



## Unconditional love

Actor Tamannaah Bhatia shares a thoughtful and introspective perspective on unconditional love

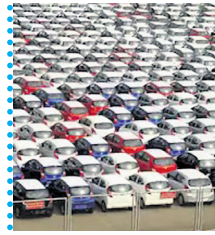
LEISURE | P2



## Canada's concern

Canadian Security Intelligence Service identifies Khalistani elements as a violent extremist threat

INTERNATIONAL | P10



## End-of-Life blow

Indian automobile industry stares at a hit of about ₹25,000cr on bottom line for FY26 with the Environment Protection (End-of-Life Vehicles) Rules 2025

BUSINESS | P11



## Baranica's fortress

Baranica Elangovan strikes again in Bhubaneswar, breaking her own national pole vault record with 4.23m clearance

SPORTS | P12

## Nepal objects to Kailash Yatra route via Lipulekh

**Kathmandu:** Nepal Sunday objected to India and China planning to conduct the upcoming Kailash Mansarovar Yatra via Lipulekh Pass, claiming that it is Kathmandu's territory. In a statement, Nepalese Foreign Ministry said Kathmandu was not consulted before finalising the route for the pilgrimage. New Delhi has been maintaining that Lipulekh belongs to it. "Nepal govt is clear and fully committed to its stand that Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani, lying in East of Mahakali river are its inseparable territories based on the Sugauli Treaty of 1816," the foreign ministry said on social media. **P10**



**CHARIOT FEST:** Temple elephants – Andal and Lakshmi – stand beside Chithirai chariot during Bandha Kal installation ceremony as part of Chithirai festival at Sri Ranganatha Swamy Temple in Tamil Nadu's Tiruchirappalli, Sunday **PTI PHOTO**

## KANAS HORROR

# Man hacked in broad daylight

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kanas, May 3:** In a gruesome incident at Golabazaar under Kanas block in Puri district, a group of seven youths attacked Mrutyunjay Bharimal, 29, of Dokanda village with a sharp weapon in broad daylight.

According to reports, the attackers first assaulted him with a fish cutter and then ran a motorcycle on his chest, a video of which has gone viral on social media. The incident raised serious questions about the law and order situation in the area.

Eyewitnesses said the attackers' brutality left the bystanders terrified, and no one initially dared come to the rescue of the victim. After about half an hour, police reached the spot and rescued a critically injured Mrutyunjay, who was then rushed to All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar where his condition is stated to be critical.

Preliminary investigation



suggests that the attack might have been the result of a previous enmity.

The victim's brother, Soumyaranjan, filed a complaint at Kanas police station. In his complaint, he stated that Mrutyunjay had gone to Golabazaar in the morning to buy fish when the accused—identified as Dharmendra Badajena, Sudhanshu Mohapatra, Akshay Rout, Chandrakant Jena, Pintu Gajendra, and Sonu—arrived at the spot. They allegedly snatched the weapon from a fish trader and attacked him, injuring his right hand and leg. He further alleged that while Mrutyunjay lay injured on the road, three of the attackers rode a Bullet motorcycle on his chest. A probe is on.

## Omfed milk prices up ₹4 per litre

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** Odisha State Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation (Omfed) has increased the prices of milk by ₹4 per litre across the categories, citing a rise in processing and transportation costs.

Fisheries and Animal Resources Development Minister Gokulananda Mallik said that the price of toned milk has been hiked from ₹50 to ₹54 per litre, while the price of premium milk has been increased from ₹54 to ₹58 per litre.

Similarly, the price of gold premium milk was revised from ₹56 to ₹60 per litre, while the gold premium plus variant will now cost ₹64 per litre, up from ₹60. He said the revised prices took effect Sunday.

Mallik said the 500 ml pouches of toned milk and premium milk will now sell for ₹27 and ₹29, respectively.

"Milk prices have not been revised for a long time. We will purchase milk at a higher price for the benefit of farmers. Compared to other branded companies, Omfed's price is still considerably lower," he said.

Omfed has enhanced the price of a litre of cow milk procured from farmers by ₹1 to ₹39.05. Similarly, farmers will now get ₹1.60 per litre extra for selling buffalo milk to Omfed.

# Iran sends new proposal to US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lahore, May 3:** Iran has conveyed a "multi-layered proposal" to Washington in an attempt to break the deadlock over peace talks, a senior official familiar with the development said Sunday.

US President Donald Trump says he is still not satisfied with Iran's new offer to end the West Asia conflict. He has also indicated that Washington is unlikely to accept any framework that does not include firm guarantees preventing Tehran from developing nuclear weapons.

A Pakistani official told PTI that the fresh Iran proposal is a phased de-escalation framework. There are three broad components of it. "The first component of the plan focuses on urgent de-escalation measures," the official said.

"Iran has indicated willingness to ease tensions in and around the strategic Strait of Hormuz, provided US reciprocates by scaling back its military posture and easing economic pressure, including restrictions affecting Iranian oil exports," he said.

"Secondly, Iran is seeking to de-

couple the restoration of maritime trade and oil flows from nuclear negotiations, arguing that economic normalisation should precede any binding commitments on its nuclear activities," he said.

The third component concerns "conditional flexibility" on the nuclear front. "While reaffirming its position on the right to peaceful nuclear energy, Iran has indicated openness to discussing limits on uranium enrichment and enhanced monitoring mechanisms—but only within a broader agreement that guarantees tangible sanctions relief," he added. **P10**

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



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**HILL SAYS INSTANT FAME WAS SCARY FOR HIM**

Jonah Hill has shared it was "scary" to experience fame. The 42-year-old actor became a household name following his breakout role as high school senior Seth in *Superbad*. While the sudden attention he and his co-star Michael Cera received could be "exciting", he also found it uncomfortable

**MERYL STREEP TAKES SUBTLE DIG AT MCU**

Meryl Streep appears to take a subtle dig at the Marvel Cinematic Universe, suggesting its reliance on clear heroes and villains limits depth. While promoting *The Devil Wears Prada 2*, she noted the genre often flattens characters, making storytelling feel less nuanced and engaging overall



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**ARIES**  
You are a touchy one. People will rub you the wrong way today. But remember that getting needlessly annoyed will bring nothing but more complications. Contemplate in seclusion about the root cause of the problem. Ganesha's hint? It is closer than you imagine.

**TAURUS**  
Your enthusiasm will be as contagious as your smile today, predicts Ganesha. People will stand charmed by your high spirits. There will be stressful moments, but things will look up later in the day. Take some time off if things get too hectic for you.

**GEMINI**  
Today, you are likely to focus on self-improvement, predicts Ganesha. Self-employed people may expect huge profits in their businesses. You may end up spending more time at work and less time with family. You need to strike a balance between work and family.

**CANCER**  
A quintessential Scorpio that you are, sex and passion will figure at the top of your priority list today. At work, you will have a tough time holding yourself back from making a pass at good-looking colleagues. However, as the day progresses, you may start thinking from your brains again, says Ganesha.

**LEO**  
Call it the momentary re-ignition of the spark of brilliance and energy, this day finds you at the peak of your dynamism. Ganesha predicts a fantastic day for all, especially those in the freelancing business, as your imagination and inspiration reach new heights and motivate others to excel. Recall the legendary Swami Vivekananda's words, "Arise, awake and stop not till your goal is reached."

**VIRGO**  
Today is the day when you'll be like the Iron Man: heart of gold, nerves of steel - minus the shiny body armour, though. Tolerance, optimism and exceedingly artistic talents will rule the roost. Pursue academics in the arts, advises Ganesha. Your understanding of life will help you serve society better. Yes, like Iron Man.

**LIBRA**  
You never let a favour go unacknowledged, or let a ridicule pass by unanswered. So, it's time to settle those old accounts that are so important to you, feels Ganesha. This will increase chances of interesting developments that will continue to surprise you throughout the day. All in all, Ganesha wishes you a vibrant day today.

**SCORPIO**  
Ganesha warns you of a long, dreary day today. Though not completely at a loss, you may feel lost and desire to spend some time alone with yourself. The empty nest syndrome is likely to invade and hold your mental peace at ransom, says Ganesha.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Today, your superiors at work are going to trust you with many complicated assignments. But, after exerting yourself, you are sure to come out with flying colors and have your work appreciated. Do not be surprised if cash incentives come your way. Such may indeed be your fortune, says Ganesha.

**CAPRICORN**  
If you are a sports person, you will enjoy both good health and fame, while engineers will mull investing money in new business ventures, foresees Ganesha. But make sure you know what you are doing, a minor slip can cost you a fortune, and you would have realised by now that repenting won't undo anything.

**AQUARIUS**  
Money matters are very important, and your family will demand your presence in all financial dealings. At work, things will be more comfortable. You may also get new projects. Ganesha predicts a trip in the offing.

**PISCES**  
Your inherent dynamism and energy will sparkle forth today. Freelancers will be struck with inspiration, and will conjure masterpieces. Pleasant surprises await you in the evening, says Ganesha.

**Tamannaah on love**

**Mumbai:** Tamannaah Bhatia offered a thoughtful and introspective take on love, describing it as unconditional, deeply personal and not bound by the rules of a relationship. In a past conversation, she explained that people often confuse love with relationships, especially when expectations come into play. According to her, the moment expectations arise, love risks becoming transactional rather than genuine.

Tamannaah emphasised that true love is an "inside job," an emotion that originates within an individual rather than something dependent on another person's actions. She believes that two people can love each other independently, but that doesn't necessarily define or guarantee a successful relationship. For her, love must come with freedom, allowing the other person to grow, evolve and be their authentic self without imposed expectations.

She also challenged the idea of "one true love," stating that love is not limited to a single experience in life. Instead, it can be felt multiple times, as it is shaped by one's own emotional capacity. Tamannaah's perspective highlights self-growth, emotional independence and a more liberated understanding of love.

AGENCIES



**Smriti breaks typecasting norms**

**Mumbai:** Smriti Kalra continues to stand out in the entertainment industry by consciously breaking typecasting norms and embracing versatility. Known for her work in *Dil Sambhal Ja Zara* and *Kaagaz 2*, she has consistently chosen roles that challenge her and differ sharply from one another. From playing complex, unconventional women to bold, modern characters, Kalra ensures that each performance is a complete departure from the last.

She believes that actors are often confined to the image of their previous roles, but overcoming that requires patience and difficult choices. Kalra openly acknowledges turning down projects, even financially rewarding ones, to avoid being boxed into repetitive characters. For her, growth as an artist is more important than comfort or consistency.

Compar-

ing artists to water, she emphasises adaptability and the ability to transform with every new role. Her journey, from radio and print to television, films and digital platforms, reflects this philosophy. She credits television for building her resilience and discipline, preparing her to handle demanding environments.

Focused on craft over convention, Kalra continues to seek roles that push her limits, proving that versatility and persistence are key to breaking industry stereotypes. AGENCIES



**Nawazuddin shares his early struggles**

**Mumbai:** Nawazuddin Siddiqui's journey to success is marked by years of struggle, resilience, and self-doubt. Long before gaining recognition, he arrived in Mumbai with minimal resources, worked as a watchman and immersed himself in theatre while chasing film opportunities. His breakthrough came much later with *Gangs of Wasseypur*, but the road leading up to it was anything but easy.

In a recent interview, Siddiqui reflected on the emotional toll of constant rejection. He admitted that repeated failures slowly eroded his confidence, making him question his abilities and training. For nearly a decade, he felt "unlucky," as promising opportunities would dis-

appear at the last moment, sometimes even after he had shared the news with loved ones. The disappointment was often overwhelming, leading to moments where he broke down in public while trying to hide his tears.

Financial hardship was another harsh reality. He survived on basic food like Parle-G biscuits, a reminder of those difficult days that still brings back painful memories. Despite everything, Siddiqui remained committed to his craft, eventually rising to prominence with powerful performances across films and series.

AGENCIES

**Konkona highlights gender gap in showbiz**

**Mumbai:** Konkona Sen Sharma has once again drawn attention to the persistent gender gap in the film industry, despite her own journey being defined by versatility and strong performances in films like *Metro...* and *In Dino*. Reflecting on her 25-year career, she noted that while some progress has been made, it is still not easier for women to secure substantial, layered roles.

Konkona pointed out that although smaller films and OTT platforms have created opportunities for more nuanced female characters, mainstream cinema continues to prioritise larger-than-life male heroes. According to her, this imbalance is not new but deeply rooted, with only a few films each year breaking away from formulaic storytelling to offer meaningful roles for women.

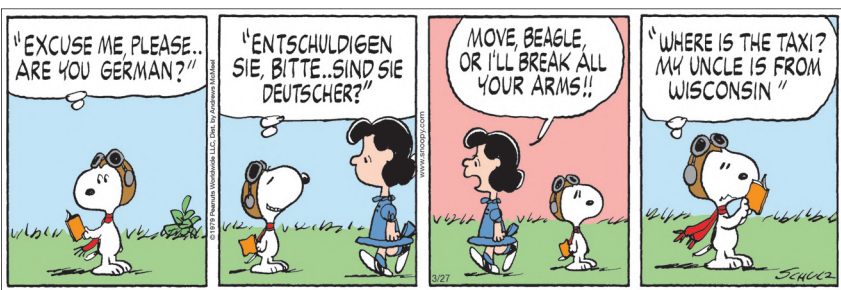
She acknowledged that streaming platforms have helped introduce diverse portrayals, including female-led narratives and complex characters. However, she observed that such roles are often limited and frequently offered to older women, with fewer opportunities for others.

Currently, Konkona is promoting *Welcome to Khoya Mahal*, co-created with Jaydeep Sarkar, as she continues to champion stories that challenge norms and spotlight stronger roles for women.

AGENCIES



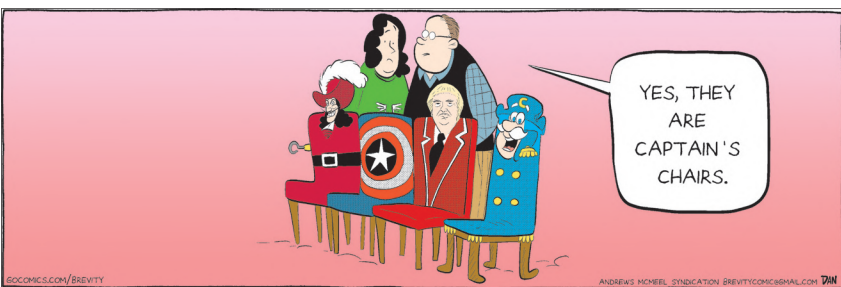
**PEANUTS**



**CALVIN AND HOBBS**

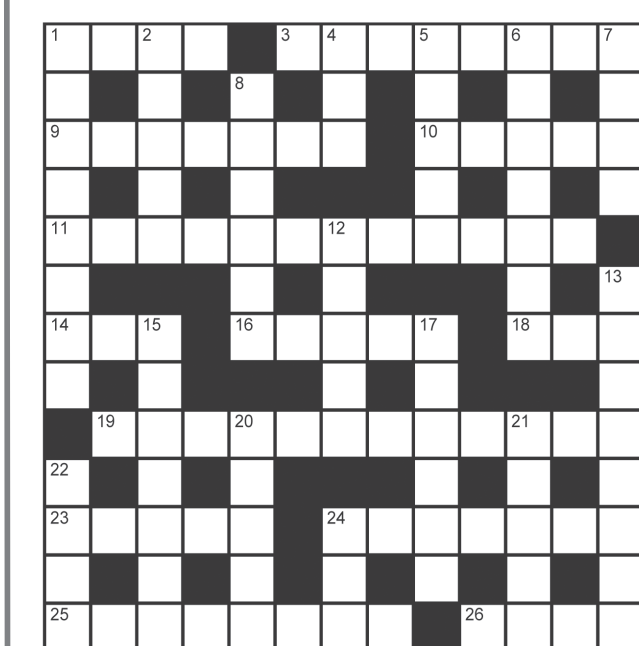


**BREVITY**



**FUN post**

**CROSSWORD**

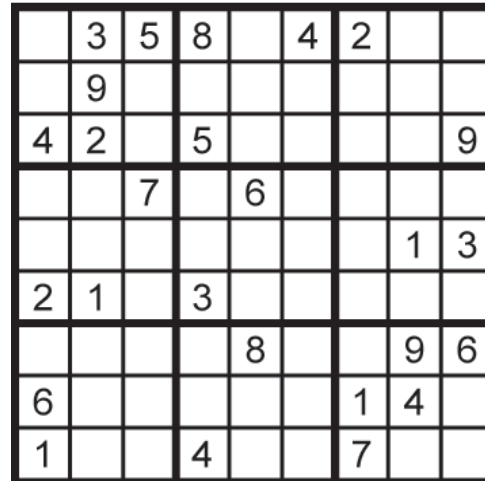


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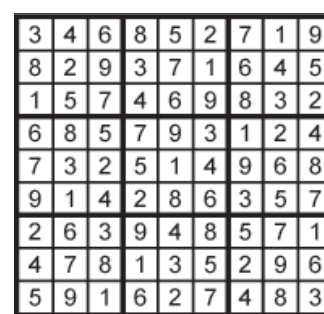
- Across**
- 1 Labels
  - 3 Top-heavy
  - 9 Blatant lie
  - 10 Latin ballroom dance
  - 11 The Red Cross, e.g. (7,5)
  - 14 Young fellow
  - 16 Weeper of myth
  - 18 Bow wood
  - 19 They can pave the way
  - 23 Raw fish dish
  - 24 Coarse lace
  - 25 Cleopatra, for one
  - 26 Questions
  - Down**
  - 1 Government building (4,4)
  - 2 Body snatcher
  - 4 Neither's partner
  - 5 Aquarium fish
  - 6 Desiccated (4-3)
  - 7 Black, in poetry
  - 8 Choice
  - 12 Sphere
  - 13 Tornadoes
  - 15 Visits (5,2)
  - 17 Tempt
  - 20 Constructed
  - 21 Draws nigh
  - 22 To be, to Brutus
  - 24 Extinct flightless bird

**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

## All eyes on Bengal

BJP AIMS HISTORIC WIN; TMC LOOKS TO RETAIN POWER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, May 3:** West Bengal heads into verdict day Monday after over a month of frenzied campaigning, as it waits with bated breath to see whether TMC manages to hold on to power or BJP makes a historic breakthrough and claims the state for the first time.

As EVMs open at 8am, CPI(M) and Congress will be watching with equal keenness, hoping to reclaim a foothold in the state's electoral map after five years in the wilderness, following their wipeout in 2021 polls.

Counting of votes will take place across 77 centres in the



state, with elaborate security arrangements and a charged political atmosphere setting the stage for the declaration of results in 293 of the 294-seat House. Kolkata mayor Firhad Hakim (TMC) said, "Mamata Banerjee will take oath as the state's chief minister for the fourth consecutive term after the results."

Bengal Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari (BJP) projected a strong win, aiming for over

177 seats. The Election Commission countermanded polls in Falta constituency in South 24 Parganas district, citing "severe electoral offences and subversion of democratic process during polling in a large number of polling stations".

The fresh poll in that seat and the counting will take place May 21 and May 24, respectively. Courtesy the tight security arrangements - with over 2.5 lakh central paramilitary personnel on the ground, besides the presence of a thoroughly reshuffled state police force - electoral violence remained at a minimum, and no deaths were reported for the first time in the state's election history of recent decades.



**OUTRAGE ERUPTS:** Youth Congress activists protest the Bargi Dam cruise boat capsizing tragedy in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, Sunday

## MP boat tragedy toll mounts to 13

**Jabalpur:** The bodies of a five-year-old boy and his uncle were recovered from Bargi Dam in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur district Sunday morning, raising the death toll in the cruise boat tragedy to 13, police said. The boat, around 20 years old and operated by the state tourism department, capsized during a storm Thursday evening. "The bodies of Mayuram, 5, and his uncle Kamraj (around 50), an employee of the Ordnance Factory in Khamaria, were found floating and were fished out of the dam," Bargi Sub Divisional Officer of Police Anjul Ayank Mishra told PTI over the phone. All 13 missing persons identified have now been accounted for, he said. Teams comprising around 20 Army divers airlifted from Agra, along with personnel from the National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force and local divers, were involved in the search operation.

## 9 dead in Delhi building blaze

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** A devastating fire tore through a residential building in east Delhi's Vivek Vihar in the early hours of Sunday, killing nine people from two families, including a toddler, with officials suspecting an air-conditioner blast as the trigger.

The blaze, reported around 3:50am in a four-storey building in Vivek Vihar Phase-I, spread rapidly from the rear, engulfing the first to fourth floors and trapping residents as thick smoke filled the structure.

The building's design worsened the tragedy, with a single staircase as the only exit and a

locked terrace door blocking escape. Twelve fire tenders, along with teams from the DDMA, police and volunteers, battled the blaze, which was brought under control after several hours.

Five members of a family—Arvind Jain, 60, his wife Anita, 58, their son Nishant, 35, daughter-in-law Anchal, 33 and grandson Akash—were found dead. In another flat, Nitin Jain, 50, his wife Shailey, 48 and their son Samyak, 25 also died.

On a lower floor, Shikha Jain, 45 was found dead, while her husband Naveen Jain sustained burn injuries and is undergoing treatment. Their two daughters escaped with the help of locals, officials said.

## CM's smart city plan to be rolled out soon

15 MUNICIPALITIES & 5 NOTIFIED AREA COUNCILS SLATED FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE FIRST PHASE

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** The Mukhyamantri Smart City Yojana (MSCY) will be launched shortly, with 15 municipalities and five notified area councils (NACs) slated for development in the first phase, a senior official from state Urban Development department said.

The initiative, announced by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi during the recent Budget Session, has an allocation of Rs 100 crore for the current financial year. The department is fi-

nalising the plan's framework ahead of the launch.

The scheme aims to comprehensively redevelop urban areas, covering roads, transportation, electrification, drinking water supply, parks and other civic amenities to improve quality of life in urban areas.

According to officials, the plan will prioritise afforestation to maintain ecological balance in urban zones.

Areas facing stormwater drainage issues will receive dedicated drainage infrastruc-



ture. Beautification efforts will include installation of statues of prominent local figures at

- The scheme aims to comprehensively redevelop urban areas, covering roads, transportation, electrification, drinking water supply, parks and other civic amenities to improve urban quality of life
- The plan will prioritise afforestation to maintain ecological balance in urban pockets
- Areas facing stormwater drainage issues will receive dedicated drainage infrastructure

major intersections, along with decorative lighting.

Parks will be equipped with recreational facilities to promote public health among urban residents.

Broader infrastructure upgrades are also planned as part of the cities' smart city transformation and other beautification works.

However, the decision regarding the 15 municipalities and five NACs to be covered in the first phase remains pending, the senior official added.

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NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON NEP 2020

Education most powerful tool for nation building: Governor



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 3: Education is the most powerful tool for nation-building, Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati said Sunday and added that National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a transformative reform that will play a key role in realising the vision of 'Viksit Odisha 2036' and 'Viksit Bharat 2047'.

centre of knowledge, wisdom and intellectual leadership, with pioneering contributions in mathematics, astronomy, medicine and literature," he said. Referring to rapid global changes driven by artificial intelligence, biotechnology, data science and digital innovation, the governor said the knowledge economy now demands critical thinking, creativity, adaptability and interdisciplinary learning.

Suryabanshi Suraj for Odisha's proactive implementation of NEP 2020 from August 2024. "Odisha has undertaken major reforms in higher education through curriculum restructuring, promotion of skill-based learning and measures to ensure transparency, accountability and inclusive growth," Kambhampati said. He highlighted the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Act and the University Teacher Cadre Reservation Act as significant steps towards strengthening equity in higher education.



IN FULL SWING: Maharana servitors shape chariot wheels at Rath Yard in Puri, Sunday

PICT: YAGNESWAR MOHANTY

CRACKDOWN ON INLAND WATER SAFETY VIOLATIONS

State announces 'Zero' tolerance for overloading

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 3: The state government has announced strict enforcement of inland water transport safety norms, adopting a zero-tolerance approach toward overloading and non-compliance by boat operators. The decision was taken at a high-level meeting here Sunday, under the chairmanship of Commerce and Transport department Principal Secretary. Senior officials from Odisha Maritime Board, Tourism, Fisheries and Animal Resources Development (ARD), and Forest, Environment and

Climate Change departments attended the meeting. The review comes in wake of recent boat tragedy in MP, killing 13 of the passengers. The state also recorded several boats capsizing incidents in past years, raising serious concerns about passenger safety. During the meeting, authorities assessed existing safety protocols and emphasised stricter implementation on the ground. Officials reiterated that wearing life jackets is mandatory for all passengers and crew while boarding boats. It was also directed that every operational vessel must carry adequate safety equipment, including

life jackets equal to passenger capacity, life guards, and fire safety gear as per prescribed norms. To ensure compliance, authorities have been instructed to carry out surprise inspections across inland waterways. Boat operators found violating safety rules—particularly those overloading vessels or failing to enforce life jacket usage—will face stringent punitive action. The government is also extending support to operators through 'Sahid Baji Rout Nautajatra Suraksha Yojana', under which essential safety equipment such as life jackets, life guards, and fire extinguishers

are provided free of cost to government-operated boats and at a 95 per cent subsidy to private operators. Principal Secretary stressed the need for coordinated action among all relevant departments to ensure comprehensive enforcement and prevent any lapses. Departments have been directed to work in close coordination. Reaffirming its commitment to public safety, the state government has urged all stakeholders—boat operators, passengers, and authorities—to actively cooperate in fostering a culture of safety across inland waterways.

Odisha to host investor meet in Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad: The state government will organise 'Odisha Investor Meet - Ahmedabad' May 5, as part of its efforts to promote the state as a key investment destination and strengthen industry partnerships. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, along with senior government officials, industry associations, and leading business representatives will grace the event. A road show will also be conducted in collaboration with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). The investor meet will highlight investment opportunities across priority sectors and is expected to witness signing of several Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), according to officials. The initiative aims to accelerate industrial growth and attract new investments into Odisha. The programme will also include interactive sessions to facilitate direct engagement between industry leaders and government representatives, enabling discussions on potential collaborations.

'Ama Bus' mows down biker in Capital; driver detained



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 3: 'Ama Bus', yet once again claimed another life of a young man on the busy Vani Vihar-Satsang Vihar road in Capital, Sunday afternoon. According to reports, the man was travelling from Rasulgarh Chowk towards Vani Vihar when the bus (Vehicle Registration no- OD 33 U 7352), plying on the same route, hit the motorcycle (Vehicle Registration no- OD 13 M 4520). The impact threw the rider onto the road, after which he was crushed under the wheels of vehicle, leading to

his death on the spot. Receiving information, Sateed Nagar Police Station personnel rushed to the scene and brought the situation under control. The bus driver has been detained for questioning, and an investigation is underway to ascertain the exact cause of the accident. Tension briefly gripped the area as locals gathered the spot. Later, police intervened swiftly and pacified the crowd, preventing further escalation. The identity of the deceased is yet to be confirmed. Police have seized the body and sent it for postmortem examination, while efforts are ongoing to identify

the victim using the motorcycle's registration details. Meanwhile, Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) has taken immediate cognisance of the incident. Senior officials reached the spot soon after the accident, and CRUT representatives were present at the hospital to extend necessary assistance. As per its standard operating procedures and in coordination with police norms, CRUT has announced an immediate compensation of ₹2 Lakh to the deceased's family, in addition to applicable accident insurance coverage. An internal accident investigation committee has been constituted to conduct a detailed probe into the incident. Strict action will be taken against those found responsible based on the findings, CRUT officials stated. CRUT MD Mohammad Sadiq Alam has directed officials to carry out a thorough inquiry and submit a report at the earliest.

Engg student found dead in private varsity

Bhubaneswar: A BTech first-year student was found dead in a private university here, police said. The deceased, identified as Biswas Swain, a native of Jagatsinghpur district, was found hanging from the ceiling of his room in the hostel Saturday night. Following his death, students staged a protest on the campus, which comes under the jurisdiction of Infocity police station, late Saturday night. Following the intervention of Bhubaneswar DCP Jagmohan Meena, the students lifted the stir. According to preliminary reports, the incident is suspected to be a case of suicide, though the exact cause of death is yet to be ascertained. Basant Swain, the deceased student's father, alleged that Biswas was subjected to mental torture by some seniors. It was the university authority's duty to deal with it, he said. "Seniors were mentally torturing my son and he was not eating at the hostel canteen out of fear. Last night, he did not mark his attendance at the hostel either," Biswas's mother alleged. Gopal Sahu, the university's head of administration, said, "We have not received any ragging allegation from the deceased student. Police are investigating the case."

Odissi, Kathak maestros present artistic excellence



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 3: A captivating celebration of classical dance unfolded at Kirti Chandrika Mahotsava- Kalinga Adhyay 2026, organised by Alapadma Centre for Dance and Research at GKCM Odissi Research Centre here recently. Curated under the artistic direction of Chandrika Mahapatra, the festival brought together legendary performers and distinguished guests from across Indian classical dance fraternity, creating an atmosphere rich in tradition, devotion, and cultural brilliance. The evening featured spell-binding performances by some of the most revered names in the field, including Padma

awardee Aruna Mohanty, acclaimed Odissi guru Meera Das, and renowned Kathak maestro Sandip Mallick. The mahotsava was graced by an esteemed panel of guests, including guru Kumkum Mohanty, Chandrashekhar Hota, mardala exponent Dhaneswar Swain, and noted art critics Kedar Mishra and Shyamahari Chakra. The festival stood as a tribute to the enduring legacy of Odissi and Kathak, honoring the artistes who continue to preserve and elevate these traditions. In her address, Mahapatra dedicated the event to the people of the state, reaffirming her institution's commitment to the promotion, preservation, and academic exploration of Indian classical dance forms.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate, Banki, I, Golap Mishra, wife of Late Birabadal Mishra, resident of Kotadwar samil Sunadeipur, Banki, Dist.- Cuttack, PIN- 754008 declare that in Voter ID, Aadhaar Card and Pan Card my name has been recorded as Golap Mishra. But to my misfortune in the service book of my husband late Birabadal Mishra, Ex LEMP No. 200522(H), my name has been recorded as Manjubala Mishra. That Golap Mishra and Manjubala Mishra, W/o. Late Birabadal Mishra is same person. Hence this declaration. Golap Mishra

₹1,500cr set for 391 projects in 2026-27

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 3: Under the flagship 'SUJALA' programme state plans 391 projects, including 102 new initiatives in 2026-27 with an estimated investment of around ₹1500 crore, said Housing and Urban Development department Additional Chief Secretary Usha Padhee while chairing a comprehensive review of Annual Action Plan of Public Health Engineering Organisation (PHEO) for 2026-27, 2027-28, and 2028-29 at Khara-bela Bhawan Sunday. Reviewing the progress, Padhee directed officials to expedite project implementation and ensure timely completion in line with the government's vision of universal 24x7 drinking water access. She emphasised the need for accelerated expenditure and optimal utilisation of allocated funds during 2026-27 to maintain implementation momentum. The state government has



intensified its push towards universal 24x7 urban drinking water supplies. As per official projections, population across 86 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) is expected to reach approximately 31.5 lakh by 2026. At present, these urban areas receive a cumulative supply of about 452 MLD of drinking water. Reaffirming the govern-

ment's commitment to round-the-clock water supply, a phased roadmap is being implemented to achieve 24x7 service delivery across all ULBs. During 2025-26, nine ULBs have already been covered under the initiative. Building on this progress, 38 ULBs each will be taken up during 2026-27 and 2027-28, significantly accelerating statewide coverage.

A total of 544 water supply projects have been sanctioned, of which 289 have been successfully completed, while the remaining projects are at various stages of execution. Additionally, 92 projects are slated for execution in 2027-28 at a projected cost of ₹978 crore. These projects are strategically aligned to enhance infrastructure capacity, strengthen distribution networks, and ensure uninterrupted water supply to urban households. Highlighting sustainability concerns, Padhee also stressed the importance of identifying and developing alternative water sources to discourage the use of treated drinking water for other purposes such as gardening, vehicle washing, and construction activities etc. The meeting was attended by Additional Secretary Subhanda Mohapatra, FA-cum-Additional Secretary Sikha Biswal, Engineer-in-Chief, PHEO Bilas Behera, along with other senior officials.

Weather forecast section featuring a satellite image of the region and a table with weather data for BBSR and CTC. The table includes Max Temp (30.2° vs 30.4°), Min Temp (23.0° vs 21.2°), Humidity (82% vs 90%), and Rainfall (5.6mm vs 7.4mm). A forecast icon indicates light to moderate rain or thunderstorm likely to occur.

# Jitu Munda forgives bank officials

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar/Keonjhar, May 3:** Jitu Munda, who carried the skeletal remains of his sister to a rural bank in Keonjhar district as proof of her death to withdraw money from her account, Sunday said he does not want any action against bank officials who allegedly harassed him.

**SKELETON SHOCKER**

Munda, 50, a native of Dianali village under Erendei gram panchayat in Patana block in Keonjhar district, said, "I have received money deposited in the name of my sister after carrying her skeleton to the bank. They (bank) have got the proof of my sister's death and released the money immediately. It is a fact that they harassed me. But I do not want any action against them after receiving money. They delivered cash to me at our home."

"What is the point of taking action against officials after getting money," he said, adding that he was not ashamed of the entire episode.

"Had I not brought the skeleton remains to the bank, they would not have given our family's money deposited in the name of my sister, who is dead. I have not done anything wrong," he said.

A bachelor, Jitu stayed with his 56-year-old widowed sister

who died January 26, 2026. He claimed that he did not have any remorse over digging the skeleton out of the graveyard.

"Now people say that it was a mistake to dig out the remains of a dead person. But I had no alternative but to do so as bank officials wanted the thumb impression of my sister, who had died three months ago," Jitu, who belongs to the Munda tribe, said.

The tribal man had exhumed the skeletal remains of his sister Kalra Munda and then walked around 3 km to the Maliposi branch of the Odisha Grameen Bank and produced it before the official as proof of her death. A video of Munda carrying the skeleton went viral on social media.

Jitu said that he was emotionally attached to his elder sister and both of them stayed at one home while his elder brother Raibu Munda (now dead) and younger brother Shankar Munda lived separately in the village.

"I was cooking and feeding my elder sister when she was bedridden. Her death was a great blow to me. But she has blessed me. I have received around ₹15 lakh from different people for carrying her skeletal remains," Jitu told a group of journalists who visited his village Sunday.



Kalra Munda had deposited ₹19,300 at the Maliposi branch of Odisha Grameen Bank by selling the family's oxen.

She had married Tadia Munda of Rameikhamar village under Gandia tehsil in Dhenkanal district. After the death of her husband, she shifted back to her paternal native place at Dianali village, 40 years ago, along with her child. Her child also died after some time. Since then, she was living with her brother, the official said.

Asked about the money received from his sister's bank account, Munda said that the amount of ₹19,402 (including interest) was divided into three parts. Jitu got one portion, his elder brother's widow received another portion, and his younger brother Shankar Munda also got an equal share.

## Broken hand pumps in Dianali repaired after Jitu Munda case

**Keonjhar:** Days after Jitu Munda carried his elder sister's skeleton on his shoulders to a bank to withdraw money on her behalf, sparking national outrage, the incident has quietly transformed the fortunes of his remote village. As aid poured in for Munda, administrators and political leaders who had long ignored the village of Dianali in Patana block's Erendei panchayat began making regular visits to the area. Munda has since received financial assistance, electricity connection, a fan, a cot and bedding. But the changes have extended beyond his household. Dianali, home to roughly 150 families, had long struggled with a severe shortage of drinking water. Women were forced to spend their mornings collecting water from distant sources. Several hand pumps in the village had fallen into disrepair, leaving residents without reliable access. Following widespread media coverage of the case, the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation department repaired the broken hand pumps Sunday morning, a work that residents say they had repeatedly requested for to no avail. "We complained many times before, but no one came to fix them," said Suryamani Mahant, a village resident. Fellow resident Nalita Mahant echoed the sentiment. Tribal leader and engineer Binod Nayak criticised the department's inaction, saying that officials stationed in the same post for years had grown complacent and dismissive of public grievances. While the administration claimed all non-functional hand pumps had been repaired ahead of the summer season, residents say the reality only became visible after the Munda story drew national attention.

However, money received from the government and other donations is deposited in my account at a bank in Patana, Jitu said.

Jitu said he has so far spent ₹20,000 on the preparation to hold a community feast to be given to villagers May 6. "Though we had performed my sister's last rites after her death in January, now we have to do it again because her skeleton was dug from the grave accord-

ing to Munda tribe tradition," Jitu said.

Apart from being included in the state government's social security schemes, Munda has received money from different sources. While Physics Wallah donated the highest amount of ₹10 lakh, Munda also received ₹1 lakh from Thaagam Foundation, ₹50,000 from Khidmat Foundation and ₹50,000 from AAP MLA Sanjay Singh, and ₹95,000 from other sources.

# Mobile 'hashish' oil unit busted in Malkangiri

CHEMICALS WORTH ₹100 CRORE SEIZED



PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar/Malkangiri, May 3:** Malkangiri Police Sunday busted a mobile hashish oil manufacturing unit and seized around 800 litres of chemicals and solvents used as precursors for manufacturing highly potent hashish oil, said a senior police official.

Hashish oil is a concentrated form of cannabis extract. Its production generally involves separating the resinous trichomes—which contain cannabinoids like THC and CBD—from the plant material. Sources, however, claimed that these plants with resinous (glandular) trichomes are normally not found in Odisha.

The police stated that the volume of precursors seized Sunday has the potential to yield finished hashish oil with

an estimated market value of around ₹100 crore.

Around 50 kg of marijuana and two litres of hashish oil were also seized from the vehicle, they said, adding that the driver of the vehicle managed to flee.

Officials claimed that smugglers were planning to set up a hashish oil manufacturing unit in Chittrakonda area, but could not do so due to police surveillance.

Hence, they set up a processing unit inside the vehicle that carried a fake registration number plate to evade police scrutiny, an officer said.

Specialised extraction equipment was also seized from the vehicle, he said.

Malkangiri SP Vinodh Patil H said teams have been formed to nab the driver and other persons involved in the illegal activity.

## Locals torch cattle smuggling vehicle



**Bhadrak:**irate locals set on fire a van used for illegal cattle smuggling near the Bhatatira railway level crossing under Sabaranga police limits and Sadar block in Bhadrak district in the wee hours of Sunday. According to officials, the vehicle, a Tata Omni van, was carrying seven cattle and travelling from Sabaranga towards Bhadrak's Mirzapur area early Sunday morning when locals intercepted it. The driver fled the scene after a group of people pursued the vehicle and forced it to stop near the Bhatatira railway level crossing. Witnesses said the crowd removed the cattle from the van before setting it ablaze. Sabaranga police arrived at the scene after receiving information about the fire. Firefighters were called to extinguish the blaze, after which police took the burnt vehicle into custody. IIC Shantanu Jena said police have registered a suo motu case (141/26) and launched an investigation into the incident.

## Brazen kidnapping of man foiled; 3 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhadrak, May 3:** Three persons were arrested Sunday after police intercepted a vehicle and foiled a brazen midday kidnapping in Bhadrak town, police said.

The survivor was identified as Prasanna Pradhan, 32, of Cuttack area. The incident occurred when three to four men arrived in an SUV and dragged him inside the vehicle at Post Office Square in Bhadrak town around 10am, according to Bhadrak Town police station IIC Prabhanshu Mishra. The three arrested men were identified as Chandan Sahu, Debashish Acharya and Rajesh Kumar Sahu; all from Berhampur area of Ganjam district.

Witnesses reported a physical struggle at the scene before the vehicle fled. The victim's shoes and vegetables were left

behind on the street. A bystander alerted IIC Mishra by phone shortly after the incident.

Police deployed two teams in response — one headed towards Balasore and a second led by the IIC towards Cuttack. Police officials intercepted the SUV near Barikpur on National Highway 16, the Bhadrak-Cuttack corridor and took all four individuals, the three suspects and Pradhan, into custody. Mishra said the kidnapping stemmed from a business dispute and a financial transaction gone wrong.

Police said that Pradhan, who resides in a rented house in Kuansa area of Bhadrak municipality, was unharmed. A case (288/26) was registered at the police station. The three suspects are scheduled to be produced in the court Monday.

## IPL betting racket busted Cousins drown in pond

**Sundargarh:** Police Sunday busted an IPL betting racket operating in Rajgangpur area of Sundargarh district and apprehended five people, an officer said. Acting on credible inputs, a police team conducted a raid in Rajgangpur area and busted the betting racket. During the raid, the police apprehended five individuals engaged in running the betting network and collecting money from various persons, the officer said. The police seized ₹6 lakh in cash and froze funds amounting to ₹17.61 lakh deposited in a bank account. Five mobile phones used in the operation were also seized from the accused persons, he said. A case has been registered at Rajgangpur police station and further investigation is underway, the officer said.

**Nilagiri:** Two minor cousins drowned in a village pond while bathing in Balasore district Sunday, police said. The victims, both aged 10, were identified as Annapurna Mallik, daughter of Sanjay Mallik, and Anyasi Mallik, daughter of Sujit Mallik, from Bhuinpada village under Remuna block. They had gone to a nearby pond at about 10:30am to bathe. They are believed to have moved into the deep waters and drowned due to a lack of caution, said reports. Family members began searching for them and later found them floating in the pond. They were fished out and rushed to Nilagiri Sub-divisional Hospital, where doctors declared both dead. Khantapada police registered a case of unnatural death and sent the bodies for postmortem. A probe is underway.

## Protest erupts over woman's mysterious death in Bolangir

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Muribahal/Bolangir, May 3:** The mysterious death of a 42-year-old woman triggered tension and a road blockade in Bolangir district Sunday, with villagers alleging foul play and demanding a thorough investigation.



members began searching for her. Her body was eventually discovered in the disused well, raising suspicions among relatives and villagers who alleged that she may have been murdered and later dumped to destroy evidence.



Following the recovery, agitated locals placed the body on the Bangomunda-Titilagarh stretch of National Highway 59 and staged a blockade for nearly two hours, disrupt-

ing vehicular movement. They demanded immediate arrest of those responsible, a fair probe, and compensation for the bereaved family.

Police, along with a scientific team, reached the spot and initiated an investigation. The body was sent for post-mortem examination to Kantabanji hospital before being handed over to the family.

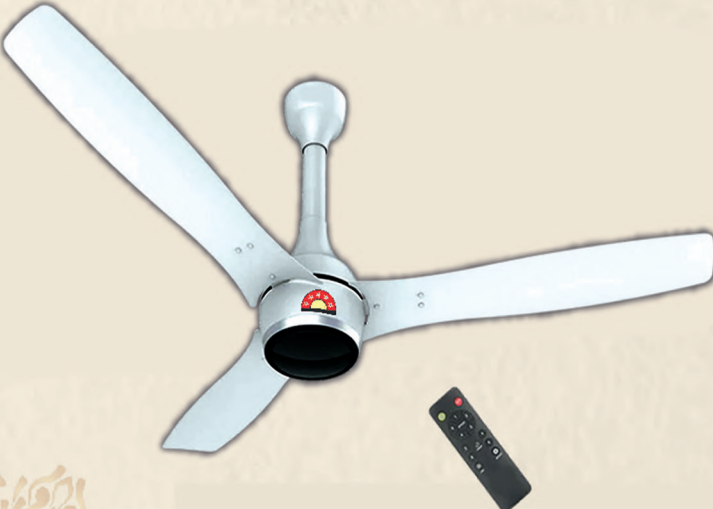

Officials including the local tehsildar held discussions with the protesters and assured an impartial inquiry and financial assistance from government welfare funds. The blockade was lifted after assurances were given. Police have detained two persons for questioning as part of the ongoing investigation.

4001/57/2627

### ବି.ଏଲ୍.ଡି.ସି ପଞ୍ଜା ବ୍ୟବହାର କରି ବିଦ୍ୟୁତ୍ ବିଲ୍ କମ୍ କରନ୍ତୁ ଏବଂ ପରିବେଶକୁ ସୁରକ୍ଷିତ ରଖନ୍ତୁ

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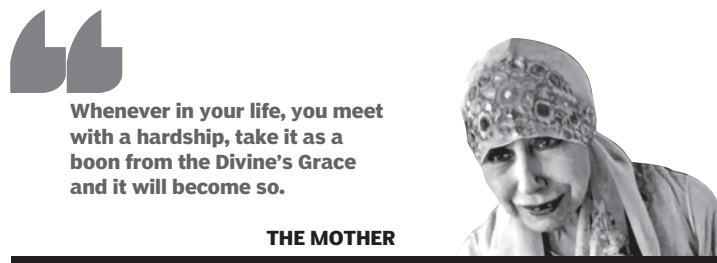



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OIPR-4001/4004/2/26-27/0002



Whenever in your life, you meet with a hardship, take it as a boon from the Divine's Grace and it will become so.

THE MOTHER

## World Order Recalibrations

The Pentagon's announcement on 2 May to significantly reduce American troop presence in Germany marks a pivotal moment in the ties between Europe and the US. The decision comes amid a spat between US President Donald Trump and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz over the war in Iran. Trump is outraged after Merz suggested that the US had been "humiliated" by Iranian negotiators during the talks for a permanent ceasefire. While about 5,000 troops will be withdrawn with immediate effect, the US has hinted at further reductions in the approximately 36,000 troops stationed at present in Germany.

US troops were first deployed in Germany in the wake of World War II as part of the Allied occupation. The arrangement subsequently became central to America's Cold War strategy as the troops were positioned at the frontline against the Soviet Union and also acted as a deterrent under NATO. In the post-Cold War era, the troop presence reassured European allies of US commitment to their security. The US military deployment in Germany is its biggest in Europe, followed by Italy with about 12,000 troops and the UK with 10,000-odd troops.

In this context, America's latest move aligns with Trump's long-standing critique of NATO burden-sharing. For years, he has argued that European allies, particularly economically powerful states like Germany, have underinvested in defence while relying disproportionately on American security guarantees. The decision also comes amid heightened geopolitical instability, particularly due to Russia's prolonged war in Ukraine and now the US-Israel Iran war. The US had, in fact, increased troop deployments in Europe after Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine to reassure allies and reinforce deterrence against Moscow. That US posturing saw a big reversal as soon as Trump began his second term as President.

Since then, a broader deterioration in the US-Europe ties has been noticed. Trump's friction with leaders such as Germany's Merz, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer reflects a widening geo-political rift. Disagreements over America's Iran policy, trade tariffs and alliance commitments suggest that the troop withdrawal is part of a larger pattern rather than an isolated move. The recently proposed 25 per cent US tariffs on European automobiles, for instance, directly targets Germany's economic core, intertwining security disagreements with economic coercion.

From a European perspective, the response has been measured but cautious. Germany appears prepared for some level of drawdown, possibly anticipating such moves given Trump's past rhetoric. However, the emphasis by German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius that US troop presence benefits both sides suggests that American bases in Germany are not merely instruments of European security but also critical nodes for US global military operations. A troop reduction, therefore, may also constrain American operational flexibility beyond Europe.

The decision has met with critical response in the US with several prominent Republican lawmakers voicing concerns that a withdrawal could weaken regional deterrence and send a message of vulnerability to Russia. Some members of the Senate and House suggested that if at all the troops are moved, they should be relocated to NATO's eastern flank rather than being withdrawn from the continent entirely.

Ultimately, the troop withdrawal debate sums up a fundamental shift in the nature of transatlantic relations. Even as the US seeks to reduce its commitments and push allies toward self-reliance, Europe faces the challenge of rapidly scaling up its defence capabilities in an uncertain security environment. While Germany is increasing its domestic defence spending to over 3 per cent of its GDP in the coming years, other European countries have expressed alarm that the withdrawal signifies a troubling decline in transatlantic cooperation. In fact, if American retrenchment outpaces European readiness, the resulting vacuum could destabilise deterrence frameworks that have cemented European security for decades. On the other hand, once European nations are forced to be militarily self-reliant and finally scale capabilities, the US might have to step down from its big brother pedestal and take its position as first among equals. That would play out very differently than Trump might visualise as of now, just like the Iran war.

## WISDOM CORNER

God creates out of nothing. Wonderful you say. Yes, to be sure, but he does what is still more wonderful: he makes saints out of sinners.

SOREN KIERKEGAARD

I would rather live my life as if there is a God and die to find out there isn't, than live as if there isn't and to die to find out that there is.

BLAISE PASCAL

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart.

HELEN KELLER

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1814: Napoleon landed at the island of Elba to serve the first of his two exiles.

1868: The Kuthodaw Pagoda in Mandalay, Myanmar, was completed. Inside and around it is a book unlike any other: 729 marble tablets, each more than five feet tall, inscribed on both sides with writings held sacred by Theravada Buddhism.

1863: The Battle of Chancellorsville during the American Civil War, a bloody assault by the Union army in Virginia that failed to disperse the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, continued.

1886: A peaceful protest by labor protesters in Chicago against police brutality turned deadly when an unidentified individual threw a bomb into the crowd and police responded with random gunfire. As many as 15 people were killed, including seven police officers, and dozens were injured. What became known as the Haymarket Affair resulted in widespread anger directed against immigrants and labor leaders.

1919: In what later became known as the May Fourth Movement, Chinese students protested the decision of the Paris Peace Conference that Japan retain defeated Germany's rights and possessions in the Chinese province of Shandong.

1953: Ernest Hemingway wins the Pulitzer Prize. The American author was awarded the prestigious accolade for his novel The Old Man and the Sea. The story about a fisherman and his battle with a large marlin also earned him the Nobel Prize for Literature.

1961: The first Freedom Ride—a political protest against the segregation of interstate bus travel in the South—began as a group of white and Black Americans departed Washington, D.C., on buses bound for New Orleans.

# NUCLEAR SCALING CHALLENGE

FOCUS ENERGY



Nuclear fission remains the only source of scalable clean, all-weather baseload power, which is why the world is returning to it

The recent criticality of India's Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) in early April marked a long-awaited milestone. It signalled India's operational entry into the second stage of the three-stage nuclear programme envisioned by Homi Jehangir Bhabha in 1950s. The achievement is immense: India has, despite decades of technology denial, built a commercial-scale FBR entirely on the strength of its own scientists and engineers, persisting with it in the face of skepticism and uncertainty.

But we must look past the hype that fills social media and even mainstream media. The PFBR is not the destination. It is, in fact, the point at which the programme enters its most difficult phase: the science and engineering have been proven; now the question is can India build industrial scale fast enough for the programme to remain relevant to the country's rising energy needs and the global energy transition. The logic of Bhabha's programme is often presented as a neat progression: Stage 1 uranium reactors produce plutonium as a byproduct; Stage 2 FBRs use that plutonium to "breed" more fissile material; and Stage 3 runs on a self-sustaining thorium cycle. The bottleneck today is not the reactor; it is the fissile inventory—the plutonium.

Going by estimates and recent statements of senior officials of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), India has enough separated plutonium to start and run the PFBR and two more 500 MWe reactors, FBR 1 and 2. If final approvals and funding are given today, and all goes well with construction, we should expect these units to come online by about 2035. However, that is where the shelf-ready fuel supply ends.

While breeders are named for their ability to produce more fuel than they consume, the rate depends on the breeding ratio. For the PFBR and FBR 1&2 using Mixed Oxide (MOX) fuel, the breeding ratio is a modest 1.03 to 1.05. This results in a system doubling time—accounting for cooling, reprocessing, and re-

fabrication into fuel—of nearly 30 years. That is, each reactor would take that long to generate enough surplus plutonium to start another unit. At this rate, the FBR programme will not scale; it will stagnate. For the next decade and more, expansion will depend less on breeding and more on reprocessing spent fuel from India's Stage 1 Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs). India has several tonnes of unseparated plutonium in its spent fuel. Bringing that material into circulation will determine the pace of FBR expansion beyond the first three reactors.

Here, the infrastructure is yet to catch up. The Integrated Nuclear Recycling Plant (INRP) at Tarapur, expected by 2028, will expand capacity, with throughput to support only another 3-4 FBRs. Meanwhile, the Fast Reactor Fuel Cycle Facility (FRFCF) at Kalpakkam, meant to reprocess FBR fuel, has been delayed until 2030. Even when operational, its capacity is designed for only the initial three reactors. Unless reprocessing capacity is expanded significantly, the next set of reactors will likely be pushed beyond 2045, and a meaningful transition to thorium will slip beyond 2060.

India does not have that kind of time. Two structural shifts have compressed the timeline. The first is the energy transition; India must expand clean energy at scale within the next two decades to meet its 2070 Net-Zero commitment, remain industrially competitive, and ensure energy security. The second is the nature

of demand: the rise of AI and the hyperscale data centre model.

These centres require continuous, high-density, 24/7 power. Renewables cannot provide such power without prohibitively expensive storage. Nuclear fission remains the only source of scalable clean, all-weather baseload power, which is why the world is returning to it.

America wants to quadruple its capacity to 400GW by 2050, and China is targeting 500GW. India has set a target of 100GW by 2047. Much of this expansion will be uranium-fuelled until at least 2040, a path that is slow, expensive, and wasteful—and, for India, potentially a strategic trap in a time of weaponised supply chains and chokepoints. India's FBR programme is a huge advantage, but only if scaled rapidly between now and 2040. Else, India will be overtaken.

Russia is advancing its Rryv (Breakthrough) project, an integrated model combining a lead-cooled breeder (Brest-OD-300) with co-located fuel facilities—similar to India's model at Kalpakkam, but designed for export. China beat India to operationalising its first commercial-scale breeder, the CFR-600, in late 2023, with a second unit coming online this year. Western start-ups like TerraPower, Copenhagen Atomics, and Molten are also racing toward fast reactors and MSRs to achieve thorium usage and waste reduction. If any of these models scale first, India's programme will face pressure to give up its

path. This was evident with the PHWR programme: because it didn't scale in time, India turned to Russian reactors in Kudankulam. The same risk exists for the FBR programme.

The constraint on India's expansion is fissile inventory, particularly between 2035-2045. At present, the breeder programme depends on plutonium from a limited set of eight unsafeguarded reactors. Meanwhile, India has accumulated spent fuel from uranium imported for its safeguarded reactors. This significant plutonium is lying idle because we lack safeguarded reprocessing facilities.

The solution is to separate civilian expansion from the military programme—as in the case of obtaining uranium under the India-US nuclear deal—through a dual-stream system: Stream 1: Retain the PFBR, FBR 1 & 2, and associated fuel facilities in the unsafeguarded stream for strategic purposes. Stream 2: Build a safeguarded stream—FBR 3 onwards, and new reprocessing and fuel fabrication facilities that tap into the plutonium in spent fuel from imported uranium.

This commercial track will allow imported uranium to fuel a rapid FBR expansion, accelerating the 100GW goal. It will also allow the introduction of thorium blankets in the 2035-2040 timeframe to build the U-233 stockpile necessary to begin the transition to thorium reactors by 2045-2050.

To hit the 2047 target and realise the thorium dream, the government must act now: mandate metallic fuel starting with FBR3 to maximise breeding ratio; accelerate INRP Tarapur to be online no later than 2028; start building safeguarded fuel cycle facilities now; and adopt fleet-mode construction; introduce thorium in FBR blankets in the 2035-2040 timeframe. All of this requires clarity, political will and urgent decision-making. The PFBR going critical should give the Indian government the confidence to go ahead.

The writer is a senior journalist and researcher based in Bangalore.

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## SPECTRUM SUPPLY CHAINS

# Chokepoints threatening world economy

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz is just the latest in a series of major supply shocks the global economy has experienced since 2020. Yet each time, the resulting shortages appear to catch policymakers off guard. From personal protective equipment at the start of COVID-19 to fertilizer and sulfur today, the key chokepoints and complex supply-chain interdependencies that cause these shortages remain poorly understood, often becoming visible only once crises are already underway.

The downstream consequences of the current crisis have yet to materialize and may take months to be fully felt. No sulfur means no sulfuric acid, which in turn threatens copper production in Chile. Meanwhile, surging fertilizer prices are likely to hit food supplies and drive up consumer prices later this year, disproportionately affecting import-dependent economies.

This raises a critical question: What other bottlenecks and shortages will emerge in the years ahead? One might expect governments to improve their monitoring of supply-chain vulnerabilities, yet despite re-

peated disruptions, progress in mapping these networks and building resilience has been limited. As a result, the global economy is bound to be caught unprepared once again.

To be sure, there has been some progress since the pandemic. The OECD's value-added trade database, for example, provides useful insights into flows of components, goods, and services, shedding light on the hidden structure of global production networks. But it remains a supplement to traditional trade statistics, offering aggregated data that extends only to 2022, and therefore, captures only a small part of a rapidly evolving landscape. Real-time visibility thus remains out of reach for most governments.

Even so, governments must do far more to identify their economies' weak points and confront those vulnerabilities head-on. Many essential inputs are produced in highly concentrated markets, often in just a handful of countries. And given that even simple or cheap components can be indispensable further up the supply chain, a seemingly minor disruption can quickly cascade into a major

supply crisis that reverberates through the global economy.

Consider, for example, the bicycle industry: most bikes rely on components made by Japanese manufacturer Shimano, which has struggled in recent years to keep up with demand. Similarly, automotive supply chains are dominated by specialist suppliers, with one or two firms often accounting for most of the sector's output. While such dependencies are well known within these industries, policymakers rarely follow the trade press, where problems tend to surface first.

With roughly two-thirds of global trade in manufactured goods consisting of intermediate components rather than finished products, this is far from a niche concern. Globalization has created vast and intricate supply chains that turbocharged economic growth while deepening interdependence. While globalization has expanded markets beyond national borders, many specialized components have no alternative producers. Their market is ultimately capped by global demand for the final product, leaving little room for diversification on the supply side and making sudden shocks harder to absorb or offset.

Encouragingly, some policymakers have begun to identify strategically important sectors.

Heightened geopolitical uncertainty has spurred investment in domestic manufacturing capacity, most notably in semiconductor production in the United States. But the persistence of supply-chain chokepoints underscores the need to rethink industrial policy. In particular, policymakers should think more broadly, including seeking to reinforce existing strengths, rather than focusing narrowly on emerging technologies such as clean energy and AI.

In most countries, however, supply-chain vulnerabilities remain largely overlooked in policy debates. That could be a costly mistake. With further disruption all but certain, governments must be able to move fast to secure vital inputs and contain emerging risks. Economic resilience is now inseparable from national security. Countries that fail to build a flexible, robust production base will learn that the hard way.

The writer is Professor of Public Policy at University of Cambridge. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE



Diane Coyle

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE IS NOW INSEPARABLE FROM NATIONAL SECURITY. COUNTRIES THAT FAIL TO BUILD A FLEXIBLE, ROBUST PRODUCTION BASE WILL LEARN THAT THE HARD WAY

## 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

## Shocking revelation

Sir, Apropos "Repoll in all booths of Falta seat May 21," I think, the news in question is a shocking revelation of the fact that how incompetent the ECI may be when it failed to conduct the rigging-free poll in Falta, despite having sufficient Central forces at its command. I would humbly ask Subrata Gupta, Special observer, how "alarming irregularities" including CCTV cameras being switched off at several booths could be made possible in spite of deployment of huge Central forces? Who dared EVMs to be covered with tape when forces were guarding the same? Should we take it for granted that Falta repoll has been ordered to facilitate BJP to improve its performance?

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

## Politicising education

Sir, The proposal to include "Modi Tattva" in a Gujarat university syllabus is worrying. Universities should promote critical thinking, not hero worship. Giving space to the ideas of a current political leader in courses may politicise education and limit diverse views. Students need balanced knowledge based on the Constitution, science, and different opinions. If such topics are added, they must also include criticism and comparison. Otherwise, this step can harm academic freedom and allow future governments to shape education for their own interests, which is not healthy for a democracy.

Sidhartha Kar Mohapatra, BARIPADA

## Life saving buzz

Sir, The recent cell broadcast test reaching over a billion people via a unified pulse marks a tectonic shift from reactive to proactive governance. With 70% of India's coast vulnerable to cyclones and 60% of its landmass earthquake prone a ten second alert can bridge the gap between life and loss. However, technology is merely the skeletal frame, while public trust is the heartbeat. Without literacy campaigns a life saving buzz is easily mistaken for a digital glitch. We must integrate these alerts with localised evacuation routes and community led response teams. Let this startling sound evolve into a digital lifeline ensuring that in our densest cities and remotest hamlets resilience is never silenced by the clutter of misinformation.

Vijaykumar HK, RAICHUR

# Tanzania beckons Haryana farmers, entrepreneurs



Agri land, factories in Tanzania offer new avenues as Haryana govt signs MoU for one lakh acres of farm land in the East African nation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chandigarh, May 3:** Farming and doing business in Tanzania have become lucrative avenues for the people in Haryana, with the state government, along with the Centre, expanding trade ties with the East African nation.

Farmers and entrepreneurs have started exploring the Tanzanian markets after Haryana began a push for investment opportunities in that country.

To enable farmers to pursue agricultural ventures, the Haryana government, with the support of the Centre, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for one lakh acres of farm land in Tanzania, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said.

Saini said that trade cooperation with African countries is being continuously expanded, with key sectors such as mining, plywood, agriculture, and IT being prominently included, according to an official statement.

Somveer Ghasola from Dadri near Bhiwani is among those who have bought land in Tanzania. Ghasola, 58, has also set up a mining business near Tanzania's capital, Dodoma.

According to him, the African country offers vast tracts of fertile land at very cheap rates,

which is suitable for growing all kinds of crops. Access to global markets is also available, which makes the business venture more viable.

On a big chunk of land that he has bought, Ghasola said it is suitable for growing rice, sugarcane, cashew and other crops.

"The land is mineral-rich, and whatever you grow, you will have a very good crop. The land lies between the Tanzanian city of Dar es Salaam and the country's capital, Dodoma. I am reaping benefits after I took the decision to explore the Tanzanian market," he told PTI over the phone.

Initially, when Manohar Lal was Haryana's Chief Minister, he motivated us to explore the foreign market and set up ventures.

"Haryana's Foreign Cooperation Department and the state government are facilitating us. In Tanzania, the local people and the government are quite welcoming, and they respect Indians quite a lot. The governments on both sides facilitate and help us in every way," said Ghasola, who first visited Tanzania as part of a delegation of entrepreneurs in 2024.

He also suggested that those youth who take the "dunki route", the risky and illegal routes to reach Europe and the US, should think of exploring markets in African nations like Tanzania to set up their own ventures.

Shiv Kumar Kamboj (49), an entrepreneur from Haryana's Yamunanagar, acquired a factory from a Chinese national in Tanzania a few months back

**African countries have rich mineral resources and affordable farming opportunities**

and is now running the profitable venture.

"In that factory, we process eucalyptus wood into core veneer (the inner, structural layers of plywood)," said Kamboj, who has two plywood factories in Haryana's Yamunanagar.

"We prepare this raw material (core veneer) in a Tanzanian factory and bring it here and use it for ourselves and also give it to other entrepreneurs in the plywood business," he said.

Asked about the economic viability of his business, he said, "The cost of wood in Tanzania is one-fourth of what it is back home. Besides, the labour is also cheap."

"Also, the Foreign Cooperation Department, Haryana government, has been assisting us. I had gone to Tanzania nearly three years back. Last year I purchased a factory there," he said, adding, "The people and government there welcome us with open arms."

Haryana Industry and Commerce Minister Rao Narbir Singh said that the state is writing a new chapter of industrial growth and building a strong global identity.

Singh said that Haryana has explored trade and investment opportunities not only with developed countries but also with African nations.

In this regard, a Haryana government delegation will visit Tanzania for seven days later this year to participate in the 50th Dar-es-Salaam International Trade Fair (Tanzania's premier trade event), where a Haryana pavilion will also be set up.

During the minister's visit, representatives from farming, trade, IT and pharmaceutical industries will join the delegation and work towards increasing cooperation with Tanzania in these areas, he said.



A macaque drinks water from a pipe at Galta Ji temple during the summer season, in Jaipur, Rajasthan

PTI PHOTO

# Boy with failing heart gets new lease of life

Army wife's family decides to donate her organs after she was declared brain dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** A 14-year-old boy suffering from end-stage heart failure got a new lease of life after the family of a woman, wife of a serving Indian Army officer, consented to donating her organs after she was declared brain dead at Command Hospital, Chandimandir, in Haryana's Panchkula, officials said.

The 41-year-old woman had suffered a brain haemorrhage. Her husband, along with their two young daughters, supported the decision to donate her organs, turning their personal loss into a life-saving opportunity for others.

After the patient was declared brain dead May 2, her heart was allocated to Indraprastha Apollo Hospital here. A specialised team from the hospital arranged urgent logistics and flew to Chandigarh on a chartered private jet to



retrieve the organ, the hospital said in a statement.

The organ was transported back to Delhi within the critical time window and successfully transplanted into a 14-year-old boy, giving him a new lease of life. The patient is currently stable and under close monitoring in the ICU, the statement said.

The hospital said the complex procedure was carried out through coordination among multiple agencies. Haryana and Punjab traffic police, along with the Airports Authority of India in Chandigarh, facilitat-

ed swift movement by providing priority clearance for the flight.

In Delhi, the traffic police created a green corridor for the airport, enabling transport of the organ in about 20 minutes, the statement said.

"Special recognition was extended to Colonel Anurag Garg of Command Hospital, whose exceptional leadership and coordination ensured the success of the donation and transplant process," the statement added.

Dr Mukesh Goel, senior consultant in cardiothoracic surgery-heart and lung transplant

at Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, said that the teenager was suffering from end-stage heart failure for more than a year. He had to be admitted almost every month to stabilise his deteriorating condition.

"Heart transplant was the only option to save his life," he said, adding that the patient had been registered with the National Organ and Tissue Transplant and Organisation (NOTTO) two months ago.

Goel said that a matching donor heart became available May 2 after the woman suffered a catastrophic brain haemorrhage and was declared brain dead.

"The family decided to donate her organs, thus saving multiple lives," Goel said.

The transplant surgery was completed successfully within the required time frame, and the patient was later shifted to the cardiac surgery ICU for further care," he added.

# Delhi to use fully digital system for time bound traffic challan disposal

Under the new framework, avoiding challans will no longer be possible and timely resolution will be mandatory for all citizens

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** The Delhi government will soon implement amended Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989, making the traffic challan process completely digital and time-bound, to curb violations and enhance road safety, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said Sunday.

Under the new framework, avoiding challans will no longer be possible and timely resolution will be mandatory for all citizens. Importantly, violators will not be able to approach courts directly to contest a challan without first going through the prescribed process, said a Delhi CMO statement.

Anyone committing five or more traffic violations within a year will be classified as a "serious offender" and will risk suspension or disqualification of their driving licence under the amended rules, it said.

Gupta noted that the issuance of challans will now be fully modernised. Police or authorised officers can issue challans either physically or electronically. In addition, violations captured through cameras and digital surveillance systems will automatically generate challans. The e-challans will be delivered within three days to the violators through their mobile numbers, and a physical notice will be delivered within 15 days.



Once a challan is issued, the violator will have 45 days to either pay the fine or challenge it before a grievance redressal officer through the online portal, supported by documentary evidence. If no action is taken within this period, the challan will be deemed accepted, and payment must be made within the next 30 days, the statement said.

If a challenge is rejected, the individual can either pay the fine within 30 days or approach the court after depositing 50 per cent of the challan amount.

Failure to act within the stipulated time will result in the challan being treated as accepted, with payment required within 15 days thereafter.

Payments can be made through electronic modes. The grievance redressal officer will be required to upload a decision on the portal within 30 days, it said. The chief minister made it clear that once deadlines lapse, daily electronic notices will be issued. Continued non-payment will lead to restrictions on all vehicle-related services, including payment of taxes and processing of driving licence or registration-related requests.

The vehicle will be flagged on the official portal as 'not to be transacted,' effectively blocking any further transactions until the dues are cleared. In cases where necessary, and subject to court orders, police or authorised officers may also impound vehicles involved in violations.

# Can't seek spouse's income details under RTI Act: Delhi HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** An individual cannot obtain details of their spouse's income from authorities by filing an application under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, the Delhi High Court has ruled after a wife claimed the information was necessary for the proper adjudication of her maintenance claim.

Personal information, unless related to public interest, is exempted from disclosure under Section 8(1)(j) of the Act, and as per the Supreme Court, an individual's income tax returns fall within that category, Justice Purushendra Kumar Kaurav said.

The court was dealing with

her husband's petition challenging an order of the Central Information Commission (CIC) directing the income tax authorities to reveal his details of his next taxable income for financial years 2007-2008 on an RTI application by his estranged wife.

Setting aside the CIC order passed in 2021 for being "unsustainable in law," the high court in the judgement passed on April 28 said the information sought by the wife was undoubtedly the petitioner's 'personal information,' which cannot be directed to be disclosed because it did not fall under the exception of "larger public interest."

The court said the RTI Act was enacted to promote trans-

parency in the working of public authorities and the intent of the legislature could not have been to allow disclosure of individuals' personal information that has no bearing on the public at large.

The wife argued that the disclosure of the petitioner's income details under the RTI Act was necessary for the proper adjudication of her maintenance claim.

The court, however, said such a contention cannot be accepted as there were other legal remedies available to her.

It said the law requires both the parties in a maintenance claim to file affidavits of their income, assets, and liabilities, in order to enable proper adjudication.

# Haryana urban development law needs overhaul: Experts

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chandigarh, May 3:** Senior administrators, urban planners and real estate leaders Saturday reached a broad consensus that the Haryana Development and Regulation of Urban Areas Act, 1975, must be urgently modernised and strengthened to keep pace with the state's rapidly expanding urban landscape and evolving developmental needs.

The consensus emerged at a high-level roundtable organised by the Institute of Town Planners, India - Haryana Regional Chapter (ITPI-HRC) in Panchkula, held to mark 51 years of the landmark legislation that laid the foundation for planned urban development in



the state through private sector participation.

Chief Secretary Anurag Rastogi, who attended the event as the chief guest, said urban policies and regulatory frameworks must continuously evolve to

address emerging challenges related to sustainability, infrastructure expansion and changing citizen expectations.

He said the 1975 Act had significantly contributed to

planned urban growth, infrastructure creation and economic development in the state over the past five decades, but underlined that the time had come to take it to the next level.

Rastogi further stressed that coordinated efforts among government institutions, planners and industry stakeholders are essential to ensure balanced, inclusive and future-ready urban development across Haryana.

He also highlighted the transformative role played by the Act in shaping the state's urbanisation journey over the last five decades.

The day-long roundtable was structured across three dedicated sessions.

The Leaders' Roundtable featured Chief Secretary Rastogi

alongside TL Satyaprakash, Joint Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals, Government of India; Amit Khatri, Director, Town and Country Planning, Haryana; and former senior officials SS Dhillon and TC Gupta. The session was moderated by former Chief Town Planner Jaswant Singh.

Participants deliberated extensively on strengthening the Act's provisions to address contemporary urban challenges, promote sustainable development, improve infrastructure resilience and put in place effective regulatory mechanisms for the future. Established in 2006, the ITPI-HRC has been actively promoting planned and sustainable urban and regional development across Haryana.



after the Sunday morning rain, providing relief to the people from hot weather conditions.

In Punjab's Hoshiarpur, a local industrialist was injured when a sudden squall accompanied by rain in the early morning uprooted some electricity poles and trees in the Industrial Focal Point at Purhira area, officials said.



The Honourable Supreme Court granted us permission to proceed. We then initiated the recruitment process. And I am pleased to state that, to date, we have successfully completed the recruitment of over 2,20,000 police personnel across the state of Uttar Pradesh

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

MANDAVIYA OPENS ESIC HOSP IN DODDABALLAPUR

Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya Sunday inaugurated the newly constructed 100-bedded ESIC Hospital at Doddaballapur near here. He also laid the foundation stone for a 100-bedded ESIC Hospital at Ballari, remotely from Doddaballapur.



of the day quote

Madhya Pradesh is among the states witnessing the fastest pace of new industrial establishments in the country

MOHAN YADAV | MADHYA PRADESH CM

Human life is defined by giving back to the world, as we are all part of one great family.

Mohan Bhagwat is defined by giving back to the world, as we are all part of one great family.

MOHAN BHAGWAT | RSS CHIEF

Elections were held in Assam, Kerala, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal and the BJP's performance in all of them is going to be exceptional

ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL | UNION MINISTER

Kharge slams BJP-RSS over press freedom



In a post on X on World Press Freedom Day, Kharge said India's position in the World Press Freedom Index has steadily declined since 2014 and alleged that the Sangh Parivar has increasingly "weaponised" legal frameworks to silence newsrooms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 3: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge Sunday attacked the BJP-RSS over the issue of press freedom, saying their message is clear that independent journalism will be punished, and compliance rewarded.

He alleged that sections of the media have been reduced to echoing the ruling establishment, while those who persist in asking questions are "targeted relentlessly".

Index has steadily declined, falling to 157th place, under the BJP regime. "A free press, in its truest sense, does not exist to amplify the government's narrative or conceal its failures.

Kharge said the media preserves the democratic balance between power and the people. "Journalists are the custodians of public truth.

Between 2014 and 2020, over 135 journalists were arrested, detained, or interrogated, he claimed, and added that between 2014 and 2023, 36 journalists were imprisoned.

The scale of persecution has risen sharply, with several journalists booked under draconian laws such as the UAPA, he said.

WILL THE POWER PENDULUM SWING?

Result day for WB, Assam, TN, Kerala & Pondicherry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Kolkata/Chennai, May 3: Counting of votes will be held Monday in Tamil Nadu, Assam, Kerala, Pondicherry and West Bengal after a riveting high-voltage contest with the outcome crucial for prominent ruling regional parties like the TMC and DMK as well as the BJP, Congress and the Left.

The exercise will begin at 8 am, starting with the postal ballots, at the counting centres, which will have a three-tier security system. In a first, the Election Commission has introduced a QR code-based Photo Identity Card system through ECINET to prevent unauthorised entry into counting centres.

Votes will be counted across 77 centres for 293 Assembly seats in West Bengal, which has witnessed unprecedented security deployment this time and an acrimony-filled run-up to the result day, with both the ruling TMC and opposition BJP expressing apprehensions of vote manipulation.

The two-phase polls in the state ended April 29, with its highest-ever voter turnout of 92.47 per cent since Independence. The election was countermanded in one constituency - Falta - in South 24 Parganas district due to "severe electoral offences" and fresh polls will be held there May 21.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress (TMC) is hoping to win its fourth consecutive term by overcoming a spirited challenge from the main Opposition BJP, while the CPI(M) and the Congress are trying to reclaim a foothold following their wipe-out in the 2021 polls.



In a first, the Election Commission has introduced a QR code-based Photo Identity Card system through ECINET to prevent unauthorised entry into counting centres

AIMIM are also trying their luck in some crucial pockets.

The EC has deployed 165 additional counting observers and 77 police observers. It has introduced stringent access control measures at the counting centres, including banning mobile phones except for returning officers and observers.

The BJP-led NDA is hoping for a hat-trick in Assam. EVMs, holding the electoral fates of 722 hopefuls from 126 Assembly constituencies of the state, will be opened at 40 counting centres across 35 districts.

Among the 722 candidates, the Congress has the highest 99, followed by the BJP with 90, AIUDF with 30, NDA allies Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) with 26 and Bodo Peoples' Front (BPF) with 11 nominees.

Sarma of the BJP, the Congress state unit chief Gaurav Gogoi. Assembly Speaker Biswajit Daimary and Rajiv Dal Chief and MP Akhil Gogoi. In Kerala, buoyed by its performance in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls and recent local body elections, the Congress-led UDF is hoping to oust the Left Democratic Front (LDF), which has been in power for two terms, while the BJP-led NDA is attempting to gain a foothold in the state with a bipolar polity.

A defeat for the LDF would also mark the first time since the 1960s that Left parties are not in power in any Indian state. A total of 883 candidates contested the election for 140 seats in the state. There are 140 counting centres across 43 locations. Officials said that 15,464 personnel have been deployed for the exercise, comprising 140 returning officers, 1,340 additional returning officers, 4,208 micro observers, 4,208 counting supervisors, and 5,563 counting assistants.

PUNE GIRL RAPE-MURDER: SIT FORMED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune/Mumbai/Nagpur, May 3: A Special Investigation Team (SIT) has been formed to probe the rape and murder of a four-year-old girl in Pune district of Maharashtra, which has sparked massive outrage.

Amid protests and road blockades, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis Sunday assured that the government will push for a death penalty for the accused and the trial will be fast-tracked to ensure justice in "record time".

A 65-year-old man with a criminal record has been arrested for allegedly sexually assaulting and murdering a four-year-old girl in a village in Bhore taluka of Pune district.

He allegedly lured the girl with the promise of food Friday, took her to a cattle enclosure where he allegedly sexually assaulted her and later killed her by hitting her with a stone, according to the police. The accused was remanded to police custody till May 7.

With political leaders cutting across party lines visiting the victim's residence to offer condolences, her father has appealed to politicians not to call on the family until the accused is "hanged till death."

NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar, Shiv Sena leader and Legislative Council Deputy Chairperson Neelam Gorhe, and BJP Rajya Sabha member Medha Kulkarni had met the family members. A Pune Police officer said an SIT comprising six police officers, including two women, has been set up to probe the crime.

The crime has drawn sharp criticism from leaders of the Opposition parties, who have slammed the government over law and order in the state and demanded strict action against the accused.

SHORT TAKES

4 drown in Ganga during ceremony

Ballia (UP): Four people, including a teenage girl, drowned in the Ganga river during a 'mundan' ceremony in Uttar Pradesh's Ballia Sunday morning, a police official said.

India, Cambodia to conduct joint drill

New Delhi: Armies of India and Cambodia will carry out a two-week military exercise beginning Monday in line with deepening bilateral defence and military ties between the two nations.

Ch'garh liquor 'scam': ED seizes cash, bullion

New Delhi: Cash worth ₹53 lakh and gold jewellery and bullion worth more than ₹4 crore were seized during fresh searches conducted in a money laundering probe linked to the alleged ₹2,800-crore Chhattisgarh liquor scam, the ED said Sunday.

J'khand: Poppy straw worth ₹1.32cr seized

Chatra/Ranchi: One person has been arrested and poppy straw worth ₹1.32 crore seized in three different operations in Jharkhand's Chatra and Ranchi districts, officials said Sunday.



Railway personnel repair overhead electric lines after a tree fell on the track following a storm near Rishikesh railway station, Uttarakhand

SNIPPETS

Man kills wife, 4 kids in Gurugram; attempts suicide

Gurugram: A man allegedly killed his wife and their four children before attempting suicide by slitting his wrists at their home in Wazirpur village here, police said Sunday.

Flyer jumps from flight at Chennai airport

Chennai: Tension prevailed for a while when a passenger opened one of the emergency exit doors while the flight was taxiing at Chennai International Airport.

Govt launches childhood diabetes screening, treatment plan

According to the ministry, the document, for the first time, establishes a structured and standardised national framework, positioning India among a select group of countries that have integrated childhood diabetes care into the public health system

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 3: The Union Health Ministry Sunday released a guidance document providing a framework for screening, diagnosis, treatment and long-term management of childhood diabetes.

According to the ministry, the document, for the first time, establishes a structured and standardised national framework, positioning India among a select group of countries that have integrated childhood diabetes care into the public health system.

Diabetes Mellitus in Children" was released at the National Summit on Best Practices in Public Healthcare Service Delivery, concluded May 1-2.

According to a statement by the ministry, the framework aims to ensure universal screening of all children from birth to 18 years through community and school-based platforms for early identification of diabetes.

Suspected cases will undergo immediate blood glucose testing and be referred to district-level health facilities for confirmatory diagnosis and treatment, it said.



A key feature of the initiative is the provision of a comprehensive free-of-cost care package at public health facilities,

including screening, diagnostic services, lifelong insulin therapy, glucometers, test strips and regular follow-up care.

The initiative seeks to reduce the financial burden on families and ensure uninterrupted treatment for children diagnosed with diabetes.

The document also lays down an integrated continuum of care linking community-level screening with district hospital-based management and advanced care at medical colleges to ensure seamless follow-up and treatment.

To strengthen early detection, the guidance promotes the "4Ts" awareness framework -- Toilet, Thirsty, Tired and Thinner -- to help parents, teachers and caregivers recognise early

warning signs of type 1 Diabetes. Besides clinical protocols, the document focuses on family and caregiver empowerment through structured training on insulin administration, blood glucose monitoring, emergency response and daily disease management.

The statement stated the initiative is expected to reduce mortality through early detection, prevent complications and improve the quality of life of affected children while strengthening the public health system's capacity to manage non-communicable diseases among children.



**The Centre immediately roll back the recent steep hike in LPG prices, alleging that it has severely impacted common people and small businesses**  
PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CM

**FIRE SAFETY WEEK: PAN-INDIA EVENT FROM MAY 4 TO 10**  
The Union Health Ministry will observe a pan-India 'Fire Safety Week' from May 4 to 10 across healthcare facilities to strengthen preparedness and raise awareness on prevention and mitigation of fire hazards



## of the day quote

Chickens are losing their lives due to the sound of a DJ. In fact, if a person with a weak heart were to walk past a DJ, they too could find themselves in a problem. The sound waves are so strong

We often define a nation's strength by its borders, infrastructure and material capabilities. While these are vital, they are only the visible aspects. The real strength of a nation lies in something far deeper, in its culture, identity and the values that bind its people together across generations

First they shut down the Madinatul Uloom, where students were taught Arabic and religious studies. Now, they have gone after Sirajul Uloom which was imparting both religious and worldly education. The BJP at the Centre and the NC government here, driven by some agenda, are closing these institutions. This is an attack on our identity

## INDIA-BOUND LPG TANKER PASSES THROUGH HORMUZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** A tanker carrying liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for India has sailed out of the Strait of Hormuz and is now headed towards the country, an official statement said Sunday.

The Marshall Islands-flagged LPG carrier MT Sarv Shakti, loaded with 46,313 tonnes of LPG and staffed by 20 crew, including 18 Indians, cleared the key shipping chokepoint May 2 and is expected to reach Visakhapatnam May 13, it said.

The cargo - enough to meet half a days requirement of the country - will partly tide over supply constraints being faced since the start of the West Asia conflict more than two months back.

Ship-tracking data showed its position in Oman Gulf Sunday evening. The very large gas carrier has previously made runs between the Persian Gulf and Indian ports, has been chartered by state-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC).

Sarv Shakti is the first India-linked tanker to cross the

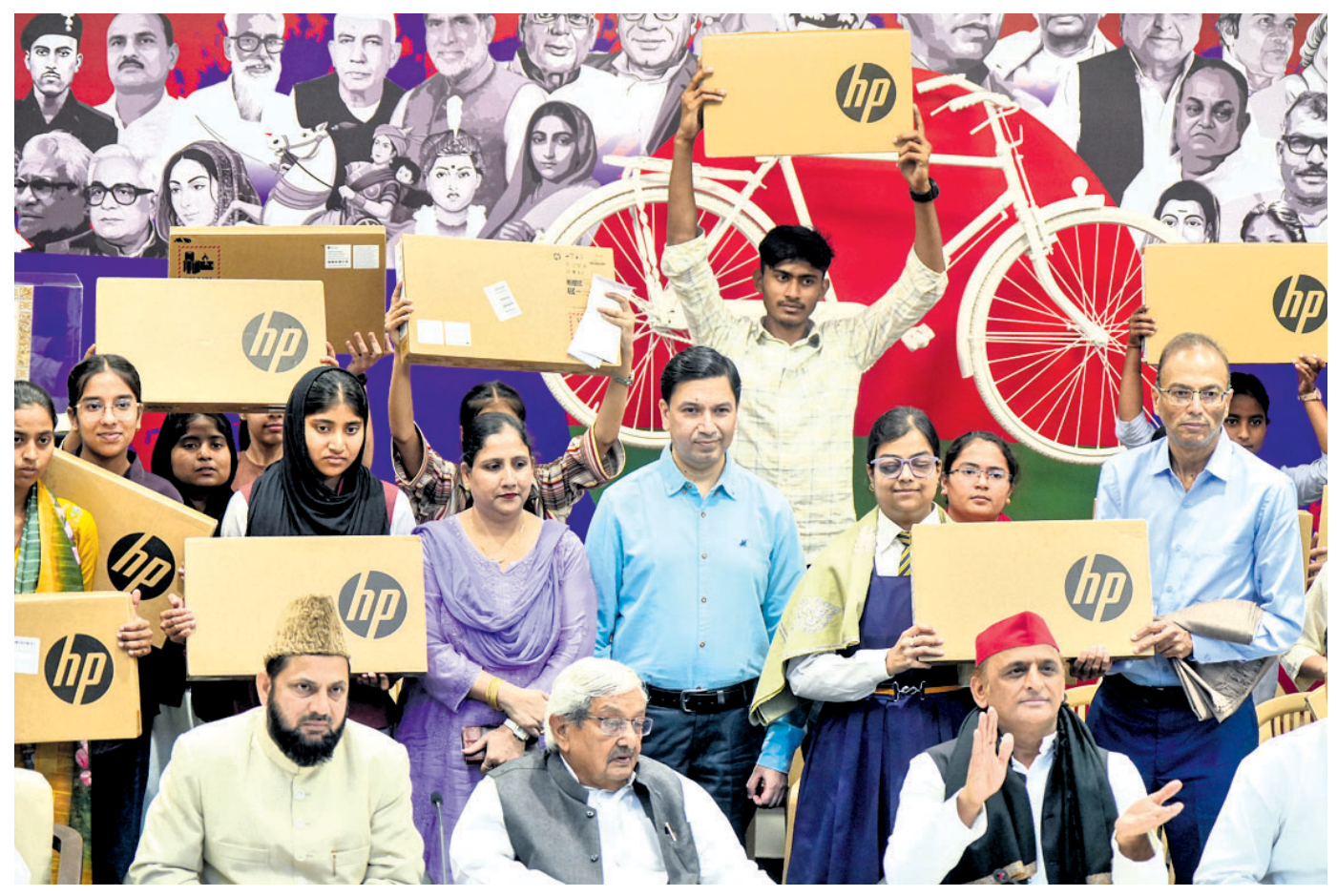
war zone since a weeks-old US blockade of ships tied to Iran began, pushing transits through Hormuz back down to almost zero.

There are as many as 14 Indian flagged or India-owned vessels still stranded on the west side of the Strait of Hormuz.

The statement said no incident involving Indian-flagged vessels has been reported in the past 24 hours. The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways is working closely with the Ministry of External Affairs, Indian missions and maritime stakeholders to ensure crew welfare and uninterrupted operations.

The Directorate General of Shipping (DG Shipping) control room has handled 8,373 calls and more than 17,965 emails since activation, including 38 calls and 127 emails in the last 24 hours.

India has also facilitated the repatriation of more than 2,953 seafarers so far, including 31 in the past day from across the Gulf region. Port operations across the country remain normal with no congestion reported, the statement added.



Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav distributes laptops to students during a press conference at the party office, in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

## Modi govt rattled by Rahul visit: Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** The Congress Sunday flagged in detail concerns related to ecology, tribal rights, transparency and security, over the Great Nicobar project, and asserted that these considerations must be debated in a parliamentary forum.

The Opposition party claimed that the Modi government is "rattled" and in damage control mode after Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi's visit to Great Nicobar last week.

In a statement, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "The Modi Government, clearly in damage control mode after the hugely impactful visit of the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, to Great Nicobar April 28 2026, issued a press note on the Great Nicobar Island Development Project three days later."

This press note does not address any of the serious concerns that have been raised on it by local affected communities, environmentalists, anthropologists, academics, civil society experts and other professionals, Ramesh said.

"These concerns had already been conveyed in detail by me to the Union Minister of Environment, Forests & Climate Change on September 10, 2024 and in a



**DURING HIS VISIT TO GREAT NICOBAR, GANDHI LAST WEEK ALLEGED THAT THE GREAT NICOBAR PROJECT AT CAMPBELL BAY IN ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS WAS "ONE OF THE BIGGEST SCAMS AND GRAVEST CRIMES AGAINST THE NATURAL AND TRIBAL HERITAGE OF THE COUNTRY"**

follow-up on September 27, 2024," the former environment minister said. During his visit to Great Nicobar, Gandhi last week alleged that the Great Nicobar project at Campbell Bay in Andaman and Nicobar Islands was "one of the biggest scams and gravest crimes against the natural and tribal heritage of the country".

The government May 1 released a detailed statement with answers to FAQs (frequently asked questions).

"The Great Nicobar Project is a strategic initiative to strengthen India's presence in the Andaman Sea. It seeks to balance port-led growth with calibrated environmental safeguards. Protection of indigenous communities remains central to its planning," the government statement had said.

"The project combines strategic, economic, and ecological

priorities. This ensures that development is sustainable, inclusive, and aligned with national interests," it had said. In his four-page detailed statement, Ramesh spelled out the key concerns over the Great Nicobar project.

Flagging ecological concerns, Ramesh said the Great Nicobar is unique and distinctly different from all other islands in the Andaman and Nicobar group.

"Galathea Bay, the site of the port, is unequivocally a Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) is a site where port construction is not allowed. As per records of the Zoological Survey of India, Galathea Bay is home to more than 20,000 coral colonies, a key marker of a CRZ-1a categorisation. Similarly, the beach here is the most important nesting site of the Giant Leatherback turtle in the Northern Indian Ocean," Ramesh said.

The recently concluded turtle nesting season saw record turtle nesting at Galathea Bay, he pointed out.

## Nitish's son gets rousing welcome from JD(U) workers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Patna, May 3:** JD(U) leader Nishant Kumar, who is being seen as the political successor to his father Nitish Kumar, Sunday received a rousing welcome from party workers when he was on his way to West Champaran's Valmiki Nagar, the starting point of "Sadbhav Yatra", his first public outreach programme.

The 45-year-old recluse, who joined the party only recently, days after his father announced the decision to step down as chief minister and move to the Rajya Sabha, is expected to reach the remote locality on the India-Nepal border late in the evening.

The JD(U)'s social media handles, which have been busy building momentum with the catchy slogan "Jay Nishant, Jay Nishant" (Nishant's time is bound to come, he shall be victorious), also carried pictures of flower petals being showered on the vehicle of the heir apparent of the supreme leader.

Nishant's open vehicle, which had earlier been used by his father for numerous public outreach programmes, has this time been given the name "Sadbhav Rath" or a chariot of goodwill, underscoring the message that the young leader wanted to win over the people through sheer goodwill.



## EC deploys 432 counting observers across Bengal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, May 3:** The Election Commission has deployed 432 counting observers across West Bengal to ensure a transparent vote count. Additional observers have been assigned to sensitive and electorally significant districts in West Bengal.

Enforcement agencies seized approximately Rs 561 crore in illegal inducements during the election period

THE ELECTION COMMISSION'S ACTIONS REFLECT ITS COMMITMENT TO FREE, FAIR, AND INDUCEMENT-FREE ELECTIONS IN WEST BENGAL

value of seizures stands at approximately Rs 561 crore, the statement said. The seizures include Rs 30.79 crore in cash and over 55 lakh litres of liquor valued at Rs 145.07 crore. Drugs and narcotics worth Rs 127.02 crore have also been confiscated, along with precious metals valued at Rs 37.52 crore. In addition, freebies and other items, including foreign currency, worth Rs 189.86 crore have been seized during the period.

The EC said personnel of the state police and the state excise department led the crackdown on illegal cash and liquor. Central agencies, including the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Border Security Force (BSF) and Customs, also played a key role in the enforcement efforts.

The Election Commission said the extensive deployment of observers, coupled with large-scale enforcement actions and seizure reflects its commitment to ensuring free, fair and inducement-free elections in the state.

Murshidabad has been assigned 33 observers for 22 constituencies, reflecting heightened monitoring arrangements. In districts such as Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Uttar Dinajpur, each constituency has been provided with an additional observer.

Meanwhile, enforcement agencies have carried out extensive seizure drives during the election period from February 26 to May 2 to curb illegal inducements and the total

## POST OF THE DAY

Will there be Extremely Severe Alerts everytime - a tiger is found dead - a boat capsizes - a bridge falls - trains collide - a tap gives sewage water - a new road crumbles - a Thar runs over people - driven by a minister's son - a cop is caught taking bribe - a judge refers to manusmriti

## SHORT TAKES

### Boy dies after water tank stairs collapse

**Siddharthnagar:** A 10-year-old boy died after the staircase of a defunct water tank collapsed, causing three of the five children on it to fall, officials said Sunday. The incident occurred on Saturday when the children had climbed the structure. Two others who fell remain in critical condition. Two children stranded atop the tank were rescued early Sunday by an Indian Air Force helicopter, officials said. Siddharthnagar District Magistrate Shivasharanappa GN said that following consultations with the Chief Minister's Office and Relief Commissioner Dr Hrishikesh Bhaskar Yashod, the helicopter was requisitioned from Gorakhpur.

### Double-decker electric bus gutted

**Mumbai:** An empty double-decker electric bus was gutted in a fire during servicing at a BEST depot in Mumbai's Kuria area Sunday, officials said, adding that nobody was injured. The blaze broke out inside the Kuria BEST bus depot near Kanakia Building, according to preliminary information from the Mumbai Fire Brigade. A BEST spokesperson said the bus was withdrawn from service May 1 following a technical fault and was brought to the Kuria depot for repairs. The incident occurred in the basement parking area. Smoke was first noticed emanating from the out-of-service bus at 3:55 PM, he said. "We are aware of a thermal incident involving one of the double decker buses at the BEST Kuria Depot. The situation was promptly brought under control. No injuries have been reported. We are currently investigating the matter," Switch Mobility said.

## Rallies, shutdown mark 3rd anniv of ethnic conflict in Manipur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Imphal/Churachandpur, May 3:** Rallies, meetings and a shutdown marked the third anniversary of ethnic conflict between Meitei and Kuki communities in Manipur, which witnessed the death of at least 260 people, the displacement of thousands of residents and imposition of President's Rule for a year.

The violence between the Meitei and Kuki communities started May 3, 2023, after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribes status.

Meitei groups organised meetings in several Imphal Valley districts seeking implementation of the NRC before the census and protection of Manipur's administrative and territorial integrity Sunday, while the Kuki Zo organisations observed a shutdown in Kangpokpi district and held meetings in Churachandpur district to commemorate the



victims of the violence.

Hundreds of people took part in a rally at Nambol in Bishnupur district, organised by the United Protection Committee. "The rally was organised to highlight the ongoing suffering of the people and to demand accountability and justice for the victims of the conflict," Convenor of United Protection Committee, Th Lamjingba, said.

At Iboiyaima Shumang Leela Shanglein in Imphal East district, representatives of women's organisation Meira

Paibis and COCOMI took part in a public meeting on "three years on Manipur crisis".

"The public discourse is being held on the occasion of three years on conflict in the state in the context of armed attacks on the indigenous people of Manipur by Kuki terrorists," said Shanta Nahakpam, spokesperson of the Coordination Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), an umbrella body of several Meitei civil society organisations.

Floral tributes were also offered to the photos of more than 100 Meiteis killed in the conflict at separate events held across five valley districts.

## The violence between the Meitei and Kuki communities started May 3, 2023, after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribes status

In the Kuki-majority Kangpokpi district, business activities remained closed due to the 12-hour shutdown called from 6 am by the Committee on Tribal Unity (COTU) in the district, officials said.

The COTU is demanding a separate administration for the Kuki people, claiming that it has become impossible for the Kukis to live with the Meiteis.

## Andaman sets two Guinness World Records in 2 days

**SRI VIJAYA PURAM:** The Andaman and Nicobar Islands Sunday created another Guinness World Record with the formation of the tallest human stack underwater at Swaraj Dweep, formerly known as Havelock Island, officials said. Fourteen people, including Lieutenant Governor DK Joshi, took part in forming the 22.3-metre-long stack, and they stayed under the water for three minutes, officials said.

The feat comes a day after the Union Territory administration achieved a landmark by unfurling the world's largest underwater national flag, measuring approximately 60 by 40 metres, in a coordinated operation involving multiple agencies and trained divers near the same island. The Lieutenant Governor, who is also the Vice Chairman of the Islands Development Agency, also participated in Saturday's event. Officials said the back-to-back achievements are part of a larger initiative to showcase the islands as a premier global diving destination, highlighting their pristine marine ecosystem and advanced diving capabilities.

# international



The Republic of China, Taiwan, is a sovereign nation and a Taiwan that belongs to the world  
LAI CHING-TE | PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

## TWO HINDU MEN IN PAK TO JOIN FEDERAL CIVIL SERVICE

Two men from the minority Hindu community have qualified to join the federal civil service of Pakistan, where representation of such groups in government jobs is historically low



### of the day quote

At present, Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps in the west and the country's army in the east are controlling the strait with power, and no ship, friend or foe, will have the right to pass without the permission and authorization of our forces

MOHAMMAD AKRAMINIA | IRAN'S ARMY SPOKESMAN

It remains a warning over the use of ever more powerful technologies. I hope that at all decision-making levels, wisdom and responsibility always prevail, so that atomic power can always be used to support life and peace

POPE LEO | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

The US president Donald Trump escalates his threats of military aggression against Cuba to a dangerous and unprecedented scale

MIGUEL DIAZ-CANEL | CUBAN PRESIDENT

# Hezbollah pays heavy price in battle

REUTERS

Beirut, May 3: Hezbollah has paid a heavy price for going to war with Israel March 2: Israel has occupied a chunk of southern Lebanon, displaced hundreds of thousands of its Shi'ite Muslim constituents and killed as many as several thousand of its fighters, according to previously unreported casualty estimates from within the group.

The move has brought severe political consequences, too. In Beirut, Opposition has hardened to its status as an armed group, which domestic rivals see as exposing Lebanon to repeated wars with Israel.

In April, Lebanon's government held face-to-face talks with Israel for the first time in decades, a decision Hezbollah firmly opposed.

However, more than a dozen Hezbollah officials told Reuters they see a chance to reverse deteriorating fortunes by aligning with Tehran in its war with Israel and the United States. The group, founded by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps in 1982, opened fire two days into the conflict, which began with US and Israeli strikes on Iran February 28.

The group's calculations are



HEZBOLLAH FACES MOUNTING LOSSES, DISPLACEMENT AND POLITICAL BACKLASH IN LEBANON GROUP SEES CHANCE TO REVERSE DECLINING FORTUNES BY SIDING WITH IRAN IN WAR WITH ISRAEL AND US, OFFICIALS TELL REUTERS  
ISRAEL AND HEZBOLLAH CONTINUE TO TRADE BLOWS DESPITE US-MEDIATED CEASEFIRE  
US SAYS ISRAEL HAS RIGHT TO DEFEND ITSELF, URGES PROPORTIONAL ISRAELI RESPONSE

based on the assessment that its participation would force Lebanon onto the agenda of US-Iranian negotiations, and that Iranian pressure can secure a more

robust ceasefire than one that took effect in November 2024 following a conflict sparked by the war in Gaza, the officials said.

Hezbollah was mauled in the last war, which killed its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, along with some 5,000 fighters, and weakened its long-dominant hold over the Lebanese state.

Rearmed with Iranian help, it has used new tactics and drones, surprising many with its capabilities after a fragile 15-month truce during which Hezbollah held fire, even as Israel continued to kill its members.

Hezbollah lawmaker Ibrahim al-Moussawi denied the group was acting on Iran's behalf

when it resumed hostilities, as alleged by opponents. He told Reuters Hezbollah saw a window to "break this vicious cycle ... where the Israelis can target, assassinate, bombard, kill, without any revenge."

He acknowledged losses and damage in southern Lebanon but said "you don't go into making calculations of how many are going to be killed" when "pride and sovereignty and independence" are at stake.

While a US-mediated ceasefire that took effect April 16 has led to a significant reduction in hostilities, Israel and Hezbollah have continued to trade blows in the south, where Israel maintains troops in a self-declared "buffer zone".

GRAVES FRESHLY DUG, AND QUICKLY FILLED

More than 2,600 people have been killed since March 2, around a fifth of them women, children and medics, Lebanon's health ministry has reported. Its toll does not distinguish between civilians and combatants.

Three sources, two of them Hezbollah officials, said the ministry's figures do not include many of the group's casualties. They said several thousand Hezbollah fighters have been killed, though the group does not have the full picture yet.

# Canada declares Khalistan extremists as 'threat'



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ottawa, May 3: The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), in its latest public report, has identified Khalistani elements as a violent extremist threat, as per a media report.

A small but determined group of Canada-based Khalistani extremists (CBKES) continue to use Canada as a base to promote, raise funds and plan violence, according to a report in Khalsa Vox.

These individuals, often linked to Canadian nations, exploit community institutions to raise funds that are used for violent activities. The CSIS report noted that no such attacks took place in Canada last year; however, it warned that their ongoing involvement in politically motivated violent extremism poses a direct national security threat to Canada and Canadian interests, it said.

In the report, CSIS stated that foreign interference remains aggressive and sophisticated in Canadian politics. According to the report, the main perpetrators - China, Russia, Iran, and Pakistan - use various tactics designed to undermine the institutions, influence public discourse, and end trust in democratic processes. China's intelligence services have changed their methods, posting job advertisements through cover companies on major online platforms to recruit people of Canada with access to proprietary or classified information. They specifically target people who face financial difficulties or career ambitions, develop-

ing long-term networks for espionage and coercion.

Meanwhile, Russian actors exploit social divisions through disinformation campaigns increased by proxies, artificial intelligence, and social media, with a goal to weaken Canada's international alliances and domestic cohesion. Iran is involved in transnational repression, including plans to harass, abduct, or even kill perceived opponents on Canadian soil. Pakistan, using proxies, maintains covert relationships with politicians, journalists, academics, and community leaders to manipulate media narratives and silence dissent within diaspora groups. These incidents showcase a coordinated assault on Canadian sovereignty, according to the Khalsa Vox.

"Khalistani extremism thrives in the gaps of the multiculturalism policies, where legitimate advocacy sometimes blurs into support for violence. Foreign interference corrodes the very heart of the Canadian electoral system and public debate. The CSIS report makes clear that half-measures are no longer sufficient. The time for complacency has ended. Parliament must empower CSIS and security agencies with the tools and resources they need to disrupt these networks decisively. This includes stronger screening of foreign funding to community organisations, aggressive prosecution of transnational repression, and public transparency about interference attempts," it said.

## SHORT TAKES

### Jaishankar arrives in Jamaica on official visit

Kingston: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has arrived in Jamaica on his first visit to the Caribbean nation to boost bilateral relations between the two countries. Jaishankar arrived in Kingston Saturday evening on the first leg of his nine-day tour of Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago to further bolster India's strategic and cultural ties with the Caribbean nations. "Pleased to arrive in Kingston for my first visit to Jamaica. Touched by the warm welcome extended by Foreign Minister @kaminajsmith," Jaishankar posted on social media.

### More than 130 foreign nationals held in Lanka

Colombo: More than 130 foreign nationals were arrested in Sri Lanka for alleged cybercrime operations over the last two days, police said. The police actions are part of a wider crackdown on cross-border online fraud networks operating from the island nation. In a raid in Thalagama, a suburb of Colombo, the police arrested 37 Chinese nationals Saturday. One of them was a woman, two of them did not have valid visas, and one did not possess a passport, according to the police. All of them were aged between 24 and 44.

### Pak clears donkey meat exports

Karachi: Pakistan has approved the export of donkey meat to China after a Chinese company warned it could shut operations, prompting intervention by the prime minister's office. The dispute involves the Hangeng Trade Company operating in Gwadar, a port city central to China-backed projects, where export approvals had been delayed for months, raising questions about bureaucratic difficulties affecting foreign-backed projects in Pakistan.

### UN expert calls for release of journalists

Kabul: UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan Richard Bennett has demanded immediate and unconditional release of detained journalists in Afghanistan, local media reported Sunday. In a statement marking World Press Freedom Day Sunday, Bennett called on Taliban to ensure that journalists can do their work freely without fear of arrest, threats or harassment.

## US-IRAN CONFLICT

# UK SETS OUT FUEL CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR FLIGHTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, May 3: Airlines will be expected to consolidate schedules on certain routes with multiple flights to the same destination on the same day as part of contingency measures the UK government announced Sunday.

The Department for Transport (DfT) issued a series of temporary plans amid ongoing jet fuel supply issues caused by the US-Iran conflict and the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz.

It stressed that while UK airlines say they are not currently facing supply issues, the government is stepping in to protect travellers from the likelihood of last-minute flight cancellations over the upcoming summer holiday period in the event of significant disruption caused by the conflict.

"Since the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the government has been monitoring jet fuel supplies daily and working with airlines, airports and fuel suppliers to stay ahead of any problems," said UK Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander.

"There are no immediate supply issues, but we're preparing now to give families long-term certainty and avoid unnecessary disruption at the departure gate this summer.

"This legislation will give airlines the tools to adjust flights in good time if they need to, which helps protect passengers and businesses," she said.



A member of the 9th Ward Black Hatchet and Semolian Warriors Mardi Gras Indians perform during the second weekend of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival at Fair Grounds Race Course in New Orleans

# Nepal objects to Kailash Mansarovar yatra via Lipulekh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, May 3: Nepal Sunday objected to India and China planning to conduct the upcoming Kailash Mansarovar Yatra via Lipulekh Pass, claiming that it is Kathmandu's territory. In a statement, the Nepalese Foreign Ministry said that Kathmandu was not consulted before finalising the route for the pilgrimage. Nepal's objection to the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra came days after India announced that it would be held between June and August.

"The Nepal government is clear and fully committed to its stand that Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani, lying in the East of the Mahakali river are

## INDIA REJECTS CLAIMS

NEW DELHI: India trashed Nepal's objection to conduct of upcoming Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through Lipulekh Pass and asserted that such "unilateral artificial enlargement" of territorial claims is "untenable". The pilgrimage to Mount Kailash and Mansarovar Lake in China's Tibet Autonomous Region holds religious significance to Hindus as well as Jains and Buddhists. The Yatra was resumed last year after a gap of nearly five years as part of efforts to normalise the relations between India and China.

its inseparable territories based on the Sugauli Treaty of 1816," the foreign ministry said in the statement posted on social media. "The Nepalese government has reiterated its clear stand to both India and China regarding the Kailash-Mansarovar tour to be organised via Nepalese territory, Lipulekh," it said.

Earlier, the Nepalese government had also requested

agreement, understanding, facts, maps and proofs in view of close and friendly relations existing between Nepal and India," the ministry said.

Nepal claims that Lipulekh and Kalapani are its territories, whereas India maintains that the territories belong to it.

Nepal's KP Oli-led government in May 2020 included the territories, including Kalapani and Lipulekh, in its official map. The move came after India inaugurated an 80-km road linking Dharchula to the Lipulekh Pass—a route to the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage site in Tibet. Nepal protested the road's inauguration as what it called India's "unilateral act".

The statement added that the Nepalese government has also informed China about it. "Nepal government is always committed to resolving the border issue through diplomatic channels based on historical

# Shakira fans turn Copacabana beach into dance floor

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rio de Janeiro, May 3: Colombian superstar Shakira delivered a free concert on Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro Saturday night, drawing an estimated two million people, according to the city's mayor, to one of the world's most iconic waterfronts.

The performance followed similar mega shows by Madonna in 2024 and Lady Gaga last year, both of which drew massive crowds who danced across the sprawling beach. For Shakira, the concert was part of her "Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran" ("Women No Longer Cry") world tour, named after her 2024 album.

Her set began around 11 pm local time—more than an hour behind schedule—triggering deafening cheers and applause as skywriting drones lit up the night, spelling "I love you Brazil" in Portuguese.

The megastar spoke fondly about the first time she came to Brazil, some three decades ago.

"I arrived here when I was 18 years old, dreaming about singing for you," Shakira told the crowd shortly after coming on stage. "And now look at this. Life is magical."

The much-loved pop star sang fan favourites such as "Hips Don't Lie", "La Tortura" and "La Bicicleta". She ended with "BZRP Music Sessions" which followed her separation from Spanish soccer player Gerard Pique.

Rio Mayor Eduardo Cavaliere said on X that two million people attended the performance. "The She-Wolf made history in Rio," he posted, referring to Shakira's 2009 hit.

When Shakira first performed in Brazil in the 1990s, she established an amazing connection with the Brazilian public, according to Felipe Maia, an ethnomusicologist pursuing a



doctoral degree on popular music and digital technologies at Paris Nanterre University.

That success in Brazil "has a lot to do with the fact that she comes from Colombia, a country whose culture has many similarities with Brazil," Maia said, adding that Saturday's performance "crowns the relationship she has had with Brazil for a very long time."

Erica Monteiro, a 38-year-old accountant, said she has been listening to Shakira since childhood.

"For me, she represents the strength of our Latino community," Monteiro said ahead of the concert. "We're treated as if we were inferior but in fact we have much more strength."

By Saturday morning, crowds had started piling onto

the beach to nab a good spot for the show. Street vendors sold sweetcorn and other Brazilian snacks, bottled water and caipirinhas, the popular Brazilian cocktail - but also toilet paper, deodorant and even bags of sand for concert goers to stand on to get a better view of the stage set up opposite Copacabana Palace, a historic luxury hotel.

The free concerts are part of City Hall's attempt to boost economic activity after Carnival and New Years' Eve festivities and before the monthlong Saint John's Day celebrations in June.

"For us, parties are serious business. Because parties generate jobs, income, development, and identity for the city," Rio Mayor Eduardo Cavaliere said Wednesday as he presented the city's operational plan for the event. "Our investment in this show will give us a financial return 40

times greater," he said. Shakira's performance could generate around 777 million Real (around USD 155 million), according to a study by City Hall and Riotur, the municipality's tourism company, thanks to the influx of tourists and cash spent in restaurants, hotels and shops.

Ahead of Shakira's performance, Airbnb said in an April 22 statement that it was seeing an increase in guests expected to travel from different parts of Brazil, Latin America and even European capitals such as Paris and London.

Wanderson Andrade, a 30-year old architect, said he flew in especially for the show from the city of Goiana in central Brazil on Saturday and will fly back the following day.

"I tried to get tickets to see her in Brazil last year but I didn't succeed," said Andrade, who's first-ever tattoo is a wolf in honour of Shakira.



**Banks in India are now entering a phase where they have to see IT spend from a 'cost of running' to a 'cost of surviving' spend. Frontier AI systems, especially the unreleased models like Anthropic's Claude Mythos, do not create a new category of risk; they collapse the timelines of every existing one**

SRINIVAS L | JOINT MD & JOINT CEO, 63SATS CYBERTECH LIMITED

## WEST ASIA CRISIS: LEATHER & FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY SEEKS DUTY EXEMPTIONS

The leather and footwear industry has sought duty exemptions on a number of critical inputs such as synthetic leather, metal accessories, machinery, threads, moulds, and certain chemicals as the ongoing West Asia crisis has pushed input costs up by up to 60 per cent, an official said. The industry has recently flagged the matter with the commerce and industry ministry



## of the day quote

Times are volatile. It's a difficult thing for anyone to predict what's going to happen even two months down the line

MANISH TIWARY | CHAIRMAN AND MD, NESTLE

Crude oil price trends will remain the primary external variable, with the ongoing US-Iran standoff and closure of the Strait of Hormuz likely to keep volatility elevated

AJIT MISHRA | SVP, RESEARCH, RELIGARE BROKING

We are seeing some shortage in some local players, particularly in India and South-east Asia, that can support our volumes, and it will make easier the passing of pricing in the future

FERNANDO FERNANDEZ | CEO, UNILEVER

## SHORT TAKES

### Top firms gain ₹2.2L-cr mcap

**New Delhi:** The combined market valuation of four of the top-10 most valued firms surged by ₹2.20 lakh crore in a holiday-shortened last week, with Reliance Industries emerging as the biggest gainer. Last week, the BSE benchmark Sensex climbed 249.29 points or 0.32 per cent. While Reliance Industries, Bharti Airtel, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Bajaj Finance were the gainers from the pack, HDFC Bank, State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, Larsen & Toubro, Hindustan Unilever and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) faced a combined erosion of ₹1.24 lakh crore from their valuation. Reliance Industries remained the most valued domestic firm followed by HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, TCS, Bajaj Finance, Larsen & Toubro, Hindustan Unilever and LIC.

### D-Mart's Q4 net profit rises 19.2%

**New Delhi:** Avenue Supermarts Ltd, which owns and operates the retail chain D-Mart, has reported a 19.17 per cent year-on-year rise in its consolidated net profit at ₹656.42 crore in the March quarter of FY26. The company had posted a net profit of ₹550.79 crore in the January-March quarter a year ago, according to a regulatory filing from Avenue Supermarts. Revenue from operations increased 18.9 per cent to ₹17,683.86 crore during the quarter under review. It was at ₹14,871.86 crore in the corresponding quarter last fiscal. Total expenses of Avenue Supermarts in the March quarter were up 18.5 per cent to ₹16,797.86 crore.

### Thyssenkrupp, Jindal call off steel sale talks

**Frankfurt:** Thyssenkrupp has paused talks with India's Jindal Steel International about a possible sale of the German industrial group's steel unit, it said Saturday, marking a setback for CEO Miguel Lopez's restructuring efforts. Lopez has made major progress in recent years with turning Thyssenkrupp into a holding company, most notably by separately listing its hydrogen and warship divisions, but long-standing plans to divest the volatile steel business have proved more difficult to achieve. While the companies did not provide a reason for why talks had ended, Lopez said in the statement that prospects for the steel business were "better than they have been in a long time", citing improved conditions across the continent.

## END-OF-LIFE VEHICLE RULE

# Auto industry faces ₹25K-cr hit on profits

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** The Indian automobile industry is staring at a hit of about ₹25,000 crore on bottom line for FY26 with the Environment Protection (End-of-Life Vehicles) Rules 2025 triggering an accounting standard clause that requires automakers to make budgetary provision for environmental compensation for vehicles sold in the past.

According to industry executives, an "innocuous looking" clause in the Environment Protection (End-of-Life Vehicle) Rules, 2025 notified by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, in January 2025 has spooked automakers after their auditors flagged the magnitude of its ramifications. The "Rule 4 (6)" of the January 2025 notification states, "In case the producer stops its operations, the producer must comply with its Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) in respect of vehicles already made available in the market till closure of operations..."

"This rule triggers accounting standard IND AS 37, 'Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets', which means automakers will have to make substantial financial provisions for the cost of EPR certificates for all vehicles sold over the past 20 years for private, and 15 years for commercial," an industry executive on the condition of anonymity said. Another industry official said, "Due to the rule, automobile companies will have to make provisions for EPR for vehicles sold in the past even if they have no intention of exiting the market, thereby blocking funds and affecting profits." It is understood that industry body Society of Indian Au-



### STELLAR START TO FY27: Carmakers began the new fiscal on a strong note, with an estimated 4.5 lakh units of passenger vehicles sold in April in the domestic market, up 27 per cent, on the back of record sales by firms, including Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai and Kia

tomobile Industry (SIAM) had also taken up the matter with the ministry, highlighting the financial impact on the bottom line of automakers due to the environmental compensation under IND AS 37. "Once the environmental compensation (EC) cost is notified by CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board), automobile manufacturers may be required to make substantial cumulative financial provisions under the accounting standards (IND AS 37). Preliminary estimates indicate a potential one-time industry impact of approximately ₹25,000 crore on a gross basis (around ₹9,000 crore) on discounted basis in FY2025-26," SIAM wrote in a letter to the ministry, seen by PTI. The auto industry body had sought the possibility of resolving the issue through amending Rule 4(6) before EC cost notification to clarify that cumulative budgetary provisioning may not

be required. However, the ministry in its amendment notification to the Environment Protection (End-of-Life Vehicle) Rules, 2025 March 27, 2026 did not alter the specific clause. "Once the provision is realised in the accounting books, it would significantly reduce the profits of that year for the entire auto industry," another industry executive said. As per industry estimates, the overall industry impact on four-wheeler makers due to the rule is about ₹14,623 crore and for two and three-wheeler makers the total impact is estimated to be ₹9,650 crore for FY26. This policy makes a huge dent on the auto industry's bottom line wiping off ₹25,000 crore from profits and it may affect the ability of many manufacturers to further make investments in new technologies and fuel their growth plans, said one of the executives.

## OPEC+ gives nod to oil output quota hike



*This will be the third consecutive monthly increase amid the geopolitical crisis and the departure of the UAE from the group*

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, May 3:** Amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, OPEC+ countries have agreed in principle to raise oil output targets in June.

Multiple reports say that seven OPEC+ countries have agreed to raise oil output targets by about 188,000 barrels per day next month. The output hike would rather be largely symbolic until Strait of Hormuz reopens.

With the UAE leaving, OPEC+ includes 21 members, including Iran. However, only the seven nations (and the UAE) have been involved in monthly production decisions. Iran, also an OPEC+ member, has seen its own exports dwindle amid the blockade.

Crude oil output from all OPEC+ members averaged 35.06 million bpd in March, down 7.70 million bpd from February.

Last week, the UAE announced it was leaving the OPEC and OPEC+ cartels in

what is seen as a major setback to the group of oil-exporting countries led by Saudi Arabia. The UAE said the decision reflected its "long-term strategic and economic vision and evolving energy profile".

The exit of the UAE is expected to weaken the oil cartel at a time when the Persian Gulf countries have taken a huge hit to their exports due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz by an embattled Iran. The UAE accounts for around 15 per cent of the OPEC oil exports.

Reports also surfaced that Kuwait exported zero barrels of crude oil in April, a situation not seen since the 1991 Iraqi occupation, due to blockade of the Strait of Hormuz.

Kuwait Petroleum Corp declared force majeure, impacting around 2 million barrels per day. The blockade has led to a complete disruption in Kuwaiti exports.

Meanwhile, oil prices dropped after reports said Iran proposed fresh talks with the United States using Pakistan as a mediator.

West Texas Intermediate fell more than five per cent and dropped below \$100 per barrel. It later recovered to \$101.7.

Brent crude also fell more than three per cent to \$106.98 before rising again to \$108.4.

## TDS, TCS to annual filings: Major tax deadlines lined up in May

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, May 3:** As the new financial year gains momentum, taxpayers must stay alert to a series of important compliance deadlines scheduled throughout May 2026, with experts stressing that timely action is essential to avoid penalties and additional charges.

The month begins with a crucial deadline May 7, when taxpayers are required to deposit tax deducted at source and tax collected at source for April.

Government offices making payments without a challan must credit the tax to the Central Government on the same day.

The date also marks the deadline for submitting declarations under Section 394(2) of the Income-tax Act, 2025, which allows buyers to procure goods without the collection of tax for transactions carried out in April.

The next key date falls May 15, which involves multiple compliance requirements under the Income-tax Act, 1961.

Towards the end of the month, May 30 brings further obligations for businesses and specified entities.

May 31 stands out as one of the most significant compliance dates, with several filings due. Trustees of approved superannuation funds must file returns for tax deducted from contributions.

## Bharat Masala launches new TVC featuring Bobby

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** Bharat Masala, one of Eastern India's leading spice and food brands, recently announced the launch of its new television commercial (TVC) featuring Bollywood actor Bobby Deol.

The launch event was attended by Managing Director, Susant Kumar Panda; Director, General Manager (Operations) Arun Kumar Nayak; and Sales Head, Pan India, Nainita Nilima.

"Quality and affordability has always been the primary goals of our company and we operate one of India's largest cryogenic grinding facilities," said Panda.

Speaking on the occasion, company representatives stated that the new campaign aims to connect with consumers across



generations while strengthening Bharat Masala's growing national presence. For a long time, legendary actor Dharmendra was associated with Bharat Masala as its brand ambassador. Now, his son, actor Bobby Deol, has endorsed the brand, further reinforcing the rich legacy and trust associated with Bharat Masala. The TVC featuring Bobby Deol

will be released across television, digital, and social media platforms as part of a larger nationwide brand campaign. Bharat Masala currently offers a wide range of products across spices, herbs, culinary powders, sauces, gourmet foods, tea, pasta, and snacks, serving consumers across multiple Indian states and international markets.

# GalaxEye's 'Drishti', world-first OptoSAR satellite, blasts off

### The launch marks a significant advancement in Earth observation technologies and reinforces India's rising capabilities in the global space sector

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** Bengaluru-based space start-up GalaxEye's Mission Drishti satellite was launched Friday aboard SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket from California.

Mission Drishti is the world's first OptoSAR satellite, integrating electro-optical (EO) and synthetic aperture radar (SAR) sensors into a single operational platform, according to the company.

While EO sensors capture high-resolution images during sunlight and clear skies, SAR sensors provide all-weather and all-time images, using radar pulses.

In a statement, Suyash Singh, founder and CEO of GalaxEye, said, "With the satellite (Mission Drishti) now successfully in orbit, our immediate focus is on completing its commission-

ing. As we move through this phase, we are already witnessing strong global interest in the differentiated datasets enabled by our OptoSAR payload."

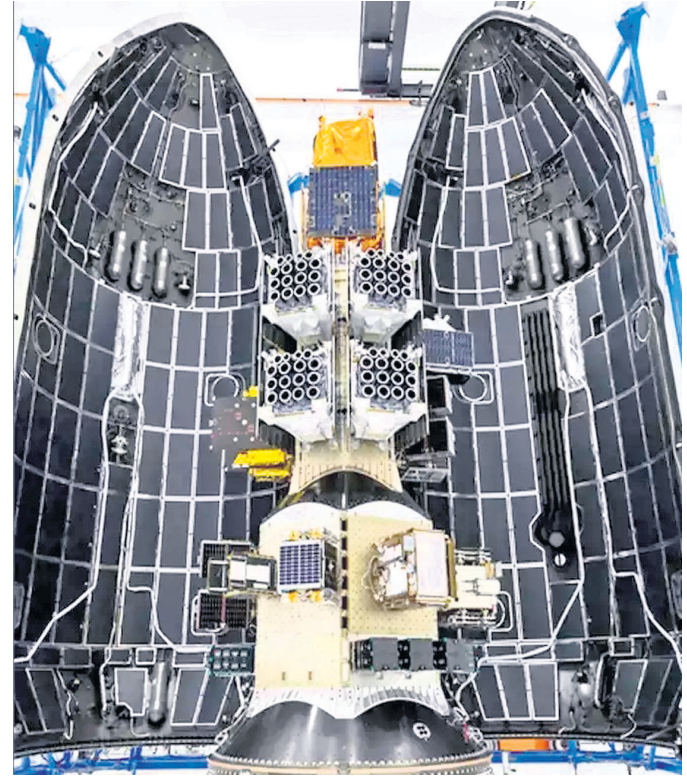
The satellite will help address long-standing limitations of conventional systems and enable more reliable and consistent data acquisition across diverse environmental conditions, the company said.

As a dual-use Earth observation satellite, the mission will support use cases across defence, agriculture, disaster management, maritime monitoring, and infrastructure planning.

The satellite is also expected to complement India's broader initiatives, including the 29 active Earth Observation satellites outlined in ISRO's recent annual report.

The launch came after five years of indigenous research and development, and exten-

## SATELLITE GAME CHANGER



■ Mission Drishti marks a first-of-its-kind step forward, opening a new era in which satellite imagery is more reliable, easy to use, and widely accessible

■ It is the first satellite globally to combine Electro-Optical (EO) and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) sensors into a single platform, enabling imaging in all weather conditions, both day and night

■ Weighing around 190 kilograms, Mission Drishti is the largest privately developed Earth observation satellite in India

sive environmental testing and performance validation of the Mission Drishti. In a statement, Lt Gen AK Bhatt (Retd), director general

## Air India board meeting May 7; cost-saving steps, CEO selection on agenda

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** As headwinds persist for the loss-making Air India, its board is expected to discuss cost-saving plans, selection of the next CEO, financials, and other issues during the meeting scheduled for May 7, according to sources.

Headwinds for the Air India Group, which is projected to have incurred more than ₹22,000 crore loss in the financial year ended March 2026, have multiplied with the West Asia conflict.

In the midst of an ambitious transformation plan, the Tata Group-owned airline is also scouting for a new CEO as incumbent and Singapore Airlines Group veteran Campbell Wilson will be stepping down later this year.



The sources said the board, chaired by Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran, will meet in Mumbai May 7.

Various cost-saving measures, CEO succession plans, financials for 2025-26 fiscal year as well as other issues are expected to be discussed during the meeting, the sources said.

Tata Sons and Air India did not offer comments.

As part of stringent measures to save costs amid spiralling jet fuel prices, Air India is mulling unbundling meals from tickets as well as lounge access for business class travellers.

With the unbundling plan, the airline will be able to offer a different fare category where passengers do not prefer to have meals. Similarly, the business class passengers will have the option to choose lounge access, the sources said. They also stressed that these measures are only being mullied and a final decision has not been taken on whether to go ahead with it.

Airspace restrictions in the wake of the West Asia conflict have forced the airline to take longer routes for many international destinations, which is also resulting in increased fuel burn.

The board is also expected to discuss the selection of the next CEO for the airline, in which Singapore Airlines has a 25.1 per cent stake.

Apart from Chandrasekaran and Wilson, Singapore Airlines CEO Goh Choon Phong and four others -- Sanjiv Mehta, Alice Vaidyan, P R Ramesh, and P B Balaji -- are members of the Air India board.

**Mission Drishti marks a major achievement in our space journey. The successful launch of the world's first OptoSAR satellite and the largest privately-built satellite in India is a testament to our youth's passion for innovation and nation-building**

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

What stands out is not just the technology, but its broader impact on how downstream applications will increasingly define value in the space economy, particularly in Earth observation, where timely, decision-grade insights are critical," he added. ISPA is the premier industry association of space and satellite companies in the country. GalaxEye aims to scale up Mission Drishti to a constellation of 10 satellites by 2030, developing a robust and sovereign Earth observation infrastructure for India.

ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS CHAMPIONSHIP

# Odisha gymnasts make mark

Strong showing from the state athletes at senior WAG, highlighted by medal finishes from Priyanshi and Tannu

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** The Junior & Senior Artistic Gymnastics National Championships 2026-27 concluded the Women's Artistic Gymnastics (WAG) competitions here Sunday with thrilling apparatus finals at the Gymnastics High Performance Centre in Kalinga Stadium, bringing an end to a highly competitive national championship.

Odisha had a notable presence in the senior women's artistic gymnastics events, with Priyanshi Bansal securing a podium finish on the balance beam and Tannu delivering a standout performance to clinch gold on the uneven bars.

Karishma, sister of Tannu, an elite gymnast training at Odisha AM/NS India Gymnastics High Performance Centre who represents Railways Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) won gold in floor exercise.

In the senior women's artistic gymnastics competition, Haryana's Niranjana Punia claimed the balance beam title, with Maharashtra's Anoushka Patil finishing second and Priyanshi taking third place.



On the floor exercise, Karishma of RSPB delivered a winning routine, ahead of West Bengal's Ashmi Debnath and Maharashtra's Eshita Rewale, who also went on to secure top honours in the vault, where she edged out RSPB's Piyasa Kundu, while West Bengal's Soumili Karar completed the podium.

On the uneven bars, Tannu executed a sharp performance to clinch gold, followed by Gujarat's Diya Thakore and Kerala's Amani Dilshad.

In the junior women's section, West Bengal's Anuska Howlader emerged strongest on the balance beam, with Tripura's Shreyanshi Roy taking silver and another West Bengal gymnast, Shreya Ghosh, finishing third.

The floor exercise saw Sreeparna Debnath of Tri-

pura rise to the top, ahead of her state-mate Shreyanshi Roy and Maharashtra's Dhanishtha Ugalmugle. On vault, Maharashtra's Vaishnavi Vyas powered to first place, while Shreyanshi Roy added another podium finish in second, with West Bengal's Tora Sani in third. On the uneven bars, West Bengal's Paromita Bera secured the top step, followed by Uttar Pradesh's Abhidha Singh Dev and Maharashtra's Sakshi Dalvi.

The final day was graced by distinguished dignitaries including Suryabanshi Suraj, Minister, Sports & Youth Services; Sambit Patra, Member of Parliament from Puri Lok Sabha; Dipa Karmakar, Padma Shri awardee and Olympian; Bishweshwar Nandi, Dronacharya Awardee; Yeddula Vijay,

Director-Sports, Department of Sports & Youth Services, Odisha; Ashok Sahoo; Dhiren Kumar Panda; Vikas Yadvendu, Head CSR at AM/NS India; and Sonali Subhadarshini, Officer on Special Duty, Department of Sports & Youth Services, Odisha.

With the conclusion of the Women's Artistic Gymnastics events, the Junior & Senior Artistic Gymnastics National Championships 2026-27 successfully came to a close, celebrating the incredible talent, dedication, and rising standards of gymnastics across India.

The championship reaffirmed Odisha's position as a premier destination for hosting world-class sporting events and nurturing the next generation of Indian gymnasts.

# BARANICA DOES IT AGAIN

Back at her lucky venue, Baranica Elangovan betters her own mark, clearing 4.23m to set a fresh national record

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, May 3:** Bhubaneswar Indoor Stadium has proved a happy hunting ground for Tamil Nadu's pole vaulter Baranica Elangovan. Within a span of nearly five weeks, the 29 years old improved the national record twice at the same venue.

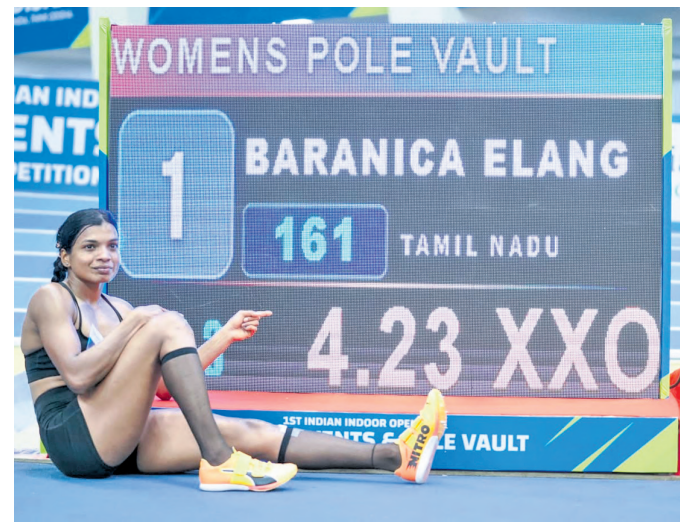
Baranica cleared 4.23m milestone Sunday, to better her own national record of 4.22m set at the inaugural edition of National Indoor Athletics Championships held in the last week of March here. She crossed 4.23m on her third attempt while Nikitika of Madhya Pradesh and Blessy Kunjumon of Kerala both cleared 3.90m to share second place.

"It was another good day for me," says Baranica of setting a new benchmark in women's pole vault. Baranica has shifted from Tamil Nadu to Odisha and



Odisha's Jashbir Nayak secures bronze medal in the Men's Heptathlon event

## FORTY DAYS, TWO PEAKS



practices at Bhubaneswar. Odisha athletes made a strong impact at the championships with Purnima Hembram finishing as the winner of women's pentathlon. She secured 3835 points while Jashbir Nayak bagged bronze in the men's heptathlon.

In the men's heptathlon, Thowfeeq N of NCOE Trivan-

drum topped the field with 5350 points, followed by Usaid Khan of Army (5288 points) and Jashbir (5250 points). The men's U20 heptathlon title went to Kirthik Vasana S of Tamil Nadu with 4609 points, ahead of Jinoy Jayan of NCOE Trivandrum (4518 points) and Aryan Parakash of Madhya Pradesh (4509 points).

In the women's U20 pentathlon, Jaskiran Kaur of Uttarakhand secured top honours with 3272 points, followed by Priya of Haryana (3133 points) and Alfaz Kaur Grewal of Punjab (3066 points). The women's pentathlon saw Purnima winning the gold with 3835 points, followed by Isha Chandra Prakash of Uttarakhand, securing second place with 3671 points while, Bidisha Kundu of West Bengal finished third with 3600 points.



Odisha's Purnima Hembram clinches gold medal in the Women's Pentathlon event

## INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

# KKR snap SRH winning streak

Raghuvanshi, spinners fire KKR to seven-wicket win over SRH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, May 3:** A resurgent Varun Chakravarty and milestone man Sunil Narine were instrumental in Kolkata Knight Riders' comprehensive seven-wicket victory that snapped Sunriser Hyderabad's five-match winning streak in the Indian Premier League, here Sunday.

After Chakravarty (3/36) and Narine (2/31) played major roles in bowling out SRH for 165 in 19 overs, KKR chased down the target with 10 balls to spare to notch their third win on the trot.

This was leg-spinner Chakravarty's fourth successive match in which he took at least two wickets while veteran off-spinner Narine joined an exclusive three-member 200-wicket club in the IPL.

Playing his 197th match, Narine, who also opened KKR's bowling, joined pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar (215 from 199 matches) and spinner Yuzvendra Chahal (228 from 182 matches) in the elite group.

Chasing a small target, KKR lost Impact Sub Finn Allen in the fourth over for a quick-fire 39 off 13 balls when the team score was 49 but captain Ajinkya Rahane (43 off 36 balls) and Angkrish Raghuvanshi (59 off 47 balls) held the innings together with a second wicket stand of 84 runs from 11 overs.

Rahane, who scored just one half century in previous eighth matches at the top of the order, hit four boundaries and a six, while Raghuvanshi struck five boundaries and two sixes.

Rinku Singh struck the winning runs -- a four -- as he remained not out on 22 off 11 balls.

Earlier, opting to bat, SRH were in their usual menacing batting form, reaching 77 for 1 after powerplay and 107 for 2 at the halfway mark, courtesy Travis Head's (61 off 28 balls) second consecutive half century.

But they collapsed spec-



**BRIEF SCORES**  
**Sunrisers Hyderabad:** 165 all out in 19 overs (Travis Head 61, Ishan Kishan 42; Varun Chakravarty 3/36, Sunil Narine 2/31) lost to **Kolkata Knight Riders:** 169/3 in 18.2 overs (Angkrish Raghuvanshi 59, Ajinkya Rahane 43) by seven wickets

TEAMS	P	W	L	NRR	PTS
PBKS	9	6	2	0.855	13
RCB	9	6	3	1.420	12
SRH	10	6	4	0.644	12
RR	10	6	4	0.510	12
GT	10	6	4	-0.147	12
CSK	9	4	5	0.005	8
DC	9	4	5	-0.895	8
KKR	9	3	5	-0.539	7
MI	9	2	7	-0.803	4
LSG	8	2	6	-1.106	4

tacularly in the second half of their innings, losing nine wickets in 10 overs for the addition of 60 runs. This was the first time SRH were bowled out in the IPL 2026.

## TITANS CRASH KINGS' PARTY

**Ahmedabad:** Sai Sudharsan's cool-headed 57 alongside the storm kicked up by pacers Mohammed Siraj, Jason Holder and Kagiso Rabada carried Gujarat Titans to a last over four-wicket victory over Punjab Kings in their IPL match here Sunday.

On a slightly slow pitch, the Titans needed a level-headed chase of 164, and Sudharsan did precisely during his 41-ball knock.

A similar innings from debutant Suryansh Shedje's energetic 57 had helped PBKS to post 163 for nine despite Siraj (228) and Holder (424) reducing them to 47 for five in 8.4 overs.

But it was Sudharsan's turn to stand on the winners' podium in the battle of half-centurions on the night. The result meant that GT stayed at five in the table but their points tally swelled to 12, while PBKS also maintained their top spot with 13 points for now.

After skipper Shubman Gill fell early to Arshdeep Singh, Sudharsan took control of the chase and added 53 runs for the second wicket with Jos Buttler.

Buttler (25) was the more dominant partner, dismissing Marco Jansen and Xavier Bartlett for a six each, the second one being an audacious scoop over the wicketkeeper.

# Shuttlers settle for bronze

India go down 0-3 to France in the Thomas Cup semifinal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Horsens (Denmark), May 3:** India's hopes of reclaiming the title ended in disappointment as they went down 0-3 to France in the semifinals of the Thomas Cup Finals, settling for a bronze medal here Saturday.

The absence of Lakshya Sen proved costly as HS Prannoy

joined Ayush Shetty and Kidambi Srikanth in defeat, losing 19-21, 16-21 to world No 17 Toma Junior Popov, as India failed to win a single game in a completely one-sided contest.

India, champions in 2022, had already assured themselves of a medal by reaching the semifinals, adding to their bronze finishes in 1952, 1955 and 1979.

With the win, France became only the second European nation to reach the final after Denmark's maiden title in 2016.

Ayush, drafted into the opening singles with Lakshya nursing a swollen right elbow, went down 11-21, 9-21 in 39 minutes to world No 4 Christo Popov.

All eyes were on Srikanth to restore parity, but the former world No 1 went down fighting 16-21, 18-21 to world No 10 Alex Lanier in the second singles.

The onus was then on Prannoy to keep India alive, and though the 2023 World Championships bronze medallist put up a better fight, he could not get past world No 17 Popov.



# Olympian Vinesh flags fear of bias

WFI assures safety, rules out venue change

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, May 3:** Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president Sanjay Singh Sunday asserted that the venue for the National Open Ranking Tournament in Gonda will not be changed and offered a "personal guarantee" for Vinesh Phogat's safety after the decorated wrestler warned that the government would be responsible for any untoward incident and raised concerns over possible biased officiating in her comeback event.

In a video message ahead of her comeback after nearly 18 months, Phogat alleged that the competition, slated to be held at a venue linked to former WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, could see results influenced by individuals close to him.

"If Vinesh is worried about her safety, let me assure her

that I am taking personal guarantee of that. Also, we have UWW-approved referees who officiate and all trial bouts are recorded, so there is no chance of any bias," Sanjay Singh told PTI.

"And let me add that this is an Open tournament which is not mandatory. The choice is hers to compete. We are not going to change the venue," Singh said.

The National Open Ranking tournament is scheduled to be held from May 10-12. The tournament will open with the men's freestyle trials and will be followed by Greco Roman (May 11) and women's events (May 12).

Vinesh, who has entered the competition in 57kg weight class, earlier during the day voiced her concerns.

"If any untoward incident happens to me, my team or supporters during the competition, the Indian government will be responsible," Vinesh said and urged the media and the sporting community to be present at the venue to ensure transparency.

"The tournament is being organised at a place where his



(Brij Bhushan) influence is strong. Who will officiate which bout, how many points will be awarded, who will sit as mat chairman, everything can be controlled by him and his people," she further added.

According to sources, about 1400 wrestlers have registered for the tournament.

"Do you think it is fair to change the venue and disturb the whole schedule when about

1400 wrestlers have entered the tournament and made their travel and stay arrangements. Why WFI should do it and put participating wrestlers to inconvenience," said a WFI official.

The 31-year-old Vinesh, who quit the sport after her Paris Games disqualification and resumed training in recent months, said she wants to return to the mat "honestly" and win medals for the country again, but expressed doubts over a level playing field.

It may be mentioned that Vinesh is now a politician, having won the Haryana state assembly elections from Julana constituency on a Congress ticket in October 2024.

Vinesh also voiced concern over the mental pressure of competing in an environment she described as hostile, particularly given her role as one of the complainants in an ongoing sexual harassment case against Singh.

Invoking the Supreme Court's guidelines on protecting the identity and dignity of victims, Phogat said she felt compelled to speak publicly due to the circumstances.