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English Daily



India Tears Into Yunus Regime Over Hindu Leader's Killing In Bangladesh



New Delhi, (HS) : India has issued a strong diplomatic rebuke to Bangladesh following the kidnapping and killing of Bhabesh Chandra Roy, a prominent Hindu minority leader in northern Bangladesh. In a sharply worded statement, New Delhi condemned the incident and accused the Muhammad Yunus-led Bangladesh interim government of failing to protect its minority communities. "We have noted with distress the abduction and brutal killing of Shri Bhabesh Chandra Roy, a Hindu minority leader in Bangladesh," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement. "This killing follows a pattern of systematic persecution of Hindu minorities under the interim government even as the perpetrators of previous such events roam with impunity." The statement continued: "We condemn this incident and once again remind the interim government to live up to its responsibility of protecting all minorities, including Hindus, without inventing excuses or making distinctions." Mr Roy, 58, was kidnapped from his home in Basudebpur village in Dinajpur district - located about 330 kilometres northwest of Dhaka - and later found dead. According to local media reports citing police and family members, Mr Roy received a phone call around 4:30 pm on Wednesday, believed to be from the men who would later attack him. According to The Daily Star report, roughly thirty minutes after the call, four individuals arrived at Mr Roy's home on two motorcycles. They reportedly kidnapped him and took him to Narabari village, where he was assaulted. Family members told The Daily Star that Mr Roy was returned to his home in an unconscious state. He was transported to a hospital in Dinajpur, where he was declared dead on arrival. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge described Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent meeting with

Continued P-4

US VP JD Vance to arrive with family in Delhi, meet PM

New Delhi, (HS) : United States vice president JD Vance is set to arrive in New Delhi with his family on Monday for a three-day visit that will include a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with ongoing trade negotiations expected to figure in the talks. Much of the focus of the trip to India, however, will be on cultural engagements and visits to tourist sites in Jaipur and Agra that are aimed at introducing Vance's three children - sons Ewan and Vivek and daughter Mirabel - to the country where their mother Usha traces her roots.

As of now, the only substantial official engagement in Vance's schedule is a meeting with Modi and a dinner to be hosted by the Prime Minister at his official residence on Monday evening, people familiar with the matter said on condition of anonymity. Several cabinet ministers, including external affairs minister S Jaishankar, and top Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders are expected to attend the dinner, they said. A change in the timing of Vance's arrival in New Delhi - he is now expected to fly into the capital several hours later than scheduled - has meant that meetings with several leaders are



no longer part of the itinerary. Modi too has a busy schedule this week as he will travel to Saudi Arabia during April 22-23. Vance will be accorded a guard of honour at the airport on his arrival. The Vances are expected to go shopping at an outlet for Indian-made handicrafts and textiles in central Delhi some hours after their arrival, the people said.

India is the second leg of a week-long two-nation tour by Vance that began on April 18 and has already taken him to Italy. This is his first visit to India, and Modi and Vance last met on the margins of the AI Action Summit in Paris in February. The India-US negotiations for a bilateral trade agreement and President Donald Trump's reciprocal tariffs, currently paused till July, are expected to figure in Vance's

regional and global developments, it said. Soon after the dinner hosted by Modi, Vance will travel from New Delhi to Jaipur on Monday night. On April 22, Vance will receive a formal welcome from the Rajasthan governor and chief minister, and he and his family are expected to visit Amer Fort, Jantar Mantar, City Palace and Hawa Mahal.

In the afternoon, Vance will deliver a speech at the Rajasthan International Centre before holding some meetings with political and business leaders. On April 23, the Vances will travel to Agra to visit the Taj Mahal. Vance's visit follows a trip to India by director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard, who was the first member of Trump's cabinet to travel to New Delhi in March for a security conclave and the Raisina Dialogue. This will be Vance's third foreign trip since taking office. Vance visited Paris and Munich in February, when his remarks at public events criticising European allies for censorship of free speech and defence spending ruffled many feathers as they seen as supportive of right-wing forces. Vance visited Greenland in March with his wife and Waltz.

CM visits Sambalpur and seeks blessings of Maa Samaleswari



Sambalpur, (DMC) : Chief Minister Mohan Majhi visited Maa Samaleswari Temple today. He witnessed the Evening Arati of Maa Samaleswari and sought her blessings. CM Majhi paid homage to the revered Goddess Maa Samaleswari today and prayed for everyone's well being. He will attend the public grievance redressal hearing tomorrow. He arrived at Jharsuguda's Veer Surendra Sai Airport this evening at 6 pm. The grievance redressal hearing will be hosted at Durgapali in Sambalpur and will have a high-powered delegation of 11 ministers, District

Collectors from 10 districts, the Chief Secretary, and Secretaries of several departments. Residents of 10 districts will get a chance to attend the meeting and register their grievances.

Another Chief Minister Mohan Majhi arrived at Jharsuguda's Veer Surendra Sai Airport this evening at 6 pm. He was given a warm welcome by the district BJP President and Jharsuguda MLA. He is scheduled to attend the public grievance redressal meeting tomorrow. He will listen to the grievances of the people of Western Odisha and try to solve their issues. Revenue and

Continued P-4

Deceased pharmacist declared 'Covid Warrior,' wife to get financial aid: Orissa HC



Cuttack, (DMC) : The Orissa High Court has declared a deceased government hospital pharmacist a 'Covid Warrior,' entitling his widow to financial assistance under state welfare provisions. The ruling overturned an earlier order that had denied benefits on the grounds that the pharmacist was not directly assigned Covid-related duties. Ashok Kumar Patro, employed as a pharmacist at the district headquarters hospital in Rayagada since July 2020, contracted COVID-19 and was hospitalised on 3 September 2020. He succumbed to the virus on 11 September 2020. Following his death, Patro's wife, E Meerabai Patro, applied for financial assistance available to families of designated Covid warriors, under a government

resolution dated 4 August 2020. However, the Odisha government rejected her claim on 22 June 2021, stating that Patro had been engaged in routine duties at a drug distribution centre and not formally designated for Covid management. A single judge of the High Court upheld the government's decision in February 2024, reasoning that Patro's role did not fall under the Covid warrior category as per official guidelines. Meerabai appealed the decision. A division bench comprising Chief Justice Harish Tandon and Justice B P Routray reviewed the appeal and ruled that the earlier judgment failed to recognise the nature of Patro's duties. The bench highlighted that even if he was posted at a drug distribution

Continued P-4

LS Speaker Felicitates JEE Mains 2025 Topper Om Prakash Behera

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : The National Testing Agency (NTA) announced the JEE Mains 2025 Session 2 results on April 18, 2025, revealing that 24 students, including Om Prakash, scored a perfect 100 percentile. However, Om Prakash stood out by clinching the top rank nationwide, a feat that has brought glory not only to his family but also to the state of Odisha.

During the felicitation, Om Birla praised Om Prakash for his dedication and perseverance. "Om Prakash Behera's historic achievement in JEE Mains 2025 is a testament to the power of hard work and determination. He has made Odisha and the entire nation proud," said Birla, as he shook hands with the young achiever. The event was attended by Om Prakash's family, including his mother, Smita Rani Behera, who has been a pillar of support throughout his journey. Om Prakash, a student at Allen



Career Institute in Kota, scored a perfect 300/300 in the January session of JEE Mains 2025 and maintained his stellar performance in the April session. Hailing from a well-educated family - his father, Kamlakant Behera, is an officer in the Odisha Administrative Services, and his mother is a college lecturer - Om Prakash's success story is one of

discipline and sacrifice. His mother took a three-year break from her career to relocate to Kota and support his preparation, a decision that has paid off. "I am deeply honoured to be felicitated by the Lok Sabha Speaker. This achievement would not have been possible without the support of my family, teachers at Allen, and the competitive environment in

Kota," said Om Prakash, who aspires to pursue a BTech in Computer Science at IIT Bombay. Currently preparing for JEE Advanced, he remains focused on his ultimate goal of securing a seat at one of India's premier engineering institutes. Om Prakash's journey is a shining example of what focused effort

Continued P-4

Jharsuguda Sizzles At 43.5°C: Heatwave Sweeps Across 11 Odisha Towns

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Jharsuguda town in Odisha recorded the highest temperature in the state on Sunday, with the mercury soaring to 43.5°C. A total of 11 towns in Odisha recorded temperatures of 40°C or above. Bhubaneswar registered a maximum temperature of 37.5°C, while Cuttack recorded 37°C.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Balangir experienced a scorching 42.4°C, followed closely by

Titilagarh at 42°C, Sambalpur at 41.9°C, Sundergarh at 41.8°C, Boudh at 41.5°C, Hirkud and Sonepur at 41.3°C each, Nuapada at 41°C, Bhawanipatna at 40.8°C, Rourkela at 40.1°C, Paralakhemundi at 39.8°C, and Angul at 39.7°C. The IMD has also predicted that maximum temperatures are likely to rise by 4 to 6 degrees Celsius in eastern Indian states over the next four days.

Puri Srimandir Ratna Bhandar could have collapsed without repairs: Law Minister

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : In a significant and alarming revelation, Odisha's Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan on Sunday stated that if timely restoration work had not commenced, the Ratna Bhandar (treasure chamber) of the Jagannath Temple in Puri could have potentially collapsed due to years of neglect and damage. His strong statement underscores the critical need for structural conservation of this ancient and sacred chamber. Speaking to the media, Harichandan emphasized that although the chamber stood firm for nearly 200 years, recent structural assessments revealed concerning signs of wear and damage. "If repair work had not begun now, the chamber might have given way anytime," he said, pointing to the urgency of the ongoing conservation effort. The minister clarified that despite the pressing need, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is not being rushed or pressured in any way. "The repair work is being undertaken with great care, considering the temple's sanctity and historical importance," he added. Currently, the restoration work is being carried out for 1.5 to 2 hours daily, due to various procedural and religious constraints. However, authorities are making every effort to ensure that the work is completed before Snana Purnima, the upcoming major religious occasion at the temple. The Law Minister further acknowledged that the limited working hours granted to ASI have slowed progress, but assured that the work is progressing with both technical precision and devotion.

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey attacks ex CEC over Waqf Act criticism

New Delhi, (HS) : BJP MP Nishikant Dubey on Sunday launched an attack on former Chief Election Commissioner S Y Quraishi, calling him a "Muslim commissioner" rather than an election commissioner. This came a day after Dubey stirred controversy with his remarks targeting the Chief Justice of India and the Supreme Court, and his criticism of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, which Quraishi had earlier described as a "sinister and evil plan of the government to grab Muslim lands".

Quraishi, who previously served as the CEC of India, had posted on X on April 17. "Waqf Act is undoubtedly a blatantly sinister evil plan of the govt to grab Muslim lands. I'm sure SC will call it out. Misinformation



by the mischievous propaganda machine has done its job well." In response, Dubey accused Quraishi of communal bias during his tenure. He said, "You were not an election commissioner, you were a Muslim commissioner. The maximum

number of Bangladeshi infiltrators were made voters in Santhal Pargana in Jharkhand during your tenure." Dubey added, "Prophet Muhammad's Islam came to India in 712. This land (Waqf), before that, belonged to Hindus or tribals, Jains or

Buddhists associated with that faith." He further brought in a historical reference from his background, saying, "Unite this country, read history. Pakistan was created by dividing it. There will be no partition now." He also noted, "My village Vikramshila, was burnt down by Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1189 and that the Vikramshila University gave the world its 'first vice chancellor' in Atish Dipankar." Dubey's remarks have drawn criticism from opposition parties like the Congress and AAP, which denounced them as an attack on judicial independence. His earlier outburst against the Supreme Court and Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna, in which he held them responsible for "religious wars" in India, prompted the BJP to distance itself from his

statements. Dubey is currently serving his fourth term as the Lok Sabha MP from Godda in Jharkhand.

Nishikant Dubey previously accused the Supreme Court of "inciting religious wars" and went so far as to question its authority, suggesting that if the court is making laws, then there is no need for Parliament to function. Dubey also took issue with earlier rulings by the court, including its decisions on decriminalising homosexuality and resolving religious matters. He alleged that the judiciary was steering the nation towards disorder. "The Supreme Court wants to push the country towards anarchy," he said. "Article 368 states that only the Parliament has the authority to

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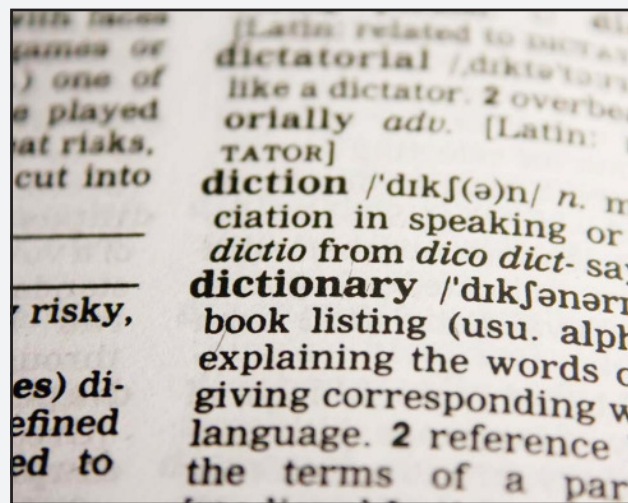
Covid-19 Treaty

At the height of the Covid pandemic in March 2021, more than 20 countries and international organisations issued a call for a treaty to protect the world from future outbreaks. In December that year, WHO members established the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body to draft an international instrument. Despite the toll taken by the pandemic across the world, countries were not on the same page over the details of the treaty's two central tenets - exchange of scientific information and equitable allocation of medical preventives and antidotes. Countries from the developed world insisted on instant access to scientific data. Members of the Global South wanted such information sharing to be linked to the rapid provision of vaccines, diagnostics and drugs - an understandable demand given that vaccine distribution was skewed against low and middle-income countries (LMIC) for much of the pandemic. The slow and difficult negotiations concluded on Wednesday. The WHO's Draft Pandemic Treaty, which will be presented at the World Health Assembly on May 19, is limited in scope compared to the pact proposed during the Covid years. Yet, it's a significant step forward towards securing the world against Covid-like crises.

The treaty is founded on the "One Health" approach, which recognises that people's health is closely connected to developments in the natural world. It asks countries to identify circumstances under which pathogens can jump from animals to humans, and take steps to reduce such risks. Such information, shared swiftly, can prevent and contain outbreaks. If approved by the World Health Assembly, the pact will be the first international covenant against spillover infections. Countries that share pathogen samples and genetic sequencing will get primacy in access to diagnostics, vaccines and therapeutics that are developed using this information. WHO members have also made some headway towards resolving vexed intellectual property issues related to drugs, diagnostics and vaccines by giving primacy to the public-interest principle. Such measures could help avoid situations such as those during the Covid pandemic, when some countries in the West could not compel vaccine manufacturers to share information on products they had developed using public-funded research. However, the treaty lacks an enforcement mechanism. To begin with, the US participated in the deliberations on the pandemic treaty. But the final text was drafted without American participation. Its ratification by 191 countries is more than a symbolic victory for multilateralism - the treaty sends a strong message that the WHO has overcome the setback caused by the US's withdrawal from the global health body.

21st April

Big Word Day



Big Word Day takes place on April 21 every year. Big Word Day is all about words, specifically coming up with new large words to keep the English language alive and well. Every language on the planet has a lexicon made up of words. Through speech, people have created and polished words over time. We tend to use short words when communicating, so we can convey more meaning with fewer words. Big Word Day is exactly what the world needs.

We use words in our day-to-day life, many of which can be found in a dictionary. An Englishman named John of Garland coined the term 'dictionary' in 1220 while writing a book called "Dictionarius" to aid Latin diction. From that time onwards, several attempts at writing a dictionary were made. It wasn't until Samuel Johnson's "A Dictionary of the English Language" that a more reliable English dictionary was created (1755). "Johnson's Dictionary," first published in 1775, is highly regarded by lexicographers today. In addition to creating the methodical tone of reference books, Johnson produced a widely emulated style of biography and literary critique.

His dictionary was the first to cover both written and spoken English. It was also the first attempt to impose a spelling and grammar standard on an unruly English language that lacked an equivalent of an academy to defend its use as proper or improper. "Johnson's dictionary" was the English-language standard for over 150 years, until 1884, when the Oxford University Press began developing and publishing the "Oxford English Dictionary" in short fascicles. It took over 50 years to complete this massive project, and the "O.E.D." was finally published in twelve volumes in 1928.

In 1807, Webster began compiling an American Dictionary of the English Language, which he completed during his year abroad in Paris, France, and at the University of Cambridge in 1825. His book contained seventy thousand terms, twelve thousand of which had never appeared in a dictionary. In 1840, the second edition was published in two volumes. G & C Merriam Co. bought Webster's dictionary after his death in 1843, and Encyclopedia Britannica bought Merriam-Webster in 1964.

Rural India: Key to India's Future Economic Growth



Raghunath Mahapatra

After facing a prolonged slowdown in rural consumption since 2021 (largely triggered by soaring inflation) the consumer goods industry is finally breathing a sigh of relief. Encouraging signs across key indicators suggest that rural demand of consumer goods is on the mend. This positions the FMCG sector for a return to mainstream growth. India's rural sector, which comprises of 65% of India's population, has always remained as a crucial part of the national economy. This sector contributes significantly to both the agricultural and non-agricultural production. Of late, various rural development initiatives, taken up by the Central governments as well State governments plays a key role in rural development, focusing on improving quality of life, promoting economic empowerment, and driving infrastructure development fuels the engine of the rural economy in our country. Since decades, this new vibrant rural India is emerging as a key driver of consumption growth, bridging the urban-rural divide through increasing incomes, targeted government initiatives, and improved infrastructure. Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies are

witnessing higher demand from rural markets, with growth consistently outpacing urban areas. This surge in rural consumption is complemented by accelerated poverty reduction and a shift in consumer preferences: from basic necessities to discretionary products. Further, an increased spending by rural households stimulates local businesses, creates jobs, and boosts overall economic activity, ultimately contributing to a positive feedback loop of rising income and consumption in the economy of the country. According to the RBI's August 2024 bulletin, easing inflationary pressures has helped the rural spending to increase within last months. This increase has helped to bridge the gap in consumption volumes between urban and rural markets. As per a report by NielsenIQ in November, 2024, rural demand grew twice as fast as urban demand which was driven by food staples and the recovery of mid-sized companies. While urban demand grew by 2.8%, rural India witnessed a 6% growth (compared to 5.2 per cent in the previous quarter). Overall, the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) sector grew by 5.7% in value and 4.1% in volume during the quarter, with 1.5% growth attributed to price increases.

Of late, it's said that India's private consumption spending has been on a rebound which is driven by improved rural demand, easing inflation, and government measures to stimulate demand. This rebound is reflected in the growth of Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE), which has been accelerating, reaching a seven-quarter high in some periods. In the fiscal year 2024-25, Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) accounted for 61.8% of



India's GDP at current prices. This percentage was estimated to increase from 60.3% in the previous fiscal year (2023-24) which is the highest since fiscal year 2003. Though, initially the rural consumption demand showed some stagnation in comparison to the urban areas - partly due to the El Nino effect on monsoon- but of late, the rural demand is growing at a faster pace than urban demand. The effect was already seen in FY25 as the gap between rural and urban consumption growth narrowed during the year. While the overall PFCE as a percentage of GDP has been on the rise, the good news is that rural recovery is underway and likely to gain momentum in the second part of 2025. While in rural regions, non-food items like conveyance (7.6%), medical expenses (6.8%), and clothing, bedding, and footwear (6.6%) contributed significantly to spending, on the other hand, in urban areas, spending was higher on conveyance (8.5%), entertainment and miscellaneous goods (6.9%) and durable goods (6.9%). Many research studies states that the country's rural areas (which accounts for over a third of consumer good sale) have been proving to be a positive outcome for the industry which has been grappling with a

slowdown in the urban setups (due to inflationary trend and due to slowing salary/wage increases). While these factors, in the urban areas, have impacted consumer spending, the rural areas have been outperforming the urban locations for the last four quarters. A favourable trend in rural demand in the current financial year was reflected in the first quarter of GDP data of FY25, which showed a spike in PFCE growth to 7.4% year on year basis (YoY) which was just 4% in FY24. The gross value added (GVA) growth was estimated at 2% in the first quarter of FY25; higher than 0.6% in the last quarter of FY24. It's said that the rural areas have been benefitting from the income support schemes rolled out by the Union as well many states.

Although rural demand is on the rise, it is still not enough to fully offset the slower growth in urban spending. For instance, Hindustan Unilever, a leading FMCG company, derives only one-third of its sales from smaller towns and villages. However, with the narrowing of consumption gap, the FMCG companies have started seeing green shoots of revival in rural areas and expect this to continue on the back of cooling inflation and a good monsoon season. "We are optimistic of a gradual uptick in consumption

trends over the course of next year, considering predictions of a normal monsoon, improving macroeconomic indicators, continued government spending on infrastructure building, and lower inflation," Mohit Burman, chairman, Dabur India had said in the company's annual report. "We expect a favourable monsoon, which will support agribusiness and consequently spur rural growth. Besides, a big wedding season with limited days in July is also expected to enhance large-scale out-of-home consumption of several products from our portfolio," Angshu Mallick, chief executive officer (CEO) and managing director (MD) of Adani Wilmar had also told the Business Standard. It's of no doubt the rural market (which accounts for 52% of FMCG volume) is witnessing renewed momentum. These are driven by favorable global trends and a domestic demand shifts. As per Centrum Institutional Research, this upturn is expected to fuel growth in the months ahead and as per Crisil, FMCG growth in smaller regions will achieve 7-9% revenue growth this fiscal, underpinned by a rise in volumes.

As rural demand is on rebound, its role in steering the FMCG sector's growth in India is becoming more evident. With the demand gap narrowing between urban and rural, latter is likely to become an important pillar for future growth. The key question now remain is its sustainability. With the base effect in play, the outlook for the sector and rural economy remains optimistic. It's of no doubt that the rural market is going to see a seismic shift once there is stability in the macro market. But it can be said that as of now, a full recovery remains elusive.

The writer is Former Senior Project Associate HSS Department, IIT Kanpur

Why students must consider unique jobs

Vijay Garg

In a rapidly evolving world, graduates must embrace adaptability and constant learning. Success depends on reinventing oneself and staying curious. Letting go of past knowledge opens new doors and by connecting multiple passions and pursuing a multidisciplinary path, students can create unique opportunities for themselves. Even the parents understand the importance of fulfilment and value non-traditional career paths. To prepare for the unknown, graduates should focus on their passions, deepen their understanding, and find connections that make them stand out. Being true to oneself and embracing uniqueness leads to a fulfilling and prosperous future. Success lies in adaptability, constant learning, unlearning, finding one's true calling, and integrating financial knowledge. High school graduates can confidently navigate the evolving world by following their own unique path to success. Beyond the disruptive innovations in existing fields, many new career avenues have emerged, that offer unique opportunities for students with diverse interests and passions. Following are some of these exciting new-age careers for students:

Sound engineering and music: The realm of sound



engineering offers an immersive experience for individuals with a love for music and audio production. Sound engineers play a crucial role in recording, mixing, and mastering music tracks as well as providing audio support for live performances and film production. This field combines technical expertise with creative flair.

Artificial Intelligence: The rise of AI has opened up a world of possibilities across various industries. AI specialists work on developing algorithms, machine learning models, and intelligent systems. From autonomous vehicles to personalised recommendation systems, AI professionals shape the future by harnessing the power of data and automation.

Digital marketing and advertising: In the digital age, businesses rely heavily on digital marketing and advertising to reach their target audience. Careers in this field involve creating engaging content, analysing consumer

behaviour, and utilising various online platforms to promote products and services. Digital marketers combine creativity, analytical skills, and strategic thinking to drive brand success.

Drone and robotics: The field of robotics is advancing at an astonishing pace which presents opportunities for individuals interested in designing and programming robots and drones. Robotics engineers develop robots for industries ranging from manufacturing and healthcare to logistics and entertainment. This field requires a blend of engineering skills and a passion for innovation. As the job market evolves, it is essential for graduates to explore the new-age career options available to them. These fields not only provide exciting opportunities, but also offer the chance to make a meaningful impact in the world. By embracing the power of technology, innovation, and creativity, students can pave the way for a successful and fulfilling career.

Service, a crucial part of deeper journey

Bipin Bihari Rout

How do great seekers describe their peak spiritual experiences? In the same way, ten persons describe the taste of mangoes they have never seen or savoured before - in ten unique, yet broadly similar, delightful ways. Practitioners following different practices say the experiences converge as they go deeper. One may wonder, how the widely differing spiritual practices lead to similar experiences. Do the different external practices lead to similar changes deep inside? If this is true, can the deeper journey be as clearly laid out as going from place A to place B?

The spiritual journey essentially requires transcending the lower nature and shedding all baggage to become light. Surge in creativity, hearing of soothing sounds, experiencing colourful light flashes and a heart filled with joy are the few early stage rewards everyone gets, indicators of a deeper reality. In fact different sounds and colours appear in a definite order indicating the progress markers on the path. Most seekers are aware of these. Tame our body and mind: We are more than the sum of our physical, astral and mental bodies. We need to tame them as they create hindrance in our true work. For example, when there is an opportunity to help someone, the physical body feels tired and wants us to rest. The astral body has its desires; it wants us to say sharp words, feel jealous, be greedy, envy other people's possessions. Our mental body wishes to think much of itself

and little of others. Each one of them pretend to be our real Self wanting us to pursue selfish motives. But as we want none of these things, it must always be us who should control our physical, astral and mental bodies and not that they control us. The body must be treated well, fed on pure food and drink, and kept clean, for without a perfectly clean and healthy body we cannot do the work of preparation. Never wish to shine or appear clever. Speak little; better still say nothing, unless we are quite sure that what we want to say is true, kind and helpful. Never allow ourselves to feel sad or depressed because it infects others and makes their lives harder. Control anger or impatience, so that our thought may always be calm and unruffled.

Consider sufferings as healing: For people taking the journey, God's grace allows past karmas to bear fruit in an accelerated way in one or two lives only whereas usually it might take hundred lives or more. The resultant suffering thus is like the healing of the patient and should be embraced with cheer. Always watch for an opportunity: To help others through selfless and unattached actions. Any set of spiritual practices with the above mindset will transform us into channels through which divine energy and love can flow. The more divine love flows through us to help others, the higher we rise on the evolutionary ladder. We rise as we help others rise. This resolve must fill our whole nature, and no temptations should ever turn us away from this.

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Science & spirituality, reason & faith

agriculture finds two plants of the same family. He tries to combine the seeds or use graft of the one on the other, experiments and develops a new variety, a new plant of the same family. The scientist may call it an invention. But where did the original seeds or saplings come from? They were already there.

The scientist picks up matter and studies its origin, and how it attained its existence. Recently it was

concluded that the whole universe is a matter of evolution from what is described as a 'sub-atomic particle'. It was claimed to be a discovery consistent with the long sought Higgs Boson - popularly known as the "God Particle" - that explained what gives all the matter in the universe its size and shape. The universe, in this way, was described as a matter of self-evolution. Who created this 'sub-atomic particle' or 'God Particle'? It has been only discovered - not

invented or created. This brings us to faith, the cornerstone of spirituality. Here, it is a matter of belief. There is no intention to dispute, deny or disprove it. The spiritual master tells us all about the Creator and Creation along with its purpose and we believe him, trust him. The question arises as to when this stage of belief, trust or faith arrives. We describe what is written in scriptures as the outcome of the lifelong experience of the great

spiritual masters who wrote them. We trust them simply because we do not want to make any more experiments or apply our own reasoning to arrive at the same conclusions.

True faith must be based on Truth. And Truth does not admit plurality. It implies that we have exhausted all other concepts, options and alternatives. We may love many but faith can be reposed only in one. Here, all our arguments are at their end. In fact this kind of stage exists in the field of science also.

Prof. Hepatology Deptt. S.C.B. Medical College, Cuttack

Lakhpati Didi Scheme Brings Tranformative Changes in Women's Lives

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The Women of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in this city of Odisha are scripting inspiring stories of empowerment through the 'Lakhpati Didi' initiative. With the joint endeavour of the Odisha government and the Centre, the programme is being implemented through the Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) to strengthen women economically and socially.

The scheme aims to make women self-reliant by promoting entrepreneurship and providing access to skill development training. As part of this initiative, eligible women receive zero-interest loans of up to Rs 5 lakh to scale their businesses. From tailoring to manufacturing, these



women are not just learning to stand on their own feet but are also becoming pillars of support for their families and communities.

A couple of beneficiaries also spoke to IANS and shared their heartwarming story of strength, resilience and transformation. Rihana Begum, a scheme

beneficiary, sharing her journey said, "I took a loan through my SHG and bought a sewing machine.

Now, I earn by stitching clothes and also teach sewing to other women. Becoming a Lakhpati Didi has filled me with confidence. I am grateful to the government for recognising and

supporting our dreams." Madhusmita Sahu, another inspiring entrepreneur, turned her life around by starting a paper plate-making business." After receiving support from the government, I started my venture through our SHG. Today, I am not only financially independent but also able to contribute to others' livelihoods.

I am proud to be a Lakhpati Didi," she said. These stories reflect a silent revolution in rural Odisha - one where women are breaking barriers and rewriting their destinies. Through timely support, training, and financial inclusion, the Lakhpati Didi programme is creating thousands of micro-entrepreneurs who are shaping a brighter, more inclusive future.

Bhubaneswar Rape Accused Shoots Self In Plot To Frame Victim's Husband; 3 Held

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In a sensational twist to a 2024 rape case, the accused allegedly shot himself in an attempt to falsely implicate the victim's husband. The incident took place late Saturday night under the jurisdiction of Balipatna police station on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar.

Police have arrested three persons in connection with the incident. The accused, identified as Dipti Ranjan Mohapatra alias Kuna of Guapur village, is currently undergoing treatment at a city hospital. His associates- Amaresh Pradhan of Nayapalli and Tofan Bisoi alias Banguru of Bharatpur Basti- have been taken

into custody for aiding the act. According to police, Mohapatra's injury was self-inflicted and part of a pre-planned strategy to trap the victim's husband in a fabricated criminal case. "During the investigation, we found that Dipti had conspired to frame the victim's husband and deliberately shot himself.

We initially suspected a self-inflicted wound due to the absence of typical close-range blackening marks. Our team cracked the case within 10 hours," said Bhubaneswar DCP Jagmohan Meena at a press conference on Sunday. A 9mm pistol used in the incident was recovered, along with four live rounds. An empty cartridge

was also found at the scene. Police said Mohapatra's associates helped him arrange the firearm and later hide it. Meanwhile, high drama unfolded outside Balipatna police station after the accused's mother attempted self-immolation using kerosene. She was quickly stopped by police personnel.

Claiming her son is innocent, she alleged he was being framed in a false case. "My son's mental condition has been unstable since his previous jail term. I do not know if he shot himself or someone else. If he is sent to jail again, my husband and I- both aged over 60- will set ourselves on fire in front of the police station," she said.

Eight Odisha scientists from Bhubaneswar, Berhampur institutes earn breakthrough prize at CERN



Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Eight scientists from Odisha-based institutions have been awarded the Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics-2025, among 13,508 global researchers recognised by the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN) for groundbreaking contributions to particle physics. The USD 3 million prize, higher than the Nobel Prize's monetary award, honours work conducted during

CERN's Large Hadron Collider (LHC) Run-2, which concluded in July 2024. Scientists from Bhubaneswar's National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER), IIT, Institute of Physics, and Berhampur's IISER contributed to experiments like ALICE and CMS, advancing understanding of subatomic particles, Higgs boson properties, and cosmic matter-antimatter asymmetry. Their research analysed data from high-energy

particle collisions, shedding light on extreme cosmic conditions and rare particle interactions. "The breakthrough prize trophy, had fun holding it today. Trophy molded into the shape of a toroid, natural forms found from black holes and galaxies to seashells and coils of DNA. All due to immense contributions of researchers of four experiments in LHC," wrote Prof. Bedangadas Mohanty in a post on X.

The Breakthrough Prize underscores advancements in quantum physics, which could revolutionise energy, computing, and material sciences. By decoding universal forces, these discoveries pave the way for innovations like precision medical imaging and sustainable energy solutions.

Notably, the achievement highlights Odisha's growing role in high-energy physics, inspiring STEM students nationwide to pursue research careers. With CERN collaborations set to expand, India's scientific footprint on the global stage is also poised to grow.

Odisha Unveils 2.3 Lakh Cr Infra Roadmap To Transform Connectivity

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In a bold push toward integrated and inclusive development, the Odisha government has announced a comprehensive multi-sector infrastructure roadmap focusing on road networks, urban mobility, rural irrigation, and regional connectivity.

The vision was laid out by Works Minister Prithviraj Harichandan on Saturday, signaling the state's long-term ambition to reshape its economic and social landscape. At the heart of the plan is a massive ₹2.3 lakh crore investment to upgrade and expand road infrastructure across the state over the next five years. The initiative will enhance both urban and rural mobility, easing traffic congestion and strengthening Odisha's logistical backbone. As part of the urban



focus, Ring Roads will be constructed in 11 major cities, including Odisha's five largest urban centers. These circular transit corridors are aimed at decongesting city traffic, improving intra-city movement, and boosting the efficiency of goods and passenger transport systems. In a major move to bridge developmental gaps in southern Odisha, the state will construct a new Greenfield Corridor

connecting Berhampur to Jeypore. This new highway will open up underserved regions, drive regional trade, and enhance access to remote districts, fostering balanced economic growth.

Addressing rural and agricultural development, the government aims to bring 15 lakh hectares of farmland under assured irrigation within the same five-year span. This initiative is designed to reduce monsoon dependency,

improve crop yields, and encourage crop diversification- benefiting lakhs of farmers and stimulating agro-based industries.

Minister Harichandan emphasized that the roadmap goes beyond physical infrastructure.

"These initiatives are not only about development but about building a stronger, more connected, and inclusive Odisha that can compete with the best in the nation," he said. The government expects the plan to generate thousands of jobs, attract public and private investment, and dramatically uplift the standard of living statewide. The multi-pronged strategy reflects Odisha's growing focus on sustainable, tech-integrated, and regionally balanced growth, positioning it as a future-ready state in India's evolving federal framework.

Bank of Baroda Inaugurates New Zonal Office in Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Bank of Baroda, one of India's leading public sector banks, inaugurated its new Zonal Office premises in Bhubaneswar, reaffirming its commitment to deepening customer outreach and strengthening its presence in Eastern India. The Bhubaneswar Zone encompasses the states of Odisha and Jharkhand and plays a strategic role in the Bank's regional operations. The new Zonal Office will oversee five Regional Offices located in Sambalpur, Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Cuttack, and Bhubaneswar, managing a network of 337 branches.

Notably, nearly 67% of these branches are situated in rural and semi-urban areas, reinforcing the Bank's efforts to expand financial inclusion and banking access in under-served regions. The inauguration ceremony was graced by M. Nagaraju, IAS, Secretary, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, along with Debadatta Chand, Managing Director & CEO, Bank of Baroda, and Manoranjan Mishra, Director (RBI Nominee), Bank of Baroda.

Senior bank officials, stakeholders, and esteemed customers also attended the event. Speaking on the occasion, Debadatta Chand, MD & CEO, Bank of Baroda, said: "At Bank of Baroda, we are committed to expanding banking services in emerging regions and high-potential geographies across the country. The launch of the new Zonal Office in Bhubaneswar



reflects the strategic importance of Odisha and Jharkhand for the Bank. It strengthens our presence in these key markets and enhances our ability to deliver banking solutions more efficiently, while driving inclusive growth."

Odisha, known for its rich cultural heritage and resilience, has been a focus area for the Bank. With this development, Bank of Baroda reiterates its dedication to customer service excellence, digital innovation, and inclusive growth. The inauguration also supports the Government of India's vision of "Purvodaya" - a mission to unlock the potential of Eastern India.

Bhubaneswar firing: Victim plotted to get himself shot

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The Balipatna firing incident in Bhubaneswar has taken a new twist. The victim had allegedly plotted to get himself shot and to blame it on another man he had a previous enmity with.

According to information, Deepti Ranjan, the one who was shot by the bullet had in fact plotted the attack on himself. After investigation police found that he had a sexually assault case in his name and was arrested for the same. In order to take revenge from the woman and her husband



(who had lodged the complaint), he plotted the attack on himself. On Saturday night, he went near the house of the sexual assault victim and fired at himself. He wanted to project it as the woman's husband had attacked him. He is undergoing treatment now and his condition is stable. After being discharged from the hospital he will be arrested by the police for launching the attack on himself.

Connection 2025 Brings IIMC Alumni Together In Bhubaneswar



Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) and its alumni association, the IIMC Alumni Association (IIMCAA), must collaborate more closely to enhance the skills of media professionals, said Prof. Anand Pradhan, Regional Director of IIMC Dhenkanal, on Saturday. Speaking at Connection 2025, the annual alumni meet of the IIMC Odisha Chapter held in Bhubaneswar, Prof. Pradhan stressed the importance of coordination between the Central Committee and regional chapters to carry forward the

institute's rich legacy. He also encouraged alumni to actively participate in the upcoming silver jubilee celebrations of the Odia Journalism course, which will mark its 25th year in 2025. The event brought together nearly 130 former students from batches spanning 1993 to 2025. It was a nostalgic occasion where cherished memories were shared and long-lost connections rekindled. The event was graced by several distinguished personalities including former IIMC Director UmaKant Mishra; Prof. Biraj Swain of National Law University;

Prabhat Upadhyay; Ramesh Chandra; Rajesh Kumar; Neeraj Bajpayee; Prabhat Pandey; Ritesh Verma; Animesh Biswas; Atul Gupta; and representatives from both the Central and Odisha chapters. Odisha Chapter President Sandeep Sethi, Vice President Sangeeta Agrawal, Byomakesh Biswal, along with prominent alumni of Odisha Jajati Karan, Ashok Pradhan were also present. Speakers unanimously highlighted that IIMC is more than just an academic institution- it represents a profound emotional connection

and a guiding force in the lives of its students. They underlined that the strength of the alumni association lies in unity, collaboration, and shared success. The accomplishments of IIMC alumni continue to elevate the institute's standing among the premier media schools in the country. During his welcome address, Odisha Chapter President Sandeep Sethi urged the Central Committee to extend greater support in facilitating the activities of the Odisha Chapter. He also called on alumni to join hands in strengthening the reputation of the institution.

IIMC Dhenkanal, known for its tranquil setting and academic rigour, draws students from across India, and its legacy is something that all alumni are committed to preserving. During the event, members of the Silver Jubilee batch of IIMC Dhenkanal were felicitated. The association also honoured Satya Sundar Barik, a recent recipient of the prestigious Ramnath Goenka Award. A lucky draw added a touch of excitement, with three winners receiving prizes from the attending dignitaries.

Third Party To Verify Fire Safety Certificates In Big Buildings In State



Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The Odisha Fire Department has planned to introduce a third-party verification system for fire safety certificates in big buildings, hospitals, and shopping malls across the state. Fire Services DG Dr Sudhanshu Sarangi said the move aims to ensure compliance with fire safety norms and prevent potential disasters. "We have provided fire safety licenses to 5,800 buildings in Odisha. More buildings are coming up. If we conduct a verification of fire safety in a big hotel or hospital, it will take around 10 to 15 days for completion. So, the government

has decided to engage a third-party fire safety auditor, which would be very helpful," Sarangi said. Under the new system, third-party organizations appointed by the Fire Department will verify fire safety certificates of buildings and shopping malls every six months. The verification process will include checks on whether buildings have valid fire safety certificates and whether they meet the required safety standards. The Fire Department will scrutinize the reports submitted by the third-party organizations to ensure compliance. Additionally, regular checks will be conducted on buildings constructed

before 2027 to ensure they meet fire safety standards. Dr. Sarangi also announced the introduction of mobile control vehicles to the fire department, which will be equipped with advanced camera systems to monitor major incidents. These vehicles will enable senior officers to keep a close watch on incidents and coordinate response efforts. Furthermore, the Fire Department plans to introduce a K9 squad with specially trained foreign dogs next May to enhance its capabilities. The K9 squad has already showcased its skills during the Fire Service Week celebrations at ODRA, Bhubaneswar.

District Excise Office inaugurated in Khordha



Khordha, (DMC): The newly constructed 3-storeyed building in front of LIC office khordha was formally Inaugurated to the by the Minister for Law, Works & Excise, department Prithiviraj Harichandan.

In his inauguration speech Excise Minister likely to emphasized the importance of the office in upholding the state's excise law, ensuring proper revenue collection & controlling the liquor trade. The new district excise office will streamline processes & improve efficiency in various excise functions. The office will be more accessible to the public providing better service to individuals & business involved in the regulated liquor

industry. He said that this office will play a major role in stopping the sale of smuggled liquor, preventing smugglers and creating a drug-free empowered society by enactment of excise rules and regulations, and protecting the society from the effects of drugs.

He also said that the excise employees will be given Arm-3 weapons and will suppress smugglers with a strong hand and Odisha will be made a drug-free state. On this occasions, MLA, Prasanta Kumar Jagdev, Zilla Parishad President, Rupa Shree Rani Guman Singh, Khordha Municipal Council Chairperson Kanak Laxmi Mohanty, Commissioner -Cum-Secretary State Excise Dept. Mrs. Guha Poonam Tapas Kumar, Collector,

Khordha, Chanchal Rana, I/C, Excise Commissioner, Odisha Dharmendra Mallick, Khordha Excise Superintendent, Sumati Tripathy, Bhubaneswar Excise Superintendent Debasish Patel, Cuttack Excise Superintendent Karuna Shankar Tiwari, Joint-Excise Commissioner, Rajendra Bhatra, Ashok Kumar Gadtia, Dambarudhar Khanda,

Additional Superintendent of Police, Khordha, Amrit Pal Singh, Sub-Collector, Khordha, Ashok Kumar Panda, Deputy Collector Debabrata Kar, Sritapa Mishra, Ananya Sriti Satpathy, DI & PRO, Khordha, Laxman Kumar Behera along with the employees of excise department, public & Media representatives were present.

Blood Donation Camp at St. Joseph Church

Paralakhemundi, (DMC): At St. Joseph Church premises blood donation camp organized. SP Gajapati Jatindra Kumar Panda graced as chief guest. CDMO Dr. Md. Mubarak Ali was also present. 40 units of blood collected in this blood Camp. Church father Ajit Nayak, Amod Kumar Bardhan & Lajar Lima with members of Church coordinated the program.



SKCGC(A) Old Students Association Observed General Body Meeting



Paralakhemundi, (DMC): SKCG (A) College old students association observed general body meeting. Presided by Principal of the institution, MLA Paralakhemundi Er. Rupesh Kumar Panigrahi graced as chief guest, Prof. Bipin Nayak as chief speaker, MLA Chikiti Manoranjan Dyansamantaray as guest of honor.

Working committee President Md. Naseer Baig, Secretary Dr. Sankar Prasad Bakshi graced on dias. Chief

guest Panigrahi extolled on history of the college which produced illustrious students being the second oldest college of Odisha. He assured to support on all development of the college & try to address long demand of University status of this oldest institution.

Chief speaker briefed his experiences as student & teacher of this institution. MLA Chikiti who is also an alumni shared his experience & advised to stick up on all perseverance which can

bring bright students. Parents & teachers blessings is the highest flash to address good career. On this occasion a souvenir launched. Some illustrious personalities honored in this occasion. Vote of thanks given by Naseer Baig. Dr. Sankar Bakshi presented secretarial report.

Amulya Panigrahi facilitated the program. New Executive Committee formed where Nrusingha Charan Patnaik elected as Working President. Other official bearers elected.

Various organisations, including the lawyers' association, have opposed the proposal to shift the puri & district courts

Puri, (DMC): Various organisations, including the lawyers' association, have opposed the proposal to shift the puri and district courts. The decision to launch a joint agitation against it was taken at a meeting held on Saturday. There is a proposal to shift the district court building to Balukhand revenue village.

The state government has provided five acres of land to the law department for the construction of the new court. Though the lawyers' association has been protesting against this, it has been going on for about 55 days, but the district administration has not held talks with the union workers. Therefore, the lawyers' association has sought the cooperation of all political and non-political organizations in Puri. President Premananda. The



meeting was chaired by Mohanty on Saturday. Former Union minister Brajkishore Tripathi said the state government should have held discussions with local residents and lawyers' associations before taking such an important decision. The proposal to transfer the district court is completely unreasonable

and anti-people. MLA Sunil Kumar Mohanty said that he will raise the issue in the upcoming assembly. presentation Will do it in session. It is unfortunate that this issue has not been discussed with the local people's representatives and lawyers. Former MLA Umaballav Rath said, "The place where the

One Crore of Marijuana Seized on Inter State Transportation Racket: 2 Arrested



Paralakhemundi, (DMC): More than one crore of contraband ganza seized. On interstate racket 2 persons arrested. Adava police of Gajapati district chased such hard huddles. While patrolling near Ramsing village some persons stood with bags. While seeing police they tried to whisk away but police strangled 2 persons. They are Anant Majhi & Asim Majhi of Ramsing village. Adava police seized ganza which would have costed one crore. This was about to transport outreach state.

"Mana Mukura" poem Collection Launched



Paralakhemundi, (DMC): At Utkal Hiteishini Samaj premises by Sidhant literary organization a book "Mana Mukura" collection of Odia poems launched. Written by Dr. Bidhyut Sekhar Mishra Deputy Director of Veterinary of Gajapati district, scholar Purnachandra Mahapatra presided. As guests of honor CDO Dr. Ramakant Rana, Dr. Kalyani Mishra & writer's brother Sudhansu Sekhar Mishra, Sabita Satpathy of Koraput district graced as guests of honor. Speakers extolled on epic writings that covered both myths & reality of life. Gourahari Karasudha Patnaik welcomed thr guests & Tripati Prasad Panda conveyed vote of thanks.

Opera Party detained- Non payment of salary of staff



Jagatsinghpur, (DMC): One of prominent Opera Party "Parbati Gananatya" detained at Uttar Sasan under Biridi Block of Jagatsinghpur. Due to arrear salary and non payment of wages of artist and worker Opera Party in distress condition. As per agreement with Mahavir Sanskrutik Sangathan opera party should perform show from 14th April. But Party arrived in late and started stage show from 15th to 17th April but now some Artist of Party and workers including Cook are at Uttar Sasan and demanding pending salary, wages. They are of opinion that the Opera party owner Pabitra Mohan Mohapatra not receiving phone and manager avoiding them. They are in distress condition and local Sarpanch helping them to arrange food. Now a cold war started with Owner and frontline actors. Local people, Opera Organisers, artists and workers demanding for a peaceful compromise.

Great news for sports enthusiasts PPA chairman inaugurated Floodlights at Gopabandhu Stadium

Paradip, (DMC): The floodlights at Gopabandhu Stadium have been officially inaugurated by Shri P. L. Haranadh, Chairman, Paradip Port Authority (PPA) on last Friday.

This upgrade will allow for more evening games and events, greatly benefiting for local athletes and the community. Several Heads of Departments (HoDs) from Paradip Port Authority were also present during the inauguration,



marking their support for this significant development in local sports infrastructure. The cost the Flood Lighting project was 1, 06,63,500/-, excluding GST.

a rollback of the decision. Bibhu prasad Tripathy, member of The Odisha Bar Council, Senior Advocates Aditya Hrudaya Mishra, Bijay Kumar Mishra, Priyadarshan Patnaik and Ramesh Prasad Singh participated in the discussion.

They opposed the proposal to transfer the district court to Balukhand Revenue Village. An all-party committee comprising educated intellectuals from Puri city, including organising a joint procession to protest against the proposal, met the Chief Minister, The Law Minister and the Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court and decided to hold discussions. Sangh general secretary Sarat Kumar Rayguru conducted the programme. Hundreds of lawyers, politicians, activists of various social and cultural organizations attended the event.

From Page- 1

CM visits....

Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari had conducted a review meeting for the smooth conduction of the grievance redressal. The grievance redressal meeting will be hosted at Durgapali in Sambalpur and will have a high-powered delegation of 11 ministers, District Collectors from 10 districts, the Chief Secretary, and Secretaries of several departments. Residents of 10 districts will get a chance to attend the meeting and register their grievances. It is to be noted that more number of group grievances have been registered than individual grievances.

LS Speaker....

can achieve. After scoring 92% in his Class 10 exams, he enrolled at Allen Career Institute, where he followed a rigorous 9-hour daily study routine and avoided distractions by not owning a smartphone. His preparation strategy, centered on NCERT textbooks and guidance from his teachers, proved to be a winning formula. The JEE Mains 2025 results have sparked widespread celebrations across India, with several students from diverse backgrounds achieving top ranks. For Odisha, Om Prakash's achievement is a matter of pride and a reflection of the state's growing prominence in academics. His success has also put the spotlight on Kota's competitive coaching culture, which has played a pivotal role in shaping the careers of countless engineering aspirants.

BJP MP...

make laws in this country. The Supreme Court has the right to interpret the law. But now the Supreme Court is saying that the President should decide what to do within three months, and the Governor should decide what to do within three months," he told. His attack on the judiciary came just hours after another remark: "If the Supreme Court is making the laws, then the parliament building should be shut down." These statements coincided with the apex court's hearing on a series of petitions questioning the constitutionality of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

Deceased pharmacist...

centre, his responsibilities inevitably brought him into contact with multiple hospital areas, including wards with Covid-19 patients. The court further acknowledged a certification by the Chief District Medical and Public Health Officer of Rayagada, confirming that Patro had been drafted for Covid-related work. In its verdict, the bench stated that "his exposure to direct contact with Covid-19 patients in the course of discharging his duties as a pharmacist is very much probable." The High Court set aside the earlier judgment and directed the Odisha state authorities to provide financial compensation to Meerabai Patro in accordance with the finance department's resolution. The case sets a significant precedent in recognising the contribution of frontline workers beyond those formally assigned to Covid-specific tasks.

India Tears Into...

Muhammad Yunus as "ineffective" in securing protections for minorities. "In Bangladesh, religious minorities, especially our Hindu brothers and sisters, are continuously facing atrocities," Mr Kharge said in a statement. "The brutal murder of a prominent Hindu community leader, Mr Bhabesh Chandra Roy, is evidence that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cordial meeting with Bangladesh's Chief Advisor has failed." Mr Kharge further cited Indian parliamentary data, stating that there had been 76 attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh in the past two months alone, resulting in 23 deaths. He also alleged that similar attacks on other religious minorities were ongoing. Responding to Mr Kharge's remarks, the BJP questioned why the Congress is silent on alleged attacks on Hindus in West Bengal, adding that foreign policy cannot be dictated by grudges but through diplomacy. "The first thing Congress should do is realise that targeting PM Modi for his cordial ties with a global figure like Muhammad Yunus is absolutely absurd," BJP spokesperson Charu Pragma told.

Forest department seizes bombs used for wild boar hunting in Nuapada; 3 poachers arrested

Nuapada, (DMC): In a significant crackdown on illegal hunting activities, the Forest Department of Komna Range in Nuapada district conducted a successful raid in Sirli village and seized a cache of explosives and hunting equipment allegedly used for wild boar poaching. The operation, conducted based on intelligence inputs, highlights the growing concern over the use of dangerous methods for hunting wildlife in forested areas. During the raid, officials seized six country-made bombs, 55 metal spikes often used to trap animals, sharp-edged weapons like axes, and bird snares, along with a quantity of wild boar meat. The seized explosives, reportedly planted to kill wild boars during their movement in the forest fringes, posed a serious threat not just to wildlife but also to human lives.

Three accused individuals-Antaram Majhi, Tejaraj Majhi, and Indramani Majhi-were arrested from the site and later forwarded to court under relevant provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, and the Explosives Act. Forest officials stated that the use of such explosive devices for hunting is a deeply worrying trend. "These bombs are locally assembled and extremely dangerous. They are often hidden in fields or forest trails with bait to lure wild boars. When the animal tries to eat it, the bomb detonates, causing instant death or severe injury," said a senior forest officer from the Komna Range. Mohammad Mustafa, ACF, said, "During the raid, we have seized boar meat and other explosives and arrested three persons in this connection." The recovered bombs were neutralized safely by the Bomb Disposal Squad of the local police to avoid any further risk. The Forest Department has intensified patrolling in vulnerable areas and has appealed to locals to report any suspicious activity related to illegal hunting or explosive traps. The Forest Department has assured that further investigations will continue and strict legal action will be taken against those involved in wildlife crimes.

2 Killed In Separate Lightning Strikes In Balangir

Balangir, (DMC): Two persons lost their lives in separate lightning strike incidents in Balangir district on Sunday. The deceased have been identified as Gangadhar Dharua of Saramuhana village and Snehilata Budek of Tustapali village. According to sources, the first incident took place in Bagdora village under Belapada police limits in Patnagarh sub-division. Gangadhar Dharua was reportedly ploughing a field with his tractor when lightning struck, killing him on the spot. In a separate incident, Snehilata Budek, a shepherd from Tustapali, was grazing her goats when sudden rainfall forced her to take shelter under a tree. Tragically, she was struck by lightning and died instantly. Family members and local police later recovered the body.

'Lost Everything in One Night': J&K's Ramban Residents after Landslides



New Delhi, (HS) : Residents in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban are assessing the damage due to landslides triggered by heavy hailstorm, with many saying they have lost commercial property and homes. Three people were killed when their houses collapsed due to the landslide. "I live on the other side, but even there, the flow of water was very strong, we could not make it here in time. When I reached here, I saw the whole market, including my shop, had vanished... This is the first time I am seeing something like this," a Ramban resident, Om Singh, told.

Some houses damaged by the landslides were visible behind Mr Singh. Ravi Kumar, a shopkeeper at Ramban, said he owned two shops, both of which vanished overnight. "I had two shops at the market... When we got to know at 4 am that the whole market had been washed away, we rushed here to find there was nothing left," Mr Kumar said. "We didn't know who to approach for help, what to do; we were clueless. These shops were our only source of livelihood. Now we have no shops and no land. I request the government to come and help us... It was a very scary sight, beyond

imagination... We want our loans to be waived, we have nothing left," he said. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ramban Kulbir Singh said all police stations have been alerted, and some 100 people have been rescued from Dharam Kund. Sunil Kumar, a local resident, is devastated to find his new car was damaged by the landslide. "I was travelling from Jammu to Srinagar. Since it was raining, I booked a hotel in Ramban. At 3 am, this incident took place. When I came out, I saw that two floors of the hotel were inside the debris. Around 15 people were there on the top floor. We rescued all of them. My new car is completely damaged due to the landslide... Around 8-10 cars are stuck under the debris," he told. Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in a post on X said officials are in touch with the local administration to ensure immediate rescue efforts wherever needed.

Union Minister and area MP Jitendra Singh said National Highway 44 remains blocked due to the damage in Ramban. He said he is in touch with the deputy commissioner and relief is being given to those affected by the

3 Dead as Heavy Rain Triggers Landslides



Srinagar, (HS) : Three people have died and the Srinagar-Jammu national highway, the lifeline of the Valley, has been shut after heavy rain caused landslides and triggered flash floods in the Union Territory. Visuals show trucks stuck and vehicles submerged in the debris. Among the areas worst affected by the calamity is Ramban. Multiple trees have been uprooted, disrupting traffic movement, and power cuts have also been reported. A sudden spell of strong winds and rain hit the area on Thursday and flash floods followed. Parshottam Gupta, former Sarpanch of Sateni Panchayat in Udhampur, said the area has suffered extensive damage. "I have inspected my Panchayat, and there were several trees uprooted. The traffic and electricity have been affected in the area. After 4-5 years, such strong winds have affected the area," he told. The weather department has said an active western disturbance caused the heavy rain and storm. About 40 homes were damaged in Ramban's Dharam Kund village and more than 100 trapped villagers had to be rescued by police personnel.

Heavy rain has also triggered landslides and mudslides at nearly a dozen places between Nashri and Banihal along Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, leading to the suspension of traffic, officials said. A traffic department spokesperson said traffic on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was stopped due to landslides, mudslides and shooting stones. He said commuters had been advised not to travel on the key highway till the weather improved and the road cleared.

natural disaster. Local officials said some 40 houses were damaged after a flash flood hit Dharam Kund village. Ten houses were fully damaged while the rest suffered partial damage. More than

100 trapped villagers were rescued by the police, officials said. Indian Army personnel are providing food, medicines, and aid to those affected by the Ramban flash floods.

3 Key Accused with 7 Arrested in Seelampur Murder Case

New Delhi, (HS) : Three key accused involved in the Seelampur murder case have been arrested, while seven people have been apprehended so far, police said on Sunday. "Delhi Police have apprehended a total of 7 individuals in connection with the Kunal murder case. Key accused Zikra, Sahil, and Dilshad have been arrested, along with several minor suspects who are now in police custody," an official statement said. Further investigation is underway. Earlier, 'Lady Don' Zikra was arrested in the murder case involving a 17-year-old boy in Seelampur. During questioning, Zikra told police that her cousin Sahil was attacked in November last year by two boys, Lala and Shambhu, who were friends of Kunal. Kunal was also there at that time, but since he was a minor, his name was not in the FIR. Zikra and Sahil believed that Kunal was behind the attack, so they sought revenge against him. The opposition party lashed out at the BJP-led government in the state and said that the situation has worsened after the new government came to power in Delhi. Meanwhile, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said that justice would be served in the case of the 17-year-old boy who was stabbed to death and later declared dead at Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan (LNJP) Hospital. "I have spoken to the Police commissioner about the murder of a 17-year-old boy, Kunal. He was attacked with knives and was rushed to the Jai Prakash hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival," Gupta told reporters.

Senior citizen dragged in hospital; video goes viral

CHHATARPURN, (HS) : A video of a septuagenarian being dragged by two men in a government hospital in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatarpur district has gone viral on social media, with authorities and the victim giving conflicting versions of the chain of events. While the man said he was kicked and slapped by a doctor after his turn came following a long wait in the queue, hospital authorities said he had come out of turn, which triggered an argument. The incident took place on April 17 when Uddhav Singh Joshi (70), a resident of Naugaon town, had come to the district hospital in Chhatarpur for his wife's medical check-up. "I remained in queue for a long time after getting the time slot slip. When my turn came, Dr Rajesh Mishra objected and then slapped and kicked me," Joshi alleged while speaking to reporters. Refuting his charges, civil surgeon GL Ahirwar said the place was overcrowded and Dr Mishra objected because Joshi had broken the queue. In the viral video, two men can be seen holding the hands of Joshi and dragging him.



MUMBAI, (HS) : Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut on Sunday said there has been no announcement of an alliance between his party and the MNS, but claimed "emotional talks" between the two are going on. Talking to reporters, Raut also said Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray has not set out a precondition for rapprochement with Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president and his cousin Raj Thackeray. "There is no announcement of an alliance. Currently, emotional talks are going on," Raut said. "They (Raj and Uddhav) meet at family events. They are brothers," the Rajya Sabha member added. The buzz about rapprochement started after Raj Thackeray said in a podcast interview

with filmmaker Mahesh Manjrekar - recorded weeks ago but released on Saturday - that he had no issues when working with Uddhav in the undivided Shiv Sena. The question is does Uddhav want to work with him, he said. MNS' Mumbai president and party spokesperson Sandeep Deshpande, however, said people were reading too much into the remarks made by Raj Thackeray. He said the election tie-up is a distant step and the Sena (UBT) must back the MNS in its agitation for Marathi language and people. Raj and Uddhav have sparked speculation about a possible reconciliation with statements indicating they could ignore "trivial issues" and join hands nearly two decades after a bitter parting of

ways.

While Raj Thackeray said uniting in the interests of "Marathi manooos" was not difficult, former CM Uddhav Thackeray said he was ready to put aside trivial fights, provided that those working against Maharashtra's interests were not entertained. Uddhav's assertion has been seen as a veiled reference to the MNS chief recently hosting Deputy CM Eknath Shinde at his residence. Without naming his cousin, Uddhav Thackeray had said nothing should be done to help the "thieves", an apparent reference to the BJP and Shinde-led Sena. Raut on Sunday said Uddhav Thackeray has not put a precondition for rapprochement. He has only asked to prioritise the interest and not to break bread with the enemies of Maharashtra. "Raj Thackeray talks about the interest of Maharashtra, so does Uddhav Thackeray. The BJP does not fit in it. Those who are with the BJP also do not fit into it," Raut said. He dubbed BJP as "the enemy of Maharashtra" and claimed it split Bal Thackeray's Shiv Sena, which worked to safeguard the pride of Maharashtra.

Anyone with them (BJP) is the "enemy" of Maharashtra, Raut further claimed. Deshpande said, "Everyone feels that two brothers should come together, but how? If you are not going

Waqf Act Row: SC to Hear on Monday PIL Seeking Judicial Probe Into Bengal Violence

New Delhi, (HS) : The Supreme Court is slated to hear on Monday a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking the formation of a five-member judicial enquiry commission under the chairmanship of a retired apex court judge to enquire into the violent protests erupted against the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 in West Bengal's Murshidabad. As per the causelist published on the apex court's website, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and N.K. Singh will take up the matter for hearing on April 21. The plea seeks directions to the West Bengal government to file a status report on the clashes/riots which took place during the protest against the Waqf Amendment Act, apart from taking action and curbing the hate speeches made with respect to any community. Further, the PIL, filed by advocate Vishal Tiwari, seeks direction to the Union Home Ministry to issue an advisory to Chief Secretaries of all the states to curb the hate and provocative speeches by the political parties or their leaders. As per the petition, protests erupted across various parts of the country after the enactment of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, with demonstrations taking place in West Bengal, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Chennai, and Bengaluru. "In West Bengal's Murshidabad District and North 24 Parganas, violence erupted in the protest against the Waqf Amendment Act. The violence has led to deaths and destruction of property. Stones were pelted, and several police personnel were also injured. Prohibitory orders and an Internet ban remained in place in various areas of Murshidabad. Train services were hit as protesters blocked the rail tracks," it said. The petition added that it may be a good opportunity for politics, and some of the political parties use the religious sentiments to gain political mileage. "Instead of maintaining peace, the politicians give provocative speeches, which makes the situation worse. The Chief Ministers or ministers who, while sitting in tightened security, speak whatever they want and sometimes their speeches are filled with hate and provocation targeting a particular religion and people," further stated the petition. On Wednesday, a bench headed by CJI Sanjiv Khanna expressed its concern over violence taking place amid protests against the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, as it dealt with a clutch of petitions challenging the validity of the contentious amendments introduced to the Waqf Act, 1995.

"One thing that is very disturbing is the violence which is taking place. Once the matter is before the court, it should not happen," remarked the Bench, also comprising Justices Sanjay Kumar and K.V. Viswanathan. The CJI Khanna-led Bench, on Thursday, recorded the Centre's undertaking that no fresh members would be appointed to Waqf Boards and the Central Waqf Council in terms of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, till the next date of hearing. In its interim order, the apex court recorded the assurance given by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, the second highest law officer of the Centre, that the status of existing Waqfs, including Waqf by user, will not be changed or identified.

Prime accused in riot-hit Murshidabad double murder arrested by STF, fourth arrest in violence case

KOLKATA, (HS) : One of the prime accused in the murder of a man and his son in violence-hit Murshidabad district in West Bengal was arrested, police said on Sunday. This was the fourth arrest in the killing of the two at Jafrabad in Shamsherganj, a senior officer said. The arrested person, identified as Ziaul Sheikh, a resident of Sulitala Purbapara, the neighbouring village of Jafrabad, has been on the run since the crime took place on April 12. Sheikh was arrested by the Special Task Force (STF) of the West Bengal Police along with the Special Investigating Team (SIT) from his hideout in Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur district on Saturday, he said. "This person is one of the prime accused who had conspired and instigated a mob to carry out vandalism at the residence of the deceased and killed Haragobindo Das and his son Chandan Das on April 12," the officer told PTI. The police have all the evidence, CCTV footage, and his mobile phone tower location to prove his



presence at the crime spot on April 12, he said. Earlier, the police had arrested two brothers, Kalu Nadar and Dildar, and Inzmam Ul Haque in connection with their involvement in the killing of the two. Kalu was arrested from Murari in Birbhum district, his brother Dildar was held from the Bangladesh border area under the Suti Police Station jurisdiction. The third accused was apprehended from Suripara, a neighbouring village of Jafrabad. "We have lodged over 100 FIRs in the Murshidabad violence cases. We have so far arrested 276 people in these cases," the officer added. At least three people were killed in connection with violence amid recent protests over the amendments to the Waqf Act.

When Raj Thackeray Quit Shiv Sena, How Uddhav Had Reacted

Mumbai, (HS) : "I wouldn't wish a day such as today even on my worst enemy. All I had asked for was respect. All I got was insult and humiliation." On December 18, 2005, a 36-year-old Raj Thackeray addressed a press conference at Shivaji Park gymkhana. With a voice choking with emotion, he announced his decision to quit Shiv Sena, a party founded by his uncle and firebrand leader Bal Thackeray. Three months later, Raj Thackeray would form Maharashtra Navnirman Sena. At another press conference at Matoshree, the Thackeray residence at Mumbai's Bandra, Raj's cousin and Bal Thackeray's son Uddhav, then 44, spoke to the media. "Raj's decision is the outcome of a misunderstanding. He revolted on November 27 and all these days we were hoping that the differences would be resolved amicably. But he remained adamant even after meeting Bal Thackeray on December 15," he said. Uddhav said Bal Thackeray was saddened by his nephew's decision. The firebrand Sena chief did not speak to the media.

In the two decades after that press conference, much water has flowed down the Godavari river. The MNS, which saw some success initially with its Marathi Manooos pitch, is now a fledgling political force. The Shiv Sena, which Raj Thackeray left, split in 2022 after a rebellion led by Eknath Shinde toppled the Uddhav Thackeray government. Twenty years from that parting of ways, the two estranged cousins, Raj and Uddhav, have dropped broad hints that they may come together, a development that has surprised political circles across Maharashtra and the country.

to back (us) on the issue of Marathi, how will things go forward?" "Raj saheb's interview should be seen with a holistic view. His stand was that all Marathi people should come together for the interest of Maharashtra and Marathi manooos. That was his stand. You are reading too much into it," he said in response to a question. When

Uddhav Thackeray was the chief minister, 17,000 MNS activists were slapped with cases for protesting against loudspeakers outside mosques, Deshpande claimed. "Does Uddhav Thackeray feel it was a mistake and if that's the case, will he apologise to Maharashtra Sainiks?" the MNS leader said.

Nepal: Protests Demanding Endorsement of School Education Bill Continue

Kathmandu, (DMC): Nepal Teachers' Federation continued their protest on Sunday in Kathmandu demanding endorsement of the School Education bill, local media reported. The federation decided not to withdraw the protest despite recent assurances from Nepal Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and Speaker of the House of Representatives of Nepal, Devraj Ghimire. Recently, the Nepal government agreed to address the demand of protesting teachers in the country as they decided to summon a parliamentary session on April 25 to pass the School Education Bill, according to a report by the leading Nepali daily, The Kathmandu Post.

PM Oli on Friday held a meeting with office-bearers of the Confederation of Nepalese Teachers (CNT) to explore solutions to the ongoing teachers' agitation centered in Kathmandu. He urged the teachers' representatives to withdraw their agitation and assured them that the government would make maximum effort to address their demands." The House session was called early to discuss the bill. However, I cannot give the exact day of its endorsement as it



is the legislature which decides," Oli was quoted as saying by a participant in the meeting. Later on Friday evening, speaker Ghimire met the teachers and assured them that he was ready to put the bill to a vote in a fast-track process. "The Speaker said he was ready to put the bill to a vote the very next day it is tabled in the House of Representatives," said Nanu Maya Parajuli, co-chair of the federation and coordinator of the struggle committee. However, the federation decided not to withdraw the protest,

though they termed the meetings with Oli and Ghimire as positive. "Though the meetings with the Prime Minister and the Speaker were positive, we have decided to continue the symbolic protest on Sunday. We will sit on Sunday to decide what to do in the days to come," said Parajuli. Thousands of teachers continued the agitation as usual on Saturday afternoon and decided to continue with the protest for a few hours on Sunday. "Our protest is not against the government. We are

fighting only for the new Act," Parajuli added. Further, the teachers accused the bureaucrats of Nepal of providing the wrong briefing to the Prime Minister and ministers for the delay in addressing their demands. "The bureaucracy wrongly reported that it would cost Rs 200 billion to address our demands. In reality, the cost won't exceed Rs 13 billion. We can find a solution to the current problem overnight if everyone works with the right intent," said an office bearer of the federation.

Reports suggest that the teacher's demonstrations and sit-ins in the Maitighar-Naya Baneshwor area of Kathmandu since April 2 have severely disrupted the national enrollment drive and delayed key academic tasks, such as evaluating answer sheets from the recently held Secondary Education Examination (SEE). The teachers defied the government's instruction to begin student enrollment for the new academic year in Nepal, which started on April 15. Earlier this week, the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal expressed serious concern over the ongoing protest and urged the concerned parties to resolve the matter through dialogue.

Bangladesh Seeks Interpol Red Notice Against Ousted PM Sheikh Hasina

Dhaka, (H.S): Bangladesh has requested Interpol to issue a red notice against former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and 11 others in connection with a case alleging conspiracy to overthrow the Muhammad Yunus-led interim government, according to local media reports. According to reports, the request was submitted by the Bangladesh Police Headquarters amid an ongoing investigation into charges of inciting civil war and plotting to unseat the transitional administration.

Leading Bangladeshi daily, The Dhaka Tribune, quoted Assistant Inspector General (Media) Enamul Haque Sagor as confirming the development. "These applications are filed in connection with allegations that emerge during investigations or through ongoing case proceedings," he stated. The red notice, once issued, would enable law enforcement agencies globally to locate and provisionally detain the accused individuals pending extradition or other legal actions. "Interpol plays a key role in identifying the locations of fugitives residing abroad. Once



the whereabouts of any absconding individual are confirmed, that information is relayed to Interpol," said Sagor, adding that the red notice request is currently being processed. The Daily Star noted that the police undertake such procedures based on appeals from courts, public prosecutors, or investigating agencies.

The Chief Prosecutor's Office of the International Crimes Tribunal had previously urged the police to seek Interpol's assistance for Hasina's arrest. That formal appeal was made in November last year. Hasina, who is currently facing over 100 cases ranging from mass murder to corruption, fled Bangladesh on August 5 last year following a

massive student-led movement that resulted in the collapse of her 16-year rule under the Awami League. Hasina, the daughter of Bangladesh's founder Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, is reported to be residing in India since then.

Most of her former ministers and top party leaders have either been arrested or have fled the country in an attempt to evade trial on serious charges, including crimes against humanity. While addressing the Awami League supporters online from India in February, the ousted Prime Minister of Bangladesh accused the Yunus-led interim government of turning the nation into an alleged hub of "terrorism" and "lawlessness."

Bhutanese King Visits Jogighopa Terminal, Logistics Park In Assam



New Delhi, (H.S): King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck visited Assam to view the facilities at the Inland Waterways Terminal (IWT) and the Multi Modal Logistics Park (MMLP) in Jogighopa, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Sunday. The IWT and the MMLP are two major connectivity projects focused on boosting trade and enhancing regional development.

Upon his arrival in Assam on Saturday, the King was received by the Assam Minister for Public Health Engineering and Housing and Urban Affairs, Jayanta Mallabaruah. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma also took to X and extended a warm welcome to the Bhutanese King. "A very warm welcome to His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the King of Bhutan, to Assam. The Jogighopa MMLP will be a game-changer for the larger Indo-Bhutan region and ensure seamless trade and logistics

movement. It will also aid in the development of the Gelephu Mindfulness City," he posted. "His Majesty's visit underscores the shared interests and close ties between the State of Assam and Bhutan for a better future for our people," CM Sarma added. According to the MEA, as part of its 'Neighbourhood First' policy, the Centre has been pursuing several connectivity initiatives for boosting people-to-people ties and facilitating trade and economic cooperation with Bhutan.

The IWT at Jogighopa, which was inaugurated in February this year, is an important infrastructure project for economic development and enhancing connectivity in the region, the MEA statement read. "India and Bhutan enjoy unique ties of friendship and cooperation, underpinned by mutual understanding, trust and utmost goodwill at all levels. The visit of the King of Bhutan to Jogighopa, Assam, is in keeping

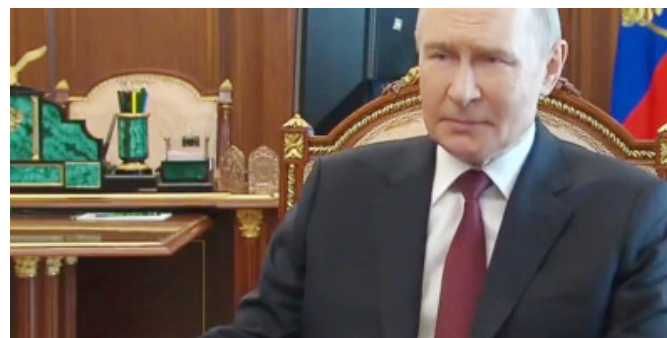
with the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries," it added. Earlier this month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated India's commitment to cooperate with Bhutan in various sectors during his meeting with the Bhutanese counterpart Tshering Tobgay on the sidelines of the 6th BIMSTEC summit in Bangkok. "Had a great conversation with my good friend, PM Tobgay. India's friendship with Bhutan is robust.

We are cooperating extensively in several sectors," PM Modi posted on X after the meeting. The meeting allowed both leaders to engage in discussions enhancing Indo-Bhutan friendship. Expressing his happiness, Tobgay also took to social media and posted, "Always a pleasure to meet my elder brother and mentor PM Narendra Modi ji. Discussed BIMSTEC, enhancing regional cooperation, and furthering Bhutan-India friendship."

Putin Announces Easter Ceasefire in Ukraine Conflict

Moscow, (H.S): Russian President Vladimir Putin on Saturday declared an Easter truce for the ongoing Ukraine conflict. The ceasefire will be in effect from 18:00 Moscow time on April 19 until 00:00 Moscow time on April 21 - a total of 30 hours, the Russian media reported. It was announced by Putin following a meeting with Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov. Moscow said it hopes that Kyiv will follow its example and also cease fire.

Ukraine's reaction will show how sincerely it wants and is able to participate in peace talks," Putin noted. The Kremlin, according to Russian news agency Tass, maintained that since the earlier moratorium on attacks on energy facilities declared for 30 days from March 18 was violated by the Ukrainian Armed Forces "more than 100 times", the Russian forces must be ready to repel attacks if Ukraine violates the Easter truce. "I order that all military actions be stopped for this



period. We assume that the Ukrainian side will follow our example. Russian troops must be prepared to repel possible violations of the ceasefire and provocations from the enemy, any of its aggressive actions. We know that the Kyiv regime has violated the agreement not to strike energy infrastructure more than 100 times, as you reported to me," said Putin after his meeting with Gerasimov. On Friday, after Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov held a telephonic conversation with the United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio, US President Donald Trump said that he expects to get

Russia's response on a possible ceasefire in Ukraine over the weekend. "We're going to be hearing from them this week, very shortly, actually. I think we're getting close, but we'll let you know very soon," Trump told reporters at the White House. The Russian Foreign Ministry stated that Lavrov reaffirmed Moscow's readiness to continue collaborative efforts with American counterparts to comprehensively address the root causes of the Ukrainian crisis. Secretary Rubio, who was in Paris, informed the Russian side about the recent engagements that he and US President's Special

Envoy Steve Witkoff had in the French capital. "These discussions involved representatives from Ukraine, France, and several other European nations. It was underscored that these contacts were in alignment with the framework of ongoing consultations between Washington and Moscow, including the recent dialogue between President of Russia Vladimir Putin and Steve Witkoff in Saint Petersburg," read the statement.

Russia's envoy to the United Nations Vasily Nebenzya, meanwhile, said that a ceasefire in Ukraine is "unrealistic" at this point, as Kyiv fails to honour the moratorium on striking energy infrastructure. "We had an attempt at a limited ceasefire concerning energy infrastructure, which was not observed by the Ukrainian side. Under these circumstances, it is simply unrealistic to talk about a ceasefire at this point," he told reporters.

4 terrorists killed in Pakistan

Islamabad, (H.S): Four terrorists were killed during a joint operation of security forces and law enforcement agencies in Pakistan's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the military said. The intelligence-based operation was conducted in Swat district of the province, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistan Army, said on

Friday in a statement. Security forces engaged the terrorists at their location, killing all four terrorists, said the ISPR, adding that a huge cache of weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the terrorists' hideout, Xinhua news agency reported. The killed terrorists were involved in numerous terror activities in the area, said the statement. Earlier, security forces

killed four terrorists during an intelligence-based operation in the Maddi area of Dera Ismail Khan district on Wednesday. Earlier this month, ARY News reported that during the first quarter of 2025, terrorist attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) resulted in the deaths of 152 people, including police officers, security personnel, and civilians. According to a report released by

the KP Police, 302 individuals were also injured in these incidents. The report noted that civilians were the most affected, with 45 deaths and 127 injuries reported between January and March. The police force lost 37 members, with 46 others sustaining injuries. Additionally, the Frontier Corps (FC) suffered the loss of 34 personnel, with 43 more wounded in the attacks, Ary News reported.

Lawyers Protesting Indus River Canal Project Warn of Blocking Railway Tracks

Islamabad, (H.S): The lawyers' association in Pakistan has warned that in the next phase of their protest against the canal project on the Indus River, scheduled on April 21, they will begin blocking the railway tracks to disrupt the movement of trains between Sindh and Punjab. The National Highway in Sindh at two different locations has already been blocked as the protestors staged a sit-in demonstration in the Babarloi town of Khairpur district, local media reported.

Speaking at the protest camp on Saturday, the President of the Karachi Bar Association, Amir Warraich, who is leading the sit-in, gave the federal government two days to revoke the canal project. He slammed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and stated that the government acts like a sub-nationalist entity whose primary purpose is to pursue the interests of Punjab. He accused the federal government of remaining



indifferent to the protest in Sindh against the canal project from across all sections, including doctors, engineers, teachers, writers, poets, lawyers, journalists, students, women, and children.

The outgoing President of Sindh High Court Bar Association, Ayaz Tunio, threatened that the protestors would not return home until the government issues a notification to cancel the project, Pakistan's leading daily, The Express Tribune, reported. Meanwhile, the ruling coalition allies of the Pakistan government - the

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) - again locked horns over the construction of the six canals on the Indus River. Speaking to Geo News, PML-N leader Rana Sanaullah on Saturday said that the PPP's opposition to the canals was just propaganda and that its reason for pursuing the issue was for political gain.

PPP is part of the government and must speak with full responsibility; the water issue is too sensitive to be used for political point-scoring," said the PML-N leader Sanaullah. His statement came a day after PPP

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari threatened to exit the government if the controversial canal project on the Indus River is not shelved. Addressing a large public gathering at the Hatri Bypass Ground in Pakistan's Hyderabad late Friday night, Bhutto said that his party would not go along with the federal government if it didn't withdraw the controversial projects, even after acknowledging the PPP's objections.

He complained that the government is neither listening to its coalition partner nor taking back the decision to build new canals. "I thought Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would stay away from the project after seeing such a reaction because he understands that without PPP support, he can't run assembly sessions or pass the budget. However, it seems he is not ready to shelve the project. If that is the case, then we are not ready to give up either," Bilawal Bhutto added.

3 killed, 4 wounded in fresh US airstrikes on Yemen: Houthis

Sanaa, (H.S): At least three people were killed and four others wounded in fresh US airstrikes on Yemen's capital Sanaa, its outskirts, and other provinces. The US military launched 21 airstrikes on Sanaa and its western outskirts, killing two people and wounding two others in the Al-Nahda neighbourhood, northern Sanaa.

A third one was wounded in a cemetery in the Safiah neighbourhood in southern Sanaa, Xinhua news agency reported quoting Houthi-run al-Masirah TV. In the Bani Matar district in Sanaa's western outskirts, the airstrikes killed one person and wounded another one, said the Houthi television. The report did not specify whether the victims were civilians or Houthi operatives. The airstrikes on the capital also targeted several other locations, including weapons depots in the Al-Hafa military camp in the Mount Nuqum in eastern Sanaa, and two military sites in



northeastern Sanaa, according to Sanaa's residents. The roar of the fighter jets speeding at full throttle could be heard across the capital before and after the strikes hit. Ambulances were seen in Sanaa's streets rushing to the targeted sites as the Houthi-controlled police cordoned off the targeted areas.

Meanwhile, the US fighter jets conducted 13 airstrikes against the Houthi-controlled Hodeidah Airport and the Navy Base in the Red Sea port city of Hodeidah, western Yemen, according to the Houthi

television and local residents. The other four airstrikes targeted Houthi positions in the district of Sirwah, west of Yemen's central province of Marib. Another four airstrikes targeted a Houthi military position in the Harf Sufian district in the northern province of Amran, said the television.

The fresh airstrikes came two days after the US airstrikes on the Ras Isa fuel port in the western province of Hodeidah, which killed at least 80 people and wounded 150 others, according to the latest statement by local health authorities.

JSW Energy to revise 2030 goals under Vision 3.0, not looking at B2C for now: CEO

New Delhi,(H.S): JSW Energy on Sunday said it is working on Vision 3.0, which is likely to be unveiled in the next 2-3 months, to revise its earlier target of 20 GW installed capacity and 40 GWh storage by 2030, in view of a favourable regulatory and demand outlook. The upcoming vision document will outline a higher capacity target and an increased capex as compared to the Rs 1.15 lakh crore investment announced under Vision 2.0 in May 2023, an official said.

The country's fourth-largest private power producer stated that while its current business is focused on B2B (business-to-business) power generation, it is not looking at B2C (business-to-consumer) activities like power distribution or setting up electric vehicle charging stations at the moment, he said."Distribution is an opportunity, but as I mentioned, we have a lot on hand at the moment. So, our current focus is on our core areas, and we are not looking at distribution for now," JSW Energy Joint MD & CEO Sharad Mahendra told PTI. Speaking on capacity, he said, "Our current operational capacity stands at 12.2 GW, of



which 5.85 GW-or about 46 per cent-is thermal, and the rest comes from renewable sources, including solar, wind and hydro. An additional 18 GW is under various stages of development over the next few years. So, combining operational and in-progress projects, we are looking at a total of 30 GW."

Out of the 18 GW of pipeline projects, only 3.2 GW is thermal and the rest are renewables, Mahendra said. For its captive requirement, the company is going to start manufacturing some of the key components, which have a very big cost advantage if made in India, he said. "We are going to commission in the current year two manufacturing plants of wind turbine blades,

which are large blades of 80-82 meters (one blade size). So we are setting up two manufacturing units in India for our own requirement, he said.One plant will be in Karnataka, and work is already on, and one in Gujarat, he said. Mahendra is in Kolkata for the foundation stone laying ceremony of a 1,600 MW power plant at Salboni by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on April 21.

In FY'25, the company added 3.2 GW of capacity through both organic and inorganic means and expects to surpass that in FY'26. "This will enhance our free cash flows and support future expansion," Mahendra added. JSW Energy has completed two major inorganic acquisitions recently and continues to evaluate

new opportunities. "If they meet our benchmarks-returns, asset quality, and long-term sustainability-we are open to more," he said. Asked whether the company has nuclear power ambitions, Mahendra said the private sector, including JSW Energy, is interested but is awaiting a conducive policy framework. "We are engaged with the government on this and remain optimistic," he added.JSW Energy is commissioning 3,800 tonnes per annum green hydrogen project for green steel production at Vijaynagar this quarter.

The power producer is "expanding rapidly while maintaining financial prudence and efficient capital allocation", which is supporting growth backed by strong financials and manageable debt, Director (Finance) Pritesh Vinay said. However, the company did not provide specific topline guidance for FY'26 or FY'27. Mahendra said, "Topline is not a key metric for us, as it can fluctuate with fuel costs, especially in thermal. We focus on EBITDA and margins. Over the next five years, we expect significant year-on-year improvement in EBITDA."

India To Achieve Steel Production Capacity of 300 Million Tonnes By 2030

New Delhi,(H.S): India is on a trajectory to achieve steel production capacity of 300 million tonnes (MT) and a per capita consumption of 160 kg by 2030, according to the government.In FY25 (April to December period), the production of crude steel stood at 110.99 MT and finished steel stood at 106.86 MT.Also, the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme 1.1 for specialty steel has witnessed investment commitments worth Rs 17,000 crore in the second round, according to the government.

The expansion of the scheme is expected to further enhance India's global competitiveness in specialty steel production. Keeping this ambitious growth in the steel sector in mind, the 'India Steel 2025' is set to take place next week in Mumbai 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.Prime Minister



Narendra Modi is scheduled to address the global steel industry event through video conferencing on April 24.

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.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.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. Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet will also be held to facilitate trade opportunities and foster new business engagements, according to the Ministry of Steel.

BHEL Records 19 Pc Growth In Revenue At 27,350 Crore In 2024-25

New Delhi, (H.S): Public sector engineering giant Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) has recorded a 19 per cent year-on-year growth in revenue at Rs 27,350 crore for the financial year 2024-25, according to a company statement issued on Sunday.

The company also secured its highest-ever order inflows during the year, amounting to Rs 92,534 crore. BHEL's total order book at the end of FY 2024-25 has now gone up to Rs 195,922 crore. BHEL has maintained its leadership by winning orders worth Rs 81,349 crore in the power sector.It has 39 boilers in its order book so far.Of them,

Adani Power stands first in placing the maximum number of boilers with an installed capacity of 800 MW producing thermal power plants. The private company has placed orders for 14 boilers, followed by National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) with 11 boilers. State-owned companies from Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra have also placed orders for boilers.

The number of boiler orders placed by Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) and Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) stands at three and four, respectively. Of the 39 boilers, 31 were for 800 MW each and

eight were for 660 MW each.BHEL recently received the LOI for an engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) package of two 660 megawatt 'Supercritical' thermal power plants at Hasdeo Thermal Power Station, which is located in the Korba district of Chhattisgarh.

The contract would include the supply of supercritical equipment, including boiler, turbine, generator and other associated auxiliaries, along with the erection of civil works.Its industrial segment recorded fresh orders worth Rs 11,185 crore, reflecting the company's diversified presence across

sectors such as transportation, defence, process industries, and industrial equipment, the statement said. BHEL has commissioned/synchronised 8.1 GW of thermal power capacity, demonstrating its continued focus on project delivery and operational efficiency, according to the statement.

With double-digit revenue growth, a record order book, and a healthy execution pipeline, BHEL entered FY 2025-26 with strong momentum, it stated.The company remains committed to delivering high-impact infrastructure, driving indigenisation, and enhancing stakeholder value the statement added.

South Korea, US To Hold '2+2' Trade Consultation of Finance, Trade Ministers

Seoul, (DMC): South Korea and the United States will hold "two plus two" tariff negotiations in Washington this week, involving the countries' finance and trade ministers, the Seoul government said on Sunday.From Seoul, Finance Minister Choi Sang-mok and Trade Minister Ahn Duk-geun will lead the negotiations, while U.S.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer will be in charge of the U.S. side, according to the government. The government said the upcoming tariff talks were proposed by Washington and the two sides are discussing details of the schedule and agenda of the meeting, reports Yonhap news agency. Meanwhile, Duk-geun said on Sunday he will put priority on consultations instead



of making a hasty deal in high-level tariff talks between Seoul and Washington.

In a TV programme by Korea Broadcasting System, the minister added a Korean delegation, likely to visit the U.S. this week for tariff negotiations, will take a cautious approach in the upcoming talks."We will focus on resolving pending issues reciprocally for mutual benefits as there are things that need to be checked rather than hastily

wrapping up a deal," he said.The minister said the Korean delegation will make utmost efforts to secure an exemption from U.S. tariffs on automobiles and semiconductors, the country's two key export items to the United States.

U.S. President Donald Trump imposed country-specific reciprocal duties on around 60 countries, including 25 percent tariffs for South Korea. The duties have been suspended

for 90 days, allowing the subjected countries, except for China, to engage in negotiations with Washington. South Korea is among the five preferred nations designated by the U.S. for tariff negotiations. The remaining four are Britain, Australia, Japan and India."The Trump government's tariff policies are not over yet. Tariffs are expected to remain major issues throughout his entire second term.

Given this, the government needs to continue to have negotiations over tariffs," he said.As for a possible inclusion of the cost of stationing the U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) in the talks, the minister said the U.S. government has made no such request. Government agencies in charge of talks on defence cost sharing will respond should the U.S. side make such a request, Ahn added.

India US Trade Talks: Key Negotiations To Begin In Washington Next Week



New Delhi, (H.S): A team of negotiators, led by Commerce Secretary-designate Rajesh Agarwal, is likely to travel to Washington, DC, next week to advance discussions on the proposed India-US Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA).The high-level meetings are expected to take place over three days starting April 23, according to reports.

As per officials, the agenda for the talks has been finalised and will cover an extensive range of issues spread across 19 chapters.These include key areas such as tariffs, non-tariff barriers, rules of origin, trade in goods and services, customs facilitation, and regulatory cooperation.This round of talks is being closely watched,

with both New Delhi and Washington aiming to conclude an early harvest agreement before the fall deadline.India and the US have targeted to conclude the first phase of the BTA by the fall (September-October) of this year, with an aim to more than double the bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030, from about \$191 billion currently.

Both the nations are working to sign the first tranche of a 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 and US Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) terms of reference have been finalised when the US team was here. The first tranche negotiations will start

virtually on the various chapters within this week, and the talks in the physical mode may start at the end of the month," Additional Secretary, Commerce, Rajesh Agarwal said this week"India has decided to go for a path of trade liberalisation with the US," Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal told journalists.

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. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is also set to embark on an official visit to the US and Peru, beginning April 20, where she is slated to participate in Multilateral dialogues to showcase India's economic dynamism.

Coal Trade Exchange: Govt extends deadline until May 7 for comments on draft rules

New Delhi, (H.S):The government has extended the deadline to early next month for public comments on the proposed rules on Coal Trade Exchange that will facilitate the dry-fuel's trading as a commodity. "Ministry of Coal had published the proposed draft legislations on Coal Trade Exchange for public consultation... Ministry of Coal has decided to extend the last date for submission of comments/suggestions from April 6, 2025 till May 7, 2025," the coal ministry said on its website.

The coal ministry has proposed to empower the Coal Controller Organisation (CCO) as the regulator for the proposed trade exchange. At present the coal sales channels in the country are specific to the government-owned coal companies, including Coal India Ltd. A need is therefore felt to provide a platform i.e. Coal Trading Exchange (CTE), to also



allow commercial, captive miners a ready access to market their produce, the ministry said, adding that the public sector coal companies may also use this platform. The exchange will facilitate trading of coal as a commodity. The CTE is envisaged to lead to a 'many-to-many' platform where both buyers and sellers can bid simultaneously, thereby, making price discovery of coal more efficient and competitive. Thus, the Coal Trading Exchange would lead to a

paradigm shift by transforming the coal sales model in the country from a 'One-to-Many' model to 'Many-to-Many' model. Besides, it is envisaged that the CTE will provide for clearing and settlement systems where the Exchange shall act as a counterparty. The different commodity exchanges operating within India or internationally, are being regulated by a regulator. Ministry of Coal has also proposed to empower the CCO as the regulator for the CTE to

be set up in the country. The ministry further explained that India's coal output is likely to grow beyond 1.5 billion tonnes (BT) by 2030. With the increased availability of domestic coal in the country, it is envisaged that there would be a paradigm shift towards a surplus coal scenario and as a result the coal sales scenario is expected to undergo a major change from the existing mechanisms of coal sales channels, necessitating a major market reform backed by a regulatory mechanism.

Therefore, in the scenario of increased availability of domestic coal in the country, there is a necessity to introduce further reforms in the coal sector with focus on promoting competitive markets for sale of coal. The government had earlier said that it is optimistic about coal exchange in 2025 and the details are being worked out.

Dia Mirza: For most women in cinema, offers disappear from age of 35 to 48

Dia Mirza Rekhi reflects on how motherhood influenced her choices, and is glad that OTT has given women actors a new voice. Twenty five years into the Hindi film industry, Dia Mirza Rekhi is still finding firsts to put next to her credit. Recently, the actor had an unusual feat to her name as her 2019 web series Kaafir, got re-released in the form of a movie.

Talking about it, Dia Mirza says, "It's being shown in a format that is possibly more convenient for people as a film is a shorter format. It also gives the story an opportunity to reach out to a whole new set of people. Interestingly, it was first initially written as a feature film. For many years Sidharth Malhotra and Sapna tried to make it, but it wasn't happening. Eventually, it got made into a series. With the movie, it feels like a full circle for it. Dia, who is mother to three-year-old Ayaan Azaad Rekhi, played a mother in Kaafir, trying to build a better life for her daughter. In this year's Naadaniyan too, she played a

doting mother to Ibrahim Ali Khan. Ask her how the choices in work have changed for her after embracing motherhood in real life, and she says, "Every single job I have done in the last five years leading to my son's birth and the years after his birth, are projects that I would want him to watch. A big part of my priority in choosing stories is the thought, 'Would I want my children to watch this? What will they gain from it?'" While Dia is glad that factors like age, marital

and maternal status of women, which used to define their longevity in cinema, are no more effecting work, she does admit to facing the impact of it. "I was beginning to believe that work had dried up for me because of my age. It's a pattern; it happens with most women in cinema that post the age of 35 till 48, work really disappears, and then, post 47, you start getting offered mother's and sister's roles. But the advent of OTT has given voice to women. Shefali Shah in Delhi Crime has been an example of it, and I count Kaafir as one of those too," Dia says.

While she is happy about the progress on the above fronts, she laments a new factor that has come into play-social media following. "Now there is a whole new nonsense that's underway. A lot of casting is being done based on an individuals' popularity on social media, which is unfair. Some extremely stupendous talent may not be willing to put out their voice on social media but that should not mean that they don't qualify for a part.

Kesari Chapter 2 box office collection 25 cr day 3



Kesari Chapter 2 box office collection day 3: Akshay Kumar, R Madhavan and Ananya Panday's period drama, Kesari Chapter 2, had a decent start at the box office. The historical courtroom drama received positive reviews and word of mouth from fans, which enabled an improvement in numbers during the weekend. As per the latest box office update by Sacnilk.com, the film has now crossed the 25 crore mark within three days.

The report states that Kesari Chapter 2 showed a growth in numbers on its third day of release. The film collected 10.36 crore by 8 PM. Its opening day collections stood at 7.75 crore, while the second day numbers showed a growth at 9.75 crore. Overall, the total collections now stand at 27.86 crore. This is still less in comparison to Akshay's previous release Sky Force, which collected 27.50 crore on its third day of release. Sky

Force had a much higher opening weekend haul, with a strong domestic nett figure of 61.75 crore. Kesari Chapter 2 had a 26.94% Hindi Occupancy on Sunday. The occupancy for morning shows was at 17.28%, while for afternoon shows, it increased to 36.60%.

This film is directed by Karan Singh Tyagi and produced by Dhama Productions, Leo Media Collective, and Cape Of Good Films. The film is based on the book The Case That Shook the Empire by Raghu Palat and Pushpa Palat, centred around C Sankaran Nair and the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Akshay essays the role of real-life figure C Sankaran Nair, a lawyer who fights against the British Raj to uncover the truth about the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Meanwhile, R Madhavan stars as Advocate Neville McKinley, and Ananya Panday plays the character of Dilreet Gill.

Sikandar Box Office Collection 150 Cr.

Salman Khan's Sikandar continues to witness a decline at the box office. Released on March 30, the film earned ?9 lakh on Day 21, according to a report by Sacnilk. With this, the total collection of the action-packed project now stands at 110.04 crore. Sikandar, directed by AR Murugadoss, follows the life of Sanjay Rajkot - also known as Sikandar - a ruler living in Rajkot, Gujarat. He enjoys a peaceful life with his wife, Saisri. But things take a turn when he finds himself up against a corrupt minister and the minister's troubling

son. The story is about how Sikandar deals with these challenges and stands his ground. Sikandar features Salman Khan in the role of Sanjay Rajkot, while Rashmika Mandanna plays his wife, Saisri Rajkot. Audiences are also showering love on the performances of Sathiyaraj as Minister Rakesh Pradhan, Kajal Aggarwal as Vaidehi Rangachari, Sharman Joshi as Amar and Prateik Smita Patil as Arjun Pradhan. Earlier, Salman Khan shared his views about whether he relates to his character in Sikandar.

Mahesh, Anand & Vikram Reunite for 'Haunted 3D: Ghosts of The Past'



After the spine-chilling success of "1920: Horrors of the Heart," the powerhouse trio of Mahesh Bhatt, Anand Pandit, and Vikram Bhatt is back with another horror spectacle- "Haunted" 3D: Ghosts of the Past." The much-anticipated film is set to hit cinemas on September 26, 2025. Trade analyst Taran Adarsh took to his social media handles to share the first look of the film. Presented by Mahesh

Bhatt and Anand Pandit and helmed by Vikram, the film promises to deliver a gripping supernatural experience. "Haunted 3D" stars Mahaakshay Chakraborty and Chetna Pandey in pivotal roles. This upcoming horror mystery will be produced by Anand Pandit, Rakesh Juneja, and Shwetambari Bhatt.

Interestingly, just before the official announcement, Mahaakshay Chakraborty,

popularly known as Mimoh, had already hinted at the sequel being in development. He confirmed that Haunted 3D would be making a comeback, with Vikram Bhatt once again taking the director's seat. The teaser for the eagerly anticipated sequel has already been finalized and is expected to be unveiled soon. Speaking of "Haunted 3D," the film released in 2011 became one of the standout horror offerings from the Bhatt camp. The film, directed by Vikram Bhatt, starred Mimoh Chakraborty, Tia Bajpai, Achint Kaur, and Arif Zakaria. It was the first Indian stereoscopic 3D horror film. The story centers on a young man who discovers a haunting connection to the spirit of a girl bound to a tragic past. As he unravels the mystery, he learns that she was a victim of a horrific assault by her piano teacher - a trauma that left her spirit in unrest.

Kohli, Patidar power RCB to dominant win over PBKS



New Chandigarh, (HS) : Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) registered a commanding seven-wicket win over Punjab Kings (PBKS) in their IPL 2025 clash at the New PCA Stadium in Chandigarh. Chasing 158, RCB cruised to victory in 18.5 overs, thanks to explosive innings from Virat Kohli and Devdutt Padikkal. Both batters reached their half-centuries, with Kohli remaining unbeaten on 71 off 54 balls and Padikkal scoring a

quickfire 61 off 35. Their dominant partnership laid the foundation for an easy chase. Earlier, RCB skipper Rajat Patidar won the toss and opted to bowl first. Despite a strong start from PBKS, the momentum of the Kings were derailed by RCB's bowlers who applied pressure throughout. PBKS were eventually restricted to 157 for 6, with spinners Krunal Pandya and Suyash Sharma playing key roles.

With this win, RCB move up to third on the points table, keeping their playoff hopes alive. Earlier, spinners Krunal Pandya (2/25) and Suyash Sharma (2/26) turned the tide in RCB's favour, picking up key wickets and breaking Punjab's rhythm. Romario Shepherd also struck in his very first over in his first appearance of the season. Opener Prabhsimran Singh was the top scorer for PBKS with an explosive 33 off 17 balls,

however, regular breakthroughs prevented PBKS from building any strong partnerships. After a disappointing performance in their previous encounter, where they were bowled out for just 95 in a rain-shortened 14-over match, RCB bounced back in style. In the previous game, only Tim David showed some resistance, while the rest of the batting line-up - including Phil Salt, Virat Kohli, skipper Rajat Patidar, and Liam Livingstone - failed to fire in front of the home crowd. But this time, RCB made a strong statement, comfortably chasing down the target and settling scores with Punjab Kings.

Brief scores: Punjab Kings 157/6 in 20 overs (Prabhsimran Singh 33, Shashank Singh 31 not out; Krunal Pandya 2-25, Suyash Sharma 2-26) lost to Royal Challengers Bengaluru 159/3 in 18.3 overs (Virat Kohli 73 not out, Devdutt Padikkal 61; Harpreet Brar 1-27, Yuzvendra Chahal 1-36) by seven wickets.

Hyderabad Cricket Association Asked to Remove Azharuddin's Name

New Delhi, (HS) : The Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) has been instructed to remove Mohammed Azharuddin's name from the North Pavilion Stand at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium. This directive follows allegations of Azharuddin's biased conduct during his tenure as association president. Justice V Eswaraiah, the HCA's Ethics Officer and Ombudsman, issued this order on Saturday. Cricbuzz



reports that this decision was initiated by a petition from Lords Cricket Club, claiming a conflict of interest. The club argues that Azharuddin used his presidential role at HCA for personal gain. Justice Eswaraiah's 25-page ruling stated, "The lack of ratification or modification by the General Body underscores the respondent's self-serving actions." The HCA is also barred from issuing new tickets featuring Azharuddin's name for the

remainder of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 season. Hyderabad is set to host five more matches, including crucial games for Sunrisers Hyderabad and two play-off fixtures. The Lords Cricket Club has suggested that the stand be renamed in honour of VVS Laxman, a celebrated Indian cricketer. The change is intended to be reflected in all signage and future ticketing to promote integrity and fairness.

Odisha Sports Dept to Young Athletes Launches Khelo India Centres

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : The Odisha government, in collaboration with the Central Government and the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, has formally inaugurated Khelo India Centres across all 30 districts of the state. The initiative aims to revolutionize the state's approach to nurturing young sporting talent by providing formal training pathways and strengthening grassroots sports infrastructure.

A total of 30 government schools, one from each district, have been selected for the establishment of these sports centres. Each centre will receive an annual financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh to support operations, training, and infrastructure



maintenance, Sports Minister Suryabanshi Suraj informed. "Along with providing proper training to the sportspersons, stadiums and all kinds of facilities for various

sports like football, volleyball, hockey, athletics, kho kho, kabaddi etc. will be provided to the players," minister stated. Sports and Youth Services Minister Suryabanshi Suraj

emphasized that the initiative is not just an infrastructure project but a mission to identify and nurture the next generation of sportspersons from villages, towns, and cities. The centres will provide equal opportunities to children from remote regions, focusing on Olympic and priority sports where India has strong international potential.

The centres will appoint coaches transparently, prioritizing experts from relevant disciplines and past champions. The minister expressed hope that the centres will play a key role in shaping students' careers in sports, acting as training hubs at the grassroots level and creating a feeder system for district, state, and national teams.

Odisha FC announce squad for Kalinga Super Cup

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Odisha FC have announced their squad for the Kalinga Super Cup 2025, a day ahead of their clash against Punjab FC, which will be played at the Kalinga Stadium on Monday. The Kalinga Warriors, who were runners-up in the previous edition of the tournament, are eager to return to action and take a step further this year.

The cup competition will take place in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, for the second time, and kickstarts on Sunday. Odisha FC will begin their journey in the

competition with an exciting opening match against Punjab FC. The tournament will feature 15 premier clubs from across India, including 13 Indian Super League (ISL) clubs and two I-League clubs. Unlike the last two years, the competition will be played in a knockout format, ensuring thrilling encounters as the teams vie for supremacy. The champions of the Kalinga Super Cup 2025 will be rewarded with a coveted opportunity to compete in the AFC Champions League 2 (ACL2)



Playoffs, giving Indian clubs the chance to showcase their

talent on the continental stage. Ever since making their Kalinga

Super Cup debut in 2023, the Juggernauts have been the team

to beat in the competition. Champions in 2023 and runners-up in 2024, the Super Cup has been their favourite tournament. Last year, East Bengal FC snatched the silverware, defeating Odisha FC 3-2 after a thrilling period of extra-time in the final. The Red and Gold Brigade ended their 12-year wait for a national trophy and are out to defend their crown on the same pitch.

Odisha FC Squad for Kalinga Super Cup 2025: Goalkeepers: Amrinder Singh, Anuj Kumar, Manas Dubey

Defenders: Narender, Amey Ranawade, Carlos Delgado (Spain), Mourtada Fall (Senegal), Jerry Lalrinzuala, Saviour Gama, Ricky Meetei, Subham Bhattacharya, Tankadhar Bag Midfielders: Rohit Kumar, Lalithathanga Khawlring, Hugo Boumous (France), Raynier Fernandes, Thoiba Singh Moirangthem, Narendra Naik Forwards: Diego Mauricio (Brazil), Jerry Mawihmingthanga, Isak Vanlalratfela, Rahim Ali, Aphaoba Singh, Rahul KP, Dorieltom Gomes (Brazil)