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English Daily



Top Court Man Who Claimed Disability Due to Covid Vaccine



New Delhi, (HS) : The Supreme Court on Monday told a petitioner, who allegedly suffered disability due to the side-effects of Covid-19 vaccine's first dose, to file a suit for damages instead of pursuing his plea. A bench of Justices B R Gavai and Augustine George Masih made the observation while hearing the plea for a direction to lay down appropriate guidelines for an effective resolution of side effects following immunisation (AEFI) with specific reference to Covid-19 vaccination. "If you keep your petition pending here, nothing will happen for ten years. At least if you file a suit, you will get some quick relief," the bench said.

The petitioner's counsel said the man was suffering from the adverse effects of immunisation after taking the first dose of Covid vaccine as he developed 100 per cent lower limb disability. "How can a writ petition be filed for that? File a suit for damages," Justice Gavai said. The counsel said there were two separate petitions raising a similar issue pending in the apex court and the coordinate benches had issued notice on them. If the petitioner wanted, the court said, it would tag his plea with the pending petitions. The bench said the plea might be pending in the apex court for long and for 10 years, it might not see the light of the day. The counsel requested the bench to grant him a week's time to discuss it with his client. "At least if a suit is filed, within one year or two years or three years, you will get some relief," the bench observed. The matter was then posted after a week. The plea sought a direction to the Centre and the manufacturer of Covishield vaccine, Serum Institute of India, to ensure the petitioner was able to live with dignity as a physically disabled person. It also sought a direction to them to

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"Naagrik Devo Bhava...": PM's new mantra to civil servants

New Delhi, (HS) : Asserting that in the past decade, India has undergone transformative changes, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday asked the civil servants to follow the 'Naagrik Devo Bhava' mantra. "We should always remember one thing: no matter how technology-driven the world becomes, we should never forget the importance of human judgments. Listen to the voice of the poor and hear their pain. You solve their problems; it should be your first priority. Jaise 'Atithi Devo Bhava' hota hai, vaise hi 'Naagrik Devo Bhava' ke mantra ko le kr ke chalna hai. You have to prepare yourself for your duty not only as civil servants of India but also as architects of Viksit Bharat," PM Modi said, addressing the 17th Civil Services Day event at the Vigyan Bhawan in Delhi.

PM Modi said that today, the country is beginning to build the grand vision of a Viksit Bharat on a strong foundation. "However, there is no shortage of challenges in this journey. India has now become the most populous country in the world. In this context, achieving saturation of basic amenities must be our top priority. A strong



focus on last-mile delivery is essential. As the needs and aspirations of citizens evolve rapidly, civil services must also adapt to contemporary challenges," he said. He said that the foundation laid over the past decade has greatly strengthened the path towards Viksit Bharat 2047. "We cannot evaluate our work or performance by comparing it to previous governments...We must set our own benchmarks. We need to measure how far we still are from

the goal of a 'Viksit Bharat by 2047'. The time for tallying up what we have achieved so far is over," PM Modi said. The Prime Minister touched upon India's global leadership and highlighted the scale of its presidency at the G20. "We are no longer just focused on growth, but on setting benchmarks in governance, transparency, and innovation. Our G20 Presidency is a strong example of this. Over 200 meetings were held across more than 60 cities, an

unprecedentedly inclusive footprint that has never been seen before in the history of the G20. This reflects our truly holistic approach," he added. The Prime Minister said that they have launched the Mission Manufacturing, and its success can be largely attributed to MSMEs. "Today, MSMEs, startups and young entrepreneurs have unprecedented opportunities. Therefore, ensuring competitiveness in the global supply chain is crucial. Their competition is not just with small entrepreneurs but with the entire world," he asserted. Earlier, PM Modi released e-Coffee Table Books on 'Holistic Development of Districts for Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration' and 'Select Innovations from Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration'. The Prime Minister also conferred the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration for effective implementation of identified priority programmes and innovation to districts and central and state governments.

The Prime Minister also
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Pope Francis Dies at 88, Announces Vatican



Vatican City, (HS) : Pope Francis has died at the age of 88 at his residence in the Vatican's Casa Santa Marta, the Vatican said in a statement Monday afternoon, India time. "Pope Francis died on Easter Monday, April 21, 2025, at the age of 88 at his residence in the Vatican's Casa Santa Marta," the Vatican posted on X. The leader of the Roman Catholic Church had been suffering from respiratory ailments and pneumonia.

"Dear brothers and sisters, it is with profound sadness I must announce the death of our Holy Father Francis," Cardinal Kevin Farrell announced on the Vatican's TV channel. On Easter Sunday morning, Pope Francis had a brief private meeting with

the Vice President of the United States of America, J D Vance, the Holy See's Press Office had detailed about the interaction that lasted a few minutes. Vance was travelling to Italy with his family and visited the Secretariat of State before leaving for India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has in the past admired Pope's commitment to serve people and had also extended an invitation to Pope Francis to visit India at an early date. "Met Pope Francis on the sidelines of the G7 Summit. I admire his commitment to serve people and make our planet better. Also invited him to visit India," the Prime Minister posted on X after meeting the Pope at the

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US Vice President Vance Calls On PM in New Delhi



New Delhi, (HS) : US Vice President J.D. Vance and his family called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi Monday evening ahead of the Principals' and delegation-level bilateral meeting between the two leaders. PM Modi welcomed Vance, Second Lady Usha Vance and the couple's three children - Ewan, Vivek, and daughter Mirabel - at his Lok Kalyan Marg residence.

This is Vance's first visit to India and besides holding discussions with PM Modi, the US Vice President and his delegation will also have other engagements in Jaipur and Agra before departing for Washington on April 24. Embracing Indian culture, Vance's children once again donned traditional Indian outfits for the visit to the PM's residence. After the talks, Prime

Minister Modi will host the Second family for dinner. Earlier in the day too, the couple's children walked out of Air Force Two in Indian outfits. While Ewan and Vivek wore blue and yellow kurtas, three-year-old Mirabel was dressed in an Anarkali-style suit and an embroidered jacket. Later, the US Vice President, Second Lady Usha Vance and their children also visited Swaminarayan Akshardham in Delhi - their first stop in India. During the visit, the family experienced the temple's majestic art, architecture and timeless values of faith, family and harmony. This is the first visit to India by an American Vice-President in 13 years. The last was Joe Biden, who travelled to India in 2013 as Vice-President to President Barack Obama.

Accessible Governance: CM Brings Grievance Redressal to Sambalpur

Sambalpur, (DMC) : In a remarkable display of accessible governance, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, accompanied by a robust contingent of Ministers and officials of the State administration, transformed the Sambalpur Municipal Corporation office into a hub of public grievance redressal on Monday morning. According to an official press release, by 8 a.m., the premises were teeming with citizens eager to voice their concerns directly to the state's top leadership, marking the 10th session of this innovative initiative.

Unlike the previous nine sessions held in Bhubaneswar, this event stood out as the government brought its entire administrative machinery to Sambalpur, embodying the spirit of a "people's government." The Chief Minister was joined by 10 cabinet ministers, who included Deputy Chief Minister-cum-Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, Revenue & Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari, Health & Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling, Housing & Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra, Forest, Environment & Climate Change



Minister Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia, Panchayati Raj, Drinking Water & Rural Development Minister Rabi Narayan Naik, Food Supplies & Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra, Industries Minister Sampad Chandra Swain, Steel & Mines Minister Bibhuti Bhusan Jena, School & Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond, and Higher Education & Culture Minister Suryabanshi Suraj were present, listening to the people's grievances.

Senior officials, such as Additional Chief Secretaries Satyabrata Sahu, Surendra

Kumar, and Deo Ranjan Kumar Singh, along with other secretary-level officers, ensured a seamless process. The previous evening, the Chief Minister and his Cabinet arrived in Sambalpur, paying their respects at the Maa Samaleswari temple and praying for the welfare of Odisha's people. Speaking at the event, Majhi described the grievance redressal programme as a "positive message" for the government, the people, Odisha, and democracy itself. He highlighted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had praised the initiative, noting that Modi's guidance has inspired the

administration to forge closer ties with the public. "Our goal is to achieve Odisha's broader development while ensuring that the struggles of the poor and helpless are not ignored," Majhi said. "Unlike the previous government, which was indifferent to such concerns, we have resolved to hold grievance redressal sessions across the state. Today, it's Sambalpur; tomorrow, it will be other regions." The Sambalpur session saw approximately 1,000 complaints registered online and 1400 offline. A single-window system facilitated immediate

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Temperature in Odisha crosses 45°C-mark for first time this summer

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : The maximum temperature i.e day temperature in Odisha crossed the 45°C-mark for first time this summer as Jharsuguda reported 45.4 degree Celsius mark today. The latest bulletin of the regional centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) revealed that mercury rose to 45.4 degree Celsius in Jharsuguda while it touched the 43°C-mark in Sambalpur. While with 42.4°C Hirakud was Odisha's third hottest place today, a temperature of 42 degree Celsius was witnessed in Rourkela. Likewise, people of Keonjhar also sizzled at 38.3°C and in Chandabali the temperature was 38.2°C.

Similarly, the residents of the State Capital City Bhubaneswar



today witnessed 36°C temperature. The maximum temperature in the state is expected to rise further as the weather department has issued yellow warning for heat wave conditions for the next three days. According to IMD reports, Bhubaneswar experienced increased temperatures on Sunday compared to the previous day, with humidity levels above 60% throughout the day, making

it feel hot and sultry. The temperature in Bhubaneswar was 31 degrees Celsius at 8:30 am with humidity at 81%. By 11:30 am, the temperature had risen to 35.2 degrees Celsius with humidity at 67%. At 2:30 pm, the temperature was recorded at 37 degrees Celsius with humidity at 61%, contributing to the sweltering conditions in the city. On the other hand, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Nuapada,

Malkangiri, Koraput, Bargarh, Nabarangapur, Nayagarh, Boudh, Balangir, and Bhadrak districts experienced thunderstorms on Sunday, accompanied by lightning and strong winds of 40-50 km/h. There were reports of two deaths due to lightning strikes in Balangir district.

YELLOW WARNING till 8.30 AM of April 22: Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 40-50 kmph very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two places over the districts of Koraput and Malkangiri. Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 30-40 kmph very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two

places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Mayurbhanj, Gajapati, Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Rayagada, Nabarangapur and Kalahandi. **YELLOW WARNING** from 8.30 AM of April 22 to 8.30 AM of April 23: Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 30-40 kmph very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two places over the districts of Nabarangapur. Malkangiri and Koraput, Heat wave condition very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Jharsuguda, Bolangir, Sundargarh and Sambalpur.

YELLOW WARNING from
Continued P-4

Around 12 people detained in Odisha by West Bengal STF in connection with Murshidabad violence



Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Around 12 people were detained from Odisha's Jharsuguda district on Monday in connection with the violence in West Bengal's Murshidabad district, police said. They were nabbed by a Special Task Force (STF) of the West Bengal Police, a senior Odisha

Police officer told. Among those apprehended were two sons of Ziaul Sheikh, one of the prime suspects in the murder of a man and his son in Murshidabad's Jafraabad, he said. After being detained, they were taken to the Banharpali police station for

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Bat Size

The Indian cricket board's decision to impose regulations on oversized cricket bats, specifically requiring that all bats utilized in the Indian Premier League (IPL) undergo a gauge test, represents a crucial measure aimed at addressing the growing imbalance within the game. While the weight of cricket bats has not been a major issue the dimensions of these bats have become a focal point of concern. In particular, the size of the sweet spot, which is the area on the bat that produces the best performance when striking the ball, along with the thickness of the edges, has led to significant debates among players, coaches, and cricket enthusiasts alike. These factors contribute to an unfair advantage, potentially skewing the competitive nature of the sport. By implementing these regulations, the board seeks to ensure a more level playing field, thereby preserving the integrity and traditional values of cricket. Perfect balance might still be elusive. Cricket must adopt strategies aimed at minimizing the occurrence of mis-hits that result in the ball crossing the boundary. This is essential to maintain the integrity of the sport and to ensure that average batsmen are not mistakenly regarded as extraordinary six-hitters, particularly in the T20 format. The current dynamics of the game can lead to situations where a batsman, through sheer luck or a poorly executed shot, achieves results that do not accurately reflect their skill level. Furthermore, bowlers who voice their concerns regarding the apparent disparities within the game present legitimate points. Their arguments highlight the need for a more balanced approach to the rules and regulations governing the sport, ensuring that both batting and bowling skills are appropriately valued and rewarded. The ball has remained much the same through centuries. Newer colours, machines replacing hands in stitching leather, and use of different dyes, are the only changes. In contrast, bats have evolved faster than homo sapiens. In subsequent years, batsmen have wielded a spate of fancily named bats, from the Jumbo and Run Reaper to Mongoose and the unpresed trampoline bats that modern cricketers use. Australia's pace legend Dennis Lillee once wielded an aluminium bat. Bat-making scientists are devoting endless nights to making bats lighter but more powerful. The depth of the bats expanded to such an extent that the MCC introduced restrictions in 2017 to de-fatten the wood.

It is excessively presumptuous to believe that eliminating large bats would lead to a reduction in the frequency of sixes in modern cricket. The act of hitting sixes cannot be attributed solely to the power generated by the bats; rather, it is influenced by a multitude of factors. These include the smaller dimensions of the playing field, which facilitate scoring, as well as the innovative techniques and strategies employed by contemporary batsmen. Truly adept players, those who excel at hitting sixes, will find a way to clear the boundary regardless of any limitations imposed on bat size. In this regard, the specifications of bats could serve to further highlight the exceptional six-hitting capabilities of players, thereby differentiating emerging talents from more experienced athletes in the sport.

22nd April

Earth Day

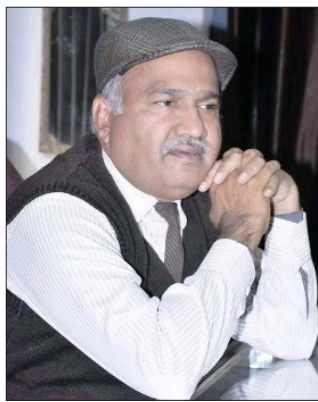


For the past 50 years, Earth Day has been celebrated by billions of people around the globe, annually every April 22, to join together in promoting awareness for the health of our environment. Why should we continue to celebrate this holiday? Some people may view it as just another holiday, or an excuse to wear green and a flower crown, similar to St. Patrick's Day, but with serious concerns about our changing environment being studied and addressed today by prominent scientists, politicians, and young climate change activists alike, some people are adapting to more environmentally friendly ways of living - every day, not just on April 22 every year. Cue the composting, recycling, repurposing, carpooling, thrifting, and metal straws to save the turtles.

The idea for Earth Day was originally born in 1969, when a US Senator named Gaylord Nelson, witnessed the effects of a massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, CA. He called to action all Americans to take a stand for the environment in 1970, and thousands of colleges and universities across the United States organized protests for a healthy, sustainable Earth. This included air pollution from factories and freeways, as well as the loss of habitats for animals and animal extinction. Because of these national rallies, the first Earth Day helped create the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species acts into law. Today, we have similar concerns, and unfortunately they are even messier than that original oil spill. Increasing natural disasters, extreme weather, and rising global temperatures may seem impossible for one human, let alone millions or even billions of humans, to slow down, or stop. It has been reported that coral reefs are dying, we see pictures of animals on land and in the ocean with trash in their bellies or around their body, and corporate factories and large companies around the world continue to pollute our air and our living spaces. But a small action, like picking up litter on the sidewalk that may have otherwise ended up around the neck of an animal or in the ocean, still makes an impact - a step in the right direction, and an important change.

20 million Americans protest in the streets for more environmental protections. 200 million people are now organizing and united, fighting for climate protections across 141 countries. Young people begin to strike for climate change, led by Greta Thunberg in Sweden, with around 2,200 strikes organized in 125 countries from 2018 - 2019. A "Green New Deal" Resolution is presented to the United States Congress for 100% renewable, zero-emission energy sources.

Astrology and the child mind in education



Vijay Garg

A fourth-class baby girl from Chamarajnagar in Karnataka made a 'project' in the science exhibition, with a message that the woman who wears a special garment deserves Jannah and who doesn't wear is a feast of snake-bitchhias in hell. In such a situation, this phenomenon presents a frightening picture of the prejudices that have been made into the masses of our education system. In the science exhibition, a baby girl's religious fanaticism-inspired model is not only her imagination, but the result of the atmosphere in which she has been molded. The question is not how this thought came to his mind, but it is, after all, who molested his thinking in this direction?

Is it the result of the education that inspires us to adopt a scientific approach or is it the gift of a society that stacks the fear of superstition and punishment even in the gentle consciousness of children? It is surprising that all this is happening openly and not the education system to its bhank. If the video of this modal did not come to the discussion, did the administration wake up? Would school's responsibility be fixed? This

position opens the pole of lecture monitoring and accountability of our education system. The purpose of education should then motivate children to think independently, argue and become discreet. Only things written in books are not rote the purpose of education. The aim of education is not only to create things written in books, but to develop the ability to think and reason independent in children, but when the education system itself starts to form a medium of religious prejudices and social evils, it not only disrupts the mental development of children, but also makes the future of society dark. According to UNICEF's 2023 report, 70% of children worldwide are affected by religious and cultural prejudices during their early education. The 2021 national educational policy rump in India suggests that children in the number of schools are taught more religious backgrounds than scientific attitudes. The Karnataka incident is an example of the same trend, where an innocent baby girl was tortured into superstition. The difficult road to democracy in Myma, the military government may accept India's arbitration.

According to a study, 65% of children aged 8-14 adopt religious beliefs from the family, which influence their independent thinking. This is the result of the social adaptation, which limits the thinking of children in the name of religion. The real aim of education is to give rise to questions in the minds of children, not to fill them with superstitions that eliminate the ability of their self-determination. In a country with diversity like India, where women have the freedom to wear by their choice,



how are religious fanaticism breathing so deep? On the one hand, women in Iran are struggling, then on the other hand, it is being imposed in some parts of India as the identity of religion. Ironically, children who should have an understanding of their rights and freedom are already being taught that some special dresses in the name of religion are proof of 'purity'. Wearing any garment can be one's personal choice, but when it is combined with fear and religious prejudice, it does not remain just a matter of hypothecation, but takes the form of a mental fasten. At the age at which children should be taught to take logical thinking and scientific approach, at the same age, filling in their minds that women who do not wear special apparel are 'napak', indicating that more poisonous venom society than a snake-scorpion is solving in the minds of children. Conflicts between religion and education even in other countries. This case of conflict of religion and education is not limited to India alone. There is debate of evolution versus creationism in America, there is issue of hijab ban in France or ban the education of people in Afghanistan, the struggle of

religious ideology and education is clearly seen everywhere. In China, then the government itself controls the education system and decides what children should think and not. Ironically, the education that makes a person independent thinker is now becoming the mother of prejudices. That is why it is important to keep schools away from any such education that fills children with prejudices. They should be encouraged to think freely, question and adopt new ideas. State governments and education policymakers should also have a key role in it. Education should not be limited to curriculum only, but it should be an opportunity to give children to develop logical thinking and scientific approach. Until the end of religious, political and cultural prejudices in education, creation of free and logical thinking will not be possible. The digital economy provided new employment opportunities, many challenges and threats before online business. Now the question arises what is the solution to this problem? First of all, schools should ensure that there is no place of any kind of religious or cultural bias in the education system.

Teachers should also be trained to think and question children freely. Parents also have responsibility to try to make them discreet and argumentative while keeping their children away from religious fanaticism. The second important step could be to encourage science and logical thinking more in the education system. The course should be made in such a way that children develop a habit of thinking independently and making their own opinions. As long as children themselves will not understand what is right for them and what is wrong, they can easily come under the influence of any ideology.

Education should be the real aim of making children argumentative and independent thinking. The third solution can be that dialogue and debate be boomed at a wider level in society. It is imperative that people understand that making any religious outfit mandatory, especially when they are combined with fear and punishment, it is a blatant of freedom. Ultimately, the real aim of education should be to make children argumentative and independent thinking, not to make them a puppet of a particular ideology. The poison of religious fanaticism and prejudices will continue to spread in society until logical and scientific thinking is boomed in schools. The mind of children is like an empty canvas, which can either be filled with colors of knowledge and rationality, or from dark spots of superstition and fanaticism. It depends on us in which direction we want to lead the next generation.

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The herd mentality

Dr. Samrat Kar

It is quite fascinating to watch the movement of the herd. If you observe closely, you will see one from the herd a bit ahead and in close-knit formations the rest will trail closely behind, refusing to break free and also uninterested in adopting a new leader even in their specified rows. Their thinking is even more alluring. They think exactly like the chap slightly ahead, they collectively refuse to entertain new opinions and ideas. Nobody dares to speak a word against the leader, if they do, they will be dropped from the herd. However archaic the leader's thoughts may be, it is easily adopted by the herd in collective glee come what may.

There are many groups and parties who bear the insignia of the herd. This has been their biggest peril and results are evident. The Congress party for one adopted this mentality completely and the result is for all to see. Of course, the other confusion that did exist within the Congress party was they could not accurately identify the leader of the herd. They believed that they were being led by a young calf when in reality they were being led by the matriarch. In this breakdown of command prevailed utter confusion and lack of respect for the newly ornamented leader. And even in defeat the herd mentality has been abundantly transparent. If the leader of the

herd declares that all but the leader was responsible for leading the herd into a sinking-sand, then this manifests as absolute truth. Some are so engrossed with the idea of collective identity that they cannot perceive anything else. It needs certain amount of character, attitude and vision to break free from the shackles of restraint. Very few are able to think differently and have a mind of their own, and for such individuals being cooped up in a herd is claustrophobic and suffocating. These individuals have the temperament to break free and when they do, the results are there to see. Some of the world's greatest leaders have done exactly this in their search for innovation and pioneered exceptional results without being attracted to the gravitational pull of the herd.

The herd mentality inspires blind allegiance. We see this in our day-to-day lives. If we question acts of bamboozlement, we are in turned questioned for our actions by the herd. We are accused of either being out of line or for not conforming to social dictums passed by the herd. It takes a strong individual to ignore counter accusations and press on without compromising on his/her core belief. They represent a very few percentage of this society. In a recent personal issue, a friend & I have pursued a case where we have exposed certain financial irregularities and

rigging practised by so called respectable people of this society. Supposedly respectable individuals have stooped to nadir levels and have indulged in acts of forgery and fabrication. And not surprisingly, the herd have refuted our claims despite enough and more evidence. Both their egos and their alter egos have received a sudden jolt and they adorn blinkers. I already have filed a case against a few individuals who have intimidated me. No, we are not dissuaded in the least, in fact lets say we are more determined that ever before and we know how to take matters to a logical conclusion. We take great pride in the way we think especially because it does not conform to the herd's thinking; that the place of the woman is in the kitchen or at the feet of her man. The herd mentality is also hard mentality. It will not soften easily. It needs many individuals to break away from hives and resist collective challenge. It needs gumption to resist popular notions and beliefs. Crowd wisdom is not always right. When people become sheeple, they seldom realize Pied Piper is leading them over the cliff. – “We are sheep in a herd of sheep, but Clytemnestra, Electra and Death are burnt like star-names in the sky” – Hilda Doolittle

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Come back, the only way out is in

Dr. Suresh Kumar Nayak

As teachers, our mission is not just to transmit knowledge, but to help create a worthy, beautiful human race, in order to take care of our precious planet. We know that children – the students of today – have a lot of suffering in them. There is a loneliness, a kind of vacuum in the child, and the child tries to fill up this emptiness with video games, movies, television, food, and perhaps, drugs. There is an enormous amount of suffering in young people, and this makes the work of teaching a lot more difficult. We ourselves, as teachers, have difficulties, too. If we as teachers, along with our colleagues, are not happy, how can we expect children to be happy? The first step is to come back to yourself – the way out is in. Come back to yourself to be able to take care of yourself: learn how to generate a feeling of happiness; learn how to handle a painful feeling or emotion; listen to your own suffering, so that understanding and compassion can be born.

Mindfulness is a kind of energy that helps us to be fully present in the here and the now, aware of what is going on in our body, our feelings, mind, and in the world, so that we can get in touch with the wonders of life that nourish and heal us. With mindfulness, concentration and insight, you can generate a feeling of joy and happiness, whenever you want. With the energy of mindfulness, you can also handle a painful feeling or emotion. If you're joyful, happy and aware, you light up the lamp of happiness and joy in others, because, in each of us, there is a seed of mindfulness, of awareness. As a teacher, you can perform that miracle in just a few seconds, and you can make the students in your class happy. Deep Communication: If you do not understand yourself – if you do not know the cause of your own suffering, fear and anger – you cannot communicate with yourself. Then, how can you communicate with another person? That is why going home to yourself – to get in touch with your body, feelings, perceptions and your suffering – is crucial before you help another.

Deep listening and loving speech, help remove obstacles between teachers and students. If you listen with compassion and love you can help the other person to suffer less. You know that suffering is in you, but in him there is also suffering. When you see the suffering in the other person you don't blame or accuse them anymore. Instead you want to help him. Coupled with mindful listening, is the practice of loving speech. We try to tell the other person the truth about the suffering in us and in him, using gentle speech to help the other person open his heart. The way we speak, helps the other person recognise the suffering in him, and in you. The practice of using deep listening and loving speech to restore communication and promote understanding and collaboration between teachers and students should be included in all teacher-training courses.

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Puspamitra Mohapatra

A servant, in order to find out his master in a dark room, enters the house and goes into the dark room. In the dark room with his hand he tries to touch and feel everything that is contained therein. As he moves about in the dark room and as he tries to feel and touch various objects may be one occasion he would touch a chair and then he would say no this is not my master. Then he may touch a bench

Master in a Darkroom

and he would say, no this is not my master. He may then touch some kind of a box, then he would say, no this is not my master. This kind of enquiry will lead him through various situations by which he would say, this is not my master, this is not my master he would exhaust all that he can feel inside the room. In this manner and while making such a search, he will go and touch a cot. After he

has touched the cot, he will touch the feet and then he will say, now I have found my master. It is not right that he could feel happy, satisfied and contented as soon as he touches the feet and as soon as he thinks he has found his master. His objective will be fully achieved only after he goes further, goes nearer the master and is able to recognize and take himself closer to the master. In this body, which

can be compared to a house, all the desires which come through the various organs which are parts of the body may be compared to the darkness in the house. In this dark house, that aspect which we may call the individual is going round like the servant in a dark room searching for the souter or the Lord. The first thing which this individual does is to touch and feel the organs of the body. After that

he feels the presence of the mind. After that he feels the presence of intelligence.

Through this intelligence, which can be compared to the cot which the servant touched as a first step to finding his master, he is able to find out the feel of his master. In this analogy and in this spiritual path, what we have to find is the existence of these four aspects, the soul, the intelligence the mind and the sense organs.

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Tribal Dreams Take Flight

100 KISS Students Pursuing in KIIT Bag Prestigious Campus Placements



Bhubaneswar, (DMC): As many as 100 students from the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), currently pursuing at KIIT-DU, have secured prestigious placements in leading national and multinational companies.

This marks a turning point in their lives, as these students hail from humble tribal backgrounds, many of whom are the first in their families to enter the professional workforce. The recently published placement list for the 2025 graduating batch highlights

numerous success stories, including offers from companies such as PRA India Ltd., Tata Power, Essar Power Gujarat Ltd., Skipper Ltd., and Megha Engineering & Infrastructures Ltd., with the highest salary packages of Rs 9.5 LPA.

The lowest package for these students is 4 LPA. Students from various branches, including ITI, Polytechnic, Engineering, Management, and Rural Management, have been selected. Every year, about 200 talented students of KISS get the

opportunity to pursue higher technical education free of cost in various courses of KIIT University.

Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS, makes extensive arrangements through the KISS authorities to ensure that these talented students of KISS get quality education and get employment in various national and multinational companies. Today, these successful students paid a courtesy call on Dr. Samanta and received his blessings. On this occasion, Dr. Samanta

congratulated all the students and wished them a bright future. He said, "These students, being the first learners in their families, have become an inspiration for others. As the children of KISS get quality education along with employment, the goal of KISS towards reducing illiteracy and providing employment has been achieved".

KISS is a sought-after institution among tribals because it gives a complete solution to a poor tribal child - complete education to a job in their hands, he underscored. Among others, KIIT University Vice Chancellor Prof. Saranjit Singh, Registrar Prof Jnyana Ranjan Mohanty, KISS University Registrar, Dr. Prashanta Kumar Routray, and Additional Registrar Pramod Kumar Patra were present on the occasion.

ECoR General Manager Felicitates Five Railway Employees for Exemplary Dedication and Alertness



Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In a commendable recognition of dedication and vigilance, Shri Parmeshwar Funkwal, General Manager of East Coast Railway (ECoR), felicitated five railway employees for their outstanding performance in ensuring safe and smooth train operations. The felicitation ceremony was held today at the ECoR Headquarters, Rail Sadan, Bhubaneswar, in the presence of the Additional General Manager, Principal Chief Safety Officer, and other senior railway officials. The employees felicitated for their remarkable service include: Sri Shakti Prasad Sahoo, Train Pointsman, Kamakhyanagar; Sri Debraj Suna, Track Maintainer, Godbhaga; Sri Purna Chandra Panda, Goods Train Loco Pilot, Khurda Road; Sri Surakattula

Sricharan Teja, Assistant Loco Pilot, Rayagada; Sri Pujan Kumar, Track Maintainer, Titlagarh. General Manager Shri Funkwal applauded the employees for their alertness, quick response, and dedication while on duty, which played a vital role in preventing potential disruptions and ensuring passenger safety. Shri Funkwal highlighted that the backbone of Indian Railways lies in the commitment and vigilance of its field staff, whose actions are

integral to the safe and efficient operation of train services. Emphasizing the importance of safety at every level, he encouraged all railway personnel to maintain a high standard of alertness, responsibility, and professional excellence. The event concluded with a renewed call for maintaining a zero-compromise approach towards safety and continuing the culture of recognizing and encouraging exemplary performance within the organization.

Safety-Related Modernization Work Between Rourkela and Bondamunda: Temporary Changes in Train Services

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In line with Indian Railways' commitment to enhance safety and improve infrastructure, the South Eastern Railway, Chakradharpur Division, will undertake critical safety-related modernization work between Rourkela and Bondamunda from April 21 to April 26, 2025.

This essential work involves track linking and non-interlocking operations as part of the commissioning of multi-tracking lines in the Rourkela-Bondamunda section.

These upgrades are aimed at improving train operations, ensuring safer and more efficient railway services in the long term. To facilitate the seamless execution of this project, certain train services will be temporarily cancelled or partially cancelled. These changes are being implemented with the utmost priority on passenger safety and



minimizing inconvenience to the traveling public. Passengers are requested to check the latest train schedules and plan their journeys accordingly. Railway regrets the temporary inconvenience and seeks cooperation from the public during this period of vital infrastructure enhancement.

Fake job racket busted in Bhubaneswar, 3 arrested



Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Commissionerate Police busted a fake job racket running at a hotel in Bhubaneswar and arrested three persons for their involvement in the racket. The arrested persons have been identified as Babulahari Gouda of Khandara village under Hinjilikatu police station limits in Ganjam district who is at present living in Mumbai, Mahesh Ramchandra Lokhande at Kegaon Taluka Uran in Mumbai and Kiran Shashikant Ghumre who is staying at Ekdant Apartment, Flat No-305, Wing-C, Ps-Uran, Dist-Raigad,

Mumbai. Police also seized resumes of several candidates, forged documents and four mobile phones from the possessions of the accused persons. On April 20, acting on a complaint by Sunil Kumar Sah, the Protector of Emigrants in Bhubaneswar (Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India), Kharvelnagar P.S Case No. 178 dtd. 20.04.2025 U/s 61(2)/54/336(3)/340(2)/319(2)/318(4)/62/143(3)/3(5) BNS r.w. S.24 of Emigration Act, 1983 was registered regarding an illegal interview being conducted in Hotel Raj Inn under Kharvel

Nagar Police Station for alleged recruitment to various posts in Israel. The police investigation revealed that the accused individuals had widely circulated fake advertisements on social media and used forged documents resembling official notifications from the Ministry of Labour & Employment to mislead the job seekers. The accused persons were collecting Rs 5,000 in advance from each job aspirant and told them that they would collect Rs 70,000 upon issuing (fake) offer letters.

Police also has attained the footages of the CCTV cameras of the hotel in which the accused persons were seen conducting a fake job mela at the hotel and several job seekers were attending the fake job fair. The accused were neither authorized by the Ministry of External Affairs nor by any registered recruitment agency. Swift police action led to the apprehension of three accused persons. This action prevented the huge loss of money of the job seekers.

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Economic Offences Wing (EOW), Odisha, on Monday arrested four persons in connection with a Rs 8.1 Cr loan fraud. The accused persons identified as Smruti Ranjan Sethy and M. Dibyashree Jyoti Ranjan from Jagatsinghpur, Niranjana Behera and Debasish Behera from Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar. The arrested accused persons are going to be produced before the Designated Court under OPID Act, Cuttack.

The case was registered on the written report of Shiba Sundara Sahoo, Regional Manager, State Bank of India, RBO, Bhubaneswar wherein it was alleged that the accused persons by entering into a conspiracy availed 234 No. of Xpress Credit Loans amounting to Rs. 8.1 Cr. from Jaydev Vihar Branch (92), Damana Chhak Branch (142) of SBI during the



period from Nov' 2021 to Jan' 2023 by producing fake/ fabricated employment records as employees of different organizations like Capital Trust Ltd., Corporate InfoTech Pvt. Ltd., Falcon Marine Exports Ltd., GAS Secure Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Global Innovsource Solutions, Innovsource Services Pvt. Ltd., Muthoot Microfin Ltd., Narayana Hrudalaya Ltd.,

Orion Security Services Solutions Pvt. Ltd. etc. The arrested persons in connivance with the loanees and others managed to sanction/avail 234 No. of Xpress Credit loans meant for the Corporate Sector in favour of 234 different ineligible individuals by producing fake/ fabricated employment records like salary certificate, employment details, bank statements and KYC documents. After availing the loan

by fraudulent means, the loanees stopped making payment of the EMI and the loan accounts became NPA leaving the outstanding of Rs. 4,77,96,009/-. As found on investigation, amounts of Rs. 19,08,385/-, Rs. 2.42 lakh, Rs. 94,000/- and Rs. 50,000/- have been transferred to the accounts of arrested accused persons Smrutiranjana Sethy, M. Dibyashree Jyoti Ranjan, Niranjana Behera and Debasish Behera respectively from the loan account of the loanees.

These accused were acting as middlemen in preparing the fake documents for financial gain. Many incriminating materials like one laptop and 05 No. of mobile phones suspected to be containing the incriminating materials have been seized from the arrested accused persons. The investigation of the case is going on.

PRSI Bhubaneswar Chapter celebrates National Public Relations Day 2025

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) Bhubaneswar Chapter, in collaboration with IIT Bhubaneswar, celebrated the National Public Relations Day 2025, with deliberations by eminent speakers on the theme 'Responsible use of Artificial Intelligence: Role of Public Relations', at IIT Bhubaneswar Campus, today.

Speaking on this occasion, Prof. Shreepad Karmalkar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar said, "Technology, especially AI, is only as ethical and effective as the intent behind its use. As custodians of communication, PR professionals carry a deep responsibility—not just to inform, but to influence ethically. The three pillars—communication, collaboration, and critical thinking—are not just academic ideals, but essential tools in



ensuring AI is used with responsibility and purpose in the world of PR." He stressed on using AI innovation with integrity and in an ethical manner. "Sharing his insights as expert speaker on Responsible use of Artificial Intelligence and Role of Public Relations, Rohit Dubey, Vice President and Head - Corporate Communications, Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd. said, "AI in PR is an augmentor, not a replacer. It's a productivity booster, a creative partner—a co-

pilot, not an autopilot. Those who embrace AI find it frees them from drudge work, enhancing their value rather than making them obsolete." He further described it as a fantastic opportunity for computer science students to collaborate with public relations professionals and co-create India-centric PR tools - from media analytics and real-time sentiment tracking to customised content generation. Asserting that the PR tech space in India remains relatively untapped, with very few homegrown software startups

focusing on this domain, he urged the students to take this up as a college project or an entrepreneurial venture. Setting the context of the event, Sudhi Ranjan Mishra, Chairman, PRSI Bhubaneswar Chapter highlighted the Importance of National PR Day and said that,

"In the age of huge social media influence, the role and responsibilities of PR person is much higher now in terms of fighting misinformation and fake news." Speaking on Responsible AI and Initiatives at IIT Bhubaneswar, Dr. Debi Prosad Dogra, HOD, Computer Science Engineering, IIT Bhubaneswar, said "The advent of AI has accelerated the development in healthcare, public service, and other fields. However, using AI responsibly lies with the users and the creators of AI models should be careful in disclosing the underlying facts of AI.

Nitin Gadkari's Vision for Odisha's Connectivity and Growth

In the heart of eastern India, Odisha is witnessing a monumental transformation in its road infrastructure, driven by the ambitious vision of Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari. With an unwavering commitment to enhancing connectivity, boosting tourism, and fueling economic growth, Gadkari has spearheaded a series of national highway (NH) projects, reshaping Odisha's landscape.

From sprawling six-lane highways to strategic bridges and underpasses, the state is on the cusp of a transport revolution, with investments exceeding 2 lakh crore and a bold target of 73 lakh crore by 2027. The current status of Odisha's national highway projects with the transformative initiatives under Gadkari's leadership seems to be having far-reaching impact on the state's future.

A New Era: Odisha's road network has long been a lifeline for its people, connecting vibrant coastal cities like Puri and

Bhubaneswar to remote tribal regions and industrial hubs. However, until recently, the state's highways lagged in terms of modernity and capacity. Since 2014, under the leadership of Gadkari and the Modi government, Odisha's national highway infrastructure has undergone a dramatic overhaul. The NH network has expanded from 4,639 km in 2014 to 5,753 km by 2024, with 4,250 km of roads constructed at a cost of 33,000 crore over the past decade.

Another 1,312 km, valued at 22,000 crore, is currently under construction, with completion expected by the end of 2025. In April 2025, Gadkari inaugurated 19 NH projects worth 74,137 crore, spanning 154 km across districts such as Khurda, Puri, Ganjam, Kandhamal, and Nayagarh. These projects are a testament to the government's focus on creating world-class infrastructure tailored to Odisha's diverse needs. Among the highlights are the four-laning of the Banarpal-Godibandha

stretch, the Talcher-Kamakhyanagar corridor (NH-149 and NH-53), and the transformative six-laning of the Bhubaneswar-Puri highway, a 71,200 crore project designed to handle traffic demands for the next century. Additionally, four bridges along the Berhampur-Gopalpur and Rourkela-Biramitrapur highways, alongside vehicle underpasses on NH-16 at Balikuda, Sikharpur, and Badachana, are set to enhance safety and connectivity.

Future Plans: The April 2025 announcements are just the tip of the iceberg. Gadkari laid the foundation for 13 additional NH projects worth 2,905 crore, covering 105 km, and a critical bridge over Gangua Nallah in Bhubaneswar. These initiatives are part of a broader pipeline that includes 76,000 crore worth of ongoing projects, 760,000 crore in completed works, and detailed project reports (DPRs) for 40,000 crore in new developments. Gadkari's ultimate goal is to elevate

Odisha's highways to U.S. standards, with a staggering 73 lakh crore in projects planned over the next two years. Key corridors under development include the Raipur-Visakhapatnam highway, which will slash travel time from Nabarangpur to Visakhapatnam from 8.5 hours to just 4 hours by the end of 2025. The Chandikhol-Paradip corridor, vital for port connectivity, is slated for completion by December 2026. Additionally, a second Ranchi-Sambalpur corridor, backed by an 78,000 crore investment, will bolster regional trade and mobility. The Bhubaneswar Ring Road, a 111 km greenfield project costing 76,253 crore, promises to decongest and connect the capital region, benefiting Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, and Khurda. Odisha's Chief Minister, Mohan Charan Majhi, has also advocated for further expansion, requesting the four-laning of the proposed coastal highway and an additional 1 lakh crore for road development. This coastal highway, envisioned as a scenic

and economic corridor, could redefine tourism and trade along Odisha's 480 km coastline. **Decade of Progress:** The seeds of Odisha's highway transformation were sown in 2015, when Gadkari declared NH status for 2,000 km of state highways, backed by a 735,000 crore investment. This included seven new NHs spanning 1,260 km and 12 bypasses under the Bharatmala Pariyojana, targeting key areas like Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, and backward regions with religious significance.

These projects laid the groundwork for the state's current infrastructure boom, addressing long-standing connectivity gaps in rural and tribal areas. Today, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) manages Odisha's NH network, leveraging public-private partnerships for maintenance and toll collection. The focus on high-quality construction, coupled with strategic planning, has positioned Odisha as a model for

highway development in India. Gadkari's emphasis on tourism-centric projects, such as the Bhubaneswar-Puri corridor, aligns with Odisha's cultural and spiritual heritage, making it easier for millions of pilgrims and tourists to visit iconic destinations like the Jagannath Temple.

Challenges Ahead: While the progress is undeniable, challenges remain. Timely execution of DPRs and project completion is critical, as past initiatives, such as those announced in 2015, faced delays.

Land acquisition and environmental clearances, particularly for large-scale projects like Bharatmala, could pose hurdles, though recent updates suggest smooth progress. Additionally, ensuring the maintenance of newly built highways will be key to sustaining their long-term impact. Gadkari's vision extends beyond mere road construction. By integrating advanced technologies, sustainable practices, and a focus on economic upliftment, Odisha's highways are

poised to become engines of growth. The emphasis on port connectivity, such as the Chandikhol-Paradip corridor, will strengthen Odisha's role in maritime trade, while projects in backward areas promise to bridge socio-economic disparities. A Transformative Legacy: As Odisha's highways evolve into world-class corridors, Nitin Gadkari's leadership is leaving an indelible mark on the state's future.

The 4,137 crore projects inaugurated in April 2025, combined with a 73 lakh crore roadmap, reflect a commitment to progress that transcends political boundaries. From the bustling streets of Bhubaneswar to the serene shores of Puri, Odisha's highways are not just pathways of asphalt—they are lifelines of opportunity, connecting dreams to reality. As Odisha races toward a future of seamless connectivity, the journey promises to be as remarkable as the destination.

Governor visits Raghurajpur in Kalagram



Puri, (DMC): Governor Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati and First Lady of Odisha Smt. Jayashree Kambhampati visited Kalagram Raghurajpur this afternoon. The governor couple arrived at Raghurajpur and were received by a bunch of boys and artists. The governor couple was later overwhelmed to see the pattachitra and other handicraft items of Raghurajpur. He also interacted with art gurus and artists.

During the visit, ADM Administration Sarat Chandra Behera, ADM Nilamadhab Bhoi, Sadar BDO Sambit Satpathy, Deputy Director of Handicrafts Umapati Behera, District Culture Officer Hemanta Behera, Village Secretary Abhiram Das, Vice President of District Kala Sanskriti Sangha Basanta Kumar Pradhan, Secretary of Dasbhujia Gotiputra Odissi Nritya Parishad Sevendra Das, Shilpi Guru Banamali Mohapatra and other artists were present.

Women Retorted Against Country Liquor Selling

Paralakhemundi, (DMC): By women Gajapati district of Kashinagar block at Allada on country liquor selling women agitated & started a rally. At various streets & lanes such items are selling & that caused impact on students.

On smuggling liquor Excise too not stringent to take action. So members of SHGs gathered. Their rally



started from Indira colony & reached at Allada via Lamtaguda & Bhalia villages. Led by IIC Kashinagar police maintained law & order.

Singer Ghantasala Aradhana Function by Oldest Chaitanya Organization



Paralakhemundi, (DMC): By cultural organization famous Telugu singer Padmashri Ghantasala's Aradhana function held at Paralkhemundi Biju Kalyan Mandap.

Collector Gajapati Bijay Kumar Dash graced as chief guest. On this occasion health camp organization by the organizers. By Specialists more than 150 patients checked their health & free medicines given.

Fire Safety Awareness Week successfully concludes at PPA

Paradip, (DMC): The Fire Safety Awareness Week, observed across Paradip Port with the aim of enhancing public understanding and preparedness for fire-related emergencies, has concluded on Monday successfully. Throughout the week, starting on April 14th, 2025, the Paradip Fire Department, in collaboration with local organizations and community volunteers, conducted a series of impactful initiatives to educate residents, businesses, and institutions on crucial fire safety measures.

This year's campaign focused on the theme "Unite, to ignite a fire safe India", emphasizing the importance of proactive measures and community involvement in preventing fires and ensuring swift and safe responses when they occur. Key highlights of the Fire Safety Awareness Week included Educational Workshops and Seminars, Fire Safety Drills and Demonstrations, Public Awareness Campaigns, Community Engagement Programs, Special Focus on Industrial Safety. The Paradip Fire Department



expressed its gratitude to all the participating organizations, volunteers, and the community members for their enthusiastic involvement in making the Fire Safety Awareness Week a resounding success.

They reiterated their commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of all residents through continuous awareness programs and efficient emergency response services. At the valedictory function held at Gate No.-4, Nilabhra Dasgupta, Dy.Chairman, Paradip Port Authority (PPA) said, "Fire safety is not just the

responsibility of the fire department; it requires the active participation of every individual. The knowledge and preparedness gained during this week will undoubtedly contribute to making Paradip a safer place for everyone. Sanat Kumar Patel, Commandant, CISF gave the welcome address.

The Asst. Commandant Akash Jaiswal offered the vote of thanks. The winners of the various events were awarded prizes by the Chief Guests. The Fire rescue and Disaster Management demonstrations was also conducted by the CISF Department.

2 Bike Riders Injured: Collided with CDMO Vehicle

Paralakhemundi, (DMC): At Domaguda of Mohana block of Gajapati district joint grievances held. CDMO Gajapati Dr.Md. Mubarak Ali was going to attend the same. Near hearing impaired school his vehicle collided with a motor bike. No sooner that slipped towards nearest bushes. Motor bike rider Dibya Nayak & on his back a woman named Brundabati Nayak of Bhaliapada injured. They are grand mother & grandson as relationship. Though CDMO vehicle not much affected but those injured bike riders admitted at Mohana CHC. Later they referred to Brahmapur. Mohana police started enquiry of the incident.

Patients Troubled by Lack of Ambulance ; Ambulance Reached after 21 hours



Paralakhemundi, (DMC): At Ramgiri PHC of Gajapati district, due to lack of ambulance patients stranded. One Rabindra Roito of Marlabha of Rayagada block admitted at Ramgiri PHC. After acknowledged as serious, he has been referred to

Brahmapur. So family members contacted for ambulance but in vein. Later Dr. Brajaraj Kar contacted for ambulance. After 21 hours that ambulance came from Chandragiri which is hardly 35 kms. This shows to hide callousness of medical administration. If such situation prevailed serious patients life & death question is imminent. Let district administration must notch up such utter negligence, where patients suffering is just a mock for authorities.

Bhubaneswar Police Arrest Transgender Chain Snatcher From Jharkhand

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Commissionerate Police, Bhubaneswar has arrested a transgender person from Jharkhand who was accused of snatching a gold chain in the capital city. The accused, Subhashree Pani, was arrested by the Capital Police Station team after nearly 10 months of investigation. Bhubaneswar DCP Jagmohan Meena shared the information with the media persons on Monday.

According to the police, Subhashree Pani had allegedly snatched a gold chain from a woman in the Niladri Vihar area of Bhubaneswar in July last year. A case was registered with the police and an investigation was launched immediately. After months of tracking, the police finally located Subhashree's whereabouts. The investigating team arrested her from Jharkhand on Sunday and has brought her to Bhubaneswar on transit remand.

DCP Meena stated that the accused has mortgaged the stolen gold chain at a bank in exchange for money. As a result, the chain could not be recovered. He further said that strict action would be taken against banks that accept gold ornaments without proper documentation.

Murshidabad Murder Case: West Bengal STF Arrests 2 Key Accused In Jharsuguda

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In a significant breakthrough in the Murshidabad double murder case, the West Bengal Special Task Force (STF), with support from Jharsuguda police, arrested two key accused in Jharsuguda district of Odisha on Monday. The arrested persons have been identified as Bani Israel (24) and Sefaul Haque, both sons of Jialul Haque from Sulitala village under Samserganj police station in Murshidabad district, West Bengal.

They are prime suspects in the murder of Haragobindo Das (72) and his son Chandan Das (40), which occurred on April 1, 2025. The case was registered as Samserganj PS Case No. 210/25

under Section 103/3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). According to an official press release, the West Bengal STF, acting on intelligence inputs, arrived in Jharsuguda and sought assistance from Banharपाली Police. Joint raids were conducted across several locations under the jurisdiction of Bandhabahal Outpost.

During the operation, the two suspects attempted to escape. The police fired four warning shots in the air, ultimately leading to their successful apprehension. A country-made pistol loaded with two 7.62 mm live rounds was recovered from the possession of Bani Israel. Additionally, four empty 9 mm

cartridge cases were seized from the spot. In a further development, six more persons from Murshidabad were detained during follow-up raids in the Bandhabahal area. They are believed to be linked to the larger network behind the Murshidabad violence. All six detainees are residents under the jurisdiction of Samserganj police station.

Speaking at a press conference, Jharsuguda Superintendent of Police Parmar Smit Parshottamdas said, "During the raids, we found six more residents of Murshidabad who we suspect may also be involved in the case. They have been detained and handed over to the West Bengal STF for further legal action

Parliamentary Standing Committee Review Meeting Held

Puri, (DMC): It is very important to consult MPs while formulating and implementing central schemes in Puri. Saptagiri Ulka, chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, briefed the MPs on everything and stressed on the need to work within the stipulated time.

Presiding over a review meeting held on the occasion at the May Fair Hotel Conference Room today, Mr. Ulka said that the role of people's representatives in its functioning and success is important as all the schemes are being arranged for the benefit of the common man. Therefore, according to the guidelines given by the Central Government, it is very important to involve people's representatives and seek advice.

The chairman and other members suggested action against the officials concerned where there is violation. The committee stressed on the importance of informing the people's representatives during the preparation of the project, placing their suggestions with importance during the finalization of the project, involvement of public representatives during the launch and inauguration, organizing dissha meetings on a regular basis.

The Prime Minister approved the committee for CC Road on Gram Sadak. Improvement in the economic condition of the village is the development of the country. The committee called for the success of all schemes to realise the dream of a developed Odisha in 2036. UCO Bank was reviewed as the lead bank. He suggested that the



various services meant for the customers should be done at the right time and properly. It suggested that the report of the review be sent to Parliament within 15 days. Other members who attended the meeting included Bhajan Lal Jatav, Vijay Kumar Dubey, Geeta Alias Chandraprabha, Ram Shankar Rajjhara, Dr Mohammad Javed, Naba Charan Majhi, Desh Raj Shekhar, L Singhsan, Sushil Kumar, Mrityunjay Singh Yadav

and Sonia Wawalia. Principal Secretary Rural Development Sanjay Kumar Singh, Panchayati Raj Commissioner and Secretary S N Girish, Social Security Commissioner and Secretary R S Gopalan, Special Project Director Jyoti Prakash Das were also present on the occasion. State Mission Director and Jeevika Mission CEO Monika Priyadarshini, Additional Secretary Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Department

Surendra Kumar Meena, Planning and Review Department's Madhusmita Samal, State Finance Commission Member Secretary Satyapriya Rath, UCO Bank MD and CEO Ashwini Kumar, GM Gautam Patra were present on the occasion. Visited the Konark Sun Temple and interpretation centre. Zilla Parishad chief development officer Priyaranjan Prusty and Deputy Collector Nilamadhab Majhi supervised and conducted all the work.

From Page- 1

Pope Francis...

G7 Summit's Outreach Session in Borgo Egnazia, last year. In October 2021, the Pope received PM Modi during a private audience at the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican, which was also the first meeting between an Indian Prime Minister and the Pope in more than two decades. In June 2000, late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had last visited the Vatican and met the then Pope, John Paul II. India and The Holy See have friendly relations dating back to the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1948. India is also home to the second-largest Catholic population in Asia.

'Naagrik Devo Bhava...

emphasised the launch of Mission Manufacturing and attributed much of its success to MSMEs. "Today, MSMEs, startups and young entrepreneurs have unprecedented opportunities. Therefore, ensuring competitiveness in the global supply chain is crucial. Their competition is not just with small entrepreneurs but with the entire world," he remarked. Describing civil servants as the architects of the nation's future, PM Modi said, "You are not just Civil Servant, you are the craftsman of a new India. To fulfil the responsibility of craftsman, we should enable ourselves, we should dedicate time to the goal. You see, you will be able to see developed India in front of your eyes." Prime Minister Modi also presented the "PM Awards for Excellence in Public Administration" to various civil servants for their outstanding performance in implementing schemes for holistic development on the ground. He also released an e-book featuring success stories and best practices in governance, and viewed a film made on the government's flagship schemes.

Accessible Governance:...

assistance, particularly for those battling critical or incurable diseases. Through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund, 18 individuals received medical aid totaling 19.5 lakh for treatment expenses. A dedicated medical team was stationed at the grievance cell to expedite this process. Beyond medical aid, citizens raised a range of issues, from pension disputes to infrastructure needs. Each complaint was addressed with urgency, with ministers and senior officials issuing direct instructions to relevant authorities, often via telephone. Among the complainants was Deeptirani Padhi from Sambalpur, who sought resolution for a pension-related issue. After presenting her case to the Chief Minister, she received immediate assurances, leaving with a sense of relief. Similarly, residents of Dunguribahal in Bargarh district requested irrigation facilities from the Dunguribahal project. Majhi promptly directed the Water Resources Department's top engineer to take action, sending the group home with renewed hope.

Reflecting on past sessions, the Chief Minister noted that the previous nine grievance hearings in Bhubaneswar had recorded 9,377 complaints, with 88% resolved and the remainder in progress. "Our regional grievance redressal programs ensure that officials address issues at their level promptly, fostering greater awareness of public needs," he said, adding that clear directives have been issued for swift resolution of all complaints. The event left an indelible mark on attendees, with many expressing satisfaction and confidence as they departed. The visible commitment of the state's leadership to listen and act underscored the program's success. As Odisha's government continues to take governance to the people, this initiative is setting a new standard for public administration.

Around 12 people...

questioning, he added. Sheikh has already been arrested by the West Bengal Police, the officer said. These people used to work as labourers in Bundubahal in the Banharपाली police station area. They had gone home to Murshidabad during Eid and allegedly took part in the violence, he said. Following the violence, they returned to Jharsuguda and were in hiding, he said. "The people detained by the STF are being questioned, and their mobile phones are being verified to ascertain their presence in Murshidabad on the day of the violence. Based on the prima facie evidence, action will be taken," the officer said. Three people were killed, several people were injured, and scores of shops and houses were vandalised as violence rocked parts of Murshidabad during protests over the Waqf (Amendment) Act.

Temperature in Odisha...

8.30 AM of April 23 to 8.30 AM of April 24: Heat wave condition very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Boudh, Nuapada, Sonepur, Balangir, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur and Sundargarh. Hot and Humid Conditions very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam and Gajapati.

Top Court Man...

reimburse his medical expenses and take responsibility for his future medical expenses for the treatment of his physical disability after being administered the first dose of the vaccine. Aside from these, the plea sought a direction to grant compensation to the petitioner for his physical disability if his condition was found to be untreatable.

Khelo- India- Khelo Center Inagurated

Jagatsinghpur, (DMC): To-day Sports Minister Suryavanshi Suraj Inagurated Kho- Kho Center at Mani charan Sarala Accademy, Tirtol under Khelo -India- Khelo scheme. It was inaugurated by VC at Oswan VC room of Collectriate in presence of ADM Jyoti Shankar Roy, DEO, Niranjan Behera, District Sports Officer and Kho- Kho coach.



SC Dismisses as Withdrawn PIL Seeking Judicial Probe Into Bengal Violence



New Delhi, (HS) : The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed, as withdrawn, 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 that erupted against the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 in West Bengal's Murshidabad.

"You file a fresh petition," a bench of Justices Surya Kant and N.K. Singh told the PIL litigant after he sought permission to amend the plea in view of the "serious speech made against the Chief Justice of India". The Justice Surya Kant-led Bench emphasised that the averments made in the petition should not infringe the "dignity and decorum of the institution". "Our averments should be decent, responsible and respectful. In a petition under Article 32 of the Constitution, we always expect petitioners to raise good questions of law," it said. Ultimately, the apex court allowed withdrawal of the PIL with liberty to file a fresh petition with comprehensive averments. The plea, filed by advocate Vishal Tiwari, sought 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

Top Maoist Commander Prayag Manjhi with Rs 1 cr. Bounty among 8 Killed in Jharkhand

Bokaro, (HS) : At least eight Maoists, including senior commander Prayag Manjhi - who carried a bounty of Rs 1 crore on his head - were killed in an ongoing encounter with security forces in the Lugu hill area of Lalpania in Bokaro district, officials said. The gun battle began around 5.30 a.m. on Monday and was still underway, with intermittent firing reported from both sides. Officials said the number of casualties could rise further.

One of those killed was identified as Prayag Manjhi, a central committee member of the CPI (Maoist). Known by multiple aliases - Vivek Da, Phuchna, Nago Manjhi, and Karan Da - he was active in the Parasnath hills and surrounding areas of Giridih over the past few months. Manjhi, originally a resident of Dalbudha in Tundi (Dhanbad district), was a key Maoist figure wanted in over 100 incidents across Jharkhand, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha. In Giridih district alone, he was wanted in more than 50 cases. An official statement from the CRPF released on Monday morning initially confirmed the killing of four Maoists. The number has since increased to eight. The earlier statement said: "The

community. Further, the PIL sought 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," it further stated. Last week, a bench headed by CJI Sanjay 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.

Central Reserve Police Force, in a joint operation with the state police, killed four Maoists in an encounter in the Lugu hills of Bokaro district this morning. One SLR and one INSAS rifle have been recovered. No injuries to security personnel have been reported so far. Intermittent firing continues." The joint team, comprising personnel from the CRPF's 209 Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) and Jharkhand Police, had launched a search operation in the forested foothills of Lalpania police station area when they came under fire from Maoists. The forces retaliated, leading to the gunfight which is still going on. So far this year, 13 Maoists have been killed in encounters with security forces in Jharkhand. Police have set a target to make the state completely Maoist-free by the end of 2025.

According to Jharkhand Police data, 244 Maoists have been arrested this year, while nine were killed in encounters prior to this operation. Additionally, 24 Maoists - including four zonal commanders, one sub-general commander, and three area commanders - have surrendered and joined the mainstream of society.

New Indian Cardinal, Unfulfilled Visit: Pope Francis' Bond with India

Kochi, (HS) : Pope Francis's connection with India was marked by a mix of hopes and challenges. His long-held wish to visit the country remained unfulfilled. However, just months ago, he elevated an Indian priest, who is a Vatican official, to the rank of Cardinal - a notable moment for the Catholic community there. Francis, who was the first non-European Pope in nearly 1,300 years, died on Easter Monday. He was 88. The Pope was diagnosed for double pneumonia. His efforts to resolve the ongoing conflict over how Holy Mass is performed in the Syro-Malabar Church, one of the Oriental Catholic Churches, did not succeed.

Meanwhile, Pope Francis also moved forward with the sainthood causes of a few much-revered Indian figures, offering quite moments of pride for many of the faithful. During his papacy, in 2014, Pope Francis elevated Fr Kuriakose Elias Chavara and Sister Euphrasia Eluvathingal from Kerala to sainthood. In 2019, another Kerala-born Catholic nun, Mariam Theresia, was declared a saint by Pope Francis at a function held at St Peter's Basilica in Rome. She was the third nun and fourth clergy member from the Kerala-based Syro-Malabar Church to be canonised into the league of saints. His papacy also saw Devasahayam Pillai, who embraced Christianity in the 18th century, being declared a saint - becoming the first Indian layman to be canonised. Devasahayam was recommended for the process of beatification by the Vatican in 2004, at the request of the Kottar Diocese, the Tamil Nadu Bishops'



Council, and the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India. Pope Francis canonised Blessed Devasahayam Pillai, along with nine others, during a canonisation mass at St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican in 2022. It was in a grand consistory held at the Vatican on 7 December, 2024, that 51-year-old Indian priest George Jacob Koovakad was elevated to the rank of Cardinal by Pope Francis. The ceremony, held at the iconic St Peter's Basilica and attended by clergy and dignitaries from around the world, witnessed the induction of 21 new Cardinals from various countries. Hailing from the Archdiocese of Changanassery in Kerala, Koovakad's appointment brought the total number of Indian Cardinals to six, further strengthening the country's representation in the Vatican. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, other senior leaders, and heads of churches across

India welcomed the announcement with joy and pride. The Government of India sent a delegation led by Union Minister George Kurian to witness the ceremony. Prior to the event, the Indian delegation also had an audience with Pope Francis. Koovakad has been organising Pope Francis's international travels since 2020.

Previously, Koovakad, who held the title of Monsignor, was declared the Titular Archbishop of Nisibis in Turkey. He is currently based in the Vatican. Soon after his elevation, Cardinal Koovakad said that Pope Francis's visit to India would most likely be after 2025, which has been announced as the "Jubilee Year" by the Catholic Church, due to celebrations in Rome during that year. When asked about the Pope's visit, he said that it was not clear when Francis would come to India. "Chances are that it will be after 2025, which is the Jubilee Year. There are a lot of celebrations in

Rome during that year, and therefore the Pope will most likely be there," he had told reporters. At the same time, he had also said that a visit by the Pope in the near future could not be ruled out. During his papacy, the Syro-Malabar Church was marred by crisis, with a strong section of priests and members of the Church community in the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese disagreeing with the Syro-Malabar Church's August 2021 decision on uniform Holy Mass. This decision mandated a standardised way of conducting Holy Mass, where priests are required to face the congregation only at the beginning and end of the service, turning towards the altar for the rest of the Mass (known as the 50:50 formula).

While most dioceses under the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church have adopted this approach, many priests in the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese, along with their parishioners, continue to oppose it. They argue that it breaks from the tradition wherein the priest faces the congregation throughout the entire Mass. It was during the peak of the crisis that Cardinal George Alencherry announced his resignation as Head of the Syro-Malabar Church in 2023. His decision came amid an ongoing feud in the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, involving the implementation of a uniform Holy Mass and the church's land dealings. Alencherry held the position of Major Archbishop of the Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese. Following his resignation, Bishop Raphael Thattil was elevated as the head of the Syro-Malabar Church.

Delhi Court issues notice to NIA on

Tahawwur's Plea for communication with family

New Delhi, (HS) : The Delhi Patiala House Court has issued a notice to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in response to an application filed by Tahawwur Rana, seeking permission to communicate with his family. The court will hear arguments on the matter on April 23. Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a Pakistani-Canadian accused of terrorism, is a former military doctor with a history of alleged involvement in terror-related activities. He was recently extradited from the United States to India. Recently, while granting Rana's remand to the NIA, the court acknowledged evidence suggesting a wide-ranging terror conspiracy spanning multiple cities, with potential targets extending beyond India's borders. Emphasising the gravity of the allegations, the court underscored their direct implications for national security and stressed the necessity of confronting the accused with witnesses, forensic evidence, and seized documents, particularly those tied to reconnaissance operations. Recognising the seriousness of the matter, the court authorised an 18-day police custody remand, mandating strict adherence to legal protocols, including medical evaluations every 48 hours. Given Rana's reported health concerns and the sovereign assurances provided during extradition proceedings, the court directed that he receive appropriate medical care in line with established guidelines.

Bombard Rahul for remarks on EC; Congress defends former chief



New Delhi, (HS) : The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Monday targeted Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his remarks questioning the victory of the BJP-led Mahayuti coalition in the Maharashtra Assembly polls, alleging that the Election Commission of India was "compromised."

Speaking at an event in Boston, USA on Sunday, Gandhi cited the Maharashtra Assembly polls and alleged that the Election Commission is "compromised" and "there is something wrong with the system." Gandhi claimed that, in simple terms, more people voted in the Maharashtra assembly elections than there were adults in the state. "The Election Commission gave us a voting figure for 5:30 PM, and between 5:30 PM and 7:30 PM, 65 lakh voters voted. This is physically impossible to happen. For a voter to vote, it takes approx 3 minutes, and if you do the Math, it would mean that there were lines of voters till 2 AM, but this did not happen," he said. "When we asked them for the videography, they not only refused but they also changed the law so that now we are not allowed to ask

for the videography," Gandhi said. "It is very clear to us that the Election Commission is compromised, and it is very clear that there is something wrong with the system. I have said this multiple times," he added. Gandhi's statements irked the ruling BJP, which unleashed a series of attacks against him. Dubbing him a "traitor" for his remarks, BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra accused him of venting his frustration over ED action in the National Herald case on the poll body. "You are venting the ire over the Enforcement Directorate (action in the National Herald case) on the Election Commission. Nothing will happen by doing so," Patra said. "The ED will not spare you because agencies work on the basis of facts and the National Herald matter is an open-and-shut case. You will not be spared. You and your mother will be caught with the proceeds of crime and sent to jail," he said at a press conference at the BJP headquarters.

Both Rahul Gandhi and his mother Sonia Gandhi will go behind bars in connection with the case, he asserted. "You are a traitor, not just because you insult Indian institutions and Indian

democracy on foreign soil but also because you and your mother embezzled crores of rupees of the country in the National Herald case. You and your mother will not be able to get away with this," Patra said. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) recently filed a chargesheet against Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi and others before a special court in New Delhi in the National Herald case, accusing them of allegedly laundering Rs 988 crore. The prosecution complaint filed on April 9, under various sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), named Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi as accused no 1 and 2, respectively. Slamming Gandhi's questioning of the BJP-led Mahayuti alliance's sweeping victory in the Maharashtra Assembly polls, Patra asked,

"In the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the BJP won 240 seats and the Congress 99. The Congress was then calling the results its victory and the BJP's defeat. Was the EC compromised then?" Though Rahul Gandhi is the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, he is actually a "leader with no position" in his own party and in the eyes of the country's people, Patra said. "With their votes, people are saying that he is a leader with no position. He is incapable and politically unfit, who always takes the crutches of false allegations to prove that he is a leader. What he has been doing in the US and other countries are the result of his frustration with his failures," he said. Rahul Gandhi should contest elections from some other country if he is not able to do politics in India, he added.

Marathi, Hindi, and the Politics of Preference in Maharashtra

Sabyasachi K.

New Delhi, (HS) : The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, approved by the Centre, has sparked a wave of debates across various states, with language being one of the most contested aspects. One of the recent flashpoints is Maharashtra, where the state government's decision to make Hindi a compulsory subject in Marathi and English medium schools has stirred controversy. The move has drawn criticism from opposition parties, who accuse the government of attempting to impose Hindi and marginalize regional languages. However, a closer look at the situation reveals that the debate may be more political than pedagogical, and possibly even unnecessary.

Under the NEP, Maharashtra has begun implementing the three-language formula from classes 1 to 5. This formula has existed in upper classes for years but is now being expanded to the primary level. As per the new rules, in Marathi and English medium schools,



Marathi and English will remain compulsory, while Hindi will be introduced as the third language. In schools that use other languages as the medium of instruction - a minority in the state - Marathi and English will serve as the other two compulsory languages. This formula is not new and has been in practice in various forms across the country. In Maharashtra, Hindi has long been the preferred third language in

schools, largely due to its similarities with Marathi in script and structure. Both use the Devanagari script, which makes Hindi relatively easier for Marathi-speaking students to learn. It is also more convenient for teachers already familiar with Marathi. Most schools already offer Hindi as the third language, and alternatives are rarely presented. The criticism against the decision, particularly from leaders of the

Shiv Sena (UBT), Congress, and NCP factions, does not fundamentally oppose the three-language policy. Rather, the opposition is directed at what they perceive as the "imposition" of Hindi. They argue that the state government is promoting Hindi at the cost of Marathi, even though Marathi remains a compulsory subject under the policy.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and his cabinet have defended the decision, stating that Marathi's place as the state's primary language remains untouched. They also argue that the implementation merely formalizes what is already a ground reality in most schools across Maharashtra. In truth, Hindi already enjoys significant prominence in various regions of the state. In areas like Vidarbha and Marathwada, Hindi is often the primary spoken language, and in cosmopolitan Mumbai, Hindi or English tends to be the default language in interactions with strangers. Parents of children in English medium schools also tend to prefer Hindi

over other Indian languages due to its wider utility in daily life and media. Given this context, the controversy seems disproportionate to the actual impact of the policy. The opposition's argument appears to be rooted more in identity politics than educational concerns. On the other hand, the state government's move to "make compulsory" what is already the norm could have been communicated more thoughtfully to avoid stoking linguistic anxieties.

Ultimately, the debate over Hindi in Maharashtra seems to be less about education and more about political posturing. With local body elections on the horizon, both sides may be using language to evoke emotional responses from voters. While the preservation of regional languages is essential, turning educational policy into a political battleground does little to serve students or the broader public interest. What's needed is a balanced approach that respects linguistic diversity while also promoting multilingualism, as envisioned by the NEP.

Former Police Chief Found Dead in Home

Bengaluru, (HS) : Karnataka's former police chief Om Prakash was found dead at his Bengaluru home on Sunday. He was 68. There was blood everywhere on the floor where his body - which had injuries - was found, the police said. His wife, Pallavi, and daughter were in the house at the time of the incident, sources said. The police control room received a call from another person, informing about the body, sources said. The police have started questioning Pallavi and her daughter. He lived on the ground floor of his three-storey house in Bengaluru's HSR Layout. The police said they suspect the involvement of a family member, news agency PTI reported. The body has been sent for autopsy. Om Prakash was an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the 1981-batch. He was appointed Director General of Police in March 2015. Before that, he also headed Fire and Emergency Services, and Home Guards.

China's Big Warning For Countries Signing Trade Deals with US

Beijing, (H.S): China has warned other countries against making a broader trade deal with the United States at Beijing's expense, ratcheting up its rhetoric in a spiralling tariff war between the world's two biggest economies. China's warning came amid reports about the Trump administration's plan to pressure nations seeking tariff negotiations from the US to curb trade with China.

While the US President Donald Trump slapped the rest of the world with a blanket 10 per cent tariff, China faces levies of up to 145 per cent on many products. Beijing has also responded with duties of 125 per cent on US goods. The Trump administration has said that a number of countries are now engaged in negotiations with the United States to lower tariffs. But on Monday, China's



Commerce Ministry said it "firmly opposes" other countries making broader economic deals with America that compromise its interests."

Appeasement will not bring peace and compromise will not be respected," a spokesperson for Beijing's commerce ministry said in a statement. "To seek one's own temporary selfish interests at the expense of others' interests is to seek the skin of a tiger,"

Beijing said. That approach, it warned, "will ultimately fail on both ends and harm others". "China firmly opposes any party reaching a deal at the expense of China's interests," the spokesperson said.

If such a situation occurs, China will never accept it and will resolutely take reciprocal countermeasures," they added. Beijing also slammed Washington for "abusing" tariffs on all trading

partners under the "banner of so-called 'equivalence', while also forcing all parties to start so-called 'reciprocal tariffs' negotiations with them." China is determined and capable of safeguarding its own rights and interests, and is willing to strengthen solidarity with all parties, the ministry said. US President Trump's tariff blitz has seen Washington and Beijing impose eye-watering duties on imports from the other,

fanning a standoff between the economic superpowers that has sparked global recession fears and sent markets into a tailspin. Recently, citing sources, Bloomberg reported that the Trump administration is preparing to pressure nations seeking tariff reductions or exemptions from the US to curb trade with China, including imposing monetary sanctions.

Trump has also said that the United States was in talks with China on tariffs, adding that he was confident the world's largest economies could make a deal to end the bitter trade war. "Yeah, we're talking to China...I would say they have reached out a number of times," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office on Thursday. "I think we're going to make a very good deal with China."

China has vowed to fight a trade war "to the end" and has not confirmed that it is in talks with Washington, though it has called for dialogue. It has slammed what it calls "unilateralism and protectionism" by the United States -- and warned about an international order reverting to the "law of the jungle". "Where the strong prey on the weak, all countries will become victims," Beijing said Monday.

Russia Repels Ukrainian Attacks Amid Easter Truce

Moscow, (H.S): The Russian Defence Ministry said on Sunday that it repelled Ukrainian attacks overnight amid a unilateral Easter truce declared by Russian President Vladimir Putin, while Ukraine accused Russia of violating the ceasefire. The Ministry said Russian troops "remained at previously occupied lines and positions" while Ukrainian troops "attempted to attack the positions of Russian troops" in the Donetsk region overnight, Xinhua news agency reported. The Ministry was referring to the villages of Sukha Balka and Bagatyr in the Russian-held part of the eastern Donetsk region. Moscow said Ukraine also attacked the Bryansk, Kursk and Belgorod border regions of Russia, saying that "as a result there are dead and wounded civilians".

It added that Ukrainian forces had fired at Russian positions 444 times and counted more than 900 Ukrainian drone attacks. Meanwhile, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Sunday that 26 Russian assault actions have taken place from 12 a.m. on Saturday) to noon, accusing Russia of violating its self-declared ceasefire. Putin said the truce starts from 6 p.m. local time on Saturday and lasts until midnight on Sunday into Monday. When announcing the truce on Saturday, Putin told troops to respond militarily to any violation of the truce.

Zelensky said Ukraine would comply with the truce but that troops would also respond "symmetrically" to any attacks. On Sunday, Zelensky said Russian attacks were ongoing. The Russian Defence Ministry accused Ukraine of launching "48 drones including one in Crimea", annexed by Russia in 2014. Ukrainian units "444 times shelled... the positions of our troops and carried out 900 strikes with drones", the Ministry added.

Gurdwara In Canada Vandalised With Pro-Khalistan Graffiti

Toronto, (H.S): A prominent gurdwara in Vancouver, Canada, was vandalised with pro-Khalistan graffiti overnight, sparking outrage among the local Sikh community. The incident occurred at the Khalsa Diwan Society (KDS) gurdwara, commonly known as the Ross Street gurdwara. The gurdwara administration shared images on its official X,

showing the word "Khalistan" spray-painted in several locations along the wall surrounding the temple's parking lot. The vandalism came to light on Saturday morning - the same day as Surrey hosted what is considered the largest Vaisakhi parade in the world. The Vancouver Police Department is currently investigating the incident, according to Canadian media reports. In a statement, the KDS condemned the act, describing it as a deliberate attempt to spread fear and division within the community. "A small group of Sikh separatists, advocating for Khalistan, defaced



our sacred walls with divisive slogans like 'Khalistan Zindabad'," the gurdwara said. "This act is part of an ongoing campaign by extremist forces that seek to instil fear and division within the Canadian Sikh community. Their actions undermine the values of inclusivity, respect, and mutual support that are foundational to both Sikhism and Canadian society," it added.

The gurdwara noted the painful timing of the act, which occurred as the community gathered to celebrate Khalsa Sajna Diwas, a day symbolising unity and resilience in Sikh history. "These extremists are undermining the dreams and sacrifices of our elders, who worked tirelessly to build a thriving community in a

country that celebrates diversity and freedom," the statement read. "Their actions seek to divide us, contrary to the unity and peace we hold dear as Canadians. We cannot - and will not - let these forces of division succeed," it further read.

KDS had held its own Vaisakhi parade in Vancouver the previous weekend and had prohibited pro-Khalistan groups from participating in the event. Meanwhile, the KDS gurdwara spokesperson Jag Sanghera told CTV News that the vandalism was "extensive." Established in 1906, the Ross Street Gurdwara is one of the oldest and most significant Sikh institutions in Canada.

Hezbollah Member Killed In Israeli Airstrike on Lebanon

Beirut/Jerusalem, (H.S): A Hezbollah member was killed and another injured on Sunday when an Israeli drone struck a vehicle in the southern Lebanese municipality of Kaoutariyet Al Siyad, according to Lebanese sources. "The drone targeted a car on the eastern road of Kaoutariyet Al Siyad. Ambulances rushed to the scene amid heavy flights of Israeli warplanes and drones over the area,"

Lebanon's official National News Agency reported. The Lebanese Health Ministry's Public Health Emergency Operations Centre confirmed one death and one injury, Xinhua news agency reported. Meanwhile, a Lebanese security source revealed to Xinhua that the deceased was Hussein Nasr, a Hezbollah member from the town of Harouf, adding that another person was "seriously wounded". The Israeli military later claimed responsibility, identifying Nasr as the deputy head of Hezbollah's Unit 4400,



which it described as managing weapons smuggling operations. According to the Israeli side, Nasr coordinated with Iranian operatives and airport personnel to transfer weapons and funds through Beirut International Airport,

oversaw procurement along the Syria-Lebanon border, and played a key role in Hezbollah's military build-up. Separately, the Lebanese army announced it had seized "several rockets and their designated launch platforms" after raiding an apartment in the

Saida-Zahrani area of southern Lebanon following intelligence about an imminent rocket launch toward Israel. Several suspects were arrested in the operation. Despite a ceasefire agreement in effect since November 27, 2024,

Israeli forces have conducted intermittent strikes inside Lebanon, claiming they target Hezbollah "threats". Some strikes have resulted in casualties, according to Lebanese officials. Israel has also maintained a presence on five hilltops along the Lebanese

border despite ceasefire provisions requiring withdrawal. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun reiterated on Sunday that "the Lebanese Armed Forces must become the sole authority responsible for carrying weapons and defending Lebanon's sovereignty and independence". However, he acknowledged that while the decision to implement weapons restrictions had been made, it was necessary to "wait for the appropriate circumstances, which will determine how it is carried out".

Any internal dispute in Lebanon must be addressed through dialogue, communication, and a reconciliatory - not confrontational - approach," Aoun added. His remarks came a day after Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem rejected calls for the group to disarm, calling such efforts a "delusion" that would serve Israeli interests. Hezbollah's military autonomy has long divided Lebanese politics.

Trump Planning Another Strike on Harvard? \$1 Billion Funding May Be Slashed

Washington, (H.S): The Trump administration is reportedly planning another financial strike on Harvard University following a week of escalating fireworks between the two sides after America's wealthiest educational institution refused to follow the government's diktat on campus administration. In the past week, the administration has launched an all-around attack on Harvard's financial stability by freezing

billions in federal funds, and with threats of potentially revoking its non-profit tax status and its ability to enroll foreign students. In the latest threat, US President Donald Trump's administration is planning to slash another \$1 billion in federal grants and contracts for health research to Harvard, the Wall Street Journal reported on Sunday. The new cuts will add to the existing \$2.2 billion funding

revocation announced last week. The new threats came after Harvard's president, Alan Garber, publicly rejected the set of demands issued by the White House last Friday. The Trump administration is "furious with Harvard University" over Garber's action, as the government thought the long list of demands sent to Harvard was a "confidential starting point for negotiations," WSJ reported,

citing two anonymous sources. Harvard's move to not keep the demands private is being touted by some in the White House as a reason to take a more aggressive approach to the university's funding, the report said. The confrontation with the government could cost as much as \$9 billion in federal money for Harvard. But, beyond the implications of losing those funds, it's not clear how far the

standoff could go. With an endowment of more than \$50 billion, Harvard is perhaps the best-positioned university to push back on the administration's pressure campaign. In a letter to Harvard on Friday, Trump's administration had called for broad government and leadership reforms at Harvard, as well as changes to its admissions policies. It also demanded that the university audit views of

diversity on campus and stop recognising some student clubs. On Monday, Harvard President Alan Garber said the university would not bend to the government's demands. "The University will not surrender its independence or relinquish its constitutional rights," Garber said in a letter to the Harvard community. "No government - regardless of which party is in power - should dictate what

private universities can teach, whom they can admit and hire, and which areas of study and inquiry they can pursue." Hours later, the government froze billions in Harvard's federal funding. The announcement comes just days after the New York Times reported that the Friday demands had been sent to Harvard erroneously and without approval. The White House stood by the demands.

69 Per Cent of Gaza Under Israeli Displacement Orders: UN Agency



Gaza, (H.S): The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) said that 69 per cent of the Gaza Strip is under active Israeli displacement orders. The Israeli army issued at least 20 displacement orders between March 18 and April 14, UNRWA said in a press statement on Sunday, adding that the agency "currently operates 115 shelters across Gaza, housing more than 90,000 displaced people." Some 420,000 people have been displaced again since the ceasefire collapsed on March 18, it said, warning that the already dire humanitarian situation in Gaza is worsening due to Israeli shelling and the seven-week-long aid blockade. UNRWA stressed the need for an early ceasefire, the release of all hostages, and the unfettered flow of humanitarian aid and commercial supplies into Gaza, Xinhua news agency reported. Israel has blocked the entry of all humanitarian aid into Gaza since March 2. It then ended a two-month ceasefire with Hamas on March 18 and resumed deadly air and ground assaults on the enclave. Meanwhile, at least 29 Palestinians were killed in Israeli attacks on Gaza on Sunday, according to the Civil Defence in Gaza. In central Gaza, 10 people were killed and some others wounded by an Israeli airstrike on a residential house in the Nuseirat refugee camp, Mahmoud Basal, spokesperson for the Civil Defence, told Xinhua. In southern Gaza, a Palestinian woman was killed and four others wounded in an Israeli drone attack on a tent housing displaced people in the Al-Mawasi area in Khan Younis city, and four others were killed in another two separate Israeli attacks on the city, Basal said. The renewed Israeli attacks have so far killed 1,827 Palestinians and injured 4,828 others, Gaza health authorities said Sunday, adding the death toll in the enclave since the war began in October 2023 has risen to 51,201, with 116,869 injured.

Protestors Block Train, Road Routes In Sindh Against Pakistan Govt's Canals Project

Islamabad, (H.S): A large number of protestors blocked Railway traffic near Khairpur city in Pakistan's Sindh province, cutting off all routes towards the Punjab province, as part of their ongoing demonstration against the government's plans to build at least six new canals on the Indus River. The Pakistani government's Cholistan project to irrigate South Punjab's lands has triggered nationwide protests by political parties, including its coalition partner, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), which has expressed strong reservations against the project and warned of toppling the Shehbaz Sharif government if the proposed project is not cancelled.

On Sunday, a large number of protestors and activists from some nationalist parties extended their ongoing protest and blocked train traffic near Khairpur city. Protestors and political party leaders in Sindh province have been staging massive public gatherings and protest sit-ins and slamming the Shehbaz Sharif government, along with its coalition partners PPP, for what they call a conspiracy to turn Sindh's fertile land into a desert. The nationwide protests against the canals project were also supported by the lawyers' community, who staged their sit-in protest, in the Sindh province



for the third consecutive day. In the latest protest, the train tracks were later restored after being blocked for several hours by the protestors. However, the protests and ongoing rallies against the project have paralysed the whole province.

Shutter down protests have been reported in major cities and town including Jamshoro, Larkana, Naushehro Feroz, Sujawal, Nawabshah, and Ghotki. The protests have disrupted traffic between Sindh and Punjab province as roads and the National Highway has been blocked at several places. "In Larkana, shopkeepers, petrol pumps, and markets remained closed, while business activities have come to

a complete halt in Ratodero, Baqrani, Dokri and Badah. Commercial activities in Jamshoro and Nawabshah are suspended, while similar reports are coming from Sujawal, Kandhkot, Shahdadkot, Kashmore, and other districts where markets and other public services have been shut down,"

said Hanif Shamon, a resident of Mithi, Tharparker district of Sindh. "People believe that this is the biggest agitation in the history of Sindh. All roads leading to Punjab and other regions have been blocked for the past three days due to protest sit-ins against irrigation canals. Massive protests have erupted in most parts of Sindh," he added. These

protests surfaced after Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif inaugurated the Cholistan project on February 15, 2025. Immediately after the launch of the project, strong reservations and concerns were raised by the Sindh provincial government of PPP, which passed a unanimous resolution against the project in March. Since then, nationwide protests by political parties including PPP, PTI and others have been witnessed, with voices against the contentious project titled 'Green Pakistan Initiative (GPI)' becoming louder with protests intensifying with every passing day.

The \$3.3 billion GPI launched by the government aims to develop six canals to irrigate at least 1.2 million acres of barren land in South Punjab. PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has given an open warning and threat to the federal government under the ruling party Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) to not go down the path of confrontation with Sindh over the issue of new canals on the Indus River. "I want to make it clear that our party will not go along with the federal government if it does not shelve the controversial project, even after acknowledging PPP's objections," said Bilawal

Bhutto Zardari. On the other hand, the government has finally decided to resolve the contentious canals project issue through dialogue as PML-N's founder and former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and present PM Shehbaz Sharif directed ministers to have table talks with PPP over the matter. "Premier Shehbaz Sharif and PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif have instructed me to alleviate Sindh's concerns regarding the canal issue. We believe in the fair distribution of resources, including water, among all units," said Rana Sanaullah, Advisor to the Prime Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination.

However, the opposition party, the PTI has accused the PPP of opposing the canal project in the open while secretly supporting the plan as it is part of the federal government. "PPP is a partner of the ruling government. Asif Ali Zardari is the president of Pakistan. And the president is supporting the canals project," said Haleem Adil Sheikh, provincial president of PTI in Sindh. "PPP cannot make a fool out of us all. We will not let anyone steal what is rightfully ours. The federal government and the Punjab government will fail. People of Sindh should get prepared for a big struggle against the canals project," he added.

IMF, World Bank See India's Potential as Engine of Global Trade: FM Sitharaman

San Francisco, (H.S): Finance Minister Niramala Sitharaman said on Monday that India has become the fastest-growing economy, driven by the "visionary leadership" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the stability provided by a continuing government. Addressing the Indian diaspora in the US, the Finance Minister said,

"When we say that India is the fastest-growing economy and when the IMF and World Bank recognise that India can be the engine driving global trade, what they are recognising is the immense potential that exists in India." Highlighting the steps to strengthen the Indian economy, Sitharaman said, "During the Covid-19 pandemic, our fiscal deficit went up. But in 2021, we came up with a clear signal as to how we wanted to manage our fiscal deficit. We set year-on-year



targets and committed to bringing the fiscal deficit below 4.5 per cent by 2026. And that's what we have been following each year without fail." She said the government's primary focus under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is achieving 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. This vision encompasses improvements across sectors impacting women, the impoverished, youth, and farmers. FM Sitharaman highlighted that India prioritises 'Sunrise Sectors' and stands out

as a leader in Digital Public Infrastructure, driving innovation and growth. She also said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi makes it a part of his every overseas visit to connect with the Indian diaspora because he thinks that it is important that India connects with each one of you who, located in whichever part of the world, are doing your best to contribute to the world and stand out as an example." Sitharaman is on a five-day visit to the United States. Upon her arrival in San

Francisco, she was received by Indian Ambassador Vinay Mohan Kwatra. During the visit, she is slated to deliver a keynote speech at Stanford University and hold discussions with CEOs in San Francisco on investment and technological advancements. The visit will also include participation in diaspora events, enhancing India's global cultural presence.

In Washington DC, Sitharaman will attend the IMF and World Bank Spring Meetings, and the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meetings. She will also hold bilateral talks on the sidelines with counterparts from the US, the UK, France, Germany, Saudi Arabia, and other countries, as well as top officials from international financial institutions. After completing her US trip, Sitharaman will travel to Peru for a visit from April 26 to 30.

Core Sector Industries Clock 3.8 Per Cent Growth In March



New Delhi, (H.S): The combined index of eight core industries increased by 3.8 per cent in March 2025, as compared to the same month of the previous year, according to data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry on Monday. The production of cement, fertilisers, steel, electricity, coal, and refinery products recorded a positive growth in March this year.

The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) and are an indicator of the overall industrial growth. The final growth rate of the index of eight core industries for December 2024 has been revised to 5.1 per cent. The cumulative growth rate of the ICI from April to March 2024-25 now works out to 4.4 per cent as compared to the corresponding period of last year. Fertiliser production increased by a robust 8.8 per cent in March this year over the

same month of the previous year as the agriculture sector picked up growth momentum with a better monsoon and higher MSP earnings for farmers. The cumulative index for fertilisers increased by 2.9 per cent during April to March, 2024-25, over the same period of the previous year.

Steel production rose by 7.1 per cent in March over the same month of the previous year on the back of higher construction activity and investment in big infrastructure projects. The growth in steel output for April to March now works out

to 6.7 per cent over the corresponding period of the previous year. Cement production posted a robust double digit growth of 11.6 per cent in March, while its growth during April to March is at 6.3 per cent over the corresponding period of the previous year. Electricity generation increased by 6.2 per cent in March this year with its cumulative growth between April-March working out to 5.1 per cent during April to March, 2024-25.

Coal production rose by 1.6 per cent in March, over the same month of the previous year, while its cumulative index increased by 5.1 per cent during April to March, 2024-25 over the corresponding period of the previous year. Natural Gas production declined by 12.7 per cent in March compared to the same month of the previous year, while Petroleum Refinery Products recorded a 0.2 per cent increase during the month.

Gold Hits New Record High Of 96,805, May Touch 1 Lakh Mark Soon



New Delhi, (H.S): Gold prices in India touched a new record high of Rs 96,805 per 10 grams on Monday on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) as rising fears over a global trade war and weakness in the US dollar pushed investors towards the yellow metal. Around 1:30 pm, the 'MCX Gold June 5' contract was trading 1.65 per cent higher at Rs 96,830 per 10 grams. Spot gold prices in India also surged. According to the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA), the fine gold (999 purity) was priced at Rs 9,659 per gram, while 22-carat gold stood at Rs 9,427. The rates for 20-carat and 18-carat were Rs 8,596 and Rs 7,824 per gram, respectively. The sharp rally in domestic prices mirrored international trends, where spot gold also hit a new all-time high of \$3,384 per ounce. Investors across the world are seeking safe-haven assets due to the growing tensions between the United States and China. Another factor supporting gold prices is the weakening of the US dollar.

The dollar index hit a three-year low, making gold more attractive for investors holding other currencies. Since gold is priced in dollars, a weaker dollar makes it cheaper for buyers in other countries - boosting its demand. In the previous trading session, MCX gold had slipped 0.44 per cent to Rs 95,239 per 10 grams due to profit booking. However, the ongoing concerns over a possible prolonged trade war triggered fresh buying at lower levels. "Gold prices continued their positive momentum and have risen briefly above \$3,400 per ounce. Uncertainty around trade tariffs, a weaker US dollar, and rising US bond yields are keeping bullion prices strong," said Pranav Mer of JM Financial Services Limited. He added that buying interest from exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and upcoming festive demand in India are also lending support to gold prices. "Traders will also keep an eye on the ongoing trade talks between the US and its major partners like Japan, the Eurozone, and China, which could give more clarity to the market direction," Mer added. On the technical front, gold prices now hold support at Rs 95,550 and then at Rs 94,200, while the next resistance levels are seen at Rs 97,580 and Rs 98,200, Mer mentioned.

Index of Eight core Industries (base: 2011-12=100) for March, 2025

New Delhi, (PIB): The combined Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) increased by 3.8 per cent (provisional) in March, 2025 as compared to the Index in March, 2024. The production of Cement, Fertilizers, Steel, Electricity, Coal and Refinery Products recorded positive growth in March, 2025. The details of annual indices, monthly indices and growth rates are provided at Annex I and Annex II.

The ICI measures the combined and individual performance of production of eight core industries viz. Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Electricity. The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 percent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). The final growth rate of Index of Eight Core Industries for December 2024 was observed at 5.1 per cent.

The cumulative growth rate of ICI during April to March, 2024-25 is 4.4 per cent (provisional) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The summary of the Index of Eight Core Industries is given below: Coal - Coal production (weight: 10.33 per cent) increased by 1.6 per cent in March, 2025 over March, 2024. Its cumulative index increased by 5.1 per cent during April to March, 2024-25

over corresponding period of the previous year. Crude Oil - Crude Oil production (weight: 8.98 per cent) declined by 1.9 per cent in March, 2025 over March, 2024. Its cumulative index declined by 2.2 per cent during April to March, 2024-25 over corresponding period of the previous year. Natural Gas - Natural Gas production (weight: 6.88 per cent) declined by 12.7 per cent in March, 2025 over March, 2024.

Its cumulative index declined by 1.2 per cent during April to March, 2024-25 over corresponding period of the previous year. Petroleum Refinery Products - Petroleum Refinery production (weight: 28.04 per cent) increased by 0.2 per cent in March, 2025 over March, 2024. Its cumulative index increased by 2.8 per cent during April to March, 2024-25 over corresponding period of the previous year.

Fertilizers - Fertilizer production (weight: 2.63 per cent) increased by 8.8 per cent in March, 2025 over March, 2024. Its cumulative index increased by 2.9 per cent during April to March, 2024-25 over corresponding period of the previous year. Steel - Steel production (weight: 17.92 per cent) increased by 7.1 per cent in March, 2025 over March, 2024. Its cumulative index increased by 6.7 per cent during April to

March, 2024-25 over corresponding period of the previous year. Cement - Cement production (weight: 5.37 per cent) increased by 11.6 per cent in March, 2025 over March, 2024. Its cumulative index increased by 6.3 per cent during April to March, 2024-25 over corresponding period of the previous year.

Electricity - Electricity generation (weight: 19.85 per cent) increased by 6.2 per cent in March, 2025 over March, 2024. Its cumulative index increased by 5.1 per cent during April to March, 2024-25 over corresponding period of the previous year. Data for January, 2025, February, 2025 and March, 2025 are provisional. Index numbers of Core Industries are revised/finalized as per updated data from source agencies. Since April 2014, Electricity generation data from Renewable sources are also included.

The industry-wise weights indicated above are individual industry weights derived from IIP and blown up on pro rata basis to a combined weight of ICI equal to 100. Since March 2019, a new steel product called Hot Rolled Pickled and Oiled (HRPO) under the item 'Cold Rolled (CR) coils' within the production of finished steel has also been included. Release of the index for April, 2025 will be on Tuesday, 20th May, 2025.



of 'Viksit Bharat' by the year 2047 and making India the third economy of the world. He attributed this historic achievement to the inspiration of Pujya Bapu, the guarantee of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the guidance of the Ministry of MSME and the tireless hard work of crores of artisans working in the remote villages of the Country.

Chairman KVIC shared that while the production of Khadi and Village Industry products was Rs. 26109.07 crore in the financial year 2013-14, it increased nearly four times to Rs. 116599.75 crore in the financial year 2024-25 with a jump of 347 percent. While the sales were Rs. 31154.19 crore in the financial year 2013-14, it increased nearly fivefold with an unprecedented growth of 447 percent to reach Rs. 170551.37 crore in the financial year 2024-25, which is the highest sale till date. Speaking to the media, he opined that unprecedented growth has also

been observed in the production of Khadi clothes in the last 11 years. While the production of Khadi clothes was Rs. 811.08 crore in the financial year 2013-14, it increased by 366 percent and increased four and a half times to Rs. 3783.36 crore in the financial year 2024-25, which is the best performance till date. There has also been a tremendous jump in the sales of Khadi clothes. While its sale was only Rs. 1081.04 crore in the financial year 2013-14, it increased by about six and a half times to Rs. 7145.61 crore in the financial year 2024-25 with an increase of 561 percent.

The promotion of Khadi by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi from a larger platform has had a huge impact on the sale of Khadi clothes, he reiterated. Speaking on objective of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission he said that major objective of KVIC is to provide maximum employment opportunities in rural areas. In this area too, KVIC has set a

record in the last 11 years. While the cumulative employment was 1.30 crore in the financial year 2013-14, it rose to 1.94 crore in 2024-25 with an increase of 49.23 per cent. There has also been an unprecedented increase in the business of Khadi and Village Industries Bhawan, New Delhi. While the business of Bhawan was Rs. 51.02 crore in the financial year 2013-14, it increased by almost 2 times and reached Rs 110.01 crore in the financial year 2024-25 with a jump of 115 percent.

Since the launch of the Pradhan Mantri Employment Generation Program (PMEGP) scheme, a total of 1018185 units have been established, for which the Government of India has distributed margin money subsidy of Rs. 27166.07 crore against a loan of Rs. 73348.39 crore. So far 90,04,541 people are getting employment through PMEGP.

He said that with the aim of providing employment to maximum number of people in rural areas under the Gramodyog Vikas Yojana Scheme, KVIC has more than doubled the budget of Rs 25.65 crore in the financial year 2021-22 by 134 percent to Rs. 60 crore in the financial year 2025-26. So far, 39244 electric pottery wheels, 227049 bee boxes and honey colonies, 2344 automatic and pedal-operated incense stick manufacturing machines, 7735 footwear

Bulls Return As Market Cap of BSE-Listed Firms Crosses \$5 Trillion Again

Mumbai, (H.S): After facing pressure due to global uncertainties, Indian stock markets rebounded strongly as the total market capitalisation of all companies listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has once again crossed the \$5 trillion mark. The last time BSE-listed companies' market cap touched \$5 trillion was on January 20. However, a subsequent market correction dragged the figure down to \$4.39 trillion by February 28. With the latest rally, the total market cap has recovered and hit

the \$5 trillion milestone once again on April 21, according to latest Bloomberg data. Currently, the United States, Japan and Hong Kong are among the countries that have stock markets with a total market capitalisation of over \$5 trillion. The sharp correction earlier this month was triggered by US President Donald Trump's announcement of reciprocal tariffs, which had a ripple effect across global markets, including India. On April 7, the combined market cap of BSE-listed companies had slipped to \$4.5 trillion. However, with the ongoing recovery, markets have gained back around

\$500 billion in value. Meanwhile, the Indian equity markets continued its strong rally for the fifth day in a row on Monday, as investors showed heavy buying interest in banking, IT, and auto stocks. The Sensex surged 855 points, or 1.09 per cent, to close at 79,408.50, while the Nifty jumped 273 points, or 1.15 per cent, to end at 24,125. These included prominent names like AIA Engineering, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Bharti Airtel, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, IndiGo, and Kotak Mahindra Bank.

EPFO adds 16.1 lakh members in February as employment rises



New Delhi, (PIB): The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) on Monday announced a net addition of 16.10 lakh members in February this year. The year-on-year analysis reveals a growth of 3.99 per cent in net payroll additions compared to the same month last year, reflecting increased employment opportunities and heightened awareness of employee benefits, bolstered by the EPFO's effective outreach initiatives, according to an official statement.

The figures further showed that the EPFO enrolled around 7.39 lakh new subscribers in February 2025, with a dominance of the young 18-25 age group. As many as 4.27 lakh new subscribers were added in this age group, constituting a significant 57.71 per cent of the total new subscribers added in the month. This is in consonance with the earlier trend, which

indicates that most individuals joining the organised workforce are youth, getting into their first jobs. Further, the net payroll addition for the age group 18-25 for February 2025 is approximately 6.78 lakh. This represents a growth of 3.01 per cent from the same month last year, the statement said. Approximately 13.18 lakh members, who had exited earlier, rejoined the EPFO in February 2025. This figure depicts a significant 11.85 per cent year-

over-year growth compared to February 2024. These members switched their jobs and re-joined the establishments covered under the ambit of the EPFO and opted to transfer their accumulations instead of applying for final settlement, thus safeguarding long-term financial well-being and extending their social security protection, the statement said. Around 2.08 lakhs new female subscribers joined EPFO in February 2025. It depicts year-over-year growth of 1.26 per cent

compared to the same month of the previous year. Further, the net female payroll addition during the month stood at around 3.37 lakh, a significant year-over-year growth of 9.23 per cent compared to February 2024. The growth in female member additions is indicative of a broader shift towards a more inclusive and diverse workforce, according to the statement.

State-wise analysis of payroll data denotes that the top five states/UTs constitute around 59.75 per cent of net payroll addition, adding a total of around 9.62 lakh net payroll during the month. Of all the states, Maharashtra leads all the states with the addition of 20.9 per cent of net payroll during the month. The states/UTs of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, Haryana, Delhi, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh individually added more than 5 per cent of the total net payroll during the month.



Nushratt opens up on not getting roles like Sonakshi, Shraddha despite delivering hits

Nushratt Bharuccha highlighted the challenges faced by non-industry individuals in networking and accessing opportunities. Bollywood actor Nushratt Bharuccha began her career with a lead role in the film *Jai Santoshi Maa*. She then went on to deliver hits such as *Pyaar Ka PUNCHNA* and *Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweetie*, among others. In a recent interview with Shubhankar Mishra, the actor spoke about how, despite her successful films, she still struggled to get roles. Sonakshi Sinha made her debut alongside Salman Khan in *Dabangg*, which proved to be a major box-office success. Shraddha Kapoor debuted in the industry with *Teen Patti*, which turned out to be a flop. However, their career graphs have continued to rise in comparison to Nushratt's. When asked about this, she said, "They definitely have an advantage. They know the industry, they know the people. And if they don't, their parents do. So what happens is, they reach places I cannot. They can knock on doors

I may not even know the address of. If I want to meet a director, who's going to give me his number? Where should I even ask for the director's address? This is a very practical problem - but it's a real one." She further spoke about how, after *Pyaar Ka PUNCHNA*, she had wanted to contact a director but couldn't get his number or address.

"At that time, I messaged Kabir Khan for work, and he replied and agreed to meet - that

made my month. It's so difficult to get a director's number or set up a meeting. It's a very tough road for people who are not from the industry. I don't like calling them 'nepo kids' because they have their own struggles - but yes, they get inroads that we don't. That may have been the harder route for me. I value the people who want to work with me. I hold them close like family. I would have liked a lot more opportunities - more 'yes' than 'no's'. But I'm still very happy with the films I've got," Nushratt recalled. Nushratt is currently busy promoting her film *Chhorii 2*. The horror film, directed by Vishal Furia, is the sequel to the 2021 film *Chhorii*. It also stars Soha Ali Khan in her acting comeback, along with Gashmeer Mahajani and Hardika Sharma in lead roles. The story revolves around Sakshi (Nushratt), who goes to extreme lengths to save her daughter Ishaani (Hardika) from supernatural forces. The film is available to stream on Amazon Prime Video.

Chhaava is 2nd Bollywood film to cross 600 cr. mark

Chhaava, starring Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna, is on a record-breaking spree. Based on the life of Maratha warrior Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, son of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the historical drama has stormed past 600 crore mark in India. After *Pushpa 2* and *Stree 2*, *Chhaava* has become the third film to achieve this milestone. It is the second Bollywood movie (originally in Hindi) to hit the mark. Vicky's father, Sham Kaushal, who is also a celebrated action director in Bollywood, thanked the fans for their support in making the film, a blockbuster. It is interesting to note that while the other films relied also on the popularity of their franchise to bring people to the theaters, Laxman Utekar directed *Chhaava* knocked it out of the park with strong characterisation, impressive cinematography and outstanding performances. However, the figures on Sacnilk.com



still do not show it has crossed 600 crore nett. Sham posted a poster from the film and wrote, "600 NOT OUT, *Chhaava* storms past the 600 Crore mark. After *Pushpa 2* Hindi and *Stree 2*, *Chhaava* becomes the third film to achieve this milestone. ALL-TIME BLOCKBUSTER. Shukar Rab da te sab da for giving so much love to CHHAAVA."

Rani Mukerji's first look in Mardaani 3, release in 2026



After the success of the first two instalments, Rani Mukerji is all set to entertain fans once again

as fearless cop Shivani Shivaji Roy in the upcoming film *Mardaani 3*. The makers of the film have released her first look and the film's release date.

On Monday, YRF took to Instagram and shared the first look of Rani as the fearless cop in *Mardaani 3*. The actor is seen wearing a black shirt, paired with blue denims and black boots, holding a gun and pointing it towards the camera. Along with the poster, the makers also revealed the release date of the film. "The countdown begins for #Mardaani3! On Holi, good will fight evil as Shivani Shivaji Roy returns to the big screen on February 27, 2026," YRF wrote in the caption. Holi, which falls on 4th March 2026, symbolises the triumph of good over evil, and the makers are pegging this film as a bloody, violent clash between Shivani's righteousness and sinister forces, with their choice of release date reinforcing this theme.

Earlier, YRF shared another poster on Instagram. It features the film's title along with the names of director Abhiraj Minawala and producer Aditya Chopra. "The wait is over! Rani Mukerji is back as the fierce Shivani Shivaji Roy in *Mardaani3*. In cinemas 2026," read the text attached to the post.

Aamir says he plays a 'politically incorrect' role in Sitaare Zameen Par

Fans are eagerly awaiting to get an update on Aamir Khan's next release. The actor's next film is *Sitaare Zameen Par*, which is touted as the film's spiritual sequel. In an interaction with his China fan club, which was uploaded on X (formerly Twitter), Aamir spilled the beans on his character in the film.

During the interaction, Aamir said, "I am working on a film now [*Sitaare Zameen Par*] which is almost ready. It is the sequel of *Taare Zameen Par*. Thematically, it is going ten steps ahead. It is about people who are differently abled. It is about love, friendship and life. *Taare Zameen Par* made you cry but this film will make you laugh. It's a comedy but the theme is the same." He went on to add, "My character in *Taare Zameen Par* was Nikumbh, who is a very sensitive person. In this



film my character's name is Gulshan but his personality is exactly opposite to Nikumbh. He is not sensitive at all. He is very rude, politically incorrect and he insults everybody. He fights with his wife, mother. He is a basketball coach and he beats up his senior coach. He is a person with a lot of internal problems, and the story is how he changes with the film. How these people

in the spectrum teach him what it is to be a good human being."

He revealed that the film is a remake of the Spanish film *Champions*. *Sitaare Zameen Par* was announced in October 2023. It will star Aamir alongside Darshheel Safary and Genelia Deshmukh in the lead roles. RS Prasanna is the director of the sequel. An official release date is yet to be announced.

Central Contracts of BCCI

Rohit, Virat retained in top grade; Shreyas, Ishan back

New Delhi, (HS) : The BCCI on Monday retained megastars Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli in the top bracket of its annual players contract list, less than 24 hours after they played sublime knocks to win IPL games for their respective franchises. The out-of-favour duo of Shreyas Iyer and Ishan Kishan also returned to the fold in the lower brackets in a 34-strong list of centrally-contracted players, which also includes pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and Ravindra Jadeja in the highest-paid A+ category. Iyer and keeper-batter Ishan Kishan were dropped from the list last year for allegedly ignoring domestic cricket.

Both Rohit and Kohli figure in A+ category, but it remains to be seen if the Mumbai batter will be asked to lead the team in England in the upcoming five-Test series when his red ball form has been patchy. The BCCI mandarins are, however, tight-lipped on the issue since head coach Gautam Gambhir's view will also matter in taking a final decision. The BCCI offers contracts in four categories: A+, A, B and C with annual retainership valuation of Rs 7 crore, Rs 5 crore, Rs 3 crore and Rs 1 crore, respectively. It is learnt that national selectors, after discussion with head coach Gambhir and secretary Devajit Saikia, had prepared the contract list at least two weeks back but held back the announcement. Interestingly, it was announced hours after both veterans hit sparkling knocks, especially skipper Rohit, who was going through a lean patch. While Kohli hit an unbeaten 73-run knock against Punjab Kings, Rohit came up with an unbeaten 76-run knock against Chennai Super Kings. Iyer was included in the B category while wicketkeeper-batter Ishan Kishan made a comeback in category C. Rishabh Pant, who was demoted to category B during the 2023-24 season as he didn't play due to



BCCI central contracts list

A+ category: Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Jasprit Bumrah, Ravindra Jadeja

A category: Mohammed Siraj, KL Rahul, Shubman Gill, Hardik Pandya, Mohammed Shami, Rishabh Pant

B category: Suryakumar Yadav, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shreyas Iyer.

C category: Rinku Singh, Tilak Verma, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shivam Dube, Ravi Bishnoi, Washington Sundar, Mukesh Kumar, Sanju Samson, Arshdeep Singh, Prasidh Krishna, Rajat Patidar, Dhruv Jurel, Sarfaraz Khan, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Ishan Kishan, Abhishek Sharma, Akash Deep, Varun Chakaravathy, Harshit Rana.

his recovery from a life-threatening accident, is back in A category in place of the retired Ravichandran Ashwin.

The central contract is offered based on a player's performance in the year gone by. The A+ category is meant for all-format automatic choices. The A category is for players who are Test match certainities and also play the other two formats from time to time. The category B is for players who at least play two formats regularly and category C is for newcomers and one-format specialists. Many would question how Rohit, Kohli and Jadeja were retained in the A+ grade when the troika has already announced retirement from the shortest format? A top BCCI official explained the reasoning. "The period of the fresh central contract is from October 1, 2024

to September 30, 2025. But the assessment year is October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024. Kohli, Rohit and Jadeja played the T20 World Cup final in June, 2024 and hence at that time, they were all-format regulars. Going by that technicality, they are supposed to be in A+ category," the official PTI on condition of anonymity. "Similarly, Ishan (2 World Cup matches) and Shreyas played 15 ODIs and a handful Tests in the 2023-24 season and hence got their respective categories." Rishabh Pant was downgraded to 'B' from A in the last contract because he hadn't played any cricket during the year due to a life-threatening car accident. After he returned to action in 2024, Pant played regularly in at least two of the three formats and hence is back in

category 'A' in place of retired Ravichandran Ashwin. Suryakumar Yadav has been retained in grade B because in last year's list he was a two-format regular having played most games of ODI World Cup in 2023 and also regular T20 skipper. While there is not much change in terms of contracts offered in the top three categories, Grade C now has 19 players compared to 17 in the last list following the inclusion of Sarfaraz Khan and Dhruv Jurel.

The category C features new players such as Nitish Kumar Reddy and Harshit Rana, both of whom made their debuts between October and December 2024. A player has to play three Tests or 8 ODIs or 10 T20Is in a calendar year to qualify for a central contract. The lowest category has five new entrants in Harshit Rana, Varun Chakaravathy, Abhishek Sharma, Nitish Kumar Reddy and Akash Deep, who earlier had a fast bowling contract. The only notable name missing in the list is Mumbai all-rounder Shardul Thakur, who last played for India in the 2023 ODI World Cup game against Bangladesh in Pune. Fast bowler Avesh Khan, keeper-batters Kona Bharat and Jitesh Sharma have also been excluded from the list.

'I regret playing cricket': Azharuddin deeply pained

New Delhi, (HS) : Mohammad Azharuddin is heartbroken and pained after the Hyderabad Cricket Association decided to remove his name from a stand at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Uppal. Azharuddin, the former India captain, has called the move a disgrace, slamming the authority, and urged the BCCI to step in and look into the matter. The Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) received a formal directive to erase the name of Azharuddin from the North Pavilion Stand, following serious allegations of favoritism levelled against the former Indian cricket team captain. The order was issued on Saturday by Justice V Eswaraiah, who serves as the

Ethics Officer and Ombudsman for the HCA, in response to a petition that brought the matter to light. According to a report published by Cricbuzz, the action was prompted by a formal complaint lodged by Lord's Cricket Club, a local entity, which argued that Azharuddin, during his tenure as the president of the HCA, engaged in decision-making that demonstrated a clear conflict of interest, favouring his own interests. The petition specifically pointed to actions taken by Azharuddin that were perceived as self-serving, thereby undermining the principles of fairness and impartiality expected from someone in his position of authority.

Sports Hostel Sundargarh Clinches Title in 5-A-Side Girls' Inter-State Hockey Tournament Held in Jharsuguda

Jharsuguda, (DMC) : In a thrilling finale of the 5-a-side girls' inter-state hockey tournament held in Jharsuguda, Sports Hostel Sundargarh defeated SAI Hostel Sundargarh by 5-3 goals to clinch the championship title. The three-day tournament was organized under the aegis of the Jharsuguda District Hockey Association.

In the third-place decider, Dilip Tirkey Sports Academy, Jharsuguda secured victory

against Sports Hostel Panposh with a close 5-4 scoreline, claiming the third position. The champion team was awarded a trophy and a cash prize of 50,000, presented by Jharsuguda MLA Shri Tankadhar Tripathy, who graced the event as Chief Guest. The runner-up team, SAI Hostel Sundargarh, received a trophy and ₹30,000, presented by Ajay Pandey, Head of Vedanta Power Plant. Teams securing third and fourth



places - Dilip Tirkey Sports Academy and Panposh Hostel

- were awarded 10,000 each along with hockey sticks,

sponsored by State Bank of India and handed over by Awdh Kumar Pandey, Manager, MCL IB Valley. The closing ceremony was attended by several dignitaries including Sanatan Sahu, Secretary of Hockey Odisha; Subhadra Pradhan, former captain of the Indian women's hockey team; Brajabandhu Bhoi, Additional District Magistrate and Secretary of Jharsuguda Hockey Association; and Kalu Charan Chaudhury, former

coach of the Indian national team. Ritika Tiga from SAI Sports Hostel was felicitated for her outstanding individual performance during the tournament. Addressing the gathering, MLA Shri Tripathy assured that all possible support and cooperation will be extended for the promotion of sports in the district. He also appreciated Jeevan Mahanty, Vice President of Hockey Odisha and Tournament Coordinator, for

successfully organizing the championship.

A large crowd of spectators witnessed the final match, adding to the festive atmosphere. The tournament was strongly supported by Vedanta Aluminium, Jharsuguda, and the event's success was made possible by the dedicated efforts of Prajwal Patel, Sushant Behera, Clement Ronald, Ashwini Pandey, Ravi Narayan Pujari, Ganesh Nayak, and Prof. Tapan Barik.