



Trump targets tax exemption status of law firms



WASHINGTON, (HS) : First the nation's top law firms. Then its premier universities. Now, President Donald Trump is leaning on the advocacy groups that underpin US civil society. Trump said Thursday that the administration is looking at the tax-exempt status not just of Harvard, but environmental groups and specifically the ethics watchdog organisation Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, or CREW. It could be a devastating financial blow to the nonprofit organisations - and his perceived political foes.

Early this week, President Trump escalated his war against elite US universities with a threat to strip Harvard's tax-exempt status if the country's most famous educational establishment refuses to submit to wide-ranging government oversight. Harvard stands out for defying Trump, in contrast to several other universities and a string of powerful law firms that have folded under intense pressure from the White House in its crackdown on American institutions. The threat of a major tax bill comes after Harvard already lost \$2.2 billion in federal funding on Monday. Trump said nonprofit Harvard "should lose its Tax Exempt Status and be Taxed as a Political Entity" if it does not submit to his demands for the college to change the way it runs itself, including selection of students and authority for professors. Tax-exempt status is "totally contingent on acting in the PUBLIC INTEREST," he added in the post on his Truth Social network. Trump and his White House team have justified their pressure campaign on universities as a reaction to what they say is uncontrolled anti-Semitism and support for the Palestinian militant group

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CM Hails Koraput District On Winning PM's Award For Excellence In Public Administration



Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Majhi has congratulated the Koraput district administration on being selected for the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration. Taking to his X handle, Majhi wrote: "Congratulations to @dmkoraput and their team on being selected for the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2024. Their

exemplary work in holistic district development is truly commendable. May they continue to achieve bigger milestones and inspire others." Although the award year mentioned in the CM's praise is 2024, the district is set to receive the award in 2025 for its outstanding performance. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will present the award to Koraput District Collector, V. Keerthi

Vasana, at a ceremony in New Delhi on April 21.

Vasana thanked the district's residents, officials and staff for their hard work and dedication, which led to this achievement. The award recognises Koraput district's significant contributions to overall development, particularly in effectively implementing 11 central government schemes. By engaging with the public and

showcasing its capabilities, the district administration has earned its place among the best districts in the country.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has expressed deep grief over the death of two students who drowned in Keshari Kunda, Baitarani River in Keonjhar. He extended his condolences to the bereaved families and announced a financial compensation of Rs 4 lakh from the State Disaster Management Fund to the next of kin of both deceased students. The two students, identified as Nitesh Peldar and Pritam Mahamanat, were swept away while bathing in the river with friends. They were pronounced dead at the Champua Community Health Centre. According to reports, eight students had gone to the river to bathe due to the hot summer. Three of them, including Nitesh and Pritam, were swept away. Despite the efforts of others, the two students couldn't be saved. They were later rescued and taken to the Champua Community Health Centre, where the doctor declared them dead.

PM's Top Officials in Odisha



Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two principal secretaries, Pramod Kumar Mishra and Shaktikanta Das, are currently on a visit to Odisha. Shaktikanta Das arrived in Odisha on Thursday night with his wife, while Pramod Kumar Mishra reached on Friday. Their simultaneous visit is considered a significant event. Shaktikanta Das is scheduled to tour Cuttack and Keonjhar districts, while Pramod Kumar Mishra will be in Sambalpur, reviewing urban development projects. Since the formation of the BJP government in Odisha, the Prime Minister's Office has been actively overseeing various schemes and initiatives in the state. Pramod Kumar Mishra has been focusing on Odisha's development for nearly a decade, while Shaktikanta Das, after retiring as RBI Governor, has also prioritised Odisha's programs in his new role. Later, he will attend the convocation ceremony of IIM Sambalpur as the chief guest tomorrow at 9 am. Tomorrow he will discuss various projects of the Tourism and Urban Development Department. Meanwhile, Shaktikanta Das reached Bhubaneswar last night. Shaktikanta Das is on a three-day visit to Odisha. On this occasion, he has an important meeting with the Chief Minister and the state government. Tomorrow, Shaktikanta Das will go to Ghatgaon Tarini Temple and offer prayers to Maa Tarini. Y-plus security has been provided for him. There is a buzz in the media about the visit of two senior officials to Odisha in two days, the Prime Minister's Office has a special focus on Odisha.

ACS Nikunj Bihari Dhal Goes on Central Deputation



Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Senior IAS officer Nikunj Bihari Dhal, who is currently serving as the Additional Chief Secretary to Odisha CM, has been appointed as the Secretary of Union Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved his appointment. He will assume charge after the superannuation of Umang Narula. The

Notification issued by the Appointment Committee of the Cabinet stated "Nikunja Bihari Dhal, IAS (OR:93), presently in the cadre, as Secretary, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs vice Shri Umang Narula, IAS (AGMUT:89) upon his superannuation on 30.06.2025" The 1993 batch officer, Dhal had earlier served as the Chief Electoral Officer. Similarly, the 1994 batch Odisha Cadre IAS officer Santosh Kumar Sarangi has been appointed as the Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. The ACC also approved in-situ upgradation of Odisha Cadre IAS officer Ranjana Chopra to the level of Special Secretary. She became the Special Secretary and Finance Advisor, Ministry of Culture.

Kalabaisakhi Rain to Continue in Odisha Till April 22

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Odisha is expected to experience Kalabaisakhi rain for the next four days. The Regional Meteorological Centre issued a warning for rain and thunderstorm till April 22, with a change in weather expected by April 23. Two active trough lines or low-pressure systems over the state are triggering the rain. The

Meteorological Centre has forecast light to moderate rain in most places for the next three days, followed by a 2-3 degree temperature rise. This will lead to an unbearable heatwave. A warning has been issued for 25 districts in the next 24 hours, with a yellow alert for heavy rain in Mayurbhanj, Balasore, and

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Amit Shah Urges Hiding Maoists To Surrender, Join Mainstream

New Delhi, (HS) : Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday asked all underground Maoists to surrender as soon as possible and join the mainstream, saying the government is determined to free the country from the scourge of Maoism before March 31, 2026. Amit Shah also said that the Cobra commandos and Chhattisgarh Police have arrested 22 notorious Maoists with modern weapons and explosive materials in various operations in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district. He said that 11 Maoists have also surrendered in Badesetti Panchayat of Sukma due to which this panchayat has become completely Maoist-free. "I appeal to the hiding Naxalites to lay down their arms as soon as possible and join the mainstream



by adopting the surrender policy of the Modi government. We are determined to free the country from the scourge of Naxalism before 31 March 2026," Amit Shah wrote on 'X'.

Addressing the CRPF raising day function at Neemuch in Madhya Pradesh earlier on Thursday, the home minister said that Maoism is now confined to just four districts in

India. "Naxalism has been confined to just four districts in India. The menace will end in the country by March 31, 2026, as stated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The CAPF (Central Armed Police Forces) and the CRPF, especially its CoBRA battalion, are playing a major role in eliminating Naxalism from the country," he said. The Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) is a specialised unit of the CRPF, known for its proficiency in guerrilla and jungle warfare, particularly in combating the Maoist menace. Amit Shah said the CRPF has set up over 400 forward operating bases in Maoist affected areas and violence in these regions has come down by more than 70 per cent because of this and "we are now close to ending it".

Coast Guard Rescues Two Olive Ridley Turtles Entangled in 600 Kg of Ghost Nets Off Odisha Coast

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : In a heartening act of marine rescue, the crew of Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Ship Vighraha successfully freed two endangered Olive Ridley turtles entangled in nearly 600 kilograms of ghost nets in the sea, officials confirmed on Friday.

The rescue is part of the

ongoing efforts under 'Operation Olivia', the ICG's annual initiative aimed at protecting the Olive Ridley turtles during their breeding and mass nesting season along the Odisha coast, which spans from February to March. Ghost nets-abandoned or lost fishing nets drifting in the ocean-pose a serious threat to marine

life, especially to species like the Olive Ridley turtle that are already listed as vulnerable under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. Since its inception in 1991, Operation Olivia has been instrumental in coordinating with central and state agencies to safeguard these delicate marine species. The ICG continues to

conduct aerial surveillance, deploy ships, and work closely with forest and fisheries departments to ensure safe nesting grounds.

This year's nesting season has shown encouraging numbers, especially at Rushikulya, one of the key mass nesting sites.

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Death Toll from US Overnight Airstrikes on Yemeni Fuel Port Rises to 74: Houthis

Sanaa, (HS) : The death toll from US overnight airstrikes on the Yemeni fuel port of Ras Isa has increased to 74, with 171 others wounded, according to an update from Houthi-run health authorities on Friday.

The health authorities stated that rescue teams are working to search for victims and identify missing persons. The strikes started late Thursday night. According to Houthi-run al-Masirah TV, the victims included workers and employees of the port, who came under violent US airstrikes while on duty.

Five paramedics were also among the casualties, said the television in an earlier report, adding that they were killed upon their arrival on ambulances at the scene, in the second wave of US

airstrikes on the port that took place overnight shortly after the first. More than 14 airstrikes on the fuel port were reported during the two waves, destroying concrete tanks storing imported fuel and igniting massive fires. The fires were extinguished within hours, said the report. A resident confirmed to Xinhua that among the victims were employees, truck drivers, contracted workers, and civilian trainees of the port, adding that rescue teams recovering bodies and extinguishing fires were also targeted in subsequent strikes. The port, northwest of Yemen's Red Sea city of Hodeidah, has been a main lifeline for importing fuel into the areas seized by the Houthi group. The group has controlled vast areas of northern



Yemen since it started a civil war against the government in late 2014. Earlier, US Central

Command (USCENTCOM) confirmed in a statement that it struck and destroyed Ras Isa on

Thursday, "to eliminate this source of fuel for" and "degrade the economic source of power"

of the Houthis. "The Houthis have continued to benefit economically and militarily from countries and companies that provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organisation," USCENTCOM said on social media platform X. The United States redesignated the Houthi group as a terrorist organisation after President Donald Trump assumed power in January. Xinhua news agency reported. USCENTCOM alleged that the Houthis "use fuel to sustain their military operations, as a weapon of control, and to benefit economically from embezzling the profits from the import". Shortly after the heavy airstrikes, Yemeni Information Minister Moammar al-Eryani blamed the targeting of the fuel

port on the Houthis, accusing the militia of transforming the port "from an economic facility serving Yemenis into a centre for smuggling weapons and fuel." Meanwhile, Minister of Oil and Minerals Saeed al-Shamasi confirmed the readiness of government-controlled ports in Aden, Nishtun, Mukalla, and Mocha to receive fuel and food shipments sufficient to meet market demands across all regions of Yemen. In response, the Houthis denounced the strikes as "a full-fledged war crime," dismissing the US and the Yemeni government's accusations and insisting that "the port is a civilian, not a military facility".

In a statement released Friday, the Houthis said the US

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China's Retaliation

On April 2, Donald Trump announced the imposition of tariffs on most of America's trading partners. A week later, triggered by turmoil in the bond market - the 10-year US treasury yield touched 4.51 per cent - Trump reversed his stance, announcing a 90-day pause on tariffs for most nations. The exception was China. Trump, in fact, raised tariffs on China to a staggering 125 per cent. On April 15, the White House said that "China now faces up to a 245 per cent tariff" due to its retaliatory actions. The focus of the trade war now appears to have narrowed. China has, however, refused to bend, vowing to "fight to the end", even as more than 75 countries have reached out to discuss new trade deals, according to the White House. Beijing has retaliated in kind, by not only raising tariffs on US imports, but also unveiling non-tariff measures that hurt American interests. For instance, it has imposed restrictions on exports of rare earth elements that are critical in the energy, automobile and defence sectors. Considering that China accounts for 70 per cent of production and 90 per cent of processing of rare earth elements as per studies, it exercises a stranglehold over these supply chains. Reportedly, China has also asked its airlines to stop purchases of Boeing jets. The Trump administration has also unveiled some non-tariff measures. It has imposed restrictions on Nvidia's exports of H20 artificial intelligence chips to China - the company expects to take a hit of \$5.5 billion in its first quarter earnings as a result. Amidst this escalating trade war, Chinese president Xi Jinping has embarked on a three-nation Southeast Asia tour. On Monday, he visited Vietnam, where he is reported to have said that the two countries should jointly oppose "unilateral bullying". On Wednesday, he met with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, and the trip concluded in Cambodia. The US has imposed a tariff of 46 per cent on Vietnam, 49 per cent on Cambodia and 24 per cent on Malaysia. In this uncertain global environment, while each country will be guided by the imperative of protecting its self-interest, no one is likely to emerge unscathed from a trade war that involves the world's largest consumer and producer.

Some like India fear that as exports of countries face hurdles in accessing markets, the export machinery could be directed towards them, raising concerns of dumping. As reported in this paper, the Indian government is estimating the "risk of a diversion in trade from other countries to India", especially of US farm products and goods from China, Vietnam and Indonesia. The government is looking at "import surges and has identified some countries for more intense monitoring". This period of uncertainty calls for carefully calibrated policy responses, not knee-jerk reactions.

19th April

Holy Saturday



Religious holidays have a way of bringing people together and this is why we celebrate Holy Saturday on April 19 this year. Holy Saturday marks the last day of the Holy Week. Jesus was laid to rest on this day. He was enclosed inside a tomb whilst his followers held a 40-hour vigil in his honor. All over the world, people also observe the last day of their Lent on this day, which they had begun months prior. Lent is a period of reflection and preparation for Easter Sunday. During this time, many people around the world give up one thing that they absolutely love. Traditionally, people abstain from eating certain food items, usually their favorites.

Holy Saturday in Christianity holds a lot of significance due to the dark and light elements it encompasses. There's much to take away from the day's events due to the lessons it imparts. Let's take a closer look at its history. In Holy Week, Holy Saturday is the last day of the week, falling after Good Friday and before Easter Sunday. The date is decided using the Ecclesiastical Tables that was composed by the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. The date of Holy Saturday and, by extension, Holy Week, determines the date of Easter Sunday as it occurs on the spring equinox's first full moon. On Holy Saturday, Jesus was laid to rest by his followers, all of whom observed a 40-hour-long vigil outside his tomb. The 40-hour vigil also saw people observing Lent. The early church celebrated Lent with large baptism ceremonies. However, the tradition died down some time later due to many Christians' suspended state, especially those belonging to the Western Churches. Even so, many still observe Lent in the Eastern Churches.

Many accounts state that Jesus, during his state of death, went to hell to save and retrieve the souls of good people, including Adam and Eve. There are different versions out there, but the spirit of unity remains in the celebrations of Holy Saturday. The day is also known as the Great and Holy Saturday, or as the Great Sabbath in most Eastern Churches, or as Hallelujah Saturday (Brazil and Portugal). Regardless of the differences, the day is celebrated with much unity and traditions.



Suresh Chandra Sarangi

The incredible journey of the Dollar after the second world war, as the reserve currency of the world and its connection with the global economy is the story of the success of the postwar financial system. The Almighty Dollar, today faces an unprecedented risk of losing its lustre. With all the attendant risks. The Dollar has remained the most resilient reserve currency that rules the roost. Whether it is a shopping Mall in Delhi or Chicago, the Chinese central bank or the Nigerian railway, the Iraq oil fields, the free Trade and the world financial system, all depends upon the all pervasive dollar. Like Napoleon's statement that when France sneezes, entire Europe catches cold and when there is a spark in France, the entire Europe catches fire. When the dollar shrinks, the world is beset with its consequences and when the dollar swells the world feels like catching cold.

Let us delve in to the Breton woods system of payment settlement mechanism, which is based on the dollar, which defined the strength of related currencies in respect to the Dollar. This established the supremacy of the Dollar, and emerged as the world currency, which is a standard and all other existing or future currencies of the world was/is pegged to the dollar. Five key

Uma Shankar Prasad

Biju Babu was a great Indian and a prodigious Oriya too. He dedicated his entire life to build a great egalitarian and democratic India. His life was a saga of sacrifice and adventure. His ability to create confidence among the people of Odisha and inspire them was phenomenal. He had a remarkable capacity to transmit his cheerful strength to others. For that Julian Huxley, the great Zoologist of International fame and the brother of eminent world philosopher Aldous Huxley speaking about Biju Pattnaik has rightly said "A memorable Indian whose adventures will surly fill a book. As per the remark of an eminent Economist the long life can be read as something of a history of India back to the time when the country was run by the British. And he gave Indian politics a rare fresh of colour. When Dr Ram Manohar Lohia was seriously ill and admitted in Wellington hospital New Delhi almost in a stage of coma. It was almost the daily routine of Biju Babu to come and see Dr. Lohia in the hospital which proofs his servitude. The affectionate feelings of Mr Pattnaik to words Dr Lohia one day familiar with the " Quit India Movement of 1942 lunched by Mahatma Gandhi were well aware of the fact that Biju Babu along with Dr Lohia, Jaya Prakash Narayan, Aruna Asaf Ali and Achut Patwardhan kept the flag of 1942 movement flying after Gandhiji's arrest. Biju Babu was a young pilot then. He was courageous enough to make the supreme sacrifice by actively responding to the clarion call of 'Do or Die' of Mahatma Gandhi. He was arrested and put behind the bars along with other leaders.

Such dynamic figure Bijupatnaik was born in Cuttack, Orissa on very holy day on 5th March, 1916 in the lap of Ashalata Devi and Laxminarayan Pattnaik. Although his father Laxminarayan Pattnaik was in judicial service but was a great nationalist and also a

elements of Breton Woods system was global integration, creation of new institutions, recapitalisation of banks, formulation of fiscal and monetary policy, and finally establishment of a new world order. That order provided stability, created a new International Monetary System, helped promote economic growth, and financial stability to the post world war 2 period. But in 2025, new developments in USA, in the name of MAGA ,make America great again, and trade tariff escalation, imposed by president Donald Trump has shook the world economy, triggered a trade war and has caused the weakness in the reserve currency Dollar and the world simply appears to be degenerating into chaos. Fear is rising that with the collapse of the dollar, in the aftermath of tremors created by the new trade tariff system, that has come as a shock, this may cause massive withdrawal from the American treasury, with higher bond yields the stock markets may feel the pinch and gradual redemption by Major participant in the US treasury, like Japan and China, the shock may be massive. Already people have started questioning the Bretton woods system and the numero uno status of the American Dollar. The de dollarisation drama is silently unfolding, in the backdrop of a BRIC currency and new found status of China's Renimbi. The buzz of economic activity has suddenly become silent and the tug of war between US and Beijing has resulted in the closure of the factories in China. There prevails an "eerie" silence in world politics and economy today.

The US financial system's greatest strength was its resiliency, derived from the mighty Dollar, which has withered the terrorist attack, the financial system crisis of 2008 and the COVID Pandemic. The ability of the dollar to recover from crash, absorb disruptions and its tenacity to keep the world economy moving is profound. Wall Street journal



speaks that a weak dollar poses a major global risk. The slide in the global currency would mean a pressure on exporters and a hit on export proceeds of nations. This can be a double whammy in the sense that there will be a shrinkage in collection of revenues as export will dwindle on account of higher tariff, consequent inflation, and second a weak dollar means exporter would be the resultant looser. Would be that the Dollar that drove exports, may again be the cause of its decline. Due to the rapid fall in the dollar, through out the world, the local currencies would be strengthening against the dollar. The Dollar Index , a yardstick to measure the strength of dollar against a basket of currencies, started weakening and from dollar index of 110 during January 2025, it had hit a low of approximately 98 in April 15 th. This fast dollar declining has been historic and with the Dollar index, a measure of greenback against a basket currencies has slipped around 8% this year, the worst decline in four decades. It has hit fresh lows against Japanese yen, Euro and Swissfranks, Jerome Powell, in his important address at Chicago delineated that, at least, for the present and may be for a brief period till the trade war continues,

there is a good chance of inflation recovering in America and therefore, it may not be possible for a rate cut going ahead. Forecasting anything under the present volatile situation, becomes extremely risky as the things are in a flux. It is a fact that American expansionism and exceptionalism under risk/ arrest. America was accumulating the dollars in acquiring it against the bond market. Markets were vulnerable throughout the world, due to inflation, recession, war terrorist attack, but the American dollar was strong and strengthening against major currencies. Ruchir Sharma, the investment banker, who sees The seismic shift on account of Trumps tariff and thus, dollar may face a major jolt at least in near term. piling of Dollar was favourable, till now, is facing the greatest shock of in its journey. Dollar which is overvalued, is reversing its strength. That would be a disappointment. The fact remains that both China and Japan has a greater pie in terms of investment in American Treasury and in case they redeem those bonds , what would be the fate of dollar. Economists are of the opinion that Trump can not stop dedollarisation and with the onset of tariff war and a full blown trade war, the dollar's share of foreign

reserve is going down. Countries like China and to some extent India are participants in a new economic shift by having their trade and psymnet settlement mechanism through local currencies. That is a direct affront on Dollar. Moreover, financial innovation and pgradation has it will have its impact on the economy, and because of its economic shift of global proportion with immediate effect on dollar. Bries countries policy resolution for a shared currency, may have significant impact on he Dollar.

With the onset of Tariff war and consequent trade war, the Dollar is capsized in the intricate web of international finance. With China flexing its muscle by imposing retaliatory tariff, things have become more impregnated with a major economic shock. with 360 billion dollar export to America by China and 760 billion dollar in America treasury, China seems to be adamant and a near solution, without the intervention of international organization, is next to impossible The Dollar, once the king of the universe feels threatened and who knows the fortunes of America and the world financial system may besaeale f the trade war becomes protracted, long drawn, and temperamental.

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Reminiscence of Biju Babu

prominent leader of the oriya movement. The two architects of modern Orissa like Utkal Gourav Madhusudan Das and Utkalmani Gopabandhu equivocated Biju Babu. Biju babu inherited the qualities of fearlessness, strongness and love of Orissa right from his parents. He had two brothers and one sister. He had his early education in Mission primary School and Christ collegiate school at Cuttack. In 1927 he admitted in the famous Ravenshaw Collegiate School where Netaji once was a student. He passed matriculation with first division and got admitted in science class of the famous Ravenshaw College Cuttack. In his student carrier he was a accomplished sportsman and led the university teams champion in football, cricket, hockey and Athletics for three consecutive years. He discontinued studies for a B.sc degree to undergo training as a pilot at the Aeronautic Training Institute of India and Delhi flying club. In fact as a child Biju was fascinated by aero planes and from his school days, he had decided to make his carrier in flying. His great pleasure was flying and his exploits a pilot provided his carrier with a metaphor that endured from the frolics of his youth to his ambition to be a politician and Industrialist. He married Gyan in 1939. And the guest of the wedding arrived in Tiger Moths. He showed his penchant for the extraordinary at a very young age. Like his role model Napoleon, he seemed to have deleted the word 'impossible' from his dictionary. When japan entered the war in 1941, Biju Pattnaik evacuated British Families from the advancing invaders. He pioneered risky operations across the Himalayas to help the Chinese revolutionaries in Chiang Kai Shek's China. He once flew all the way to Stalingrad on yet another mission. The British Government Particularly appreciated his efforts to evacuate

British Families from Rangoon when the Japanese invaded Myanmar during World War ii. Aruna Asaf Ali, who was one of the prominent fighters of the Quit India movement, has said- "Among the thousands who came forward to take up the challenge, Biju Pattnaik was one of the most fearless, and who mobilized his fellow pilots and inspired them to help the " Underground Directorate ". In 1971 Biju Babu formed a state party in Orissa named 'Utkal Congress'. He then did not look back and never joined the Congress till the end of his life. After the victory in Bangladesh war in 1971 Indira Gandhi was very ruthless in dealing with those in opposition parties. But in this crucial movement a ray of light reflected and some young men invited Mr Biju Pattnaik& Rabi Ray to their village in Cuttack District to address their club. Like 'Blessing in Disguise' both the friend had a heart-to-heart talk there for the first time about the state of the nation existing then. Both of us agreed for the formation of a National alternative of all opposition parties at the centre would go a long way to save the country from the impending authoritarian rule of Smt Indira Gandhi. Biju Babu was such a veteran leader who lost no time in getting the active cooperation of two former Chief Minister Sri Hare Krishna Mahatab& Sri R.N.Singdeo in this regard. The net result of this efforts was formation of Pragati Dal consisting of ' Swatantra Party (Sri R.N.Singdeo), Utkal Congress (Sri Biju Pattnaik) and the Sanjukta Socialist Party (Sri Rabi Ray) formed in Orissa. The lunching of pragati Dal was bound to catch the imagination of the people in the state.

Biju patnaik is considered as a pioneer of the Industrial growth of Orissa and established a string of industries in misson. He set up the Kalinga Tubes, the first

modern Textile Mills at Choudwar, Orissa, the first Refrigerator factory at Jobra, Cuttack and a low shaft Furnance at Barbil. He started his own airline, the Kaling Airways and in 1947 carried soldiers in to Kashmir, when he was threatened from across the newly created border sky. At great risk, he landed the first platoon of troops in Srinagar. In 1951 he established the Kaling Prize for the popularization of Science and entrusted the responsibility to the UNESCO. In the year 1946 when he was elected to Orissa assembly from that period like a colossus, Biju strode Orissa's political arena for more than four decades. Whether in power or in the opposition, he was one of the most influential politician of the country. His flagship industry was one time Asia's largest pipe manufacturing plant. The resounding success in 1961 midterm poll established him as a superb party organizer and the brief period of his administrative stewardship built his image of a dynamic man who could electrify the people of the state with a sense of urgency and keep bureaucrats on their tiptoes. Within that little span of time Mr Patnaik laid the blue print for Orissa's development and the state was on the threshold of a new of industrial revolution. He not only accelerated the process of development, but was able to locate a number of new industries in the state- the MIG factory at Sunabeda, Balimela Dam, Public Corporations, Panchayat Industries, the Express High way and a lot many. His ambitious projects, which he named as " Decade of Destiny" was meant to elevate the state to a new height. Biju could not tolerate red-tapism. He would have a thing done immediately and not suffer any delay. Result he was charged with administrative impropriety. To the official his advice was, be loyal to me not to the government but to the destinies of this state

and to the prosperity of the people. There is a fine example when a speeding motor truck carrying stones for Paradeep Port was stopped by a traffic policeman, the drives humorously replied that the speed suggested by the policeman would delay the port work by several years, when Biju Babu wanted everybody to work at top gear. As per Biju Patnaik "A people cannot grow unless the industries were developed and established here." I would expect my officials to become thinkers and administrators in turn. I would expect them to become leaders of men not leaders of the longest notes on the files. The period of Mr. Pattnaik, between 1961-67 is aptly described as the golden era in the history of education of the state. At his initiative the Regional College of Education was set up at Bhubaneswar .The Regional Engineering College at Rourkela was established in 1961, the Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology was set up and during the Chief Ministership of Biren Mitra when Biju was the Chairman of the State Planning board. Universities were established in Berhampur and Sambalpur. Thus Biju Babu is responsible for the giant leap forward of education in Orissa.

He was a prominent figure in odisha's political land scape over four decades. He is displayed unflinching courage and ability, astuteness as he served state and the country in different capacities as Chief Minister, Union Minister with integrity and dignity. He was a great architect for Odisha. A long illustrious career came to an end on the 17 April, 1997 when Bijupatnaik passed away at Delhi. In his death Odisha lost a greatest figure. At a stretch he was Wily, volatile, flamboyant, dynamic, reckless, daredevil, dam efficient. Such a man like Biju Babu will never take birth again in the soil of Odisha. But Biju Babu left a proud legacy like Nabeen pattnaik our beloved Chief Minister.

*Columnist and Editor
Margadarshi*

Dr Achyuta Samanta conferred Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Award 2025

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Eminent educationist, social reformer, and founder of KIIT and KISS, Dr. Achyuta Samanta has been conferred today with the prestigious Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Award 2025. The award was presented to Dr. Samanta today in Kokrajhar, Assam, by the Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Trust. This recognition honours Dr. Samanta's significant contributions to society through education and social empowerment.

The award is named after Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma, a revered spiritual leader and social reformer of the Bodo community, widely known as the "Mech Gandhi of Assam," who dedicated his life to the propagation, preservation, and promotion of education. Every year, in his memory, this award is presented to distinguished individuals who have made remarkable contributions in various fields. On the occasion of Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma's



166th birth anniversary, Dr. Samanta was chosen for this honour. The award, considered one of the most prestigious recognitions in Bodoland, is given to those who have made impactful contributions to society.

Its core objective is to uphold the values of peace, social reform, and non-violence propagated by Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma. As part of the honour, Dr. Samanta received a citation, a memento, and a cash award of Rs. 1 lakh. In a noble gesture, Dr. Samanta donated the entire award money

back to the Trust for its development. Expressing his gratitude upon receiving the award, Dr. Samanta thanked the Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma Trust and reaffirmed his commitment to accelerate further his mission of empowering society through education.

The award ceremony was graced by several eminent personalities, including Pramod Boro, Chief Executive Member of Bodoland Territorial Region, and Ajit Boro, President of the Trust.

Odisha Chief Secy Reviews Preparations For Rath Yatra 2025

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): As the date for Puri's iconic Rath Yatra approaches, the Odisha government has intensified its preparations to ensure the grand festival is conducted peacefully and without any disruptions. A high-level review meeting was convened on Thursday afternoon at Lok Seva Bhawan under the leadership of Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja to assess the readiness of all departments involved in organizing the event.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasized the importance of seamless coordination among departments and instructed officials to ensure that every aspect of the preparations is handled meticulously. He stressed that there should be no room for error and directed the police and administrative machinery to work in close sync to maintain order and safety throughout the festival. Senior officials including the Director General of Police Y.B. Khurania, Chief Administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration Dr. Arabind Kumar Padhee, and



Secretaries of key state departments were present during the meeting. Top officials from the police administration also participated in the discussion. Several others, including Additional Chief Secretary of the Home Department Satyabrata Sahu, Principal Secretary of the Works Department, Puri Collector, and the Puri SP, joined virtually to present updates from the ground. The discussions focused on comprehensive strategies to

manage the large crowds expected this year. Installation of CCTV cameras at critical junctions, deployment of adequate police personnel, and setting up an Integrated Command and Control Center for real-time monitoring and coordination were among the core areas reviewed. The government also evaluated the progress of infrastructure work, including the readiness of the Grand Road, or Bada Danda, where the chariots will roll. Special attention was given to the construction of the three chariots and the arrangements for

their smooth pulling. The administration is also making provisions for dedicated parking facilities for vehicles and has planned special arrangements for VIP guests who are expected to attend the festival. The Rath Yatra, known globally for its spiritual and cultural significance, draws lakhs of devotees every year. This year, the Odisha government aims to uphold the sanctity of the festival while ensuring that it unfolds in an environment of discipline, safety, and devotion.

District Level Poshan Pakhwada-2025 Celebrate

Khordha, (DMC): District level Poshan Pakhwada-2025 was celebrated by the district social welfare department at the conference hall of collectorate, Khordha, aims to raise awareness about holistic nutrition & encourage community participation. The chief guest of the occasions Collector, Khordha, Chanchala Rana, in his speech he said that anganwadi workers & CDPOs have a major responsibility to keep every child & mother healthy.

It is important to check why the child's weight is reduce & why the mother is anemic at regular intervals. If the children & mother's adopt discipline & punctuality, eat balanced food & adopt disciplined habit's then all mother's & children can remain healthy & disease free society can be formed. To widely publicize the program, Collector Mr. Rana ordered to organise Poshan Pakhwada every month in all the anganwadi center of khordha



district & hold a swearing-in-ceremony. The anganwadi workers & CDPOs advised to empower the society by organising good programs & conveying the message to the new generation.

Additional District Magistrate, Pratap Chandra Beura joined as the guest of honour & said that the Poshan program should be monitored not only on a monthly basis but also on a daily basis & that the responsibility of the future of the country lies with the anganwadi workers, supervisors & CDPOs. He said that it is necessary to

check whether they eating nutritious food or not. In the program organized under the supervision of District Social Welfare Officer, Kusum Kumari Praharaj.

She gave a welcome speech & spoke on the main theme of the Seventh Poshan (Prime Minister Comprehensive Plan for Total Nutrition) Pakhwada-2025 from April-8 to April-22. The chief guest Mr. Rana felicitated who had done remarkable work in the Poshan programs. They are BMC-1, CDPO, Minati Panda, Runubala Sahu of Balipatna block second, Joyti Rekha jena of

Balianta block were awarded the third prize & certificate's. Similarly, Collector, Mr. Rana awarded the first prize to Pratyush Swain, Second Subhalakshmi Dash, third Anuman Pratha Sarathi for good health of the child & cut the cake & distributed among the children & wished a bright future for all the mother's & children's.

Among others Poshan district co-ordinator Abhilipsa Behera, CSO, Suguda Murum, DI & PRO, Khordha, Laxman Behera, anganwadi worker's, supervisor's, CDPOs, Mission Shakti women were prominently present. ADM, Pratap Chandra Beura reviewed problems arising in the construction of anganwadi center & problems of land, drinking water, toilet, electricity, etc. & directed to carry out the work in co-ordination with BDOs, Tahasildars & DSWO. At the end of the programs Additional District Social Welfare Officer Mrs. Susama Mohanty proposed vote of thanks.

Odisha Farmers, Officials Embark On 7-Day Agricultural Exposure Visit To Malaysia

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): A 28-member team comprising 14 farmers and 14 officials from Odisha is set to undergo a 7-day agricultural exposure visit to Malaysia. The visit, organised under the Odisha Integrated Irrigation Project for Climate Resilient Agriculture (OIIP CRA) project, was flagged off by Deputy Chief Minister, Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo.

Singh Deo highlighted Odisha's prominent position in fruit and vegetable exports, with the state striding high in the sector. He also mentioned that Odisha ranks fourth in supplying rice to the Food Corporation of India (FCI). The Deputy Chief Minister encouraged the team to learn about scientific methods and machinery usage in traditional agriculture, emphasising the importance of recording daily



reports and implementing best practices to double farmers' income. Principal Secretary, Dr. Arabinda Kumar Padhee, highlighted Odisha's agricultural development, including the record production of 14.3 million tonnes of food grains and 14.48 million tonnes of fruits and vegetables during last year. He also mentioned the state's successful export of various produce to countries in Middle East and Europe. The team is expected to gain knowledge and skills during the

visit, which will enable them to contribute to Odisha's agricultural growth and development. The visit is jointly organized by the Directorate of Horticulture, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment, Odisha; Bankers Institute of Rural Development (BIRD), Lucknow and NABARD. Director Horticulture Nikhil Pavan Kalyan; Agriculture Director Shubham Saxena and PD OIIP CRA Rashmi Ranjan Nayak were present.

Spanish Ambassador meets SOA Founder President

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The Ambassador of Kingdom of Spain to India, H.E. Juan Antonio March Pujol, paid a courtesy visit to Professor (Dr.) Manojranjan Nayak, Founder President of Siksha & #39;O & #39;Anusandhan (SOA) University, on Friday. Ambassador Pujol, who represents Spain in India as well as Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives, met with Professor Nayak at the SOA University office in Bhubaneswar. During the meeting, the two discussed avenues for collaboration between Spain and India in areas such as education and healthcare. They also explored the prospects of promoting Spanish language education at the



university. SOA Vice Chancellor, Professor Pradeep Kumar Nanda, was also present during the interaction.

Odisha unveils green tourism blueprint for Nandankanan & Chilika

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In a significant push towards sustainable tourism, the Odisha Government has unveiled major eco-tourism initiatives for Nandankanan Biological Park and Chilika Lake.

The ambitious plan, spearheaded under the leadership of Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Satyabrat Sahu, aims to boost tourism while maintaining ecological integrity. For Nandankanan, the development roadmap includes the

construction of a state-of-the-art tunnel aquarium, a native botanical garden showcasing local flora, rejuvenation of the picturesque Kanjia Lake, and the introduction of a ropeway to improve visitor accessibility and experience.

Meanwhile, Chilika Lake, Asia's largest brackish water lagoon and a haven for migratory birds, is set to introduce solar-powered boats and larger eco-friendly passenger vessels. These sustainable modes of

transport will facilitate eco-tours, including birdwatching and dolphin-spotting expeditions, without compromising the delicate aquatic ecosystem. Beyond tourism, the meeting also addressed key administrative reforms.

Measures such as same-day pension release and expedited handling of career progression cases for government staff were discussed to improve governance efficiency. In a bid to strengthen forest management, the state is

recruiting over 1,600 Forest Guards along with 176 officers, signalling a major ramp-up in environmental oversight. Additionally, the state government plans to float global tenders for the sale of its red sandalwood stockpile, a move expected to generate significant revenue.

These integrated efforts underscore Odisha's commitment to becoming a national leader in eco-tourism and forest governance.

Grand Opening of Branch of Union Bank of India at Padmapur Bargarh



Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, (DMC): Union Bank of India, one of the largest Public Sector Bank in India, has opened prestigious Branch at Padmapur, Bargarh District with excellent infrastructure and modern banking facilities.

This is the 21st Branch of Union bank of India in Bargarh District with all the modern facilities for the banking needs of customers in and around Padmapur with a Special Focus to cater the needs of Retail, Agri & MSME Clientele. Simultaneously Branch will

cater to the needs of Depositors and Senior Citizens of the area with a focus on Financial Inclusion & implementation of various Govt schemes. This prestigious Branch is inaugurated by Dr. Mukesh Mahaling, Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Parliamentary Affairs, Electronics & Information Technology.

Govt of Odisha on 17.04.2025 in presence of Senior Executives of Union Bank of India, H K Das Zonal Head Bhubaneswar and Dharmendra Rajoriya, Regional Head Sambalpur. On the occasion, Dr. Mahaling has

appreciated contribution of the Bank and its wide presence as 2nd largest banking network in the State catering needs of citizens of the State. Shri Das has emphasised Bank's contribution & active participation in various Govt Scheme catering needs of public at large by providing banking facilities with better infrastructure & modern digital banking facilities. Shri Rajoriya has said that Bank has wide range of all need based competitive products for the customers and committed to serve the public as a responsible Bank of the Nation.

The ceremony is graced by other prominent personalities, Business Associations, Senior citizens of the Town. Union Bank is having second largest Network of Branches in the State of Odisha with latest technically enabled 100 % digitally secured CBS Branches. Public can avail mobile Banking, Lockers, Digitally processed Loans and other products with attractive offers & better competitive rate of interest.

Consultative Workshop on Data Policy: Govt Seeks Public Feedback

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The Electronics and Information Technology (E&IT) Department, Government of Odisha, organized a consultative workshop on Odisha State Data Policy 2.0 on Wednesday at a hotel in Bhubaneswar. Principal Secretary, Electronics and Information Technology (E&IT) Department Vishal Dev, Special Secretary, E&IT Manas Ranjan Panda, Additional Secretary E&IT Dr. Pradeep Raut and other senior government officials attended the event along with representatives from academia and Odisha's IT industry.

The session was organised to seek expert feedback on the state's upcoming data policy. During the event, Vishal Dev said "The purpose of this workshop is to gather valuable stakeholder feedback as we move towards more data-driven governance. While the government holds vast amount of data, challenges around accessibility and utilisation remain. By unlocking and analysing this data effectively, we can significantly improve public service delivery, enable targeted interventions, and make



governance more responsive to citizens' needs." Additional Secretary E&IT Dr. Pradeep Raut added, "A robust data policy is essential for any state aiming to deliver efficient, citizen-centric governance. It plays a key role in informed decision-making, driving socio-economic development, and safeguarding citizens' data. Odisha's upcoming data policy is a forward-looking and comprehensive document that will position the state for the next stage of e-governance: personalized, proactive, and transparent service delivery. It will establish clear protocols for the entire lifecycle of data, from collection and storage to secure sharing and use, and ensure that

governance is both responsible and future-ready." The draft policy document has been uploaded on the websites of the E&IT Department (<https://it.odisha.gov.in/>) and Odisha Computer Application Centre (<https://www.ocac.in/or>) to seek public feedback which can be shared at feedback.osdp@odisha.gov.in. A comprehensive presentation on the draft of the upcoming policy was delivered during the event, highlighting its key features. The policy will promote data sharing and collaboration between departments, drive economic growth through open data access, enable smarter governance through data insights, streamline data to reduce duplication and redundancy, ensure ethical data use through

informed consent, enhance transparency in government data sharing, and enable proper data handling and protection. The draft policy has been prepared after extensive stakeholder consultations and analysis of relevant policies and data protection acts from other countries and states, including the national Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act 2023.

This presentation was followed by an interactive Q&A session, where officials from the E&IT Department provided detailed responses to the queries raised by attendees. The session also served as a platform for gathering valuable feedback, as stakeholders shared insightful suggestions and practical inputs, which were duly noted for consideration in the finalization of the policy. The workshop ended with a vote of thanks by Special Secretary E&IT Manas Ranjan Panda. Smruti Ranjan Mishra, Dipankar Rath and other officials from Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC) coordinated the event.

Demand for New Block at Birikote in Gajapati



Paralakhemundi, (DMC): At Gajapati district Birikote Development Council of Mohana block demanded for separate block of Gajapati district. They submitted a memorandum to Rajib Das BDO Mohana pointed that being the largest block with 39 panchayats it is difficult for monitoring & assessment of developments. So they chartered out to include those panchayats eg; Birikote, Guluba, Gardama, Mandimera, Raipanka, Dengaskal, Gurujhuli, Khariguda & Kirama of Nuagada block. PRI members & Council Members were present.

Tribute to Late Rajesh Patnaik by District Press

Paralakhemundi, (DMC): Gajapati district Press Association conveyed their tribute to late Rajesh Patnaik representative on his sad demise. Since last 20 years he was involved in grassroots & collecting news. His death is a great loss on press arena. Among those media crews Dwijendranath Padhi, Pradip Nayak, Krushna Kumar Behera, Bidhan Choudhry, Sujit Bisoyi, Saroj Biro, Sekhar, Sumant Ghanto, Amit Patnaik Sisir Gouda, Prabhat Patra, Amod Bardhan, Anil, Premanand Panda, Bibekanand Behera & others were present.



Free Artificial Limb transplant Camp held in Khariar Road

Nuapada/Khariar Road, (DMC): Four Days long free artificial limbs transplant camp organised by Marwari Yuva Manch Jagriti Sakha at Agrasen Bhawan in Nuapada District was concluded on Wednesday.

The camp was organised with the collaboration of Bhagwan Mahavir Viklang Samiti Rachi. In the opening ceremony Block Chairperson Tareshwari Sahu, NAC Chairperson Sonia Jain, Mohan Bansal, Sekhar Jain, Sakha President Sangeeta Agrawal and



Kamlabai Dungarmal were the special invitees on the dais. Rachna Jain conducted the proceedings of the programme. In all 90 persons from different regions were given to artificial limbs. Wheelchairs, blind sticks and hearing instruments also

Puri Literature Festival is a celebration of India's cultural heritage & progressive aspirations: Governor

Puri, (DMC): It is a matter of great pleasure to inaugurate the Puri Literature Festival in the spiritually resonant and culturally rich city of Puri. Governor Dr Hari Babu Kambhampatti said it was a unique celebration of India's cultural heritage and its progressive aspirations. Inaugurating the Puri Literature Festival this morning, the Governor said that Puri is not just a geographical place; It is a living symbol of India's timeless spiritual and artistic traditions. The festival is a perfect platform for meaningful discussions about not just the co-existence of tradition and modernity but also how one can progress together.

It seeks to revive them as dynamic sources of knowledge that is capable of guiding a rapidly-evolving society. At a time when technological progress and global impact dominate public consciousness, it is very important to remember that cultural infrastructure provides the necessary guidance for responsible progress. It recognizes that a nation does not grow by rejecting its past but develops by weaving its heritage into its contemporary narrative. Governor Dr. Kambhavapati said that the presence of writers,



thinkers, architects, artists and young people here is proof of this inclusion and called for taking forward the heritage that continues to enrich our national interpretation. In a video message at the event, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan conveyed his best wishes and best wishes to the organizers and guests for such a memorable festival and said that the festival can be more appreciated about our great culture, Odisha's literature, traditional food, contribution of the ancestors. Puri Lok Sabha MP Dr Sambit Patra was one of the guests of honour. Every word uttered at the festival will enrich literature and culture. Eminent personalities like Adi Shankaracharya, Guru Nanak, Chaitanya, Sant Kabir, Tulsi Das, Ramanujam have come to Puri.

That's why the monastery culture has become great. He opined that the next three days will discuss, review the literary culture and guide the youth spiritually and our great culture. The festival was presided over by Om Priyadarshi Chotaray, president of Puri Literature Festival and was attended by one of the chairpersons, Shivam Raghuvanshi.

Members Soumendra Das and Professor Sasmita Bandarnayak felicitated the guests. Chairman Shashank Shekhar Singh proposed the vote of thanks at the end. At the outset, the governor and other guests inaugurated the three-day literature festival by lighting a lamp. A book fair has been organised at the festival site on behalf of reputed publishers.

Southern Division IG Visited Paralakhemundi Model PS

Paralakhemundi, (DMC): Southern Division IG Nitin Sekhar visited Paralakhemundi Model Police Station. He prioritised on identification of missing women & children & to start investigation. Similarly on crime, theft, kidnapping too to be included. On his visit SP Jatindra Kumar Panda, SDPO Madhabananda Nayak, IIC Prasany Kumar Bhupati with other staff were present.



Prof. Prabhat Kumar Mohapatra has joined the Central Sanskrit University, Sri Sadashiv Campus as the new Director.

Puri, (DMC): Former Director Prof. Banamali Biswal handed over the responsibility to Prof. Mohapatra. Professor Biswal will be attending the campus in Prayagraj (Uttar Pradesh). A farewell award and felicitation meeting was organized to Prof. Banamali Biswal today.

Professor Prabhat Kumar Mohapatra was welcomed by all departments at the meeting. Professor Mohapatra had started his tenure from the Puri campus.



Eklavya was currently serving as the director of Prastha Tripura. He returned to his campus and thanked the director for the responsibility and sought the cooperation of all the faculty and office in the coming days.

Blood Donation & Thalassemia Awareness Drive by Mohan Maharana

Jajpur, (DMC): India has witnessed a surge in awareness about blood donation and thalassemia thanks to the relentless efforts of Mohan Maharana, a globally recognized social activist. His unwavering dedication to this cause has been pivotal in spreading knowledge about the importance of regular blood donation, especially for children suffering from thalassemia, a genetic blood disorder that requires lifelong transfusions.

Mohan Maharana serves as an active member of the Blood Donation and Awareness Committee at SCB Medical College and Hospital, Cuttack, one of the largest and most reputed healthcare institutions in Odisha. His work has garnered immense support from Dr. Smita Mohapatra, Professor and HOD at SCB, who has been instrumental in strengthening these initiatives.

Her expertise and commitment have added significant value to the ongoing awareness programs. Additionally, Venegtie Makka, a dedicated supporter of this mission, has consistently backed Mohan Maharana's initiatives, adding global



recognition and encouragement to the cause. Together, they have amplified the reach of these campaigns, ensuring that the message of blood donation reaches every corner of society.

Among the numerous awareness programs organized under Mohan Maharana's leadership, DU Public School, Chandikhol, stands out as a center of attention. The school has become a hub for engaging young minds and inspiring the next generation to contribute toward this noble cause.

Dr. Biswajit Mohapatra, Director of DU Public School, plays a vital role in supporting these initiatives. As a responsible educator and compassionate individual, his efforts to instill a sense of social

responsibility among students have significantly contributed to the success of these programs. Through consistent blood donation camps, awareness drives, and educational programs, this initiative continues to make a profound impact, saving countless lives and fostering a culture of compassion and responsibility.

The combined efforts of Mohan Maharana, Dr. Smita Mohapatra, Venegtie Makka, and Dr. Biswajit Mohapatra are a testament to the power of community-driven change, ensuring that the fight against thalassemia and the need for regular blood donation remain at the forefront of public consciousness.

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ACS Nikunj...

Bhadrak. Winds are expected to blow at 50-60 kmph in some areas. Districts likely to experience rain with lightning include Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada, Malkangiri, and Koraput, with winds blowing at 30-40 kmph. Citizens have been advised to remain alert

Trump...

Hamas. Their allegations are based on controversy at protests against Israel's genocidal war in Gaza that swept across campuses last year. Columbia University in New York -- an epicenter of the protests -- stood down last month and agreed to oversight of its Middle Eastern department after being threatened with a loss of \$400 million in federal funds.

Coast Guard...

Officials reported 6,126 nests resulting in the laying of 5,51,238 eggs. Meanwhile, sporadic nesting was also observed at the Devi River mouth to Astaranga, with 60 nests and 5,400 eggs. The recent rescue serves as a reminder of the threats Olive Ridleys face at sea and the crucial role of sustained protection efforts in ensuring their survival.

Death Toll from...

attacks are aimed at supporting Israel in crimes against the Palestinian people, vowing to continue their "support operations" for Palestinians. The group, meanwhile, claimed that it has successfully prevented all "Israeli navigation in the Red Sea." It also assured citizens in northern Yemen that "the oil supply is stable," while warning that "the US crime will not pass without painful punishment." Also on Friday, the Israeli military reported intercepting a missile launched from Yemen in the morning. The launch is believed to be made by the Houthis in retaliation for the US overnight airstrikes. In mid-March, Trump ordered "decisive and powerful military action" against the Houthis after the group announced plans to resume attacks on Israeli targets, citing Israel's blockade of humanitarian aid to Gaza as the reason.

Blood Donation Camp Organized in Rayagada



Rayagada, (DMC): A voluntary blood donation camp was organized at the Lions Club premises in Rayagada, Odisha. The camp was organized by the Odisha Diploma Engineers Service Association, Rayagada branch. The camp was inaugurated by Sri Asway Kumar Khemundu, Chief Development Officer and Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad, Rayagada. A total of 25 units of blood were collected during the camp. The event saw active participation from members of the Diploma Engineers Service Association, including President Engg. Sila Someshwar Rao, Secretary Engg. Girija Shankar Pati, Vice President Engg. Jaya Prakash Narayan Bhatra, Engg. Swagatika Chualsingh, Engg. Babulal Palei, Engg.

Ambika Prasad Das, Engg. Anil Kumar Sahu, and Engg. Deepti Ranjan Sahu. The blood donation camp was organized with the objective of collecting blood for patients in need. The event was a success, with many participants donating blood voluntarily. The camp saw participation from members of the Diploma Engineers Service Association and their family members, who actively donated blood and supported the noble cause. The blood donation camp was a successful event that highlighted the importance of voluntary blood donation. The Odisha Diploma Engineers Service Association, Rayagada branch, deserves appreciation for organizing this initiative.

All previous Development Scheme are Dead at Municipality

Jagatsinghpur, (DMC): All previous Development Scheme are dead now in Jagatsinghpur Municipality area. No renovation, no Reconstruction and no accountability fixed so far. Even Counsellors, Chairman and Municipal administration are silent about miss utilisation of funds. Sight to an example development scheme under "MUKTA" Yojana may take in to consideration. In the year 2022-23 massive benevolent programme carried out under " MUKTA" Yojana.

Building of Roads, Gymnasium, Park, Renovation of Ponds, Burial ground, Drains and Water Conservation Project. But all the projects are dead and gradually in damaged position. Similarly in Waste land Management scheme several programme taken by Municipal authorities in 2022 and they prepared Parks, Toilets and other scheme. At present all the benevolent scheme are in worst condition. Immediate repair, renovation work should be taken by Municipal authorities. But Jagatsinghpur Municipality authorities are silent and giving emphasis upon utilization of new Govt. Scheme and avoiding maintenance of previous development work. As a result crore of investment are at the door of destruction as stated by intellectuals.

Woman Drowned at Mahendratanaya River



Paralakhemundi, (DMC): At Bommika village on a passing Mahendratanaya river one woman about 55 years, named Brunda Roul. She went for bathing & drowned. Gurandi police rescued her deceased body & sent to DHH Paralakhemundi for postmortem. SI Omnarayan Patra started investigation.

SKCGC(A) Student got 1 Gold, 1 Silver & 1 Bronze on Inter University Athletics



Paralakhemundi, (DMC): At Sambalpur on Inter University Athletics Championship SKCG (A) College student of +3 Political Science (Hons), named Nirmal Kumar Jena got one gold, one silver & one bronze with a cash award of Rs.55000. Vice Chancellor of Sambalpur University Bidhubhusan Mishra, Registrar Nrupraj Sahu, PG Council Chairman Tusharkanti Dash honored him. On his rare glory Principal of SKCG (A) College Dr. JN Patnaik & all teaching cum non-teaching staff sent their compliments. From various corners he has been accoladed.

Gouri Nilakantheswar Temple Renovated

Paralakhemundi, (DMC): In Goribandha panchayat of Khurigaon village, at the outskirts of Kashinagar town of Gajapati district, newly constructed Gouri Nilakantheswar temple inaugurated. From 16th to 18th thousands of devotees visited the temple. President of Zilla Parishad (ZP) Gavra Tirupati Rao's father started this temple, but lost its magnanimity.

So devotees, too, felt uneasy to visit that temple. Later development of the temple started by the help of ZP President. On inauguration he with his wife Nirmala performed formal rituals. MLA Paralakhemundi Er. Rupesh Kumar Panigrahi, Chairman of Hi-Tech Dr. Tirupati Panigrahi, President of district BJD Pradip Nayak, Chairperson of Kashinagar block BSayamma & others were present. For long 11 days rituals held. Temple trust conveyed all for their presence & cooperation.



Kapil Sibal's "Indira Gandhi" Reply to Jagdeep Dhankhar's President Remark

New Delhi, (HS) : A series of pointed remarks by Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar concerning the judiciary has prompted an equally sharp response from senior advocate and Rajya Sabha MP, Kapil Sibal. Last week, for the first time, the Supreme Court ordered that the President should decide on the bills reserved for her consideration by the governor within a period of three months from the date on which such reference is received.

Mr Dhankhar claimed that the judiciary was overstepping its bounds by invoking Article 142 - a provision that empowers the Supreme Court to issue orders necessary to do "complete justice" in any matter before it. The Vice President described Article 142 as a "nuclear missile against democratic forces available to the judiciary 24x7". "We cannot have a situation where you direct the President of India and on what basis? The only right you have under the Constitution is to interpret the Constitution under Article 145(3). There, it has to be five judges or more... Article 142, Article 142 has become a nuclear missile against Democratic forces, available to judiciary 24 x 7,"



Mr Dhankhar said. Mr Sibal recalled the 1975 Supreme Court judgment that invalidated then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's election. "People would remember that when the Supreme Court's decision came regarding the election of Indira Gandhi, only one judge - Justice Krishna Iyer - gave the decision, and she was unseated," he said. "That was acceptable to Dhankhar ji, but now a two-judge bench ruling against the government is being questioned?" Mr Sibal also expressed his disappointment

over the Vice President's public criticism of the Supreme Court's authority. "I was saddened and surprised to see Jagdeep Dhankhar's statement," he said. "If there is any institution that continues to command the trust of the public across the country, it is the judiciary. The President is only a titular head. The President acts on the authority and advice of the Cabinet. The President has no personal right of their own. Jagdeep Dhankhar should know this."

Mr Dhankhar criticised the judiciary

for allegedly assuming the roles of legislature and executive, claiming that certain judges were acting as a "super Parliament". Specifically referencing a recent Supreme Court verdict concerning the Tamil Nadu Governor's withholding of assent to ten bills, Mr Dhankhar objected to the court imposing a time-bound directive on the President. "The President being called upon to decide in a time-bound manner, and if not, it becomes law. So we have judges who will legislate, who will perform executive functions, who will act as super Parliament, and absolutely have no accountability because law of the land does not apply to them," he said. Kapil Sibal, in response, accused the Vice President of undermining both judicial independence and constitutional literacy. "This should be known to Dhankar ji (Vice President), he asks how the powers of the president can be curtailed, but who is curtailing the powers? I say that a minister should go to the Governor and be there for two years, so they can raise issues which are of public importance, will the Governor be able to ignore them?" Mr Sibal said.

Heavy Rains Hit Normal Life in Hyderabad

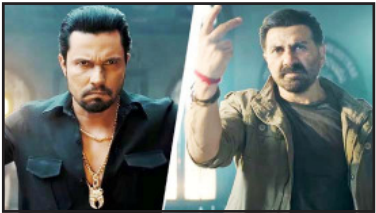
Hyderabad, (HS)

: Heavy rains, accompanied by strong winds, lashed several parts of Hyderabad and its surroundings on Friday, affecting normal life. The heavy spell of pre-monsoon showers during the evening hours provided some relief from the heat, but it also caused inconvenience to people by throwing vehicular traffic out of gear and disrupting the electricity supply.



The rains led to waterlogging on roads at busy junctions, resulting in traffic jams. People returning home from offices and workplaces were stranded. The strong winds uprooted trees in a few places and also resulted in the disruption of the electricity supply. An electric transformer exploded after a big tree fell on it in Red Hills area in Nampally. There were no casualties in the incident. A tree fell on the road in front of PG Law College in Basheerbagh, causing a traffic jam. Trees also fell on the road between Upper and Lower Tank Bund, leading to a traffic jam. Two electricity poles were damaged when a tree fell on them in Bapunagar colony in Langar Houz. A crane at an under-construction building in the busy Moazzamjahi Market area also collapsed due to strong winds. Fortunately, no one was injured. Areas in the old city, central parts of the city, Secunderabad, and Cyberabad received heavy rains. There was a heavy traffic jam from Begumpet to Panjagutta, a key road connecting the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. A massive traffic jam was also seen in Madhapur in the IT hub of Cyberabad. Vehicles were moving at a snail's pace at the IKEA underpass and at Raidurgam. Employees returning from IT companies in the IT clusters ofHITEC City and Gachibowli were caught in the stalled traffic. Rain water and overflowing drainages led to inundation of roads and the traffic police personnel had a tough time in regulating the traffic.

'Jaat' Movie Sparks Row, FIR Against Sunny, Randeep



Chandigarh, (HS) : A case has been registered against Bollywood actors Sunny Deol, Randeep Hooda and Vineet Kumar Singh for hurting religious sentiments with a scene in their newly-released film 'Jaat'. The First Information Report (FIR) was filed by the Jalandhar police on Wednesday under Section 299 (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). It was also registered against the film's director, Gopichand Malineni, and its producers. One of the scenes in the film, which was released on April 10, has "deeply hurt the religious sentiments of the entire Christian community", the complainant said. He alleged that disrespect was shown towards Jesus Christ. The scene in 'Jaat' reportedly shows Mr Hooda's character standing under a crucifix inside a church, right above the holy pulpit, as people are praying. It reportedly includes scenes of intimidation and unruly behaviour.

"The director, writer and producer deliberately released this film during the holy month of Good Friday and Easter so that the Christians get angry and riots break out in the entire country and unrest is spread," the complainant alleged, while demanding a ban on the movie. Sunny Deol's latest action film, 'Jaat', features Randeep Hooda as the main antagonist, with a supporting cast that includes Vineet Kumar Singh, Saiyami Kher, Regina Cassandra, Prashant Bajaj, Zarina Wahab, and Jagapathi Babu. It also marked the Hindi directorial debut of Mr Malineni, known for Telugu films like "Don Seenu", "Bodyguard", and "Veera Simha Reddy".

The movie has been produced by Mythri Movie Makers and People Media Factory and was released in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu languages.

Indian Students in US Make Up 50% Of Recent Visa Revocations

New Delhi, (HS) : The US government's recent crackdown on international students has raised concerns, particularly among Indian students. According to a report by the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), about half of the 327 recent visa revocations collected by the organisation have been of Indian students. The AILA brief, titled 'The Scope of Immigration Enforcement Actions Against International Students', highlights that 50 per cent of these students were from India, followed by 14 per cent from China. Other countries represented in the data include South Korea, Nepal, and Bangladesh.

The US State Department and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have been screening foreign students' data, including their activism, over the past four months. Some allege that this screening is done using artificial intelligence, which may lead to inaccurate targeting of students without a criminal history or links to campus protests. In March, Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced the "Catch and



Revoke" program to identify and screen student visa holders, including monitoring their social media for evidence of anti-Semitism or support for Palestinians and Hamas. The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is a portal used by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to track international students and exchange program visitors. According to an ICE

release, the visa status of 4,736 international students was terminated in the SEVIS system, mostly holding F1 visas. AILA described these administrative actions as unprecedented, raising several legal questions that may require litigation. The impact of these visa revocations is significant, with 50 per cent of the 327 cases being Optional Practical Training (OPT) holders. OPT allows international students on F-1

visas to work in the US for up to 12 months. With their visas revoked, these students are now unable to work. The top states affected by these visa revocations are Texas, California, New York, Michigan, and Arizona. However, its worthwhile to note that, around 1,000 international students at U.S. colleges, universities and university systems have had their visas revoked or their legal status terminated since late March, according to an Associated Press review of university statements and correspondence with school officials.

Many of the students losing their legal status are from India and China, which together account for more than half the international students at American colleges. But the terminations have not been limited to those from any one part of the world, lawyers said. The Indian government has taken notice of the issue. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated, "We are aware that several Indian students have received communication from the US government regarding their F-1 visa status. We are looking into the matter. Our Embassy and consulate are in touch with the students."

Wanted gangster with Rs 25,000 bounty injured in encounter

Noida, (HS) : A wanted criminal carrying a reward of Rs 25,000 was injured in an encounter with Beta-2 police near ATS Gol Chakkar in Greater Noida on Friday, police said. According to police, a team was conducting checks when a motorcyclist approached. When signalled to stop, the suspect attempted to flee, prompting a chase. Sensing he was cornered, the suspect opened fire on the police with the intent to kill. In self-defence, the police retaliated, injuring the suspect in the leg. He was identified as Suresh, son of Prakash, a resident of Hinroti village, Kakod police station, Bulandshahr. According to Greater Noida ADCP Sudhir Kumar, from Suresh's possession, police recovered a 315 bore country-made pistol, one live cartridge, one spent cartridge, and a stolen motorcycle.

Newly wed youth killed by wife, aides in MP after stabbed 36 times with bear bottle

Burhanpur, (HS) : A newly wed youth was allegedly killed by his 17 year old wife and her aides in Madhya Pradesh recently. The accused persons reportedly stabbed 36 times with a bear bottle. As per reports, a 25-year-old man was stabbed to death by his minor wife and her lover's two friends in Burhanpur district of Madhya Pradesh. The couple were returning after marketing in a bike when the girl pretended and said her husband that her slipper fell down on the road. To get it back as the husband stopped the bike, the girl's aides appeared at the scene and dragged the victim from the bike. They attacked him with broken bear bottles and reportedly stabbed him 36 times with the bottle. As a result the young man died on the spot. After committing the crime, the minor girl video called her boyfriend and showed him her husband's body telling him that the 'job has been done'. Later, a case was registered in this connection and Police arrested the four accused persons, police reportedly said.

Stalin makes veiled attack on Dhankar; says SC verdict limiting Governor's power has rattled 'anti-democratic forces'

CHENNAI, (HS) : Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Friday said the Supreme Court's judgment on governors, a welcome course correction has rattled many "anti-democratic forces."

The chief minister, however, did not directly refer to Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar's criticism of the apex court's verdict on timeline for President. Stalin tagged a journalist's comment and an English daily's editorial that slammed Dhankar. In a post on 'X', the CM said: "More than 75 years have passed since we adopted our Constitution. The current malaise stems from the politicisation of constitutional offices, including Governors, the Vice-President and even the President, to undermine opposition governments and inject right-wing narratives into public discourse." "In a



democracy, governments are to be run by elected representatives, not by ceremonial appointees. No one, however high, can be above the law. The same has been pointed out by our Hon'ble Supreme Court, and its historic judgement is a step

towards resetting the process," Stalin wrote. "Hence, it is understandable that this welcome course correction has rattled many anti-democratic forces. The need of the hour is to ensure that this reset is implemented in its true spirit," he added.

Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla set for space travel next month

New Delhi, (HS) : Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla is set to travel to the International Space Station next month as part of an Axiom-4 mission, four decades after Rakesh Sharma's iconic spaceflight onboard Russia's Soyuz spacecraft, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said on Friday.

Singh made the remarks after reviewing the work of the Department of Space and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) here. "Group Captain Shukla's journey is more than just a flight... it's a signal that India is stepping boldly into a new era of space exploration," Singh said. ISRO Chairman V Narayanan made a presentation on various upcoming space missions. ISRO is set to launch the NISAR satellite - developed jointly with NASA - in June on board the GSLV-Mark 2 rocket. Singh said, adding that in July the space agency will put in orbit BlueBird Block-2 satellites of US-based AST SpaceMobile Inc. using the heavy-lift LVM-3 rocket. Singh said Group Captain Shukla's



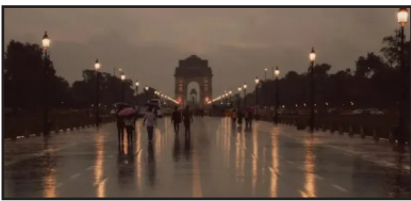
mission, scheduled for May, marks a milestone in India's expanding international space collaborations. A decorated test pilot with the Indian Air

Force, Group Captain Shukla was shortlisted under ISRO's Human Spaceflight Program and is among the top contenders for the Gaganyaan mission. His journey aboard the Axiom-4 mission is expected to provide critical hands-on experience in spaceflight operations, launch protocols, microgravity adaptation, and emergency preparedness — all essential for India's crewed space ambitions, an official statement said. "What sets Shukla's mission apart is its strategic importance. Unlike the symbolic undertones of India's first human spaceflight, this time the focus is on operational readiness and global integration," it said. The statement said Shukla's participation underscores India's growing engagement with public-private international partnerships in space and its resolve to emerge as a serious contender in human

space exploration. Singh said the collaboration with international partners and the strategic momentum of projects like Gaganyaan reflect India's commitment to becoming a global leader in space technology. The minister said these efforts were not only scientific in nature but also aligned with the vision of a developed and self-reliant India. ISRO also plans to launch the PSLV-C61 mission carrying the EOS-09 satellite, which is equipped with a C-band synthetic aperture radar, capable of capturing high-resolution images of Earth's surface under all weather conditions, day or night. Another significant milestone will be the Test Vehicle-D2 (TV-D2) mission, designed to simulate an abort scenario and demonstrate the Gaganyaan Crew Escape System.

The mission includes sea recovery operations for the Crew Module, mimicking procedures planned for India's first human spaceflight, he said.

Rain Brings Relief For Delhi Amid Scorching Heat



New Delhi, (HS) : Rain, accompanied by gusty winds, lashed parts of Delhi on Friday evening, bringing relief from the heat. Parts of the city, including central, south and west Delhi, witnessed rainfall in the evening. In its latest nowcast, the weather department said light to moderate rainfall, accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds (30-40 kmph), is very likely in several areas, including Burari, Rohini, Badli, Model Town, Karawal Nagar, Azadpur, Pitampura, Delhi University, Civil Lines, Dilshad Garden, Seemapuri, Mundka, Paschim Vihar, Punjabi Bagh, Kashmere Gate, Seelampur, Shahdara, Vivek Vihar, Rajouri Garden, Patel Nagar, Red Fort, Preet Vihar, Buddha Jayanti Park, President House, Rajiv Chowk and ITO, as well as in certain parts of the National Capital Region (NCR). The city recorded a maximum temperature of 41 degrees Celsius, 4.2 notches above normal, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The minimum temperature was recorded at 25.6 degrees Celsius, four notches above the season's average, the MeT office said. Humidity levels fluctuated between 57 per cent and 35 per cent. According to the IMD's forecast for Saturday, the sky will be "partly cloudy" and become "generally cloudy" towards the evening. Very light rain or drizzle is likely, accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning and dust storms, along with winds with a speed of 40-50 kilometre per hour, gusting up to 60 kmph, in the evening. The maximum and minimum temperatures are expected to hover around 38 degrees Celsius and 26 degrees Celsius respectively.

Myanmar: Four Indian Nationals Trapped in Cyber Scam Networks Repatriated Through Yangon

Yangon, (H.S): Four Indian nationals were repatriated via Yangon after India coordinated with Myanmar authorities to facilitate their exit permits from the Myawaddy compound, the Embassy of India in Yangon informed on Friday. The four Indian nationals were trapped in cyber-scam networks in the Myawaddy region of the Myanmar-Thailand border and were recently released and brought from Hpa-An to Yangon by the Myanmar authorities."

We facilitated exit permit by Myanmar authorities for these four Indian nationals from Myawaddy compounds and repatriation through Yangon yesterday. We strongly advise against such job offers and entry/exit without border immigration in Myanmar/Thailand, which can restrict future entry," the Embassy of India in Yangon stated on Friday. Last week, as many as 32 Indian nationals - all victims of Myawaddy scam compounds - were repatriated



through Mae Sot in the Myanmar-Thailand border region. The Embassy of India in Yangon has re-emphasised its advice against such job offers and cautioned that entry or exit without border immigration in Myanmar/Thailand is illegal and can lead to future entry restrictions."

The Government of India has been making sustained efforts to secure the release and repatriation of Indian nationals lured to various South East Asian countries, including Myanmar,

with fake job offers. These persons were subsequently made to indulge in cybercrime and engage in other fraudulent activities in scam centres operating in regions along the Myanmar-Thailand border,"

the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated. Earlier in March, the Indian embassies in Myanmar and Thailand coordinated with the local authorities to secure the repatriation of 283 Indian nationals by an IAF aircraft from Mae Sot in Thailand." The

Government of India wishes to reiterate its caution, circulated earlier from time to time through advisories and social media posts, about such rackets. Indian nationals are once again advised to verify credentials of foreign employers through Missions abroad and check the antecedents of recruiting agents and companies before taking up a job offer," the MEA reiterated.

Earlier this month, during his meeting with Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chairman of the State Administration Council and Prime Minister of Myanmar on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had appreciated the support extended by Myanmar for the rescue and repatriation of Indian nationals from cyber-scam centres along the Myanmar-Thailand border. Both sides had also agreed on the need to cooperate in addressing insurgent activities, transnational crimes, and human trafficking along the India-Myanmar border.

Zambia confirms second mpox death as cases rise to 49

Lusaka, (H.S): Zambia confirmed its second mpox-related death as the cumulative cases reached 49 in the southern African country. Minister of Health Elijah Muchima said on Thursday that the second mpox-related death, involving a 10-year-old child, was recorded in Mpika District, Muchinga Province. The country recorded its first mpox-related death last month after reporting its first mpox case in October last year.

In remarks delivered during an update press briefing, the minister said the country recorded 13 new cases between April 2 and 15, bringing the total number to 49, with cases reported in six of the country's 10 provinces so far. A total of 32 cases have so far been treated and discharged, while 15 people are currently under home isolation, he added. The minister said the Health Ministry is working with cooperating partners to investigate, detect, and contain mpox cases to prevent further spread, Xinhua



news agency reported. According to the WHO, mpox is an infectious disease that can cause a painful rash, enlarged lymph nodes, fever, headache, muscle ache, back pain and low energy. Most people fully recover, but some get very sick, Xinhua news agency reported.

Mpox spreads from person to person mainly through close contact with someone who has mpox, including members of a household. Close contact includes skin-to-skin and mouth-to-mouth or mouth-to-skin contact, and it can also include being face-to-face with someone who has mpox (such as talking or breathing close to one another, which can generate infectious respiratory particles). Mpox causes signs and symptoms

which usually begin within a week but can start 1-21 days after exposure. Symptoms typically last 2-4 weeks but may last longer in someone with a weakened immune system. For some people, the first symptom of mpox is a rash, while others may have a fever, muscle aches, or sore throat first. The mpox rash often begins on the face and spreads over the body, extending to the palms of the hands and soles of the feet.

It can also start on other parts of the body where contact is made, such as the genitals. It starts as a flat sore, which develops into a blister filled with liquid that may be itchy or painful. As the rash heals, the lesions dry up, crust over, and fall off. Meanwhile, the country's cumulative cholera cases have reached 490, following 18 new cases recorded in the past two weeks. About 480 people have so far been discharged, while nine people have died, the minister said.

Bangladesh Demands US\$ 4.32 Billion, Apology For 1971 Genocide From Pakistan



Dhaka, (H.S): Bangladesh on Thursday raised the issue of financial claim to the tune of USD 4.32 billion from Pakistan as a fair share from the assets of undivided Pakistan before 1971 besides also seeking a formal apology for the genocide committed by the Pakistani armed forces during the Liberation War.

The issues were raised during the Foreign Secretary-level Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) held in Dhaka between the two countries after a gap of 15 years. Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Jashim Uddin led the Bangladesh delegation while the Pakistani side was represented by its Foreign Secretary Amna

Baloch. During the meeting, Bangladesh also demanded USD 200 million - the foreign aid from countries and agencies to East Pakistan - during the extremely deadly Bhola cyclone. "We said that as a friendly neighbour of Bangladesh in South Asia, we seek Pakistan's cooperation in building a strong,

welfare-oriented and forward-looking relationship with Pakistan by resolving the existing historical unresolved issues at the earliest and we emphasise on working together towards this end," Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Jashim Uddin told reporters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after the talks. "These issues need to be resolved for having a solid

foundation of our relations," he added. Interestingly, the local media reported that the Pakistani side refused to comment on the outcomes of the meeting. During her visit, Baloch held separate meetings with Bangladeshi interim government's Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus and Foreign Affairs Advisor Touhid Hossain, where they discussed issues of mutual interest.

During his meeting with the visiting Pakistani Foreign Secretary, Yunus called for strengthening ties with Pakistan to boost mutual cooperation and explore trade and business potentials."

There are certain hurdles. We have to find ways to overcome those and move forward," Yunus said after Baloch called on him at the State Guest House Jamuna. Referring to the past, Baloch said Bangladesh and Pakistan must find ways to "harness the potentials between the two countries". "We have huge intra regional markets on our own rights. We should use it. We can't miss the bus every time," Baloch said.

Death Toll From US Airstrikes on Yemeni Fuel Port Rises To 38: Houthis

Sanaa, (H.S): The death toll from US overnight airstrikes on the Yemeni fuel port of Ras Isa has increased to 38, with 102 others wounded, Houthi-run al-Masirah TV reported on Friday, citing Houthi-controlled local health authorities. According to al-Masirah, the casualties include five paramedics who were killed upon arriving at the scene, when the US military launched another wave of airstrikes on the port just minutes after the first on Thursday night.

More than 14 airstrikes on the fuel port were reported during the two waves, igniting massive fires in tanks storing imported fuel. The fires were extinguished within hours, said the report. The US Central Command said earlier in a statement that it struck and destroyed the Ras Isa port on Thursday to "eliminate this source of fuel for" and "degrade the economic source of power of" the Houthis, Xinhua news agency reported.

In mid-March, US President Donald Trump ordered "decisive and powerful military action" against the Houthis after the group announced plans to



resume attacks on Israeli vessels in the Red Sea, citing Israel's blockade of humanitarian aid to Gaza as the reason. Earlier on April 17, Yemen's Houthi leader Abdulmalik al-Houthi had said his group had launched 26 attacks against Israel and 33 strikes on the US aircraft carrier and warships in the Red Sea since March 15.

In a televised speech aired by the group's al-Masirah TV on Thursday, the Houthi leader said the attacks on Israel were carried out using "30 ballistic missiles and drones," while those targeting the USS Harry S. Truman aircraft carrier and its escorts involved "122 ballistic and cruise missiles, as well as drones". However, the

Israeli military has reportedly intercepted many of the Houthi projectiles before they reached targets, Xinhua news agency reported. The US Central Command dismissed the Houthi claims of daily attacks on the US aircraft carrier as "outlandish" in a post on the social media platform X.

Meanwhile, the Houthi leader noted that the US military had conducted more than 900 airstrikes against his group's positions across northern Yemen during the past 30 days. Tensions between the Houthi group and the US military have escalated since Washington resumed airstrikes on Houthi targets in Yemen on March 15 to deter the group from

attacking Israel and US warships in the Red Sea. The Houthis, which control much of northern Yemen, said their attacks aim to press US-backed Israel to stop the offensive against the Gaza Strip and allow humanitarian aid into the Palestinian enclave. Israel's Channel 12 News reported last Saturday that a Yemeni drone was intercepted near the Dead Sea within the Jordanian airspace before it could reach Israel.

The Jordanian army confirmed later last week that an unidentified drone entered Jordanian airspace and crashed in the Ma'in area of Madaba governorate, near the Dead Sea, and no casualties were reported. Even since Israel renewed its intensive strikes in March across the Gaza Strip, the Houthis have been launching frequent attacks against Israeli and US targets. Earlier last week, the Houthi military spokesperson claimed fresh attacks against the US aircraft carrier, USS Harry S Truman, and other US warships in the northern Red Sea.

Israeli PM Insists Will Not Allow Iran To Obtain Nuclear Arms

Jerusalem, (H.S): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has reiterated that Israel would not allow Iran to acquire nuclear weapons, amid reports of renewed negotiations between Tehran and the US administration over a new nuclear agreement. "The Prime Minister has made clear more than once: Israel will not allow Iran to obtain nuclear weapons," Netanyahu's office said on Thursday in a statement.

The office added that Netanyahu, who views Iran as Israel's arch-foe, "has led countless overt and covert operations against Iran's nuclear program," and has "led the global campaign against Iran's nuclear program". Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi met with US special presidential envoy Steve Witkoff in Oman's capital Muscat on Saturday over Tehran's nuclear program, with both sides describing the meeting as "constructive". The talks in Muscat followed US President Donald Trump's statement in early March that he had sent a letter to Iranian leaders, delivered



through the United Arab Emirates, proposing negotiations on Iran's nuclear program, Xinhua news agency reported. Iran later agreed on indirect talks. Israel and western governments have long accused Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons capability, an allegation Tehran has consistently denied.

Even before the war in Gaza, sparked by Hamas's October 2023 attack, Netanyahu repeatedly took issue with Iran for its backing of Hamas and other militant groups Israel is currently fighting. "The Prime Minister has led countless overt and covert actions in the battle against Iran's nuclear program, without which Iran would today possess a

nuclear arsenal," the statement said. "These actions delayed Iran's nuclear program by nearly a decade." Netanyahu's statement comes ahead of a second round of Omani-mediated negotiations between US and Iranian delegations set to take place in Rome on Saturday.

Trump's efforts to reach a deal with Iran on its nuclear program through mediation appear in contrast to Netanyahu's long standing policy to tackle the issue using military action. "Prime Minister Netanyahu has been leading the global campaign against Iran's nuclear program for more than a decade, even when some dismissed the threat and

referred to it as a 'political spin' and called the Prime Minister 'paranoid'," his office said. In March, Trump sent a letter to Iran's Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei urging talks but warning of possible military action if they failed to produce a deal. While Netanyahu has been pushing the US to also take firmer action, a report in the US media on Wednesday said Trump had scuppered an Israeli plan to strike Iran's nuclear sites.

Trump administration officials revealed to the Times that Israel had sought Washington's assistance to carry out an attack on Iranian nuclear facilities in May. According to the report, the plan and its possible maneuvers were under consideration for months. But during Netanyahu's visit to the White House earlier this month, Trump told the Israelis he would not support an attack. The president instead publicly announced the direct talks with Tehran. On Thursday, UN nuclear watchdog chief Rafael Grossi urged the two sides to secure a deal, saying that time was running out.



Washington, (H.S): Two people were killed and six others were injured after an active shooter opened fire on the Florida State University (FSU) campus in Tallahassee on Thursday, law enforcement said at a news conference. The injured victims and the suspected shooter were brought to a local hospital. The suspect was taken into custody after being shot by police, officials said, adding that he invoked his right not to speak with police.

The alleged gunman has been identified as 20-year-old Phoenix Ikner, an FSU student who is the son of a Leon County deputy sheriff, Leon County Sheriff Walter McNeil said at the briefing. Investigators said the suspect used his mother's former service weapon, now owned by her as a personal handgun, which was found at the scene. They said he was also armed with a shotgun.

The deputy sheriff has been at the agency for more than 18 years and her service to the community has been exceptional, the sheriff said. "Unfortunately her son had access to one of her weapons," Sheriff McNeil said. He also said that the alleged shooter was a longstanding member of the Leon County Sheriff's Office citizen advisory or youth advisory council and

engaged in a number of their training programs. He had "been steeped in the Leon County Sheriff Office's family," the sheriff said. Police said the two people killed in the shooting were not students. The victims' names have not been released. Tallahassee police said at about 3:15 p.m. ET that the campus has been secured, although multiple law enforcement agencies remain on site for the ongoing investigation."

Law enforcement has neutralised the threat," FSU tweeted. The university said the student union and several other buildings on campus should be avoided "as they are still considered an active crime scene". Police responded to an active shooter call from the area of the student union around 12:01 p.m., FSU said.

Police later said the shooter opened fire at about 11:50 a.m. The school sent an alert warning those on campus to "seek shelter and await further instructions". The university also cautioned students to lock and stay away from all doors and windows. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis tweeted, "Our prayers are with our FSU family." The FBI and ATF said they had agents at the scene to assist local law enforcement. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt

said US President Donald Trump has been briefed on the shooting, and Trump made brief remarks about it on Thursday noon. "It's a shame. It's a horrible thing. Horrible thing. Things like this take place. And we'll have more to say about it later," Trump said. Asked later if he would take a look at gun laws in light of the shooting, the President said, "Well, I'm going to have to look. I'm a big advocate of the Second Amendment..."

These things are terrible. But the gun doesn't do the shooting, the people do. "The university said classes and all events were cancelled through Friday, and sports events cancelled through Sunday. Thursday's incident was not the first time there was a shooting at the school. Three people were shot in the university's library in 2014, before the gunman, a former student, was shot by police.

So far in 2025, there have been 80 mass shootings in the US, including the most recent incident at Florida State University, according to the Gun Violence Archive. In all of 2024, there were 502 incidents, which is a little less than 10 incidents per week. The Gun Violence Archive defines a mass shooting as an incident where four or more people are shot or killed, not including the shooter.

Russia Denies Attacking Warehouse of Indian Pharmaceutical Firm in Kyiv

New Delhi, (H.S): Russia on Thursday denied Ukraine's allegations that its armed forces had attacked the facility of an Indian pharmaceutical firm in Kyiv during a drone strike on April 12,

asserting that Moscow has never targeted civilian facilities during its ongoing Special Military Operation in Ukraine. "In response to the accusations spread by the Embassy of Ukraine in India the Russian Embassy in New Delhi informs that the Russian Armed Forces

did not attack or plan to attack on April 12, 2025, Kusum Healthcare's pharmacy warehouse in the eastern part of Kyiv," read a statement issued by the Embassy of Russia in India on Thursday evening."

On that day, Russian tactical aviation, strike unmanned aerial vehicles and missile forces hit an aviation plant of the Ukrainian military industrial complex, the infrastructure of a military airfield and armoured vehicle repair and UAV assembly workshops at a completely different location," it

added. Oleksandr Polishchuk, the Ambassador of Ukraine to India, had reportedly stated that the warehouse of the Kusum Group was "deliberately targeted" by a Russian drone, resulting in losses of almost \$25 million.

Russia, however, said that the "most likely explanation" of the incident is that one of Ukrainian air defence missiles fell on Kusum Healthcare's warehouse setting it on fire. "Similar cases have occurred previously whereby Ukrainian

air defence interceptors failing to hit their targets fell in urban areas due to ineptly operated electronic warfare systems," the Russian Embassy stated. It outlined that during the ongoing conflict, the Russian Armed Forces have never targeted civilian facilities."

It should also be noted that it has become customary for the Ukrainian military to deploy air defence systems, rocket launchers, artillery pieces and other military equipment in urban areas using civilians as a human shield," the statement added.

FM Sitharaman: India will Tackle Global Trade Disruptions with Agile Policy, Investments

Mumbai, (H.S): Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday expressed confidence that India would tackle the challenge posed by the global trade war with the right mix of policy agility and long-term investments to strengthen the domestic economy.Addressing the celebrations here to mark 150 years of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), the Finance Minister said:

"The intensification of tariff wars and the rise of protectionist policies have the potential to disrupt global supply chains, increase production costs and create uncertainty in investment decisions across borders as well."However, amidst this volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world, the strength of India's economic fundamentals and macroeconomic prudence stands out, she added."We offer investors a combination of policy stability and growth, governance



and innovation," she remarked." We will navigate the global disruptions with policy agility and long-term investments," she remarked. Sitharaman also said that India's financial markets have shown remarkable resilience despite recent global uncertainties which reflected the faith that retail investors' have in the markets.She pointed out that the transition of domestic institutional investors from playing a supportive to a dominant role in Indian markets underlines the growing maturity and depth of the country's capital

market.Indian markets have been more resilient than most others following the shock waves that rocked capital markets worldwide after the tariff hikes announced by the US.Indian stock markets have turned stable after the 90-day pause in the tariff hike for the country announced by President Donald Trump amid the bilateral trade talks between India and the US.The two countries are working to sign the first tranche of a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) to bring down tariffs before the agreed timeline

of the fall of 2025 as the terms of reference for the pact have already been finalised."India has decided to go for a path of trade liberalisation with the US," Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal told journalists this week.He said both India and the US would benefit if the trade deal is wrapped up before the fall of 2025."

When we said we want to do a first tranche of BTA with the US by fall, that doesn't mean we can't do it before fall. If we end up doing the BTA before fall, then it will be good for both India and the US," he added.If both the countries come to an agreement on reducing tariffs, it would lead to higher trade for the US and India.Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Trump have set an ambitious target of \$500 billion bilateral trade by 2030 in a joint statement during the Indian PM's visit to Washington.

Government takes steps to ensure affordable Domestic Natural Gas to CNG (Transport) & PNG (Domestic) Segments under CGD Sector

New Delhi, (PIB):The Government has introduced key policy measures aimed at strengthening the allocation framework for domestic natural gas, in alignment with its vision of promoting cleaner energy access, enhancing urban air quality, and bolstering domestic energy security.

With a focus on ensuring the sustained availability and affordability of natural gas for key public-facing segments- Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) used in transport and Piped Natural Gas (PNG) used in domestic households for cooking-the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) has introduced the following important enhancements to the Domestic Gas Allocation Policy: From Q1 FY 2025-26, domestic natural gas allocations for CNG (T) and PNG (D) segments will be done on a two-quarter advance basis.Allocation will also

now include New Well Gas (NWG) from nomination fields of ONGC and OIL.Estimations by GAIL and ONGC will help ensure supply visibility to CGD entities in advance, enhancing planning and delivery efficiency.Auction-based allocation for NWG has been replaced with a quarterly pro-rata allocation to ensure timely and reliable supply.

GAIL will allocate NWG to CGD entities in proportion to their requirements, in accordance with prevailing MoPNG guidelines. Despite increasing demand in the CGD sector, allocation ratios of domestic gas have broadly been maintained: Q3 2024-25: 54.68% of projected demand allocated.Q1 2025-26: 55.68% allocation.Q2 2025-26 (Projected): 54.74% allocation. Broad trajectory in domestic gas allocation reflects the Government's commitment to prioritize public-facing segments like transport and domestic

cooking.Pricing Linked to Indian Crude Basket:As both APM gas and New Well Gas prices are linked to Indian Crude Basket prices, calculated monthly, with the recent decline in crude prices, this allocation of domestic gas would make natural gas more affordable for CNG (T) and PNG (D) consumers.

These strategic measures by the Government will lead to enhanced ability of CGD entities to forecast demand and manage supply efficiently, improved supply predictability and better affordability for CGD companies due to crude-linked pricing. These measures will ensure a stable, affordable, and transparent domestic gas supply system for the critical transport and domestic segments under the CGD network, benefiting millions of urban and semi-urban consumers across India.

Adani Ports Acquires NQXT Australia With 50 MTPA Capacity

Ahmedabad, (H.S): The Board of Directors of Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) on Thursday approved the acquisition of Abbot Point Port Holdings Pte Ltd (APPH), Singapore, from Carmichael Rail and Port Singapore Holdings Pte Ltd, Singapore (CRPSHPL), which is a related party.

APPH holds the entities which own and operate the North Queensland Export Terminal (NQXT) - a dedicated export terminal with a current nameplate capacity of 50 million tonnes per annum (MTPA).The transaction will further enhance the APSEZ's global transport and logistics footprint and fast-track its journey to handle 1 billion tonnes per annum by 2030.The terminal is located at the Port of Abbot Point, approximately 25 km north of Bowen, in North

Queensland on Australia's east coast.According to Adani Ports, the transaction will be completed on a non-cash basis. APSEZ will issue 14.38 crore equity shares to the CRPSHPL, in exchange for the acquisition of 100 per cent interest in APPH.This is based on an enterprise value of NQXT of 3,975 million Australian dollars.

As part of the transaction, APSEZ will also assume other non-core assets and liabilities on APPH's balance sheet, which APSEZ will realise within a few months of the acquisition (zero net impact on the transaction valuation).APSEZ's leverage will remain at similar levels post the transaction,Adani Ports said in a statement."NQXT's acquisition is a pivotal step in our international strategy, opening new export markets and securing

long-term contracts with valued users.Strategically located on the East-West trade corridor, NQXT is poised for robust growth as a high-performing asset, driven by increased capacity, upcoming contract renewals in the medium term, and the potential for green hydrogen exports in the long term," said Ashwani Gupta, Whole-time Director and CEO, APSEZ."

We are targeting EBITDA growing to A\$400 million within 4 years. I am proud to welcome NQXT to our 'Growth with Goodness' initiative, as it exemplifies our commitment to high standards in environmental, social, and governance practices," Gupta noted. NQXT handled its all-time high cargo at 35 MMT in FY25, and APSEZ will benefit from an incremental EBITDA margin in excess of 90 per cent.

India's Sugar Production Touches 254.97 Lakh Tons In Current Season

New Delhi, (H.S): Sugar production in the current sugar season touched 254.97 lakh tons, as on April 15, with 38 factories operating across the country, according to a statement issued by the Indian Sugar and Bio-energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) on Thursday. Around 35 lakh tons of sugar is expected to be diverted towards ethanol production this year, compared to last year's diversion of 21.5 lakh tons, the statement said.

As many as 22 factories are still operational during the current season in Uttar Pradesh, out of which 16 factories are operating in western UP.Owing to the improved yield of plant cane, cane availability has improved in UP, and these factories are expected to remain in operation up to late April 2025 or May 1st week. Moreover, sugar recovery has also shown improvement in



the second half of the season, resulting in better output of sugar, the statement said.In Maharashtra, one sugar mill in Pune district is expected to remain in operation up to the 2nd week of May this year.

At the same time, some factories in south Karnataka are expected to restart operations during the special season from June/July to September 2025. Historically, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu collectively contribute

around 4-5 lakh tons of sugar in the special season.ISMA is also optimistic on the outlook for the 2025-26 sugar season due to better crop prospects in the southern and northern states.

The crop outlook has improved in the south, due to a favourable southwest monsoon in 2024, and sugarcane planting for the 2025-26 season has shown notable improvement in key producing states like Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Consequently, the crushing season is anticipated to begin as per schedule in October 2025, ensuring adequate supply.Both cane and sugar yields are also expected to go up in the north. In Uttar Pradesh and other northern regions, ongoing varietal replacement initiatives are delivering encouraging outcomes.

These advancements are expected to enhance both cane yield and sugar recovery rates, thereby strengthening overall production performance in the upcoming season. Seasonal forecasts from both the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) and Skymet project a normal southwest monsoon for 2025. This reinforces confidence in a favourable agro-climatic environment, supporting a healthy sugarcane crop and robust production potential for the 2025-26 season, the ISMA statement added.

SECL to Become First Coal PSU to Use Paste Fill Technology for Mining

New Delhi, (PIB): South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) is set to become the first coal PSU in India to adopt paste fill technology for coal mining- marking a major step toward sustainable and environmentally friendly mining practices.To implement this innovative underground mining technology, SECL has signed a 7040 crore agreement with TMC Mineral Resources Private Limited.

Under this agreement, large-scale coal production will be undertaken using paste fill technology in the Singhali underground coal mine located in SECL's Korba area. Over a period of 25 years, the project is expected to produce approximately 8.4 million tonnes (84.5 lakh tonnes) of coal.Paste filling is a modern underground mining method that eliminates the need to acquire surface land. After coal extraction, the mined-out voids are filled with a specially prepared paste made from fly ash, crushed overburden



from opencast mines, cement, water, and binding chemicals. This process prevents land subsidence and ensures the structural stability of the mine.Importantly, the paste utilizes industrial waste materials, making the process environmentally sustainable and promoting waste recycling.

The Singhali underground mine was approved in 1989 for a production capacity of 0.24 million tonnes per year and commenced operations in 1993. Presently, the mine has 8.45

million tonnes of extractable reserves of G-7 grade non-coking coal. It was developed using the Bord and Pillar method, employing Load Haul Dumpers (LHDs) and Universal Drilling Machines (UDMs) for underground operations.

However, the surface area above the mine is densely occupied-with villages, high-tension electricity lines, and a Public Works Department (PWD) road-rendering traditional caving methods unfeasible due to safety and

environmental concerns.With the introduction of paste fill technology, mining activities in this area can now proceed without disturbing the surface infrastructure.The successful implementation of this technology in Singhali is expected to pave the way for resuming operations in other underground mines where similar land constraints exist.With a total investment of 7040 crore, the project is a major initiative to promote green mining technologies in India.

It aims to enhance coal production while significantly reducing environmental impact. Speaking on the occasion, SECL CMD Shri Harish Duhan said "I firmly believe that paste fill technology will not only secure the future of underground mining but also offer an innovative, eco-friendly solution. This project is a landmark step toward green mining and will shape the future of the coal industry in the years to come."

New Delhi, (H.S): The Central Board of Indirect Taxes (CBIC) has issued revised instructions to the officers for processing GST registration applications, that will reduce compliance burden on taxpayers and facilitate rule-based transparency, it was announced on Friday.

Several grievances have been received by the CBIC), Department of Revenue, regarding difficulties being faced by applicants during the GST registration process, mainly on account of queries raised by officers on the grounds of seeking additional documents.

To resolve these grievances and to smoothen GST registration process, CBIC has issued new instructions." Officers have been instructed to strictly adhere to the prescribed list of documents provided in registration application form. Requisite documents in specific cases to



be uploaded with registration application form have also been delineated in the instructions," according to the Ministry of Finance. Officers have been directed not to issue notices based on presumptive grounds, minor discrepancies, or for additional documents that are not essential for processing applications.

They have been also directed to seek approval of the concerned Deputy/Assistant Commissioner in cases where document apart from the listed documents is required to be sought.The Zonal Principal Chief Commissioner/Chief Commissioners have been advised to devise mechanism to

closely monitor and issue suitable trade notices, wherever required. It has also been advised that the strict action should be taken against the officers deviating from these instructions." This will further facilitate in the process of getting GST registration, ease compliance burden, and promote ease of doing business," said the Ministry.

Meanwhile, India's goods and services tax collections surged by 9.9 per cent to Rs 1.96 lakh crore during March this year compared to the same month of the previous year, reflecting the higher level of economic activity and better compliance. Sequentially, the GST collections were 6.8 per cent higher than the Rs 1.84 lakh crore revenue recorded in February this year.

Gross GST revenue in March included Rs 38,100 crore from Central GST, Rs 49,900 crore from State GST, Rs 95,900 crore from Integrated GST, and Rs 12,300 crore from compensation cess.

US cites national security to justify steel tariffs to counter India at WTO

New Delhi, (H.S):The US has informed the World Trade Organisation (WTO) that the Donald Trump administration's decision to levy tariffs on steel and aluminium, was based on national security grounds and should not be considered as safeguard measures.The US defence came in response to India filing a request with the WTO on April 11 for the holding of consultations with the US on the tariff hikes under the WTO's Safeguards Agreement.India has said that despite the US's characterisation of these measures as security measures, they are, in essence, safeguard measures.It also pointed out that the US has failed to notify the WTO Committee on Safeguards under a provision of the Agreement on Safeguards on taking a decision to apply these measures.The Trump administration, in its response to the WTO dated April 17, stated:

"The US notes that the premise for India's request for consultations under Article 12.3 of the Agreement on Safeguards is that the tariffs are safeguard measures. The President imposed the tariffs on steel and aluminium pursuant to Section 232, under which the President determined that tariffs are necessary to adjust imports of steel and aluminium articles that threaten to impair the national security of the US," Washington stated in its response to the WTO, dated April 17.The US also claimed that Section 232 is a national security statute, and the tariffs are being kept in place under the security exception allowed under a provision of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1994.

PM Modi To Flag Off India Steel 2025 Global Conference in Mumbai on April 24

New Delhi, (H.S): Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate India Steel 2025, the 6th edition of the biennial international exhibition and conference scheduled to take place from April 24 to 26 at the Bombay Exhibition Centre in Mumbai, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Steel on Thursday.

The event will bring together leading stakeholders from across the global steel value chain to discuss the future trajectory of the sector, with a sharp focus on growth, sustainability, resilience, and innovation.India is on a trajectory to achieve a production capacity of 300 million tonnes and a per capita consumption of 160 kg by 2030, in line with the National Steel Policy. Keeping in view this ambitious growth in the steel sector, the conference is being organised to unlock new opportunities for inter-state and



international collaboration, facilitate knowledge exchange, and showcase India's policy reforms and infrastructure initiatives aimed at enhancing the ease of doing business across the steel value chain, the statement said.Prime Minister Modi will flag off the premier event on April 24 through video conferencing. The conference will be attended by Union Steel and Heavy Industries Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, Minister of State for Steel and Heavy Industries Bhupathi Raju Srinivasa Varma, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra

Fadnavis and Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishu Deo Sai.The event will also have a presence of global Industry leaders and senior foreign dignitaries leading high-level delegations, including the Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade of Russia, the Ambassadors of Australia, Mozambique, and Mongolia, reflecting the deepening international engagement and strategic cooperation in the steel sector.Key highlights of the International Conference-cum-Exhibition include the display of cutting-edge technologies and advancements in the steel

industry.Roundtable discussions will be held on sector-specific topics, international collaboration, and emerging trends.

Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet will also be held to facilitate trade opportunities and foster new business engagements. Country specific sessions involving key steel-producing nations, including South Korea, Sweden, Australia, and Mongolia. These discussions will explore joint research, technology transfer, and resilient supply chains to de-risk India's steel production and drive global competitiveness.The event will also focus on themes like augmenting domestic consumption, showcasing futuristic steel applications, and fostering global partnerships. With more than 12,000 business visitors, 250 exhibitors, and 1,200 conference delegates representing various sectors, Government

departments, State Governments, country delegations, and domestic and international buyers from India and abroad, the conference would be one of the biggest steel events globally.

Other Union Ministers will attend the programme are: Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of New & Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi, Minister of Mines G. Kishan Reddy as well as Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi. They will preside over key sessions of the conference, reflecting the multi-sectoral relevance of steel in India's economic and industrial strategy. Senior officials of the Centre, including the Secretaries of the Ministries of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Steel, and Coal, will also chair key sessions during the event.



Urvashi claims she has a temple to her name in Badrinath, wants one in South

One list which will always remain as exclusive as can be when it comes to acting heavyweights is the list for the celebrities with fan-made temples dedicated to them. With names like Amitabh Bachchan, Rajinikanth and Nayanthara having achieved this exclusivity, it was only a matter of time before the internet's first lady Urvashi Rautela joined their ranks.

Hear it from the horse's mouth: "Already mere naam ka mandir hai, Urvashi

mandir. Aap Badrinath ke mandir ke darshan karne jaoge na, uske theek baaju mein there is a mandir, called 'Urvashi' ", she shared during a chat with Siddharth Kannan. Siddharth, like us, was pretty surprised at this casual revelation made by Urvashi and attempted to confirm with her, not once, not twice, but THRICE, if she was serious. And each time the mega-star in her own right said, "Haan, Urvashi mandir wahan pe hai". For anybody else, allegedly

having one temple to their name would have probably been enough of a spiritual achievement. But Urvashi being Urvashi expressed her desire to also have a mandir to her name down South. The reason? It's because her career seems to be evidently booming there off-late and so she would like for her fans to have a place to go to, much like fandoms of the industry titans she has starred opposite so far. She said, "Within a span of 1.5 saal, I made my debut with

megastar Chiranjeevi. Phir maine Pawan Garu Kalyan ke saath kaam kiya, do filmon mein, phir maine Balaya Babu ke saath kaam kiya. Meri bas yahi chah hai ki unke bhi temples hai toh South mein aisa kuch ho, for my fans, wahan pe kuch ho". The still-baffled interviewer tried to confirm again if she was being serious and Urvashi very matter-of-factly said, "Haan kaam South mein ho raha hai na, toh South mein hona chahiye".

When asked where exactly her mandir is located, Urvashi explained that anybody going for the Chaar Dham yatra would be able to spot her 'mandir' about a kilometre into the route. Siddharth further attempted to clarify if people were following common rituals like bowing their heads down, offering prayers and seeking blessings. To this Urvashi happily exclaimed, "Arre mandir hai! Wahi toh karenga".

Movie Release

Kesari Chapter 2 review: Akshay's towering performance will anger Indian



Box office collection 6 cr on day 1

Kesari Chapter 2 box office collection day 1: Kesari Chapter 2, featuring Akshay Kumar, R. Madhavan, and Ananya Panday, was one of the most anticipated releases of the year. The film, which tells the untold story of the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre, opened to positive reviews. As per the latest box office update on Sacnilk, the film has collected 5.46 crore in its opening day. The box office report states that Kesari Chapter 2 collected 6.2 crore by 9PM. It registered an overall 17.40% Hindi occupancy on Friday. On its opening day, the occupancy for its morning shows were at 12.67%, for both its afternoon and evening shows it increased a little at 19.76%. It will be interesting to see if Kesari Chapter 2 can beat the opening day haul of Akshay Kumar's previous release Sky Force. On its first day of release in January, Sky Force had collected 12.25 crore.

We give our superstars far too little credit than what they really deserve. 'Khiladi' 'King of romance' 'Bhai'- yes they all do commercial, masala, OTT cinema really well. But with their immense experience, if given a good story and a different role, they can do wonders. When coupled with crisp direction and editing- you get something like

Kesari Chapter 2, which is as hard hitting and refreshing, as it is smart. A worthy addition to the Kesari franchise.

The story, set in the Pre-Independence era, revolves around C Sankaran Nair (played by Akshay Kumar), an Indian advocate who believes that courts are all about who loses and wins, rather than who's right and who's

wrong. A favourite with the British since he wins cases for them, he is tasked with investigating the horrific Jallianwala Bagh massacre which took place in Amritsar in 1919. They expect the results to be in their favour. What he finds out leaves him numb, and he decides to sue the Crown and General Dyer for genocide. The movie is directed by Karan Singh Tyagi, also credited as co writer along with producer (and writer) Amritpal Singh Bindra. Together, they create a compelling narrative. Free from the second half curse, which entails that a film usually dips post intermission, the pace is on point here. High points are neatly spread across the 2 hour 15 minute runtime. The sensitivity with which the entire incident has been dealt with, is admirable. Mass masala films rely on slick action and OTT sequences to evoke laughter and excitement. Here, the dialogues do the trick. Karan, the director, builds such sequences where you can't help but cheer as the actors deliver impactful lines. Sample: the 'empire is shrinking' line which Akshay Kumar delivers in the trailer as well. The dialogues thus by Sumit Saxena are on point. Don't mistake this film for a tearjerker though. It is meant to be rousing. It wants you to feel angry at the apology India still waits for.

Salman's Film Sikandar Continues to Struggle



Salman Khan's Sikandar continues to witness a decline at the box office. On Wednesday, the film earned 14 lakh through ticket sales, according to industry tracker Sacnilk. With this, the movie - made on a reported budget of 200 crore - has amassed a total of 109.74 crore in 18 days. Sikandar recorded an overall Hindi occupancy of 6.19% on April 18, the report added. The breakdown includes 4.78% for morning shows, 6.41% for afternoon shows, 6.62% for evening shows and 6.96% for

night shows.

While Sikandar continues to struggle at the box office, Akshay Kumar came out in support of Salman Khan on Tuesday. During a special screening of Kesari: Chapter 2 in Delhi, Akshay was asked about the recent underperformance of big-budget films. In response, Akshay Kumar told Hindustan Times, "Dekhiye yeh galat baat hai. Aisa hai, aisa ho nahi sakta hai. Tiger Zinda hai aur hamesha rahega. Salman aisi nasal ka tiger jo zindagi mein kabhi marr nahi

sakta. Salman Khan, who has tried various promotional strategies for his films, earlier opened up about the lack of support from the film fraternity. The actor shared that several people in the industry assume that he does not need backing because of his star power. Salman emphasised that just like everyone he also needs support for his projects. The superstar also pointed out that he actively promotes the films of his friends and colleagues.

"Unko aisa lagta hoga ki zaroorat nahin padti mujhe. (Maybe they think that I don't need their support.) But, sabko zaroorat padti hai. (Everybody needs support, including me)," Salman Khan Bollywood Bubble. Directed by AR Murugadoss, Sikandar marks the first-ever on-screen collaboration between Rashmika Mandanna and Salman Khan.

Rafael Nadal to be Honoured at French Open

Paris, (HS) : Rafael Nadal will be honoured at this year's French Open in recognition of his remarkable legacy and achievements at Roland Garros, as per the Olympics.com. The 38-year-old Spaniard is a 22-time Grand Slam champion, with a record 14 of those titles coming on the Paris clay. The ceremony will take place on the opening Sunday of the tournament, 25 May, on Court Philippe-Chatrier, following the day's matches. Nadal, a two-



time Olympic champion (Beijing 2008 singles, Rio 2016 doubles), retired in November last year. His remarkable win-

loss record at Roland Garros reads 112-4, and there are plans for him to take up an ambassadorial role at the Grand Slam. Zverev became just the third man ever to beat Nadal at Roland Garros, joining Robin Soderling and Novak Djokovic (twice). Nadal also played on the red dirt of Paris at last year's Olympics, losing to eventual champion Djokovic in the second-round singles and bowing out of the doubles with Carlos Alcaraz at the quarter-final stage.

Virat tops batting charts, Yuzvendra leads with ball in IPL turns 18



New Delhi, (HS) : On April 18, the Indian Premier League (IPL) celebrates its 18th birthday, a tournament that revolutionised cricket and changed the sport's landscape forever. The league's inception was nothing short of dramatic, as Brendon McCullum of Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) lit up the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium with an unforgettable 158* off just 73 deliveries, smashing ten fours and thirteen sixes against Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB). That one knock announced the arrival of a cricketing carnival.

As the league undergoes its 18th season, Virat Kohli stands as the highest run-scorer in IPL

history. Representing just one franchise-Royal Challengers Bangalore-Kohli has amassed an astounding 8,252 runs from 258 matches, including eight centuries and 58 fifties. Remarkably, he has never missed a season for RCB, making him the league's most loyal and prolific batter. Just behind Kohli is veteran Indian opener Shikhar Dhawan, who has accumulated 6,769 runs in 222 matches. Unlike Kohli, Dhawan has journeyed across five franchises: Mumbai Indians (MI), Deccan Chargers (DCH), Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH), Delhi Capitals (DC), and Punjab Kings (PBKS). India's five-time IPL-winning captain, Rohit

Sharma, sits third on the list with 6,710 runs from 263 matches. He has played for two teams-Deccan Chargers and Mumbai Indians- and has lifted the trophy with both, cementing his status as one of the league's most successful players. Australian southpaw David Warner, a destructive force at the top of the order, occupies the fourth spot. With 6,565 runs in 184 games, Warner has represented Delhi Capitals and Sunrisers Hyderabad, leading SRH to their maiden title in 2016. Fifth on the list is Suresh Raina, the now-retired former Chennai Super Kings (CSK) stalwart. Raina scored 5,528 runs in 205 matches and also represented

Gujarat Lions during CSK's brief suspension from the league. On the bowling front, Yuzvendra Chahal leads the charts with 211 wickets in 166 matches. His IPL journey began with Mumbai Indians, but it was at RCB where he truly flourished. Later, he represented Rajasthan Royals, and in 2024, Punjab Kings secured his services for a whopping INR 18 crore. Veteran leg-spinner Piyush Chawla follows with 192 wickets in 192 games. A two-time IPL winner, Chawla hit the winning runs in KKR's 2012 final and was also part of CSK's victorious 2021 squad. He has also featured for Kings XI Punjab (now Punjab Kings) and Mumbai Indians. Third on the list is KKR legend Sunil Narine. Since joining the franchise in 2012, Narine has been a game-changer with both bat and ball. He played a key role in KKR's title triumphs in 2012, when he took 24 wickets, and in 2014, when he took 21 wickets. In 2024, Narine had a dream season, scoring 488 runs and taking 17 wickets, helping KKR lift their third IPL title. In total, Narine has 187 wickets from 183 games. He was also adjudged the Most Valuable Player of the Season thrice (2012, 2018, 2024).

Damning Allegation by Team India's 'Powerful Member' Led to Nayar Sacking

New Delhi, (HS) : The after-shock of India's Border Gavaskar Trophy loss against Australia was felt on Wednesday as sources claimed that the Rohit Sharma-led team's assistant coach Abhishek Nayar has been sacked despite being only eight months into his tenure with the national side. Also, trainer Soham Desai and fielding coach T Dilip would not continue in their respective roles. While most reports claimed that Nayar was being removed after India's poor show on the Tour of Australia, news agency PTI came up with an interesting



detail. A report by PTI claimed that Nayar's removal was on the cards after Sitanshu Kotak was added to the Indian team's support staff as an additional batting coach. "...just after the tour of Australia, there was a review meeting conducted by the BCCI. The top officials of the board, including secretary Devajit Saikia and vice-president Rajeev Shukla, were present along with important members associated with the Indian team, and the national selectors," a BCCI source was quoted as saying by the news agency. "

Anaya's Claim in Gender Transition, Harassment & ICC Ban



Mumbai, (HS) : Previously known as Aryan, Anaya is an athlete who once followed in her father's footsteps, playing age-group cricket in India. However, she revealed that continuing a cricketing career after undergoing hormone replacement therapy and gender reaffirming surgery presented significant hurdles-both systemic and social.

In a recent interview with Lallantop, Anaya spoke openly about recognising her identity at a young age. "I was about eight or nine when I started wearing my mother's clothes and would say to the mirror, 'I am a girl. I want to be a girl,'" she shared.

Despite playing alongside now-renowned cricketers like Musheer Khan, Sarfaraz Khan, and Yashasvi Jaiswal, Anaya kept her identity private for years, especially considering her father's high profile in the cricketing world. "Cricket is filled with insecurity and toxic masculinity," she said, explaining the pressure she faced. Anaya also discussed both support and harassment she experienced after her transition. "There were some who stood by me, but there were also instances of harassment. Some cricketers randomly sent me inappropriate photos. Others used abusive language publicly but then

privately approached me for pictures or worse," she revealed. She further recalled a disturbing incident involving a veteran cricketer who, upon learning about her identity, made an unsolicited sexual advance. Anaya has played club cricket for Islam Gymkhana in Mumbai and Hinckley Cricket Club in Leicestershire, UK. However, her aspirations to play at higher levels were dealt a blow in November 2023, when the International Cricket Council (ICC) ruled that transgender athletes would not be eligible to compete in women's international cricket. "Inclusivity is incredibly important to us, but our priority was to protect the integrity of the women's game and ensure safety," ICC CEO Geoff Allardice had stated at the time.

Reacting to the ruling, Anaya expressed her disappointment on Instagram, where she continues to actively engage with her followers and advocate for LGBTQ+ inclusion in sports. Now based in Manchester, Anaya remains a powerful voice for acceptance, equity, and change in both cricket and society at large.

GT pick Dasun as replacement for injured Glenn



Mumbai, (HS) : With an impressive record of 1456 runs and 33 wickets in 102 T20Is, Shanaka brings both experience and versatility to the Titans' lineup. Shanaka, who previously represented the Gujarat Titans during the IPL 2023 season, returns with renewed vigour, aiming to impact the ongoing season. GT sealed the deal for INR 75 Lakh, hoping Shanaka will bolster their campaign. Fans eagerly await his contribution as the Titans seek to stay ahead in the competition.

Another Chennai Super Kings on Friday announced the roping in of South Africa all-rounder Dewald Brevis, one of the most exciting young cricketers in the world, into their squad, replacing injured pacer Gurjapneet Singh for the remainder of the IPL.