivers'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 27: Drivers of all commercial passenger vehicles in Maharashtra must have a working knowledge of Marathi, Maharashtra Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik said Monday, while warning of strict action against those who refuse to learn the language.

Sarnaik said demands of autorickshaw and taxi unions to give non-Marathi drivers a fixed time to learn the language were reasonable and are being considered, he said. The minister's comments have come amid appeals from various quarters to defer the government's plan to make Marathi compulsory for autorickshaw and taxi driv-

ers from May 1.

Speaking at a meeting held at Mantralaya, the minister said the state government is firm on the language requirement, as drivers regularly interact with passengers and should be able to communicate in basic Marathi. Drivers of all commercial passenger vehicles in the state must have a working knowledge of Marathi, he said, without specifying the categories of vehicles.

Transport commissioner Rajesh Narvekar, labour leaders Shashank Rao and Haji Arafat Shaikh, and Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Nirupam, along with representatives of autorickshaw and taxi unions, were present at the meeting, an



official release issued here said. Sarnaik said while Maharashtra is a progressive state and employment generation is a key priority of the government, having a basic knowledge of Marathi is

a minimum expectation while doing business in the state and dealing with the public.

"As the state language, Marathi must be respected, and non-Marathi drivers should

The state government is firm on the language requirement for drivers interacting with passengers

Autorickshaw and taxi unions have requested time for non-Marathi drivers to learn the language

The government plans to introduce a short course on functional Marathi for drivers

Strict action will be taken against drivers who refuse to learn Marathi

learn it," he said.

The minister said the government is taking steps to teach drivers basic Marathi needed for day-to-day communi-

tion, and organisations such as the Mumbai Marathi Sahitya Sangh and Konkan Marathi Sahitya Parishad, along with writers, have supported the initiative. Autorickshaw and taxi unions have also agreed to cooperate, he added.

He further said that a meeting of 59 regional and deputy regional transport officers has been scheduled at the Transport Commissionerate on Tuesday to discuss the issue in detail and take appropriate decisions. The government is also planning to introduce a short course on functional Marathi for drivers and will conduct awareness campaigns to help them learn the language, he added.

international



An entire nation is being humiliated by the Iranian leadership, especially by these so-called Revolutionary Guards. And so I hope that this ends as quickly as possible
FRIEDRICH MERZ | CHANCELLOR, GERMANY

CLASHES IN INDONESIA'S PAPUA
Students and civilians clashed with law enforcement personnel in Indonesia's insurgency-hit Papua Monday during a protest attended by hundreds of residents demanding the withdrawal of military personnel from the region, a police official said. A military operation conducted in the region earlier this month allegedly resulted in the death of 15 people, including women and children



of the day quote

The shooting incident has come to China's attention. We oppose and condemn illegal violence
LIN JIAN | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, CHINA

We take a lesson other jurisdictions that had the foresight many decades ago to start sovereign wealth funds. In some cases they began with a domestic focus then outgrew the scale of the domestic focus
MARK CARNEY | PRIME MINISTER, CANADA

The unity or division of the Church should not revolve around sexual matters. I believe there are much greater and more important issues such as justice, equality... that would all take priority before that particular issue
POPE LEO | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

Putin meets Iran's FM Araghchi



Russia has offered to mediate to try to help restore calm to the Middle East following US and Israeli strikes on Iran, which Moscow has condemned

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, April 27: Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi Monday met Russian President Vladimir Putin, who hailed the Iranian people for fighting bravely and heroically for their sovereignty and said Moscow is ready to do its best to help bring peace to West Asia as soon as possible.

Araghchi, who held talks with Omani and Pakistani leadership before arriving in Russia, met Putin in St. Petersburg and thanked him for supporting Iran, state-owned TASS news agency reported.

"Russia is ready to do everything in its power to ensure that peace in the Middle East is achieved as soon as possible," Putin said during his meeting with Araghchi, which was also attended by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Revealing that he received a message from Iranian Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei last week, Putin asked Araghchi to convey his "gratitude for this message and best wishes for his health and well-being."

He praised the Iranian people for fighting "bravely and heroically" for their sovereignty, Iran's state-run PRESS TV reported.

"We really hope that, based on the courage and desire for independence, the Iranian people, under the guidance of the new leader, will weather this difficult period of trials and peace will come," Putin said.

He also stressed that Russia "intends to maintain" its strategic relations with Iran.

Araghchi said that the world witnessed Iran's strength in countering the US during the recent war, and that the Islamic Republic is a "stable and powerful establishment."

"With their courage, the Iranian people succeeded in resisting the US aggression and will be able to endure it," he said.

He said that it became clear that Iran has "great friends and allies" like Russia, and conveyed "warmest greetings" from Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei and President Masoud Pezeshkian to the Russian leader.

Araghchi said relations between Moscow and Tehran represent a "strategic partnership at the highest level" and will continue to develop "regard-

less of circumstances." "We are grateful to you for the solid and strong positions in support of the Islamic Republic of Iran," he said.

Araghchi arrived in Russia after his whirlwind trip to Islamabad, which, according to him, was "very productive" and involved "good consultations" with Pakistan's Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, amid uncertainty over the second round of peace talks to resolve the war in West Asia.

"We held good consultations with our friends in Pakistan. The trip was successful. We assessed the outcome of our recent (meetings) and discussed in what direction and under what conditions talks can move on," Araghchi said in a video posted on his Telegram channel upon his arrival in St Petersburg.

Referring to the second round of talks between the US and Iran to resolve the conflict in West Asia, Araghchi said, "Developments have taken place in the negotiations."

"Despite some progress in earlier rounds, the talks failed to reach their objectives due to the Americans' approach, the excessive demands they made, and the wrong approaches they adopted. Therefore, it was necessary to consult with our friends in Pakistan to review the latest situation," Iran's official news agency IRNA quoted him as saying.

Russia is ready to do everything in its power to ensure that peace in the Middle East is achieved as soon as possible
VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

WASHINGTON DINNER SHOOTING

Suspect set to appear in court

REUTERS

Washington, April 27: The man accused of shooting a US Secret Service agent as he tried to breach security at a Washington dinner where President Donald Trump was present is expected in court Monday to face criminal charges.

Cole Tomas Allen, 31, of Torrance, California, is scheduled to make his first appearance in Washington federal court, two days after authorities said they foiled an attack at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner, an annual black-tie gathering of journalists and politicians.

Charges have not yet been formally filed, but US Attorney Jeanine Pirro, the top federal prosecutor in Washington, said Allen would be charged with assault on a federal officer and using a firearm during a crime of violence. Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche said other charges, including attempted assassination, were possible, but that the investigation remains ongoing.

Allen left a manifesto with family members referring to himself as the "Friendly Federal Assassin" and discussing plans to target senior Trump administration officials, who were present in the hotel ballroom. Blanche said his targets likely included Trump himself.

Allen booked a room at the Washington Hilton hotel, where the dinner took place, and traveled from California to Wash-



Suspect Cole Allen expected to face assault, firearm charges

Allen divulged plans to target Trump officials, authorities say

Shooting targeted prominent Washington gala

ington by train, officials said.

The shooting Saturday rattled the press dinner, a prominent event on Washington's social calendar, sending attendees scrambling under tables and prompting law enforcement to whisk senior officials out of the room. Trump, who was set to deliver remarks later in the evening, was rushed off the stage by security personnel after shots were fired.

The proceeding Monday is expected to be brief. A judge will advise Allen of his legal rights and prosecutors are expected to seek his detention while the case moves forward.

Allen has not yet responded to the allegations. It was not immediately clear if he had a lawyer.

The suspect allegedly fired a shotgun at a Secret Service agent at a checkpoint inside the hotel before being tackled and arrested, according to authorities. Video footage Trump posted online showed the suspect sprinting through a hallway outside the ballroom.

SHORT TAKES

14 killed in plane crash near Juba

Juba (South Sudan): A Cessna aircraft crashed Monday on the outskirts of the South Sudanese capital, killing all 13 passengers and the pilot, the country's civil aviation authority said. The authority said preliminary reports indicate that the plane may have crashed due to adverse weather conditions that caused poor visibility. Among those onboard were two Kenyan nationals, while the rest were South Sudanese, officials said. The civil aviation authority said a team had been dispatched to the site, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) outside Juba, to gather information and support emergency services.

Russian drone attack on Odesa wounds 14

Odesa: An overnight Russian drone attack on Ukraine's southern city of Odesa wounded more than a dozen people, including two children, and damaged residential buildings, Ukrainian officials said Monday. The strikes caused the worst damage in the historic central Prymorskyi district, where residential buildings, a hotel and facilities were damaged, said Serhiy Lysak, the head of the local military administration, on Telegram. Most of the injured people were located there, Lysak said.

Starmer faces vote over Mandelson probe

London: Britain's parliament will vote Tuesday on a possible inquiry into Prime Minister Keir Starmer, looking at whether he misled the House of Commons over the appointment of former US ambassador Peter Mandelson. Any such inquiry could have serious implications for Starmer's future. He has so far resisted pressure to quit over his decision to hire Mandelson, but if found to have knowingly misled parliament his position would likely become untenable. House of Commons Speaker Lindsay Hoyle said he had approved a request from opposition Conservative Party leader Kemi Badenoch for parliament to debate and vote on whether the Committee of Privileges should look into the matter.

Bahrain revokes citizenship of 69

Bahrain: Bahrain has revoked the citizenship of 69 people over what it described as sympathy with Iran's hostile acts and collaboration with foreign entities, the kingdom's interior ministry said in a statement. The ministry said that the 69 people included accused individuals and their family members, and that they were all of non-Bahraini origin.

Israeli strikes hit east Lebanon



REUTERS

Beirut, April 27: The Israeli military began carrying out strikes in eastern Lebanon Monday, expanding the scope of its bombing campaign during a ceasefire that has failed to fully halt hostilities with Lebanese armed group Hezbollah.

The strikes on Lebanon's eastern Bekaa Valley marked the first time the area has been hit since a US-brokered ceasefire came into force April 16, significantly reducing the pace of attacks without entirely stopping the exchanges of fire.

Israel has continued to carry out strikes across southern Lebanon, and its troops are occupying a strip of the country's south, destroying homes they describe as infrastructure being used by Hezbollah. The Iran-backed

group, meanwhile, has kept up its drone and rocket attacks against Israeli troops in Lebanon and on northern Israel.

A spokesperson for the Israeli military said it was beginning to strike Hezbollah infrastructure in the Bekaa as well as areas in southern Lebanon. Security sources told Reuters strikes had hit near the town of Nabi Chit, near Lebanon's eastern border with Syria, with no immediate reports of casualties.

Lebanon's state media agency reported several strikes across the south that left at least three people wounded.

Hezbollah said Monday it had attacked an Israeli tank in southern Lebanon with a drone. The Israeli military said a drone launched by Hezbollah exploded near its troops in southern Lebanon, without causing casualties.

LEBANESE PRESIDENT TAKES INDIRECT SWIPE AT HEZBOLLAH

More than 2,500 people have been killed in Israeli strikes across Lebanon since March 2, when Hezbollah fired on Israel in support of its ally Iran and triggered an Israeli ground and air campaign that has left swathes of southern Lebanon in ruins.

The war has deepened differences among people in Lebanon, who are divided over Hezbollah's arms and over prospective peace talks with Israel.

The Lebanese and Israeli ambassadors to the United States have met twice to discuss the ceasefire, intended to pave the way for direct talks to secure a peace deal between the long-time foes.

Hezbollah fiercely opposes direct negotiations, with its head Naim Qassem describing the talks in a written statement Monday as a "humiliating and unnecessary concession."

"Let it be clear, these direct negotiations and their outcomes are considered nonexistent to us and do not concern us at all. We will continue our defensive resistance for Lebanon and its people," Qassem said.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun has defended the government's move to engage in face-to-face talks and Monday made a jab at Hezbollah without naming the group.



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un honours members of the North Korean troops killed while fighting for Russia in the war against Ukraine during the opening ceremony of the Memorial Museum of Combat Feats at the Overseas Military Operations, in Pyongyang, North Korea

Trains collide on outskirts of Indonesian capital, official says

Jakarta: Two trains collided late Monday in the city of Bekasi adjoining the Indonesian capital Jakarta, an official said, adding that it has affected train operations. The collision took place in Bekasi train station between a commuter line and a long-distance train, the spokesperson of the commuter line operator Karina Amanda told Reuters. There were no reports of casualties, Karina said, adding that "we are focusing in evacuating passengers and train crew". The cause of the crash was not immediately clear, she said. Footage from local broadcaster Kompas TV showed some ambulances at Bekasi station. Rescuers from Indonesia's rescue agency were also in attendance to help evacuate passengers.

Hafiz Saeed's close aide, key LeT figure shot dead in Pak

Lahore: Sheikh Yousaf Afridi, a key Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) figure and a close associate of the Mumbai terror attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed, was shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, police said Monday. The incident took place in Landi Kotal in the Khyber region, some 250 kms from Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan. A source in the police told PTI that unknown armed assailants opened indiscriminate fire on Afridi, resulting in his death on the spot. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack. Afridi is said to be a key figure within the regional structure of the banned LeT. He also reportedly played a role in the recruitment and coordination of the terror group's activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. "The incident has sparked widespread anger in the area, and local authorities have launched an investigation to apprehend those responsible for his killing," the source said.

Tsunami survivor battles wildfire to protect hometown in Japan

REUTERS

Otsuchi, Japan, April 27: Ryota Haga was in high school when the biggest earthquake ever recorded in Japan triggered a deadly tsunami and swept away his family home in the quiet northeastern town of Otsuchi in March 2011.

Now 31 with a wife and toddler, the volunteer firefighter faces another natural disaster: this time a wildfire raging for a sixth day and threatening his community after burning through more than 1,600 hectares of forest as of Monday morning.

"It's been 15 years since the (Great East Japan) Earthquake, and our lives were finally begin-

ning to settle down," Haga said at the end of another draining day battling the blaze Sunday.

"We can't let people lose what is precious to them all over again. The fire is spreading and our exhaustion is at a limit, but it's our hometown. We will protect it at all costs, even if it feels like we're running on empty."

Otsuchi was among the hardest-hit coastal towns in 2011, when a tsunami estimated around 10 metres (33 ft) high swept through the small fishing town. Nearly 1,300 residents, or about a tenth of its population, perished, including its mayor.

The scale of the current fire is nothing that Haga has ever experienced, he said. Some 1,400 firefighters and dozens of



Self-Defense Force personnel have been deployed so far, with no prospects yet of bringing the blaze under control despite

- Over 1,400 firefighters deployed, blaze remains uncontrolled despite rain forecast
- Haga worries about shortage of firefighters as wildfires increase and population declines
- A tenth of Otsuchi's population died in March 2011 tsunami

some scattered rain forecast Monday.

While Japan has experienced relatively few large-scale wildfires compared with other parts of the world, climate change has increased their frequency, especially as the early spring months before the humid rainy season have been hot, dry and with winds that can whip up flames. Another wildfire started

in Fukushima, also in Japan's northeastern region Sunday.

For Haga, the increasing instances of wildfires have added to a longer-term concern over the acute shortage of firefighters as the population declines and ages. Already, the fire brigade he belongs to is below the staffing level set by authorities, he says.

"If a forest fire breaks out when I'm in my 50s or 60s, and I'm the one gasping for breath while trying to fight it, I don't think we'll be able to stop it," he said.

Still, Haga grasps onto the hope that the firefighters' single-minded determination to save the community will not be wasted.



Exporters are effectively being asked to absorb open-ended financial liability for circumstances entirely beyond their control
PRIYANKA MITTAL | CHAIRPERSON, BRFED

PEAK POWER DEMAND MODERATES

India's peak power demand moderated to 238.15 GW Sunday, down from the record 256 GW the previous day, as most commercial and industrial establishments remained closed. According to the Power Ministry data, the peak power demand met, or the highest supply in a day, was 237.21 GW, leaving a shortfall of 0.93 GW Sunday. Thus, the peak power demand Sunday was 238.15 GW



of the day quote

Geopolitical uncertainty, momentum in gold prices and portfolio diversification preferences are expected to continue fuelling investment demand for gold, with its share in overall gold consumption is projected at 35-40 per cent in FY27
AKHIL GOYAL | DIRECTOR, CAREEDGE

Lack of awareness continues to be one of the reasons solar has not expanded to its full potential. We have been making continuous efforts to spread awareness about renewable energy and help build confidence around solar solutions
VINOD SHARMA | MD, JOINT SOLAR

Land acquisition has increasingly become both capital-intensive and regulation-driven in the last few years
ANUJI PURI | CHAIRMAN, ANAROCK

India-NZ FTA cuts tariffs, boosts exports

REUTERS

New Delhi/Wellington, April 27: India and New Zealand signed a free trade agreement (FTA) Monday, lowering tariffs on key fruit imports such as kiwifruit and apples, expanding opportunities for Indian exports and easing visa access as the nations deepen economic ties.

Concluded in December after about nine months of talks, the pact is one of the South Asian nation's fastest trade deals, and will cut or remove tariffs on 95% of New Zealand's exports to India, including seafood, iron, steel and scrap aluminium.

"The benefits of this FTA are widespread," New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon said in a statement, adding that it would open the doors of opportunity to 1.4 billion consumers in the Indian market.

"New Zealand has also committed to invest \$20 billion," Indian Trade Minister Piyush Goyal said after signing the pact with his counterpart Todd McClay in the presence of business leaders from both countries.

In agriculture, India kept sensitive sectors such as dairy, coffee, sugar, spices, edible oils and rubber outside market ac-



cess commitments to protect domestic producers, he said.

That was a disappointment for New Zealand's dairy industry, its largest export sector.

The agreement is part of India's push to diversify exports amid global trade tension, such as uncertainty over US tariffs and the Middle East conflict.

New Delhi has also advanced trade talks with Britain, Oman and the European Union as it pushes for wider market access with major partners.

Amid the ongoing geopolitical tension in West Asia, the signing of the FTA between India and New Zealand comes as a breath of fresh air for India's textile and apparel exporters
ASHWIN CHANDRAN | CHAIRMAN, CITI

Under the deal, New Zealand will offer market access across 118 services sectors from the professional, audio-visual and

- PACT CUTS OR REMOVES TARIFFS ON 95% OF NEW ZEALAND EXPORTS
- MORE THAN HALF OF NEW ZEALAND GOODS TO BE DUTY-FREE FROM DAY ONE
- SENSITIVE AGRICULTURE ITEMS LIKE DAIRY, COFFEE OUT OF DEAL
- ALL INDIAN GOODS TO GET DUTY-FREE ACCESS TO NEW ZEALAND
- NEW ZEALAND PARLIAMENT STILL NEEDS TO RATIFY DEAL

computer-related to construction, telecoms and tourism.

The deal also provides a quota of 5,000 temporary employment visas for Indian professionals and 1,000 working holiday visas, while easing post-study work rights for Indian students, Indian officials said.

It requires approval from New Zealand's parliament, but is expected to pass after support expressed by the opposition Labour Party last week. Trade agreements in New Zealand have historically received bipartisan support.

TARIFF CUTS OVER A PERIOD OF TIME
The pact will lower tariffs on

wine over 10 years and allow immediate duty-free access for dairy and other food ingredients meant for re-export, while phasing in duty-free access for bulk infant formula and other high-value dairy products over seven years, and halving a tariff on high-value milk albumins within a New Zealand-specific quota.

McClay said the deal would support New Zealand's goal of doubling exports in 10 years. "This deal will deliver thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in additional exports."

More than half of New Zealand's exports to India will become duty-free immediately, with tariffs on other products reduced over time, New Zealand said in a statement.

The deal is expected to boost key Indian export sectors such as textiles, leather, pharmaceuticals, engineering goods and automobiles, while allowing duty-free access to industrial inputs such as wooden logs, coking coal and metal scrap.

Two-way trade remains modest. Indian data showed merchandise trade at about \$1.3 billion in 2024/25, while total goods and services trade was estimated at roughly \$2.4 billion in 2024.

DOUBLE PRICES

India to import 64LT urea, 19LT of other fertilisers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: India plans to import 64 lakh tonnes of urea and 19 lakh tonnes of other fertilisers this kharif season as the West Asia crisis has driven up global prices by nearly double, raising import bill, the government said Monday.

Addressing an inter-ministerial briefing on the impact of recent developments in West Asia, Aparna S Sharma, Additional Secretary in the Department of Fertilisers, said retail prices of urea and Di Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) would remain unchanged, and there is adequate supply for the kharif season.

"MRP of fertilisers like urea and DAP remain the same. There has been no change," she said.

Urea continues to be sold at ₹266.50 per 45 kg bag and DAP at ₹1,350 per 50 kg bag. Of the planned imports, 9.4 lakh tonne of urea has already been received since the crisis began. Another 13.07 lakh tonnes were secured through a global tender in February, while 25 lakh tonnes more have been tendered and are expected to arrive in May.

"Most of the imports are out of the Strait of Hormuz. We are very much sure that we will be getting the supplies on time," the official said.

On domestic production, Sharma said output had taken a hit in March due to force majeure on gas deliveries, bringing plant utilisation down to 60-65 per cent.

"Now we have taken measures to import gas even at a higher cost. Availability of gas for urea units, which earlier was 60-65 per cent, is now 97 per cent. So our urea production has been very good after that," she said. Post-crisis domestic urea production has reached 35.4 lakh tonne. The government has also floated a global tender for the import of 19 lakh tonnes of non-urea fertilisers, comprising 12 lakh tonnes of DAP, 4 lakh tonnes of Triple Superphosphate (TSP), and 3 lakh tonnes of Ammonium Sulphate, to ensure adequate supplies during the peak kharif season.

Q4 RESULTS

UltraTech Cement posts ₹3K-cr profit

New Delhi: UltraTech Cement, the country's leading cement maker, Monday reported a consolidated net profit of ₹3,000.02 crore during the March quarter. It had posted a net profit of ₹2,474.79 crore in the January-March period a year ago, the Aditya Birla group flagship firm said in a regulatory filing. Revenue from operations was at ₹25,799.47 crore in the March quarter of FY26. It was at ₹23,063.32 crore a year earlier. Total expenses of UltraTech were at ₹21,894.18 crore. During the quarter, the company achieved "highest ever sales volume", it said in an earnings statement. The total consolidated income was at ₹89,089.04 crore for the financial year ended March 31, 2026. For the full year, total grey cement volumes for India were 145 million tonnes.

SBI Card profit rises

New Delhi: SBI Card Monday reported 14 per cent rise in profit to ₹609 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2026. SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd (SBI Card) had earned a profit of ₹534 crore a year ago. Total income improved to ₹5,187 crore from ₹4,832 crore in the year-ago period, a BSE filing by the company promoted by SBI said. For the full fiscal 2025-26, profit increased 13 per cent to ₹2,167 crore from ₹1,916 crore a year ago. Total income increased to ₹20,708 crore from ₹18,637 crore. The size of the company's balance sheet as of March 31, 2026, was ₹66,328 crore against ₹65,546 crore a year ago.

MHRIL profit dips 43%

New Delhi: Mahindra Holidays & Resorts India Ltd Monday reported a 43 per cent decline in consolidated profit after tax to ₹41.49 crore in the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2026, impacted by outgo on impairment charges, new labour code and forex movement. The company had posted a consolidated profit after tax (PAT) of ₹72.94 crore in the same quarter of 2024-25, Mahindra Holidays & Resorts India Ltd (MHRIL) said in a regulatory filing. Revenue from operations in the fourth quarter stood at ₹820.29 crore as against ₹778.83 crore in the year-ago period, it added. In the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, consolidated PAT stood at ₹67 crore as against ₹125.95 crore in the previous year, MHRIL said.

Silver rebounds ₹3,500, gold gains ₹200

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: Silver prices rebounded by ₹3,500 to ₹2.50 lakh per kg in the national capital Monday, while gold edged higher to ₹1.56 lakh per 10 grams amid fresh buying by jewellers and retailers.

The white metal had closed at ₹2,47,000 per kg in the previous session.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, gold of 99.9 per cent purity gained ₹200 to ₹1,56,100 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes).

In the international markets, both spot gold and silver traded marginally lower at \$4,704 and 75.60 per ounce, respectively.

"Spot gold slipped as US-Iran talks stalled, which pushed up oil prices, stoking inflation concerns," Praveen Singh, Head of commodities at Mirae Asset ShareKhan, said.

However, the metal recovered later and was trading steadily at USD 4,710 per ounce amid reports that Iran has given the US a new proposal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz and end the conflict, he added.

The proposal also includes the postponement of nuclear negotiations.

The US Dollar Index was slightly weaker on optimism over peace talks as risk appetite improved.

"Apart from US-Iran talks, the Fed's monetary policy decision due on April 29 is the most crucial event that will impact financial markets as investors fret over jump in oil prices affecting rate cut chances," Singh said.

D-St bounces back after 3-day drop

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 27: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded nearly 1 per cent on Monday, snapping the three-day falling streak following a rally in Reliance Industries and Sun Pharma and positive global trends.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 639.42 points or 0.83 per cent to settle at 77,303.63. During the day, it surged 755.83 points or 0.98 per cent to 77,420.04. The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 194.75 points or 0.81 per cent to close at 24,092.70.

Among the 30-Sensex firms, Sun Pharma jumped 7 per cent after it announced the acquisition of US-based Organon & Co in an all-cash deal at an enterprise valuation of \$11.75 billion, one of the largest overseas buy-

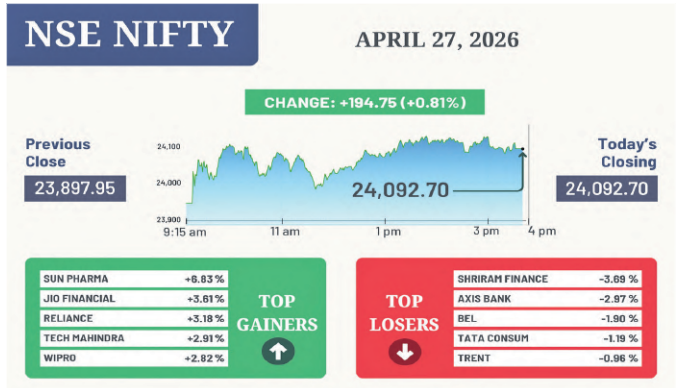
Tata Steel Foundation announces ₹1.2L subsidy for diploma students

POST NEWS NETWORK

Gopalpur, April 27: Tata Steel Foundation (TSF) announced a financial subsidy for students enrolled in core diploma programmes at its technical institutes.

Starting from the Academic Year 2025-26, TSF will provide ₹20,000 per semester, offering total financial support of up to ₹1.2 lakh during the diploma programme.

The subsidy will benefit students studying at JN Tata Technical Education Centre (JNTTEC), Gopalpur, Ganjam, Odisha; RD Tata Technical Education Centre (RDTTEC), Golmuri, Jamshedpur; and Tata Steel Technical Institute (TSTI), Burmamines, Jamshed-



outs by Indian firms. Reliance Industries jumped 2.88 per cent. Adani Ports, Tech Mahindra, Mahindra & Mahindra, NTPC, HCL Tech and Tata Consultancy Services were also among the major gainers.

Axis Bank, Bharat Electronics, Trent and ICICI Bank were

among the laggards from the blue-chip pack.

The BSE SmallCap Select index jumped 2 per cent and Mid-Cap Select index climbed 1.35 per cent. All sectoral indices ended higher. Utilities surged the most by 2.50 per cent, followed by Healthcare (2.43 per cent),

Focused IT (2.41 per cent), Realty (2.35 per cent), IT (2.20 per cent), Power (2.05 per cent) and Services (1.92 per cent).

A total of 3,075 stocks advanced, while 1,288 declined and 193 remained unchanged on the BSE. Among Asian markets, South Korea's benchmark Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, and Shanghai's SSE Composite index ended higher, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index ended lower.

Markets in Europe were trading in positive territory. US markets ended mostly higher Friday. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹8,827.87 crore Friday, according to exchange data.

On Friday, the Sensex dropped 999.79 points or 1.29 per cent to settle at 76,664.21. The Nifty slumped 275.10 points or 1.14 per cent to end at 23,897.95.

Vedanta Aluminium's Mobile Health Units reach over 50,000 residents

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 27: Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest aluminium producer, has provided critical healthcare services to more than 50,000 residents across 18 remote villages in Sundargarh and Jharsuguda districts through its flagship Mobile Health Unit (MHU) services.

Over the last three years, the company has conducted over 3,000 free health camps, addressing vital healthcare needs in underserved areas.

Through the MHUs, Vedanta Aluminium has provided free medical consultations, malaria and seasonal disease screen-



ings, blood sugar testing, and essential medicines, while also conducting over 1,000 structured health awareness sessions on critical topics such as anaemia, breastfeeding, menstrual hygiene, deworming, tobacco cessation, heatstroke prevention, malaria control, and lifestyle-related diseases.

The initiative has also reached over 4,000 children, supporting early medical intervention, nutritional screening, and improved health outcomes during critical developmental years.

In Sundargarh district's Hemgir block, the MHUs cater to villages and settlements including Jamkhani, Jharpalamb, Girisima, Garjanjore, R&R Colony, Ghogharpalli, Mundherkhet, Latapani, Bhograkachar, and Bileimunda, ensuring that residents receive regular health services. Similarly, in Jharsuguda district's Lakhanpur block, the outreach spans Kuraloi, Banjari, Bartap, Pipilmal, Ward No 17, and Katujor.

Sun Pharma to buy Organon in India's largest pharma deal

Upon successful consummation of the transaction, Sun Pharma is poised to be among the top 25 global pharmaceutical companies with a combined revenue of \$12.4bn

REUTERS

New Delhi, April 27: Sun Pharmaceutical Industries will buy US drugmaker Organon & Co in an all-cash deal valued at about \$11.75 billion including debt, for the largest overseas

acquisition by an Indian pharmaceutical company.

The move comes as Sun, India's biggest drugmaker by market value, steps up a push into higher-margin specialty medicines with a sharper focus on areas such as dermatology, oncology and obesity to offset declining US sales.

Shifting tariff policies in the United States have squeezed margins for one of India's drugmakers most exposed to the American market, prompting it to keep open the option of expanding manufacturing there.

Though positive from an earnings standpoint, the deal is unlikely to materially change Sun's position in the United States, where



LANDMARK OVERSEAS DEAL: Sun Pharma's acquisition of Organon will be among the top overseas acquisitions by Indian firms, which include Tata Steel's \$12 billion takeover of Corus for \$12 billion in 2007 and Bharti Airtel's \$10.7 billion deal to buy Kuwait-based Zain Telecom's African business in 2010

Organon has a relatively small footprint, said Shrikant Akolkar of Nuvama In-

stitutional Equities. The acquisition will double Sun's revenue and EBITDA,

- Sun Pharma to buy Organon for \$14 per share
- Deal valued at \$11.75 billion including debt
- Presence in 150 countries, with 18 large markets

adding \$6.2 billion in sales with robust 30% EBITDA margins, Akolkar said, adding that the deal is projected to be 30% to 40% EPS accretive by FY28.

Sun Pharma's shares settled up 7% for a boost of Rs 271.36 billion (\$2.88 billion) in market value, but off a rise of as much as 9% after the news.

"It also gives Sun access to markets such as China, Brazil and other emerging regions

where its presence has been limited, helping it scale up as a branded and specialty drugs player," the pharma analyst added.

Sun Pharma, valued at more than \$40 billion, said it would buy Organon for \$14.00 a share, or a premium of more than 24% to the April 24 closing price. Shares of Organon climbed 16% to \$14.06 in pre-market trade.

It plans to fund the deal through cash and committed bank financing, with Organon carrying net debt of about \$8.6 billion as of December 31, 2025.

For the same period, Sun's debt was roughly \$198.4 million and profit stood at \$1.16 billion.

RCB pacers humiliate DC

Hazlewood, Bhuvneshwar star as RCB complete nine-wicket rout of listless DC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: Royal Challengers Bengaluru rode a storm of sheer pace fury to annihilate Delhi Capitals by nine wickets in their IPL clash here Monday, after unleashing a powerplay spell so vicious that it virtually ended the contest within the first three overs.

It was carnage of the highest order, a powerplay ambush so brutal that the Delhi Capitals never quite recovered as RCB unleashed a devastating new-ball spell to script one of the most dramatic openings in the IPL history.

Josh Hazlewood (4/12) and Bhuvneshwar Kumar (3/5) turned the powerplay into a demolition act, ripping through Delhi with two ruthless three-over bursts that left the hosts gasping at 13 for six.

Only Abhishek Porel (30), David Miller (19) and Kyle Jamieson (12) reached double-digit scores. The home team scored eight fours and a six.

All Delhi could manage was 75 in 16.3 overs but eventually deflected the ignominy of posting lowest IPL score. RCB had managed 49 in 2017 against Kolkata Knight Riders.

Chasing a modest target, RCB openers Virat Kohli (23) and Jacob Bethell (20) ensured a smooth start.

There were no hiccups except that Bethell was done in by an exceptional catch by T



Natarajan off Kyle Jamieson. Devdutt Padikkal scored a fluent 34 as some solid RCB batting took the game away from Delhi in no time.

Kohli's trademark composure combined with Padikkal's free-flowing strokeplay made the chase a mere formality as the duo raced past the finish

Kohli hits 9K runs milestone

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) and Indian iconic batter Virat Kohli wrote another historic chapter in his IPL career, becoming the first batter to complete 9,000 runs in tournament history. Virat achieved this milestone during his side's match at his home stadium of Arun Jaitley Stadium, from where his journey as a cricketer started. He finished off a sweet chase with two back-to-back sixes, scoring 23* in 15 balls, with a strike rate of 153.33. Now, Virat has 9,012 runs in 275 matches and 267 centuries and 66 fifties, an average of 40.05 and a best score of 113*. The now fourth in the Orange Cap race, with 351 runs in eight innings at a strike rate of 162.50, including three fifties and a best



UNWANTED RECORDS

- 75 marks Delhi Capitals' third-lowest IPL total and the lowest of the 2026 season so far
- DC's 13 for 6 in the powerplay is now the lowest in a completed IPL innings, surpassing Rajasthan Royals' 14 for 2 in 2009
- It also places them alongside Kochi Tuskers Kerala (2011) for the most wickets lost in the first six overs of an innings
- DC has now been bowled out under 100 runs 11 times, the most for any team in IPL history

line with ease in 6.3 overs, capping off a dominant night for the visitors.

The packed house came to watch their favourite batter but Kohli didn't get the opportunity to enthrall his fans much due to a small target. The local boy, ended the match with consecutive sixes off T Natarajan.

From the dizzying high

of piling up 264 in a batting spectacle that still somehow ended in defeat against Punjab Kings, the fall for Delhi was dramatic.

BRIEF SCORES

Delhi Capitals: 75 all-out in 16.3 overs (Abhishek Porel 30; Bhuvneshwar Kumar 3/5, Josh Hazlewood 4/12) lost to **Royal Challengers Bengaluru:** 77 for 1 in 6.3 overs (Devdutt Padikkal 34; Kyle Jamieson 1/42) by nine wickets

IPL STANDINGS

TEAMS	P	W	L	NRR	PTS
PBKS	7	6	0	1.333	13
RCB	8	6	2	1.919	12
SRH	8	5	3	0.815	10
RR	8	5	3	0.602	10
GT	8	4	4	-0.475	8
CSK	8	3	5	-0.121	6
DC	8	3	5	-1.060	6
KKR	8	2	5	-0.751	5
MI	7	2	5	-0.736	4
LSG	8	2	6	-1.106	4

HISTORIC CHASE

Johann's debut glory on desert tracks



Teen racer Johann Emmanuel clinches historic Qatar Superstock title with dominant double victory

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Doha, April 27: India's Johann Emmanuel, astride a Kawasaki ZX-6, scripted history by becoming the first from his country to win the coveted Qatar Superstock 600 Championship (QSTK) by winning both the races in the postponed final round to provide a grand climax to his debut season in this class.

The 19-year-old Chennai-based Johann, trailing championship leader Marton Belleli from Hungary by nine points going into the weekend's double-header, needed to win both races to seal the title, and he delivered stunningly.

Qualifying second, Johann won both races, withstanding immense pressure to clinch the championship with a 21-point advantage. He finished the sea-

son with six wins out of 10 races, having endured a 200 km/h crash and three retirements due to mechanical issues.

Johann's journey to the title was far from straightforward. An early-season crash at 200 kmph could have derailed his campaign, but instead, it became a turning point. Emmanuel returned stronger, using the setback as motivation in his pursuit of the championship.

Through the season, Johann demonstrated remarkable consistency and pace, winning six out of ten races. His triumph marks a historic milestone, making him the first Indian rider to win a QSTK trophy title - achieved in his debut season in the 600cc category.

It's an incredible feeling to secure my first international title in my debut season on a 600cc machine. I was thrilled after the race. Every bit of hard work and sacrifice was worth it. But this is just the beginning, and there's still a long way ahead

JOHANN EMMANUEL

TODAY'S MATCH
PBKS VS RR
TIME: 7:30 PM
Star Sports channels & JioHotstar

Iconic shuttler Sindhu begins new journey as BWF Council member

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Horsens (Denmark), April 27: Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu has promised to represent the voices of the shuttlers from across the globe in her tenure as Badminton World Federation (BWF) Council member, a rare role for an active player.

One of the most accomplished players in the sport's history, Sindhu has assumed a full voting position on the BWF Council following her election as Chair of the BWF Athletes' Commission in December.

After completing the formal vetting process, Sindhu officially entered the BWF Council at the end of 2025. She made her first appearance before the global badminton membership during the Annual General Meeting here April 25, marking the beginning of her tenure.

"It is a true honour and privilege to take on this responsibility within the Badminton World Federation and to represent the voices of athletes from around the world. Badminton has given me so much, and I feel deeply grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the sport in this capacity," she said in a release.

Her presence within the BWF Council is particularly significant as it remains rare for an active athlete competing at the highest level to simultaneously hold a voting position within badminton's global governance structure.

In this role, Sindhu will help ensure that the voices, experiences and priorities of players are represented at the highest levels of decision-making.

The BWF Council plays a central role in guiding the strategic direction and governance of badminton worldwide.

As a voting member of the BWF Council, Sindhu will participate in discussions and decisions on matters that shape the future of the sport, bringing the perspectives and experiences of elite athletes directly into the heart of global badminton leadership. Her elevation to the BWF Council reflects the trust placed in her leadership, experience and understanding of the sport at the highest level.

Rising stars shine at Artistic Gymnastics Nationals Day 3

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 27: Day 3 of the Junior & Senior Artistic Gymnastics National Championships 2026-27 witnessed thrilling performances across categories, with standout achievements in both junior individual and senior team events.

In the Junior Men's Artistic Gymnastics (MAG) Individual All-Around category, Harschit Damodaran from Uttar Pradesh clinched the gold medal with an impressive score of 73.700, delivering a composed and technically strong performance across all apparatus.

Akshat Bajaj of Delhi secured the silver medal with a score of 69.866, while SK Nabigh Ali representing West Bengal took home the bronze medal with a close score of 69.767, rounding off a highly competitive podium.

In the Senior MAG Team Championship, the Railways Sports Promotion Board emerged as the champions, posting a commanding total score of 220.533. The Services Sports Control Board secured the silver medal with 211.767, while Maharashtra claimed the bronze medal with a strong



score of 211.203.

The day was graced by distinguished dignitaries including Sandeep Verma, Additional Chief Secretary, Rajasthan; Sudhir Mittal, President of the Gymnastics Federation of India; Bhupendra Singh Poonia, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, DSYS; Bijaya Kumar Swain, Additional Secretary, Department of Sports and Youth Services; Swarupananda Sahu, Deputy Secretary, DSYS; and Amit Kumar Nayak, Deputy Secretary, DSYS.

The championship continues to showcase India's rising gymnastics talent, providing a vital platform for athletes to compete at the highest national level.

Roll Ball breakthrough for Odisha

The state clinches first-ever senior Roll Ball medal at National East Zone Championship

POST NEWS NETWORK

Shillong, April 27: The Odisha Senior Roll Ball team created history by securing its first-ever senior medal—a bronze—at the National East Zone Senior Roll Ball Championship 2026 here.

The championship, organized by the Meghalaya Roll Ball Association (MRBA) & Roll Ball federation of India (RBF), conducted from April 24 to 26.

The Odisha senior team displayed exceptional skill, determination, and teamwork throughout the tournament, culminating in a historic podium finish. This achievement marks a significant milestone for Roll Ball in the state, as it is Odisha's maiden medal at the senior level in the discipline.

Pratik Arnab Jena stood out for Odisha, finishing as the team's top scorer with seven goals. At just 14, his impressive performance proved crucial in guiding the side to a commendable third-place finish at the



2nd National East Zone Championship 2026.

The Odisha Roll Ball Association (ORBA) and its Founder, Partha Sarathi Jena, extended their heartfelt congratulations to the players and support staff for this historic achievement.

Speaking on the occasion, Jena said, "Odisha has been

consistently performing well across all age groups over the past few years, securing national medals at multiple levels. This achievement is particularly special as it marks our first-ever Senior Roll Ball Medal. With the development of dedicated Roll Ball infrastructure at Kalinga Stadium, Bhu-

baneswar, we are confident of reaching greater heights in the coming years."

The association expressed optimism that this milestone will further boost the growth of Roll Ball sport in Odisha and inspire young athletes across the state to pursue the sport at a competitive level.

Double delight for Indian teams

Women's team bag gold, men settle for silver

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Sanya (China), April 27: India ended the kabaddi competitions in the Asian Beach Games with the women's team clinching a gold medal and the men's team settling for silver for the second consecutive edition, claiming two medals in the competitions being held in Sanya, China, Monday.

The women's team made the country proud by defeating Sri Lanka comfortably in the final to win the gold, while the men went down to the Islamic Republic of Iran. The two medals in kabaddi Monday were India's first at this edition.

ASIAN BEACH GAMES



The Indian women registered a comfortable 47-31 win over Asian Beach Games champion Sri Lanka to win their sixth consecutive title. This is India's first gold in this edition of the Asian Beach Games. Earlier,

the Indian women defeated Bangladesh 50-31 in the semifinals to confirm the first medal.

Meanwhile, the men's team fell to the Islamic Republic of Iran this year, losing the summit clash 44-31. The six-member

team of Brijendra Singh Choudhary, Jitendra Yadav, Yatharth Deshwal, Neeraj, Jai Bhagwan, and Bhanu Pratap Tomar trailed Iran 23-11 at the halfway stage and never recovered in the second half.

The team had lost to Pakistan in the final of the previous edition, and exacted revenge by beating the neighbours 50-27 in the semifinals in Sanya.

Organised by the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), the Asian Beach Games is a multi-sport event focused on beach and coastal disciplines. First held in Bali, Indonesia, in 2008, the Games showcase sports not always featured at the Asian Games. The 2026 edition is being staged entirely in the resort city of Sanya, and India sent a 31-member contingent.

Inaugural women's edition of Rugby Premier League in June

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: Rugby Premier League (RPL) will have its inaugural women's edition in June with four franchise teams competing, the organisers announced Monday.

Four of the six men's teams which competed in the RPL in 2025 will also field women's teams when the league is held from June 16-28 at Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad.

The four teams are Chennai Bulls (owned by Avid Sys Sports), Delhi Redz (RMZ Corp), Mumbai Dreamers (Dream Sports) and Kolkata Banga Tigers (Hunch Ventures).

GMR Sports, in partnership with Rugby India, is organising the league.

The player draft and auction for the four women's teams and six men's teams, including Hyderabad Heroes and Bengaluru Bravehearts, will take place in Hyderabad April 30.

The HSBC Rugby Premier League builds on the strong foundation of its debut season held in Mumbai last year, which featured six men's franchises.

Speaking on the introduction of the women's tournament, Rugby India President Rahul Bose said: "It has always been our dream at Rugby India to have an RPL Women edition. This year that dream comes to fruition. We have our partners, GMR Sports and our wonderful franchises to thank. Women's 7s rugby across the world is as exciting as Men's 7s rugby."