

Tamannah's revelation

Actor Tamannah Bhatia shares why she doesn't get typecast despite doing special appearances in several movies

LEISURE | P2

Golden Dome

Trump unveils \$175bn Golden Dome defence plan, a multilayered system that would place US weapons in space for the first time

INTERNATIONAL | P10

India-US trade talks

India and the US are likely to agree on an interim trade pact before July 8 with India seeking full exemption from reciprocal tariff

BUSINESS | P11

Kaur turns professional

Former World championship bronze medallist Simranjit Kaur becomes the latest Indian boxer to turn professional

SPORTS | P12

Cash row: SC nixes plea seeking FIR

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Wednesday refused to hear a plea seeking an FIR against high court judge Yashwant Varma in connection with the discovery of cash from this official residence in the capital. A bench comprising Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan said a press release issued by the top court May 8 records that the Chief Justice of India forwarded the report of the in-house enquiry committee along with the judge's response to President and Prime Minister of India.

Top court rap, relief for Mahmudabad

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Wednesday granted interim bail to Ashoka University professor Ali Khan Mahmudabad, arrested for his contentious social media posts on Operation Sindoor, but refused to stay the investigation against him. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotisar Singh directed the Haryana director general of police to constitute a three-member special investigation team (SIT) headed by an inspector general (IG) rank officer also including a superintendent (SP) rank woman officer within 24 hours to investigate the case. The top court said the interim bail was granted to the petitioner to facilitate further investigation and directed Mahmudabad to surrender his passport.

12-yr-old raped by 5 minors in school

Moradabad (UP): A 12-year-old girl was allegedly raped inside a school building here by five minor boys, who have all been detained by the police, an official said Wednesday. Both the survivor and the perpetrators belonged to a Dalit community and lived in the same locality in Moradabad district, the official said. The accused -- aged between 12 and 15 years and students of Classes VII to IX -- lured the girl to the school building near her house, drugged her with an intoxicant in a cold drink, and committed the crime. After the assault, the accused allegedly recorded her video and threatened to upload it on social media if she spoke out, the official said.



PICTURE-PERFECT: Robert Pattinson arranges the dress of Jennifer Lawrence on the red carpet during arrivals for the screening of the film 'Die, My Love' at the 78th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, France

Top leader Basavaraju, 26 more Maoists killed

Narayanpur (Chhattisgarh), May 21: Topmost leader and the backbone of the Naxal movement, Nambala Keshav Rao alias Basavaraju, and 26 other dreaded Maoists were killed by security forces in a fierce encounter in the dense forests of Chhattisgarh Wednesday.

Hailing the operation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was proud of the security forces for the "remarkable success", while Union Home Minister Amit Shah termed it a "landmark achievement" in the battle to eliminate Naxalism.

Police said the gunfight took place in dense forests of Abhujmad on the tri-junction of Narayanpur-Bijapur-Dantewada districts.

The operation was launched two days back following intelligence inputs about the presence of Central Committee and Politburo members of the CPI (Maoists) as well as senior Maad Division cadres and PL-GA (Peoples' Liberation Guerrilla Army) members.

So far, bodies of 27 Naxalites and a large number of weapons have been recovered from the spot. A member of the District Reserve Guard (DRG), a unit of Chhattisgarh Police, was also killed in the action while some others sustained injuries, police said.

The Union Home Minister



said this was for the first time in three decades of India's battle against Naxalism that a general secretary-ranked leader has been neutralised by the security forces.

Applauding the "brave security forces and agencies for this major breakthrough", the Home Minister said he was glad to share that after the completion of Operation Black Forest, 54 Naxalites have been arrested and 84 others have surrendered in Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Maharashtra. "The Modi government is resolved to eliminate Naxalism before the 31st of March 2026," he said.

Basavaraju was in his early 70s, officials said. Hailing from undivided Andhra Pradesh, Basavaraju was the brain behind several major attacks on security forces in Chhattisgarh. He was associated with the banned movement since the 1970s and elevated to the top post in CPI (Maoist) seven years ago.

Students' union polls after 7 yrs

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The state government is planning to hold elections to students' unions in colleges and universities this year, after a gap of seven years.

Speaking to reporters here, Higher Education Minister Suryabanshi Suraj said, "Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi had earlier promised that students' union elections would be held this year."

Efforts are being made to commence the academic session for undergraduate and postgraduate courses by July 15 so that the first semester is completed on time before Dussehra holidays, and students' studies are not hampered during the elections, he said.

The previous BJD government had stopped holding college elections since 2018 due to various reasons, including violence on campuses and the Covid-19 pandemic. The BJP, in its 2024 election manifesto, had promised to resume the students' elections after coming to power.

CHSE DECLARES PLUS II RESULTS

Girls outperform boys

83% students declared successful

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Girls once again performed better than boys in the Class XII (Plus II) board examinations in Odisha, the results of which were declared Wednesday.

About 82.77 per cent of students cleared the examinations conducted by the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond said.

About 3.93 lakh students had filled the forms for the Annual Higher Secondary Examination 2025, and out of them, 3.82 lakh appeared, he said.

Out of the 3.16 lakh students who passed the examinations,



Happiness knew no bounds for students and teachers at Saraswati Sishu Vidya Mandir in Tulasipur area of Cuttack after CHSE declared Plus II results, Wednesday

PASS PERCENTAGE	
ARTS	80.51
SCIENCE	87.49
COMMERCE	83.2
VOCATIONAL STUDIES	60.57

1.74 lakh are girls and 1.42 lakh are boys, he said. The pass percentage of boys is 77.88 and that of the girls is 87.24, he added.

Gond said 1,01,914 students passed in the first division, 67,815 students secured second division, and 1,43,339 students got third division.

The pass percentage in Arts stream is 80.51, while in Science and Commerce it is 87.49, and 83.2, respectively. In vocational studies, 60.57 per cent students have passed the examination, he said.

Congratulating the successful students, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi wished

for their bright future.

For the students who did not get the desired results, he said, "We will have to give many more exams in the coming days. Success in the exams of life is the real success. Make efforts with confidence. Make your father, mother and the country proud."

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

You're such a knowledgeable man. Do you really think this is the right time to speak or write the truth -- publicly?

Nilgais take over Asia's largest auto-test track

Indore, May 21: Asia's largest auto-testing facility, the National Automotive Test Tracks (NATRAX) at Pithampur near here, has found itself sharing space with an unexpected herd -- over a hundred nilgais. As sleek test vehicles zip past at speeds of 300 km per hour, these gentle antelope have turned the sprawling campus into an unintended wildlife refuge.

With safety concerns mounting, authorities have intensified their efforts to rescue the nilgais. NATRAX is known as Asia's largest auto-testing facility, but officials fear that there could be accidents due to the presence of animals on its 3,000 acre campus.

Yohan Katara, superinten-

dent of Ralamandal sanctuary in Indore, said Wednesday that in the last five days they have released about 50 nilgais, rescued from the campus, in the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary, a habitat of leopards.

NATRAX which belongs to the Union Ministry of Heavy Industries is used to test the strength and performance of automobiles and automobile components before they are launched in the market.

The Gandhi Sagar sanctuary, incidentally, is the new home of cheetahs.

"Prabhas' and 'Pavak', two cheetahs from Kuno national park, were released into Gandhi Sagar sanctuary April 20.

The sanctuary is spread over Neemuch and Mandsaur districts, around 300 km away



from NATRAX.

"It is estimated that there are another 90 nilgais on NATRAX campus. Our campaign to rescue them and release them in their natural habitat will continue," Katara said.

NATRAX was formally inaugurated January 28, 2018, but nilgais had made their home before a fence was put up around its grounds.

With the availability of food and water, their number kept increasing year after year, Katara said.

Manish Jaiswal, director of NATRAX, said, "No accident has happened due to a nilgai on our campus so far, but the risk is clearly there."

"Vehicles of national and international brands are often driven here at speeds of 200-300 km per hour during testing. We are lucky that no vehicle has collided with a nilgai so far," he added.

In the last two years, more than 80 nilgais were safely rescued and shifted to their natural habitats, the official said.

Banu Mushtaq wins Int'l Booker for 'Heart Lamp'

London/Bangalore, May 21: Kannada writer, lawyer, and activist Banu Mushtaq and translator Deepa Bhashti Wednesday scripted history by winning the International Booker Prize for 'Heart Lamp', the first Kannada title and the first-ever collection of short stories to be awarded the GBP 50,000 prize.

"This moment feels like a thousand fireflies lighting up a single sky - brief, brilliant, and utterly collective," said Mushtaq, standing next to Bhashti, after receiving the prestigious literary award at London's Tate Modern.

Mushtaq's collection of 12 short stories, translated from the Kannada 'Hridaya Deepa' into English by Bhashti, chronicles the everyday lives of women in patriarchal communities in southern India -- the reproductive rights that are often exploited, the dynamics of lives where the power reins are held by men and the oppression of an orthodox society that seldom tolerates women's autonomy.

In a moving acceptance speech, Mushtaq said that it is an affirmation, "We as individuals and as a global community can thrive when we embrace diversity, celebrate our differences and uplift one another."

AFGHAN JOINS CHINA, PAK TO EXPAND CPEC

Beijing/Islamabad, May 21: The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is set to be expanded to Afghanistan with the foreign ministers of the three countries agreeing on it as part of broader efforts to boost "trilateral" cooperation.

The announcement on expansion of CPEC was made following a meeting among Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar and Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in Beijing, according to a Pakistani readout.

India has been severely critical of the CPEC as it passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. New Delhi is also opposed to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as the project includes the CPEC.

The trilateral meeting took place days after the interim Taliban government recently warmed up to India. The meeting between the foreign ministers of the three countries was held also in the backdrop of Islamabad's persistent criticism of the interim Taliban government for failing to crackdown on militant groups operating from Afghan soil waging a war against Pakistan.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning in her media briefing in Beijing termed as "unofficial" the meeting between Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, and Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Amir Khan Muttaqi.

The three countries for a long time had a trilateral foreign ministers' mechanism which has not been convened for some time amid growing differences between Islamabad and Kabul over forcible repatriation of thousands of Afghan refugees by Pakistan. The trilateral meeting was held on the concluding day of Dar's three day visit to Beijing, the first high-level interaction after India launched Operation Sindoor.

leisure



CAREY MULLIGAN TO JOIN NARNIA CAST

Hollywood actor Carey Mulligan, best known for *An Education* and *The Great Gatsby*, is in negotiations to join the star cast of Netflix's *Narnia* film. According to the entertainment news outlet *The Hollywood Reporter*, Mulligan will star alongside Daniel Craig, Meryl Streep and Emma Mackey in the film

BALDONI'S MARRIAGE UNDER STRAIN AMID LEGAL DRAMA

Actor and filmmaker Justin Baldoni is reportedly facing turbulence in his personal life, as he deals with the legal battle mounted against him by his *It Ends With Us* co-star, Blake Lively. *PEOPLE Magazine* reported that Baldoni and his wife, Emily, are going through a tough time



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
Today, you may look around and feel grateful for the wonderful blessings bestowed on you — your family, home, job, friends. This may prompt you to organise a little thanksgiving kind of get-together with your family and friends. Ganesha gives a thumbs up.

TAURUS
Your moral well-being and physical health will take precedence over all other things today, predicts Ganesha. If you have any business decisions pending, you might seal the deal over lunch this afternoon. It is an auspicious day to propose for marriage, says Ganesha.

GEMINI
You are likely to take your time and read a situation carefully before you take any important decisions, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you may go on a pleasure trip to recharge your batteries.

CANCER
As a leader, you may deal with others with an iron hand masked under a velvet glove. You may come across as lenient and considerate on the face of it, but you will not spare anyone who crosses you. This may change as the day passes, but your colleagues and subordinates will be wary of you for the remainder of the day.

LEO
Ganesha foresees today as a day full of duplicities, as you foster amazing feelings and astonishing fears. It's like you don't know whether to be happy or scared. At work, you may do well to anticipate a sudden turn of events as hectic business activities take their toll on you. Towards evening, you may want to enhance your outlook and be part of a few social dos, suggests Ganesha.

VIRGO
Today, you shall be in a receptive frame of mind, open to all ideas; yet the stubborn will rule when decision-making matters, predicts Ganesha. Organise and sort out things at work today. But in the evening, enjoy a fine meal and then, may be, summon the courage to pop the question, says Ganesha.

LIBRA
Today, you touch a new high when it comes to self-reliance. The pledges and promises you make may tend to perplex people at your workplace. Afternoon may see you taking on other people's responsibilities as well. Your vigour reaches its highest point in the evening, expects Ganesha.

SCORPIO
The flamboyance with which you do your work leaves people awestruck. At work, your dedication will win rich favour from your bosses. After dusk, let your hair down and have a great time, says Ganesha. Unwind with music or meditation in the night, suggests Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Gold finger might just be your nick name today. Whatever you take up to do will yield results much more than expected. You would not shy away from showering praise on others for their contribution. Beloved ones will be the cyno sure of your attention.

CAPRICORN
All the factors responsible for a successful life, be it positive attitude, perseverance, time management or strong and supportive well-wishers, are favouring you. But, do not take it very easy, advises Ganesha. You understand the importance and seriousness of the situations, and try to take your colleagues along with you to accomplish your goals. Spending more time with family will make you realise that how important you are for your loved ones.

AQUARIUS
Your friends will make your day, especially those in high places will prove invaluable. With their assistance, you may even start a new venture without a hitch. If a professional, you will meet with wonderful success. If a student, have no worries about missing a few classes, says Ganesha. Your classmates will bail you out!

PISCES
Today, you are likely to sign new agreements and ink new contracts, which will later prove to be milestones in your path to progress. Your financial position is also likely to grow stronger, and your savings ought to become more robust, planning as you are for future exigencies, says Ganesha.

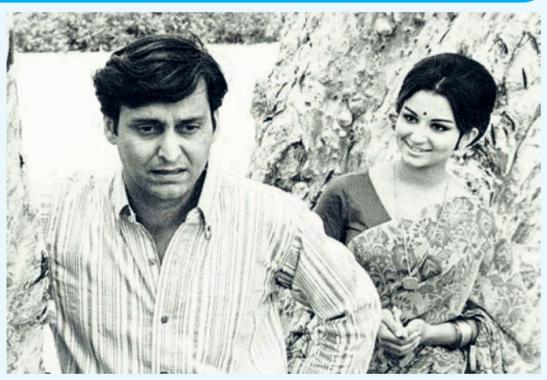
Tamannaah: Happy not being typecast

Mumbai: Actor Tamannaah Bhatia says whether it is her special songs in movies, her performance in films or on OTT, as an entertainer, her aim is to reach out to her audience. The actor, who has featured in special appearance in a song in some of the recent films like Kannada blockbuster *KGF: Chapter 1* starring Yash, Rajnikanth-led *Jailer*, *Stree 2*, John Abraham's *Vedaa* and Ajay Devgn's *Raid 2*, said song is "one of the many things" she does. "It happens with a lot of people, they do get typecast. But it hasn't happened with me because I do long format, features, and I work in different languages, and industries. I work on stage, I make reels. I'm an entertainer. I'm only interested in reaching people," Bhatia told this news agency. "I don't consider any platform small or big. My job is to entertain people in some way, and whenever I get that opportunity, I give it my all with respect and interest, I give it my all. I hope people like it." "Everything leads to something. It's a misnomer that if you do something, you become typecast. I've done a lot of songs, if you count how many songs I've done, you will be stunned. But every song has either given me a connection with the people or taught me a little dance," she added.



Standing ovation for Ray's Aranyer Din Ratri at Cannes

New Delhi: The 4K restored version of Satyajit Ray's classic *Aranyer Din Ratri* received a standing ovation at the 2025 Cannes Film Festival, where it was screened under the Cannes Classics section. Veteran actors Sharmila Tagore and Simi Garewal, who were part of the ensemble cast of the 1970 Bengali film, attended the showcase Monday evening. Saba Pataudi, jewellery designer and Tagore's daughter, shared a video on her Instagram page Wednesday showing the audience giving a standing ovation



after the film's screening. "A little more.... of moments. Standing ovation. A beautiful celebration of life. Team that made it all possible. Congratulations! @filmheritagefoundation!" she captioned the post. Pataudi also shared pictures of her with her mother, Garewal, as well as film's gala presenter and Hollywood filmmaker Wes Anderson, a long-time admirer of Ray who spearheaded its six-year restoration. The restored version of *Aranyer Din Ratri* is presented and restored by Martin Scorsese's The Film Foundation through its World Cinema Project initiative at L'Imagine Ritrovata in collaboration with Shivendra Singh Dungarpur's Film Heritage Foundation, Janus Films, and the Criterion Collection. Also part of the screening were producer Purnima Dutta and Margaret Bodde, executive director of The Film Foundation. The film, titled *Days and Nights in the Forest* in English, explores themes of alienation, class, and modernity. It follows the story of four city-bred men who escape to the forests of Palamau (now in Jharkhand) for a carefree holiday, only to undergo a journey of self-discovery.

Karishma on career pause



Mumbai: Karishma Tanna's last major outing was the critically acclaimed crime series *Scoop*, where she portrayed a determined crime journalist. As the show recently marked its two-year anniversary, many are wondering why the talented actress has been away from the screen, barring a cameo in *Call Me Bae*. Karishma admits she doesn't have a clear answer. "*Scoop* was a milestone — a platform with an acting-driven script. It challenged me. But it's not like I've suddenly become too choosy. I'm simply waiting for the kind of work that feels right," she says. Despite receiving offers, Karishma hasn't felt compelled to say yes. "I expected more character-driven roles after proving what I could do," she shares. The 41-year-old confesses she's been tempted to accept average projects just to stay visible. "There's always that fear — 'out of sight, out of mind' — and it's very real for actors," she adds. Though she's eager to return to set, the right script hasn't come her way yet. "The wait is frustrating. I miss holding a script, facing the camera, being in that creative space," she says. "But after *Scoop*, you want something equally powerful. Right now, I'm in a very confusing phase."

Unanswered questions of Parveen Babi's life

Mumbai: In 1983, at the peak of her stardom, Parveen Babi vanished from public life without a trace. No farewell note, no press release—just silence. One of the most glamorous, intelligent, and sought-after actresses of her era, she left behind fame, fortune, and countless questions. Whispers circulated: Was it heartbreak? Disillusionment with the film industry? Or was something deeper

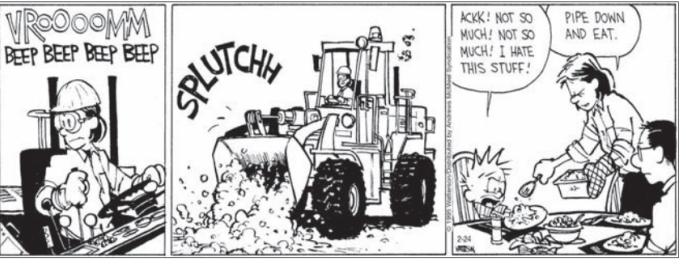
unraveling beneath her poised exterior? Years later, Parveen resurfaced—not on the silver screen, but in seclusion. Her reappearance sparked a media storm as reports of erratic behavior and startling allegations emerged. Eventually, it came to light that she had been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, a condition poorly understood and heavily stigmatised at the time. The diagnosis offered some explanation but did little to shield her from the public's harsh gaze. Her later years were marked by isolation in her Juhu apartment, far removed from the glamour of her earlier life. Once surrounded by fans and flashbulbs, she now lived alone, im-

mersed in spiritual texts and far from the limelight. Reports suggest she rarely stepped out and had severed ties with nearly everyone from her past. In 2002, she shocked the nation by filing a Supreme Court petition accusing top Bollywood and Hollywood figures, including Amitabh Bachchan, of plotting to kill her—an act that spotlighted her deteriorating mental health and blurred the lines between paranoia and reality. January 22, 2005, Parveen Babi was found dead in her apartment, days after her passing. There were no grand farewells—just silence. Her body was discovered only after neighbors noticed her newspapers piling up. She died as she had lived her final years: alone, misunderstood, and enveloped in mystery. Yet in death, Parveen became immortal—a tragic symbol of brilliance, beauty, and the hidden battles of the mind.

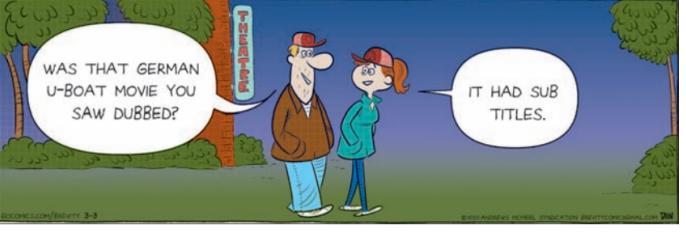
PEANUTS



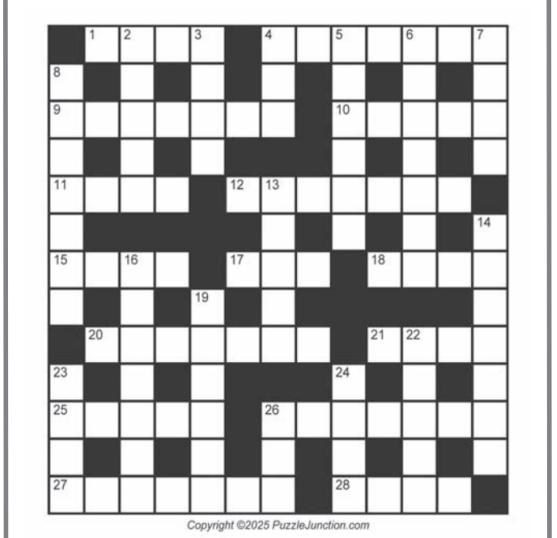
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN POST CROSSWORD



- Copyright ©2025 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 Charity
 - 4 Smallest planet
 - 9 Small So.
 - 10 American woodland bird
 - 11 Tightwad
 - 12 German pastry
 - 15 Rubberneck
 - 17 "The Lord of the Rings" figure
 - 18 Nile snakes
 - 20 Spanish artist (1881-1973)
 - 21 Auctioneer's shout
 - 25 Role player
 - 26 Canadian province
 - 27 Inconsistent
 - 28 Leisure
 - 5 Hearsay
 - 6 Topcoats
 - 7 Kitten's plaything
 - 8 Peculiar
 - 13 Knight fights
 - 14 Kind of salesman (4-3)
 - 16 Computer peripheral
 - 19 Macaw
 - 22 Cruel sorts
 - 23 Kismet
 - 24 Slender reed
 - 26 Rainbow shape
- Down**
- 2 "Let's do ___"
 - 3 Heroic tale
 - 4 Disfigure

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.

				9	6			
			8			4		
6	9	3						
			5					
	8		2				3	
4			3					1
	7		5			3	4	9
				3	9	1		
	5	1				2		

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

S	Q	U	A	B	C	U	E	B	A	L	L
E	T	T	I	V	L	A					
P	R	O	D	D	E	D	E	X	I	S	T
A	P	E	R	E	R	B	E				
R	E	I	G	N	T	I	G	R	I	S	
A	A	E	E	R	I	G					
T	I	N	C	U	R	S	E	P	E	A	
E	E	G	E	I	Z						
T	I	S	S	E	N	I	T	R	E		
S	D	S	N	F	I	L					
O	P	E	R	A	T	O	E	N	A	I	L
F	A	R	R	L	E						
A	S	S	A	I	E	D	A	T	L	A	S

SUDOKU

9	8	7	3	4	6	2	5	1
6	5	1	9	2	7	8	3	4
2	3	4	5	1	8	6	9	7
5	4	6	8	3	1	9	7	2
1	9	3	2	7	4	5	6	8
8	7	2	6	9	5	4	1	3
3	6	8	7	5	2	1	4	9
7	1	5	4	8	9	3	2	6
4	2	9	1	6	3	7	8	5

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Children take part in a drawing competition organised by Odisha Citizen Forum on the occasion of former PM Rajiv Gandhi's death anniversary, at Buddha Mandir in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday



downtown

PM JANMAN YOJANA

Visit remote areas to assess situation: CM to secretaries



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday directed department secretaries to visit remote areas in 14 districts of the state where PM Janman Yojana is being implemented and assess the situation there.

The CM gave the directive while reviewing the progress of implementation of PM Janman Yojana in Odisha, at Lok Seva Bhawan here.

"Visit every remote area in 14 districts where the scheme is being implemented and assess

has been set to construct 45,408 houses, about 210 kilometres of roads, supply tap water to 1,646 villages, connect mobile towers in 351 areas, build hostels for students in 405 areas, and build 74 multipurpose centres.

The CM advised the officials to complete all the work within the set deadline.

It was informed in the meeting that all the 1,055 habitations have been provided with mobile medical units and 100 per cent success has been achieved in this regard. The CM expressed satisfaction over this.

Majhi directed all the secretaries to complete the works of water supply, electricity supply and mobile connection, especially for the tribals living in the PVTG areas, as soon as possible. "The Chief Secretary and other secretaries should visit the unconnected or remote areas and give instructions on how to complete the work there within the stipulated time," the CM said.

Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja, Development Commissioner Anu Garg, Revenue and Disaster Management department Additional Chief Secretary Deoranjana Kumar Singh and secretaries of various departments attended the meeting.

the situation there," Majhi said.

The CM also directed the district Collectors and the department officers working at the district-level to visit every identified village and public settlement and assess the situation there and submit a report.

Notably, the scheme covers 55 blocks, 1,751 villages/public settlements, 289 village panchayats and two municipal areas in 14 districts of Odisha, while a total of 3,14,514 people from 68,605 families will benefit from this noble initiative.

The meeting informed that by the end of 2026, the target



Include widowed girls under MKVY: CM

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday directed officials to include widowed girls under the Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana (MKVY), which will soon be implemented in the state.

Chairing a meeting at Lok Seva Bhawan here, Majhi stated that the Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana would be of immense help to poor, helpless, and financially weak families by supporting the marriage of

An allocation of ₹12 crore has been made for this scheme for the current year

their daughters. The meeting discussed the implementation of the scheme under the Chief Minister's guidance to ease the financial burden of marriage on underprivileged parents.

Previously in Odisha, assistance for inter-caste marriages involving girls was provided by the Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department as

well as by the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare department.

The Chief Minister instructed the departments to make arrangements for government-sponsored wedding gifts and to organise the marriages on a collective basis.

Majhi also asked the departments to complete all necessary procedures promptly and

launch the scheme without delay. According to official sources, an allocation of Rs 12 crore has been made for this scheme for the current year.

Among others, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja, Development Commissioner Anu Garg and senior officials from the Women and Child Development department, Finance department, Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare department and the School and Mass Education department attended the meeting.

BJD demands 27% SEBC quota, stages dharna

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Opposition BJD Wednesday staged a demonstration outside the Raj Bhavan here demanding 27 per cent reservation for students belonging to Socially and Economically Backward Classes (SEBCs) in the state.

A BJD delegation, which included MPs, MLAs and senior leaders, besides students, met Governor Hari Babu Kam-bhampati and submitted a memorandum seeking his intervention to protect the constitutional rights of the OBCs,

who are referred to as SEBCs in Odisha.

The agitators staged the protest rally after the state's BJP government last week announced 11.25 per cent reservation for students in the SEBC category in higher education, excluding medical, engineering and technical courses.

Both BJD and the Congress are opposing the state government's decision and demanding 27 per cent quota, instead of 11.25 per cent reservation for the SEBC students in higher education, and inclusion of medical, engineering and technical



courses.

The ruling BJP Tuesday stated that 11.25 per cent quota will be extended to SEBC students in medical and engineering courses as well. However, it is yet to be implemented by the

state government.

In the memorandum, the BJD sought the Governor's intervention and stated that the measure taken by the BJP government in Odisha was inadequate.

"Reservation has not been extended to medical and engineering colleges in the state. Furthermore, we would like to highlight that while the Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Scheduled Castes (SCs) constitute 22.5 per cent and 16.25 per cent of the state's population respectively, the current reservation in technical, medical,

and engineering colleges stands at only 12 per cent for STs and 8 per cent for SCs -- totalling merely 20 per cent," the BJD memorandum pointed out.

"This falls significantly short of the 38.75 per cent combined reservation that should be allocated in proportion to their population," it said.

The regional party pointed out that the Central government and several other states have already implemented 27 per cent reservation for OBCs across educational institutions, including in technical and professional education.

₹3,500 social security pension from June

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The state government has decided to provide an enhanced pension of Rs 3,500 per month to beneficiaries aged 80 years and above and persons with more than 80 per cent disability from June this year, an official notification said.

As per the notification issued by the Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department, the government has sanctioned the enhanced pension under its social welfare schemes.

All beneficiaries of the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) and Madhu

Babu Pension Scheme (MBPS) will now receive an increased monthly pension of Rs 3,500, an official said, adding that the previous emolument was Rs 1,500 per month.

The SSEPD department has directed all district social security officers (DSSOs) to implement the enhanced pension from June based on the list of eligible beneficiaries provided by the sub-collectors. The DSSOs have also been asked to sanction the revised pension amounts and forward the necessary orders to the department for further action. This increase will be effective retrospectively from January 2025, it added.

SEC defers rural bypolls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 21: A few hours after announcing dates, the State Election Commission (SEC) Wednesday deferred the bypolls to a few three-tier panchayat institutions from May 22 as the early onset of monsoon is expected in the region, an official said.

The panel had Tuesday issued a notification for the by-elections for 1,043 vacant ward member seats, 43 sarpanchs, 40 panchayat samiti seats and five zilla parishad members. The polls were scheduled May 22 and June 25.

Keeping in view the early onset of monsoon, the notification for the by-elections stands cancelled and the polls will be held after the rainy season is over, an SEC official told reporters here.

Immediately after the issuance of the notification, feedback from the district officials, the public and intending candidates for the by-elections poured in, suggesting that there may be disruption in the poll process due to early monsoon and inconvenience to voters, the official said.

The SEC immediately sought a report from the regional centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) in Bhubaneswar.

Quoting the IMD report, the official said the southwest monsoon is likely to reach Kerala in the next three to four days, much earlier than the usual date of June 1.

The conditions for the onset of monsoon are likely to become favourable for some parts south and central Bay of Bengal, the official said.

Woman, daughter held over ₹123-crore chit fund scam

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 21: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Odisha Police has arrested the wife and daughter of a chit fund firm director, who is already behind bars, in West Bengal in connection with a ponzi scam involving Rs 123 crore and around 34,000 investors from multiple states and Bangladesh.

Dwipika Bhanjo and Tandra Bhanjo, who were arrested in Paschim Medinipur of West Bengal, are the wife and daughter, respectively, of Tusar Bhanjo, the director of Harit Krishi Nidhi Ltd. and M/s Transvision Dream Multi Trade Pvt. Ltd.

According to the EOW, the company collected over Rs 123 crore from investors across Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Tripura, Maharashtra, and even Bangladesh.

The two women have been booked under Sections 420, 467, 468, 471, and 120B of the IPC, read with Sections 4, 5, and 6 of the PCMCs (Banning) Act, Section 6 of the OPID Act, and Section 66(D) of the Information Technology Act.

The accused were produced before the Court of CJM, Barasat, North 24 Parganas, Kolkata, May 20 and brought to Bhubaneswar on a three-day transit remand. They were presented before the Designated Court under the OPID Act in Cuttack Wednesday.

The case was registered based on a complaint of Manmohan Dora of Bhubaneswar May 28 last year. He alleged that Harit Krishi Nidhi Ltd. and M/s Transvision Dream Multi Trade Pvt. Ltd., and their director Tusar Bhanjo induced him and thousands others to invest by promising high returns, including monthly interest of 11 per cent and additional commissions of 4-5 per cent for referring new investors.

Tusar was arrested in the case in June 2024 and since then, he is in jail. The company also promised fixed

monthly salaries — Rs 4,000 for a Rs 4 lakh investment, Rs 8,000 for Rs 8 lakh investment and so on. To lure investors, Tusar used social media, leaflets, brochures, and physical meetings as well. Investigations revealed that Tusar had earlier registered M/s Transvision Dream Multi Trade Pvt. Ltd. with the Registrar of Companies (ROC), Cuttack. In 2023, he incorporated Harit Krishi Nidhi Ltd. in West Bengal.

Though rules restricted operations in the state of incorporation, Tusar opened offices in other states such as Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Assam — in violation of Nidhi company regulations.

Moreover, chit fund activities, which are prohibited for Nidhi companies, were being run in the form of a ponzi scheme. Investors were promised high monthly returns and substantial commissions for bringing in new members.

With the help of associates, Tusar collected over Rs 123 crore. After disbursing a few initial returns at 11 per cent per month, he allegedly absconded with the rest of the funds.

The money was reportedly diverted to various accounts, including those of his wife and daughter. Funds were even siphoned off to Bangladesh and China, according to EOW sources.

In Odisha, the company had offices in Balasore, Bhadrak, Bhubaneswar, and Rourkela. Investors were actively encouraged to bring in new members with the lure of attractive bonuses — a key characteristic of a ponzi scheme, which is strictly prohibited for Nidhi companies.

It was also discovered that the company invested the collected funds in forex trading by creating a pooled account, aiming to earn an additional 20 per cent return, a fact not disclosed to the investors.

EOW sources further revealed that Tusar used investors' money for luxury trips to Dubai and Bangkok as well.

TUSAR WAS ARRESTED IN THE CASE IN JUNE 2024 AND SINCE THEN, HE IS IN JAIL.

In Memoriam

DR BANSIDHAR PANDA
(26.11.1931- 22.05.2018)

In loving memory
Bajayant 'Jay', Paramita, Nivedita, Subhrakant Jagi, Braja, KG, Shaifalika Raie, Reva, Anuva, Aditya, Raisah, Raemana Litisha, Anirudh, Cameron Relatives, Members & Associates of IMFA Group

imfa

Tel: +91 674 2611000 | Email: memoriam@imfa.in

Nimapada CHC gets Health ATM 'Migration affects quality of life'



Puri, May 21: In a major step toward enhancing rural healthcare services, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida inaugurated an advanced digital Health ATM at the Nimapada Community Health Centre (CHC) here Wednesday. The state-of-the-art digital health kiosk, also known as a self-service Health ATM,

was installed by a private organisation to offer modern diagnostic solutions to people in remote and underserved areas. The innovative Health ATM is designed to provide fast, affordable, and accurate diagnostic services to the general public. Residents of nearby villages and communities will now be able to receive basic health checkups and over 100

essential medical tests, including blood sugar, blood pressure, ECG, BMI, oxygen levels, and more — all with quick result generation. Speaking on the occasion, Parida said that the launch of this digital facility marks a new chapter in the evolution of primary healthcare in the state. She emphasised that such initiatives are crucial in bridging the healthcare gap between urban and rural areas, empowering communities with tools to monitor and manage their health regularly. The Health ATM is expected to significantly reduce the burden on hospitals by allowing patients to perform preliminary health screenings without the need of doctor's immediate involvement. Reports generated from the machine will help healthcare professionals provide timely advice and treatment if needed.

Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo represents India at Bhutan conference, calls for stronger support systems for migrant workers

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo Wednesday said that migration is a multifaceted reality that greatly affects the quality of life and economic growth of people. Singh Deo said this while addressing the South Asia Labour Mobility Conference held under the joint auspices of the Royal Government of Bhutan and the World Bank in Bhutan, an official release said here. Singh Deo, who is also the chairman of the Task Force formed by the Odisha government for migrant workers, participated in the conference from India.

He said that migration is a multifaceted reality that greatly affects the quality of life and economic growth of the people. In India, about 10 crore workers migrate to other places every year, usually for one to six months, he said. According to the census data, about 139 million have migrated within India. Due to migration, most of them are deprived of various welfare schemes in their own region, Singh Deo said. To address the problems they face in their places of migration, the Inter-State Migrant Workers Act has been enacted and implemented since 1979. According to the census, the population of Odisha is 42



million. Out of these, 14 districts have been identified as migrant-prone, and some significant steps have been taken by the Odisha government, he said, according to the release. The Deputy CM said Odi-

sha government has taken steps to combat exploitative advance payment systems, regulating informal recruitment chains, creating awareness for informed migration, strengthening skill development linkages, and working towards inter-state portability of services. Besides, 67 online services are being provided through the PARESHRAM portal, including migrant worker registration he added. While attending the conference, the Deputy Chief Minister discussed with Bhutanese Prime Minister Lyongchhoen Tshering Tobgay to work together in all possible ways. The summit will strengthen cross-border cooperation and help in empowering migrant workers and will further strengthen the ties between the countries, said Singh Deo.

Workshop on climate resilience in fisheries

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: A state-level workshop on 'Coordination and Convergence in the Implementation of Fisheries Activities' was held here Wednesday, bringing together key stakeholders to discuss strategies for enhancing climate resilience in the state's fisheries sector. The event was organised by the State Project Management Unit (SPMU) under the Enhancing Climate Resilience of India's Coastal Communities (ECRICC) project, with support from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and UNDP. Fisheries and Animal Resources Development (F&ARD) department principal secretary Suresh Kumar Vashishth inaugurated the workshop and emphasised Odisha's vision for inclusive

and climate-resilient growth in fisheries. He highlighted the state's potential in sustainable aquaculture, the importance of institutional convergence, and the ECRICC project's role in ecosystem restoration, capacity building, and governance reform. The ECRICC initiative aims to support over 16,000 coastal households by 2027, promoting climate-adaptive practices in both livelihoods and natural resource management. The event was joined by F&ARD special secretary Reena Mohapatra, ECRICC state project director, and senior representatives from ICAR-CIFA, MPE-DA-RGCA, divisional forest officers, and fisheries officials from 13 coastal blocks across Puri, Kendrapara, Ganjam, and Balasore districts.

ISRO chief Narayanan inspires OTR students



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Odisha University of Technology and Research (OUTR) hosted an inspiring talk session with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman, department of Space secretary, and Space Commission chairman V Narayanan at its campus here Wednesday. The event offered students a rare and valuable opportunity

to engage directly with one of India's most esteemed space scientists. Narayanan shared key insights into India's evolving space programme and underlined the critical role of the younger generation in steering the nation's space exploration efforts forward. "By 2040, in the space sector, India will be second to none," Narayanan declared, sparking a wave of enthusiasm among the attending students. His

words not only celebrated India's achievements but also emphasised the limitless potential of students to shape the future of space science. The session was graced by the presence of OTR vice chancellor Bibhuti Bhusan Biswal and NIT Rourkela former director Saurikumar Sarangi, alongside other eminent academicians and faculty members. The event fostered a vibrant atmosphere of learning, innovation, and aspiration. The successful organisation of the programme was credited to the collaborative efforts of Academic Affairs dean Achyutananda Acharya and OTR registrar Ashis Jena, along with dedicated faculty and staff. The event marks a significant milestone for OTR as it continues to strengthen its academic and research pursuits in science and technology.

US research institute named after Samanta



POST NEWS NETWORK

New York, May 21: The City University of New York (CUNY) has named a new research institute after renowned educationist Achyuta Samanta. The "Achyuta Samanta India Initiative CUNY Crest Institute" (ASIICCI) was inaugurated Tuesday in New York, marking the first time a U.S. research institute has been named after an Indian. The institute aims to support research by American students on Odisha's art, heritage, and Samanta's contributions to education and tribal development. The initiative was proposed by Milton Santiago, President of Bronx Community College (CUNY), following his visit to Samanta's institutions KIIT and KISS in Bhubaneswar. Impressed by Samanta's work, Santiago recommended naming the institute after him, a proposal approved by the university board. Saman-

ta attended the inauguration at Santiago's invitation. At the event, Santiago said the initiative would help American students engage with India's tribal communities, culture, and innovative educational models. Samanta expressed his honour and dedicated the recognition to the people of Odisha and the KIIT-KISS community. At the event, Samanta said it was an honour to have an institute in the U.S. named after him. He said the recognition was a matter of pride for Odisha, KIIT, and KISS. He dedicated the honour to the people of Odisha and the KIIT-KISS community. Samanta was also awarded the university's highest honour, the Presidential Medal, during the event. CUNY, a public university with over 300,000 students from 122 countries, also awarded Samanta its highest accolade, the Presidential Medal, during the ceremony.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

Before The Executive Magistrate, Jajpur, I, Girish Chandra Bal, aged about 45 years, S/o. Siba Prasad Bal, Vill-Barabati (Laliteswar Nagar), PO-Jajpur, PS/Dist. - Jajpur, do hereby solemnly affirm and state that, my son Rudransh Bal was born on 30.06.2014 and having a Birth certificate from M.O. Markandpur C.H.C. in which his name was wrongly mentioned as Rudransa Bal. I swear this affidavit in order to correct his name as "Rudransh Bal" instead of "Rudransa Bal" as both the name are same and one person. That, the facts stated above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

LOST

Sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Birmaharajpur, dt- 29.07.2024, by the affidavit I, Birakishor Karmi, S/o- Dasharatha Karmi, P.O.- S. Mahada, Dist.- Subarnapur, declared that the ROR of holding No.- 84 of Mouza Bhudobar of 5th settlement is stand recorded in my father name was lost. Inspite of my several effort I am unable to trace out.

Tetrahedron excels in CHSE Science stream

POST NEWS NETWORK

Manguli/Jagatpur, May 21: The Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), Odisha, announced the Plus II results for Science, Commerce, Arts, and vocational streams Wednesday. Among the top performers was Tetrahedron Group of Institutions in Tangi, Cuttack, which recorded 100 per cent success in the Science stream. A total of 1,136 students from Tetrahedron Higher Secondary School and Tetrahedron Women's Higher Secondary School appeared for the Science examination, with 1,120 students securing first division—a significant academic achievement.



Abinash Panda topped Tetrahedron Higher Secondary School with 581 marks, while Anannya Anuprita Sahu led the women's wing with 574 marks. Other notable performers included Anun Jaya Sethi (578), Haraprasad Sahu (575), Anannya Priyadarshini (574), Priyadarshini Sahu (574), Ru-

tuparna Sahu (574), Ashutosh Das (573), Soumyak Nayak (572), Sandip Kumar Raut (572), Priyanka Raut (571), and Sayam Mahapatra (570). A detailed performance analysis showed that 229 students scored above 89 per cent, 280 above 88 per cent, 446 above

85 per cent, and 712 students scored over 80 per cent. A felicitation ceremony was held on campus to honour the achievers. Students were presented with flower bouquets and ceremonial shawls. The event was presided over by founder-chairman Tridev Behera, who expressed optimism that re-evaluation would further improve scores, especially those above 90 per cent. Senior faculty members, including Prabodh Mahapatra, Biranchi Narayan Mohanty, Women's College Principal Keshab Nath, Vice Principal Subrat Mahapatra, Prof Subash Nayak, and senior lecturer PK Bal, were also present at the celebration.

IADVL Odisha warns of dermatology quackery

POST NEWS NETWORK

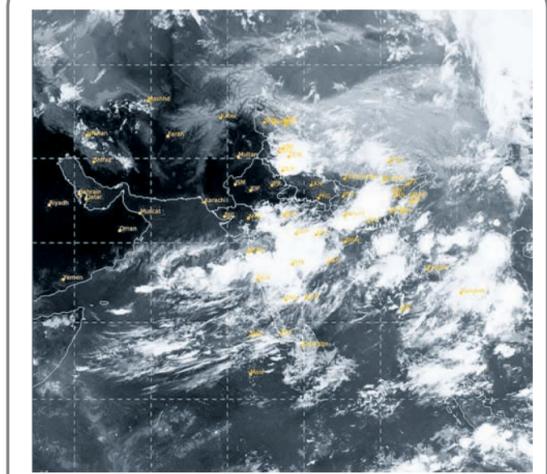
Bhubaneswar, May 21: The Indian Association of Dermatologists, Venereologists and Leprologists (IADVL), Odisha chapter, Wednesday raised serious concerns over the growing menace of quackery in dermatology across the state. At a press conference, IADVL members highlighted a tragic

incident in which a young man lost his life following a hair transplant procedure conducted by a dentist impersonating a dermatologist. Former state president Sumanta Kumar Dash, state vice president Haraprasanna Tripathy, secretary Kumar Abhishek, treasurer Narayan Nanda, and advocate Rakhi Mishra were present on the occasion.

The associations pointed out that in recent years, numerous reports have surfaced about unqualified individuals—from beauticians to alternative medicine practitioners—performing complex dermatological and cosmetic procedures such as laser treatments, chemical peels, and injectable therapies. When conducted by untrained hands, these procedures pose serious risks, including infections, disfigurement, and even fatalities.

SSHSS celebrates CHSE results

Cuttack: Students of Saraswati Science Higher Secondary School (SSHSS), Belgachhia demonstrated academic excellence in the recently announced CHSE Class XII results. Out of 403 students who appeared for the exam, 349 secured first division, while 50 attained second division. The remaining three students passed in the third division, maintaining the institution's 99.75 per cent pass rate. Adding to the jubilation, Binit Mohanty, a student of this residential school, achieved 586 marks (97.66 per cent), earning the distinction of state topper. His extraordinary accomplishment has brought immense pride to the institution and cemented its reputation for nurturing academic brilliance. Renowned for its commitment to quality education, SSHSS offers integrated coaching programmes for competitive exams such as JEE and NEET, ensuring holistic preparation for students. A dedicated team of faculty members provides round-the-clock mentorship, fostering an environment conducive to academic and personal growth. Chairman of the institution Debadatta Swain extended heartfelt congratulations to the successful candidates, stating, "This achievement reflects the relentless hard work of our students and teachers. We wish them continued success in their future endeavours." School principal Biswajit Tripathy also lauded the collective effort, remarking, "This remarkable result underscores our commitment to excellence."



WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	37.2°	34.8°	Partly cloudy sky with possibility of development of thunderstorm/lightning.
Min Temp	28.5°	27.0°	
Humidity	74%	81%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 977517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Vihar-Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Goolle Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Jagannath-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

Central team in Keonjhar for DMF projects' review



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, May 21: A three-member team from the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) arrived in Keonjhar town Wednesday to review the functioning and utilisation of the funds under District Mineral Foundation (DMF). The team is expected to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of developmental activities funded by DMF, especially in the mining-affected areas. The delegation includes joint secretaries KK Tripathi and Apurva Mishra from the EAC-PM. They were accompanied by additional secretary to state's Planning and Coordination department Pradyumna Mahakud.

Upon their arrival, Keonjhar Collector Vishal Singh welcomed the delegation at the Circuit House here and held discussions over the issue. According to sources, the committee will study the operational efficiency of DMF Trust and review the implementation of various schemes under its purview.

This is reportedly the first such visit since the DMF became fully operational in the district. The review comes amid ongoing allegations of irregularities, financial mismanagement, and corruption in DMF-funded projects. There have been claims that project deadlines were repeatedly being missed and extended without performance assessments, while salary hikes

The committee will study the operational efficiency of DMF Trust and review the implementation of various schemes under its purview

for several staff members were approved without authorisation from the DMF Trust Board. The Central team is expected to analyse how DMF funds have been utilised and assess compliance with the newly issued guidelines. A joint review meeting involving all departments is also scheduled. "The team is here to study how the DMF is functioning, how its funds are being spent, and how to align ongoing projects with the new guidelines," said Collector Vishal Singh. Meanwhile, locals are watching the developments closely, anticipating what action might follow the findings of this high-level review, said sources.



RECKLESS ACT: A large pit dug up for repair works near the statue of freedom fighter Pandit Lakshminarayan Mishra at College Square near G.M. University in Sambalpur sparks fear of the collapse of the statue, Wednesday

3 from Ganjam killed in Maha building collapse

Purushottampur: The tragic roof collapse incident in Kalyan area of Thane in Maharashtra Tuesday that claimed six lives included three women from Ganjam district. This was revealed Wednesday. According to sources, the deceased trio from from CH Nuagaon village under the Purushottampur block was identified as Pramila Sahu, 56, and her two daughters - Sunita Sahu, 40, and Sujata Padhi, 35. While Sujata's in-laws reside in Hinjili, Sunita's in-laws are from Chanduli village under the Hinjili police limits. The family had migrated to Mumbai for work some days ago. Pramila had recently traveled to Mumbai to visit her daughters. While the three women were conversing at the house where Sujata was staying Tuesday afternoon, the building's slab suddenly gave way, burying them under the debris. All three died on the spot. Sujata's four-year-old son, Kartik, narrowly escaped death but was critically injured and is currently undergoing treatment. The bodies of the three women were cremated in Mumbai Tuesday night. News of the tragedy has cast a pall of gloom over their native village, CH Nuagaon.

Dead workers issued labour certificates



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, May 21: Widespread irregularities were detected in labour welfare schemes in Sundargarh district, with allegations surfacing that certificates and benefits are being issued in the names of deceased persons. According to sources, a glaring example has emerged from Balani in Lathikata block where Raturaj Nayak, a labourer who died January 30, 2022, was issued a construction worker certificate October 8, 2024. Moreover, a fake death certificate dated December 5,

2024, was also issued in his name. Another case involves Gopal Kisan from Garjan village who is alive but was falsely declared dead in a certificate dated December 14, 2019. Despite Gopal's actual death occurring in 2023, an application for death benefits was processed based on the earlier fraudulent certificate. A department official accepted the forged application without due verification January 13, 2025. These irregularities have allegedly taken place right under the nose of department officers and in cahoots with

Cops trained on digital probe skills

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balasure, May 21: Over 700 investigating officers (IOs) Wednesday attended a workshop on latest skills and knowledge in digital investigation, evidence management, and case documentation. The workshop was organised by the State Crime Records Bureau (SCRB) for the IOs of Balasure, Bhadrak, and Mayurbhanj districts on e-Investigation, e-Sakshya, e-Sign, said Satyajit Naik, DIG Eastern Range. "The training aimed to equip IOs with the latest skills and knowledge in digital investigation, evidence management, and case documentation," the DIG said, adding that by leveraging technology, the police department seeks to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of investigations, ultimately ensuring justice delivery.

Vedanta's watershed project irrigates 3,500 acre farmland

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: India's largest aluminium producer Vedanta's 'Sangam Watershed Project' is creating sustainable water-based assets across 41 villages around Lanjigarh in Kalahandi district, along with ensuring year-round water availability for both drinking and agricultural purposes. Thus, Vedanta is making significant strides in ensuring water security in a region that was previously plagued by drought and famine, a release issued by the aluminium major said. Balabhadrapur-based sugarcane farmer Krushna Chandra Mali said, "Grateful to the Sangam Project and Vedanta's support. Yield rate of our sugarcane has increased by 25 per cent - a milestone we had once dreamt. With access to quality seeds, expert training and support for fencing, our efforts are finally bearing fruit." Vedanta Aluminium CEO

Rajiv Kumar said, "The transformation we are witnessing in Kalahandi is a testament to the power of partnership and innovation. Through Sangam Watershed Project and our integrated development initiatives, we have not only enhanced water security and agricultural productivity, but have also empowered thousands of rural families with sustainable livelihoods." "We remain committed to leveraging technology, community participation along with strategic alliances to drive inclusive growth and long-term prosperity for the people of Kalahandi," averred the CEO. The project is irrigating over 3,500 acres of cultivable land, boosting water storage capacity and groundwater recharge rates. Once fully implemented, it will directly benefit more than 22,000 rural people annually. The project supports organic farming in 72 acres through NADEP composting and has set up five Kisan Seva Kendras.

Road mishap kills three

Padmapur: Three youths were killed when an unidentified vehicle hit them on Gumuda bridge near here in Rayagada district late Tuesday night. The victims were travelling on a motorcycle to Kareni village to witness Thakurani Yatra, according to sources. The deceased were identified as Bulu Shabar, 19, Subrat Shabar, 17, and Arka Balakrishna, 18 of Kaithapadar village under Gudari block in the district. Locals rescued the victims and rushed them to the Padmapur community health centre where doctors declared Bulu and Subrat dead while Arka succumbed to his injuries while undergoing treatment at Gunupur hospital. Gumuda police seized the bodies and sent them to Gunupur for post-mortem. An investigation into the mishap is underway.

4 ARRESTED FOR CARJACKING IN SAMBALPUR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, May 21: Police arrested four individuals and recovered a car through GPS tracking following a carjacking incident near Hirakud Station under Burla police limits. The accused, identified as Amit Sahu, 28, Ravi Debnath

alias Dang, 26, Nirmal alias Nirmod Dangagunda, 26, and Sachin Banchhor, 22, allegedly threatened the car driver with a knife and fled with the vehicle (CG-04-QC-9357) late Tuesday night. The victim, Shibu De of Bilaspur, had parked the car near a shop on the highway when the

accused arrived on two motorcycles, threatened the driver, and took control of the vehicle. The driver escaped and filed a complaint at Burla police station around 2:45am. Acting swiftly, police tracked the vehicle using GPS as the suspects moved toward Bargarh and then Chipilima Road. Un-

able to escape, they abandoned the car and tried to flee but were intercepted and arrested. Police recovered the car, a motorcycle, a knife, and five mobile phones. The accused have multiple criminal cases pending in various stations. They were produced in court Wednesday.

MOBILE NETWORK ELUDES 19 VILLAGES IN NIYAMGIRI



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, May 21: Despite being home to a number of tribal communities, Rayagada district has also some major industries like a paper mill as well as bauxite mining. However, people in this tribal-dominated district continue to struggle with basic mobile network connectivity. People in 19 villages in the remote Niyamgiri hill region are still unaware about basic mobile network services when internet facility still eludes them. Members of Dongria Kondh community, an indigenous tribe residing in Niyamgiri Hills under Kalyansinghpur block, remain disconnected from even the most basic cellular networks when it is better not to talk about internet services. The area comprises two panchayats Sunakhandi and Parsali under which lie

36 Dongria Kondh settlements. Out of these, 19 villages have no mobile coverage. Locals said they face severe problems during emergencies due to the absence of connectivity. Despite years of government schemes aimed at mainstreaming the Dongria Kondh, many remain on paper only, according to Niyamgiri Suraksha Samiti president Lada Sikaka. While Sikapadar village in Sunakhandi panchayat is one of the few villages with limited access, 18 villages under Parsali panchayat—such as Bada Dengneli, Bemberi, Chatikana, Damaguda, Dangamati, Guma, Kalatipadar, Krushamohi, Lakhapadar, Lamba, Mayabali, Nishikhal, Pakeri, Patangapadar, Sanadengneli, Sarijhola, Tadamunhi, and Talua have no connectivity at all. Even in places with signal presence, internet services are reportedly non-functional.

With mobile number-Aadhaar card link becoming mandatory for availing benefits under government schemes, these villages are unable to complete essential documentation due to lack of mobile connectivity in the area. Many are also missing out on government welfare schemes, such as access to eggs and sattu provided at Anganwadi centers, due to the lack of a registered mobile number. Absence of connectivity is proving to be dangerous during medical emergencies. Residents say pregnant women and sick persons often have to be carried long distances on slings or cots to access healthcare services because calling for ambulances or health workers is not possible for them due to absence of mobile connectivity. The digital divide has also disrupted children's education. With no mobile network or internet access, online learning remains out of reach for students in these villages. District Collector Parul Patawari has said that under PM Janman scheme, steps will soon be taken to provide mobile network services to the 19 affected villages. Meanwhile, tribal communities and local activists continue to urge the state government and district administration to take immediate action to bridge the digital gap in the Niyamgiri region.

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, KUNDRA DISTRICT-KORAPUT
No. 1614/2025 Dated. 20.05.25
No.i-110 : Seal tenders are invited from Registered Contractors from State PWD/M.Irrigation/ Rural works for execution of Buildings etc. The details information of which are made available in the (www.tendersorissa.gov.in) website and also in Koraput Dist. Website i.e <http://www.koraput.odisha.gov.in>.
The date and time of apply & receive of Tender paper is from 20.05.2025 to 29.05.2025 up to 01.30 Hrs through in the (www.tendersorissa.gov.in) website only.
Tender will be opened on 30.05.2025 at 11.30 A.M. onwards in the Office of the Panchayat Samiti, Kundra, Dist. - Koraput
Sd./- Block Development Officer Kundra
OIPR-19138/11/0003/2526

Advertisement No. 45/2025
Government of India
Public Enterprises Selection Board
invites applications for the post of
Member (HR)
in
Airports Authority of India
Last date of submission of application by the applicant is by 15:00 hours on **09.06.2025.**
Last date of forwarding of applications by the Nodal Officers to PESB is by 17:00 hours on **18.06.2025.**
for details login to website <https://pesb.gov.in>
CBC-03111/12/0003/2526

Bank of India
Zonal Office: Baripada
Bank Of India Building, Lal Bazaar, In front of MKC School, PIN-757001

POSSESSION NOTICE
[Rule-8(1)] of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002

Whereas, the undersigned being the **Authorised Officer** of the **Bank of India**, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices calling upon the Borrower/Mortgagor/Co-Borrower in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **possession** of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrower/Mortgagor/Co-Borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the **Bank of India, Remuna Branch** for an amount mentioned below with interest & expenses thereon. **The Borrower's / Guarantor's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.**

REMUNA BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrower/Mortgagor/Co-Borrower	Liabilities due as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession	Description of the Immovable Property
Borrower/Mortgagor: Mrs. Sabitri Sing, W/o: Niranjan Sing / Co-Borrower: Mr. Bijay Kumar Sing, S/o: Niranjan Sing, Both are At: Narasinghpur, PO.: Mitrapur, Dist.: Balasure, PIN-756020	₹10,83,324.08 as on 01.03.2025 + interest & expenses thereon	01.03.2025 / 16.05.2025	EQM of land and building situated at Mouza: Ganipur, PS.: Remuna, Dist.: Balasure, situated over Khata No.: 588/308, Plot No.: 868/1577, Area: Ac.0.110

Dec., Kissam: Gharabari standing in the name of Mrs. Sabitri Sing

Place: Baripada Date: 21.05.2025

Authorised Officer Bank of India

FOCUS EXECUTIVE VS JUDICIARY

A FEDERAL DILEMMA



Ultimately, the present episode is a crucial reminder that India's constitutional design depends not merely on the written word, but on a shared respect for institutional roles

clarify the boundaries of institutional competence.

Looking ahead, there is a need for systemic reforms to prevent such impasses. Parliament could consider amending Articles 200 and 201 to introduce a reasonable time limit—say three to six months—for Governors and the President to act on bills. Such an amendment would harmonise judicial concerns about executive inaction with the constitutional need to preserve the discretionary role of the executive. The judiciary, in turn, must develop clearer jurisprudential limits for its powers under Article 142, especially when dealing with domains that are already governed by constitutional or statutory provisions.

Moreover, the establishment of standing legislative committees in state assemblies to monitor the progress of bills and identify undue delays could bring additional transparency and accountability. Similarly, a codified "Governor's Code of Conduct" could help curb the misuse of constitutional powers for political ends, ensuring that Governors remain neutral constitutional functionaries and not partisan actors.

Ultimately, the present episode is a crucial reminder that India's constitutional design depends not merely on the written word, but on a shared respect for institutional roles. The President, Governors, and the Judiciary are all guardians of the Constitution, and their powers are designed to check and balance one another, not to clash. As India approaches the 75th anniversary of its Republic, this moment offers an opportunity to recalibrate those balances and reaffirm the founding vision of a co-operative federalism under a constitutional rule of law.

In choosing the path of constitutional dialogue rather than confrontation, President Murmu has set a dignified precedent. Now the SC must decide how to respond—not just in legal terms, but in a way that sustains the delicate harmony of India's constitutional democracy.

The writer is a service union representative and a columnist.

In a rare development, President Droupadi Murmu on 13 May, invoked Article 143(1) of the Constitution, seeking the Supreme Court's advisory opinion on a matter that touches the heart of federal governance: whether timelines can be imposed by judicial authority on the President and Governors while exercising their discretion over state legislation. The move follows the SC's landmark verdict on 8 April, 2025, in which it laid down, for the first time, a three-month deadline for the President to decide on any bill reserved for her consideration by a Governor. The verdict arose from a case filed by Tamil Nadu government, alleging delays by the Governor in assenting to state bills, and has since ignited a fierce debate over the separation of powers between the Executive and Judiciary.

Under Article 143(1), the President may refer to the SC any question of law or fact that is deemed to be of such public importance that obtaining the Court's opinion becomes expedient. Though the Court's opinion in such matters is not binding, it carries great moral and legal weight, especially since such references are heard by a five-judge Constitution Bench. The President's current reference is only the thirteenth in Indian constitutional history and contains fourteen significant questions regarding the interpretation of Articles 200 and 201—both of which relate to how Governors and the President deal with bills passed by state legislatures.

Article 200 allows a Governor to assent to a bill, withhold assent, or reserve it for the President's consideration. When a bill is reserved, Article 201 empowers the President to either assent to it or withhold assent. Notably, neither article sets a specific timeline for action, thereby creating the legal vacuum that has led to the present controversy. In its April 8 judgment, a division bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan held that a Governor must act based solely on the advice of the state's Council of Minis-

ters and cannot delay or reject a bill based on personal dissatisfaction, political expediency, or irrelevant considerations. The Court further ruled that the President must decide on a reserved bill within three months of its receipt.

President Murmu, however, has raised fundamental objections to this ruling. In her reference, she noted that both Article 200 and Article 201 are silent on any deadlines, and this constitutional silence, she argued, cannot be replaced by judicial prescription. She also questioned the SC's use of Article 142 to introduce the idea of "deemed assent" for bills withheld by Governors, suggesting that this doctrine is alien to the constitutional scheme. The President expressed concern that such judicial intervention circumscribes the constitutional powers of both the President and Governors, altering the federal equilibrium.

The President's reference highlights broader concerns about the limits of judicial power under Article 142, which authorises the SC to pass any order necessary for doing "complete justice." While this provision has been used in the past to fill legal gaps and offer equitable remedies, critics argue that it cannot be used to legislate from the bench or encroach upon functions clearly assigned to the Executive by the Constitution.

At the core of the current debate lies the tension between the need for accountability in governance and the need to respect constitutional roles.

The SC's intent was clearly to ensure that Governors and the President do not become bottlenecks in the democratic process. But in attempting to ensure action, it may have strayed into the domain of constitutional function that traditionally rests with the Executive. For instance, treating a bill as "deemed passed" if not acted upon within a certain timeframe changes the very nature of legislative procedure and challenges the notion of discretion that Articles 200 and 201 implicitly provide.

President Murmu's decision to raise this issue through Article 143(1), rather than seeking a review of the verdict, suggests a strategic and constitutionally respectful approach. Under the rules of the SC, review petitions are typically heard in chambers by the same judges who delivered the original verdict, with limited scope for open debate. A Presidential reference, on the other hand, is a more transparent and deliberative process, involving public hearings by a Constitution Bench, which may accept or refuse to answer the questions posed.

That said, the SC is under no obligation to respond to the reference, and in the past, it has occasionally declined to provide answers where it found the matter to be political or speculative. However, given the importance of the issues raised—touching upon federalism, legislative autonomy, and judicial overreach—the Court may well consider this an appropriate opportunity to



Bruhaspati Samal

IN CHOOSING THE PATH OF CONSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUE RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION, PRESIDENT MURMU HAS SET A DIGNIFIED PRECEDENT



Joseph S. Nye

If allies see you as benign and trustworthy, they are more likely to be open to persuasion and follow your lead. If they see you as an unreliable bully, they are more likely to drag their feet and reduce their interdependence when they can

The first principle of true teaching is that nothing can be taught.

SRI AUROBINDO



Undermining Soft Power

Power is the ability to get others to do what you want. That can be accomplished by coercion ("sticks"), payment ("carrots"), and attraction ("honey"). The first two methods are forms of hard power, whereas attraction is soft power. Soft power grows out of a country's culture, its political values, and its foreign policies. In the short term, hard power usually trumps soft power. But over the long term, soft power often prevails. Joseph Stalin once mockingly asked, "How many divisions does the Pope have?" But the papacy continues today, while Stalin's Soviet Union is long gone.

When you are attractive, you can economise on carrots and sticks. If allies see you as benign and trustworthy, they are more likely to be open to persuasion and follow your lead. If they see you as an unreliable bully, they are more likely to drag their feet and reduce their interdependence when they can. Cold War Europe is a good example. A Norwegian historian described Europe as divided into a Soviet and an American empire. But there was a crucial difference: the American side was "an empire by invitation." That became clear when the Soviets had to deploy troops to Budapest in 1956, and to Prague in 1968. In contrast, NATO has not only survived but voluntarily increased its membership.

A proper understanding of power must include both its hard and soft aspects. Machiavelli said it was better for a prince to be feared than to be loved. But it is best to be both. Because soft power is rarely sufficient by itself, and because its effects take longer to realise, political leaders are often tempted to resort to the hard power of coercion or payment. When wielded alone, however, hard power can involve higher costs than when it is combined with the soft power of attraction. The Berlin Wall did not succumb to an artillery barrage; it was felled by hammers and bulldozers wielded by people who had lost faith in Communism and were drawn to Western values.

After World War II, the United States was by far the most powerful country, and it attempted to enshrine its values in what became known as "the liberal international order"—a framework comprising the United Nations, the Bretton Woods economic institutions, and other multilateral bodies. Of course, the US did not always live up to its liberal values, and Cold War bipolarity limited this order to only half the world's people. But the postwar system would have looked very different if the Axis powers had won WWII and imposed their values.

While prior US presidents have violated aspects of the liberal order, Donald Trump is the first to reject the idea that soft power has any value in foreign policy. Among his first actions upon returning to office was to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement and the World Health Organization, despite the obvious threats that climate change and pandemics pose.

The effects of a US administration surrendering soft power are all too predictable. Coercing democratic allies like Denmark or Canada weakens trust in our alliances. Threatening Panama reawakens fears of imperialism throughout Latin America. Crippling the US Agency for International Development—created by President John F. Kennedy in 1961—undercuts our reputation for benevolence. Silencing Voice of America is a gift to authoritarian rivals. Slapping tariffs on friends makes us appear unreliable. Trying to chill free speech at home undermines our credibility. This list could go on.

Trump has defined China as America's great challenge, and China itself has been investing in soft power since 2007, when then-Chinese President Hu Jintao told the Communist Party of China that the country needs to make itself more attractive to others. But China has long faced two major obstacles in this respect. First, it maintains territorial disputes with multiple neighbours. Second, the CPC insists on maintaining tight control over civil society. The costs of such policies have been confirmed by public opinion polls that ask people around the world which countries they find attractive. But one can only wonder what these surveys will show in future years if Trump keeps undercutting American soft power.

To be sure, American soft power has had its ups and downs over the years. The US was unpopular in many countries during the Vietnam and Iraq wars. But soft power derives from a country's society and culture as well as from government actions. Even during the Vietnam War, when crowds marched through streets around the world to protest US policies, they sang the American civil-rights anthem "We Shall Overcome." An open society that allows protest can be a soft-power asset. But will America's cultural soft power survive a downturn in the government's soft power over the next four years?

American democracy is likely to survive four years of Trump. The country has a resilient political culture and a federal constitution that encourages checks and balances. There is a reasonable chance that Democrats will regain control of the House of Representatives in the 2026 elections. Moreover, civil society remains strong, and the courts independent. Many organisations have launched lawsuits to challenge Trump's actions, and markets have signalled dissatisfaction with Trump's economic policies.

American soft power recovered after low points in the Vietnam and Iraq wars, as well as from a dip in Trump's first term. But once trust is lost, it is not easily restored. After the invasion of Ukraine, Russia lost most of what soft power it had, but China is striving to fill any gaps that Trump creates. The way Chinese President Xi Jinping tells it, the East is rising over the West. If Trump thinks he can compete with China while weakening trust among American allies, asserting imperial aspirations, destroying USAID, silencing Voice of America, challenging laws at home, and withdrawing from UN agencies, he is likely to fail. Restoring what he has destroyed will not be impossible, but it will be costly.

The writer was Dean of Harvard Kennedy School. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM PERSONAL FINANCE

Income tax: Old & new regimes

Not all tax payers are sure whether income tax return has to be filed even in cases where tax computation may be zero. The answer is simple. If your income exceeds the basic exemption limit, you must file income tax return. The basic exemption limit under the New Tax Regime (Default), for the financial year 2025-26 (Assessment Year 2026-27) is Rs 4 lakhs for all individual taxpayers, regardless of age (including Hindu Undivided Family). If your income exceeds Rs 4 lakh, you must file income tax return even if tax liability comes to nil after application of exemptions, deductions, and rebate.

A rebate of up to Rs 60,000 under section 87A is available for resident individuals with taxable income up to Rs 12 lakh. With a standard deduction of Rs 75,000, the effective tax-free income threshold for salaried taxpayers is Rs 12.75 lakh. However, even if

the tax liability comes to zero on account of rebate and deductions, an individual must file IT return if the income exceeds the basic exemption limit of Rs 4 lakh under the new tax regime.

The rebate under Section 87A up to Rs 60,000 is available only for resident individuals with taxable income up to Rs 1,20,000. This rebate is not applicable to non-resident individuals. If you are a non-resident Indian, your taxable income beyond Rs 4 lakh will be subject to income tax, without the benefit of rebate under Section 87A.

Under the old tax regime, the basic exemption limits vary by age for resident individuals. It is Rs 2.5 lakh for individuals below 60 years, Rs 3 lakh for senior citizens (60 years to less than 80 years), and Rs 5 lakh for super senior citizens (80 years and above). Therefore, super senior citizens need not file income tax return if their income is up to

Rs 5 lakhs. Under old tax regime also a rebate of up to Rs 12500 is available (vide Section 87A) for resident individuals with taxable income upto Rs 5 lakh, effectively making income up to Rs 5 lakh tax-free.

Income tax also has its lexicon of ambiguous jargons. Many taxpayers have confusion about the precise difference between 'exemption' and 'deduction'. However, 'exemption' and 'deduction' are two distinct concepts that help reduce a taxpayer's tax liability, but they work differently. Whereas exemption applies to certain incomes like HRA, gratuity, Leave Travel Allowance (mostly under Section 10); deductions are eligible amounts of investments and expenses (mostly under Chapter VI-A) deducted from total income. Exemptions are applied to specific sources of income or allowances. Deductions require proactive investments or expenses. In other words, exemptions reduce income

subject to tax and deductions are amounts subtracted from taxable income.

In the context of exemptions, deductions, and rebates, it is reiterated that when your total income exceeds the basic exemption limit (which is at present Rs 4 lakh under new tax regime), you must file relevant return of income even though due to the exemptions you may not have taxable income. Even after having taxable income, you might circumvent income tax liability through deductions (under Chapter VI-A) and rebates (under Section 87A).

The new tax regime is the default option as per the Finance Act 2024, but taxpayers can opt for old tax regime while filing their income tax returns. Old tax regime suits those taxpayers who have substantial amounts of deductions to reduce tax liability.

The writer is a retired banker.



Chander Gupta

MANY TAXPAYERS HAVE CONFUSION ABOUT THE PRECISE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'EXEMPTION' AND 'DEDUCTION'

Security concern

Sir, The involvement of travel vloggers, YouTubers and social media influencers in espionage cases poses a new challenge to the country's security. It is distressing that these people who have wide fan base misuse it for espionage. Under the pretext of creating content, they infiltrate sensitive areas. As they pretend to be engaged in social media work, detecting and countering such activities becomes difficult. Their extensive travel makes it easier for them to gather information. They gain the trust of their followers and recruit them for spying. Through social media platforms they pass on vital information to foreign countries. The case of YouTuber Jyoti Malhotra substantiates this challenge. She is accused of sharing sensitive information with Pakistan. In is pertinent to note here that these people are developed as assets by foreign intelligence agencies. Our intelligence agencies need to develop technology to counter such espionage activities. Suspicious activities reporting systems need to be developed. Social media laws must be revised to counter such activities. This seems to be a far more worrisome situation as several educated and talented people have no qualms about betraying their country and getting involved in spying activities.

Venu GS, KOLLAM

Cyberspace battle

Sir, One of the biggest and painful concerns from the recent India-Pakistan conflict was the rampant spread of fake news and misinformation across social media platforms. It was a proliferation of fake videos and fabricated stories, warmongering on television news channels, and unremitting canards on WhatsApp and Instagram—a trifecta that created disquiet in India even as tensions on the border escalated. As the ceasefire between the two neighbouring nations is now in place, the Central government must seriously view the villainy of fake news and find ways and means on how to effectively tackle the inevitable barrage of misinformation on the conflict that may sprout again across social media platforms, since return to bellicosity between the two countries cannot be ruled out. It is unfortunate that despite a declared ceasefire following days of intense military exchanges, the situation remains locked in a second battle, fought in the shadows of cyberspace.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

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

WISDOM CORNER

Anything's possible if you've got enough nerve.

JK ROWLING

Many receive advice, only the wise profit from it.

HARPER LEE

Be brave. Take risks. Nothing can substitute experience.

PAULO COELHO

Gujarat lion count rises to 891

As per the last census conducted in June 2020, the population of Asiatic lions, a subspecies only found in Gujarat's Gir area, was estimated at 674

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gandhinagar, May 21: The estimated population of Asiatic lions in Gujarat has increased to 891 from 674 five years ago as per the census conducted this month, officials said Wednesday.

Not only the count went up by 217, but the animals were found outside the Gir National Park, their traditional habitat, and spread across 11 districts of Saurashtra including non-forested and coastal areas, the officials said.

"Estimated population of Asiatic lions has increased to 891," Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel told reporters here.

As per the last census conducted in June 2020, the population of Asiatic lions, a subspecies only found in Gujarat's Gir area, was estimated at 674.

As per the latest count, there are estimated 196 males, 330 females, 140 sub-adults and 225 cubs, said the Gujarat forest department.

As the population of lions is increasing, their spread in Saurashtra region has also expanded. The big cats were earlier confined to the Gir National Park in Junagadh and Amreli districts, but now they have spread to 11 districts, an official said.

As many as 384 lions were



Not only the count went up by 217, but the animals were found outside the Gir National Park, their traditional habitat, and spread across 11 districts of Saurashtra including non-forested and coastal areas

counted in Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary and 507 were found outside its limits, said Jaipal Singh, principal chief conservator of forest.

The areas outside Gir where lions were spotted included sanctuaries like Pania, Mitiyala, Girmar and Barda. Some animals were seen in non-forested areas and coastal areas too.

Seventeen lions were counted

in Barda sanctuary, 15 km from Porbandar.

The highest number of lions recorded in a single pride was 17 in Bhavnagar district, official said.

The 16th Asiatic lion census, a four-day exercise, was conducted from May 10 to 13 in two phases, covering an area of 35,000 square kilometres across 58 talukas of 11

districts.

While the preliminary census was conducted on May 10 and 11, the final count was held on May 12 and 13 with the help of 3,000 volunteers, including regional, zonal and sub-zonal officers, enumerators, assistant enumerators and inspectors, said a forest department release.

The census was conducted through a more accurate method called 'direct beat verification', which provides 100 percent accuracy with almost zero margin of error due to statistical analysis and ease of implementation, said the release.

A lion census is conducted every five years by the state Forest Department.

Volunteers recorded details such as time of observation, direction of movement, sex, age, any other identifying marks on the body and GPS location among others.

Hi-tech tools like camera traps and high resolution cameras and radio-collars were used for the identification of lions, the release said.

The 11 districts where lions were spotted are Junagadh, Gir Somnath, Bhavnagar, Rajkot, Morbi, Surendranagar, Devbhoomi Dwarka, Jamnagar, Amreli, Porbandar and Botad.

Chandola demolition drive targets 2.5L square meters encroachments

The focus has now shifted to unauthorised religious structures, with Ali Masjid and Imam Hussain Masjid among those razed under heightened security arrangements

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE



Shah-e-Alam Road.

Officials confirmed that nine mosques, both large and small, located near Chandola Lake, are scheduled for demolition. The area around Lalla Bihari Farm, home to Ali Masjid, was among the first targeted sites. The demolition of Siraj Masjid is also underway.

The move comes amid efforts by civic and police authorities to curb unauthorised constructions and alleged illegal activities, including settlements by undocumented foreign nationals.

Officials have cited the area as a hub for such encroachments and a breeding ground for unlawful activities. A high-level meeting chaired by the City Police Commissioner with senior officers from the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation and law enforcement agencies preceded this operation.

Multiple Crime Branch teams

have been deployed to maintain law and order during the sensitive operation, which involves the removal of religious sites.

In the first phase of the operation, carried out earlier this year, around 1.5 lakh square meters of illegal structures were cleared. With religious structures now in focus, officials are taking precautions to prevent any unrest.

"We are ensuring that the process is handled lawfully and peacefully," a senior police official said, adding that heavy deployment of police and crime branch personnel is in place to deter any potential backlash.

As the operation continues, civic authorities reaffirm that the drive is part of a larger initiative to reclaim public land, ensure security, and curb illegal settlements, particularly in ecologically and socially sensitive zones like the Chandola Lake area.

'Rahveer Yojana' rolled out in MP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, May 21: The Madhya Pradesh government Tuesday announced the roll out of the Centre's 'Rahveer Yojana' aimed at saving the lives of people injured in road accidents, which promises a ₹25,000 reward to good samaritans who rush the accident victims to hospitals. This decision was taken in a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav at the iconic Rajwada Palace in Indore.

"We have decided to implement the 'Rahveer Yojana' to save the lives of people injured in road accidents. If a person takes the injured people in a road accident to a hospital or primary health centre, he will be given a reward of ₹25,000 by the government under this scheme," State Parliamentary Affairs Minister and cabinet spokesman, Kailash Vijayvargiya, told reporters. He said the government will instruct the police not to harass the people who rush the injured people to hospitals, in the name of interrogation.

Officials pointed out a provision in the 'Rahveer Yojana' of the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways wherein if a citizen admits person injured in a road accident to the hospital in 'golden-hour' (first one hour) and his life is saved, then he will be given a reward of ₹25,000, which was earlier ₹5,000.

Vijayvargiya said the state cabinet has decided to implement development works centred on the legacy of Adi Shankaracharya in Omkareshwar Jyotirlinga. A provision of ₹2,100 crore has been made.

"These development works

related to Sanatan Dharma and culture will promote religious tourism in Omkareshwar," he said.

Vijayvargiya said the cabinet has also approved about ₹773 crore to increase the capacity of Indore's Government Maharaaja Yashwantrao Hospital, under which this hospital will be equipped with modern facilities.

He said the state government has decided to restart the "Mukhyamantri Urban Sanitation Program", under which urban bodies will be financed in the field of cleanliness, to expedite "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan".

"A provision of ₹277 crore has been made for the first phase of the Chief Minister Urban Sanitation Program. Later, its budget will be increased," he added. Vijayvargiya further said the government has decided to launch a skills development programme with a provision of ₹100 crore in honour of Devi Ahilyabai, the ruler of the former Holkar dynasty of Indore.

The cabinet has also decided to set up the Metropolitan Authority for planned development around Indore, Bhopal, Ujjain, Jabalpur and Gwalior.

"These authorities, headed by the Chief Minister, will work with the help of local bodies and public representatives on subjects like traffic, drinking water, agriculture etc.," Vijayvargiya added. He said housing facilities will be developed for women workers in all the industrial areas of Madhya Pradesh.

The council of ministers also decided to organise "Agriculture-Industry Conclave" between May 26 and 28 in Narsinghpur, in which Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar would take part as the chief guest.

5 MP cities to become metropolitan areas



The first Metropolitan Development Authority will be formed by combining parts of Indore, Ujjain, Dewas, Dhar and Shajapur districts, while the second such body will be set up by combining parts of Bhopal, Sehore, Raisen, Vidisha and Biaoara

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, May 21: The Madhya Pradesh government Tuesday approved a proposal for a law to develop Indore, Bhopal, Ujjain, Jabalpur and Gwalior as metropolitan areas to speed up their development, officials said.

They said the proposal for the 'Madhya Pradesh Metropolitan Area Planning and Development Act 2025' was approved in the Cabinet meeting held at the historic Rajwada Palace in Indore.

The Cabinet decided to form metropolitan authorities for planned development around the five major cities of the MP. Officials said two metropolitan development authorities will be formed in the first phase.

The first Metropolitan Development Authority will be formed by combining parts of Indore, Ujjain, Dewas, Dhar and Shajapur districts, while the second such body will be set up by combining parts of Bhopal, Sehore, Raisen, Vidisha and Biaoara, an official said.

According to officials, the Chief Minister will be the chairman of these authorities.

Referring to the decision, CM Mohan Yadav told reporters, "In the cabinet meeting held at Rajwada, our government has made far-reaching and public welfare decisions whose impact will be felt for many centuries."

The CM said this was the first time after India's independence that the Cabinet meeting was held at Rajwada in Indore.

The state government organised the Cabinet meeting at Rajwada on the occasion of the conclusion of the 300th birth anniversary year of Devi Ahilyabai, the ruler of the former Holkar dynasty of Indore. The palace was decorated in its historical grandeur.

Indore has been the capital of the former Holkar rulers, and Rajwada was the palace of these rulers. It was built about 200 years ago and is a tourist attraction in the city.

The architecture of Rajwada, associated with the cultural identity of Indore, is a mixture of many forms and architectural styles of French, Maratha and Mughal style. This building, made of wood and stone, is located in the heart of the city.

The state government organised the Cabinet meeting at Rajwada on the occasion of the conclusion of the 300th birth anniversary year of Devi Ahilyabai, the ruler of the former Holkar dynasty of Indore

PM to unveil India's first 9000 HP electric locomotive

PRESS TRST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, May 21: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will unveil India's first 9,000 horsepower locomotive engine, take part in a roadshow and multiple events during his two-day visit to Gujarat starting from May 26, state government officials said Wednesday.

He will participate in a host of events in Dahod, Bhuj, Vadodara and Gandhinagar after arriving at the Vadodara airport at around 10am Monday, they said.

The Vadodara Municipal Corporation has planned a

one-km-long roadshow near the airport to greet the PM and congratulate him for the success of Operation Sindoor, said VMC standing committee chairperson Sheetal Mistry.

Modi will stay at the airport for around 15 minutes and leave for his main event of the day in Dahod district.

"People of Vadodara, including women, will stand on both sides of the roadshow route near the airport to express their gratitude to the PM for the huge success of Operation Sindoor," Mistry told reporters.

At Dahod, the PM will visit



a Railway locomotive manufacturing unit and inaugurate India's first 9,000 horsepower locomotive engine made at the facility, which has been set up with an investment of ₹20,000 crore, said a release by the Gujarat government.

The Railway factory in Dahod, established under the PPP model, will produce 1,200 engines over the next 10 years.

A key feature of these engines is their ability to carry cargo weighing up to 4,600 tonnes. The locomotive engines will be equipped with air conditioning and a toilet facility for drivers, it said. Additionally, an advanced cover system has been installed to enhance safety and prevent accidents. The 9,000 HP, 6-axle electric engine will have an average speed of 75 km per hour, said the release.

From the factory, the PM will reach an open ground near Kharod village in Dahod district to address a gathering, it said.

From Dahod, the PM will

travel to Kutch district to address a public meeting at Mirzapar Road near Bhuj town. Later, he will visit the revered Mata Ashapura Temple at Mata No Madh in Lakhpat taluka of Kutch, according to the release.

He will reach state capital Gandhinagar by evening and stay overnight at Raj Bhavan, it said. The PM will inaugurate as well as lay foundation stones for various development projects May 27 at an event to be held at Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre in Gandhinagar before leaving for New Delhi, said the release.

Light to heavy showers across Gujarat till May 27

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ahmedabad, May 21: Gujarat is set to witness an extended spell of pre-monsoon rainfall as an upper air cyclonic circulation continues to persist over the Arabian Sea.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), widespread light to heavy rain is expected across the state through May 27. The weather agency has issued a series of alerts, with orange warnings for parts of coastal South Gujarat and Saurashtra May 23 and May 25, indicating the likelihood of heavy to very heavy downpours.

Yellow alerts have also been issued for multiple districts on other days, pointing to moderate rainfall and the possibility of thunderstorms. May 22, the alert extends to Anand, Chhota Udepur, Narmada, Bharuch, Amreli, Bhavnagar, Gir Somnath, and Diu. An orange alert has been issued for Navsari, Valsad, Daman, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Amreli, and Bhavnagar

May 23, while a yellow alert remains in place for Rajkot, Junagadh, Gir Somnath, Bharuch, Surat, Narmada, Tapi, and Dang.

The weather is expected to intensify further May 24, with orange alerts covering Navsari, Valsad, Daman, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Junagadh, Gir Somnath, and Diu, and yellow alerts for Surat, Dang, Tapi, Rajkot, Porbandar, Amreli, and Bhavnagar. The IMD has predicted heavy to very heavy rainfall in Dang, Navsari, Valsad, Junagadh, and Gir Somnath under an orange alert May 25, while Surat, Tapi, Rajkot, Porbandar, and Amreli remain under a yellow alert.

May 26 is expected to bring heavy rain to Dang, Navsari, Valsad, Tapi, Daman, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Junagadh, Gir Somnath, and Diu, while the rest of Gujarat will likely see light to moderate rainfall. The ongoing weather activity is being driven by a cyclonic circulation extending up to mid-tropospheric levels over the east-central Arabian Sea, off the coasts of North Karnataka and Goa.

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, BORIGUMMA DISTRICT-KORAPUT
NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)
E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE NO-04/2025
No.I-107 : Sealed tenders are invited from Registered Contractors from State PWD/ M.I/ Irrigation/ Rural works for execution of Building etc. The details information of which are made available in the (www.tendersorissa.gov.in) website and also in Koraput Dist. Website i.e. <http://www.koraput.nic.in>.
 The date and time of apply & receive of tender paper is from 24.05.2025 at 10.00Hrs to 05.06.2025 up to 17.30 Hrs through www.tendersorissa.gov.in website only.
 Tender will be opened on 06.06.2025 at 11:00 Hrs onwards in the office of the Panchayat Samiti, Borigumma, Dist-Koraput.
Sd./- Block Development Officer, Borigumma
OIPR-19033/11/0002/2526

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, BHAWANIPATNA, DIST.-KALAHANDI, PIN-766001
'e' Procurement NOTICE. No.1547 dtd. 20.05.2025
Bid Identification No. BPM/02/2025-26
No.C-363 : The Executive Officer on behalf of Bhawanipatna Municipality invites tenders in Single Cover System. Bid documents consisting of specification the Schedule of Quantities and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen the Govt. Website i.e. <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>
 1. Number of Civil works : **46 (Forty Six) numbers**
 2. Estimated Costs : **2.49 lakhs to 16.95 lakhs**
 3. Period of completion : **As per NIT**
 4. Date and time of availability of the bid documents in the portal : **From 02.00 P.M. of 21.05.2025 to 04.00 P.M. of 30.05.2025**
 5. Last Date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal : **04.00 P.M. of 30.05.2025**
 6. Bids will be opened on : **5.00 P.M. of 02.30.05.2025**
 7. Name and address of the officer inviting bid : **Executive Officer, Bhawanipatna Municipality.**
Sd./- Executive Officer Bhawanipatna Municipality
OIPR-13100/11/0013/2526



While criticising the government, we always maintain decorum, because our aim is national and public interest
SUPRIYA SULE | NATIONALIST CONGRESS PARTY (SP) WORKING PRESIDENT

BSF RECOVERS 2 DRONES ALONG INDO-PAK BORDER

The BSF troops recovered two drones along the Indo-Pakistan border in Ferozepur Sector Wednesday, official sources said. They said that, acting on inputs, the BSF troops launched a search operation in the suspected area in the morning, after which one drone was recovered from a farming field adjacent to Palha Megha village along the zero line



of the day quote

I will be firm on the ideology! I will get funds for Tamil Nadu through struggle



M K STALIN | TN CM

Rajiv Gandhi laid strong foundation for the information technology revolution in the country, which has been yielding positive outcomes for the current generation



SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL CM

The state will have more than average monsoon (this year). We have set the target of 204 lakh metric tonnes compared to 187 lakh tonnes last year. There will be no shortage of seeds and fertilisers



DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHARASHTRA CM

SHORT TAKES

Woman's body found in suitcase near rly track

Bangalore: The body of an unidentified woman was found stuffed inside a suitcase near the railway tracks in Chandapura on the outskirts of Bangalore Wednesday, police said. No apparent injury marks were visible on the body, they said. The body was kept folded inside a blue suitcase, police said.

Delhi HC raps Abhijit Iyer Mitra

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Wednesday rapped commentator Abhijit Iyer Mitra for allegedly posting abusive remarks against nine women journalists of media house NewsLaundry and asked him to remove the posts within five hours. "Can you defend this? Such a language and words are not permissible in a civilised society. First you remove the posts then we will hear you," Justice Purushendra Kumar Kaurav told Mitra's counsel who defended the posts.

22 kids injured as bus falls into pond

Hazaribag: Twenty-two children were injured after their school bus fell into a pond in Jharkhand's Hazaribag district Wednesday afternoon, police said. The incident happened in Khutra village in the Ichak police station area when the children were returning home from school, they said.

Couple jumps in front of train in UP; man dies

Bhadohi (UP): A man died while his lover lost both her legs after they jumped before a moving train here, a day after the two got married in a court against the wishes of their families, according to police. The refusal of their families to accept their marriage is what appears to have prompted the couple to take the extreme step, police said Wednesday. The man was already married.

Six killed in road accident

Vijayapura (Karnataka): Six people died in a road accident involving two SUVs, one of whom jumped the median, and a private bus in this district Wednesday morning, police said. According to Laxman Nimbargi, Superintendent of Police, Vijayapura, a Mahindra SUV 300 vehicle travelling towards Solapur jumped the median and collided with the bus coming from Mumbai to Ballari. A Bolero SUV was also involved in the accident, he said.

Waqf Islamic concept but not essential to Islam: Centre to SC



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The Centre Wednesday defended the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 in the Supreme Court and said though waqf was an Islamic concept, it was not an essential part of Islam.

Arguing before Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said, "Waqf is an Islamic concept. But it is not an essential part of Islam.. Waqf is nothing but just charity in Islam." "Charity is recognised in every religion, and it cannot be regarded as an essential tenet of any religion," he said.

Earlier in the day, Mehta asserted nobody could claim right over public land by using waqf by user principle which was a statutory right and the law could take it away. "Waqf by user" refers to a concept where a property is recognised as waqf based on its long-term use for religious or charitable purposes, even without formal documentation.

Responding to the challenge against the validity of the 2025 law, Mehta argued the amended law dealt with the secular aspects of waqf and activities that were non-essential to Islam.

Mehta said the "waqf by user" concept did not permit "wholesale takeover of waqf

properties" by the state as alleged.

Any stay of the provision on abolition of unregistered "waqf by user" properties would defeat the purpose of the law which has been enacted to remedy the mischief like usurpation of government land, Mehta added.

Mehta said, "There is a Supreme Court judgment which says the government can save the property if it belongs to the government and has been declared as waqf."

Contesting the argument of government officers arbitrarily claiming land as government property from now on and override waqf status, he called it "misleading and false."

On the point of an officer above the rank of a district collector deciding the dispute on the claim over an alleged waqf property, he said officer wouldn't finally determine the property's ownership.

Mehta said the eviction or takeover of property could only occur after due process through the Waqf Tribunal proceedings (under Section 83) and subsequent appeals.

The possession would continue with the waqf until the issue was fully adjudicated, he said.

The SG cited the extensive deliberations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, which

A bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice BR Gavai is hearing the pleas challenging the new Waqf Act

held 96 sittings, received 97 lakh representations, and incorporated feedback from 25 Waqf Boards and several state governments.

The law officer also drew bench's attention to the "historic misuse" of waqf by user to claim ownership of public or private lands without documentation.

On the question whether the law infringed upon Articles 25 and 26 (freedom of religion and management of religious affairs) of the Constitution, he said though waqf was an Islamic concept, it did not constitute an essential religious practice.

Unlike Hindu, Jain religious trusts which deal with religious aspects, temples, priests and their management, waqf may include schools, colleges, etc., Mehta said.

Doctrine of essential religious practices, he added, as articulated by Dr B R Ambedkar must be satisfied before any constitutional protection under Article 25 can be claimed.

The Centre opposed the claim that the law enabled mass takeover of waqf properties.

Referring to case laws, he said the government could protect public lands even if erroneously entered as waqf, and that mere entry in the waqf register did not confer ownership.

Mehta said no affected parties moved the court and "it is nobody's case that Parliament does not have the competence to pass this legislation".



A pair of ostriches at its enclosure at the National Zoological Park in New Delhi

SC grants anticipatory bail to Puja Khedkar



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: Is she a drug lord or a terrorist? The Supreme Court asked Delhi Police Wednesday as it granted anticipatory bail to former IAS probationer Puja Khedkar, accused of cheating, and wrongly availing OBC and disability quota benefits in the civil services examination.

A bench comprising Justices B V Nagarathna and Satish Chandra Sharma directed Khedkar to fully cooperate in the probe cautioning against any misuse of her liberty. She was ordered not to influence

witnesses or tamper with the evidence. "What is the grave crime she has committed? She is not a drug lord or a terrorist. She has not committed 302 (murder). She is not an NDPS offender. You should have a system or a software. You complete the investigation. She has lost everything and will not get a job anywhere," the bench said.

The top court went on, "The appellant is entitled to the relief claimed under Section 482 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita. We, therefore, allow this appeal and set aside the order passed by the high court." The relief was allowed on a cash security of ₹25,000 with two like sureties.

Delhi Police was, however, allowed to move for cancellation of the anticipatory bail in case of any violation of conditions.

Senior advocate Sidharth Luthra, appearing on behalf of Khedkar, said the investigation had been going on since July, 2024 and cited his client's complete cooperation in the probe.

Karnataka BJP MLA booked for gangrape

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, May 21: An FIR has been filed against BJP MLA Munirathna and his accomplices after a 40-year-old woman accused him of gang-raping her and urinating on her face and injecting her with a deadly virus, police said Wednesday.

The FIR was registered based on the complaint of a BJP worker at RMC Yard police station Tuesday, they said. In her complaint, the woman, claiming to be a BJP worker, alleged that the incident occurred at the MLA's office in Mathikere June 11, 2023.

The complainant alleged that she was taken to his office in a car by his accomplices. Three accomplices of the MLA involved in the incident have been named in the FIR while the identity of the fourth accused is unknown.

She alleged that after reaching his office, the MLA along with two of his accomplices allegedly stripped her despite her pleas and he even threatened to kill her son if she did not co-operate.

SC grants interim bail to Ashoka varsity professor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The Supreme Court Wednesday granted interim bail to Ashoka University professor Ali Khan Mahmudabad, arrested for his contentious social media posts on Operation Sindoor, but refused to stay the investigation against him.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotisar Singh directed the Haryana director general of police to constitute a three-member special investigation team (SIT) headed by an inspector general (IG) rank officer also including a superintendent (SP) rank woman officer within 24 hours to investigate the case.

"Having regard to the contents of the two alleged offending posts uploaded on social media, which have led to the registration of two FIRs against the petitioner, we are satisfied that no case for staying the investigation is made out," the



bench said. The top court ordered, "However, to holistically understand the complexity of the phraseology employed and for proper appreciation of some of the expressions used in these two online posts, we direct the Director General of Police, Haryana to constitute an SIT comprising three directly recruited IPS Officers, who do not belong to the States of Haryana or Delhi."

It said in the SIT the remaining members should be officers in the rank of Superintendent of Police and above and one of them will be a woman IPS officer.

"We have also considered the prayer for bail made on behalf of the petitioner. With a view to facilitate the investigation, as noted above, we direct that the petitioner be released on interim bail, subject to his fur-

A Sonipat court May 20 sent Mahmudabad to judicial custody till May 27 after the completion of his two-day police custody

Haryana Police arrested Mahmudabad May 18 after two FIRs were registered against him

nishing bail bonds to the satisfaction of the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Sonipat, Haryana," it directed.

The bench, which examined the online post by the professor, who heads the political science department in the Sonipat-based Ashoka University, questioned his choice of words, saying they were used deliberately to humiliate, insult, or put others in discomfort.

"The choice of words are deliberately made to insult, humiliate or cause discomfort to others. The professor, who is

a learned person cannot lack a dictionary...he could have conveyed the very same feelings in a simple language without hurting others. He should have shown respect for the sentiments of others. He could have used a simple and neutral kind of language, respecting others," Justice Kant said.

The bench said though everybody had the right to freedom of expression, Mahmudabad's remarks seemed like "dog whistling", used in legal parlance.

The bench imposed certain conditions on Mahmudabad that he shall not write any online post, article or shall not make any oral speech related to either of the two online posts, which are subject-matter of the investigation.

The bench also restrained the professor from expressing any opinion in relation to the terrorist attack on Indian soil or the counter response given by the Indian armed forces.

TN moves SC against Centre over NEP row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The Tamil Nadu government has moved the Supreme Court against the Centre for allegedly withholding over ₹2,151 crore in central education funds under the Samagra Shiksha Scheme for 2024-2025.

The DMK government's plea, filed against the Union Ministry of Education, invokes Article 131 of the Constitution which provides exclusive jurisdiction to the top court to hear pleas between the Centre and one or more states, or between one or more states.

The state government alleged the Centre attempted to force the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the associated PM SHRI Schools Scheme which it strongly objected to, particularly the contentious three-language formula.

India lost 18,200 ha of primary forest in 2024: GFW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: India lost 18,200 hectares of primary forest in 2024 compared to 17,700 hectares in 2023, according to new data from Global Forest Watch (GFW), a global collaboration of over 100 organisations.

The GFW said the country lost 3,48,000 hectares of humid primary forest between 2002 and 2024 -- about 5.4 per cent of the country's total humid primary forest. This is 15 per cent of India's total tree cover loss during the same period.

Between 2019 and 2024, India lost 1,03,000 hectares (1.6 per cent) of humid primary forest, which is 14 per cent of its total

tree cover loss in those years. The country lost 16,900 hectares of humid primary forest in 2022, 18,300 hectares in 2021, 17,000 hectares in 2020, and 14,500 hectares in 2019, the data showed.

The GFW defines primary forests as "mature natural humid tropical forests that have not been completely cleared and regrown in recent history". These forests are identified using Landsat satellite images and special algorithms for each region.

Since 2001, India has lost 2.31 million hectares of tree cover, equivalent to a 7.1 per cent decrease in tree cover during this period and 1.29 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent



emissions. However, from 2000 to 2020, India also gained 1.78 million hectares of tree cover, which was about 1.4 per cent of the global total increase.

Between 2001 and 2024, As-

sam recorded the highest tree cover loss at 3,40,000 hectares, much higher than the national average of 67,900 hectares. Mizoram lost 3,34,000 hectares, Nagaland 2,69,000 hectares, Manipur 2,55,000 hectares and Me-

The GFW said the country lost 3,48,000 hectares of humid primary forest between 2002 and 2024 -- about 5.4 per cent of the country's total humid primary forest

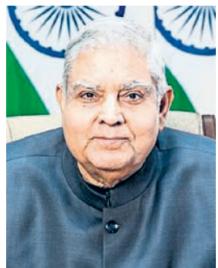
ghalaya 2,43,000 hectares. During this period, 1.39 million hectares of tree cover was lost due to shifting cultivation. Another 6,20,000 hectares was lost to permanent agriculture. Logging caused the loss of

1,82,000 hectares while natural disturbances led to 35,100 hectares of loss. Settlements and infrastructure development caused 30,600 hectares of tree cover loss.

The GFW said its tree cover loss data is based on the best available satellite information. However, the data may change over time as algorithms improve. Therefore, it advises users not to directly compare older and newer data, especially before and after 2015.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, India had the second highest rate of deforestation in the world between 2015 and 2020, losing about 6.68,000 hectares of forest per year.

national



It has sent a global message. A message that Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave to the entire world from the heartland of Bihar that terrorism will no longer go unpunished

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE PRESIDENT OF INDIA

YS SHARMILA ON HUNGER STRIKE

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president YS Sharmila Wednesday joined a sit-in hunger strike in Visakhapatnam in support of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) contract workers who were allegedly sacked by the management



of the day quote

Various issues related to tribal welfare, inclusive development and preserving tribal language, culture and traditions were discussed during the meeting. The obligation of police station limits for the sale and purchase of tribal land was also discussed

HEMANT SOREN | JHARKHAND CM

We are focusing on both citizen safety and animal welfare by ensuring proper management, shelter, and care. It is also our moral responsibility to ensure that animals shifted from the streets to gaushalas receive the care they deserve

REKHA GUPTA | DELHI CM

New jails will be constructed in Panchkula, Dadri, and Fatehabad, with an investment of approximately ₹300 crore. Furthermore, a Gaushala will also be started in the premises of the District Jail, Karnal

NAYAB SINGH SAINI | HARYANA CM

POST OF THE DAY

The recent boom in the Indian property market has happened due to NRIs: 2015-2018=7-10% 2019=10-12%

2020=12-14% 2021=14-16% 2022=17% (reported) 2023=17-18% (industry estimate) 2024=17-19% (industry estimate) 2025=18-20% (projected, ongoing trend)

India's export model has been: send intelligent hardworking humans abroad. They grind, help other nations create true wealth. In the process, build their own wealth. And, invest back in India.

@Akshat_World

SHORT TAKES

Manipur govt orders probe into bus incident

Guwahati: The Manipur government Wednesday ordered a probe into the allegations that security personnel forced to cover the state's name on a bus taking journalists to the Shirui Lily festival. It was alleged that security forces had stopped the state-run bus, on which journalists were being taken by the government to cover the tourism festival in Ukhrul district Tuesday, and forced the Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) staff to cover the state's name written on the windshield with a white paper.

Court acquits NRI of rape charge

Mumbai: Noting that a woman's consent cannot be deemed as based on "misconception of fact" when she makes a "reasonable choice" to establish a physical relationship by understanding the consequence, a court has acquitted an NRI scientist booked for rape under the pretext of marriage. Additional sessions judge, Kishor More, however, mentioned that the situation may be viewed differently if there is clear evidence that a false promise was made.

5 killed in accident

Thanjavur (Tamil Nadu): Five persons, including a woman, died when a Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation bus and a van collided in Thanjavur district Wednesday, police said. The mishap took place on the Nagapattinam-Tiruchi Highway at around 8 pm, they said. Five people in the van died on the spot and two sustained injuries.

India expels second Pak High Commission official

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the staffer at the Pakistan mission has been declared "persona non grata" for indulging in activities not in keeping with his official status and that he has been given 24 hours to leave India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: India Wednesday expelled a Pakistani official working at the Pakistan high commission on charges of involvement in espionage, in the second such expulsion in a week, people familiar with the matter said. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the staffer at the Pakistan mission has been declared "persona non grata" for indulging in activities not in keeping with his official status and that he has been given 24 hours to leave India.

The charge d'affaires of the Pakistan high commission, Saad Warraich, was issued a demarche or a formal diplomatic protest on this issue, it said in a statement.

The charge d'affaires was asked to "strictly" ensure that none of the Pakistani diplomats or officials in India misuse their privileges in any manner, the MEA said.

On May 13, India had expelled another Pakistani official for allegedly indulging in espionage. Following India's action, Pakistan had also expelled an Indian staffer posted at the Indian high commission in Islamabad.

India's expulsion of two staffers at the Pakistani high commission came as police in Punjab and Haryana are carrying out an investigation into espionage activities linked to Pakistan. At least three persons have been arrested so far in the case. "The government of India has declared a Pakistani official, working at the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, persona non grata for indulging in activities not



Op Sindoor: Multi-party delegation leaves for Japan

NEW DELHI: A multi-party delegation led by JD (U) MP Sanjay Jha Wednesday left for Japan to put across India's views on terrorism emanating from Pakistan. The delegation will also visit South Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore as part of New Delhi's outreach following Operation Sindoor and the subsequent conflict between India and Pakistan. As many as nine terror camps were hit inside Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir by Indian forces to avenge the Pahalgalam terror attack, which left at least 26 civilians dead.

in keeping with his official status in India," the MEA said in a statement this evening. It said the official has been asked to leave India within 24 hours.

"The Charge d'Affaires, Pakistan High Commission, was issued a demarche to this effect today. He was asked to strictly ensure that none of the Pakistani diplomats or officials in India misuse their privileges and status in any manner," the MEA added.

Last week, Punjab Police said it arrested two persons including a woman for their alleged involvement in espionage activities linked to a Pakistani official posted at the Pakistani High Commission in Delhi.

Based on credible intelligence, a suspect was arrested for leaking sensitive information to a Pakistan-based handler regarding Indian Army movements, Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav had said. The development came days after Amritsar Rural Police arrested two persons - Falaksher Masih and Suraj Masih - for their alleged role in leaking sensitive information and photographs of the Army Cantonment areas and air bases to Pakistan's intelligence agency, according to local officials.

The expulsion of two Pakistani staffers came amid heightened tensions between India and Pakistan. India carried out precision strikes on nine terror infrastructures early May 7 in response to the April 22 Pahalgalam terror attack. Following the Indian action, Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases May 8, 9 and 10.

IndiGo flight with 227 on board hits turbulence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, May 21: A Srinagar-bound IndiGo flight from Delhi with more than 220 people, including TMC MPs, on board encountered sudden hailstorm Wednesday, prompting the pilot to report the "emergency" to air traffic control at Srinagar. The aircraft later landed safely here and has been grounded, officials said.

Videos of the moments of turbulence shared on social media showed panic-stricken passengers could be heard making religious supplications as the plane swayed. Some passengers claimed that the nose of the plane was damaged but there was no official word on it. "IndiGo flight 6E2142 enroute Delhi to Srinagar experienced bad weather (hail storm), emergency reported by Pilot to ATC SXR (Srinagar)," an official of the Airport Authority of India said here. 'Aircraft on ground' (AOG) refers to a plane that is grounded and unable to fly due to technical issues. A Trinamool Congress (TMC) delegation, which included Derek O'Brien, Sagarika Ghose, Nadimul Haque, Mamata Thakur and Manas Bhuyan, was on board the plane, Ghose said.

"It was a near-death experience. I thought my life was over. People were screaming, praying and panicking. Hats off to the pilot who brought us through that. When we landed we saw the nose of the plane had blown up," Ghose said. "I was in the plane and heading back home from Srinagar...It was a near-death experience... the nose of the plane is damaged," Owais Maqbool Hakeem (@owaismaqbool) posted on X.



NATIONAL HERALD CASE

ED asserts prima facie charges against Sonia, Rahul Gandhi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: The ED has alleged that the proceeds of crime in the National Herald case against Congress' Sonia and Rahul Gandhi were obtained on "instructions of some senior party leaders" towards "protection, tickets to contest elections, and securing positions in the party".

The ED has filed its chargesheet against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and others under Sections 3 (money laundering) and 4 (punishment for money laundering) of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

ED alleged proceeds of crime amounting to ₹988 crore - obtained through various channels - in the case. Proceeds of crime include any property obtained or derived directly or indirectly as a result of criminal activity relating to a scheduled offence - in this case the offence of money laundering.

The central probe agency's case accuses the Gandhis, late Congress leaders Motilal Vora and Oscar Fernandes aside from Dubey, Pitroda and a private company Young Indi-

an of conspiracy and money laundering over the fraudulent takeover of properties valued over ₹2,000 crore belonging to the Associated Journals Limited (AJL).

The ED's chargesheet filed in a Delhi court said the payments received by Young Indian were not in the nature of donations but in the nature of accommodation entries arranged as a part of the criminal conspiracy by the accused persons and in continuation of money laundering-related activities.

"The senior leaders of the Congress Party who were office bearers in Young Indian under the patronage of Gandhi family members namely Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, influenced various persons including some Congress members/leaders to arrange funds for Young Indian, in the guise of donations, in lieu of various favours promised to them and also in lieu of cash from AICC office," the ED said.

The ED Wednesday informed special judge Vishal Gogte that a "prima facie" case of money laundering was made against Gandhis and others in the matter.

ED raids edu institutions linked to Parameshwara



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, May 21: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Wednesday conducted searches at educational institutions linked to Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara at Tumakuru and on the outskirts of Bangalore, official sources said.

According to sources, the searches were conducted at Sri Siddhartha Medical College and Sri Siddhartha Institute of Technology in Tumakuru and

Sri Siddhartha Institute of Medical Sciences in Nelamangala on the outskirts of Bengaluru.

The reasons for the searches were officially not known. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Congress called it "vengeance politics" against a Dalit leader; while the Opposition BJP and JD(S) have tried to link ED searches to the gold smuggling case involving Kannada actress Ranya Rao.

Speaking to reporters here, Siddaramaiah said it is vengeance politics done by the Government of India and ED, because the institutions are run by Parameshwara, who is a tall SC leader and Congress party. "Yesterday, we had a mammoth gathering at Hosapete to mark the state government's two years in office. The BJP people were perturbed with the success of the rally in Vijayanagara district's Hosapete. According to me and my information, it is a revengeful act of ED and central government," he said.



The Indian Navy Wednesday inducted a traditionally-built stitched ship as INSV Kaundinya at a ceremony held at the strategically located Karwar naval base in Karnataka. It is a recreation of a fifth-century vessel and is named after Kaundinya, a legendary Indian mariner who sailed across the Indian Ocean to Southeast Asia, officials said

Unnatural sex with wife not punishable under law: HC

The court noted Section 377 of IPC penalising such acts won't apply in a marital relationship particularly when the allegation of consent was missing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: Saying the law doesn't recognise the concept of marital rape, the Delhi High Court has quashed an order directing prosecution of a man for performing "unnatural" sex with his wife.

The court noted Section 377 of IPC penalising such acts won't apply in a marital relationship particularly when the allegation of consent was missing.

Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma was dealing with the man's plea against a trial court order which directed framing of Section 377 (punishment for unnatural offences) charge against

him for allegedly performing oral sex with his wife.

The verdict said the law did not recognise the concept of marital rape.

"There is no basis to assume that a husband would not be protected from prosecution under Section 377 of IPC, in view of exception 2 to Section 375 of IPC since the law (amended Section 375 of IPC) now presumes implied consent for sexual intercourse as well as sexual acts, including anal or oral intercourse within a marital relationship," it said.

"The essential ingredient of lack of consent - central to constituting an offence under Section 377 of IPC post-Navtej



Singh Johar (case) between any two adults - is clearly missing. Thus, there is not only a lack of prima facie case, but even the threshold of strong suspicion is

not met," the court said.

The top court in the Navtej verdict de-criminalised consensual sex among adults, including those from the same sex.

The court further said acts such as anal intercourse or oral sex were included within the ambit of offence of rape under the Section 375(a) of IPC and there was no basis to assume that the petitioner would not fall within the immunity granted to husbands under the "exception" to the offence of rape.

"In the context of a marital relationship, Section 377 of IPC cannot be applied to criminalise non-penile-vaginal intercourse between a husband and wife. Such an interpretation would be in line with the reasoning and observations of the Supreme Court in Navtej Singh Johar (case)," said the court in its May 13 order.

It came on record that the wife claimed the man was "impotent" and their marriage was the result of a conspiracy by him and his father to establish illicit relations and extort money from her family.

The man argued the marriage was legally recognised and there was an implied presumption of consent for consensual sexual acts and its nature could not constitute an offence under Section 377.

The judge underlined an "inherent contradiction" in the statement of the wife who on the one hand alleged sexual incapacity of the man and levelled allegations suggesting the performance of oral sex on the other.

international



I renew my heartfelt appeal to allow the entrance of dignified humanitarian aid to Gaza and to put an end to the hostilities whose heart-breaking price is being paid by children, the elderly and sick people

POPE LEO XIV | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

PUTIN'S FIRST VISIT TO KURSK

President Vladimir Putin visited Russia's Kursk region for the first time since Moscow claimed that it drove Ukrainian forces out of the area last month, the Kremlin said Wednesday. Putin visited the region bordering Ukraine the previous day, according to the Kremlin



of the day quote

I have said it before, and I repeat it again: uranium enrichment in Iran will continue — with or without an agreement



ABBAS ARAGHCHI | FOREIGN MINISTER, IRAN

The risk of physical and cultural extinction of Indigenous People of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta is an ongoing tragedy that we can and must prevent



SCOTT CAMPBELL | COLOMBIA'S REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Whether or not Taiwan is a country is not up to Wang Yi, nor the People's Republic of China, to say. The whole world sees us as a country. We choose our governments democratically. It is our business what our name is



LIN CHIA-LUNG | FOREIGN MINISTER, TAIWAN

Trump finalises 'Golden Dome' missile defense plan

AGENCIES

Washington, May 21: President Donald Trump has announced the concept he wants for his future Golden Dome missile defence program — a multilayered, \$175 billion system that for the first time will put US weapons in space.

Speaking Tuesday from the Oval Office, Trump said he expects the system will be "fully operational before the end of my term," which ends in 2029, and have the capability of intercepting missiles "even if they are launched from space."

It's likelier that the complex system may have some initial capability by that point, a US official familiar with the programme said.

Trump, seated next to a poster showing the continental US painted gold and with artistic depictions of missile interceptions, also announced that Gen. Michael Guetlein, who currently serves as the vice chief of space operations, will be responsible for overseeing Golden Dome's progress.

Golden Dome is envisioned to include ground- and space-based capabilities that are able to detect and stop missiles at all four major stages of a potential attack: detecting and destroying them before a launch, intercepting them in their earliest stage of flight, stopping them mid-course in the air, or halting them in the final minutes as they descend toward a target.

For the last several months, Pentagon planners have been developing options — which the US official described as medi-



'Golden Dome' may revive Russia-US arms talks: Kremlin

Moscow: The Kremlin indicated Wednesday that President Donald Trump's "Golden Dome" missile shield plans could force the resumption in the foreseeable future of contacts between Moscow and Washington about nuclear arms control. Asked about Trump's announcement that he had selected a design for the \$175-billion Golden Dome missile defense shield, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said it was a sovereign matter for the United States. The so-called "Golden Dome", inspired by Israel's land-based Iron Dome defense shield, is an ambitious project aimed at blocking threats from China and Russia, which the United States views as its two biggest geopolitical competitors. Peskov, asked if Russia saw the project as a threat to Russia's nuclear parity with the United States, said that there was no detail about the US project and many nuances remained. "In the foreseeable future, the very course of events requires the resumption of contacts on issues of strategic stability," Peskov said.

um, high and "extra high" choices, based on their cost — that include space-based interceptors. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to detail plans that have not been made public.

The difference in the three versions is largely based on how many satellites and sensors — and for the first time, space-based interceptors — would be purchased.

The Congressional Budget Office estimated this month

that just the space-based components of the Golden Dome could cost as much as \$542 billion over the next 20 years. Trump has requested an initial \$25 billion for the programme in his proposed tax break bill now moving through Congress.

The Pentagon has warned for years that the newest missiles developed by China and Russia are so advanced that updated countermeasures are necessary.

Pak to extend closure of its airspace for Indian flights by another month

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 21: Pakistan has decided to extend the closure of its airspace for Indian flights by another month, a media report said Wednesday.

Pakistan banned its airspace for India last month after steps taken by New Delhi in the wake of the Pahalgam terrorist attack April 22.

The ban was imposed for a month until May 23, as under International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) rules that airspace restrictions cannot be imposed for more than one month at a time.

Quoting sources, Geo News reported that the decision to extend the ban is expected to be announced Wednesday or Thursday, and a Notice to Airmen (Notam) will be issued.



The development comes amid heightened tensions between the two neighbours following India's precision strikes under 'Operation Sindoor' on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir May 7 in response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people.

The Indian military has been maintaining that Pakistan pleaded for stopping the military actions after India hit eight military installations in Pakistan on early May 10 in response to Pakistan's attempts to target Indian military bases.

This is not the first time Pakistan has imposed such restrictions. Pakistan closed its airspace for Indian flights during the 1999 Kargil conflict and the 2019 Pulwama crisis.

Suicide bomber kills 5 on school bus in Balochistan



REUTERS

Quetta, Pakistan, May 21:

At least three children were among five people killed when a suicide bomber struck an army school bus in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province, the military said Wednesday, in an attack that Pakistan blamed on Indian proxies.

Around 40 students were on the bus, which was headed to an army-run school, and several sustained injuries, said Yasir Iqbal, administrator of Khuzdar district, where the incident took place.

Pakistan's military and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif swiftly condemned the violence and accused "Indian terror proxies" of involvement, although they did not share any evidence linking the attack to New Delhi.

"Planners, abettors and executors of this cowardly Indian-sponsored attack will be hunted down and brought to justice," the military's media wing said.

India rejected Pakistan's accusations. "In order to divert attention from its reputation as the global epicentre of terrorism and to hide its own gross failings, it has become second nature for

Pakistan to blame India for all its internal issues," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

India also declared an official of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi 'persona non grata', the second such expulsion in a week, for "indulging in activities not in keeping with his official status".

The Pakistani charge d'affaires was summoned and given a warning to ensure that Pakistani officials do not misuse their privileges and status, the ministry added.

Tensions remain high after India and Pakistan agreed a ceasefire May 10. Diplomats have warned that the truce is fragile, following the most dramatic escalation of hostilities between the nuclear-armed neighbours in decades.

Both have traded accusations of supporting militancy on each other's soil - a charge that each denies. The latest escalation, in which the two countries traded missiles, was sparked when India accused Pakistan of supporting a militant assault on tourists in the Indian portion of the contested region of Kashmir. Islamabad denies any involvement.

Three children among the dead in suicide blast

Attack comes during fragile India-Pakistan ceasefire

Pakistan blames India, without providing evidence

India rejects allegations of its involvement

SHORT TAKES

Iran okays strategic pact with Russia

Dubai: Iran's parliament approved a 20-year strategic partnership Wednesday between Moscow and Tehran, state media reported. The agreement represents a deepening of bilateral ties including closer defence cooperation. Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Iranian counterpart Masoud Pezeshkian signed the strategic partnership document January 17. The Russian legislative branch approved the pact in April.

PIO Singaporean police officer charged

Singapore: An Indian-origin Singapore police officer was charged on Wednesday with forging police statements and documents related to cases he had investigated between 2021 and 2023. S Vikneshwaran Subramaniam, 35, was handed nine charges of forgery, reported Channel News Asia. The charges relate to five criminal cases which were ongoing and two concluded cases which did not result in prosecution, the Singapore Police Force (SPF) said in a media release.

Japan's agriculture minister resigns

Tokyo: Japan's agriculture minister resigned Wednesday over his inappropriate remark about buying rice as the public struggles with record high prices of the country's traditional staple food. At a party seminar Sunday in Saga prefecture, Taku Eto said he "never had to buy rice" because his supporters always give him the grain as gifts. The gaffe was seen as insensitive to the rice situation and could be further trouble for Ishiba's already struggling minority government before a national election in July.

Indian nat'l pleads guilty in fraud case

Houston: An Indian national living in the United States has pleaded guilty to staging armed robberies at retail stores across several American states to help individuals fraudulently obtain US immigration benefits. Rambhai Patel, 37, a resident of New York, entered a guilty plea Tuesday before US District Judge Myong J Joun in Boston to one count of conspiracy to commit visa fraud. Sentencing has been scheduled for August 20. According to US federal prosecutors, Patel and a co-conspirator carried out at least nine staged robberies at convenience stores and restaurants — five of them in Massachusetts — beginning in March 2023.

At least 82 killed in Israeli strikes on Gaza



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Deir al-Balah (Gaza), May 21: Israeli strikes continued to pound the Gaza Strip Wednesday, despite a surge in international anger at Israel's widening offensive.

The attacks killed at least 82 people, including several women and a week-old infant, according to the Gaza Health Ministry and area hospitals.

Israel began allowing dozens of humanitarian trucks into Gaza Tuesday, but the aid has not yet reached Palestinians in desperate need.

Jens Laerke, the spokesperson for the UN's humanitarian agency, said no trucks were picked up from the Gaza side of Kerem

Shalom, the Israeli border crossing with southern Gaza.

UN spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric said Tuesday that although the aid had entered Gaza, aid workers were not able to bring it to distribution points, after the Israeli military forced them to reload the supplies onto separate trucks and workers ran out of time.

The Israeli defence body that oversees humanitarian aid to Gaza said trucks were entering Gaza Wednesday morning, but it was unclear if that aid would move deeper into Gaza for distribution.

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, said its staff had waited several hours to collect aid from the border crossing in order to begin distribution but were unable to do so Tuesday. A few dozen Israeli activists opposed to Israel's decision to allow aid into Gaza while Hamas still holds Israeli hostages attempted to block trucks carrying supplies Wednesday morning, but were kept back by Israeli police.



Remembrance Day at Choeung Ek, a former Khmer Rouge "killing field," on the outskirts of Phnom Penh, Cambodia

PTI PHOTO

Tigers, jaguars, elephants latest to flee Mexico cartel violence

Veterinarians and animals, accompanied by the Mexican National Guard, began travelling along the freeway to seaside Mazatlan, where they plan to release the animals into another wildlife reserve away from the conflict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Culiacan (Mexico), May 21: A pack of veterinarians clamoured over hefty metal crates Tuesday morning, loading them one by one onto a fleet of semi-trucks. Among the cargo: tigers, monkeys, jaguars, elephants and lions — all fleeing the latest wave of cartel violence eclipsing the northern Mexican city of Culiacan.

For years, exotic pets of cartel members and circus animals have been living in a small animal refuge on the outskirts of Sinaloa's capital.

However, a bloody power struggle erupted last year between rival Sinaloa cartel factions, plunging the region into unprecedented violence and

leaving the leaders of the Ostok Sanctuary reeling from armed attacks, constant death threats and a cutoff from essential supplies needed to keep their 700 animals alive.

The aid organisation is now leaving Culiacan and transporting the animals hours across the state in hopes that they'll escape the brunt of the violence. But fighting has grown so widespread in the region that many fear it will inevitably catch up.

"We've never seen violence this extreme," said Ernesto Zazueta, president of the Ostok Sanctuary. "We're worried for the animals that come here to have a better future."

Cartel factions battle

Violence in the city explod-



ed eight months ago when two rival Sinaloa Cartel factions began warring for territory after the dramatic kidnapping of the leader of one of the groups by a son of notorious capo Joaquin "El Chapo" Guz-

mán who then delivered him to US authorities via a private plane.

Since then, intense fighting between the heavily armed factions has become the new normal for civilians in Culi-

We've never seen violence this extreme. We're worried for the animals that come here to have a better future

ERNESTO ZAZUETA | PRESIDENT, OSTOK SANCTUARY

acan, a city which for years avoided the worst of Mexico's violence in large part because the Sinaloa Cartel maintained such complete control.

"With the escalating war between the two factions of the Sinaloa Cartel, they have begun to extort, kidnap and rob cars because they need funds to finance their war," said security analyst David Saucedo. "And the civilians in Culiacan are the ones that suffer." Zazueta, the sanctuary di-

rector, said their flight from the city is another sign of just how far the warfare has seeped into daily life.

This week, refuge staff loaded up roaring animals onto a convoy as some trainers attempted to sooth the animals. One murmured in a soft voice as he fed a bag of carrots to an elephant in a shipping container, "I'm going to be right here, no one will do anything to you."

The sanctuary made the move without any public announcement, worried that they might face repercussions from local officials or the same cartels forcing them to flee, but they hope the animals will find some relief in Mazatlan after years of conflict.



Critical mineral supply chains can be highly vulnerable to supply shocks, be they from extreme weather, a technical failure or trade disruptions
FATIH BIROL | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IEA

AMAZON FASHION REBRANDS GEN Z STOREFRONT TO 'SERVE'

Amazon Fashion has rebranded its GenZ-dedicated online storefront from 'Next Gen Store' to 'Serve'. The online store has seen 3X growth in Gen Z customers and a 40 per cent year-over-year increase in shoppers from Tier II and III cities like Chandigarh, Kochi, Patna, Nagpur, Jaipur, and Surat, since April 2023, a company statement said



of the day quote

I think that EVs are one of those things that will hit a point where it is going to race ahead. It was racing already, but slowed down a bit. With every manufacturer now investing, I think that the power of many will fuel this (segment) further, giving consumers confidence
RAJAN AMBA | MD, JAGUAR LAND ROVER

A weak dollar supported gold prices. Investors are also evaluating sovereign risk after Moody's downgraded the US credit rating due to fiscal deficit concerns
CHINTAN MEHTA | CEO, ABANS FINANCIAL SERVICES

Indian property market is witnessing a trifecta of consolidation with consumers, lenders and landowners preferring to work with a handful of reputed real estate companies
ABHISHEK LODHA | MD AND CEO, MACROTECH DEVELOPERS

Q4 RESULTS

Fraud-hit IndusInd sees worst-ever show
New Delhi: Fraud-hit IndusInd Bank Wednesday reported a ₹2,329 crore loss for the March quarter, its worst performance ever, as the interim management opted to go for a deep-clean exercise beyond recognising the impact of wrong accounting practices. The fresh slippages galloped to ₹5,014 crore, largely due to the microfinance book, where a ₹1,800-crore incorrectly classified stress was unearthed and reported as a gross non-performing asset, and also some stress in the two-wheeler segment. Starting with a March 10 disclosure about a potential hit to the network because of incorrect recognition of derivative trades over the last two years, the last two months have been tumultuous for the Hindujas-promoted lender, and have also witnessed the immediate resignation of chief executive Sumant Kathpalia and his deputy Arun Khurana amid allegations of insider trading as well.

IndiGo posts highest profit of ₹3,068cr

New Delhi: InterGlobe Aviation, the parent of the country's largest airline IndiGo, Wednesday posted its highest ever fourth-quarter profit after tax of ₹3,067.5 crore, mainly helped by strong air travel demand. The company's profit after tax in the three months ended March 2025 jumped 62 per cent from ₹1,894.8 crore in the year-ago period. Its board has recommended a dividend of ₹10 per equity share. In the fourth quarter of the 2024-25 fiscal, IndiGo's capacity increased by 21 per cent to 42.1 billion while the number of passengers carried rose 19.6 per cent to 31.9 million.

Nalco profit jumps two-fold to ₹2,067cr

New Delhi: State-owned Nalco Wednesday reported twofold jump in consolidated net profit at ₹2,067.23 crore for March quarter 2025 due to higher revenue from operations. The company had logged a profit of ₹996.74 crore in the year-ago period, National Aluminium Company Ltd (Nalco) said in a filing to BSE. Revenue from operations in January-March FY25 rose to ₹5,267.83 crore from ₹3,579.05 crore a year ago. The PSU's profit in FY25 increased to ₹5,267.94 crore from ₹1,988.46 crore in FY24.

IndiGo marks long haul debut

The budget-carrier to commence flights to Manchester, Amsterdam in July

SPREADING WINGS
New Delhi, May 21: IndiGo will start operating direct flights from Mumbai to Manchester and Amsterdam with the leased Boeing 787-9 aircraft in July, and the services to the UK city will also mark the airline's long haul debut.



The airline, which has been expanding its fleet as well as overseas connections, will commence Mumbai-Manchester (UK) flight from July 1 and the Mumbai-Amsterdam (the Netherlands) service from July 2, according to releases issued Wednesday. Both services will be operated thrice a week and complimentary hot meals will be offered to the passengers on these routes. IndiGo said it will be the only airline offering direct connectivity between India and the Northern UK with the flight to Manchester. The airline's CEO Pieter Elbers said its long-haul foray marks a pivotal moment in its global expansion journey. "We are very proud as well as excited to open the sale of our first long-haul service connecting Mumbai with Manchester, a very special route in many ways," he added.

FIGHTING CYBER FRAUD

DoT INTRODUCES 'FINANCIAL FRAUD RISK INDICATOR'

Press Trust of India
New Delhi, May 21: The Telecom Department has introduced the 'Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)' that enables enhanced intelligence sharing with banks, UPI service providers and financial institutions, marking a major step towards tackling cyber fraud and financial crime, an official release said Wednesday.

This will enhance cyber protection and validation checks in case of mobile numbers flagged with this tool, when digital payment is proposed to be made to such numbers. FRI allows for swift, targeted, and collaborative action against suspected frauds in both telecom and financial domains, the release said. "...Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has announced sharing of 'Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)' with stakeholders -- an output from a multi-dimensional analytical tool developed as part of the Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP) to empower financial institutions with advance actionable intelligence for cyber fraud prevention," it said. Explaining the 'Financial Fraud Risk Indicator', it said this is a risk-based metric that classifies a mobile number to have been associated with 'Medium', 'High', or 'Very High' risk of financial fraud. This classification is an outcome of inputs obtained from various stakeholders including reporting on Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C's) National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP), DoT's Chakshu platform, and intelligence shared by banks and financial institutions. "It empowers stakeholders -- especially banks, NBFCs, and UPI service providers -- to prioritise enforcement and take additional customer protection measures in case a mobile number has high risk," the release added.

TRADE TALKS

India for full exemption from 26% tariff with US

Interim trade deal with US likely by July 8



Press Trust of India
New Delhi, May 21: India and the US are likely to agree on an interim trade agreement before July 8 with New Delhi pushing for full exemption from the 26 per cent reciprocal tariff on domestic goods, an official said. The US April 2 imposed an additional 26 per cent reciprocal tariff on Indian goods but suspended it for 90 days till July 9. However, the 10 per cent baseline tariff imposed by America remains in place. The government official said India's endeavour to protect its sensitive sectors may entail some quota or minimum import price (MIP). Such sectors include agri goods and dairy.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal was in Washington earlier this week to give an impetus to trade talks. He met with US Trade Representative (USTR) Jamie Greer and US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick. In a post on X, Goyal said that he held good discussions with the US Commerce Secretary towards expediting the first tranche of India-US bilateral trade agreement. "Talks are moving positively. Before July 8, we are looking at concluding an interim deal before the first tranche. It will include goods, non-tariff barriers, some areas of services also like digital. We are trying that the 26 per cent additional duty and the 10 per cent baseline tariff should not be there for India," the official said, adding that India is seeking concessions for its labour-intensive sectors such as textiles and leather. At present, the Trump administration requires approval from the US Congress to bring tariffs below the MFN (most favoured nation) rates. But the administration has the authority to remove the reciprocal tariffs imposed on a number of countries, including India. India may look at certain commitments from the US on the duty concessions for its labour-intensive sector in the first tranche of the proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA). Both countries have fixed a deadline to conclude the first phase of the pact by fall (September-October) of this year to more than double bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030. The minister-level meetings were followed by the deliberations between chief negotiators of the two countries, which will continue until May 22. Officials from New Delhi and Washington are looking to take advantage of the 90-day tariff pause window to advance the talks. To boost bilateral trade, India is seeking duty concessions for labour-intensive sectors like textiles, gems and jewellery, leather goods, garments, plastics, chemicals, shrimp, oil seeds, chemicals, grapes, and bananas in the proposed pact with America.

The US has suspended the additional 26% tariffs India till July 9. It was announced April 2 to bridge the widening trade deficit

MARKETS SNAP 3-DAY DECLINE

Press Trust of India
Mumbai, May 21: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded on Wednesday, snapping their three-day falling streak on the back of buying in blue-chips HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank and a firm trend in Asian peers. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 410.19 points or 0.51 per cent to settle at 81,596.63 with 24 of its constituents ending higher and six ending lower. During the day, it surged 835.2 points or 1.02 per cent to a high of 82,021.64. The NSE Nifty climbed 129.55 points or 0.52 per cent to 24,813.45. Among Sensex firms, Bajaj Finserv rose the most by 2.02 per cent. Tata Steel, Sun Pharma, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, NTPC, Nestle, Tata Motors, Hindustan Unilever and Mahindra & Mahindra also advanced. IndusInd Bank fell the most by 1.39 per cent. Kotak Mahindra Bank, Power Grid and ITC were among the laggards. The BSE midcap gauge advanced 0.90 per cent and small cap index by 0.51 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, capital goods (1.65 per cent), realty (1.58 per cent), industrials (1.35 per cent), healthcare (0.93 per cent) and teck (0.81 per cent) were the gainers. Consumer durables emerged as the only laggard. As many as 2,292 stocks advanced while 1,685 declined and 138 remained unchanged on the BSE. Among Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng in settled in the positive territory while Japan's Nikkei 225 index ended lower. Markets in Europe were trading in the negative territory. US markets ended lower Tuesday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 1.19 per cent to USD 66.16 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹10,016.10 crore Tuesday, according to exchange data. Sensex tanked 872.98 points or 1.06 per cent to settle at 81,186.44 while Nifty tumbled 261.55 points or 1.05 per cent to 24,683.90.



SNIPPETS

Notice to Uber over 'Advance Tip' feature for faster service

New Delhi: Consumer protection watchdog CCPA has issued a notice to ride-hailing platform Uber for allegedly "forcing or nudging" users to pay advance tips for faster service. "The practice of 'Advance Tip' is deeply concerning," Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said in a social media post. "Forcing or nudging users to pay a tip in advance, for faster service is unethical and exploitative. Such actions fall under unfair trade practices," the minister wrote. Joshi emphasised that tipping is meant as a token of appreciation, given after service completion, not as an entitlement beforehand. Taking cognizance of the issue, the minister directed the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) to investigate the matter. "Today CCPA has issued a notice to Uber in this regard, seeking explanation from the platform," he posted. "Fairness, transparency and accountability must be upheld in all customer interactions," Joshi added.

India trims gas-based power generation capacity to 20.13GW

New Delhi: The country has reduced gas-based power generation capacity by 20 per cent or 5 GW in the last three months to 20.13 gigawatt (GW) as of April. The development comes at a time when the government has issued a directive to use unutilised gas-based generation capacity to ensure uninterrupted power supply during the summer season, when projected demand is expected to hit 277 GW. According to Central Electricity Authority (CEA) data, India's overall installed power generation capacity was 472,468 GW in April, while the share of gas-based capacity was at 20.13 GW. India's overall installed power generation capacity was at 470,448 GW in February and the share of gas-based capacity was at 25.18 GW.

Oil demand expected to grow 4% annually over next decade

In 2025 so far, oil consumption in India stands at 4.8 million barrel per day, up 4.3% from the previous calendar year

Press Trust of India

New Delhi, May 21: India's domestic demand for oil is expected to increase at a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of 4 per cent over the next decade, S&P Global Commodity Insights, a division of S&P Global, said Wednesday. In 2025 so far, oil consumption in India stands at 4.8 million barrel per day (MBPD), up 4.3 per cent from the previous calendar year. The country's crude oil demand is 5.4 MBPD this year. The global oil prices have lost some shine in 2025 year-to-date on the back of a challenging de-

mand environment exacerbated by supply growth from OPEC+ as well as beyond, Pulkit Agarwal, Head of India Content (Cross Commodities), said. "For India, oil demand continues to grow, helped by favourable demographics and economic growth. India is quickly assuming a prominent place in the global oil demand growth order, while the base is still small to have an oversized implication on the global markets," he said. The oil demand is expected to continue to grow at a CAGR of 4 per cent for a decade, Agarwal said. India's choice of oil sources



continues to evolve as India's pivot to Russia continues largely unhindered in the fourth year of their meaningful initiation, Agarwal said. Speaking on renewable pet-

rochemicals, Stuti Chawla, Associate Director, India and Middle East Chemicals Pricing, said India's petrochemical demand is likely to outpace GDP growth in 2025-26 (Apr-Mar), de-

spite concerns over a drop in urban demand and inventory build-up seen in the domestic markets amid tariff concerns. In a world plagued with slowing consumer demand, uncertainty over tariffs, tighter margins and over-capacity, global petrochemical producers are betting on India as a key demand driver in 2025, she said. Gauri Jauhar, Executive Director, Energy Transition & Cleantech Consulting, who spoke on clean energy, said achieving net zero carbon emission, energy transition targets across multiple technology options will require connecting the dots of policy, regulatory and corporate action with a push for greater consistency. When asked about challenges expected in India's clean energy journey, Agarwal said for any kind of transition the cost of green energy is, of course, a big major factor which determines how fast the transition happens. "But, when we talk about transition and when we talk about any kind of transition, the older form of energy is almost never phased out. Remember, the world transition from coal to oil doesn't mean that the world does not consume coal. The world today is consuming more coal than probably it ever did," he said.

SKY's heroics put MI in playoffs

DELHI CAPITALS KNOCKED OUT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 21: Suryakumar Yadav's doughty 73 not out proved to be the difference as Mumbai Indians sealed the fourth and final play-off berth with a 59-run trouncing of Delhi Capitals in the Indian Premier League here Wednesday.

Suryakumar's masterclass — a 43-ball knock with seven fours and half a dozen sixes in adverse situation — paved the way for a dominating win. The five-time champions had not made the play-offs last year.

Delhi Capitals, who came into this contest with their fair share of opportunity to reach the final four, saw the tables being turned on them when MI batters collected 48 runs off the last two overs.

But the visitors were also guilty of a meek reply in a do-or-die contest which had their top-order blown away in the powerplay, leaving the rest of the contest a mere formality.

Chasing 181, Delhi Capitals, who were without regular skipper Axar Patel in this game, rolled over for 121 in 18.2 overs



with Sameer Rizvi (39) being the top scorer.

Mitchell Santner was the pick of the Mumbai Indians bowlers, returning 4-0-11-3 and accounting for Rizvi, Vipraj Nigam (20) and Ashutosh Sharma (18). Jasprit Bumrah enjoyed another successful outing as he returned 3.2-0-12-3.

Delhi Capitals' hopes suffered severe blows right at the start of the chase when stand-in skipper Faf du Plessis (6) and KL

Rahul (11) fell cheaply, leaving the others with a mountainous task to accomplish.

Rahul, coming off an unbeaten ton in the last game, perished when he edged one off the toe end of the bat awkwardly off Trent Boult (1/29) while du Plessis hit one straight to long-on off Deepak Chahar (1/22). Bumrah left DC

reeling at 65/5 when he trapped Tristan Stubbs (2) in front of the wickets and in the 15th over, Santner dismissed Rizvi and

Ashutosh to shut the doors completely on the Delhi Capitals.

Earlier in the first half, it was Suryakumar who anchored MI's resistance even as Delhi's spin pair of Kuldeep Yadav (1/22) and Nigam (0/25) exploited the sluggish nature of the surface to the maximum benefit.

On an uncharacteristic Wankhede Stadium pitch which had plenty of grip and turn for spinners and slow cutters doing the job for fast bowlers, Suryakumar dug in to produce a quality knock for the five-time IPL winners.

Suryakumar forged two crucial stands which revived a faltering innings. First, amid a challenging phase of play with DC's spinners dominating the proceedings, Suryakumar put on 55 runs for the fourth wicket with Tilak Varma. Towards the end, found a perfect foil in Dhir (24 off 8 balls, 2x4s, 2x6s) to add another 57 runs from a mere 21 balls.

The tables turned drastically in the last two overs when the Indian T20 skipper Suryakumar and Dhir hit a grand total of five sixes and four boundaries to add 48 runs, shifting the momentum completely in MI's favour.

However, at one stage it all

looked far too difficult for the Mumbai batters who struggled right from the end of the powerplay until the 18th over began.

Rohit Sharma (5) fell to a left-arm pacer for the fourth time this season edging one behind off Mustafizur Rahman ((1/30), Ryan Rickelton (25) and Will Jacks (21) perished after making impressive starts while Tilak made a laborious run-a-ball 27.

BRIEF SCORES

Mumbai Indians: 180 for five in 20 overs (Suryakumar Yadav 73 not out; Mukesh Kumar 2/48) beat **Delhi Capitals: 121** allout in 18.2 overs (Sameer Rizvi 39; Mitchell Santner 3/11, Jasprit Bumrah 3/12)

IPL STANDINGS					
TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS
GT	12	9	3	0.795	18
RCB	12	8	3	0.482	17
PBKS	12	8	3	0.389	17
MI	13	8	5	1.292	16
DC	13	6	6	-0.019	13
KKR	13	5	6	0.193	12
LSG	12	5	7	-0.506	10
SRH	12	4	7	-1.005	9
RR	14	4	10	-0.549	8
CSK	13	3	10	-1.030	6

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

City climb to third

Omar Marmoush scores stunning goal as Kevin De Bruyne says goodbye to Man City



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Manchester, May 21: Omar Marmoush's stunning long-range strike upstaged Kevin De Bruyne on the Manchester City great's Etihad farewell.

Marmoush let fly from around 30 yards (meters) to put City ahead in its 3-1 win against Bournemouth in the Premier League Tuesday.

The victory moved Pep Guardiola's team up to third in the standings and left Champions League qualification in its own hands heading into the last round of the season.

"It's really important. To be in the Champions League after what happened (this season) will be really nice," the City manager said.

De Bruyne was making his final home appearance for City before leaving the club as a free agent at the end of the season.

After a trophy-laden 10 years, the Belgium international was greeted with a huge banner declaring him "King Kev" and given a standing ovation when he was substituted off in the second half.

But it was Marmoush's goal after 14 minutes that lit up the match as his dipping shot clipped the post before crashing into the top corner.

It was the type of goal that De Bruyne would have been proud of in a career that has seen him score numerous spectacular strikes of his own.

De Bruyne missed a glorious chance to cap his farewell with a goal when missing an open net from close range — shooting against the bar.

"Terrible, terrible," De Bruyne said of his miss. "There's no excuses. My son is going to be very tough on me today."

Bernardo Silva doubled City's lead in the 38th and substitute Nico Gonzalez added a third in the 89th. Deniel Jebbison pulled one back for Bournemouth in added time in a game that saw both teams reduced to 10 men.

The win saw City bounce back from its FA Cup final loss to Crystal Palace Saturday. It

also means City needs a point in its final game against Fulham Sunday to all but guarantee Champions League soccer next season, given its superior goal difference to top-five rivals Chelsea and Aston Villa.

After ending the season trophyless for the first time in eight years, City can at least secure the consolation of a place in European club soccer's top competition.

The loss, however, ended Bournemouth's slim hopes of qualifying for Europe.

DE BRUYNE TRIBUTE
De Bruyne was fighting back tears as he addressed the crowd after the match and watched a video montage of tributes from club greats on the stadium's big screen.

He was given a guard of honor by his teammates as he walked to the middle of the field with his wife and three children.

City said it would erect a statue in his honor outside the stadium.

"It means I will always be part of this club," De Bruyne said. "Whenever I come back with family and friends, I will be able to see myself so I will always be here."

City also unveiled a mosaic of De Bruyne at the club's academy and named a road on its campus after him.

The 33-year-old De Bruyne was part of a period of unprecedented success for City, which saw it win 16 major trophies including six Premier League titles and the Champions League.

He waved to the crowd and City fans serenaded him as he left the field in the second half before embracing Guardiola on the touchline.

"There are players that are unique," Guardiola said. "In 10 years there are a lot of games, a lot of titles, a lot of moments. Today summarized how much love was there (for him)."

He is the latest City great to have a mural made in his honor, joining Yaya Toure, Joe Hart, David Silva, Vincent Kompany, Sergio Aguero, Ferdinandinho and Ilkay Gundogan.

SHORT TAKES

Major boost for golf

New Delhi: Indian golf is set to get a major boost as Grand Slam winner, Rory McIlroy has confirmed his participation in the USD four million inaugural DP World India Championship here later this year. This will be the American world No 2's maiden outing in India. The championship will take place at the Delhi Golf Club from October 16 to 19. The 2025 Masters Tournament champion confirmed his status as a global golfing icon when he completed a career Grand Slam in memorable fashion in April, adding the Green Jacket to his four previous Major victories at the 2011 US Open, the US PGA Championship in 2012 and 2014 and The Open in 2014.

Kanak clinches gold

New Delhi: Budding Haryana shooter Kanak opened India's account at the ISSF Junior World Cup in Germany with a gold medal in women's 10m air pistol Wednesday. The 17-year-old, a junior World Championship silver medallist in Lima last year, scored 239.0 in the 24-shot eight-women final to upstage Anna Dulce of Moldova, a two-time Olympian and reigning European champion by 1.7 points. Chinese Taipei's Chen Yen-Ching won the bronze medal in the event taking place in Suhl. Earlier, two Indian shooters qualified for the final with Prachi securing a spot behind Kanak in fifth place as they shot scores of 571 and 572 respectively.

Eves in 4-nation tourney

Bangalore: The Indian junior women's hockey team Wednesday departed for a four-nation tournament in Rosario, Argentina to be played from May 25 till June 2. The friendly tournament, part of the team's preparation for this year's FIH Hockey Junior Women's World Cup in Chile, will feature hosts Argentina, Uruguay and Chile besides India. The Indians will play two matches against each of the participating nations. The tournament aims to help the team evaluate its performance, test combinations and refine strategies ahead of the World Cup in December. The Indian squad, coached by Tushar Khandker, will be led by goalkeeper Nidhi, while forward Hina Bano will serve as vice-captain.

Good signs for Man Utd

Bilbao: Manchester United will have a trio of players back from injury for the Europa League final against Tottenham, coach Ruben Amorim said, with Diogo Dalot, Leny Yoro and Joshua Zirkzee all available to come off the bench. All three players took part in training Tuesday and could play at least a few minutes if needed. "Very good for us," Amorim said. "Of course, they are limited in the minutes for the game but they can help us win the game." Matthijs de Ligt will not be available but traveled to Bilbao to support his teammates. Lisandro Martinez is the only other first-team player not available as he remains out with a serious knee injury.

Odisha hosts Gymnastics National Camps for Asian Championship

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Odisha is currently hosting the Senior and Junior National Coaching Camps for Artistic Gymnastics (Men and Women) in preparation for the upcoming Artistic Gymnastics Asian Championships. The camps, being held from 16 May to 9 June 2025, have brought together some of the country's finest gymnasts for focused training under the guidance of experienced national coaches.

A total of 22 athletes, including 8 men and 8 women, along with 4 coaches, are part of the senior camp. The junior camp includes 6 men and 6 women gymnasts, also supported by

4 coaches. The camp is being led by Rakesh Patra, a former international gymnast from Odisha, who brings valuable experience and insight to the programme. Additionally, coach Bishweswar Nandi is also mentoring the gymnasts.

Odisha continues to work closely with the Gymnastics Federation of India to promote and develop gymnastics nationwide. Through its world-class infrastructure and athlete-centric approach, the state is playing a key role in supporting India's preparations for major international competitions.

Notably, four gymnasts from Odisha have been selected to represent India at the Asian Gymnastics Championships.



World C'ships bronze-medallist boxer Simranjit Kaur turns pro

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 21: Former World championship bronze medallist Simranjit Kaur has become the latest Indian boxer to turn professional.

The 29-year-old two-time Asian Championship medallist, who represented India in the Tokyo Olympics, decided to take the plunge by signing with former American professional boxer Roy Jones Jr. and Indian professional boxer Mandeep Jangra.

Simranjit, who finished second at the National Championship in the 65kg category in March, is the third Indian boxer to turn professional this year after World championship med-

I am very happy that my career is starting with such a promoter, who has given many star boxers to the world. Mandeep Jangra is already making the country proud in the professional ring and I will also try to get recognition for the country

SIMRANJIT KAUR

allists Nishant Dev and Amit Panghal. With this move, Simranjit follows in the footsteps of 2008 Olympic bronze medallist Vijender Singh, Vikas Krishan, Sarita Devi and Neeraj Goyat, who also moved to professional boxing after a good run in the amateur circuit.



Nagal crashes out of French Open qualifying



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, May 21: India's top singles player Sumit Nagal bowed out of the French Open singles qualifying following a 2-6 4-6 defeat against lower-ranked Jurij Rodionov in the second round, here Wednesday.

Nagal, ranked 170th, lost to the 225th-ranked Austrian in one hour and 29 minutes at the Roland Garros. He had beaten American Mitchell Krueger in the first round.

Nagal will miss the singles main draw of a Grand Slam after appearing in all four in 2024.

After losing the first set and trailing 2-4 in the second, Nagal got an opportunity to bounce back in the seventh game. He grabbed the chance by getting the break back.

He again fell back in the next game, losing the first two points to be 0-30 but managed to hold, making it 4-4. Serving out to stay in the match, Nagal dropped serve in the 10th game to make an exit.

368 BILLION GLOBAL VIEWING MINUTES

CT 2025 sets new broadcast records

A blockbuster final in Dubai saw India claim the iconic white jackets, and their victory over New Zealand March 9, became the most watched Champions Trophy match ever

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Dubai, May 21: The ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025, played in Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates from February 19 to March 9, was the most viewed Champions Trophy ever, recording a growth over the 2017 edition, as the International Cricket Council (ICC) Wednesday unveiled the staggering broadcast viewership figures noted across the globe.

The 2025 edition of the tournament saw 368 billion global viewing minutes across global coverage, a remarkable 19 percent increase from the previous tournament held in England and Wales in 2017. The event became the most watched ICC Men's Champions Trophy ever. Moreover, it also drew 308 million global viewing minutes per over, the most ever for an ICC event.

A blockbuster final in Dubai saw India claim the iconic white jackets, and their victory over New Zealand March 9 became the most watched Champions Trophy match ever, with 65.3 billion live viewing



minutes globally, shattering the record set during the 2017 final by 52.1 per cent, the ICC said in a release.

The thrilling finale also takes third spot in the most watched ICC matches of all time globally by live watch time, while in India itself, the fixture also represents the third most watched ICC match ever, only surpassed by the India vs New Zealand semi-final at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023, and the final of that same event

THESE MILESTONES ARE A TESTAMENT TO THE GAME'S EXPANDING FOOTPRINT AND THE PASSION OF CRICKET FANS WORLDWIDE

JAY SHAH | CHAIRMAN, ICC

between India and Australia.

The tournament became the most watched Champions Trophy ever in Australia too, with overall viewing hours up by 65 percent from 2017. With

enhanced coverage featuring the introduction of a Hindi language feed, Amazon Prime Video witnessed the highest viewership of any ICC event shown exclusively on the platform.

Despite the hosts Pakistan falling short in their pursuit of back-to-back Champions Trophy success, viewing hours for the 2025 event in Pakistan rose by 24 percent versus figures accumulated during their 2017 trophy-winning campaign.