



Narrative balance

Actor Adah Sharma opens up about how balancing strong individual characters and layered narratives excites her

LEISURE | P2



Big Tech to pay

Australia proposes to tax digital giants Meta, Google and TikTok a proportion of their revenue to pay for news reporters

INTERNATIONAL | P10



FPIs exodus

Foreign investors pull more than \$20bn out of Indian equities in the first four months of 2026

BUSINESS | P11



Nine-goal thriller

Titleholder Paris Saint-Germain hold on for a pulsating 5-4 win over Bayern Munich in the highest-scoring semifinal in CL history

SPORTS | P12

Keonjhar: CM launches projects worth ₹1,330cr



PNN & AGENCIES

Keonjhar, April 29: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday launched projects worth ₹1,330 crore, flagged off 25 advanced electric buses and inaugurated an 'Ama Bus' depot built at a cost of ₹17 crore here. The CM inaugurated 24 completed projects worth ₹251 crore, laid the foundation stones for 62 new ones valued at ₹705 crore and announced a ₹375-crore package for 101 upcoming projects to accelerate Keonjhar's growth. Launching the projects, Majhi said the biggest feature of

this new e-bus service is its affordable fare, starting at just ₹5. "It will be of great help to the lower and middle-class people who travel daily. All the buses are fully AC, and passenger safety has been given top priority. Each bus has CCTV cameras, panic buttons and GPS systems, so that passengers, especially women, can travel safely," he said. Majhi said the project has proved to be a catalyst for women's empowerment. "Of the 150 people engaged in the project, 30 are women guides and two women drivers," he said. Addressing the gathering, the CM said Keonjhar has contributed a lot to the state, but in the recent past, the district was neglected. He said the process for setting up a mega steel plant in the district is in the final stages, with its foundation stone to be laid soon. He described the next 10 years as the "Decade of Resolve" for Odisha and stressed that Keonjhar will play a pivotal role in building a prosperous state by 2036.



POLL FEVER: Voters arrive to cast their votes at a polling booth during the second phase of West Bengal Assembly elections, in Purba Bardhaman district, Wednesday (Report P9) PFI PHOTO

₹ slides 20 paise to record low of 94.88

MUMBAI: The rupee depreciated 20 paise to close at its all-time low of 94.88 against the US dollar Wednesday, pressured by rising Brent crude oil prices, hovering around USD 115 per barrel, and continued foreign capital outflows. Forex traders said the elevated crude oil price is likely to sharply impact India's import costs, while the ongoing West Asia crisis and concerns over potential wider conflict are fuelling investor anxiety. Also, analysts said that investors were awaiting cues from the upcoming US Federal Reserve policy decision. Moreover, heavy foreign institutional investor (FII) selling so far this year further dented investor sentiment.

B'lore govt hosp wall collapse claims 7 lives

BANGALORE: Seven people, including a child, were killed and seven others injured when the compound wall of Bangalore's Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital collapsed due to heavy rains here Wednesday, police said. Officials had initially said three children were killed, but the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) later clarified that only a six-year old girl was among the deceased. The victims included those from Kerala, and had come here as part of a study tour. When heavy rains, coupled with strong winds and a hailstorm, battered the area, victims taking shelter near a wall were trapped when it suddenly collapsed. P8

Custodial death triggers protests, stone pelting

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dabugaon, April 29: The death of a 25-year-old man in police custody at Dabugaon PS in Nabarangpur district triggered protests with villagers resorting to stone pelting and staging a road blockade Wednesday.

The deceased, identified as Purna Kalar of Anchala village under Dabugaon block, had been arrested two days ago in connection with a rape case. Police had registered a case (69/26), and a medical examination was completed Tuesday before his scheduled appearance in court Wednesday.

According to police, Kalar allegedly died by suicide late Tuesday night inside the lock-up, using a cloth to hang himself. However, the incident has raised suspicion among locals. Family members alleged that he was assaulted in custody and that the police were attempting to pass off the death as a suicide.

Following the incident, relatives and villagers gathered outside the police station, staging a protest and blocking the Umerkote-Nabarangpur State Highway-39. Protesters burned tires, demanded to see the body and accused police of



negligence. The protest turned violent when some agitators pelted stones and hurled glass bottles at the police station, injuring a home guard. Police later brought the situation under control and dispersed the crowd. Senior officials, including Additional Superintendent of Police Aditya Sen and Sub-Collector Prakash Kumar Mishra, reached the spot and held discussions with the protesters. Political leaders, including former MP Pradeep Majhi, Dabugaon MLA Manohar Randhari and former MLA Bhujabal Majhi, also intervened to defuse tensions. The road blockade, which lasted from around 10am to 2:30pm, was eventually withdrawn and vehicular movement resumed. Authorities said the body

Exit polls predict BJP win in Assam, edge in Bengal

DMK to return in TN, UDF to take Kerala: Pollsters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: Several exit polls Wednesday predicted a thumping victory for the BJP in Assam and a clear edge for the party over the ruling TMC in West Bengal, while projecting a return of the DMK government in Tamil Nadu and a comeback by the Congress-led UDF in Kerala after 10 years.

However, some pollsters predicted a big win for the TMC in West Bengal and a hung House in Tamil Nadu with actor-turned politician Vijay's TVK emerging as a spoiler for the DMK. Almost all forecast a return to power for the AINRC-led NDA government in Puducherry.

Axis My India predicted a sweep for the BJP in Assam, forecasting 88-100 seats for the BJP and its allies and 24-36 seats for the Congress and its partners. People's Pulse predicted that the NDA would get 68-72 seats while the Congress plus would secure in the range of 22-26 seats. Matriz said the NDA is likely to get between 85-95 seats and the Congress and its allies 25-32. The Assam Assembly has 126 seats with the magic mark being 64.

In West Bengal, while most exit polls predicted a BJP win,

two pollsters -- People's Pulse and Janmat polls -- predicted a big win for Mamata Banerjee-led TMC. The People's Pulse exit poll predicted that the TMC would get 177-187 seats, BJP 95-110, Left Front 0-1 and the Congress 1-3. The Janmat polls forecast 195-205 for the TMC and 80-90 for the BJP plus and 1-3 for the Congress. Matriz, however, predicted a BJP edge in the state, and said it is likely to get 146-161 seats.

It said the TMC would get 125-140 seats. P-Marq predicted 150-175 for the BJP and 118-138 to the TMC. West Bengal has a total of 294 seats with the majority mark being 148.

In Tamil Nadu, the People's Pulse predicted 125-145 for the DMK-led alliance, 65-80 for AIADMK-BJP and 18-24 for TVK. Matriz forecast that the DMK-Congress would get 122-132, NDA 87-100 and TVK 10-12. The Tamil Nadu has a total of 234 seats with the magic mark being 118.

In Kerala, Axis My India forecast that the UDF would get 78-90 seats, LDF 49-62 and NDA 0-3. People's Pulse predicted that the Congress-led UDF would get 75-85 seats, the LDF 55-65 and the NDA 0-3. Matriz forecast 60-65 seats for the LDF, 70-75 seats for the UDF and 3-5 seats for the NDA. Kerala Assembly has a total of 140 seats with the magic mark being 71.

Govt proposes Motor Rules Amendments to push ethanol blends

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has proposed amendments to vehicle emission rules to widen the scope for higher ethanol blends and alternative fuels, paving the way for flex-fuel and pure bio-fuel vehicles across all vehicle categories.

The draft changes to the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 aim to provide for wider use of fuels, such as E85 (a blend of 85 per cent ethanol with petrol) and E100 (which would allow vehicles to run on nearly pure ethanol), as well as B100 biodiesel and hydrogen-CNG combinations.

India has already achieved 20 per cent blending of ethanol (produced from biomass like sugarcane, corn or rice) with petrol to create a cleaner-burning fuel, reducing reliance on imported crude oil and cutting carbon emissions.

In an April 27 gazette notification, the ministry said the changes would be taken up after a 30-day public consultation period, during which stakeholders can submit objections or suggestions.

Among key proposals, the draft raises the vehicle weight limit from 3,000 kg to 3,500 kg, bringing regulation in sync with global standards for light commercial vehicles.

Russia to hold Victory Day parade sans military equipment

The ministry statement this week cited the "current operational situation" as a reason for excluding a military equipment convoy, as well as cadets

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moscow, April 29: Russia's traditional parade marking the 81st anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II this year will take place without tanks, missiles and other military equipment, the Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement late Tuesday.

It will be the first time in nearly two decades - and in the more than four years of Russia's war in Ukraine - that no military equipment will rumble through Moscow's Red Square May 9, the day Russia celebrates its most important secular holiday. The Kremlin has

used it to showcase its military might and global clout.

Victory Day parades on Red Square have involved military equipment and various weaponry every year since 2008.

The ministry statement this week cited the "current operational situation" as a reason for excluding a military equipment convoy, as well as cadets, from the parade. The statement didn't elaborate.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov in a conference call with reporters Wednesday blamed Ukraine and its "terrorist activity", in an apparent reference to Kyiv's strikes deep inside Russia. "All measures are being taken to minimise the danger," he said. The parade will feature servicemen from higher military educational institutions of all kinds



and certain service branches of the Russian Armed Forces and a traditional military aircraft flyover, the ministry said. World War II remains a rare point of consensus in the nation's divisive history under Communist rule, and the Kremlin has leveraged that sentiment to encourage national pride and underline Russia's position as a global power. The Soviet Union lost 27 million people in what it calls the Great Patriotic War in 1941-45, an enormous sacrifice that left a deep scar in the national psyche. President Vladimir Putin, who has ruled Russia for over 25 years, has turned Victory

Day into a key pillar of his tenure and has tried to use it to justify the war in Ukraine.

Last year's parade was the largest since Russia sent troops into Ukraine, and drew the most global leaders to Moscow in a decade, including high-profile guests like Chinese President Xi Jinping, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico.

Putin had declared a unilateral 72-hour ceasefire starting May 7, 2025, and the authorities blocked cellphone internet in Moscow for several days in an effort to avert Ukrainian drone attacks.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Why do we waste money on contesting elections when we have CBI, ED, governors, EC, courts...?

leisure



EMMA STONE, CHRIS PINE PAIR UP FOR THE CATCH

Emma Stone and Chris Pine are set to pair up for romantic comedy *The Catch*, backed by Universal Pictures. Directed by Dave McCary, the two-hander film has locked May 21 next year for release, with plot details still under wraps

ALBA CELEBRATES SELF-EVOLUTION

Jessica Alba marked her birthday with a heartfelt gratitude note, reflecting on a beautiful year and a life fuller than she imagined. Sharing childhood and celebration photos on Instagram, she wrote that another trip around the sun has made her softer, stronger, and more herself than ever before



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You are edgy today. Something may be bothering you, and this keeps you cautious for most part of the day. Ganesha suggests that you make the most of your evenings if invited to parties and other social events. Things may turn around for the good.

TAURUS
It is quite possible that today you will enjoy your responsibilities at the home front, says Ganesha. You may not get the best of the support from your subordinates. The value of something is the amount of effort you have put in to get it. You will be cautious and careful with people.

GEMINI
You may meet with stiff resistance in all your efforts. You should not let it bother you; just keep moving forward. This will help you maintain a good rapport with your bosses. You are likely to taste success in your interim objectives. Your sweet-talk will turn someone into your sweetheart.

CANCER
Early today, you may spend a great deal of time thinking about your career and future, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you will develop a plan on how to go about it, and by evening, you may even put the plan into action. You will spend some time with the near and dear ones.

LEO
The tiny voice inside us always tells us a lot of things. If only we were more in sync with ourselves, we could avoid so many troubles, says a retrospective Ganesha. Well, today it seems you are going to have no qualms in listening to your inner voice as you strive for excellence in all your efforts. Being in tune with yourself helps you remain level-headed and down-to-earth all day long.

VIRGO
You are Alexander this day - undefeated and unassailable. But Ganesha sees you on a wild goose chase for most of the day today. Unwittingly, you may invite unwarranted stress related to an ongoing assignment.

LIBRA
Does money really matter when compared to your loved ones? You might be asking yourself this question at some point in time during the day, foresees Ganesha. Chances are high that today, you may be at the receiving end of some sort of financial loss accelerated by someone close to you. Arguments with your siblings over property issues might take centre-stage, but you need to be belligerent towards them in the afternoon.

SCORPIO
Family members would want to talk about important matters with you today, says Ganesha. Time at work will be comfortable. Take special care of new assignments though. You are likely to bear expenses on account of tours and services today, predicts Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Chances are that you shall experiment with your Chi today. Afternoon promises to have an undercurrent of excitement. You will charge up the work environment with your dynamism. Evening will be passionate as your charm works its way to win over many a sweetheart, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
Don't be surprised if you are suddenly showered with attention at work. Ganesha says it's your lucky day today, for you will leave no room for complacency and rewards for this may come by way of special treatment from your colleagues and even your boss. Seniors, who may have bullied you and taken you for a ride in the past, will admire your efforts and potential to achieve great things.

AQUARIUS
You will take up the road less travelled today. You will find solace in spiritualism. You have worked really hard till now, and it's time to take breather, feels Ganesha. Spend some time with your friends, unwind yourself, travel to your favourite destination and rejuvenate yourself. By doing so, you will not be wasting time; in fact, you are preparing yourself to bring a better tomorrow.

PISCES
Remaining dispassionate and being cold and clinical is the way to achieve success for you today, says Ganesha. Do not let your sentiments interfere in matters of business, lest you regret it later. The evening may see you feel blue. Find something to do to cheer you up!

Trisha on her sleep struggles

CHENNAI: Trisha Krishnan has been trending on social media once again, this time for a witty and relatable Instagram story that sparked conversations around sleep and everyday fatigue. Over the past few days, the actress has remained in the spotlight due to her public appearances and online activity, including attending an event with Vijay and sharing his song after voting, which kept fans closely tracking her updates. Her latest Instagram post added a humorous twist to the ongoing buzz. Sharing a light-



hearted take on sleep deprivation, Trisha wrote, "Apparently, it takes four days to recover from losing one hour of sleep. So, according to my calculations, I should feel good again by 2062." The playful remark struck a chord with many, as fans found it both funny and deeply relatable, leading to widespread shares and reactions online. Amid growing attention surrounding her interactions and social media presence, Trisha continues to stay in the limelight. On the professional front, she will next be seen in *Karuppu* alongside Suriya, directed by RJ Balaji, slated for release May 14.

MUMBAI: Actress-fitness enthusiast Saiyami Kher, who is now making her mark as a sports critic for the IPL, said she is delighted to be part of it, along with films, as sports have always been the backbone of her life. Saiyami shared: "As a 14-year-old child, my father knew my love for cricket and had told me to leave school and pursue sports broadcasting. I loved sport but always wanted to finish my education first." She added: "From college, I got into acting, theatre, and then films... but I'm so delighted that been a part of this, with the I'm do-Sports al-been back-of my not just I enjoy but some-actively been in-



SAIYAMI EXPANDS HER HORIZONS

I have part along films ing.. have ways the bone life; it's something watching, thing I've involved in for years." Whether it's playing cricket, marathons, Ironmans, or just following games closely, there's a certain discipline and mindset that sports instills, which she says she has "carried into my work as an actor as well." "Being part of this season of IPL is incredibly exciting because it allows me to engage with the sport from a completely different perspective. And I often find myself pitching myself because I'm sitting with all my childhood heroes watching and discussing the game," added Saiyami.

ADAH THRIVES ON DEPTH

MUMBAI: Actress Adah Sharma, who is gearing up for her upcoming film *Governor: The Silent Saviour* with Manoj Bajpayee, has spoken about how balancing strong individual characters and layered narratives excites her. Talking about how portraying bold, flawed and even morally complex personalities across projects like *Sunflower*, *1920*, and *The Kerala Story* continues to engage her as an actor. Asked at this stage in her career, what excites her more: complex narratives or strong individual characters, Adah told this news agency: "A little bit of both, I guess." She added, "A solid character is fun to play. Like Rosie in *Sunflower*. She was saying such bold and al-

most sleazy dialogues. It made me almost nervous, wondering how I would pull it off." Adah reminisced about her *1920* character as she shared: "Or Liza in *1920*. I have never been possessed in real life, so that was a complex narrative and strong character." The 33-year-old actress added: "Even in *The Kerala Story*, Shalini was doing some really silly things, making bad decisions, and still, we had to convince the audience to be on her side and not hate her, so that was also exciting." Talking about *Governor: The Silent Saviour*, which is slated to release July 12, is inspired by a real former governor who passed away recently.



Lauren's surprising past



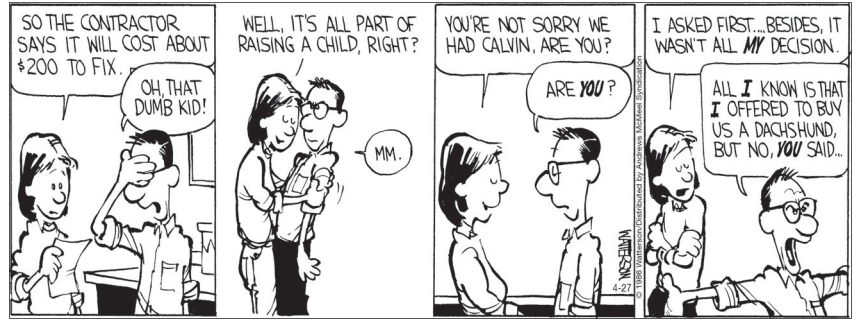
MUMBAI: Indian actress and dance sensation Lauren Gottlieb, celebrated for chart-topping tracks like *Tattoo* from *ABCD 2* and *Mercy* with Badshah, has revealed a remarkable story from her past. Known for sharing the stage with global icons like Shakira, Rihanna, and Britney Spears, Lauren opened up about auditioning for Michael Jackson's final tour before his untimely passing. In a recent interview, she recalled the intense experience, sharing that nearly 1,500 dancers auditioned, with only 30 making it to the final round. Lauren revealed that she not only performed in front of Jackson but also had the unforgettable opportunity to meet him and shake his

hand, an experience she deeply cherishes. Adding to her dynamic journey, Lauren recently created a viral moment during a live concert with Yo Yo Honey Singh in Delhi and Mumbai, where she filmed a live music video in front of an audience of 25,000 fans. With her versatility across dance styles and a strong presence in Indian cinema, Lauren continues to captivate audiences worldwide with her charisma and global appeal.

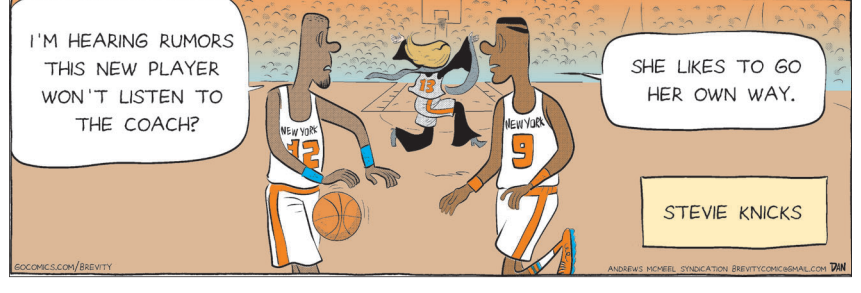
PEANUTS



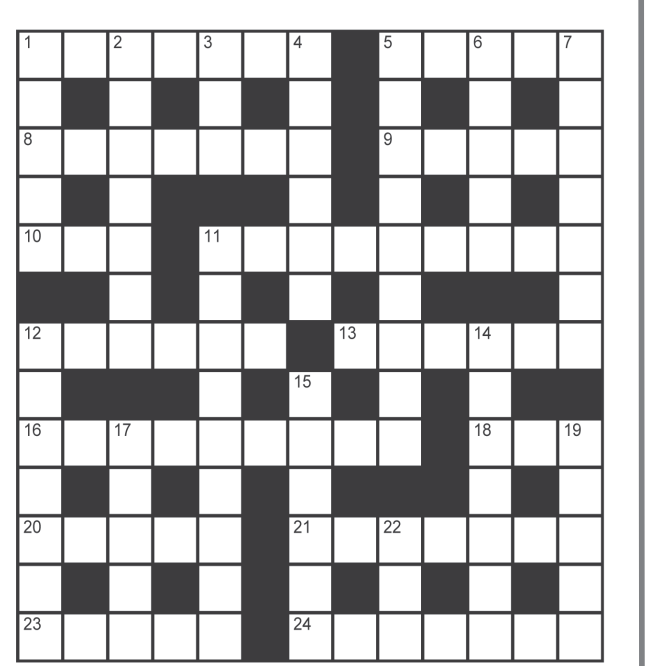
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



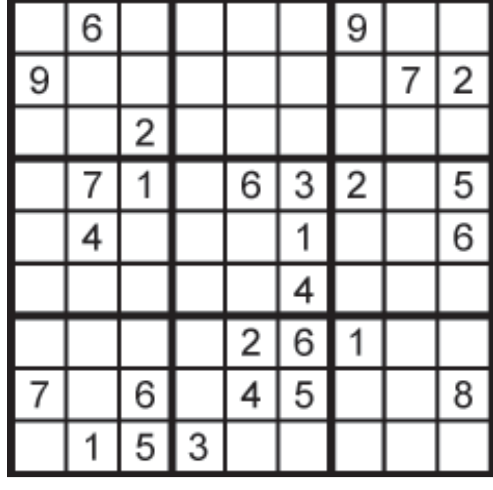
FUN post CROSSWORD



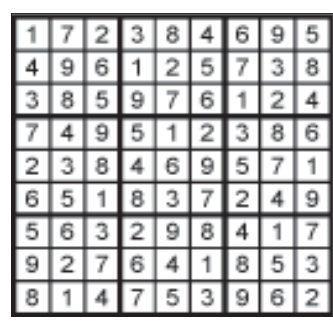
- Across**
- 1 Rustic
 - 5 Cut
 - 8 Learned
 - 9 Proclamation
 - 10 Lady lobster
 - 11 Blusterer
 - 12 Partner of above
 - 13 Silver-white metallic
 - 16 Political theory
 - 18 North Sea diver
 - 20 Harden
 - 21 Kind of negotiator
 - 23 Dusk to dawn
 - 24 Contrived
 - 4 Bill of exchange
 - 5 Sauna (5,4)
 - 6 Gallic goodbye
 - 7 Virtuoso
 - 11 Realtor (4,5)
 - 12 Citadel
 - 14 Inflexible
 - 15 Leotards
 - 17 Adhered
 - 19 Work, as dough
 - 22 Hit the slopes
- Down**
- 1 Large deciduous tree
 - 2 Relish type
 - 3 Floral necklace

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



HONING SKILLS: National Cadet Corps (NCC) Naval Wing students take part in a boat pulling (whaler rowing) training session at Veli Tourist Village in Thiruvananthapuram of Kerala, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

US to issue passports with Trump's picture

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, April 29: Donald Trump's picture will soon appear in some US passports, officials said Tuesday, shattering another norm as the president aggressively puts his personal stamp on government institutions.

The State Department, following reports by Fox News and The Bulwark, confirmed it would offer a limited-edition passport to mark this year's 250th anniversary of the US Declaration of Independence.

The articles included two images set to appear inside the passports, one of Trump's official photo imposed over the Declaration of Independence, with his signature -- in gold -- underneath. The second showed a historic painting of the US Founding Fathers. "As the United States celebrates America's 250th anniversary in July, the State Department is preparing to release a limited number of specially designed US passports to commemorate this historic occasion," State Department spokesman Tommy Pigott said on X, linking to the Fox News piece. Another State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Trump-themed passports would only be available in Washington "for as long as there is availability" and at no additional cost.

It was not immediately clear if passport applicants could refuse the special edition.

CBSE refutes marking system glitch claims

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 29: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Wednesday refuted a media report on glitches and delays in the evaluation of Class XII answer sheets under its On-Screen Marking (OSM) system, asserting that the process is working "perfectly" and is on schedule.

Speaking to PTI, Controller of Examinations Sanyam Bhardwaj said students can expect results in the third week of May, as indicated earlier.

He said a media report flagging technical issues in the newly introduced system is "far away from facts".

"My evaluation is going very perfectly, better than the previous evaluation," Bhardwaj said, adding the board is "so proud" of the rollout of the full-scale OSM system this year. "I refute each and every thing which has been stated in some media news portal. These are false and everything is perfectly fine. We are so proud that we have started this process," he said.

Highlighting the feedback from evaluators, Bhardwaj said teachers are expressing satisfaction with the system.

When asked about the timeline for declaration of results, he said students can expect them in the third week of May, as indicated earlier.

Conscience outside judicial debate: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: Observing that religion cannot be "hollowed out", the Supreme Court Wednesday said it cannot annihilate a religion in the name of reform and the matters of belief and conscience cannot be subjected to judicial debate.

A nine-judge constitution bench hearing issues pertaining to discrimination against women across religions in the country remarked that certain things have crystallised and become an essential part of the religion over the years. The bench headed by CJI Surya Kant, during its hearing on the tenth day, asked whether it can apply the test of equality in cases of religious freedom in complete negation of an "integral practice" of a religion.

The SC referred to constitutional aspiration on bringing about the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in the country keeping it in tune with the social reform and asked if the state fails to legislate, then can the judiciary do it. Justice BV Nagarathna, also part of the bench, observed that different states have enacted

SABARIMALA REFERENCE



UCC to regulate marriage and succession rights of citizens and when the society is ready for it, Parliament will enact it.

The bench was told by senior advocate Indira Jaising, appearing for two women claiming right to enter Sabarimala temple in Kerala, that every state has made temple entry laws and if one wants to claim his right, he has to go by the statute.

Justice Bagchi told Jaising that there is no such law in respect of non-Hindu religious institutions and can the court in its zeal for maintaining equality among citizens enforce similar directions for non-Hindu institutions, or should it defer to legislative decision.

He told the senior lawyer that the court would have consistently directed for a UCC.

Jaising submitted that the question of a UCC has been placed in the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) and it is a matter of policy. "India does not have an all-India UCC. But we do have Central statutes like the Hindu Marriage Act, the Hindu Adoption and Guardianship Act, and the Hindu Succession Act. That is a policy decision taken by the state. They are free to change it whenever they want. I am not disputing that. But if a UCC is enacted, then its constitutionality may have to be examined," she submitted.

Justice Bagchi said, "Our question is not on what form UCC is brought. The constitutional aspiration of UCC is admitted and the social reforms understood in Article 25 (2)(b) have to be linked with constitutional aspirations

of DPSP that it will bring UCC. The question is if the state fails to do it, can the court bring incremental equality clauses when it comes to religious freedoms and can we apply the test of equality to completely negate an integral practice of a religion."

Jaising argued that the religious freedom guaranteed to individuals under Article 25(1) of the Constitution would prevail over the rights of religious denominations and the court cannot adopt a complete hands-off approach in religious matters, as judicial review is an inherent constitutional power.

"There cannot be complete Balkanisation of Hinduism. It cannot be a case where one denomination is denied entry to the temple of another denomination," Jaising submitted.

Justice Nagarathna told Jaising, "In the name of reform, don't hollow out the religion... Let us not open rituals and ceremonies which have been there for centuries. It will be annihilating a religion, which we don't want to be a part of. Matters of conscience cannot be a subject matter of debate in a secular court."

State urges Centre to set up 190 EV charging stns

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The state government has requested the Centre to set up 190 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations across an equal number of locations in six key cities under the PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) scheme, officials said Wednesday.

The State Transport Authority (STA), under the Commerce and Transport department, has submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) in this regard, they said.

The proposed EV charging infrastructure will be established at 190 locations in Angul, Balasore, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Kalinganagar, and Puri, according to an official statement.

A meeting in this connection was held here in the presence of Transport Secretary NBS Rajput, Transport Commissioner Amitabh Thakur, and other senior officials of the department.

Notified in September 2024 with a total outlay of Rs 10,900 crore, the scheme earmarks Rs 2,000 crore specifically for the development of EV public charging stations.

The initiative supports both



upstream infrastructure and EV supply equipment, including chargers, to strengthen the country's charging network—considered crucial for addressing range anxiety and boosting EV adoption.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has been appointed as the Project Implementation Agency (PIA) for developing EV public charging stations.

A joint team from MHI and BHEL will conduct site surveys to assess feasibility before granting final approvals and sanctioning the proposed charging stations, the statement said.

Once implemented, the project is expected to significantly enhance charging accessibility, reduce range anxiety, and support the development of a robust EV ecosystem in the region, it added.

'Leave India' notice issued to 3 US nat'ls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, April 29: Police in Maharashtra's Pune city have issued a 'Leave India' notice to three American nationals after they were allegedly found engaging in religious propagation activities and violating tourist visa norms, officials said Wednesday.

The trio was recently found distributing pamphlets of religious nature in Sadashiv Peth area of the city, they said.

All three US nationals are men. While one of them is a senior citizen, two others are in the age group of 45 to 50 years, an official said.

"These three American nationals are on tourist visas. They were found distributing pamphlets in Sadashiv Peth. Alert citizens spotted them and

informed the police," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Branch) Sandip Bhajbhakare said.

During inquiry, it was confirmed that all three are American nationals visiting India on tourist visas, he said.

The pamphlets distributed by them were in English, Marathi and Hindi, and contained content related to Christian religion. Following scrutiny, they were issued a 'Leave India' notice for violating the tourist visa norms. They are required to leave the country by May 10, he added. He said the trio was in Mumbai before arriving in Pune about a week ago.

Police are also probing possible local links in the case. "We are checking if any local institution or individual is connected to them," Bhajbhakare said.

Scientists unlock mayfly's dance secret

On a spring evening along the banks of the River Thames, thousands of mayflies can be seen engaging in what may be one of the world's oldest dances. In the fading light, the males make a steep vertical climb, flip over and float back to Earth -- wings and tail outstretched in a sky-diving posture so as to drop slowly through the sky.

Mayflies are among the world's oldest winged insects, emerging roughly 300m years ago -- long before dinosaurs walked the Earth. Even the Mesopotamian poem the Epic of Gilgamesh, one of the oldest pieces of literature, makes reference to the short-lived mayfly. Over the epochs, the insect's basic design has changed very little compared with the fossils of their ancestors, 'The Guardian' reported.

"They have retained these

odd characteristics and we can probably assume that they've been doing this for hundreds of millions of years, and yet we don't really know why," says Samuel Fabian, a research fellow at the University of Oxford who studies the aerial behaviours of insects.

Now, Fabian and his colleagues at Imperial College London think they finally have an answer. In new research published in the Journal of Experimental Biology, the scientists reconstructed the flight behaviour of the common mayfly, filming large swarms in the London borough of Richmond in 3D and analysing the insects' flight paths.

It turns out that male mayflies rely on this bizarre up-and-down flight pattern to figure out who among the swarm is male, and who is female. By flying vertically, males rarely fly horizontally above the swarm



– the signature of their female counterpart.

In further simulations, the scientists found that male mayflies would stop their pursuit of any target that dropped

beneath the horizon.

"The problem is that the males have almost no filter," Fabian says. "You can give them a beach ball -- which, as far as I'm concerned, looks

quite different from a female mayfly -- and males will go right up to that much larger object and try to mate with it."

Things get even trickier in low-light conditions, as females look almost identical to males even at close range. By staying below the females, males ensure their romantic energy is well spent. This is especially critical because mayflies do not have much time, only living from a few hours to a few days, during which they must pass on their genes.

acing such reproductive goals is crucial to the species' long-term survival. There are more than 3,000 mayfly species living in the world's freshwater creeks, rivers, ponds and lakes. But many of Britain's 51 species are now in a state of decline -- another victim of what scientists call the 'insect apocalypse'.

AGENCIES

MoSPI report shows gains in gender parity, child welfare



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) Wednesday launched the 27th edition of its flagship publication, Women and Men in India 2025: Selected Indicators and Data, during a National Dialogue on “Data for Development” held here.

The publication presents a comprehensive snapshot of the status of women and men across the country, drawing on a wide range of official data sources. It compiles gender-disaggregated indicators across key sectors such as population, education, health, economic participation, decision-making and gender-based violence. To enhance usability,

the report also provides detailed metadata for 50 key indicators, explaining concepts, definitions and methodologies.

Officials said the report aims to provide a strong evidence base for policymakers, researchers and stakeholders to better understand evolving gender dynamics and frame more inclusive, data-driven policies. It includes rural-urban classifications, state and Union Territory-level data, and time-series indicators wherever available, offering a nuanced picture of development trends.

Among the key highlights, the report noted an improvement in the sex ratio at birth from 904 in 2017-19 to 917 in 2021-23, indicating better survival outcomes for girl children. The country has also recorded a steady decline in infant mortality rates for both boys and girls between 2008 and 2023.

In education, gender parity has been achieved from primary to upper secondary levels. The gross enrolment ratio in higher education also rose to 30.2 for females and 28.9 for males in 2022-23, reflecting wider access to advanced learning.

Economic participation trends show encouraging momentum, particularly among women. The labour force participation rate has increased for individuals aged 15 years and above, with rural women recording the sharpest rise—from 37.5 per cent in 2022 to 45.9 per cent in 2025.

The report also highlights notable gains in leadership roles. While the number of men in managerial positions rose by 73.8 per cent between 2017 and 2025, the growth among women was even more pronounced, registering an increase of over 100 per cent during the same period.

By mapping these trends, the publication underscores India's gradual progress toward gender equality while identifying areas that require sustained policy attention. The full report is available on the official MoSPI website.

Min Patra assures uninterrupted LPG, petrol, diesel supply

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra has assured that the supply of domestic LPG across the state remains completely normal, while petrol and diesel stocks are sufficiently available to meet consumer demand.

Reviewing the overall fuel supply situation with representatives from major distribution companies including HPCL, IOCL, BPCL and the Adani Group, the Minister took stock of the availability of LPG, petrol and diesel across the state.

During the review, it was confirmed that domestic cooking gas supply is operating smoothly, with household consumers receiving LPG cylinders within the stipulated timeframe after booking. The minister said public concerns over any possible shortage of cooking gas have been effectively addressed.

In commercial and non-domestic sectors, nearly 80 per cent LPG supply is currently being maintained, ensuring that hotels, restaurants and other businesses continue to receive substantial support.

Patra also clarified that Odisha has adequate reserves of petrol and diesel, ruling out any immediate possibility of fuel price hikes in the state. He urged citizens not to be influenced by misinformation or rumours on social media regarding possible increases in petrol or diesel prices.

Highlighting the state government's crackdown on illegal fuel trade, the minister said the seizure of over 7,000 illegal gas cylinders stands as a major enforcement success.

CYBERSECURITY CONCLAVE KICKS OFF AT SOA VARSITY



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: A two-day National Conclave on ‘Cyber Security, AI and Emerging Technologies—Securing Tomorrow's Intelligent Systems’ commenced at SOA Deemed to be University here Wednesday.

Addressing the inaugural session, Director General of Police, CID-Crime Branch, Vinaytosh Mishra said security must be embedded while developing any new technology. He added that whenever a technology is introduced, the key question is whether its positive and negative impacts have been properly assessed.

The session was also addressed by Vinayak Godse, CEO, Data Security Council of India; Lt Gen MU Nair, formerly of National Security Council Secretariat, PMO; Kishor Narang of International Telecommunication Union, Geneva; Vikram Tiwathia, Senior

Advisor, Cellular Operators Association of India; NK Goyal, President, Cybersecurity Association of India and Debabrata Nayak, Director, Price Waterhouse Coopers India.

University Vice-Chancellor Pradipta Kumar Nanda said the rapid expansion of digital infrastructure and the advent of artificial intelligence had emerged as major concerns. He added that the university would undertake training programmes for students on cybersecurity.

Lt Gen Nair said while the government can frame policies, new technologies will continue to pose fresh challenges. He added that academic institutions have a vital role to play in debating such issues and thinking ahead.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between SOA and the Cybersecurity Association of India on the occasion.

BMC's beautification drive along NH-16

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Mayor Sulochana Das Wednesday launched a major beautification and green drive for key traffic junctions and median stretches along NH-16 passing through the Capital city, with support from Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

In first phase, plantation work kicked off at CRPF Square. Saplings were planted under the bridge and in surrounding median areas. BMC said the initiative aims to improve air quality, reduce the Air Quality Index (AQI), absorb roadside dust pollutants, and lower heat levels. Authorities also hope the plantation drive



will create a cleaner, greener and visually attractive urban corridor for residents and commuters.

Since, NH-16 serves as one of the main entry gateways to Bhubaneswar, officials said

the project will significantly enhance City's visual identity. The plantation and maintenance work is being carried out by VASA, a voluntary organisation empanelled by SMS India Private Limited. The company

is funding the project through its CSR resources, while VASA will oversee implementation, monitoring and long-term maintenance.

BMC remains committed to introducing more citizen-centric and environmentally sustainable projects. In the coming months, residents and travellers are expected to witness phased beautification of other important corridors as well.

Notably, Bhubaneswar secured the fourth rank nationally in Swachh Vayu Survey 2025, and the civic body said efforts will continue to make the City cleaner, greener, healthier and more beautiful.

Deputy Mayor Manjulata Kaha, civic officials, corporators and senior BMC officers were also present on the occasion.

Min Mahaling briefs Gov on Assembly spl session

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mukesh Mahaling Wednesday met Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati at Lok Bhavan and briefed him on the agenda and significance of the special session of the Odisha Legislative Assembly scheduled for April 30.

The special session has been convened to deliberate on women's participation in Indian democracy, with a focus on strengthening their role in governance and decision-making. During the meeting, the Minister Mahaling apprised the Governor of the key themes and discussions proposed to be taken up in the House.

Governor Kambhampati appreciated the initiative and expressed hope that the deliberations would be meaningful and result-oriented. He also emphasised the importance of enhancing women's participation in democratic processes.

The Governor conveyed his best wishes for the smooth conduct and success of the special session.

Padhee reviews Kalinganagar industrial corridor progress

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Additional Chief Secretary to the Housing and Urban Development department and Chairperson of IDCO Usha Padhee Wednesday reviewed the progress of the Kalinganagar National Industrial Corridor (KNIC) in Jajpur district, with emphasis on accelerating industrial expansion along with urban infrastructure development.

During her visit, Padhee held detailed discussions with the District Collector, officials of the Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) and the District Investment Promotion Agency (DIPA).

The deliberations centred on streamlining land allocation, strengthening infrastructure provisioning, and ensuring industrial growth is aligned with essential urban services.

The visit highlighted the state government's emphasis on proactive field-level monitoring, expediting industrial



and urban infrastructure readiness, and enhancing inter-departmental coordination to create a sustainable, investment-ready ecosystem in the state.

As part of the review, Padhee conducted an extensive field inspection of the Kalinganagar industrial region to assess land development, strategic infrastructure initiatives, and the status of key urban development projects.

She began by inspecting nearly 600 acres of land at Alijanga and later reviewed the Sukutijhara area to evaluate the preparedness of these zones

for future industrial expansion. Apart from industrial infrastructure, Padhee also assessed the progress of ongoing urban development projects and flagship schemes in the district.

Special attention was given to strengthening civic infrastructure, improving service delivery, and enhancing the quality of life in rapidly developing industrial townships.

The visit reaffirmed the state's commitment to transforming Kalinganagar into a major industrial hub supported by robust urban planning and sustainable development initiatives.

Odisha plans ORCAD for elderly, divyangjan

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Odisha has initiated efforts to build a robust institutional framework for inclusive governance through the proposed Odisha Resource Center for Ageing & Divyangjan (ORCAD), a state-level centre of excellence aimed at promoting accessibility, inclusion and coordinated services for elderly persons and Divyangjan across the state.

Envisioned as a strategic platform, ORCAD aims to strengthen inter-departmental convergence, promote evidence-based policymaking and enhance administrative capacities at various levels to ensure meaningful participation of senior citizens and persons with disabilities in Odisha's socio-economic development. The proposed centre is also aligned with the broader vision of Viksit Odisha 2036 and 2047, focusing on inclusive and sustainable growth.

A high-level consultative meeting in this regard was held here Wednesday in view

of Odisha's changing demographic landscape and the increasing need for integrated, future-ready systems to support ageing populations and persons with disabilities.

The consultation was organised by the department of Social Security & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

The meeting brought together senior government officials, representatives from United Nations agencies including UNDP and UNICEF, development partners, and subject experts.

Principal Secretary Suresh Kumar Vashishta highlighted



the importance of creating responsive and inclusive systems capable of addressing the complex and interconnected challenges emerging from demographic transitions.

He reaffirmed the state government's commitment to ensuring dignity, independence, and equitable opportunities for all sections of society.

Director Parul Patawari outlined ORCAD's proposed role as a knowledge and resource hub focused on research, capacity building, and policy innovation.

She stressed the need for strong institutional mechanisms that can effectively transform data and insights into scalable interventions while

embedding inclusion within Odisha's governance structure.

The consultation also saw active participation from key departments including Health and Family Welfare, School and Mass Education, Higher Education, Mission Shakti, Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water, and Women & Child Development, along with technical experts.

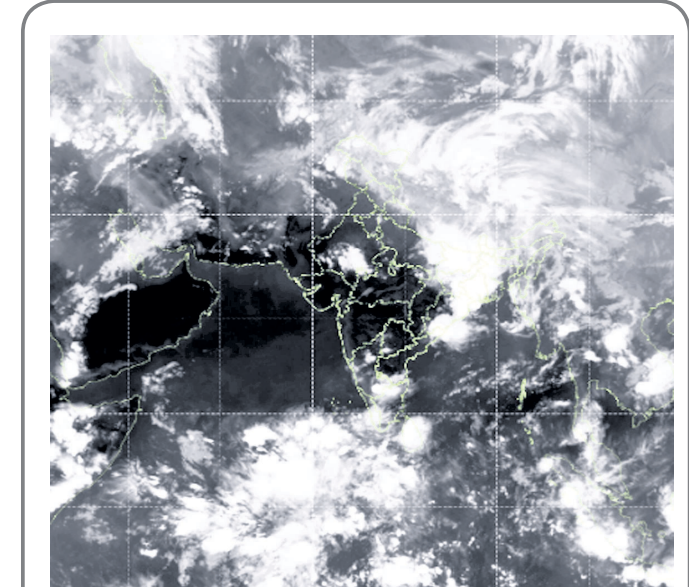
Detailed discussions during the meeting generated significant inputs that are expected to shape ORCAD's institutional design, governance structure, and implementation roadmap.

UNFPA Odisha State Head Nadeem Noor presented the proposed institutional framework for ORCAD, developed jointly with the SS&EPD department.

•ORCAD will serve as a strategic platform to improve inter-departmental coordination, evidence-based policymaking and administrative capacity for inclusion of senior citizens and persons with disabilities

•The proposed centre aligns with the Viksit Odisha 2036 and 2047 vision, with a focus on inclusive and sustainable growth

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	94.865 ▲ 0.32	SENSEX	77496.36 ▲ 609.45	GOLD	₹149,220 ▼ ₹807
EURO	110.8920 ▲ 0.14	NIFTY	24177.65 ▲ 181.95	SILVER	₹232,815 ▼ ₹4,530



WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	38.7°	38.0°	Light to moderate rain or thunderstorm likely to occur
Min Temp	25.6°	24.2°	
Humidity	66%	70%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	

Retd engr gets 2-yr RI for embezzling funds

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: A vigilance court in Sundargarh district Wednesday sentenced a retired junior engineer to two years of rigorous imprisonment for embezzling government funds meant for labourers under a welfare scheme.

The convict, Anup Kumar Das, was found guilty of misappropriating public money during his tenure by inflating work records related to pond excavation under the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS). Investigations revealed that he forged signatures and left thumb impressions of beneficiaries on muster rolls to siphon off funds.

The former JE Anup Kumar Das, who has retired from service, was charged sheeted by Odisha Vigilance U/s 13(2) r/w 13(1)(c)(d) of PC Act, 1988/409/477-A/34 IPC, for misappropriating government fund by showing excess work towards excavation of pond under Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), and forging the signatures and left thumb impressions of the labourers on the muster rolls, said a statement issued by the Vigilance.

The Special Judge, Vigilance, Sundargarh found him guilty of corruption charges and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for a period of 2 years, it further stated. Odisha Vigilance will now move the competent authority for stoppage of pension of the convict following his conviction, it concluded.

Maoist leader gunned down in encounter

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bona, April 29: Security forces killed a wanted Maoist commander during an encounter in a forested area along the Odisha-Jharkhand border Wednesday, officials said. Weapons and Maoist materials were recovered from the site. The deceased has been identified as Israel Puri, also known as Amrit (32), a resident of Sangajata village under Goikera police station in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district. Authorities said a reward of ₹1 lakh had been announced for information leading to his capture. He was reportedly a key cadre involved in training and intelligence activities within the Maoist organization.

Security forces were conducting a combing operation in the Rautugutu forest under the Tonto police station area when armed Maoists opened fire. Security personnel returned fire, triggering an exchange in which Amrit was killed.

HC orders review in paddy token dispute

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, April 29: The Orissa High Court has issued a significant directive aimed at resolving long-standing grievances in the state's paddy procurement system. In a ruling on writ petition No. 9562/2026, filed by 14 farmers from Bargarh district, the court ordered the district collector to examine pending applications and ensure that eligible farmers are not denied their right to sell paddy under the government's procurement scheme.

The petition, led by Girish Kumar Darshana of Mandosil village in Paikamal block, highlighted the plight of farmers excluded from the registration process, leaving them unable to sell their since the last Kharif season. Represented by advocate Dilip Kumar Sahu, the farmers sought judicial intervention to secure procurement tokens and prevent further losses.

The case was heard Monday by Justice Sibho Sankar Mishra. During proceedings, Additional Government Advocate J.K. Bal assured the bench that the state remains committed to purchasing paddy from all registered



farmers without discrimination. He further informed the court that the government has set an ambitious procurement target of 9.3 million tonnes for the 2025-26 Kharif season, with transactions taking place at designated mandis and primary agricultural cooperative societies (PACS) at the minimum support price.

After hearing arguments, the court directed the Bargarh collector to scrutinize the farmers' applications and decide their cases promptly in accordance with law. The bench also reminded the state government that failure to act could compel the court to order the issuance of procurement tokens directly to the petitioners.

Meanwhile, tensions continue to simmer in Bargarh district, where farmers have been staging a sit-in protest outside the collector's office since March 9. Their demand is straightforward: inclusion in the procurement process so that they can sell their paddy without further delay.

With the High Court's intervention, farmers are now awaiting clarity on whether their produce will finally be procured or whether bureaucratic hurdles will prolong the dispute. The ruling has raised hopes among the aggrieved cultivators, but the coming weeks will determine whether the directive translates into tangible relief on the ground.

NASM-SR clears critical salvo trial at ITR Chandipur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: In a boost to India's maritime strike capabilities, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Navy Wednesday successfully conducted the maiden salvo launch of the short-range naval anti-ship missile system off the coast of the Bay of Bengal in Odisha.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh complimented the DRDO, the Navy, the Indian Air Force and industry partners involved in the project for the successful trial of the Naval Anti-ship Missile-Short Range (NASM-SR).

"During the trial, two missiles were launched in quick succession from the same he-



licopter, making it the first salvo launch of an advanced air-launched anti-ship missile system," the defence ministry said.

It said all test objectives were fully met as per the data captured using various range tracking instruments like radar, electro-optical system and telemetry deployed by the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur.

"Along with proving the salvo launch capability, the missiles demonstrated the waterline hit capability. The test launches were witnessed by senior scientists from DRDO, users' representatives from the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force and Development-cum-Production Partner (DcPP)," the ministry said.

The NASM-SR missile uses a solid propulsion booster and long-burn sustainer. The ministry said all critical subsystems like the seeker, integrated avionics module, advanced navigation and guidance using fibre-optic gyroscope-based inertial navigation system and guidance algorithm were developed indigenously by different laboratories of DRDO and Indian industries.

CRPF jawan arrested for rape under false marriage promise

POST NEWS NETWORK

Digapahandi, April 29: Police in Digapahandi have arrested a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawan for allegedly raping a woman under the pretext of marriage, officials said. The accused, identified as G. Ayodi Reddy (47), posted in Nabarangpur, was taken into custody following a complaint lodged by the survivor Sunday at Digapahandi police station.

Based on the complaint, Inspector-in-Charge Kishore Kumar Samal registered a case (186/26), and Sub-Inspector Sophia Mishra led the investigation. After the survivor underwent a medical examination at MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur, the accused was arrested Tuesday and produced before a court Wednesday. He has been remanded to judicial custody at Digapahandi sub-jail.

According to the complaint, Reddy had come into contact with the woman, a resident of a village under Digapahandi block, in 2003. The two developed a relationship despite belonging

to different castes and had mutually decided to marry in the future. During this period, they were reportedly in a consensual physical relationship.

Police said Reddy later severed ties with the woman and married someone else. The survivor, fearing social stigma, did not report the matter at the time.

The complaint further alleged that Reddy continued to assure her that he would give her the status of a wife even after his marriage. He allegedly called her May 25, 2025, to a lodging facility in Puniikanya, Digapahandi, on the pretext of discussing an urgent matter, where he allegedly intimidated and raped her.

The woman further alleged that Reddy later abused her over the phone using offensive language and refused to marry her when she confronted him about the issue. She also stated in her complaint that Reddy's wife, G. Shilpa Reddy, called her April 5, verbally abused her, and threatened to kill her if she continued any contact or attempted to maintain a relationship with her husband.

Inspector shunted out over harassment charge

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, April 29: A reserve inspector (RI), Govinda Mahari, has been transferred from Angul to Kalahandi following allegations of mental harassment by a woman havildar, Sumitra Biswal.

According to reports, Biswal, posted as a constable in Angul district police had lodged a complaint with the SP about a month ago alleging that RI Mahari and havildar Shubhakanta Sahu subjected her to mental harassment and intimidation. Distressed over the alleged treatment, she had also submitted her resignation.

Based on her complaint, Angul SP Rahul Jain ordered a probe by the police's internal complaints



committee and a senior DSP. However, with no action taken for nearly a month, Biswal launched an indefinite hunger strike in front of the SP's office seeking justice Wednesday.

Following the SP's recommendation, Mahari has now been transferred to the 9th Special Indian

Reserve Battalion in Kalahandi. Northern Range IG Satyabrata Bhoi held discussions with Biswal, heard her grievances and assured appropriate action.

Bhoi said the transfer was effected based on the inquiry report and further action would follow. Preliminary findings suggest the alleged harassment was linked to leave-related issues. Biswal continues in service and her resignation has not been accepted. She has also been counselled.

Steps will be taken to ensure grievances of police personnel reach the SP promptly and are resolved without delay, Bhoi added.

After receiving assurances from the IG, Biswal withdrew her hunger strike, sources said.

Mild tremor in Kalahandi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhawanipatna, April 29: A mild earthquake measuring 4.1 in the Richter scale was felt in several places of Kalahandi district Wednesday evening, officials said.

According to the National Centre for Seismology, the tremor was recorded at 7.42 pm. Its epicentre was located at latitude 19.729 degrees North and longitude 82.599 degrees East, at a depth of 24 kilometres beneath the Earth's surface.

The quake was felt for a few seconds at Dharmagada, Junagarh, Koksara, Thaumul Rampur and Bhawanipatna blocks of the district.

JE found dead in rented house



POST NEWS NETWORK

Gudvella April 29: Police in Bolangir district Wednesday recovered the body of a 27-year-old junior engineer (JE) from his rented accommodation in Gudvella, officials said.

The deceased, identified as Prabir Behera of Kanikapada in Jajpur's Mangalapur police station area, was working as a junior engineer on a mega drinking water supply project in the Gudvella block. He was staying in a rented house at Jagannathpada in

the block headquarters. According to police, Behera shared an accommodation with one of his colleagues who had gone home on leave April 24. When the engineer did not respond to repeated phone calls Wednesday morning, co-workers alerted the police.

A police team reached the residence and found Behera's body hanging from a ceiling fan with a rope. The body was brought down in the presence of police personnel. A scientific team visited the spot and initiated an investigation. The cause of death is yet to be ascertained.

Police have registered an unnatural death case at Tusura police station and informed the family. The body has been sent to Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital in Bolangir for post-mortem examination.

Officials said the exact cause of death will be known after the post-mortem report.

EAST COAST RAILWAY INDICATIVE NOTICE EXTENSION OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE UPTO 20.05.2026 OF EMPLOYMENT NOTICE NO. SBP/Pers/Staff/Re-Engagement of retired Loco Pilot DATED 23.04.2026

Ph.D in Sanskrit Mr. Shesadev Parida has been awarded the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) degree in Sanskrit from Utkal University.

TPNODL PUBLIC NOTICE REFUND OF UNCLAIMED SECURITY DEPOSIT (SD) FOR PERMANENTLY DISCONNECTED CONSUMERS

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, BHANDARIPOKHARI Tender for Construction of Additional Classroom of Elementary School & Construction of GPLF Office Building-cum-Market Complex

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER BOUDH (R&B) DIVISION, BOUDH INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)

Government of Odisha, Department of Water Resources OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER KANDHAMAL IRRIGATION DIVISION, PHULBANI



Turn all things to honey; this is the law of divine living.

SRI AUROBINDO



Caught In Crossfire

Jewish history includes three episodes of flourishing in exile: the Babylonian diaspora's great academies; the centuries-long experiment in Moorish and then Christian Spain; and the American Jewish experience, particularly after World War II. But the American experience has come under intensifying threat, and the causes are not mysterious.

Political polarization, the collapse of institutional gatekeepers, and social media's amplification of fringe voices were always going to put pressure on American Jews. But the effects of these forces have been compounded by one contingent factor: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's mismanagement of Israel's relationship with the United States during his decades of dominance over Israeli politics.

Two consequential innovations have marked this period. First, from coordinating a 2015 speech to Congress with Republican leaders—over President Barack Obama's objections—to endorsing President Donald Trump in the 2024 election, Netanyahu has transformed the US-Israeli relationship from a bipartisan strategic alliance into a factional arrangement with the GOP.

Israeli officials would say that this was a defensive manoeuvre because the Democrats were drifting away from Israel. But this claim conflates criticism of Israeli policies, unavoidable in a healthy democracy, with hostility to Israel's existence.

Second, Netanyahu has made the safety of American Jews a secondary consideration in Israel's security calculations, tradeable against domestic political advantages. Again, Israeli officials have a ready response to this charge: a strong Jewish state is in the interest of Jews everywhere, and therefore must be the top priority. But this is a logical trap, which requires that American Jews bear the consequences of Israeli decisions, in which they have no vote.

The consequences are quantifiable. FBI data show that antisemitic hate crimes in the US reached their highest recorded levels in 2023, with 1,832 incidents—a 63% increase over 2022—and rose again in 2024, to 1,938 incidents.

The Anti-Defamation League, which includes non-criminal harassment and vandalism in its statistics, documented 8,873 antisemitic incidents in 2023 and a record-breaking 9,354 in 2024, with physical assaults rising by 21%. In a February 2025 survey, 77% of American Jews reported feeling less safe than before the October 7 Hamas attack, and 56% said fear had caused them to alter their daily behaviour.

While Netanyahu cozies up to the GOP, American Jews continue to vote overwhelmingly Democratic. In 2024, major Jewish-voter surveys and post-election polling found then-Vice President Kamala Harris, Trump's opponent, winning Jewish voters by roughly 45 points. In a shift from past elections, however, Orthodox communities—about 9% of American Jews—broke heavily for Trump. It does not help that, since the Gaza war began, the Democratic Party's progressive base has increasingly turned on Israel, though as a recent poll showed, American Jews still trust Democrats far more than Republicans to fight antisemitism (by a 28-point margin).

Netanyahu's Iran gambit has made matters far worse. He visited the White House six times in the past year, more than any foreign leader in American diplomatic history. After the US joined Israel in striking Iran, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, apparently accidentally, told reporters that the Trump administration "knew there was going to be an Israeli action," which would "precipitate an attack against American forces," unless the US preempted it by joining the initial assault. Add to that Netanyahu's comment that he had "yearned" to attack Iran for "40 years," and it was hard to avoid the impression that Netanyahu manoeuvred Trump into a Middle Eastern war.

This is fodder for accusations of dual loyalty and conspiracy theories about Jews secretly controlling global affairs. But American Jews did not ask for this exposure. Those who supported Netanyahu's policies did not devise them, nor did they consent to fuelling antisemitic tropes. And the majority who oppose his policies are also implicated by Israel's claim to represent all Jews.

Netanyahu's lack of regard for American Jews' safety is, from his perspective, perfectly rational. He needs American political cover, and the best way to get it is by borrowing it from American Jews—to whom he technically has no political obligation—while cultivating evangelical Christian Zionists, MAGA politicians, and other figures on the pro-Israel right.

What should American Jews do? A full break with Israel is neither realistic nor, for many, desirable. The historical and emotional connections are genuine and deep, and the Jewish state's security remains a legitimate concern. But reflexive solidarity with the Israeli government's policies amounts to a subsidy without accountability.

American Jews need a framework in which their Jewishness does not automatically implicate them in the decisions of a foreign government they did not elect and cannot remove. Judaism's intellectual traditions, which prize argument, dissent, and ethical accountability, offer exactly this. For decades, communal pressure toward unity—which served a legitimate purpose when Israel's existence was in doubt—muted these traditions. Now that communal pressure serves only Netanyahu's interests, reviving them has become essential.

To be sure, there is no guarantee that a different Israeli government would behave very differently. A country formed under genuine existential threat, surrounded by enemies who denied it right to exist, was bound to develop a militant political culture that treats diaspora Jews as a resource, not a partner. Netanyahu exploited and exacerbated this tendency, but he did not create it. What he did devise, or at least perfect, is the combination of US partisan politics and Middle Eastern adventurism that has placed American Jews in the crossfire.

The writer, Distinguished Fellow and Visiting Professor at Dartmouth College, is the former senior director for the Middle East and North Africa at the National Security Council.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old.

FRANZ KAFKA

We choose our joys and sorrows long before we experience them.

KAHLIL GIBRAN

He who has a why to live can bear almost any how.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

INDIA'S SOLAR MOMENT

FOCUS ENERGY

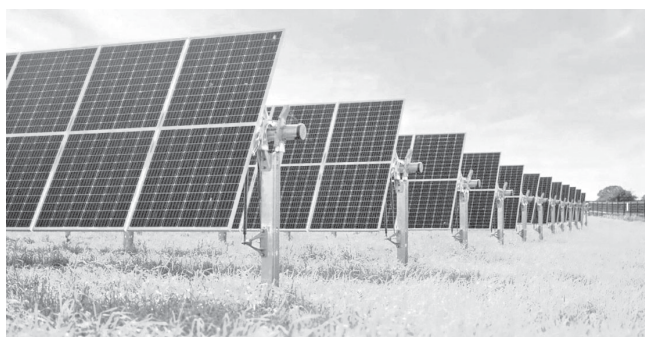
When missiles fill the skies over West Asia, the tremors reach every household's electricity and petrol bill. The ongoing crisis in the region has exposed the vulnerability of India which is the world's third largest consumer of crude oil, imports nearly 89% of its requirement i.e. roughly 1.75 billion barrels a year, or about 4.8 million barrels every single day. Over 60% of that flows through the geopolitically sensitive Strait of Hormuz.

In 2024-25, India's crude oil import bill was \$137 billion. If prices stay at the March average of \$113.57 then the import bill would balloon to nearly \$200 billion. Every ten-dollar rise in the price of a barrel of crude adds \$14 to \$16 billion to India's import bill. That is money drained from our precious foreign exchange reserves.

That refined oil goes into trucks that move goods, tractors that farm fields, fishing boats that feed coastal communities. It also powers diesel generators that keep telecom towers humming across rural India. There is a way to reduce this vulnerability. We are a nation bathed in light! India is gifted by geography which gives it a blazing sun for more than 300 days a year. Unfortunately, sometimes summer heat can also be a curse. We just witnessed a scorching April week. Nineteen of the twenty hottest places on earth were in India, and 92 of the 100 hottest cities globally. But what is a climate burden is simultaneously an energy opportunity of historic proportions.

India leads the International Solar Alliance, a coalition of over 120 sunshine-rich nations. In 2025, India added 38 gigawatts of new solar capacity, surpassing the US, which added 35 gigawatts. Total installed solar capacity now stands at over 150 gigawatts, and annual solar generation has rocketed from 3.4 terawatt-hours in 2013-14 to 144 terawatt-hours in 2024-25.

As the brutal heatwave of April pushed temperatures into the mid-forties and air conditioners across north India ran at full



The sun rises over India every morning without negotiation, without geopolitics, and without a price tag. The only question is how India can harvest it at the scale and speed the moment demands

blast, the electricity grid faced its highest ever demand: 256 gigawatts. Solar power alone was generating 81 gigawatts on that critical day. This was one-third of total national generation. The grid did not collapse. It passed the stress test.

Solar's potential is not just as clean energy, but also as securing our foreign exchange. Even a 10% reduction in oil import dependence would save between \$13 to \$20 billion annually depending on oil prices. A displacement of 100 million barrels through solar-powered electricity substituting diesel gensets, electric pumps replacing diesel pumps, and electric vehicles reducing petrol and diesel demand, would still save \$7.5 to \$11 billion a year in foreign exchange.

But there is also an intriguing possibility that India could become an energy exporter. India's refining capacity of 258 million metric tonnes already exceeds its domestic consumption of 239 million metric tonnes. In 2025, India exported 64.7 million metric tonnes of refined petroleum products — petrol, diesel, aviation fuel — worth over \$52 billion, a record high. Refining capacity is set to expand further, to 309 million metric tonnes by 2028. If solar and electrification progressively reduce domestic fuel consump-

tion, more and more of what India refines goes abroad, earning precious dollars. India would be importing crude, refining it far more efficiently and exporting value-added fuel — functioning as an energy hub for the region.

The trajectory, if pursued with determination, could see India shifting from an energy importer to an energy value exporter. This is in the realm of thinkable.

There are hurdles in the solar journey. Panels need large tracts of land. This is a genuine constraint in a country where farmland is scarce and contested. The answer lies in deploying solar panels on fallow wasteland, rooftops, highway corridors, and canal banks. India already has programmes for all of these.

Solar panels also need water to wash off the thick dust that settles on them, especially in Rajasthan and Gujarat where solar potential is greatest, but water is scarce. Waterless robotic panel cleaners are an emerging solution. India should produce these at scale domestically. Most critically, the sun sets every evening, but demand does not. Without storage, solar power has a structural limitation. India urgently needs massive deployment of storage systems. In 2025, India curtailed 2.3 terawatt-hours of clean solar power simply because the grid could not absorb it. That is both an engineering failure and an

economic one. Then there is the China problem. India imports most of its solar panels and components from China, which deepens trade asymmetry. However, domestic solar module manufacturing capacity has grown to 172 gigawatts. The government has set a target of domestically produced solar cells and wafers by 2028. An India that makes its own solar equipment is truly energy sovereign.

Here are five action points.

One: treat solar energy as a national security infrastructure, equal in priority to defence. Funding should be at least doubled. Two: invest urgently and massively in battery storage. Or else every evening the grid falls back on coal and diesel. Three: upgrade the national transmission grid. Solar-rich states like Rajasthan and Gujarat need to be able to evacuate to demand centres in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Four: accelerate electric vehicle adoption across two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and buses since transport is the single largest consumer of petroleum. Five: scale rooftop solar energy through PM Surya Ghar and allied schemes.

India's peak power demand is projected to rise further to 271 gigawatts, driven partly by rising incomes and the spread of air conditioning. The opportunity and the urgency are both enormous. The current crisis in West Asia offers us a window. In a world where oil routes can be disrupted overnight by wars India did not start, energy independence becomes a sovereign necessity. Every gigawatt of solar power installed is one step away from the Strait of Hormuz. Every electric vehicle on the road is a barrel of oil India does not have to import. Every rooftop panel is a small act of national self-reliance.

The sun rises over India every morning without negotiation, without geopolitics, and without a price tag. The only question is how India can harvest it at the scale and speed the moment demands.

The writer is a noted economist. ©THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

Heat isn't a season, it's an economic condition

India lost 247 billion potential labour hours to extreme heat in 2024. Agriculture absorbed 66% of that loss. Construction accounted for 20%. The income equivalent, calculated by the Lancet Countdown in its 2025 report, was \$194 billion. That figure was 124% higher than the annual average in the 1990s. These are not projections. They are recorded outcomes from a single year.

Odisha sits near the centre of this pattern. The IMD places Bolangir, Nuapada, Bargarh, Sonepur, and Kalahandi under recurring red alerts each summer. These districts are not peripheral. They form the state's primary labour-sending belt. When temperatures cross 44 degrees Celsius by late April and persist through June, those most affected are daily wage earners. They have no paid leave, no cooling infrastructure, and no buffer between a missed day and lost income.

The economic mechanism is direct. A worker who stops at noon earns half. A worker who falls sick earns nothing and incurs medical costs. A 2024 study in Environment Research Letters finds that a

one-degree rise in maximum temperature reduces net earnings by 14%. A one-degree rise in wet-bulb temperature reduces earnings by 19%. During peak heatwave periods, earnings fall by about 40%, compared to non-heatwave days. The primary cause is illness.

In Bolangir and Nuapada, these losses extend beyond summer. They lengthen the migration cycle. A reply tabled in the Odisha Assembly in 2026 reported distress migration rising from around 50,000 workers in 2024 to over 65,000 in 2025. Bolangir recorded the highest outflow. In 2024, 626 workers rescued from exploitative conditions were from Bolangir, and 153 from Nuapada. These are official figures.

The link between heat and migration is mediated through local constraints. In Bolangir, less than a quarter of agricultural land is irrigated. Rainfall has declined. The cultivation window is already short. When heat compresses it further, and when MGNREGS work ends before guaranteed days are delivered, income options collapse. Government data show that average workdays under MGNREGS in Bolangir stood

near 57 days, far below the state commitment of 300. In Nuapada, the figure was about 78 days. The gap drives migration.

Odisha extended MGNREGS to 300 days annually in selected districts in 2020, covering the wage gap up to the state minimum of Rs 352 per day. The commitment is substantive. However, work schedules do not adjust for extreme heat. Tasks remain outdoor and physically demanding. Requiring earthwork during peak heat concentrates risk when exposure is highest.

The Labour Department identifies 14 migration-prone districts under its State Action Plan. District Heat Action Plans recommend restricting outdoor work between 11 am and 3 pm during heatwaves. The recommendation exists on paper. There is no public compliance data confirming consistent enforcement at MGNREGS worksites.

Policy still treats heat primarily as a health emergency. Under the Disaster Management Act 2005, 12 disaster categories qualify for State Disaster Response Fund assistance. Heatwaves are excluded. The 15th Finance Commission de-

clined inclusion. A Lok Sabha reply on 25 July, 2024 confirmed no change is planned.

This exclusion carries fiscal consequences. Cyclones trigger formal response and compensation. Heat erodes income gradually and generates no claim. Odisha's disaster response system has no parallel mechanism for heat.

Measurement gaps worsen the problem. Income losses in informal sectors do not enter official indicators. Reduced hours, medical spending, and household borrowing remain uncounted.

Corrective steps are feasible. MGNREGS schedules in affected districts should shift to early morning during May and June. Red alert restrictions must apply explicitly to worksites. At the national level, inclusion of heatwaves in the disaster list would enable fiscal response. Without this, income loss remains invisible in policy terms.

The cost is already borne locally. Recognition determines whether that burden shifts or persists.

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



Sagari Gupta

A WORKER WHO STOPS AT NOON EARNS HALF. A WORKER WHO FALLS SICK EARNS NOTHING AND INCURS MEDICAL COSTS

UAE's OPEC exit

Sir, The United Arab Emirates decided to leave OPEC and OPEC+ from May 1, ending nearly 60 years of membership and delivering a major blow to the oil producers' alliance. This reflects the growing desire of major producers to pursue national interests rather than remain bound by collective production quotas. For the UAE, with expanding capacity and ambitious diversification plans, greater autonomy offers flexibility to increase output and capture market share. However, the move weakens the cohesion of OPEC+, long seen as a key force in stabilising oil prices through coordinated supply management. It may also deepen strategic tensions within the Gulf, particularly with Saudi Arabia, the group's central power. For consumers, increased competition could moderate prices over time, though short-term volatility may rise. The exit also signals that traditional commodity cartels face mounting strain in an era of geopolitical rivalry, energy transition, and divergent national priorities.

Deadly combination

Sir, The familiar "heatwaves" have not only arrived in India but have also intensified. In the years to come, a two degree rise in temperature is said to push the globe to thrice the normal exposure, and this phenomenon is likely to affect South Asian countries more. The "marine heatwaves" too, have shown little signs of abating. Heat brings humidity, and the natural cool air from the seas get smothered by high humidity in coastal India. In regions like Maharashtra's Vidarbha, hot winds and lack of moisture are responsible for the mercury soaring high. Areas that have received little "April showers," are heading towards an insuperable period. People need to remain on their toes: heat exhaustion, heat cramp and heat stroke -- the three common heat conditions. Additionally, water paucity and overuse of electricity have put much pressure on the power grids. Simmering heat, paucity of water, and polluted air form a deadly combination.

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

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

New paths for Telangana youth from LWE areas

Telangana govt appoints 20 former Maoist-affected tribal youth as tourist guides



able tourism and facilitate the socio-economic reintegration of tribal communities in the "Legacy and Thrust" districts of Mulugu and Bhadradi Kothagudem, official sources said. MHA categorised Mulugu and Bhadradi Kothagudem as "Legacy and Thrust" districts. A "Legacy and Thrust district" is one completely free of Naxal insurgency. "Giri Darshaks" initiative represents a convergent, multi-departmental approach led by the Telangana Police, in coordination with Forest, Tourism, Endowment Departments, and ITDA. It aims to promote sustain-

activities to foster sustainable regional development and to ensure overall law and order and provide a secure environment for tourists, they said.

The core objectives of Giri Darshaks include engaging local tribal youth as professional guides and community facilitators and providing sustainable livelihood opportunities for unemployed tribal youth, they said.

The other objectives include strengthening community-police trust and "enhance the state's presence" in remote tribal areas and position Mulugu and Bhadradi Kothagudem districts as models for tourism-led inclusive development. The 20 youth underwent a training programme for about a month covering tour guiding, etiquette, heritage knowledge, and safety and first aid.

They will be deployed on a rotational basis across heritage, eco-tourism, and pilgrimage circuits to facilitate tourist movement, the sources said.

PENDING DUES

Telangana releases ₹1K-cr for officials

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, April 29: Taking another significant step towards resolving long-pending issues of the government employees in Telangana, the state government has released Rs 1,000 crore towards pending dues.

Acting on the directions of the Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, the funds were released Wednesday. Principal Secretary of the Finance Department, Sandeep Kumar Sultania, issued the orders for the release.

With this, the Deputy CM has fulfilled the assurance given in the Assembly, said an official release. Last year, during discussions with employee unions, the government had promised to release Rs 700 crore per month. Accordingly, the government honored its commitment and made monthly payments up to March 2026.

However, after personally observing the financial needs and difficulties faced by employees, Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka decided to increase the monthly allocation to Rs 1,000 crore from the current financial year.

Assam: Over 4,200 crashes, 1K lives lost so far in 2026

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, April 29: More than 1,000 people have lost their lives in over 4,200 road accidents across Assam in the first three months of 2026, according to official data.

In a statement, the Transport department of Assam government Tuesday said that the state recorded 4,219 road accidents and 1,008 fatalities from January to March in 2026, as against 4,232 accidents and 1,035 fatalities in the first quarter of 2025.

"While the number of accidents remained almost at the same level as last year, nine districts - Guwahati City, Kamrup, Nagaon, Lakhimpur, Sonitpur, Golaghat, Barpeta, Dhubri and Hojai - accounted for nearly 50 per cent of the fatalities," it added. However, several high-volume districts, including Sonitpur, Nagaon, Dhemajai, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh and Biswanath, recorded a significant year-on-year reduction in fatalities, reflecting the impact of focused district-level interventions and sustained enforcement, the release said.

Assam Chief Secretary Ravi Kotha chaired a state-level road



safety review meeting on Monday to comprehensively review the road safety performance across all 35 districts for the first quarter of 2026. He observed that fatalities declined by only 2.6 per cent year-on-year despite no increase in crash volume, meaning that roughly 11 lives are still being lost on Assam's roads every day - indicating that crash severity remains high.

The statement said, "He further noted that while Assam's severity index of 0.24 is better than the national average of around 0.36 (NCRB 2022), crashes in the state remain disproportionately deadly compared to safer states such as Kerala

(0.10) and Tamil Nadu (0.13)." In light of this, district-wise figures were scrutinised in detail, with particular focus on districts reporting increases in accidents and fatalities. A deep root cause analysis was undertaken to identify contributing factors and specific high-risk accident locations across all 35 districts.

The chief secretary directed that after each accident, the District Commissioner and Superintendent of Police, as part of the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC), must personally review the case in detail and ensure prompt corrective measures.

ASSAM POLLS

Nearly 8,500 people to be engaged for counting May 4

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, April 29: Around 8,500 officials will be engaged for counting of votes May 4 for 126 Assam assembly constituencies that went to polls on April 9, the state's Chief Electoral Officer Anurag Goel said Wednesday.

Addressing a press conference here, he said the Election Commission is fully geared up to conduct the counting process smoothly and in a transparent manner.

"We will have 40 counting centres spread across the 35 districts of Assam. Most of the districts have a single centre comprising all the constituencies in their jurisdictions," Goel said.

Kokrajhar, Tinsukia and Jorhat will be having two counting centres each, while Nagaon will have three such facilities, he said.

"The EC has deployed 126 counting observers, who are senior IAS officers and will come from outside the state to maintain the neutrality of the process. We will also have 2,348 micro-observers, who are central government employees," Goel said.

For the main counting work, a total of 5,981 people, mostly from the state government, will be engaged as counting officials, he said.

A record 85.96 per cent of Assam's 2.51 crore electorate exercised their franchise across 126 seats April 9. This marked the highest voter turnout in the state's history, surpassing the previous high of 84.67 per cent recorded in 2016.

Regarding the security arrangements, Goel said 25 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) have been deployed across the state in the innermost cordon to guard the strong rooms, and they will also be stationed in the counting centres.

"In addition, we have 13 companies of state armed police stationed outside the strong rooms as the second cordon. We can say it with full confidence that the strong rooms have not been compromised," he said, refuting allegations of security lapses in the EVM storage facilities by some opposition leaders.

On the counting day, 800 more unarmed police personnel will be available for the movement of EVMs from strong room locations to the counting centres.

"We will be having two additional companies of CAPF on static duty, while 93 companies of state armed police have already been deployed in the districts. We will also have the support of 85 Assault Groups (AGs) on the day of counting to deal with any untoward incident," Goel said.



A man covers himself amid heavy rainfall, in Morigaon district, Assam, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

SCAN, UPLOAD, PRESERVE

Mobile app to decentralise digitisation of Assamese books

Under the 'Digitising Assam' project, 2.76 million Assamese archival documents, including books, journals, manuscripts and rare historical records, have already been digitally preserved and are available at assamarchive.org

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, April 29: A special mobile application will soon enable the digitisation of manuscripts or books in Assamese language by their owners and link them to one of the largest digital repositories of publications in the language under an ongoing community-driven project.

The mobile app is aimed at decentralising the digitisation initiative led by the Nanda Talukdar Foundation (NTF) and supported by the Assam Jatiya Bidyalay Educational and Socio-Economic Trust.

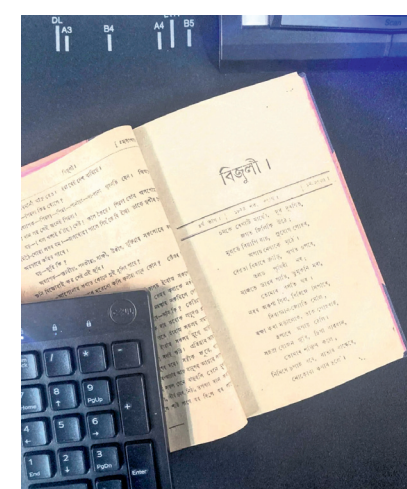
Under the 'Digitising Assam' project, 2.76 million Assamese archival documents, including books, journals, manuscripts and rare historical records, have already been digitally preserved and are available at assamarchive.org.

In the next phase, NTF is preparing to launch a mobile app that will transform ordinary smartphones into scanning devices, foundation secretary Mrinal Talukdar told PTI.

"The goal of this innovation is to decentralise digitisation and give it the form of a mass movement across Assam, where people can scan books, journals and manuscripts from their own homes and contribute to this knowledge repository," he said.

The yet-to-be-named application, which is set for a June launch, will be available for Android users only and the documents scanned and uploaded on it will undergo a process of vetting and approval before it enters the assamarchive.org repository.

"There will be no geographical boundaries and anyone from any corner of the earth can be linked with this project through the mobile application, be it as uploaders



This is not merely a technological achievement, it is a historic moment in which the doors of the Assamese world of knowledge are being thrown open to everyone

MRINAL TALUKDAR | FOUNDATION SECRETARY, NTF

or in the approval process," Talukdar stressed.

He said there are also plans to link this work with student internships within the framework of the National Education Policy (NEP), so that academic participation and cultural preservation become bound together in a single thread.

Along with the application, the NTF will also launch its 'Digitizing Assam 2.0', which will make the 2.76 million archived documents fully keyword-searchable, the secretary said. He said a dedicated technological collaboration with Borno Labs (led by Kabyanil and Indranil Talukdar) and Bohniman Systems (led by Abhijit Bhuyan) has made it possible to make the entire repository keyword-searchable.

"These two teams have used advanced artificial intelligence to decode, index and organise this vast repository of Assamese text and data. In terms of language processing, this is among the most complex and computationally challenging work undertaken in India," he said.

A mostly community-driven project, the Oil India Limited has also extended financial patronage to it, Talukdar added.

NOTICE

I Mr. Soumyaranjan Mohanty, S/o-Dibakar Mohanty are the Property woner. Mouza-Kabisul, Tehsil-Oupada, Thana-Oupada, Plot no 429, Khata No -142/35, Area- 0.089
Address Details: At-Kabisul, Po-Aghirapada, Via-Oupada, Dist-Balasore, Pin- 756049 has applied a loan. I am taking loan from Jana Small Finance Bank Bhadrak Branch by mortgaging my own land property. Baleswar, if anyone have objection please contact our lawyer-Arun Kumar Behera within 14days from the date of publication of this notification. Mobile - +91 8249658397. No complaint will be accepted after the stipulated time.
Sd./- Soumyaranjan Mohanty

OFFICE OF THE ROURKELA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
Udit Nagar, Rourkela Dist.-Sundargarh (Odisha), Pin-769012
Website: www.rmc.nic.in, Email Id: rourkelamunicipality@gmail.com
No. 5312 Date : 28.04.2026

Tender Call Notice
No.13001/325/2627 : The Municipal Commissioner on behalf of Rourkela Municipal Corporation invites sealed applications in conformation with detailed Tender call notice from the reputed Firms /Agencies for "Construction of Boat-Shaped Gazebo (Cement with MS Iron Frame & FRP) at Balughat".
Detail technical specifications, along with terms & conditions etc. may be seen from the Website of Rourkela Municipal Corporation i.e. www.rmc.nic.in & www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Date of issue of tender document 28.04.2026
Sd./- Commissioner
OIPR-13001/13131/11/26-27/0017 Rourkela Municipal Corporation

Indian Bank ZONAL OFFICE: SAMBALPUR
At: Shyam Arcade, Khetraipur, Sambalpur - 768003

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Indian Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the following Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described here-in-below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 & 9 of the said Rules. The Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Indian Bank, Rourkela Branch for an amount mentioned herein below with interest & other expenses thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of the section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

ROURKELA BRANCH/ Name & Address of Borrower/Guarantors	Amount Payable as on specified date	Date of Demand / Possession Notice	Description of the Immovable Property
Borrowers: 1) M/s. Deep Car Decor, Prop: Mr. Ranjit Singh, (Borrower & Mortgagor), 2) Mrs. Ravinder Kaur W/O-Mr. Ranjit Singh (Co-Borrower cum Guarantor), Both are At: Shop No.12, Tiwari Complex, Vedvyas, Brahmanitarang, Rourkela-769004.	₹21,95,473/- as on 03.02.2026 + interest and cost thereon	04.02.2026 / 24.04.2026	All that piece and parcel of Land and Building recorded in the name of Mr. Ranjit Singh, S/o.: Late Inder Singh in Khata No.: 963, Plot No.: 587, corresponding to 2013 settlement Khata No.:1169 and Plot No.: 587 corresponding to Sabik Khata No.: 535, Plot No.: 123/1 with area of Ac.: 0.05 Dec at Mouza : Brahmani tarang, Tahasil : Lathikata, Dist.: Sundargarh, Boundary : North : B.D. Sahoo, South: Road, East: Plot No123 (P), West :Plot No.124.

Place: Sambalpur
Date: 29.04.2026
Sd/- Authorised Officer
Indian Bank

Chola CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED
CORPORATE OFFICE: "CHOLA CREST", C54 & 55, Super B-4, Thiru Vi Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, India
Branch Office : 3rd Floor Sreemaa Construction Building, Naya Chowk Madhupatna, Cuttack, Odisha, Pin - 753 010.

DEMAND NOTICE

DEMAND NOTICE ISSUED UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002

You, the under mentioned Borrower / Mortgagor is hereby informed that the Company has initiated proceedings against you under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and that the Notice under 13(2) of the Act sent to you by Registered Post Ack. Due for Borrower/s has been returned undelivered. Hence, you are hereby called upon to take notice and pay the outstanding loan amount mentioned against the said account with Interest accruing there from within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the Company will proceed against you by exercising its right under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of the Act by enforcing the below mentioned security to realize its dues with interests and cost. It is needless to mention that this notice is addressed to you without prejudice to any other remedy available to the Company.

Loan A/c. No. ML01AAK0000077078 Name and Address of Borrower / Co-Borrower : 1. Malaya Kumar Roul (Applicant), S/o. Srustidhhr Roul Sarugaon, Tilada, District - Balasore, Odisha - 756049. 2. Malaya Kumar Roul (Applicant), S/o. Srustidhhr Roul Oupada, Khaira, District - Balasore, Odisha - 756049. 3. Jyoti Enterprises (Co-Applicant), Oupada, Khaira, District - Balasore, Odisha - 756049. 4. Sasmita Jena (Co-Applicant), W/o. Malaya Kumar Roul, Sarugaon, Tilada, Balasore, Odisha - 756049.	ALL THAT PART AND PARCEL OF THE PROPERTY BEARING KHATA NO. 127/256, PLOT NO. 362/1012, AREA ACRE 0.085 DECIMILS, MOUZA - TILADA, TAHASIL - KHAIRA, P. S. - KHAIRA, P. S. No. 160, DISTRICT-BALASORE.	Loan Amount : Rs. 25,00,000.00 (Rupees Twenty Five Lakh only) Date of Demand Notice : 09.04.2026 NPA Date : 06.04.2026 Outstanding Amount : Rs. 26,45,070.00 (Rupees Twenty Six Lakh Forty Five Thousand Seventy only) as on 09.04.2026
Loan A/c. No. ML01XB00000096243 Name and Address of Borrower / Co-Borrower : 1. Sibaram Padhy (Applicant), S/o. Ramesh Chandra Padhy, Keshapurshasan, Sahasapur District - Ganjam, Odisha - 761115. 2. Sandhyarani Padhy (Co-Applicant) W/o. Sibaram Padhy, Jharapari, Keshapur Shasan, Sahasapur, District - Ganjam, Odisha - 761115. 3. Ramesh Chandra Padhy (Co-Applicant) S/o. Sudarsan Padhy, Keshapurshasan, Sahasapur, District - Ganjam, Odisha - 761115. 4. Indian Poultry Firm (Co-Applicant), Plot No.1960, Keshpur Sasan, Main Road, Dharakote, District - Ganjam, Odisha - 761115.	ALL THAT PART AND PARCEL OF THE PROPERTY BEARING KHATA NO. 416/201, PLOT NO. 1960, MOUZA - KESHAPUR SHASAN,TAHASIL - DHARAKOTE, S.R.O.-DHARAKOTE, DISTRICT - GANJAM, ODISHA , Pin - 761115. BOUNDED BY : EAST - HARIHAR BANSA, WEST - PLOT NO. 1966, NORTH - PLOT NO. 1944 & SOUTH-ROAD.	Loan Amount : Rs. 22,00,000.00 (Rupees Twenty Two Lakhs only) Date of Demand Notice : 09.04.2026 NPA Date : 06.04.2026 Outstanding Amount : Rs. 22,42,757.00 (Rupees Twenty Two Lakh Forty Two Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty Seven only) as on 09.04.2026

Date : 30.04.2026
Place : Balasore, Ganjam, (Odisha)
Authorised Officer
Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited



In Bengal, 'Didi' is going to win with historic votes. The people of Bengal are voting in large numbers in her favour

AKHILESH YADAV | PRESIDENT, SAMAJWADI PARTY

LADAKH GETS 5 NEW DISTRICTS

The Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena Wednesday formally inaugurated five new districts in the Union Territory of Ladakh and directed the newly appointed deputy commissioners and senior police officers to address public concerns and maintain law and order. The five new districts inaugurated are Changthang, Nubra, Zaskar, Sham and Drass, officials said



of the day uote

Provide accurate, truthful and complete information about your household and family to this national effort

BHAJANLAL SHARMA | CM, RAJASTHAN

There is no doubt that our government, headed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, is trying to gradually remove Urdu, which is the language of every section of society and community in J-K, from the system

ILTIA MUFTI | LEADER, PDP

We strongly condemn the proposal they (BJP) wish to bring. When their bill fell in Parliament, they turned to this tactic to mislead people

MATA PRASAD PANDEY | LEADER OF OPPOSITION, UP

Modi inaugurates 594-km Ganga Expressway in UP



The high-speed corridor is expected to significantly boost connectivity across Uttar Pradesh, while giving impetus to industrial investment, logistics, agricultural marketing and regional balance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hardoi/Lucknow, Apr 29: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday inaugurated the 594-km-long Ganga Expressway, a mega infrastructure project connecting Meerut to Prayagraj.

The PM reached Hardoi district around noon and inaugurated the expressway with the touch of a button in presence of Governor Anandiben Patel, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, among others.

The high-speed corridor is expected to significantly boost connectivity across Uttar Pradesh, while giving impetus to industrial investment, logistics, agricultural marketing and regional balance.

Adityanath, in a post on X, said the state's development

journey would gain new momentum with the inauguration of the expressway from Hardoi.

He described the six-lane (expandable to eight) expressway as a "lifeline" connecting villages, farmers, entrepreneurs and youth, and said, "it would play a key role in accelerating development and bridging distances".

Union Minister and BJP's Uttar Pradesh president Pankaj Chaudhary said it is of the longest expressways in the country and a gift of modern infrastructure to the state.

The expressway connects 12 key districts of Meerut, Hapur, Bulandshahr, Amroha, Sambhal, Badaun, Shahjahanpur, Hardoi, Unnao, Rae Bareilly, Pratapgarh and Prayagraj and is expected to significantly reduce travel time while ensuring

Locals hail project

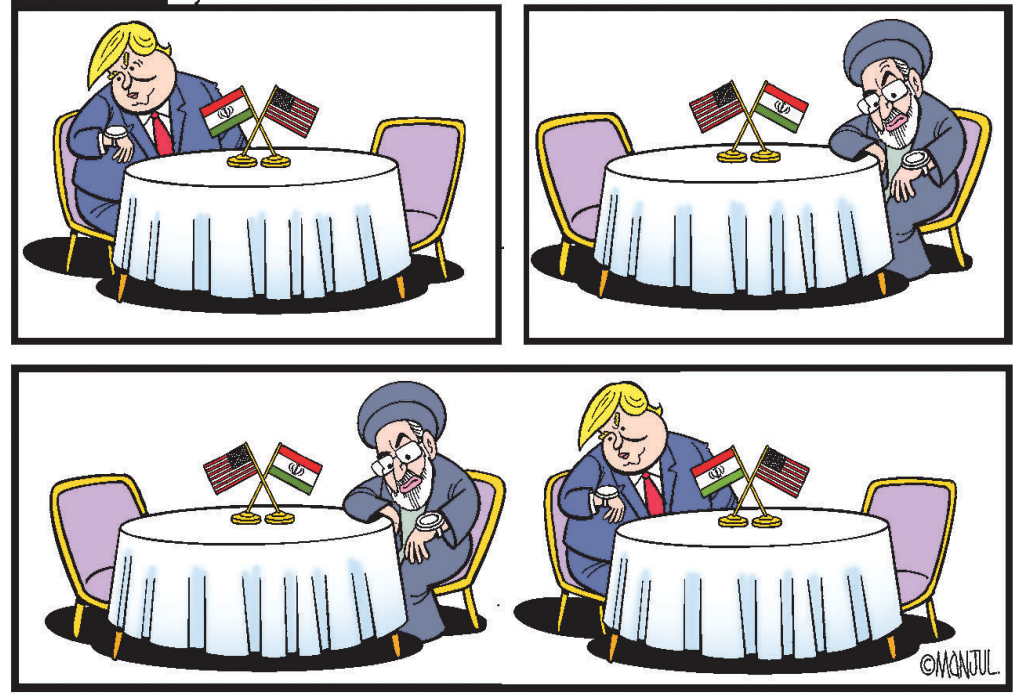
Residents of districts along the Ganga Expressway expressed optimism after the inauguration of the six-lane project Wednesday, saying that it would sharply cut travel time, improve market access and create jobs, even as the Uttar Pradesh government highlighted its wider economic and connectivity benefits. Pankaj Shukla, present at the inauguration venue, said the expressway -- positioned as an expressway-cum-industrial corridor -- will reduce travel time and give fresh momentum to the state's economy. Another local, Sanjay Singh, said the distance between Hardoi and Meerut can now be covered in just a few hours. "Travel from Hardoi to Delhi will become much easier and safer," he added. Anuradha Mishra, a principal of an inter-college, described the inauguration from Mallawan town in Hardoi, often referred to as 'Chhoti Kashi', as a matter of pride for the region.

faster, safer and more convenient movement, it stated.

Developed under a public-private partnership model, the project has been constructed as a six-lane expressway with provision for expansion to eight lanes, with a design speed of 120 kmph, it added.

One of its key features is a 3.2-km-long airstrip near Shahjahanpur for emergency landing of Air Force aircraft. The expressway is also equipped with an Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS), CCTV surveillance, emergency call boxes, ambulances and patrolling units to ensure safety, according to the statement.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



HC directs TN govt on third pregnancy leave

Justices R. Suresh Kumar and N. Senthil Kumar say the pain undergone by women employees for all pregnancies are the same and hence they are entitled to 365 days of maternity leave for third pregnancy too

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, April 29: The Madras High Court has held that no discrimination could be shown by the government in approving maternity benefits, especially leave for the third pregnancy to the employees.

The bench set aside the orders of the Principal District Judge, Villupuram, dated March 27, 2026, which rejected the representation of the petitioner seeking maternity leave from February 2, 2026 to February 1, 2027 and the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal, Villupuram, which asked her to rejoin from April 27, 2026.

The bench directed the district judge to consider the application submitted by Nisha and sanction the maternity leave as equal to that of women of first and second pregnancy, unmindful of a Government Order (GO) dated March 13, 2026, within one week.

According to petitioner, she sought maternity leave for her third pregnancy, which was re-

fused or rejected through the order, dated March 27, 2026 passed by the Principal District Judge, Villupuram, by citing G O (MS) No.18, Human Resources Management (FR-III) Department.

Citing a judgment of the Supreme Court and judgments of the division bench of the Madras HC, the judges said that having receipt of the order of the Division bench, dated January 21, 2026 and having referred so, the government has come forward to issue the said GO, whereby, though maternity leave has been allowed for third pregnancy, it has been restricted only to 12 weeks, i.e. three months.

This kind of restriction made by the government by issuing GO under its executive power vested in them under Article 162 of the Constitution against the dictum of the Supreme Court as well as this Court cannot be approved, the bench added.

For restricting the leave period to 12 weeks, absolutely there was no justification on the part of the government. If it was a pregnancy, may be the first, second or the third, suffering would be the same and pre-delivery as well as post-delivery care must be taken by the women.

This was equal to all such pregnancies. Therefore, no discrimination could be shown by the government in approving the maternity benefits, especially maternity leave for the third pregnancy to the employees, the bench added.



Indian Education Board inaugurates office in Lucknow

AGENCIES

Haridwar/Lucknow, April 29: The provincial office of the Bharatiya Shiksha Board was inaugurated with great ceremony at Christian College in Lucknow Tuesday, marked by the traditional lighting of the lamp. The event was attended by several eminent dignitaries, including renowned yoga guru Swami Ramdev, Uttar Pradesh's Minister for Secondary Education Gulab Devi, and distinguished guest Dr NP Singh. Their presence underscored the significance of the occasion as the Board expanded its footprint in the state.

Speaking on this occasion Swami Ramdev remarked that just as the 'Yoga Revolution' began, a 'Revolution in Education' is now poised to commence from this very soil of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, a revolution spearheaded by the Bharatiya Shiksha Board. He asserted that no child educated under the Bharatiya Shiksha Board would ever turn into a terrorist or a person of immoral character. The Bharatiya Shiksha Board, he declared, will make its mark not only within the country but across the entire world; "We are determined to undo the 'sins of Macaulay'."



During the "Education Dialogue" session that followed the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, the Chief Guest, Minister for Secondary Education (I/C), Gulab Devi, expressed concern over the current trajectory of education in English-medium schools, describing it as increasingly directionless. She observed that such systems often incline students toward Western cultural influences, and remarked that many children have drifted away from traditional practices, such as offering morning salutations (pranam) to their parents.

7 killed in B'lore govt hospital wall collapse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, April 29: Seven people, including a child, were killed and seven others injured when the compound wall of the city's Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital collapsed due to heavy rains here Wednesday, police said.

Officials had initially said three children were killed, but the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) later clarified that only a six-year old girl was among the deceased.

The victims included those from Kerala, and had come here as part of a study tour.



When heavy rains, coupled with strong winds and a hailstorm, battered the area, victims taking shelter near a wall were trapped when it suddenly collapsed. Seven people were killed on the spot.

Police and emergency services personnel rushed to the spot with an earthmover to bring out the bodies and the injured from the debris with the help of other citizens.

Learning about the incident, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah visited the spot along with the Greater Bangalore Authority Chief Commissioner M Maheshwar Rao and Bangalore Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh to take stock of the situation.

Siddaramaiah took the GBA officials to task for the tragedy. Briefing reporters after the spot inspection, the chief minister said, "Seven people have died...seven people are injured. All of them are stable. They are all out of danger. I have told the doctors to provide treatment free of cost."

"Rs 5 lakh solatium will be given to the kin of each deceased. Because, unfortunately, those who died are very poor people - traders, street vendors," he added.

Siddaramaiah said an inquiry will be conducted to find out why the wall collapsed. "We will conduct an inquiry to see whether the engineers are at fault. If they are found responsible, action will be taken against them immediately," he said. According to the CM, there was civil work going on inside the compound wall. The contractor was dumping soil against the compound wall.

CM Mann to meet President May 5

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, April 29: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, who had sought an appointment with President Droupadi Murmu to demand the "recall" of the AAP's Rajya Sabha MPs who joined the BJP, said Wednesday he will meet her as of May 5.

When asked whether there was any provision for recalling a legislator in the law, Mann gave no clear answer. Mann also did not clarify whether MLAs will accompany him when he meets the president.



The Aam Aadmi Party 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 April 24, alleging that the party had strayed from its principles, values and core morals. Six of the seven MPs who quit AAP were from Punjab.

Rajya Sabha Chairman CP Radhakrishnan, Monday, officially accepted the merger of the MPs with the BJP, reducing the strength of Arvind Kejriwal's party in the Upper House to three.

Buddha relics reach Leh, massive crowd gathers

The reception ceremony marks the beginning of marking a rare and significant spiritual occasion in the Union Territory of Ladakh with an exposition for the public to be held in the first two weeks of May

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Leh, April 29: The sacred Piprahwa relics of the Buddha was accorded a ceremonial reception on arrival in Leh, Wednesday, as people poured out of their homes and gathered along the roads to pay respect.

The reception ceremony, with religious figures and government officials in attendance, witnessed traditional performances, ceremonial honours and sacred rituals, reflecting the region's rich Buddhist heritage.

This marks the beginning of marking a rare and significant

spiritual occasion in the Union Territory of Ladakh with an exposition for the public to be held in the first two weeks of May.

Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena accorded a ceremonial welcome to the sacred relics at the Technical Area of Leh airport after they were flown in from New Delhi, where they are preserved.

The relics were brought to Leh in a special Indian Air Force aircraft by Drukpa Thuksey Rinpoche and Khenpo Thinlas Chosal of Matho Monastery.

Several prominent religious and public figures were pres-



ent on the occasion: Khamtak Rinpoche, Rigyal Rinpoche, Ladakh Gonpa Association president Ven. Dorje Stanzin, Ladakh Buddhist Association president Chering Dorje Lakruk, former MPs Thupstan

Chewang and Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, former Chief Executive Councillor (CEC) of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh Tashi Gyalson, and representatives of various social, religious and

political organisations.

The Ladakh Police presented a ceremonial guard of honour, while monks offered special prayers. Saxena offered 'khataks' and prayers on behalf of the people of Ladakh.

Following the reception, the relics were taken in a grand procession to Jivetsal, the designated venue for public exposition starting May 1 that coincides with Buddha Purnima this year.

Describing the occasion as highly auspicious, the lieutenant governor said the arrival of the relics has blessed Ladakh. He noted that while the relics have been exhibited internationally in several countries, this is the first time they have been brought out from their original place of preservation for exposition within India.

Saxena also expressed grati-

tude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for choosing Ladakh for the event and highlighted the region's deep-rooted connection with Buddhism. He urged people to participate in large numbers to seek blessings of Lord Buddha.

The Piprahwa relics have previously been exhibited in countries such as Thailand, Mongolia, Vietnam, Russia, Singapore, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar, attracting global attention and devotion, according to an official statement.

In Ladakh, the relics will be open for public veneration at Jivetsal from May 2 to May 10. They will subsequently be taken to Zaskar on May 11 and 12, followed by exposition at the Dharma Centre in Leh from May 13 to May 14, before being returned to Delhi on May 15, it read.



If you want a strong India, then Bengalis have the right to choose their leadership without being coerced towards any other direction

FAROOQ ABDULLAH | FORMER CM, J&K

INDIA-SRI LANKA NAVAL EXERCISE

Personnel from the navies of India and Sri Lanka executed deep-sea dives, enhancing joint capabilities in underwater search, rescue and salvage operations...



of the day quote

If he (Kharge) becomes (the CM) we will be very happy, because he is a senior politician with a lot of experience...

PARAMESHWARA | HOME MINISTER, KARNATAKA

Recently, self-proclaimed godman Dharendra Shastri made defamatory remarks against Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Likewise, several individuals made derogatory statements...

ROHIT PAWAR | NCP (SP) LEADER

We need to provide these capabilities with the right direction, an appropriate platform, and institutional support

HEMANT SOREN | CHIEF MINISTER, JHARKHAND

POST OF THE DAY

Don't give clear directions to the Indian army, just say, "Jo Uchit lage vo karo." in war like situation. Don't allow LoP to speak against China in Parliament...

@mohitlaws

SHORT TAKES

Bidar hospital blaze; patients rescued

Bidar (Karnataka): A fire broke out at Guru Nanak Hospital here Wednesday morning, following which several patients were safely evacuated...

UP: Loud DJ kills 140 chickens

Sultanpur (UP): A poultry farm owner here alleged that as many as 140 chickens at his farm died due to loud music from a wedding procession...

Gujarat road crash: 6 dead, 8 injured

Sabarkantha (Gujarat): Six women were killed and eight other persons injured after a private bus crashed into a van on a highway...

2026 WB POLL BATTLE

Record 92% Bengal turnout amid SIR row, BJP-TMC clash

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 29: The West Bengal Assembly polls ended Wednesday with what the election watchdog said was the state's highest-ever voter turnout of 92.84 per cent...



ata constituency but Banerjee's political refuge, her emotional home turf and the BJP's chosen psychological battlefield.

Wednesday's second phase saw a 92.48 per cent turnout. The concluding phase covering 142 constituencies in south Bengal appears poised to match the first phase's record voter participation of 93.19 per cent...

The figures put the combined poll percentage over the two-phases at 92.84 per cent. The first phase of polling was held April 23.

"This is the highest-ever recorded poll participation since Independence in West Bengal," it said. The capital Kolkata recorded a turnout of 88.59 per cent...

As she sat outside a booth amid heavy deployment of central forces, Adhikari arrived there and declared, "I will not allow any hooliganism." He opposed Banerjee moving around with "50-60 people" with her.

At the centre of the larger political fight stood Bhabanipur, no longer merely a south Kolk-

Banerjee who usually votes later in the day and prefers staying indoors on the day of polls broke convention and hit the ground before 8 am, moving through Chetla, Padmapukur and Chakraberia areas following complaints of alleged intimidation of local TMC leaders.

"The BJP wants to rig this election. Polls in Bengal are usually peaceful. Is there a goonda raj here?" she said, alleging intimidation of TMC polling agents and late-night visits by CRPF personnel to party workers' homes.

"The atrocities by the central forces are unprecedented. What is happening is not at all free and fair polls. But despite all this, we have full faith that we will win," she said after casting her vote.

43 cadres of last active Hmar insurgent group to surrender

The 'homecoming ceremony' follows the peace accord signed between the Mizoram government and the Hmar People's Convention (Democratic) April 14, effectively marking the end of insurgency in the state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, April 29: A total of 43 members of the Lalhmingthanga Sanate-led faction of the HPC(D) will lay down arms in Mizoram Thursday, officials said.

Chief Minister Lalduhoma and Home Minister K Sapdanga will attend the event at the Police Central Training Institute in Sesawng, around 40 km from Aizawl, they said Wednesday.

The 'homecoming ceremony' follows the peace accord signed

between the Mizoram government and the Hmar People's Convention (Democratic) April 14, effectively marking the end of insurgency in the state.

Though largely dormant in recent years, the Sanate-led HPC(D) faction was considered the last surviving ethnic insurgent outfit in Mizoram and was allegedly involved in sporadic criminal activities, including extortion in Hmar-dominated villages.

The agreement, signed at Sakawrdai in Aizawl district - headquarters of the Sinlung Hills

Cong accuses Rajnath Singh of giving 'clean chit to Pak'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: The Congress Wednesday alleged that Defence Minister Rajnath Singh gave a "shameful clean chit" to Pakistan while speaking at an SCO meeting in Bishkek, and claimed that his shocking statements were "anti-national".

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh also alleged that this "new stance" in relation to Pakistan is all part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's policy of "appeasement" of the US and "calibrated capitulation" to China.

Ramesh shared a video clip of Singh speaking in Bishkek in which he said, "We must not forget that terrorism has no nationality and no theology. No grievance, real or supposed, can become an excuse for terrorism and humanitarian loss."

In his post on X attacking Singh, Ramesh said, "Yesterday, the Defence Minister, obviously with the approval of and at the instance of the Prime Minister, gave a shameful clean chit to Pakistan while speaking in Bishkek."

Is Pakistan not the epicentre



Are there no terrorist camps in Pakistan with India as their target? Is there no ideological anti-India indoctrination in Pakistan? Were not the Mumbai and Pahalgam terror attacks masterminded and executed by terrorists from Pakistan?

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONG GENERAL SECRETARY

of terrorism, Ramesh asked.

"Are there no terrorist camps in Pakistan with India as their target? Is there no ideological anti-India indoctrination in Pakistan? Were not the Mumbai and Pahalgam terror attacks masterminded and executed by terrorists from Pakistan?"

the Congress leader said.

"Clearly this new stance in relation to Pakistan is all part of the PM's policy of appeasement of the US and calibrated capitulation to China," Ramesh said.

"The Defence Minister's shocking statements are as anti-national as the PM's bizarre clean chit to China on June 19, 2020," he alleged.

Singh, in an address at a conclave of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Bishkek, had also said Operation Sindoor demonstrated India's firm resolve that "terror epicenters" are no longer immune to "justifiable punishment".



A man plucks chrysanthemum flowers at a field at Byrapura, in Chikkamagaluru district, Karnataka, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

Govt issues SOP for international flights on hub & spoke model

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: The civil aviation ministry has issued the standard operating procedure for operationalising the hub and spoke aviation model to ensure smooth domestic to international connectivity for passengers...

One of the sources said Air India is expected to start trial H&S flights from Varanasi airport from June 1. Passengers will take a flight from Varanasi to Delhi and then another flight to London.

The Hub and Spoke (H&S) model will provide smooth connectivity for passengers travelling from spoke airports to international destinations through a hub or larger airport.

The move is part of efforts to make India, one of the world's fastest domestic civil aviation markets, as a global aviation hub. Under the model, Domestic to International (D-I) and International to Domestic (I-D) operations will be facilitated in a smoother manner for passengers, including in terms of immigration processes and baggage transfers.

Global warming pushes Himalayan plants upward: Study

Between 1999 and 2022, the vegetation line shifted upwards in all six regions studied - ranging from 1.42 metres per year in Khumbu, home of Mount Everest, to 6.95 metres per year in Manthang, Nepal, according to the findings published in the journal Ecography

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: Under continued global warming, plants in the Himalayan region are shifting to higher elevation in the mountains, a study has found.

Between 1999 and 2022, the vegetation line shifted upwards in all six regions studied - ranging from 1.42 metres per year in Khumbu, home of Mount Everest, to 6.95 metres per year in Manthang, Nepal, according to the findings published in the journal Ecography.

Researchers, led by those at the University of Exeter, UK, said that with climate warm-

ing, a reduced snow depth could be a key potential explanatory driver of the changes.

"The alpine zone is a harsh environment dominated by smaller plants and woody shrubs," lead author Ruolin Leng, from the University of Exeter's department of earth and environmental sciences, said.

"But as the climate changes, conditions in the Himalaya are changing in various ways - from temperature shifts and changes in snow cover to the availability of water and nutrients," Leng said.

The researchers combined satellite images with long-term climate data to assess



vegetation, looking for both "greening" - signifying more vegetation or more leafy vege-

tation - and "browning", which could indicate less vegetation, or more woody vegetation.

"Results revealed consistent upward shifts in vegetation lines across all regions, with rates ranging from 1.42 (metres per year) in Khumbu (Nepal) to 6.95 (metres per year) in Manthang (central High Mountain Asia). Initial levels of vegetation greenness generally increased from west to east," the authors wrote.

Across all study regions, greening trends were found to be more prevalent compared to browning, while significant browning trends were observed in the eastern regions, specifically in Khumbu and Bhutan. Even as the Himalayas are warming faster than the global average, a lot of the

studies have focussed on the melting of snow and ice, and implications for water security for the billions depending on them, Leng said.

"Less research has focused on plants, particularly the impact of these small alpine plants living at high altitude. But plant communities can also affect the water cycle - so our findings raise important questions that must be investigated," the lead author said.

Previous research showed that plant life is expanding across the Himalayan region, but the recent study assesses and quantifies the upward trend in more detail, the researchers said.

international

of the day quote

American patriots today can sing, 'My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty,' only because our colonial ancestors first sang, God save the King



DONALD TRUMP | US PRESIDENT

Military operations will continue until the armed groups involved have been completely neutralised and security has been sustainably restored throughout the country



ASSIMI GOITA | PRESIDENT, MALI

Our weekly pre-war oil bill was around USD 300 million, and today it is up to USD 800 million



SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

2 Jewish men stabbed in UK terrorist incident

London: London police say the stabbing of two Jewish men has been declared a terrorist incident. Metropolitan Police say they are investigating whether Wednesday's attack specifically targeted the Jewish community. The force says the attack in the Golders Green area left two men, aged 34 and 76, hospitalized with knife wounds. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer Wednesday led condemnations of an antisemitic attack in north-west London, which involved two men being stabbed after a knife-wielding man was seen running down a street near a synagogue. The Metropolitan Police said Counter-Terror officers are leading an investigation after a 45-year-old male suspect was Tasered and arrested. Jewish volunteer patrol group Shomrim said the man was seen running along Golders Green Road armed with a knife, attempting to stab Jewish members of the public.

Attack on Pak police post: 6 terrorists killed

Peshawar: Pakistani security forces killed six terrorists early Wednesday in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, repelling an attack on a police post. Heavily armed terrorists attacked the Mazanga police post in Bannu district, police officials said. "Terrorists launched an attack on the Mazanga police post in Bannu at around 1:00 am, which was repelled by the police," a spokesman for the Bannu police said. Six terrorists were killed in the intense exchange of fire between the two sides, police said. Heavy exchange of gunfire continued until early morning, after which security forces launched search operations in the area.

Iran's rial hits record low amid ceasefire

Tehran: Iran's national rial currency hit a record low Wednesday of 1.8 million to USD 1 as a shaky ceasefire with the US and Israel still holds. The rial had remained stable for weeks during the war, which began February 28, in part because there was little trading or imports coming into the country. Experts warn the fall of the rial is likely to further fuel inflation in a country where many imported goods, from food and medicine to electronics and raw materials, are affected by the dollar rate.

Sherpas make way for climbers on Everest quest

REUTERS

Kathmandu, April 29: A group of Sherpa climbers have opened the route to Mount Everest that had been blocked for two weeks by chunks of ice and a giant serac, allowing mountaineers to make attempts to reach the summit, officials said Tuesday. The annual climbing season for the 8,849-m (29,032-ft) peak runs from April to May, months which offer the best weather conditions to reach the wind-swept summit. But a massive 100-ft (30-m) serac, or column of ice, had blocked the path above base camp this month. Parts of it have now melted and broken away, allowing Sherpa climbers, called the icefall doctors,

to fix ropes, place ladders and carve a safe route through the treacherous Khumbu icefall to Camp I located at 6,060 metres (19,880 ft).

Lhakpa Sherpa of the 8K Expedition hiking company, who is coordinating the opening of the route, said 19 Sherpa climbers had crossed the difficult portion of the icefall and reached the site of Camp I.

"They are expected to fix ropes to Camp II, which is not difficult," Sherpa told Reuters from the base camp. Camp II is located at about 6,400 metres (21,000 ft).

Hundreds of mountaineers from different countries have been stranded at the Everest base camp for more than two weeks ahead of making summit



attempts next month.

Department of Tourism official Nisha Thapa Rawal said climbers could now begin to climb from the base camp.

Some climbers said they hoped to complete their expedition in time despite the delay.

"I think there is some hope ... But such a delay will push

summits back and possibly create crowding in the icefall and maybe the summit as teams try to make up for lost time," said British climber Kenton Cool, who is trying to climb the peak for the 20th time, the most by any foreigner.

Authorities have issued 425 Everest permits so far this sea-

son, at a cost of \$15,000 each. Another 153 climbers to neighbouring Lhotse and Nuptse peaks also share part of the same route.

There is no limit on how many permits are issued, which has led to criticism in the past from mountaineering experts about the risk of long queues forming in what is known as the death zone because the air is dangerously thin.

American climber Garrett Madison of the Madison Mountaineering company said despite the opening of the route the area was still challenging.

"It's not easy going around the serac, and perhaps a little bit dangerous," said Madison, 47, who is trying to make his 16th ascent.

Australia proposes to tax Big Tech to fund newsrooms



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Melbourne, April 29: Australia has proposed taxing digital giants Meta, Google and TikTok a proportion of their revenue to pay for news reporters.

The government released draft legislation Tuesday it intends to introduce to Parliament by July 2 that would create a financial incentive for the social media companies to strike deals with news organizations to pay for journalism.

The platforms' criticisms included that the proposal was a "digital services tax" that misunderstood the evolving advertising industry and would fail to deliver a sustainable news sector. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said a monetary value needed to be attached to journalists' work.

"It shouldn't just be able to be taken by a large multinational corporation and used to generate profits for that organisation with no compensation appropriate for the people who produce that creative content," Albanese told reporters. "We think that investment in journalism is critical to a healthy democracy," he added.

It's Australia's second legislative attempt to make the platforms pay for the Australian news text and images that their users view.

Digital platforms had been pressured to strike deals with Australian news publishers to pay for journalism by legislation passed in 2021 that created the country's News Media Bargaining Code.

The platforms chose to reach commercial deals with news creators rather than be forced into arbitration and have a judge set the price.

But they have since avoided renewing those deals by removing news from their services.

The proposed News Bargaining Incentive would charge major platforms that choose not to strike commercial deals with news publishers a 2.25 per cent tax on their Australian revenue. The platforms would be given offsets and their overall costs would be lowered if they agree to pay publishers for journalism, the government said.

The government expects the incentive would raise between 200 to 250 million Australian dollars (USD 144 million- USD 179 million) a year. That was about as much as the platforms paid news outlets when the News Media Bargaining Code was working at its peak.

The government would distribute that income among news organisations based on how many journalists each organisation employed, Communication Minister Anika Wells said.

IRGC seizes wartime power, weakening Mojtaba's role

REUTERS

Dubai, April 29: Two months into a war with the US and Israel, Iran no longer has a single, undisputed clerical arbiter at the pinnacle of power — an abrupt break with the past that may be hardening Tehran's stance as it weighs renewed talks with Washington.

Since its creation in 1979, the Islamic Republic has revolved around a supreme leader with final authority on all key matters of state. But the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on the first day of the war, and the elevation of his wounded son, Mojtaba, have ushered in a different order dominated by commanders of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and marked by the absence of a decisive, authoritative referee.

Mojtaba Khamenei remains at the apex of the system, but three people familiar with internal deliberations say his role is largely to legitimize decisions made by his generals rather than issue directives himself.

Wartime pressure has concentrated power into a narrower, harder-line inner circle rooted in the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), the Supreme Leader's office and the IRGC, which now dominates both military strategy and key political decisions, Iranian officials and analysts say.

"The Iranians are painfully slow in their response," said a senior Pakistani government official briefed on peace talks between Iran and the United States that Islamabad has been mediating. "There is apparently no one decision-making command structure. At times, it takes them 2 to 3 days to respond."

Analysts said the obstacle to a deal is not internal infighting in Tehran, but the gap between what Washington is prepared to offer and what Iran's hardline



Guards were willing to accept.

The diplomatic face of Iran at the talks with the U.S. has been Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, more recently joined by parliament speaker Mohammed Baqer Qalibaf — a former Guards commander, Tehran mayor and presidential candidate — who has emerged during the war as a key conduit between Iran's political, security and clerical elites.

On the ground, however, the central interlocutor has been IRGC commander Ahmad Vahidi, according to a Pakistani and two Iranian sources who identified him weeks ago as Iran's pivotal figure, including on the night a ceasefire was announced.

Mojtaba, who was severely injured in the opening Israeli and U.S. strike that killed his father and other relatives and left him disfigured with serious leg wounds, has not appeared publicly and communicates through IRGC aides or limited audio links because of security constraints, two people close to his inner circle said.

There was no immediate reply from the Iranian foreign ministry to a request for comment on the issues raised in

this article. Iranian officials have previously denied any divisions over negotiations with the United States.

Iran submitted a new proposal to Washington Monday, which according to senior Iranian sources envisions staged talks, with the nuclear issue to be set aside at the start until the war ends and disputes over Gulf shipping are resolved. Washington insists the nuclear issue must be addressed from the outset.

"Neither side wants to negotiate," said Alan Eyre, an Iran expert and former U.S. diplomat, adding that both believed time would weaken the other — Iran through leverage over Hormuz and Washington through economic pressure and a blockade.

Mojtaba owes his elevation to the Guards, who sidelined pragmatists and backed him as a reliable guardian of their hardline agenda. Already strengthened by war, the Guards' growing dominance signals a more aggressive foreign policy and tighter domestic repression, sources familiar with the country's inner policy-making circles told Reuters.

Better get smart soon: Trump to Iran

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, April 29: Talks between Iran and the United States ending the war seemed stalled Wednesday, despite US President Donald Trump earlier claiming Iran had informed his administration that it was in a "State of Collapse".

In a post on his Truth Social platform, Trump criticised Iran's handling of nuclear negotiations, saying it has failed to move toward a deal.

"Iran can't get their act together. They don't know how to sign a nonnuclear deal. They better get smart soon!" he wrote. Meanwhile, Pakistan said its weekly oil import bill has surged by about 167 per cent due to soaring global energy prices. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Wednesday the weekly oil import bill had risen from USD 300 million before the Middle East conflict to USD 800 million.

In a similar message, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the US-Israel war, combined with retaliation from Iran such as choking the Strait of Hormuz, is costing the European Union almost 500 million euros (USD 600 million) a day, raising prices at the pumps and fears of a jet fuel shortage within weeks.

Trump's post featured an AI-generated image of himself holding a weapon amid explosions with the caption "NO MORE MR. NICE GUY."

Another Russian oil facility burns after Ukrainian drone strike

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, April 29: Another oil facility deep inside Russia was reportedly on fire Wednesday following what Ukraine's president claimed was his country's latest long-range drone attack.

The facility is in the Perm region of Russia, located in the Ural mountains more than 1,500 kilometres (900 miles) from Ukraine, Russian media said, with some unconfirmed reports saying it was a pumping station and storage complex. Perm Gov. Dmitry Makhonin said only that a drone hit an unspecified industrial facility, sparking a fire. Russian officials have not been forthcoming about Ukrainian claims that Kyiv is carrying out more long-range attacks and that its domestically developed drones are increasingly accurate.

Advanced drone technology has become a defining feature of the battle as Russia's bigger army presses its more than four-year invasion of its neighbour. Ukraine's response has included a drive to develop new drones for attack and defence.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy Wednesday posted a video on the Telegram messaging app showing a large plume of black smoke rising into the sky in countryside near a built-up area.

Colombians divided over fate of hippos linked to Pablo Escobar

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Puerto Triunfo, April 29: Along the Magdalena River, one of Colombia's primary arteries, fishermen move with wary precision. From the silty, tea-coloured current, hippopotamuses can surface without warning, closing the distance to a vessel in a single heartbeat.

"These hippos are a true nightmare," said fisherman Wilinton Sanchez about the semi-aquatic animals capable of charging at speeds of up to 8 kilometres (5 miles) per hour in water and 30 kilometres (18 miles) on land.

"We were out Saturday when one lunged reared up and swung its jaws wide. If it ever gets hold of you, it'll tear you to pieces."

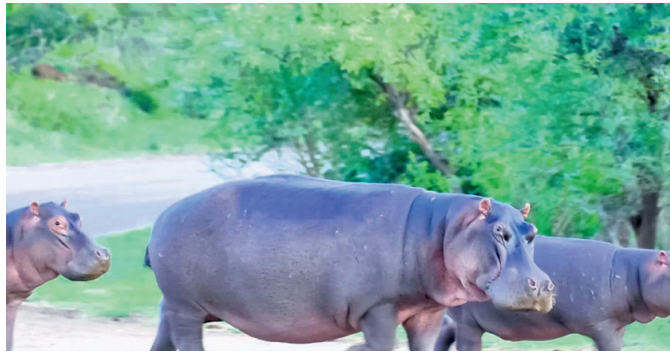
The animals also draw fascination. Several afternoons a week, boats filled with Colombian and foreign tourists arrive to scan the shoreline waiting

for signs in the murky water. Even these "hippo-watching" outings can occasionally end in screams as the animals close the distance with terrifying speed, but they also bring needed business to the community.

The hippos, an invasive species in Colombia, are part of a population of 200 that continues to reproduce unchecked. They are the offspring of animals illegally brought to the country in the 1980s by the late drug kingpin Pablo Escobar for his private zoo at Hacienda Napoles — a sprawling valley estate that featured a private airstrip and served as his secluded fortress.

Colombia's Environment Ministry has warned that the country's hippo population will exceed 500 by 2030 without intervention. To prevent this, officials recently approved a plan to euthanise approximately 80 hippos starting in the latter half the year.

The measure has ignited a



fierce debate. Scientists advocating for euthanasia have faced death threats, while animal welfare activists decry the plan as "murder".

Meanwhile, many residents of Puerto Triunfo, a town 200 kilometres (120 miles) of the capital, Bogota, fear that losing the animals will destroy the tourism that sustains their community.

Diana Hincapie pauses her work at a Puerto Triunfo

restaurant, taking a seat to chat beside a mural of a female hippopotamus and her calf.

"We don't want to see a dead hippopotamus. They aren't African anymore; they are Colombian, born and bred here for over 30 years," said the 48-year-old business owner, noting she is ready to take to the streets in protest if the euthanasia plan proceeds.

Her restaurant, situated on the banks of the Cocorna

Sur River — a tributary of the Magdalena — draws nearly 200 tourists a month. Most come specifically for the hippos, and Hincapie fears that the government's plan would decimate the area's tourism.

As one of the largest terrestrial mammals on Earth, hippopotamuses have now spread across approximately 43,000 square kilometres (16,600 square miles), according to Environment Ministry estimates.

With no natural predators and a stable, drought-free climate — a stark departure from their native Africa — the animals found a sanctuary on the "Island of Silence," a vegetation-covered river island that has become the heart of their expanding colony.

Alvaro Molina, 61, who lives on the riverbank opposite the island, recalls that the first pair arrived roughly 11 years ago. Since then, the population has surged. "One night I saw 12

at once, but I understand they have been migrating," the fisherman says.

Encounters on the river are so frequent that Molina now takes them for granted every time he goes fishing — especially at dusk. A few years ago, his boat ended up right on top of two hippos which, startled, capsized the vessel. The fisherman managed to swim to another barge without injury.

"Whether they are killed or taken away, it does us a favour," Molina said, noting that the hippos have crippled the local fishing industry because so many people have abandoned it out of fear.

The government's control plan includes confinement, a move supported by Puerto Triunfo residents, transfers to international sanctuaries or zoos and euthanasia, a last resort reserved for cases where non-lethal alternatives prove unfeasible.



DK SRIVASTAVA | CHIEF POLICY ADVISOR, EY INDIA

“ If the ICB price averages \$120 per barrel in FY27, India's real GDP growth may slip to about 6 per cent and CPI inflation may increase to 6 per cent... To minimise the adverse impact on fiscal deficit, increased energy prices should be passed on to the retailers to a relatively large extent”

FLIGHT DELAYS HIT 1.21L PASSENGERS

Indian airlines carried more than 4.37 crore passengers on domestic routes in the first three months of 2026, marking a marginal increase over the year-ago period, according to official data released Wednesday. Airlines shelled out ₹3.19 crore towards the facilitation of over 1.21 lakh passengers who were impacted by flight delays, while ₹93.49 lakh was spent for compensation and facilities provided to 66,784 passengers affected by flight cancellations in March



of the day quote

If India is to become a developed economy by 2047, we are not talking about incremental growth. We are talking about a structural leap. We are talking about adding nearly 2,000 gigawatts of new capacity over the next two decades

SAGAR ADANI | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AGEL

The industry remains resilient, but the environment has become far more demanding. Manufacturers are managing slower growth in some markets, fiercer competition in others, and continued uncertainty linked to trade tensions, supply chains, affordability, energy prices and the pace of electrification

SHAILESH CHANDRA | PRESIDENT, OICA

India offers significant potential for growth for insurance companies, as the country is heavily underpenetrated

AMITABHA RAY | CEO, SWISS RE

RESULTS CORNER

Vedanta profit zooms

New Delhi: Mining conglomerate Vedanta Ltd Wednesday reported an 89 per cent rise in its consolidated profit after tax at Rs 9,352 crore in the quarter ended March 2026, citing higher sales volume amid rising global metal prices as well as the weakening rupee's exchange rate. In the year-ago period, the Anil Agarwal-led company posted a consolidated PAT (profit after tax) of Rs 4,961 crore. The revenue from operations during the latest fourth quarter also rose by 29 per cent to Rs 51,524 crore from Rs 39,789 crore a year ago. The total expenses of the company during the reporting quarter rose to Rs 19,119 crore from Rs 13,702 crore recorded in the year-ago period, the filing said.

Adani Power net jumps

New Delhi: Adani Power Wednesday reported over 64 per cent growth in consolidated net profit to Rs 4,271.40 crore during the quarter ended March 31, mainly driven by higher revenues and lower tax expenses. It had reported a net profit of Rs 2,599.23 crore in the year-ago quarter, the company said in an exchange filing. The company's total income rose to Rs 15,989.09 crore in the fourth quarter from Rs 14,535.60 crore in the same period of the preceding 2024-25 financial year. For the full FY26, the company's net profit rose to Rs 12,971.08 crore from Rs 12,749.61 crore in FY25. In a separate statement, Adani Power said it recorded a higher profit after tax for Q4 and FY26 on the back of lower tax expenses.

Cognizant profit slides

New Delhi: US-based IT major Cognizant Wednesday reported a marginal decline in its consolidated net income to \$662 million in the first quarter ended March 2026, compared to \$663 million in the corresponding period last year. The Teaneck, New Jersey-headquartered firm follows the January-December financial year. Despite the flat net income, Cognizant - which has a vast majority of its workforce based in India - posted a 5.8 per cent year-on-year increase in its first-quarter revenue, reaching \$5.413 billion, and landing in the upper half of the company's guidance range. For the full year 2026, the company maintained its revenue growth guidance in the range of 4.8 per cent to 7.3 per cent, projecting total revenues between \$22.11 billion and \$22.64 billion.

4 months in, foreign capital flight surpasses 2025 record

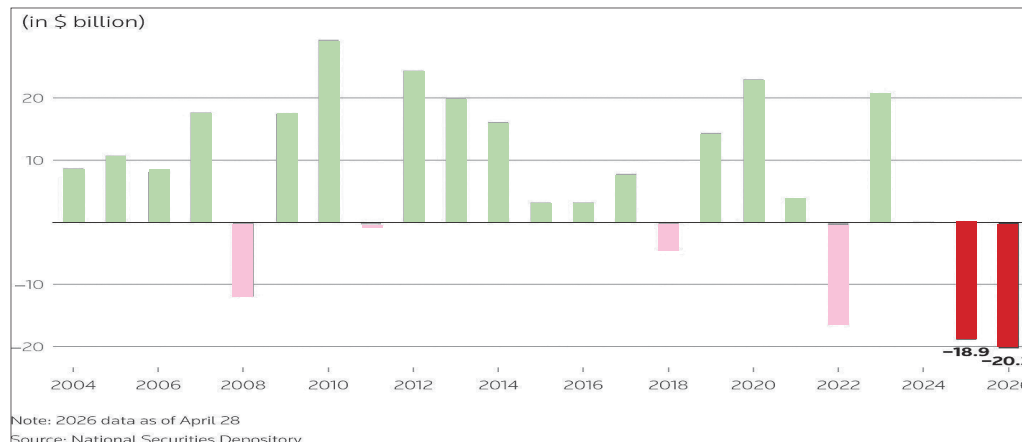
The bulk of the selling - \$19bn - has come since the Iran war started. Last year, the outflows stood at \$18.9bn

REUTERS

Mumbai, April 29: Foreign investors have pulled more than \$20 billion out of Indian equities in the first four months of 2026, surpassing last year's record annual exit, as an Iran war-driven spike in oil prices soured sentiment on Asia's third-largest economy and one of the biggest importers of crude oil.

The bulk of the selling - \$19 billion - has come since the Iran war started, data from the National Securities Depository showed. Last year, the outflows stood at \$18.9 billion.

India, which imports 90% of its energy needs and relies



Note: 2026 data as of April 28

Source: National Securities Depository

heavily on supplies from the Middle East, is among the most vulnerable to the energy shock, analysts have said.

"There is a greater propensity for markets like India, with a high reliance on oil and food prices, to be impacted by the Middle East conflict," said

Lilian Chovin, head of asset allocation at UK-based private bank and wealth management firm Coutts.

Indian equity benchmarks Nifty 50 and Sensex have fallen 8.2% and 9.8%, respectively, so far this year, underperforming their Asian and emerging-mar-

ket peers while the rupee has fallen to record lows against the US dollar.

Financial shares have borne the brunt of the selling, with outflows of Rs 799.81 billion (\$8.44 billion), followed by information technology stocks that have seen withdrawals of

Nifty 50 and Sensex have fallen 8.2% and 9.8%, respectively, so far this year

about Rs 220 billion.

Investor sentiment toward software firms has weakened due to concerns over potential AI-led disruption, which has contributed to the broader market derating, Chovin said.

Domestic institutional buying has helped steady markets, with record local purchases of \$15.4 billion in March offsetting the highest-ever monthly foreign outflows of \$12.7 billion.

While the domestic liquidity backdrop remains intact, any durable market rally would need foreign money to return, CLSA analysts led by Vikash Kumar Jain said in a note Wednesday.

IN A FIRST

Gold investment tops jewellery consumption

Consumers deferred their jewellery purchases due to volatile prices and opted instead to invest in instruments such as gold exchange traded funds

REUTERS

Mumbai, April 29: India's investment demand for gold surpassed jewellery consumption for the first time on record in the March quarter, as investors turned to the precious metal amid subdued equity market returns, the World Gold Council (WGC) said Wednesday.

Stronger investment demand in the world's second-largest consumer of gold partly offset a decline in jewellery buying, hit by a rally in prices, helping keep overall demand stable, the WGC said.

"For the first time investment demand surpassed jewellery demand," Sachin Jain, chief executive of the WGC's Indian operations, told Reuters.

"Investment demand will become increasingly prominent in the coming quarters, with both financial and retail investors showing more interest in gold."

Investment demand in the March quarter surged 52% from a year earlier to 82 metric tons, while jewellery demand fell 19.5% to 66 tons, the World Gold Council (WGC) said in a



JAN-MARCH QUARTER

- India's gold demand rises 10% to 151 tons
- Inflows into gold ETFs jumped 186% to record 20 tons
- Domestic gold prices have nearly doubled since start of 2025
- Global gold demand surges 2% in on strong bar, coin buying

report published on Wednesday. Total gold consumption in the country rose 10.2% to 151 metric tons during the quarter, according to the data.

For the first time, investment demand accounted for a larger share of total consumption than jewellery,

In value terms, demand nearly doubled to Rs 99,900 crores, up 99 per cent year-on-year, underscoring the impact of the sharp rise in gold prices

SACHIN JAIN | REGIONAL CEO, WGC INDIA

rising to 54.3% in the quarter. Investment demand typically accounts for about a quarter of India's total gold consumption, but rising prices have been prompting investors to buy coins, bars, and gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs).

Inflows into gold ETFs jumped 186% in the March quarter from a year earlier to a record 20 tons, the WGC said.

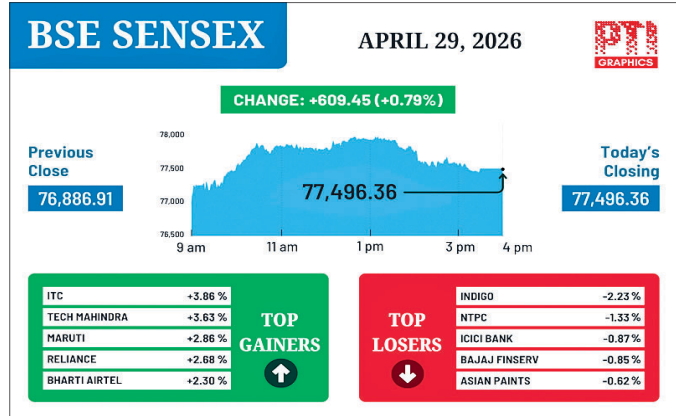
Weak stock market performance in recent quarters has been drawing investors to gold ETFs, and the trend is likely to continue, Jain said.

Domestic gold prices have nearly doubled since the start of 2025, while India's benchmark Nifty 50 has risen 2.4% during the period.

Gold slides to ₹1.52 lakh/10g

Gold prices declined by Rs 1,500 to Rs 1.52 lakh per 10 grams in the national capital Wednesday due to profit booking as rising crude oil rates raise concerns over inflation ahead of the US Federal Reserve's decision. However, silver prices posted a modest gain of Rs 500 to Rs 2,44,500 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) from Tuesday's closing level of Rs 2,44,000 per kg, as per the All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.9 per cent purity decreased by Rs 1,500, or 1 per cent, to Rs 1,52,800 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). The yellow metal had settled at Rs 1,54,300 per 10 grams in the previous session. Bullion traders weighed higher energy costs tied to tensions in West Asia, which could keep inflation elevated and force central banks to stay restrictive for longer. In the international market, spot gold fell \$23.31, or 0.51 per cent, to \$4,573.75 per ounce, while silver traded 0.18 per cent lower at \$72.99 per ounce.

Shares rise as earnings hope thwarts oil surge



The Nifty 50 rises 0.76% at 24,177.65, and Sensex adds 0.79% to 77,496.36

REUTERS

Mumbai, April 29: Indian shares advanced Wednesday as stock-specific gains after quarterly earnings offset higher Brent crude prices on reports the US may extend its blockade of Iranian ports, limiting the upside.

Brent crude hovered around \$115 a barrel. Higher oil prices pose risks for India, the world's third-largest crude importer, by fuelling inflation and pressuring growth and corporate earnings.

The Nifty 50 rose 0.76% at 24,177.65, and Sensex added 0.79% to 77,496.36.

Eleven of the 16 major sectors advanced. The auto index rose 1.2%.

Maruti Suzuki jumped 2.9%, rebounding from Tuesday's 2.5% drop after its surprise March-quarter profit fall as

multiple brokerages pointed to steady demand and volumes as positives.

Index heavyweight Reliance gained 2.6% and took its three-session rise to 7.4% after quarterly results.

Eternal, Bandhan Bank, Star Health, Dalmia Bharat and Canara HSBC Life surged 0.3%-11% on upbeat quarterly results.

The broader small-caps rose 0.7% while mid-caps were little changed.

"By and large, the earnings season has had no negative surprises, except for the subdued growth guidance by IT companies, which is supporting sentiment," said Kranthi Bathini, director of equity strategy at WealthMills Securities.

While crude prices have risen and foreign outflows from Indian equities already exceeded total sales in 2025, markets have swung between gains and losses in recent sessions, as attractive valuations, strong domestic buying and bargain hunting provide a counterweight, Bathini said.

Oil firms selling petrol at ₹14/L loss, diesel at ₹18

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 29: Oil marketing companies are selling petrol and diesel at a loss of Rs 14 per litre and Rs 18 per litre, respectively, as elevated crude prices outpace capped retail fuel rates, squeezing marketing margins.

Besides losses on petrol and diesel, the elevated energy prices post West Asia crisis are likely to leave companies with an under recovery of Rs 80,000 crore on cooking gas LPG in the current fiscal, while fertiliser subsidy is projected to rise to Rs 2.05 to 2.25 lakh crore.

Rating agency Icria said supply disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz - handling around 20 per cent of global oil and LNG trade - have tightened availability of fuels, fertilisers and chemicals, pushing up prices and increasing cost pressures across downstream industries.

Crude prices before the West Asia crisis broke out two months back were around USD 70-72 a barrel. "The stable pump prices for auto fuels amid elevated crude oil prices are impacting the profitability of the oil marketing companies (OMCs)," said Prashant Vasishth, Senior Vice President and Co-Group Head, Icria.

"At crude prices of USD 120-125 per barrel, marketing margins on petrol and diesel are estimated to be negative Rs 14 a litre and Rs 18 per litre, respectively." Icria estimates LPG under-recoveries could reach Rs 80,000 crore in FY2027, if current trends persist, while the fertiliser subsidy burden is projected to rise to Rs 2.05-2.25 lakh crore, above the budgeted Rs 1.71 lakh crore.

Behera Union Bank's new regional head for Sambalpur



Sambalpur: Deputy General Manager Jayagopal Behera has assumed charge as the new Regional Head of Union Bank of India, Sambalpur Region. Behera, who joined the bank in 2001, has over 24 years of experience working in various positions at different locations. He has gained extensive experience working in various places such as Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, and Delhi. Currently, Behera will perform his duties at his birthplace, Sambalpur. It is expected that under his guidance, the best banking services can be provided to customers.

SMART Bazaar's 'Full Paisa Vasool' sale

Bhubaneswar: SMART Bazaar has announced the launch of its 'Full Paisa Vasool' event, scheduled from April 29 to May 3, aimed at helping customers stock up on monthly essentials while saving more. During the five-day period, shoppers can access offers on commonly purchased household items such as atta, rice, pulses, edible oils, and other kitchen and home necessities. These products typically form a significant portion of monthly expenses, and the campaign focuses on delivering better value on these key categories. The initiative is designed to simplify shopping by allowing customers to complete their entire monthly purchase in one place, while ensuring affordability and convenience. The core objective is to enable families to maximize savings on routine purchases. The campaign reinforces its message with the line: "SMART Bazaar ka ek hi usool, Hamesha kareng Full Paisa Vasool."



Ethos Global unveils FANTOME energy drink

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Ethos Global officially unveiled its latest energy drink 'FANTOME' here Wednesday. This energy drink is crafted to match the lifestyle of today's fast-moving generation and is designed for those who thrive on hustle and creativity.

Speaking on the launch, Ankit Khandelwal, Group Chairman at FANTOME, emphasised the



brand's vision. He stated that the company has gone beyond creating just another energy

drink, instead developing a product that reflects a lifestyle and mindset. According to him,

FANTOME is designed for individuals who are constantly striving, creating, and pushing boundaries, offering energy that aligns with their ambitions.

With this launch, Ethos Global aims to tap into India's rapidly expanding energy drink market while building a brand that resonates with youth culture and evolving consumer preferences. FANTOME is now available across leading retail and online platforms.

West Asia conflict raises inflation risks: FinMin report

Indian economy is estimated to grow at 7.6%, the strongest in recent years

REUTERS

New Delhi, April 29: India's economy remains resilient but faces mounting risks from the Middle East conflict, which has disrupted supplies of energy, fertilisers and industrial raw materials, raised costs and weakened trade, the government's monthly economic report said Wednesday.

"India enters FY2026-27 at the

intersection of domestic resilience and external turbulence," the report said, adding that the West Asia war has altered the macroeconomic outlook following real GDP growth of 7.6% in the previous fiscal year.

The government said India remained a relative bright spot, with the International Monetary Fund raising its 2026-27 growth forecast for the country to 6.5% from 6.4%.

However, it warned that risks were tilted toward higher inflation, wider fiscal and external deficits and slower growth, especially if energy and fertiliser supply disruptions persist.



The report said India's crude oil basket averaged \$113 per barrel in March and was just under \$115 per barrel this

month through April 24. It added higher wholesale prices showed that cost pressures were building, even though consumer inflation remained

moderate.

Retail inflation rose to 3.4% in March from 3.2% in February, while food inflation increased to 3.87%. Wholesale inflation accelerated to 3.88% in March from 2.13% in February, reflecting rapid transmission of higher energy and commodity prices at the producer level.

"The risks are tilted toward persistence rather than quick reversal of the price pressures," the report said.

Trade also weakened in March, with merchandise exports down 7.4% year-on-year and 24 of 30 major export categories declining. Exports to

the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia fell sharply as the Strait of Hormuz blockade raised freight, insurance and logistics costs.

The report said remittances, which reached a record \$135.4 billion in FY25, could come under pressure if a prolonged conflict weakens Gulf labour markets.

India's unemployment rate rose to 5.1% in March from 4.9% in February, though the report said labour conditions have broadly stabilised, while confidence in future job prospects has weakened, particularly in urban India.

SRH script epic chase

PSG outgun Bayern in nine-goal thriller

Head, Klaasen power SRH to fourth-highest run-chase in IPL history, beat MI by 6 wickets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 29: Travis Head (76) and Heinrich Klaasen (65 not out) outmuscled Ryan Rickelton's record 123 not out for Mumbai Indians as Sunrisers Hyderabad romped home to a six-wicket in their Indian Premier League contest, here Wednesday.

After Rickelton's highest individual score for MI and also their fastest-ever ton in IPL history took the hosts to a formidable 243/5, SRH rode on a combined batting show to win with eight balls to spare.

Mumbai Indians had also registered their highest score batting first, but SRH recorded the fourth-highest successful run chase in IPL history on a docile wicket which provided absolutely no competition between the bat and the ball.

Chasing 244, SRH made 249/4 in 18.4 overs.

While Head provided early fireworks racing to 30-ball 76 with eight sixes and four fours, Klaasen produced an equally brutal knock to finish with 65 not out off 30 balls with seven fours and four sixes.

For MI, a string of missed opportunities early on proved costly in their sixth defeat in

TODAY'S MATCH
GT VS RCB
TIME: 7:30 PM
Star Sports channels & JioHotstar



eight matches.

While he was in his usual element, Head's knock was also littered with lifelines provided by MI.

The first ball of the third over from Trent Boult (1/41) swung away from Head and he threw his hands at it, slicing in the air towards deep point. Naman Dhir did well to get to the ball but it burst through his hands to land beyond the ropes.

Head and Abhishek went about their job nonchalantly while smacking almost every

bowler around the park.

Wicketless once again, Jasprit Bumrah (0/54) was hit for 14 in his first over, Boult for 18 after 11 in his first, and Will Jacks was clobbered for 19 runs in his first as SRH raced to 62 in four overs.

The onslaught continued beyond the powerplay when MI brought in Ashwani Kumar (2-0-41-0), as SRH openers collected 23 runs off the left-arm seamer to continue with the carnage.

SRH responded to MI's 93-run

Parag in soup after being caught vaping on camera

Rajasthan Royals captain Riyan Parag has courted controversy after TV cameras caught him 'vaping' in the dressing room during his team's Indian Premier League game against Punjab Kings in Mullanpur. The Indian government had banned e-cigarettes back in 2019, prohibiting their production, sale and distribution. As per the law, the offender faces imprisonment up to one year and/or a Rs one lakh fine for a first time offence. Parag, who has not had the best of times with the bat this IPL, was seen inhaling an e-cigarette, also known as vaping, in the dressing room during the live broadcast of their game against Punjab Kings Tuesday night. The act caught on camera triggered immediate reaction on social media. Parag made a 16-ball 29 in his team's successful chase of 223. IPL and BCCI officials involved in the conduct of the IPL termed it as a careless act in the age of social media and prying TV cameras. This is not the first controversy to hit the Royals this season. Earlier this month, team manager Romi Bhinder was fined Rs one lakh for breaching PMOA protocol after being found using his phone in the dugout.

IPL STANDINGS					
TEAMS	P	W	L	NRR	PTS
PBKS	8	6	1	1.043	13
RCB	8	6	2	1.919	12
SRH	9	6	3	0.832	12
RR	9	6	3	0.617	12
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	8	2	6	-0.784	4
LSG	8	2	6	-1.106	4

opening stand which took seven overs with 129 runs in only 8.4, with Head being the more dominant than Abhishek.



Goals galore as PSG beat Bayern Munich 5-4 in record-setting Champions League semifinal 1st leg

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Paris, April 29: Paris Saint-Germain took a narrow advantage in the UEFA Champions League semifinals after a thrilling 5-4 home win over Bayern Munich in the first leg.

It was the highest-scoring semifinal in the competition's history. Harry Kane's 17th-minute penalty gave Bayern the lead, but PSG responded through Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, Joao Neves and Ousmane Dembele before halftime.

Kane converted after Willian Pacho's sliding challenge on Luis Diaz. PSG soon hit back. After Dembele missed a one-on-one chance against goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, Kvaratskhelia

equalized by beating Josip Stanic and finishing into the far corner, reports Xinhua.

Neves then headed in Dembele's corner in the 33rd minute. Michael Olise restored parity for Bayern four minutes before halftime, driving into space and scoring from the edge of the area. PSG regained the lead on the stroke of halftime when Alphonso Davies handled Dembele's cross and Dembele converted from the spot after a VAR review.

PSG continued to press after the break. Achraf Hakimi found space on the right and Kvaratskhelia completed his double in the 56th minute, before Dembele beat Dayot Upamecano and struck in off the inside of the post two minutes later.

Bayern, however, fought back to keep the tie alive. Upamecano headed in Joshua Kimmich's free kick in the 65th minute, and Diaz reduced the deficit again three minutes later after controlling Kane's long pass, es-

caping Marquinhos and finishing. The goal stood after a VAR check. Senny Mayulu struck the woodwork late on and Pacho cleared a Kimmich header near the line in stoppage time. PSG will take a one-goal lead to Munich for the return leg.

"It was the kind of exchange you could expect, but not that it would be so open. It feels strange to lose by one goal after being three goals down. Especially in the end, we should have equalized. Paris was tired," said Kimmich.

"It was a good game between two teams with strong attacking qualities, but in the end, we decided it in our favor. We managed to stay calm and focused. We know Bayern can always come back. The most important thing is to stay focused," said Dembele.

Spanish side Atletico Madrid hosts London club Arsenal Wednesday in the other semifinal first leg.

THOMAS CUP FINALS Shuttlers win but India lose

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Horsens (Denmark), April 29: India went down 2-3 to China in their final Group A tie of the Thomas Cup Finals, despite fighting comeback wins from Ayush Shetty and HS Prannoy here Wednesday.

The 2022 champions India, who have already sealed their quarterfinal spot, were on the back foot after Lakshya Sen and the doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty lost close encounters to concede a 0-2 lead.

Under pressure, Ayush delivered, recovering from a game down to beat Weng Hong Yang 17-21, 21-13, 21-15 in the second singles and reduce the margin.

It came down to the second doubles match but the pair of

Hariharan Amsakarunan and MR Arjun couldn't get across He Ji Ting and Ren Xiang Yu, losing 17-21 13-21 as China took an unassailable 3-1 lead.

Prannoy then rallied from a game down to beat Lu Guang Zu 20-22, 21-19, 21-11 in the third singles to reduce the margin of the defeat. Lakshya, a 2021 world championships bronze medalist, had beaten world No 7 Li Shi Feng en route to a runner-up finish at the All England Championships last month but he could not replicate that form in the decider, going down 19-21 21-8 12-21 in the first singles. World No 4 pair of Satwik and Chirag also put up a gallant fight, saving five match points before losing 13-21 21-13 24-26 to Paris Olympics silver medalists Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang.

Kothari defeats Advani to retain title

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Carlow (Ireland), April 29: Sourav Kothari outclassed compatriot Pankaj Advani in a lop-sided final to retain the IBSF World Billiards Championship title here.

The Kolkataan defeated the 19-time champion Advani 1133-477 in a lopsided three-hour final. After the initial blues, the 41-year-old came up with a barrage of breaks to floor Advani. He had stupendous runs of 485, 121, 90, 241 and an unfinished 155.

"I wanted to do it again for my father. This one was for you, Dad," he said after the final in memory of his father Manoj Kothari, who had passed away early this year.

"Obviously, it feels incredible to win the World title, and to defend it is even more special,"



said Kothari. The sizzling 485 in reply to his rival's 141 early in the match set the tone.

If the 485, which culminated with a missed red pot to the centre pocket, wasn't a hammer

SHORT TAKES

FIFA enacts new WC rule on yellow cards

Washington: FIFA has tweaked World Cup rules on yellow cards to ensure fewer players are suspended for key elimination games. An extra amnesty for yellow cards - wiping player disciplinary records twice during the expanded tournament in North America - was proposed to a meeting Tuesday of FIFA's ruling council. Later FIFA issued a statement confirming the change. At the World Cup, players must serve a one-game ban if they are shown a yellow card in two different games but single yellow cards were canceled at previous tournaments after the quarterfinals stage. That ensured no player would miss the final through suspension just because of getting a yellow card in the semifinal. The expanded 48-team World Cup format, with an extra round-of-32 knockout stage, led to a FIFA review aimed at helping keep players on the field. FIFA cleared the disciplinary records of players who have one yellow card after the three-game group stage so they start the knockout phase afresh. A second amnesty after the quarterfinals will apply for players who got one yellow during the three previous knockout rounds and whose teams advanced to the semifinals.

blow, the 121 and 90 breaks in quick succession, took the match away from Advani.

Trailing 224-700 with a little over an hour until the bell, the Bengalurean made a 64 before rushing an in-off to the top left-hand pocket.

Kothari punished that error with another silken-smooth 241 effort to take a whopping 941-288 lead. Under pressure, Advani compiled a break of 119 - which ended when he missed a thin in-off to the centre pocket - to reduce the deficit.

Kothari was not done yet as he came up with a flowing 155 before the bell went off.

FROM PURI SANDS TO WORLD ARENAS

Tapeswarnath vaulting his way to global glory

Known for his explosive flips, Puri's vaulting specialist Tapeswarnath Das is carving a resilient path toward international gymnastics prominence

RISHABH PAREKH, OP

Bhubaneswar, April 29: Hailing from the coastal spiritual hub of Puri, Tapeswarnath Das, vaulting bronze-medalist at the recently concluded senior Men's Artistic Gymnastics Nationals Championships, has evolved into one of the most compelling figures in Indian gymnastics, a journey defined by world-class mentorship and a resilient comeback spirit.

His story began in 2006 when he was only seven, an age



where dreaming could be one's very own hobby. His PET from his school, also a gymnastics club coach, glanced upon tiny Tapeswarnath and introduced the sport to him.

After starting his coaching there, he had to move into the state hostel to save time, where he met his longest mentor Ashok Kumar Mishra, now the chief coach at Odisha AN/NS India Gymnastics High Performance Centre (HPC). Tapeswarnath's foundational years were shaped under the watchful eye of Ashok, who meticulously laid the groundwork for his elite aspirations.

Representing the state in the 2009 school nationals in the Sub-Junior category marked a changing moment in his childhood. Two years fast-forward in 2011, he won his first medal in Sub-Junior Nationals Under-12, bronze in Vault and silver in Parallel Bars. This brought the dawn upon his jour-

ney. With a childhood marked with sheer courage while climbing the ladder, Tapeswarnath made his entry into the Indian Air Force based on his sub-junior records at the tender age of 16. With this, he



Podium Finishes

- Bronze at Inter-Services Championships 2022 (Vault)
- Silver at Inter-Services Championships 2024 (Vault)

- Two Silver at Inter-Services Championships 2026 (Vault and Horizontal Bar)
- Silver at National Games 2025 (Vault)

- Bronze at Senior National Championships 2026 (Vault)

ready skipped junior categories and placed himself among senior gymnasts. However, it was the arrival of French gymnastics head coach Thierry Aymes that served as a philosophical turning point, fundamentally altering Tapeswarnath's mindset along with every other gymnast and expand-

ing their vision of what could be achieved on the international stage.

"The first one to arrive was Thierry sir. His impact still fuels our engine. Creating a mindset beyond performing for participation to dreaming of podiums was his vision. His views changed how everyone sees this sport. Thanks to his training we began to dream and better and stronger," he said.

Today, that evolution contin-



ues at the HPC, where Tapeswarnath refines his craft under the expert tutelage of Simon Moore and Shinoj Mulyali, while benefiting from the guidance of Rakesh Kumar Patra during his stints at the national camp.

Speaking about his experience at the HPC and the roadmap it has created for him, Tapeswarnath said, "We have the best facilities around us, from rehab and recovery to international standard training apparatus. The ABTP centre here has made injury comebacks an easier journey."

Highlighting his opinion on podium glories internationally for India, Tapeswarnath added, "In my opinion, involvement of more foreign coaches will provide us the edge when we compete globally. Their immense experience and attention to details help us in our artistic forms."

In 2021, the Puri boy made his way into his first national camp. His ascent through the ranks reached a global milestone in 2022 when he made his international debut at the World Cup in Baku, Azerbaijan. At his first global challenge, he managed to touch his best ranking - 19th in Vaulting Table.

By 2025, his domestic dominance was cemented at the National Games in Uttarakhand, where he vaulted his way to a prestigious silver medal for Odisha. While the year brought strong progress, with appearances at World Challenge Cups in Paris and Szombathely, it also tested his resilience. After suffering a serious neck injury during his second trip to Baku, he fought back to return to the world stage at the 52nd World Championships in Jakarta.

With his sights set on the Asian Championships in China, the Commonwealth Games in Scotland, and the Asian Games in Japan, the gymnast from Puri is no longer just a rising talent—he is a seasoned contender ready to leave an indelible mark on the world arena.