



# 26 killed, over a dozen injured after terrorists attack tourists

**Pahalgam/New Delhi, (HS) :** Terrorists opened fire on a popular meadow near Pahalgam in Kashmir on Tuesday afternoon, killing 26 people, mostly tourists, and injuring over a dozen, in the deadliest attack in the region since the 2019 Pulwama strike. Among the victims is Manjunath, a real-estate businessman from Shivamogga, who had gone to Kashmir to celebrate his son scoring 96% in the PUC-II exams. MP BY Raghavendra, quoting Manjunath's wife Pallavi, said the terrorists had opened fire after asking him which community he belonged to.

Another of the deceased has been identified as a man from Balasore, Odisha, who worked at CIPET. A third victim was an Intelligence Bureau official from Telangana. The victims also included two foreign nationals and two local residents, according to a senior official, who did not provide further details. The toll is still being ascertained, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said while describing the terror attack as "much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years." The incident happened in



Pahalgam's Baisaran valley at around 2.30 pm. The Baisaran valley is a famous tourist spot, popularly known as 'mini Switzerland' because of its long lush green meadows. A purported video of the attack site emerged showing several people bleeding and lying motionless on the ground while women tourists were wailing and frantically looking for their near and dear ones. "My husband was shot in the head while seven others were also injured in the attack," a woman survivor was quoted by

as saying. The woman did not identify herself but pleaded for help in evacuating the injured to the hospital. Security forces and medical teams rushed to the spot immediately after the incident.

Hours after the attack, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is currently in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, reportedly spoke to Union Home Minister Amit Shah and asked him to visit the site. PM Modi also condemned the attack and stressed that the BJP-led Centre's "resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable." "I strongly condemn

the terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. I pray that the injured recover at the earliest. All possible assistance is being provided to those affected. Those behind this heinous act will be brought to justice...they will not be spared!" he wrote in a post on X. "Their evil agenda will never succeed. Our resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable and it will get even stronger," he added.Amit Shah, in a post on X, informed that he had briefed

the prime minister about the incident and held a virtual meeting with the concerned officials. "Anguished by the terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. My thoughts are with the family members of the deceased. Those involved in this dastardly act of terror will not be spared, and we will come down heavily on the perpetrators with the harshest consequences. Briefed PM Shri @narendramodiJi about the incident and held a meeting with the concerned officials via video conferencing," Shah wrote."Will shortly leave for Srinagar to hold an urgent security review meeting with all the agencies," he said.Without confirming the death toll, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah condemned the attack on tourists as an "abomination," and offered condolences to the families of the deceased. "I'm shocked beyond belief. This attack on our visitors is an abomination. The perpetrators of this attack are animals, inhuman & worthy of contempt. No words of condemnation are enough. I send my sympathies to the families of the deceased. I've spoken to  
**Continued P-4**

## Those will not be spared behind Pahalgam attack: PM

**New Delhi, (HS) :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is on a state visit to Saudi Arabia, condemned the Pahalgam terror attack on Tuesday, saying the guilty will be brought to justice and that India's resolve to fight terrorism is "unshakable". "I strongly condemn the terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. I pray that the injured recover at the earliest. All possible assistance is being provided to those affected. Those behind this heinous act will be brought to justice...they will not be spared! Their evil agenda will never succeed. Our resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable, and it will get even stronger," he wrote on X. At least 12 tourists were injured as terrorists came down from a mountain in Pahalgam's Baisaran valley and started



firing. Earlier today, PM Modi spoke with union home minister Amit Shah, asking him to visit Jammu and Kashmir and take suitable steps. Meanwhile, Amit Shah vowed to come down heavily on the perpetrators of the Pahalgam terror attack. He said he would leave for Srinagar shortly to attend a security review meeting. "Anguished by the terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu  
**Continued P-4**

## "No Authority Above Parliament": Target to SC



**New Delhi, (HS) :** New Delhi: Hitting out at late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for imposing Emergency, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Tuesday advocated the supremacy of citizens and Parliament in a democracy, saying voters' elected representatives are the "ultimate masters" and sentinels of the Constitution's content. He added that there was no visualisation in the Constitution of any authority above Parliament. As he presided as the chief guest over 'Kartavyam', an event marking the celebration of 75 years of the Indian Constitution, organised at Delhi University, Dhankhar said, "Elected representatives are the ultimate masters as to what the Constitution's content will be. There is no visualisation in the Constitution of any authority above Parliament. The Parliament is supreme. And that being the situation, let me tell you, it is as supreme as every citizen in the country." Amid a raging debate over judicial overreach in the Tamil Nadu Bills case in which the Supreme Court set a three-month deadline for the President to decide on granting assent to Bills, Dhankhar reminded people of the citizen's power to vote and steer a democracy."Through elections a Prime Minister who imposed Emergency was held accountable in 1977 and, therefore, let there be no doubt about it that the Constitution is for the people and the repository of safeguarding it is with elected representatives,"  
**Continued P-4**

## South Odisha district bags PM's Award for Excellence in Public Administration



**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** Koraput district in southern Odisha has bagged the prestigious Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration for 2024 in the 'Holistic Development of Districts' category, an official said on Tuesday.Prime Minister Narendra Modi presented the award to Koraput District Collector V Keerthi Vasani during a ceremony held at New Delhi on Monday on the occasion of Public Service Day, informed the official.

Koraput's selection followed a rigorous multi-tier evaluation conducted by central authorities, he added. "Congratulations to @dmkoraput and their team on being selected for the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2024. Their exemplary work in holistic

district development is truly commendable. May they continue to achieve bigger milestones and inspire others," Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi lauded the district administration in a post on X. "The award belongs to every individual in Koraput who has worked with dedication, integrity, and a shared vision for progress. It reflects the collective spirit and trust the people have placed in the district administration," Koraput District Collector V Keerthi Vasani said. This prestigious national recognition celebrates Koraput's exceptional and efficient governance and the district's successful implementation of 11 major central government schemes, such as Pradhan Mantri Matru \

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## Odia Tourist Killed In Pahalgam Terror Strike; CM Condemns 'Cowardly Attack'

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** An Odia tourist was killed in a terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, which left at least 20 people dead on Tuesday afternoon. The deceased Odia resident has been identified as Prasant Satpathy from the Remuna area in Balasore district. Anantnag police confirmed his death in a telephonic call to his relative in Balasore. However, the local police have no information about Satpathy's wife and 11-year-old son, who accompanied him on the trip. The body of Prasant Satpathy is with the police in Jammu. After the terror attack, Anantnag police issued a helpline number and established a 24/7 help desk. The police control room in Anantnag has been set up to assist tourists requiring assistance or



information, with contact details: 9596777669, 01932225870, and WhatsApp 9419051940. The relative of Prasant Satpathy contacted the helpline to ascertain his condition, and the local police confirmed his death. Meanwhile, Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi condemned the 'cowardly attack on tourists. "Strongly condemn the cowardly

attack on tourists in #Pahalgam, South Kashmir. Violence has no place in our society. Heartfelt condolences to those who lost their lives. Praying for the speedy recovery of the injured. Odisha stands in solidarity with the victims and their families during this difficult time," Majhi posted on 'X'. The terror strike resulted in the deaths of tourists and local

residents. The attack occurred during a peak tourist season in the Kashmir Valley, with hotels in Srinagar, Pahalgam, Gulmarg, and Sonamarg reporting full occupancy.

According to reports, 2-3 terrorists wearing army fatigues fired at horse-riding tourists in the Baisaran area around 2:30 pm.  
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## Jharsuguda Sizzles: Schools Shut as Heat Wave Intensifies

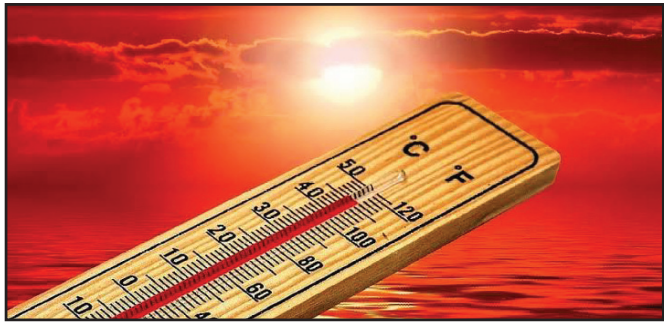
**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** As temperatures reach a record-breaking 46.2°C, authorities in Jharsuguda have declared school holidays from April 23 to April 25, 2025, to safeguard children from the relentless heat wave. The District Collector issued



guidelines to prevent heat-related illnesses, including shutting down Anganwadi centres and distributing rations directly to homes.Industries have been instructed to halt outdoor work between 10 AM and 4 PM,  
**Continued P-4**

## IMD issues severe heat wave warning for Odisha district for five days

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** Severe heatwave has gripped several parts of Odisha, with Jharsuguda breaking its all-time record for April with a scorching temperature of 46.2 degrees Celsius. This record-breaking temperature surpasses the previous high of 46.1°C recorded on April 20, 2010, since 1953. Other districts in Odisha have also reported high temperatures, with Hirakud recording 44.7°C, Sambalpur 44.6°C, Rourkela 42.8°C, Kendujhar 39.9°C, Chandbali 38.7°C, Bhubaneswar 36.7°C, and Baleswar 35.5°C. The heatwave conditions are expected to continue, with the weather department closely monitoring the situation. The Meteorological Centre, Bhubaneswar had predicted that maximum day



temprature is likely to rise by 2-4 degrees C during next three days. Maximum temperature is very likely to hover above 43 degrees C in Angul, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Sundergarh, and Kalahandi, Bolangir, Sonepur, Boudh, Bargarh, Nuapada district. Day-1 (22nd April 2025): ORANGE WARNING:Severe Heat wave condition very likely

to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Jharsuguda. Heat wave condition is very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Boudh, Balangir, Sundargarh and Sambalpur. YELLOW WARNING: Heat wave condition very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Nuapada, Bargarh, Kalahandi, Sonepur. 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. Warm Night Conditions very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Sambalpur, Sundargarh and Balangir.Day-2 (23rd April 2025): ORANGE WARNING: Severe heat wave condition is very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Jharsuguda. Heat wave condition is very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Boudh, Balangir, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Kalahandi and Sonepur. YELLOW WARNING: Heat wave condition very likely to prevail

at one or two places over the districts of Angul, Nupada and Deogarh. 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, Gajapati. Warm night conditions are very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Sambalpur, Sundargarh and Balangir. Day-3 (24th April 2025): ORANGE WARNING: Severe Heat wave condition very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Jharsuguda. Heat wave condition very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Boudh, Balangir, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Kalahandi and Sonepur. YELLOW

WARNING: Heat wave condition very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Angul, Nupada and Deogarh. 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. Warm Night Conditions very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Sambalpur, Sundargarh and Balangir. Day-4 (25th April 2025): ORANGE WARNING: Heat wave condition very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Balangir, Boudh, Bargarh and Sonepur. YELLOW WARNING: Heat  
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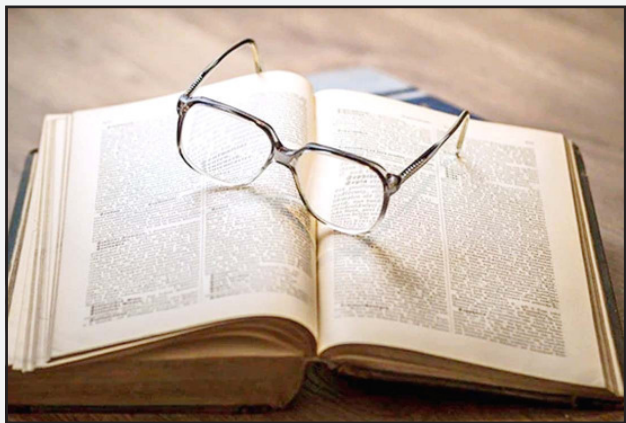
## Hindus in Bangladesh

Ever since Sheikh Hasina was overthrown in Dhaka, India has raised its concerns with Bangladesh about the safety of minorities in that country. Hasina fled to India on the evening of August 5 last year, and the following day, in an all-party meeting, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar flagged the issue. Delhi has continued to express concern over instability in Bangladesh, and in particular, the toll it takes on the safety of minorities. During a recent meeting on the sidelines of BIMSTEC, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged the Chief Advisor to the interim government, Muhammad Yunus, to ensure that the state addresses the issue with urgency. Despite assurances, however, Dhaka has been prone to dismissing the incidents of the Hindu minority being targeted as isolated manifestations of public anger against the previous regime. Following the kidnapping and killing of Bhabesh Chandra Roy, a prominent leader, however, the Yunus government cannot continue to be in denial. Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh told Parliament in February, "Since August, reports have cited the deaths of 23 Hindus and 152 incidents of attacks on Hindu temples in Bangladesh." The interim government must acknowledge the insecurity faced by Bangladeshi Hindus and take immediate steps to ensure their safety. A culture of impunity will only exacerbate the situation and also contribute to tensions between Dhaka and Delhi.

India has been a friend to Bangladesh since the Liberation War of 1971. However, the interim government's foreign policy has sent mixed signals. Yunus' recent visit to China, during which he made a provocative statement about India's Northeast region, and the high-level diplomacy over the weekend between Bangladesh and Pakistan, signal Dhaka's attempts to align with Delhi's regional rivals. Despite Bangladesh's demand for reparations and a public apology from Pakistan for the atrocities committed by the Yahya Khan regime during the 1971 Liberation War, both countries appear to be on the path towards rapprochement - a significant reversal of Hasina's foreign policy. Bangladesh must recognise Dhaka's long-term interests are better served if it acknowledges the regional realities and understands what Delhi can offer: A stable economic and defence partnership. In turn, India should remain resolute in its demands for the protection of minorities in Bangladesh, while keeping the door open for talks with the interim government on issues ranging from border security to trade, connectivity and counter-terrorism. Delhi must also broaden its outreach. Given Bangladesh's uncertain domestic situation and the impending elections, Delhi must engage a broader swathe of forces and institutions in the country to better understand its changing domestic dynamics and guard against any nasty surprises ahead.

23rd April

## World Book Day



We love books, and our friends at UNESCO agree. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization proposed World Book Day as a day of celebrating the joy of reading for enjoyment. One hundred countries observe World Book Day, and why not? Children who regularly read for enjoyment have higher test scores, develop a broader vocabulary, increased general knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures than their non-reading counterparts. Whether you read traditional paperbound books or turn to your Kindle/iPad/whatever, reading's a passport to this and many other worlds. Support children with such good habits and make sure they gather the right information from what they read online. Scholaroo will help students navigate through research on scholarships as well as guide them towards further education best suited for them. So celebrate with us on April 23! Here's how to harness your inner bookworm - and maybe get a free book.

The enjoyment of reading books is celebrated on World Book Day on April 23. It's a day to celebrate the privilege of being able to read, so head to the library or curl up on the couch and just be a bookworm! Reading is a stellar form of entertainment and it requires that you use your imagination rather than simply watching visuals on a screen. There is also something so therapeutic about the actual feel of a book, with its scent of printed pages and glossy covers. Books are a valuable aspect of society but this wasn't always the case. When vocabulary and writing were developed thousands of years ago, clay tablets were used. This evolved into parchment and papyrus. The first form of a book was achieved by the Chinese in the 3rd century, although their books consisted of thick pages, made out of bamboo, that were stitched together. By the mid-15th century, the printing press revolutionized books to become what they are today and made them readily accessible for everyone. Thanks to this ingenious invention we are able to enjoy the prose and poetry of countless authors and poets - from Shakespeare and Tolstoy to George R.R. Martin. World Book Day was established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on April 23, 1995. This date is chosen because it is the anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare and prominent Spanish chronicler Inca Garcilaso de la Vega.

Prior to this, there were several ideas on when World Book Day should be celebrated. Originally, Valencian writer Vicente Clavel Andrés suggested that the day should be on a day that honored the author Miguel de Cervantes. This meant that it could either be on his birthday, on October 7, or the day he died, on April 23. Because the day he died coincided with the date on which William Shakespeare and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega had also died, this date was chosen. Surprisingly, there are several other famous authors who have also died on April 23, like William Wordsworth and David Halberstam. Around the world, there are many other dates on which World Book Day takes place. The UK, Sweden, and Ireland all celebrate World Book Day on different dates.



Subash Ch. Mishra

### Economic Diary

Crime is coexisting with human being since time immemorial. Chanakya listed assault, rape, homicide, state corruption, animal cruelty and deforestation as crime and he prescribed an elaborate system for administration of justice. He prescribed civil law and criminal law to deal with cases appropriately. As per Chanakya, severe punishment becomes repulsive to the people; while mild punishment becomes contemptible, but right punishment is respectable. In the modern era, crime has been converted in to a sophisticated industry and the state machinery has to spend a huge amount of money and resources to control crime giving rising to the issue of economics of crime.

Globally, organized crime is a multi trillion dollar industry. An organisation named Global Financial Integrity published in its report in 2017 that the value of transactional crimes is about USD 1.6-2.2 trillion per annum. This includes trafficking in drugs, arms, human trafficking, human organs, counterfeiting, illegal wildlife crime, illegal mining and crude oil theft. Some of the major crimes for which values had been assigned by them were counterfeiting (USD 1 trillion), drug trafficking (USD 500 bn) and human trafficking (USD 150 bn). But all crimes do not have economic values; some are committed for vengeance, prestige

## Crime and Economy

(honour killing) or for fun or thrill of doing the crime like car racing, driving a car on the wrong side or beyond the permissible speed limit etc. Some crimes are committed for ideological reasons or under peer pressure or social conditioning. Experts believe that in case of economic crimes, a criminal decides to commit a crime if the expected benefits from committing a crime exceed the expected costs or the crime is essential for a livelihood. The costs of crime depend on the crime and individual committing the crime. The costs normally include direct material costs such as the cost of the instruments like gun, bullet, psychic costs (feel of guilt), opportunity costs, legal cost to fight a legal battle and expected punishment costs. One important item of cost of crime is the opportunity cost of time at the disposal of the criminal or the usage of the equipment. A person will evaluate whether by using his vehicle for legal transport or for illegal transport he is earning more and if the chances of getting caught are less, he may indulge in transporting illegal or banned goods to earn more. Many times the person committing a crime is not able to calculate the cost and benefits with reasonable degree of accuracy, but goes by the numbers given by a close associate or a partner in crime.

Shop lifting is a common crime in many countries including advanced countries. Experts believe that some rich individuals commit the crime for thrill and others do it to get an economic benefit. It has been seen that as the economy weakens and passes through a lean phase, the shop owners employ less employees to supervise which increases scope for shoplifting. Shoplifters are reported to be taking everything from electronic items and baby foods to designer clothing. While shoplifters are normally arrested, most often, shoplifters are banned from stores



rather than arrested. Most of the incidence of shoplifting is done by first time offenders who take the decision in a moment without putting much thought to the consequences. Some of the organized crime gangs also do shop lifting and sell the stolen goods over internet. In USA, it is reported that more than \$35 million in merchandise is stolen each day and about one in 11 people in America have shoplifted, according to a nonprofit organisation called National Association for Shoplifting Prevention. "Repeat offenders are found to be doing it because of drug addiction," said an assistant district attorney who has the experience of handling the shoplifting cases for 13 years. Security experts in USA also found that some regular fraudsters pretending as shoppers paste fraudulent bar codes prepared by them at home over the existing bar codes on goods in the store and check out with a lower price tag. Crime rates are influenced by several factors like poverty, unemployment and law enforcement strictness. While criminologist believe that bad economic condition results in increase in crime, economists believe that crime rate increases when economy is in upswing as a growing economy opens up many avenues of crime including

smuggling and property crime. These approaches look appealing but empirical studies have shown that GDP growth rate has no relationship with the crime rate in a country. Similarly while punishment is considered as a deterrent to crime rate in a country, in practice it is not visible. Countries like Venezuela, Papua New Guinea and South Africa have high rates of crime due to prevailing corruption in the country, economic and social challenges faced by the people. Low crime rates in countries like Switzerland and Japan are attributed to effective law enforcement and restriction on usage of gun. Overall crime rate in a country is measured by a Crime Index. While several organisations have published country wise crime index, one of the popular indices is prepared by taking the total number of reported crimes per one lakh population. The recent report puts Venezuela at the top of the list with maximum crimes and UAE with least crimes. India is placed at 81 in the list out of 147 countries. A large chunk of the people committing crime are young persons. A study in USA found that 72% of the people arrested were between 13-34 years age.

Crimes has a cost to the economy of a country. High crime rates compel the authorities to

spend more money on prevention of crime. Citizens and organisations also spend more money in creating electric fencing, installing CCTV, appointing security guard and using hi-tech vans with police security for movement of treasure. Organisations spend money in creating more digital fire walls and appointing IT experts to prevent cyber crime. In South Africa, electric fencing around households is very common and a normal single household spends around USD 5000 on installation of electric fencing. According to available data, the world spends an estimated \$1 trillion or more annually for preventing crime, with a significant portion dedicated to cyber security measures alone, as cybercrime is projected to cost the world up to \$10.5 trillion annually by 2025. Cybercrime is emerging as one of the major crimes in the recent era which is a challenge to the authorities to control and punish the culprits. In future the financial value of cyber crime will surpass all other crimes and authorities will be forced to spend more to control this. Efforts to combat money laundering and other financial crimes also contribute significantly to the overall cost of crime prevention.

In addition to measures for prevention of crime, countries spend substantial amounts of money on criminal justice system. As per available data, the world spends an estimated \$360 billion on the criminal justice system, which includes expenditure on public policing, courts, prosecution, and prisons. Prison population indicates the effectiveness of the police and justice system or the degree of criminality in the society. US has the largest number of people in prison. In 2022 US had 1.8 million people in prison, followed by China at 1.69 million, Brazil at 0.85 million and India at 0.57 million.

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## One Nation, One Election: An Analysis



Mr. Rabindra Kumar Mishra

The concept of "One Nation, One Election" (ONOE) has re-emerged as a significant proposal in India's political discourse following the approval of a proposal for simultaneous elections nationwide and the submission of a report by a high-level committee chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind. This initiative aims to synchronize elections for the Lok Sabha, State Assemblies, and local bodies to enhance governance efficiency, reduce costs, and promote stability. However, the proposal has sparked intense debate, with critics raising concerns about its impact on federalism, regional representation, and logistical feasibility. This essay explores the historical context, advantages, challenges, committee recommendations, and the way forward for ONOE, providing a balanced perspective on its implications for India's democracy.

India conducted synchronized elections from 1951 to 1967, with Lok Sabha and most State Assembly elections held simultaneously. This practice ensured a cohesive electoral cycle, minimizing disruptions to governance. However, political instability, premature dissolutions of assemblies, and

defections in the 1960s led to the divergence of election cycles. By the late 1960s, the synchronized system had eroded, resulting in staggered elections that have since characterized India's electoral landscape. The rekindled interest in ONOE seeks to restore this synchronization, drawing on historical precedent while addressing contemporary challenges. Simultaneous elections could significantly reduce the financial burden of conducting elections. The cost of Lok Sabha elections has escalated from Rs 10.5 crore in 1951-52 to Rs 50,000 crore in 2019, reflecting the growing scale and complexity of the electoral process. By consolidating elections, resources such as security personnel, polling staff, and election materials could be optimized, lowering operational costs for the Election Commission of India (ECI). Additionally, the ECI's seizure of Rs 10,000 crore during the 18th Lok Sabha elections highlights the potential to curb the influx of black money through fewer election cycles. Frequent elections often lead to "policy paralysis" due to enforcing the Model Code of Conduct, which restricts major policy decisions during election periods. ONOE would reduce these interruptions, allowing governments to focus on long-term policy implementation rather than short-term electoral strategies. This continuity could also alleviate resource strain, minimize constant campaigning, and reduce corruption associated with electoral funding. Staggered elections disrupt public life, with educational institutions frequently requisitioned as polling stations and teachers diverted to election duties. Simultaneous elections would minimize these disruptions, enabling schools and government officials to focus on their primary responsibilities.



This could enhance administrative efficiency and improve service delivery.

Supporters argue that simultaneous elections could combat "election fatigue," potentially increasing voter turnout. Concentrating electoral events may motivate voters to participate, enhancing democratic engagement. Concentrated campaign efforts could benefit political parties, particularly smaller ones, by levelling the playing field against larger parties with greater resources. Streamlined campaigns could also reduce the pressure on businesses for political donations, fostering a more transparent electoral process. The Kovind Committee report projects that simultaneous elections could boost India's real GDP growth by 1.5% in the following polls compared to the previous year. Additionally, a 1.28% increase in fiscal deficit and a 17.67% rise in public spending could stimulate economic activity. Fewer elections might also reduce the circulation of black money, further stabilizing the economy. The concentrated nature of simultaneous elections could facilitate better monitoring by the ECI, ensuring greater transparency. By reducing governance downtime and freeing up security resources, ONOE could enhance administrative efficiency, allowing officials to

prioritize governance over election management. Synchronizing national and state elections risks overshadowing local issues, as national narratives may dominate electoral discourse. This could marginalize regional parties, which often champion state-specific concerns, favouring national parties with more significant resources. Smaller parties may struggle to compete, potentially reducing political diversity and undermining India's federal structure. Simultaneous voting could confuse less informed or first-time voters, leading to uninformed choices and invalid votes, weakening democratic outcomes. Organizing simultaneous elections across India's diverse regions would strain the ECI and security forces immensely. The Parliamentary Standing Committee (2015) estimated that Rs 9,284.15 crore would be required to procure additional Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines. Logistical challenges, such as coordinating personnel and ensuring accessibility in remote areas, could compromise the integrity of the electoral process. Implementing ONOE would require significant amendments to the Constitution and the Representation of People Act of 1951. Some amendments, particularly those affecting state powers, would need ratification by more than half of India's states under Article 368. These changes could alter the balance of power between the central government, states, and institutions like the President and state governors, raising questions about preserving India's parliamentary democracy. While promoting political stability, synchronized elections may reduce flexibility in addressing political crises such as

the premature dissolution of state governments. This could result in prolonged periods of President's Rule, leading to governance gaps and inadequate representation. Frequent elections ensure accountability by offering regular avenues for voters to express dissatisfaction; under ONOE, less frequent polls may lead to complacency among elected representatives. The Election Commission of India (ECI) would face immense logistical pressure to ensure free and fair elections nationwide, and any failure could undermine democratic credibility.

The Kovind Committee proposed a phased implementation of ONOE, beginning with synchronizing Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections, followed by local body elections within 100 days. This would require two constitutional amendment bills, introducing provisions like Articles 82A and 324A and a Single Electoral Roll through Article 325(2). Despite the Parliamentary Standing Committee (2015) and the Law Commission (2018) supporting ONOE, they emphasized constitutional, financial, and administrative challenges. A phased rollout with pilot programs, extensive consultations with stakeholders, and legal clarity is crucial. Strengthening the ECI, safeguarding regional representation, and public awareness campaigns are essential. Lessons from global practices and investment in infrastructure and training can ensure the effective implementation of ONOE while upholding India's federal and democratic ethos.

*Advocate, Orissa High Court, Founder of SBLNGO, Human & Animal Rights, SDGs Analyst, Author, & Advisor.*



## Odisha Task Force Explores Dairy Farming To Curb Migrant Worker Displacement

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** A high-level meeting, chaired by Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, was convened today at the Lok Seva Bhavan Conference Hall to address the pressing issue of migrant worker displacement in Odisha.

The meeting focused on innovative strategies to reduce distress migration, with a particular emphasis on promoting dairy farming as a sustainable livelihood option. According to an official press release, SBM Advisor LLP delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation to Deputy Chief Minister Singh Deo, highlighting how milk production and dairy farming could significantly mitigate the displacement of migrant workers. Labour and Employees State Insurance



Minister Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia also attended the meeting, underscoring the state's commitment to tackling this challenge. As the chairman of the task force constituted to curb distress migration, Deputy Chief Minister Singh Deo emphasized the government's serious approach to the issue. He noted that the causes of migrant worker displacement vary across districts, urging officials to

conduct thorough analyses and implement tailored solutions. Singh Deo highlighted the potential of dairy farming and cattle rearing to strengthen rural livelihoods, particularly by empowering women with year-round income sources. "By fostering self-reliance among women through dairy farming, we can significantly reduce labour migration," he stated. A representative from SBM

Advisor LLP proposed incentivizing private sector participation alongside existing government schemes to amplify the impact of these initiatives.

The meeting saw participation from key officials, including Principal Secretary Dr. Arabinda Kumar Padhee, Chitra Arumugam, Suresh Kumar Vashishth, Girish SN and senior representatives from the Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment, Labour & ESI, Fisheries and Animal Resource Development, and Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Departments. The discussions underscored Odisha's proactive efforts to address distress migration through sustainable economic opportunities, with dairy farming emerging as a promising solution to bolster rural resilience.

## Hon'ble Odisha Governor visits Credai Odisha Home & Decor Expo 2025



expo will host a diverse range of participants, including top builders, financial institutions, building material manufacturers, electronics and electrical firms, interior designers, tile and sanitary ware brands, and more.

The event aims to cater to aspiring homeowners, real estate investors, architects, and interior design professionals alike. Attendees can explore the latest in smart home technologies, sustainable building solutions, and future-ready lifestyle products. The expo will also feature interactive sessions, expert panels, and industry

discussions on current and emerging trends in housing, interior decor, and urban living. Whether you're looking to buy a home, revamp your interiors, or simply stay ahead of the curve in home trends - the CREDAI Odisha Home & Decor Expo 2025 promises something for everyone.

Other dignitaries present at the event were Credai Odisha Vice Chairman Binay Krishna Das, Secretary Anil Agrawal, President Swadesh Kumar Routray, President (Elct) Uma Sankar Panigrahi, Vice President Umesh Khandelwal, and others.

## IIT Bhubaneswar partners with Numeros Motors to pioneer rare earth-free motor technologies

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** Numeros Motors, a new-age OEM specializing in indigenous electric mobility solutions, has entered into a strategic research collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar. The two entities have signed an agreement to jointly undertake a two-year research initiative focused on exploring and evaluating various non-magnet or rare earth-free (RE-free) motor topologies.

Aimed at revolutionizing the electric mobility space, this innovation will identify robust, cost-effective, and sustainable motor technologies catering to India's rapidly growing electric vehicle market. The agreement was signed in presence of Prof. Dinakar Pasla, Dean (Sponsored Research & Industrial Consultancy), IIT Bhubaneswar. The collaboration is intended to support India's clean mobility goals by reducing dependence on rare earth materials-key components in traditional EV motors-and by encouraging local innovation in EV manufacturing. By combining IIT



Bhubaneswar's academic expertise in electrical engineering with Numeros Motors' practical knowledge of electric drivetrain systems, the project will focus on developing motor solutions that are both efficient and affordable.

The initiative is aligned with India's vision to promote self-reliant, sustainable EV technologies. Speaking on this occasion, Prof. Shreepad Karmalkar, Director, IIT Bhubaneswar said: "Industry-Academia collaboration and entrepreneurship are among the primary focus areas of IIT Bhubaneswar. We are happy to

collaborate in the field of Electric Vehicles with a vision to ensure sustainability." He also highlighted the initiatives in the area of Electric Vehicles undertaken in the Research and Entrepreneurship Park of IIT Bhubaneswar. Shreyas Shibulal, Founder & CEO of Numeros Motors, commented on the collaboration: "

Innovation is at the core of everything we do at Numeros Motors. Our partnership with IITBhubaneswar marks a significant step in our mission to transform India's electric mobility landscape. We believe that rare earth-free motor technologies will play a crucial

role in building sustainable, affordable, and truly indigenous EVs. Scaling these technologies will help reduce import dependency, lower production costs, and contribute meaningfully to a greener, more self-reliant EV ecosystem in India." Dr. Ankit Dalal, Assistant Professor at Electrical Engineering Department, IIT Bhubaneswar said, "We're excited to embark on this two-year research journey with Numeros Motors to develop rare-earth-free motor technologies.

This partnership represents a shared commitment to sustainable innovation and cutting-edge engineering. With Numeros' industry leadership and our research capabilities at IIT, we look forward to creating impactful solutions for the future of electric mobility." The signing ceremony was attended by representatives from both Numeros Motors and IIT Bhubaneswar, underscoring their shared commitment to pioneering future-ready electric mobility solutions that are both efficient and ecologically sustainable.

## Senior OAS Officer Deba Prasad Dash Appointed New I&PR Director



**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** In a recent administrative reshuffle, senior Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) officer Deba Prasad Dash has been elevated to the rank of Special Secretary. Along with this promotion, he has been assigned the additional

responsibility of Director of the Information and Public Relations (I&PR) Department. The position of Director I&PR had been vacant since the retirement of Saroj Samal on February 28, 2025. Prior to his new role, Dash served as Joint Secretary in the Department of Odia Language, Literature, and Culture.

He will now continue as Special Secretary in the same department while overseeing the I &PR Directorate. The General Administration & Public Grievance Department issued an official notification on Tuesday confirming Dash's promotion and additional assignment.

## Dy CM KV Singh Deo Assures No Power Cuts During Peak Summer Hours In Odisha This Year



**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** With Odisha currently grappling with intense heatwave conditions, Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo has assured consumers that there will be no power cuts during the peak hours of the summer season this year. Singh Deo, who holds the Energy portfolio in the state government, has instructed the electricity distribution companies (discoms) to refrain from cutting power supply, particularly during the daytime hours of summer. "In the event of a thunderstorm, if electric

poles are knocked down, replacement may take some time. However, in many areas, power restoration has been completed within a couple of hours. During yesterday's CM grievance cell in Sambalpur, we ensured there were no complaints related to power cuts," said Singh Deo.

The Deputy CM further highlighted that the new power management model being implemented this year is proving to be highly effective. He also assured consumers that any complaints would be addressed immediately. "Unpaid bills will not result in power disconnections this summer, but consumers will still be required to pay for the electricity they have consumed," he added.

## World Oral Health Month program concludes at IDS

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** As many as 19 screening and treatment camps were organised by the Institute of Dental Sciences (IDS), faculty of dental sciences of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be University (SOA) here, to mark the 'World Oral Health Month' catering to the needs of 1,153 individuals across various locations.

The treatment procedures included pit and fissure sealants, extractions, restorations, scaling and more advanced services such as impressions, jaw relation recording and delivery of six complete dentures. The month-long celebration, which had kicked off on March 20, included impactful community outreach, awareness initiatives and academic engagements. The inaugural event was addressed by Dr. Jeevant Acharya, In-



charge of National Oral Health Program (NOHP) and Prof. (Dr.) Ruchi Bhuyan, Dean of IDS. A screening and treatment camp was held at the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp here on April 18 where 120 patients were screened and treated. Oral health education was also extended to the visitors. Community engagement, which was the highlight of the celebration, included interaction sessions held at Jatni,

Balianta and Harpur in collaboration with local community leaders. These sessions focused on oral health awareness, distribution of toothbrush and toothpaste and dental health issues.

Over 200 students, faculty members, interns and non-teaching staff of the institution participated in a walkathon held on April 6 which culminated at Anand Van. The event featured flash mob and pamphlet distribution. Besides, IDS organised three Continuing Dental Education (CDE) programs and webinars along with poster making, debate and quiz competitions for students. The valedictory program was held on April 19 which was graced by Dr. Braja Kishore Dash, Additional Director of Medical Education, Government of Odisha, and Prof. (Dr.) Bhuyan.

## Vedanta Aluminium Marks Earth Day 2025 with 650 th Fly Ash Rake Supplied for Circular Economy Avenues

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest aluminium producer, marked World Earth Day 2025 by highlighting its milestone achievements across biodiversity conservation, waste-to-wealth initiatives, and renewable energy adoption. These efforts reflect the company's integrated approach to advancing sustainability in core operations while empowering rural communities in the vicinity of its locations.

A key milestone achieved recently was the dispatch of the 650th fly ash rake from Vedanta's mega aluminium plant in Jharsuguda. Since March 2022, the company has supplied over 1.5 million tonnes of fly ash to major cement manufacturers and 3 million tonnes for use in National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) projects. An additional 0.3 million tonnes have been supplied for fly ash brick

manufacturing by MSME enterprises. In FY25 alone, 223 rakes were dispatched, helping the company achieve 113% fly ash utilisation across its operations. The consignments are GPS-enabled to enable easier tracking and delivery, with the health of ash dykes (where fly ash is initially stored) also monitored via InSAR and drones.

In addition, Vedanta Aluminium has also joined hands with PwC for comprehensive biodiversity and carbon reduction projects, planted over 1 lakh saplings under its Matrivan initiative in Jharsuguda as part of the Government of India's Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam campaign, and has signed an MoU with GAIL for the supply of natural gas to support Vedanta's upcoming 430 kilo tonnes per annum (KTPA) cast house. In observance of Earth Day, the various units of Vedanta Aluminium in Odisha and



Chhattisgarh organised a series of awareness and engagement events. In Lanjigarh, Odisha, 145 participants from Goipeta village joined the Earth Day sessions, which included drawing contests and environmental awareness drives. Over 15,000 saplings were planted, including 500 of the threatened Chloroxylon swietenia, while 31 water harvesting structures created 2.5 lakh m³ of potential, benefiting 250 farmers. At Jharsuguda, Odisha, Earth Day activities were organized in collaboration with

the OPMP Government Girls' School, engaging 170 students and teachers in a plantation drive, in addition to poster-making and debate competitions. In Korba, Chhattisgarh, BALCO - a part of Vedanta Aluminium - reinforced the importance of internal sustainability mechanisms through energy audits and behavioural change initiatives focused on reducing specific power consumption, aligning with the Earth Day theme "Our Power, Our Planet". In the vicinity of its mines, Vedanta has

installed 417 solar lights and commissioned 11 solar borewells for local communities. Over 10,000 saplings have been planted on overburden dumps, 1.7 lakh saplings through compensatory afforestation, and 8,000 saplings via a dedicated Miyawaki forest. Commenting on the significance of these initiatives, Mr. Rajiv Kumar, CEO- Vedanta Aluminium, said: "

At Vedanta Aluminium, Earth Day is not merely a single-day observance but a reflection of how we work every day with accountability to the environment and to future generations. Whether it's the dispatch of our 650th fly ash rake, renewable interventions in mines, or restoring threatened species, our efforts are focused on closely aligning industrial growth with a greener, more sustainable outlook." Vedanta Aluminium continues to align its sustainability vision with India's

decarbonisation goals and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, with a clear roadmap to achieve Net Zero by 2050 or sooner. Vedanta Aluminium, a business of Vedanta Limited, is India's largest producer of aluminium, manufacturing more than half of India's aluminium i.e., 2.42 million tonnes in FY25. It is a leader in value-added aluminium products that find critical applications in core industries.

Vedanta Aluminium ranks 2nd in the S&P Global Corporate Sustainability Assessment 2024 world rankings for the aluminium industry, a reflection of its leading sustainable development practices. With its world-class aluminium smelters, alumina refinery and power plants in India, the company fulfils its mission of spurring emerging applications of aluminium as the 'Metal of the Future' for a greener tomorrow.

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**  
File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/25-26/  
E-Tender/04/2025, Dt. 17.04.2025  
(1) Tender No. e-Tender-eastekur-  
17-25, Dt.: 09.04.2025

**DESCRIPTION : MISCELLANEOUS  
REPAIRING AND IMPROVEMENT TO  
EXISTING CEMENT CONCRETE  
FLOORING ALONG WITH OTHER  
ALLIED REPAIRING WORKS AT C-  
TYPE QUARTERS AT RAIL VIHAR  
GIRDER, CHANDRASEKHARPUR,  
BHUBANESWAR.**  
**Approx. Cost of the Work ₹ 270.67  
Lakh, EMD: ₹ 2.85,300/-**  
(2) Tender No. e-Tender-SouthKUR-  
10-2025, Dt.: 11.04.2025

**DESCRIPTION : ASSESSMENT OF  
STRENGTH AND STRUCTURAL  
ADEQUACY OF FOUNDATION, PIER,  
ABUTMENT AND SUBSTRUCTURE  
ELEMENTS OF (46 NOS) BRIDGES TO  
CATER THE LOAD OF PSC SLABS IN  
REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING PLATE  
GIRDER BRIDGE AS PER RDSO  
STANDARD OF 25T LOADING OVER  
THE KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.**  
**Approx. Cost of the Work ₹ 550.82  
Lakh, EMD: ₹ 4.25,400/-**  
**Completion Period : 12 (Twelve) Months  
(for Sl. No. 1) and 06 (Six) Months (for Sl.  
No. 2).**  
**Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1500  
Hrs. of 02.05.2025 (for both the Tenders).**  
No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/  
Fax or in person shall be accepted against  
such e-tenders even if these are submitted  
on firm's letter head and received in time.  
All such manual offers shall be considered  
invalid and shall be rejected summarily  
without any consideration.  
Complete information including e-tender  
documents of the above e-tender is  
available in website : [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)  
**Note :** The prospective tenderers are  
advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten)  
days before the date of closing of tender to  
note any changes / corrigenda issued for  
this tender. The tenderers/bidders must  
have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate  
and must be registered on IREPS Portal.  
Only registered tenderer / bidder can  
participate on e-tendering.  
**Divisional Railway Manager (Engg) /  
PR-60/Q/25-26 | Khurda Road**

**AFFIDAVIT**

By virtue of an affidavit  
sworn before the Executive  
Magistrate Sri S.K.  
Pattanayak, OAS, Puri dt-  
11/04/2025, I, Puja Mishra,  
W/O - Nirakar Mishra, Vill -  
Rani matha, Barahi lane,  
Balisahi, PO-Puri -I ,P.S. -  
Puri Town , Dist- Puri, PIN -  
752001 Odisha do hearby  
declare that I have change  
my name from Chandrakanti  
Hota(Aadhar No - 3274 2758  
6712) to Puja Mishra after  
marriage to Mr. Nirakar  
Mishra. Henceforth, I shall  
be known as Puja Mishra  
for all Proposes.  
**Sd  
( PUJA MISHRA )**

**AFFIDAVIT**

By virtue of an affidavit  
sworn before the Executive  
Magistrate Annanya  
Tripathy, OAS, Nayagarh dt-  
16/04/2025, I, Barsharani  
Mahapatra, W/O - Jitendra  
Mahapatra, Vill -Sagadia Sahi,  
Ward No - 06, PO - Nayagarh  
- 2, P.S. - Nayagarh , Dist-  
Nayagarh, PIN - 752069  
Odisha do hearby declare  
that I have change the name  
of my minor daughter from  
Payelpriyadarsini Mahapatra  
(Aadhar No - 8066 4449 3477)  
to Prangya Mahapatra as per  
her birth certificate.  
Henceforth my daughter  
shall be known as Prangya  
Mahapatra for all Proposes.  
**Sd  
(BARSHARANI MAHAPATRA)**



## District Level Procurement Committee Meeting for Rabi Paddy Crops Held

**Khordha, (DMC):** District level procurement committee meeting for Rabi Paddy crops was held under the chairmanship of Collector, Khordha Chanchal Rana. On this occasions, MLA, Beguna Pradeep Kumar Sahu, Civil Supply Officer, Khordha, Suguda Murmu & the departmental officers & committee members were present.

In his speech Collector, Mr.Rana said that all the employees, millers, farmers, regulated market committee secretary were provided sincere service during the last kharif paddy procurement and made it successful, they will also provide sincere service in the Rabi season. If the co-operative societies presidents & secretary neglect their duty, their PACS will be closed. The administration is working for the benefit of the farmers, the PACS of the



cooperative societies that show bias in paddy procurement will be closed. MLA, Begunia, Pradeep Kumar Sahu took part in the discussion and said that farmers can benefit if irrigation is managed properly. Collector suggested that the PACS and the farmers should sign the quality of the paddy. Similarly, the Collector directed the Irrigation Department to make the

borewells operational. Collector directed the officers to send a proposal to the govt. to open new PACS in Gambharimunda. Collector Mr.Rana directed the CSO to provide necessary equipment to the mandi, conduct awareness programs, provide essential infrastructure like farmer shelters, drinking water, lighting system etc. MLA, Begunia, Mr.Sahu drew attention

to the need to restore the pond in Mangulia Panchayat near Sanpur and collect rainwater. Collector directed the CSO to make all the Irrigation department officers members of this committee. Collector said that the millers will definitely procurement the paddy as per his schedule. Paddy will be procured on May 28 in Baliaanta and Balipatna blocks and on May 21 for all other blocks.

FAQ. Paddy is being sold at Rs 2,300 per quintal and Grade A paddy at Rs 2,320 per quintal. The money will be transferred to the farmer's account within 48 hours. In the 2024-25 Kharif season, 49,025 farmers have registered in the district, while the registration of 48,554 farmers has been verified. There are 154 PACS and 15 mills in the district, including 139 PACS and 15 sub-centers. In the current Rabi season, 28 PACS and 2 sub-centers will be collect paddy.

3,227 farmers have registered for this. The millers will provide gunny bags to the farmers. The meeting was attended by Deputy Registrar, Cooperative Societies Alakananda Jena, Khordha Chief District Agriculture Officer, Food Corporation of India Divisional Manager, Superintending Engineer, Khordha Irrigation Department, District Social Welfare Officer, PACS President, Secretary & Millers were present.

## Violation of Forest Right Act at Dhinkia

**Jagatsinghpur, (DMC):** People of Dhinka GP under Erasama Block of Jagatsinghpur District alleged against Violation of Forest Rights Act to Collector, Jagatsinghpur, DFO, Rajnagar and Ministry of Forest & Environment, Govt. Of India on 21st April 2025.

They stated that on 18 th March 2025 one Grama Sabha called to decide about shifting of Yogi Sahi- Bangali sahi Primery School to A 0.50 dec Forest land. Entire Panchayat objected the proposal and demanded special Gram - Sabha to regularise thousand Acer Forest land forcefully occupied earlier. But administration not taken any initiative. So, Dhinkia People put forth their allegation to stop



woks on thousand acer of Forest land illegally and force fully occupied earlier violating Forest Rights Act 2006.

As people of Dhinkia GP were residing and cultivating upon that land generation together and they have been illegally and forcibly removed. They demand special Gram - Sabha to regularise Forest Rights Act.

## PH Agitation Reached 2nd Day

**Paralakhemundi, (DMC):** In front of Paralakhemundi Model Police Station, one named James V started agitation. He demanded that in private buses reductions not given.

According bto 2016 act one physically handicapped should get. Till now they are deprived. On Monday from 9am to 12noon morning & on Tuesday from 10am to 12 noon he started agitation & reached for second day.

## Withdraw of Pension Amendment Bill



**Paralakhemundi, (DMC):** Paramount support Akhil Bharat State Government Pensiohners Association Gajapati district association presented a memorandum addressed to Prime Minister & other Officials. Led by President Aswini Kumar Padhi & Secretary Suresh Behera they submitted memorandum to withdraw amendment Bill on pension act.



## Awareness Campaigns Launched to Prevent Forest Fires in Singpur Range, Sikai Village Benefits

**Rayagada, (DMC):** In a bid to prevent forest fires and promote conservation, the Singpur Range's Shikarpai Section of the Forest Department has launched a series of awareness campaigns in various villages, including Sikapai Village. Led by Forester Pradip Kumar Jena, the campaigns aim to educate residents about the importance of preserving forests and their ecosystem.

The awareness programs, conducted in multiple villages, cover crucial topics such as the dangers of forest fires, the need to avoid wildlife hunting, and the importance of sustainable forest management. The campaigns also highlight the impact of forest degradation on human livelihoods and the environment. Forest beat



Guard Surya Patnaik and the Fire Squad participated in the programs, engaging with villagers and providing valuable insights on forest conservation. The Forest Department's efforts aim to foster a sense of responsibility and ownership among local communities, ultimately contributing to the preservation of the region's forests and

wildlife. The campaigns are part of the Forest Department's initiatives to promote sustainable forest management and protect the region's biodiversity. By educating local communities, the department hopes to prevent forest fires and promote a culture of conservation, ensuring a safer and more sustainable future for the region.

## The role of Panchagavya in protecting the earth

**Puri, (DMC):** The role of Panchagavya in protecting the earth. On International Earth Protection Day. The students of research used various wastes to create the shape of the earth and portrayed the cause and protection of the earth's disaster in it and the students of research gave a message to the society about the role of Panchagavya in protecting the earth as well as preparation of Panchagavya products.

How people are throwing away cow dung urine thinking it is useless, but in that useless dung, cow urine, milk, ghee, curd, a mixture of milk, ghee, curd, they are preparing the most important items of the people. (Lamps, rakhis, various idols, home casts, and various home furnishings.) It will be widely used as we earn an income, reduce the amount of waste, and the fertility of the soil increases and the amount of idol erosion and forest fields decreases. With the climate being pollution-free, a sacred environment is created and cow progeny is also protected. Isha Haldar secured the first place, Narayan Behera second, Priyanka Pal



second, and Bikash Nayak third, and Payal Nayak, Beбина, Khushi Dora were awarded the connection and certificates were given to the children by UNICEF institute in the preparation of Panchagavya. Prominent social activist Kailash Tikait and District Child Protection Officer Manoj Tripathy were the chief guests.

Advocate Bipin Bihari Dalai, Project Director of Sanyog Sansthan Prashant Paltasing Sir, members of the institute Niranjan Pradhan, Santosh Kumar Rout, Sipali Barik, Kshitish Nayak Subhalakshmi Pradhan, Varsha Haldar, Liku, Nandini, Om, conducted today's programme.

## Devotees Thrill on Donation for Jagannath Temple Construction



**Paralakhemundi, (DMC):** For construction of Sri Jagannath temple devotees showed their interest. Recently one devotee named Ramnatn Sahu donated one lakh & another devotee Kasturi Gouda of Batagouda street donated 10100. Committee member Durga madhab Panigrahi & others conveyed their gratitude to devotees.

## IFFCO welcomes Tribhuvan Sahkari University Bill 2025

**Paradip, (DMC):** IFFCO, the world's number one Fertilizer Cooperative organaisation welcomes the announcement of Tribhuvan Sahkari University Bill, 2025, in the Lok Sabha and its subsequent approval by the lower house.

While announcing the bill, Minister of Cooperation and Home Affairs Shri Amit Shah said that after 75 years of independence, the country is getting its first cooperative university. He said that this bill will strengthen the rural economy, develop the ecosystem of self-employment and small entrepreneurship, increase social inclusion and increase

opportunities to set new standards in innovation and research. He said that, in a way, the whole country will get a new cooperative leadership inspired by the spirit of cooperation and equipped with modern education.

Dr.Udai Shanker Awasthi, Managing Director, IFFCO, stated, "I appreciate the Tribhuvan Cooperative University Bill 2025, a historic step for the pioneering development of cooperatives. The establishment of this university will bring a new revolution to the cooperative sector. I welcome this commendable step of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the



Home and Cooperative Minister Amit Shah. This is a very big step for Indian agriculture, farmers and rural development.

This will further strengthen our villages." He said the establishment of sector-specific schools across the country will help fertiliser cooperatives, especially IFFCO. This will empower cooperatives with a

new generation of professionals in the field of fertiliser cooperative management and marketing.

Short-term courses for existing cooperative employees are a game-changer and a step which was never done at this scale. This university will also train the existing employees and cooperators, making them efficient and a great asset to the

fraternity. While expressing his appreciation for this step, Dileep Sanghani, Chairman, IFFCO, said this step will ensure that seeds for the next generation of cooperative leadership will be nurtured and cared for under a system run by the cooperatives for the cooperatives.

He expressed his gratitude towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi under whose guidance Shri Amit Shah, the first Union Minister of Cooperation, is working tirelessly with the motto of 'Sahkar se Samridhhi.' He said this is a historic step which will ensure the development of the cooperative sector for years to come.

### From Page- 1

## "No Authority Above....

he said. The VP, who faced flak in some quarters for recently using strong words against the judiciary for brining the President's functions under review, reminded all constitutional functionaries about their limits. In a veiled manner, he said all organs of a democracy have an obligation towards respecting the citizens, their elected representatives and Parliament. He also questioned some constitutional experts who described the President as a titular head or a ceremonial Constitutional functionary in their effort to justify the three-month deadline set for deciding on Bills. "Nothing can be far distanced from our wrong understanding of the role of everyone in this country - constitutional functionary or a citizen," he said.

"A democracy is built by citizens. Every one of them has a role. The soul of democracy resides and pulsates in every citizen. Democracy will blossom, its values will get heightened when a citizen is alert and contributes," he said. The remarks of Dhankhar, ex-officio Chancellor of the University of Delhi, come a day after the top court, while refraining from issuing a direction to the Union government in a recent case noted, "We are accused of intruding into Parliament's domain". Earlier this month, the top court, using its inherent powers under Article 142 of the Constitution, resolved a standoff between the Tamil Nadu government and Governor R.N. Ravi over the delay in granting assent to Bills passed by the Assembly. In the process, the apex court, apparently, brought Presidential actions under judicial review by favouring a three-month deadline for granting assent to Bills. The controversy took a new twist after Dhankhar used strong words against the judiciary, comparing Article 142 to a 'nuclear missile' available to the judiciary against democratic forces.

## Those will not be...

and Kashmir. My thoughts are with the family members of the deceased. Those involved in this dastardly act of terror will not be spared, and we will come down heavily on the perpetrators with the harshest consequences," he wrote on X. Amit Shah said he held a meeting via video conferencing with PM Modi. "Briefed PM Narendra Modi about the incident and held a meeting with the concerned officials via video conferencing. Will shortly leave for Srinagar to hold an urgent security review meeting with all the agencies," he added. The authorities in Jammu and Kashmir have pressed a chopper into service for the evacuation of the injured persons. Many injured people were brought down from the inaccessible meadows using ponies. A massive anti-terrorist operation has been launched to hunt down the terrorists. Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah called the attack "an abomination".

## 26 killed, over...

my colleague @sakinitoo & she has moved to the hospital to oversee arrangements for the injured. I'll be flying back to Srinagar immediately," he wrote in a post on X. The Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha earlier informed that the district administration and the health officials have been directed to provide immediate medical care to the injured tourists being treated at Pahalgam. "Directed the district administration and the health officials to provide immediate medical attention to those admitted at Pahalgam. An injured tourist has been evacuated to GMC Anantnag. I pray for the speedy recovery of all the injured," he wrote on X. PDP chief and former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Mehbooba Mufti, condemned the attack and called for a thorough investigation into the potential security lapses that caused it. "I strongly condemn the cowardly attack on tourists in Pahalgam, which tragically killed five and injured several. Such violence is unacceptable and must be denounced. Historically, Kashmir has welcomed tourists warmly, making this rare incident deeply concerning. A thorough investigation is needed to bring the perpetrators to justice and examine potential security lapses," she wrote in a post on X. "Ensuring visitor safety is paramount, and steps must be taken to prevent future attacks. Our thoughts are with the victims and their families," she added. Pahalgam MLA Altaf Kaloo also condemned the attack and called for swift action by the government to evacuate the injured. "Saddened to hear about the terrorist attack on tourists at Baisaran, Pahalgam. Praying for the victims. Urging @OfficeOfLGJandK, HCM @OmarAbdullah & @JmuKmrPolice to take swift action for evacuation and ensure the injured receive immediate medical assistance. Lives must be saved," he wrote on X.

## Jharsuguda Sizzles...

ensuring workers stay hydrated and take frequent water breaks. Additionally, heat stroke treatment rooms have been set up in all primary health centres to provide medical assistance. Jharsuguda's soaring temperature marks the highest recorded in Odisha this year, surpassing a 15-year-old record of 46.1°C set in 2010. As the state battles the extreme weather, officials remain on high alert for further precautionary measures.

## IMD issues...

wave condition very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Angul, Nupada, Kalahandi and Deogarh. 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. Day-5 (26th April 2025): ORANGE WARNING: Heat wave condition very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Balangir and Bargarh. YELLOW WARNING: Heat wave condition is very likely to prevail at one or two places over the districts of Boudh, Sonapur, Kalahandi and Sambalpur. 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.

## South Odisha...

Vandana Yojana, Sakhyam Anganwadi, Poshan Yojana, and other schemes over the last 18 months. "These initiatives have brought significant improvements to the lives of the district's tribal communities, ushering in a new era of inclusive and sustainable development," the official said. The assessment focused on the district's innovative approach, measurable impact, and commitment to inclusive, citizen-centric administration over time.

## Odia Tourist...

Baisran is a small meadow 3-4 km from the Pahalgam market, accessible only by horseback. Sources fear the casualty figure may rise. This is the first major terror attack targeting tourists in the Kashmir Valley in 2025, sending shockwaves through the region. Security has been heightened across the Anantnag district and nearby tourist zones, with reinforcements deployed and a search operation underway to track down any remaining threats.



# 'Please save my husband': Terror turns Pahalgam into a scene of blood and desperate cries



**Sri Nagar/New Delhi, (HS) :** It was around 2:30 pm when the calm of Baisaran meadows, a scenic stretch in Pahalgam's south Kashmir hills, known as 'mini Switzerland', was shattered by the rat-a-tat of guns. Moments later, cries for help echoed through the valley as terrified families rushed towards loved ones lying still, many of them drenched in blood. What had been a peaceful afternoon had quickly turned into one of the darkest days for civilians in Jammu and Kashmir in recent years.

Heavily-armed terrorists walked out of the woods of Baisaran, a meadow atop a hill, and surrounded a group of around 40 tourists. The terrorists started firing on the tourists indiscriminately, leaving multiple people dead and injuring at least 28. Eyewitnesses claimed that as soon as the bullets started flying, the handful of locals who earn a livelihood from tourism ran for safety, leaving the tourists as sitting ducks. "My husband was shot in the head... he was shot for not being a Muslim," a woman survivor told PTI over phone. The woman, who did not identify herself, pleaded for help in evacuating the injured to the hospital. "Bhaiyya please mere husband ko bacha lo (Brother, please save my husband),"



the woman pleaded frantically.

A video of the Pahalgam attack site emerged showing several people bleeding and lying motionless on the ground while women tourists were wailing and looking for their near and dear ones. Some were too stunned to react and were being helped by locals. As soon as the news of the attack broke out, the roads and streets of Pahalgam wore a deserted look as other tourists fled the resort town to safer places. As the famed meadows are only accessible by foot or on ponies, authorities had to summon choppers for the evacuation of the injured. However, before the helicopters arrived at the scene, some of the injured were brought down by local people on their ponies. The local tourist guides and ponywallahs consoled the survivors even as they summoned more people to evacuate the injured tourists on their shoulders to the nearest motorable point. Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah wrote on X saying that the death toll is still being ascertained. "This attack is much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years," he wrote. "I'm shocked beyond belief. This attack on our visitors is an abomination. The perpetrators of this attack are animals,

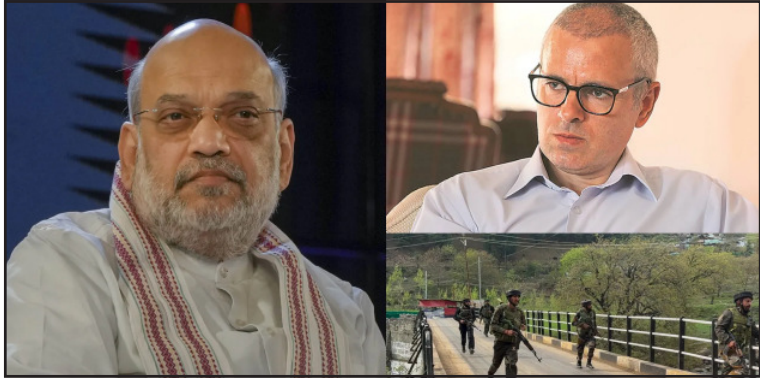
inhuman and worthy of contempt. No words of condemnation are enough. I send my sympathies to the families of the deceased," CM Abdullah said. In 2000, more than 30 persons had been killed and 60 others injured in a terror attack on Amarnath base camp in Pahalgam. A year later, 13 persons were killed and 15 others injured in an attack on Amarnath pilgrims at Sheshnag while 11 persons were killed in another attack in 2002 in the Pahalgam area.

Eight pilgrims were killed in a terror attack in 2017 as they were on the way home from Amarnath shrine. A tourist couple from Rajasthan was injured in a firing incident by terrorists at Yannar in Pahalgam in May last year. The incident comes when Kashmir is witnessing a surge in tourist arrivals after reeling under militancy for years. Also, the 38-day Amarnath pilgrimage is scheduled to begin on July 3. Lakhs of pilgrims from across the country travel to the Amarnath cave shrine from the twin routes -- the traditional 48-km Pahalgam route in south Kashmir's Anantnag district and the 14-km shorter but steep Baltal route in Ganderbal district. Baisaran is a major tourist place in Pahalgam besides being a campsite for trekkers who want to move further up to Tulian Lake.

## 'Shocked beyond belief': CM Omar Abdullah on Palgham terror attack

**NEW DELHI, (HS) :** Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said he was "shocked beyond belief" after terrorists, in Palgham district of the Valley, opened fire at the tourists, injuring several. Abdullah called the perpetrators of the attack "animals and inhuman" for whom "no words of condemnation are enough". "I'm shocked beyond belief. This attack on our visitors is an abomination. The perpetrators of this attack are animals, inhuman & worthy of contempt. No words of condemnation are enough. I send my sympathies to the families of the deceased. I've spoken to my colleague, Sakina Itoo & she has moved to the hospital to oversee arrangements for the injured. I'll be flying back to Srinagar immediately," the J&K CM wrote on X. Terrorists opened fire on tourists on Tuesday in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district, injuring several. The incident occurred at the Baisaran Valley area in Pahalgam.

## Amit Shah reaches Srinagar, to hold high-level meeting



**Sri Nagar/New Delhi, (HS) :** Over 28 people, mostly tourists were killed on Tuesday in a terrorist attack in the Baisaran Valley, a scenic area in Pahalgam, Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir. Gunshots were reported in the region-often dubbed "mini-Switzerland" for its natural beauty-prompting swift deployment of security forces. The remote, high-altitude location is accessible only by foot or horseback, complicating rescue operations. Authorities deployed a helicopter for evacuation, while locals used ponies to help bring the injured down from the meadows. At least 12 tourists were admitted to Pahalgam hospital, with doctors confirming that all were in stable condition. In response to the incident, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, currently on a visit to Saudi Arabia, spoke with Union home minister Amit Shah and directed him to ensure all necessary measures are taken. The PM also asked Shah to visit the attack site to oversee the situation firsthand. "Usha and I extend our condolences to the victims of the devastating terrorist attack in Pahalgam, India. Over the past few days, we have been overcome with the beauty of this country and its people. Our thoughts and prayers are with them as they mourn this horrific attack," he said. "The attack on tourists in Kashmir's Pahalgam that has reportedly claimed the lives of at least 26 people and injured many more once again highlights the challenges faced by security forces in J&K. This was a clear case of targeted killing aimed at spreading fear in the beginning of the tourist season. With tourism being a traditional source of revenue in Kashmir and heavily tied to govt's normalisation efforts, the terrorists wanted to send the message that J&K remains on the boil," writes Rudroneel Ghosh . "The heinous act of terror attack on tourist in Pahalgam of Jammu & Kashmir is highly condemnable and heart wrenching. We pay homage to deceased and pray for early recovery of the injured in this attack. This is an attack on the unity and integrity of our nation. All political parties and associations should rise above their differences and condemn this terror act. Government should ensure all required relief and assistance to the affected families and ensure appropriate punishment for the people responsible for this attack," Dattatreya Hosabale said.

## Actor Lalit Manchanda dies by suicide in Meerut



**Meerut, (HS) :** Actor Lalit Manchanda, who played key roles in TV shows like Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah and Crime Patrol, was found dead at his house in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, on Monday. A report states that the police have confirmed his cause of death as suicide.

The report states that Lalit was found dead at his home on April 21. Local law enforcement responded promptly after receiving a report about the incident. His body was reportedly found hanging. After being taken into custody, his body was transferred to a local facility for postmortem examination. No suicide note was found at the scene. And preliminary findings suggested there was no evidence of foul play or third-party involvement. Police have reportedly begun speaking to Lalit's family and close friends as part of the investigation. They are also examining the circumstances surrounding the death. With no suicide note found, the police are looking into mental health and recent events in Lalit's life, the report states. Those close to him have reportedly claimed that Lalit was dealing with mental stress and personal challenges in the last few months. Further details are awaited. On Tuesday, the official Instagram account of CINTAA shared a post confirming Lalit's death: "CINTAA expresses its condolences on the demise of Lalit Manchanda (member since 2012)."

Report states that Lalit has starred in several Bollywood films and TV shows in supporting roles. He was also recently working on a web series. He had a role in the long-running comedy series Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah and was known for portraying the role of a father in DD National channel's Sevanchal Ki Premkatha. He also played key roles in TV shows like India's Most Wanted, Crime Patrol and Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai, among others.

## TN Governor Judgment Would Not Cover Kerala's Case, Centre Tells SC

**New Delhi, (HS) :** The Union government on Tuesday told the Supreme Court that its recent judgement setting timelines for both the President and Governors to act on Bills would not cover the dispute between Kerala's Governor and Assembly. The top court was dealing with a plea filed by the Kerala government against "inaction" on the part of the Governor in giving assent to the bills passed by the Assembly.

Appearing on behalf of the Kerala government, senior advocate K.K. Venugopal submitted before a bench of Justices P.S. Narasimha and Joymalya Bagchi that its case would be squarely covered by the recent SC judgment in Tamil Nadu's Governor case. On the other hand, Attorney General for India R Venkataramani and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, the two topmost law officers of the Centre, said that Kerala's case is factually different and would not be covered by the latest judgment on interpretation of Article 200. "The Tamil Nadu judgment does not cover certain issues of this case on the facts. We would like to show those differences. I will put in a note," said Attorney General Venkataramani. After hearing the



submissions, the Justice Narasimha-led Bench said that it would examine whether the judgment in Tamil Nadu's Governor case was applicable to Kerala's case as well or if there were any differences, and posted the matter for hearing on May 6. In the case of Kerala, seven bills were referred to President Droupadi Murmu by then Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, post their re-adoption in a special Assembly session. The plea said that by keeping bills presented to him pending for such long periods, the Governor is directly violating the provision of the Constitution, namely, that the bill should

be dealt with "as soon as possible". The writ petition said that the words "as soon as possible" occurring in Article 200 of the Constitution necessarily mean that not only should pending bills be disposed of within a reasonable time, but that these Bills have to be dealt with urgently and expeditiously without any avoidable delay. Earlier this month, the top court, using its inherent powers under Article 142 of the Constitution, resolved a standoff between the Tamil Nadu government and Governor R.N. Ravi over the delay in granting assent to Bills passed by the Assembly. It ruled that Governor Ravi's refusal to approve 10 bills in Tamil Nadu was both "illegal and arbitrary" and set a three-month deadline for Presidential and gubernatorial approval of bills passed by the legislature for a second time. "The President is required to take a decision on the Bills reserved for his consideration by the Governor within a period of three months from the date on which such reference is received," said a bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and R. Mahadevan. If there is no decision within this time frame, states are entitled to file writ petitions seeking a writ of

mandamus against the President, the Justice Pardiwala-led Bench clarified.

The apex court used the powers for the purpose of declaring the 10 withheld Bills as deemed to have been assented to on the date when they were presented to the Governor after being reconsidered by the state legislature. The top court held that once a Bill is returned, re-passed by the legislature, and presented again to the Governor, it is not open for the Governor to reserve it for the President's consideration. Additionally, the President is now under an obligation to provide reasons for their decision, which must be communicated to the state government. Further, it suggested that the President should consult the Supreme Court on Bills involving Constitutional issues. The judgment, apparently, brought Presidential actions under judicial review by favouring a three-month deadline for granting assent to Bills. The issue took a new twist after Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar used strong words against the judiciary, comparing Article 142 to a 'nuclear missile' available to the judiciary against democratic forces.

## Accused Mushtaq Ali killed in police encounter while trying to escape in Jammu district

**Jammu, (HS) :** A man identified as Mushtaq Ali alias Bacchu Don, wanted in multiple criminal cases, died after sustaining injuries during an escape attempt while in police custody. The incident occurred as a police team was returning from Amritsar to Jammu after arresting the accused, the Jammu and Kashmir Police said on Tuesday. According to an official statement, a police party from Jammu was sent to Baba Batala in Amritsar, Punjab, on Monday to apprehend two wanted individuals with the assistance of the Punjab Police. The two accused, including Mushtaq Ali, son of Mohammad Sadiq and resident of Kikri Morh, Bari Brahmana, were arrested. Both were wanted in multiple criminal cases within the Jammu-Kathua-Samba range.

While returning from Amritsar, the accused reportedly asked the police to halt the vehicle, citing a nature's call. During the stop, both accused allegedly attacked

the police personnel, attempted to snatch their weapons, and tried to escape, said the Jammu and Kashmir police. The police party managed to bring the situation under control, but Mushtaq Ali, in an attempt to flee, fell on the road and sustained grievous injuries. He was immediately shifted to the Government Medical College (GMC) Hospital in Jammu, where doctors declared him dead. Four police personnel received minor injuries during the incident, and further investigation is underway, according to the police. Following the incident, a case has been registered under FIR No. 33/2025 at the Police Station Bishnah, under the relevant sections of the law. Legal formalities have been initiated. The police have also requested the District Magistrate of Jammu to constitute a board of doctors for conducting the post-mortem of the deceased and initiate a necessary inquiry into the matter.

## 'Will soon expose conspirators': Mamata on Murshidabad violence; to visit site in May



**KOLKATA, (HS) :** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday asserted that "outsiders" were responsible for the violence that erupted in parts of Murshidabad district over the Waqf Act recently, and said she would visit the troubled areas in the first week of May to evaluate the situation. Banerjee also said her government would

soon expose the conspirators" behind the riots that took place in two wards of Dhulian in the district. "The violence was unfortunate. We do not want riots. Some outsiders orchestrated it, but we will expose them and their conspiracy," she said at an administrative programme in Midnapore. "I have promised the families of those killed in the violence to give a compensation of Rs 10 lakh each. We will also rebuild their houses under the 'Banglar Bari' scheme... I will be going there in the first week of May and evaluate the situation," Banerjee said. The CM also said that the state government could take responsibility for the education of the children of those killed in the violence. "We are surveying the damages faced by the shopkeepers there," she said. Governor C V Ananda Bose had on April 19 met family members of a man and his son, who were killed after protests against the Waqf (Amendment) Act turned violent in Murshidabad district, and assured them of all possible support. At least three people died and over 280 have been arrested in connection with the violence earlier this month.

## Trainer aircraft crashes in Gujarat's Amreli, one killed

**AHMEDABAD, (HS) :** A deadly crash jolted Amreli as a trainer aircraft from a private aviation academy plunged into a residential area near Giria Road, killing a trainee pilot on April 22. The incident has sent shockwaves through the local community, raising fresh concerns over flight safety in training operations. Eyewitnesses reported that three people were injured in the chaos that followed the plane crash. "An aircraft crash-landed into a residential area in the Giriya Road area of Amreli town around 12:30 pm for unknown reasons," said Amreli Superintendent of Police Sanjay Kharat. "There is a flying institute in the Amreli police

station area that offers pilot training. Our investigation has revealed that a training aircraft from the institute crashed during a session, resulting in the death of a trainee pilot. No one else was injured in the accident," he said.

"A case has been registered at the local police station, and further investigation is underway," he added. "This was a trainer aircraft with permission for solo flying," Amreli Collector Ajay Dahiya told local media. "There is no damage in the surrounding area. The plane struck a tree and caught fire. We have received information about the incident and informed the DGCA. DGCA will carry out the investigation," Ajay added.

## 74-year-old woman who tested positive for Covid-19 dies in Indore

**Indore, (HS) :** A 74-year-old woman who had tested positive for Covid-19 died while undergoing treatment in Madhya Pradesh's Indore district, an official said on Tuesday. The woman, a resident of Indore, was admitted to Aurobindo Hospital on April 19 after suffering from cold-cough and fever for the last 20-25 days. She succumbed in the early hours of Tuesday at around 2 am, he added. Chief Medical and Health Officer (CMHO), Dr B S Setia told ANI, "Two patients have tested positive for Covid-19 at Aurobindo hospital on Monday evening, which includes a 74-year-old woman who was admitted here on April 19. She was suffering from cold-cough and fever for the last 20-25 days, and she died while undergoing treatment at around 2 am. Another patient, a resident of Dewas district, has also tested positive, and his health condition is stable. The patient who died due to multi-organ failure and septicemia." Currently, only two patients have tested positive for COVID-19 here in the district, he added. Meanwhile, Indore Collector Ashish Singh said that there was no need to panic and all the situations were under control. "Two patients tested positive for Covid-19, of which one patient who was suffering from other diseases too died due to multi-organ failure. Though she was tested positive, there is no need to panic at all. All the contacts of both patients have also been tested and instructed to be isolated. If required, then we will hospitalise them. All the situation is under control and there is no need to panic," he said.



## Iran Ready For Deal With US If National Interests Respected: President Pezeshkian

**Tehran, (H.S):** Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said that Iran is open to reaching an agreement with the US in ongoing indirect talks, provided that the country's national interests are preserved. "In the negotiations with the United States, we are ready for an agreement within a defined framework and while ensuring our national interests," Pezeshkian said on Monday during a meeting in Tehran.

However, if they (US representatives) refrain from negotiating with us on equal terms, we will continue on our own path," the Iranian president warned. He added that, as previously stated by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran remains "neither optimistic nor pessimistic" about the negotiations, Xinhua news agency reported.

Pezeshkian also reiterated that Tehran does not seek conflict but would resist any attempt at coercion. "We do not want confrontation with anyone, but we will not tolerate pressure or bullying," he said. His comments followed the second round of indirect talks between Iran and the United States, held in Rome on



Saturday with mediation from Oman. The first round took place in Muscat on April 12, and a third session is scheduled to be held in the Omani capital again this coming Saturday. At a weekly news conference in Tehran, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said the removal of US sanctions remained Iran's principal demand in the negotiations.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump described the recent talks as "very good." Speaking to reporters over the weekend, Trump said, "We had very good meetings actually on Iran," adding, "The next step is we need a little time." The discussions came in the wake of a letter sent by Trump to Iran's

leadership in early March, proposing talks on Tehran's nuclear programme. Trump later warned of military action should Iran reject his offer for talks. Iran signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with six world powers - Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia, and the United States - in 2015.

Under the deal, Tehran agreed to curb its nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief. The United States, led by Trump during his first term, unilaterally withdrew from the accord in 2018 and reimposed sanctions, prompting Iran to gradually reduce compliance with its nuclear commitments. Efforts to revive the agreement have not achieved substantial progress.

## Why Migrants, Including Indians, Are Losing Work Permits in Canada

**Ottawa, (H.S):** Thousands of migrants living in Canada, including Indians, are losing their work permits due to long delays in the paperwork renewal process, as growing backlogs and changing rules hinder efforts to maintain legal status. Despite paying taxes, migrants in Canada can't work legally or access medical care and other services if they lose their legal status. Among those who lost their permit is Devi Acharya, who moved to Canada from India with her husband and son in October 2022. Acharya miscarried in March because she did not go to a hospital, as she could not afford another medical bill.

She does not have health coverage for the same reason she cannot work -- her work permit expired while she waited for a labour market impact assessment, and if she sought medical care, she could be handed a hefty bill. "If I got medical attention on time, maybe we could have saved the baby," she told Reuters. Acharya was working in housekeeping at Prince Rupert's Highliner Hotel in British Columbia before she lost her job. She liked the work and recently bought a house with her husband. They applied for new labour market impact assessments in September, her



immigration consultant told Reuters. They have received no response, and their work permits have expired. They are in Canada legally but cannot work. Their son, Navdev, now five years old, cannot go to school. "Two years before we were dreaming of making Canada home," she said, "and now it's shattering." Canada has long blamed migrants for straining services and resources amid housing shortages and rising rents.

Ottawa is trying to reduce the number of migrants and is reportedly relying on people to leave voluntarily to meet its targets. Living undocumented in Canada is rare in part because it is so difficult to access services without status. The labour market impact assessment processing time for temporary workers hoping to become permanent residents in Canada has been increasing since at least

fall 2022. It has almost tripled from 58 business days in September 2023 to 165 business days in March 2025. Quoting an email from Service Canada -- which processes these applications -- Reuters reported that as of April 1, 2025, the department was still processing labour market impact assessment applications submitted a year earlier.

We are seeing a backlog now of more than a year. ... It's the first time we are seeing such a delay," said immigration consultant Kanwar Sierah. It is not known exactly how many people have lost their work permits due to delays so far, but Reuters spoke to at least four families who are in this distress. According to Canada's immigration department, migrants can keep working as long as they get a labour market impact assessment needed to maintain their status within 60 days of applying to

renew their work permit. But the department does not have guidelines for people who lost status because of long waits. The department has attributed the lengthier waits, in part, to an influx of applications, but would not provide the number of applications pending by month. The number of people applying for work permits within the country has grown compared to last year, as has the share of those applications that Canada is refusing, data from Canada's immigration department shows.

Experts say changing rules, as well as more applicants, may be contributing to the growing backlog. "People are losing their immigration status," Sierah said, and added that some people are working under the table for exploitative employers or falling victim to "unscrupulous actors" who give them bad advice, for example, by urging them to apply for asylum when they may not have a strong case. Canada's Liberal government pledged to give undocumented people status but then backtracked and said it would provide it on a small scale for people working in certain sectors. Prime Minister Mark Carney, who leads polls ahead of an April 28 election, promises to cap immigration for now.

## Sharp Escalation In Trump vs Harvard, Lawsuit Flags Serious Violations

**New York, (H.S):** Harvard sued US President Donald Trump's administration Monday in a sharp escalation of the fight between the prestigious university and the Republican, who has threatened its funding and sought to impose outside political supervision. Trump has sought to bring several prestigious universities to heel over claims they tolerated campus anti-Semitism, threatening their budgets, tax-exempt status and the enrolment of foreign students, but Harvard has refused to bow.

This case involves the Government's efforts to use the withholding of federal funding as leverage to gain control of academic decision making at Harvard," the Ivy League university said in a lawsuit filed in a Massachusetts federal court that named several other institutions targeted by Trump. "The Government's actions flout not just the First Amendment, but also federal laws and regulations," said the complaint, which called Trump's actions "arbitrary and capricious." Trump is furious at Harvard for rejecting government supervision of its admissions, hiring practices and political slant and last week ordered the freezing of \$2.2 billion in federal funding to the storied institution. The



lawsuit calls for the freezing of funds and conditions imposed on federal grants to be declared unlawful, as well as for the Trump administration to pay Harvard's costs. Trump and his White House team have publicly justified their campaign against universities as a reaction to what they say is uncontrolled "anti-Semitism" and a need to reverse diversity programs aimed at addressing historical oppression of minorities. The administration claims protests against Israel's war in Gaza that swept across US college campuses last year were rife with anti-Semitism. Many US universities, including Harvard, cracked down on the protests over the allegations at the time, with the Cambridge-based institution placing 23 students on probation and denying degrees to 12 others, according to protest organizers.

"Harvard can no longer be considered even a decent place of learning, and should not be considered on any list of the World's Great Universities or Colleges," Trump said on his Truth Social platform last week. "Harvard is a JOKE, teaches Hate and Stupidity, and should no longer receive Federal Funds." - "Sweeping freeze" - Harvard President Alan Garber said that Trump's administration had launched "numerous investigations" into the university's operations. Last week, Garber flatly refused to "negotiate over (Harvard's) independence or its constitutional rights." Other top institutions, including Columbia University, have bowed to less sweeping demands from the Trump administration, which claims that the educational elite is too left-

wing. The Department of Homeland Security has also threatened Harvard's ability to enroll international students unless it turns over records on visa-holders' "illegal and violent activities." International students made up 27.2 percent of Harvard's enrollment this academic year, according to its website. "Make no mistake: Harvard rejects anti-Semitism and discrimination in all of its forms and is actively making structural reforms to eradicate anti-Semitism on campus," said Monday's lawsuit.

But rather than engage with Harvard regarding those ongoing efforts, the Government announced a sweeping freeze of funding for medical, scientific, technological, and other research that has nothing at all to do with anti-Semitism." Trump's claims about diversity tap into long-standing conservative complaints that US university campuses are too liberal, shutting out right-wing voices and favoring minorities. In the case of Harvard, the White House is seeking unprecedented levels of government control over the inner workings of the country's oldest and wealthiest university -- and one of the most respected educational and research institutions in the world.



**New York, (H.S):** Kash Patel, FBI Director, has assured that "justice will be done" following the arrest of Gangster-turned-terrorist Harpreet Singh in the US. Singh alias Happy Passia alias Jora, wanted in connection with multiple terror attacks across Punjab and who is alleged to have collaborated with Pakistan's ISI and Khalistani group BKI, was arrested in the US on April 18 by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and US Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Enforcement and Removal Operations in Sacramento. CAPTURED: HARPREET SINGH, part of an

alleged foreign terrorist gang here illegally in the United States, who we believe was involved in planning multiple attacks on police stations both in India and the United States. @FBISacramento conducted the investigation, coordinating with our partners locally as well as in India," Indian-American Patel said in a post on X on Monday. Excellent work from all, and justice will be done. The FBI will continue finding those who perpetrate violence - no matter where they are," the first Indian-American to lead the premier law enforcement agency of the United States said in the post. Singh is

suspected to have collaborated with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and the Khalistani terrorist group Babbar Khalsa International (BKI). "He had been evading capture by using untraceable burner phones and encrypted applications. This case reinforces the importance of international cooperation in apprehending those who threaten global security," FBI Sacramento said on April 18. In January, India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) announced a cash reward of Rs 5 lakh on gangster Harpreet. He is wanted in a case of a hand grenade attack on a house in Chandigarh.

## Russia Welcomes US Proposal To Keep Ukraine Away From NATO

**Moscow, (H.S):** Russia welcomes the United States statements that Ukraine's potential NATO membership is off the table, Russian Presidential Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Monday. "We have heard statements made at various levels in Washington that Ukraine's NATO membership is ruled out. This is something that brings us satisfaction and aligns with our stance," Russian state-run news agency TASS quoted Peskov as saying. US President Donald Trump stated earlier in the month that, despite Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's desire for Ukraine to join



NATO, it would never happen. Trump also suggested that the Ukrainian conflict could have been triggered by Kyiv's ambitions to join the alliance. Meanwhile, Trump said that he

hopes that a deal on settling the Ukrainian crisis will be made in the coming week. "Hopefully Russia and Ukraine will make a deal this week. Both will then start to do big business with the United States of America," he wrote on his Truth Social network. On the other hand, Russian President Vladimir Putin declared a cessation of hostilities on the eve of Easter, at a Saturday meeting with Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces Valery Gerasimov. The 30-hour truce lasted between 6:00 p.m.

Moscow time on April 19 and midnight on April 21. Russian troops strictly complied with the ceasefire during the Easter truce and stayed at their lines and positions, Russia's Defence Ministry reported on Monday. "In compliance with the order by the supreme commander-in-chief of the Russian Armed Forces, all the battle groups strictly observed the ceasefire and stayed at their lines and positions in the special military operation area during the specified time," the ministry said in a statement. However despite the declared Easter truce, Ukrainian armed formations kept delivering artillery fire and strikes by unmanned aerial vehicles on the positions of Russian troops and civilian facilities in the border areas of the Belgorod, Bryansk and Kursk Regions and the Republic of Crimea, the ministry stated.

## Early Voting Opens in Australia's General Election

**Canberra, (H.S):** Early voting began in Australia's general election on Tuesday, with about half of the country's 18 million registered voters expected to cast their ballots before election day on May 3. Hundreds of early voting centres across Australia opened their doors from 8:30 a.m. local time as the election campaign entered its final stretch. The proportion of Australians choosing to vote early, either in person or by post, has steadily increased at recent federal elections from under 20 per cent in 2004 to almost 50 per cent in 2022.

Voting in elections is mandatory for over 18 million citizens aged 18 and over who are enrolled to do so with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC). According to the AEC, eligible voter enrollment for the May 3 election is a record-high 98.2 per cent, Xinhua news agency reported. Although millions of votes will be cast early, AEC staff cannot start counting any ballots until polls close at 6 p.m. local time on May 3. Jill Sheppard, a senior lecturer in politics and international relations at the Australian



National University, said that the rise in early voting could be attributed to the convenience of pre-polling as well as growing disengagement among voters with political parties and campaigns. Earlier on April 21, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said that the country's upcoming general election was still "up for grabs" despite polls showing his Labour Party was on track to win a second term in government. The campaign restart came one day before early voting opened across the country on Tuesday - offering millions of Australians the opportunity to avoid long queues to cast their mandatory votes - and after several new opinion polls showed that Labour had increased its lead over the Coalition among

voters. The latest edition of Newspoll, published by News Corp Australia on Sunday, reported a 52-48 lead for Labour over the Coalition on a two-party preferred basis. A separate poll published by the Australian branch of UK firm YouGov on Friday put Labour ahead 53-47, marking the government's strongest two-party result in the firm's poll in 18 months, Xinhua news agency reported. Labour had won the 2022 general election 52.13-47.87 over the Coalition on a two-party basis. When asked on Monday if Labour was in pole position to win the election, Albanese pointed to lessons the party had learned from 2019, when polls had widely forecast a Labour victory only for the Coalition to win a third term in

power in a result hailed by then-PM Scott Morrison on election night as a "miracle." "There's no complacency from my camp," Albanese told reporters in the state of New South Wales. "This election is certainly up for grabs." Dutton, who on Monday announced that a Coalition government would spend 750 million Australian dollars (\$482 million) on a crime crackdown, including a national register of sex offenders, also pointed to the 2019 election when asked about the polls. "Not too many people were predicting a Coalition victory in 2019.

A lot of people were busy with work, busy in their lives. Many Australians didn't know there was an election coming up," he said in Melbourne. "We can well and truly win the election from here." When Australians visited polling places across the country to vote, they did so on a preference basis - assigning their first preference to the candidate in their local electorate whom they most wanted to represent them in the lower house of the federal parliament. If no candidate in an electorate received a majority of first preference votes, candidates

with the fewest votes were eliminated and their votes distributed based on the preferences marked by individual voters. Australia was divided geographically into 150 electorates, each with approximately the same number of voters. Labour entered the election holding 77 seats in the lower house compared to 53 for the Coalition.

Some electorates had as many as 13 candidates running in the election. The Newspoll published on Sunday found that 34 per cent of respondents intended to vote for their Labour candidate as their first preference - the highest since January 2024 - and 35 per cent for the Coalition, while the YouGov poll had both major parties tied at 33 per cent. Labour traditionally received fewer first preference votes than the Coalition but performed better on preferences. Labour received 32.5 per cent of first preference votes in 2022, compared to 35.7 per cent for the Coalition, but benefited from over 85 per cent of votes for the Greens, Australia's third-largest party, flowing its way.



## FM Sitharaman Invites Global Ceos, Investors To Join India's Growth Story



**San Francisco, (H.S):** Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman met global CEOs, pension fund managers and other institutional investors here, and discussed the opportunity for collaboration in the domain of energy and sustainability, the Rs 1 lakh crore (\$12 billion) corpus private sector-driven research, development, and innovation scheme, and GIFT-IFSC, among others. In the presence of Finance Secretary Ajay Seth and

Vinay Mohan Kwatra, Ambassador of India to the US, the Finance Minister listened to their views on the reforms pursued by the Indian government, and gave feedback and observation on the existing policy framework. They spoke about their keen interest and commitment for a deeper and broad-based investment collaboration between the US and India and shared feedback on how to further facilitate and enhance the investment

experience. The Union Minister thanked the participants for their valuable feedback and suggestions. In her one-on-one meetings with top CEOs, FM Sitharaman discussed opportunities in the fields of AI, Cloud and digital infrastructure. Jonathan Siddharth, CEO of Turing, expressed his desire to see India at the forefront of AI revolution and spoke about working in the domain of AI with India and through Indian contributors to create a sovereign

model that can serve as a template for the world. The Finance Minister highlighted policy framework that has been put in place by India for AI, and encouraged Siddharth to explore opportunities for collaboration and fruitful engagement. Debanjan Saha, Chief Executive Officer at DataRobot, referred to India's potential to become an AI superpower and expressed interest in participating in the AI Centre of Excellence, for which the Union Budget 2025-26 recently allocated Rs 500 crore.

The minister underlined the steps that the government has taken over years to boost digital infrastructure, including budgeting Rs. 10,300 crore for India AI Mission, creating AI language technologies through Bharat Gen and Sarvam-1, and the establishment of the Srijan Centre for Generative AI at IIT Jodhpur. She informed Saha about the potential opportunity through the proposed Rs. 1 lakh crore corpus for private sector-driven research, development, and innovation. In her meeting

with Anjney Midha, General Partner at Andreessen Horowitz, and VMware CEO Raghu Raghuram, the minister discussed the remarkable transformation in technology space driven by the visionary leadership of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, suggesting them to explore collaboration across sectors within the domain of AI. She also met Thomas Kurian, Chief Executive Officer of Google Cloud and his team. They discussed the transformative evolution of India's digital infrastructure under the Digital India initiative in recent years, positioning the country as a global leader in digital adoption.

Kurian acknowledged and appreciated India's AI Mission, and the trajectory India is taking under the leadership of PM Modi and called for connecting India to the world via land and sea cables. He said that Google Cloud aims to operate entirely on carbon-free energy at its data centres and offices worldwide by 2030 and spoke about upcoming investment strategy that the group is working on for India.

## DPIIT & Stride Ventures announce the winner of the Bharat Startup

**New Delhi, (PIB):** Grand Challenge 2025, with funding of up to INR 10 crore. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), in partnership with Startup India and Stride Ventures, announced the startup Buoyancy Plastics for Change Recycling Private Limited as the winner of the Bharat Startup Grand Challenge 2025, an initiative aimed at recognizing and empowering high-impact, homegrown startups. The winner was chosen from over 120 startup applications received during the 30 days of running the challenge. Applications were received from 22 states of the country, from startups working in the sustainability, fintech and e-mobility sector. The winner of this Challenge, Plastics for Change, was founded in 2015, and focuses on building a Fair Trade verified recycled plastics supply chain.

The company is currently focused on ethical sourcing and aggregation of plastic waste to provide high-quality rPET, rHDPE and rPP materials to recycling units. Working directly with informal waste and plastics collectors and integrating them into the formal economy, the startup currently has a collection capacity of more than 20,000-ton and is now aiming to further deepen its presence in the Indian plastics recycling sector. Stride Ventures is the largest venture debt fund in India, having committed over \$1 Billion to over 170 new-age startups in the last five years.

Stride has now expanded its footprint to Singapore, Abu Dhabi, Riyadh and London. Earlier this year, Stride Ventures signed an MOU with DPIIT to provide funding, network, market access as well as mentorship support to budding startups across the country, as well as help Indian startups scale globally. This was the first time Stride Ventures hosted a Bharat Startup Grand Challenge. For the winner's, Stride Ventures announced investing up to ₹10 Crore, subject to due diligence, along with further ecosystem support, mentorship and access to Stride's network to help further scale up the startup's endeavours in sustainability and circularity in India.

## Nifty Turns 29: From 1,000 In 1996 To Over 26,000, A Look At Its Journey So Far

**Mumbai, (H.S):** Over nearly three decades, the Nifty index has evolved into a key barometer of the Indian equity market, growing from a base value of 1,000 to over 26,000. On Tuesday, the Nifty marked its 29th anniversary, continuing to serve as a reflection of India's economic growth, investor confidence, and market sentiment.

Launched by the National Stock Exchange (NSE) on April 22, 1996, the Nifty was introduced just two years after the exchange began operations. The index was created with a base date of November 3, 1995, and a base value of 1,000. Today, it tracks the performance of 50 of the most traded and largest companies in India across 15 sectors and represents about 55.48 per cent of the NSE's total free-float market capitalisation as of March 28, 2025. Since its inception, the index

has witnessed phenomenal growth. It crossed 1,000 points in 1999, 5,000 by 2007, and 10,000 in 2017. Its rise accelerated after 2020, with the index breaching 15,000 in February 2021 and surpassing 26,000 in September 2024. The highest closing level so far was 26,216.05 on September 26, 2024, with an all-time intra-day high of 26,277.35 recorded the following day.

This remarkable rally was supported by strong corporate earnings, high levels of participation from retail and institutional investors, and steady macroeconomic performance. However, the journey hasn't been without challenges. The index has weathered multiple global and domestic shocks, including the 2008 financial crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the recent

uncertainty over a US recession triggered by reciprocal tariffs announced by US President Donald Trump. Despite these disruptions, the index has consistently shown resilience, bouncing back with strength and continuing its upward trajectory. The index has also played a pivotal role in developing India's derivatives market.

Futures and options trading on the Nifty began on June 12, 2000, and it remains one of the most actively traded instruments on the exchange. Meanwhile, the NSE is preparing for its own market debut. In March 2025, the exchange submitted a detailed response to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), addressing queries regarding its IPO plans and seeking approval to file its draft red herring prospectus (DRHP).

## Gold Touches 1 Lakh Per 10 Grams For 1st Time

**New Delhi, (PIB):** Gold prices reached a historic milestone on Tuesday as the rate of 24-carat gold touched Rs 1,00,000 per 10 grams for the first time ever. According to the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA), the price of 24-carat gold rose sharply from Rs 96,670 to Rs 1,00,000 per 10 grams - a jump of Rs 3,300 within 24 hours.

Along with 24-carat gold, other categories also saw a steep rise. The price of 22-carat gold climbed to Rs 97,600 per 10 grams, 20-carat gold reached Rs 89,000 per 10 grams, and 18-carat gold touched Rs 81,000 per 10 grams. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), October futures briefly went above the Rs 1 lakh mark and touched an all-time high of Rs 1,00,484 per 10 grams - gaining nearly Rs 2,000 or 2 per cent in a single



day. Experts say the sudden spike in gold prices is due to increased global demand for gold as a safe-haven investment. "The new all-time-high attained by the yellow metal is primarily influenced by the rising tensions between President Trump and US Fed Chair Jerome Powell regarding the Fed rate cut," said Colin Shah, MD, Kama Jewellery. This demand has been driven by rising geopolitical tensions and ongoing

global economic uncertainties. His recent comments and decisions, including imposing tariffs on Chinese goods and questioning the Fed's policies, have added to market volatility. The weakening US dollar and interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve have made gold, a non-yielding asset, more attractive to investors. Lower interest rates reduce the cost of holding gold, which leads to higher investments in the yellow

metal. Another major reason behind the price surge is central banks across the world, including India and China, increasing their gold reserves. This strategy, known as 'de-dollarisation', is aimed at reducing reliance on the US dollar and preparing for economic uncertainties by investing more in gold.

While the gold price is on an upward trajectory, the fall in dollar will make gold affordable in other currencies, keeping the demand-price dynamics balanced," Shah stated. He added that domestically, it is observed that gold price witnesses a slight rise around festive season like Akshaya Tritiya, in reflection to the spike in demand. With these global factors at play, analysts believe that gold prices may remain high in the near future.

## Jindal Stainless & AB Energia set new benchmark with Odisha's largest captive industrial solar plant

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** India's largest stainless steel manufacturer, Jindal Stainless, and one of India's leading clean energy solution providers, AB Energia Solutions Pvt. Ltd.,

today announced the successful installation and commissioning of a pioneering solar energy project at Jindal Stainless' manufacturing unit in Jajpur, Odisha. This ground-breaking initiative boasts a cumulative capacity of over 30 MWp, making it the largest

captive solar energy plant within a single industrial campus in Odisha. The solar energy plant installed by Jindal Stainless at its Jajpur unit in partnership with AB Energia comprises a 7.324 MWp floating solar plant and a 23.02 MWp rooftop solar system.

The state-of-the-art plant is capable of generating approximately 44.3 million units (MU) of green energy annually, significantly reducing the Jajpur unit's dependence on conventional

grid electricity. This is equivalent to powering 12,000-15,000 households or cutting CO2 emissions by 32,208 metric tonnes annually. Largest captive solar plant in Odisha:

Jindal Stainless' Jajpur unit now hosts Odisha's largest captive green energy generation plant. Innovative installation: The project is a showcase of both scale and innovation, seamlessly blending AB Energia's engineering expertise with Jindal Stainless' commitment to sustainability. It

features a 7.324 MWp floating solar plant ingeniously deployed on an internal reservoir-transforming previously unused water bodies into productive assets that not only generate clean energy but also help reduce water evaporation.

Complementing this, a 23.02 MWp rooftop solar system has been installed across 10 industrial roofs at varying elevations, making optimal use of available space and maximising energy output. Environmental Impact:

The initiative will reduce CO2 emissions by 32,208 metric tonnes each year-equivalent to planting 1,288 trees annually-significantly decreasing the facility's dependence on conventional grid electricity.

Managing Director, Jindal Stainless, Mr Abhyuday Jindal said, "At Jindal Stainless, we're accelerating our progress towards achieving our Net Zero goals and investing in sustainable infrastructure through strategic partnerships. The

commissioning of Odisha's largest captive solar energy plant at our Jajpur facility is a major leap in this journey. We are redefining the future of stainless steel manufacturing in India by integrating innovative renewable energy solutions and staying accountable to global sustainability standards."

"Delivering this landmark project at Jindal Stainless' Jajpur facility exemplifies AB Energia's commitment to pioneering sustainable energy solutions. By

transforming unused water bodies into productive assets and optimizing rooftop spaces, we are setting new benchmarks for green innovation in India's industrial sector.

By enabling a transition away from fossil fuels and toward renewable sources, projects like this not only drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also enhance operational efficiency, cost stability, and long-term competitiveness for industrial players.

## RBI Issues New LCR Guidelines For Banks



**Mumbai, (H.S):** The RBI has issued new Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) guidelines which will require a bank to assign additional run-off rates of 2.5 per cent to internet and mobile banking-enabled retail and small business customer deposits with effect from April 1, 2026. Banks will also have to adjust the market value of Government Securities (Level 1 HQLA) with haircuts in line with margin requirements under the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) and Marginal Standing Facility (MSF).

In addition, the final guidelines also rationalise the composition of wholesale funding from "other legal entities". Consequently, funding from non-financial entities like trusts (educational, charitable and religious), partnerships, LLPs, etc., shall attract a lower run-off rate of 40 per cent as against 100

per cent currently. "To give the banks adequate time to transition their systems to the new standards for LCR computation, the revised instructions shall become applicable with effect from April 1, 2026," the RBI statement said. The Reserve Bank has undertaken an impact analysis of the above measures based on data submitted by banks, as on December 31, 2024.

It is estimated that the net impact of these measures will improve the LCR of banks, at the aggregate level, by around 6 percentage points as on that date. Further, all the banks would continue to meet the minimum regulatory LCR requirements comfortably. The RBI is sanguine that these measures will enhance the liquidity resilience of banks in India, and further align the guidelines with the global standards in a non-disruptive

manner, according to an RBI statement. The Reserve Bank had issued a draft circular on July 25, 2024, on "Basel III Framework on Liquidity Standards - Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) - Review of Haircuts on High Quality Liquid Assets (HQLA) and Run-off Rates on Certain Categories of Deposits".

The draft circular proposed certain amendments to the LCR framework and invited comments from banks and stakeholders. The final LCR guidelines have been issued after carefully examining this feedback, the RBI statement added. The Liquidity Coverage Ratio is a regulatory standard developed by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision. It requires banks to hold a buffer of High Quality Liquid Assets (HQLA) that can cover expected net cash outflows over a 30-day stress scenario.

## Ministry of Coal Hosts Stakeholder Consultation on Sustainable Coal Transportation through RSR Mode

**New Delhi, (PIB):** The Ministry of Coal today convened a stakeholder consultation on "Exploring the Opportunities for Sustainable Coal Transportation through the Rail-Sea-Rail (RSR) Mode" in New Delhi. The consultation aimed at driving consensus and synergy among key players in the coal logistics value chain to promote multimodal transportation for a more efficient, resilient, and sustainable future.

Delivering the keynote address, Shri Vikram Dev Dutt, Secretary, Ministry of Coal, termed the RSR model as a forward-looking initiative that aligns with the nation's broader goals of enhancing logistical efficiency, ensuring energy security, and promoting environmental sustainability. He underscored that RSR transportation, which integrates rail and coastal shipping, is not only an economical alternative but also significantly environment-friendly due to its lower carbon footprint. Shri Dutt emphasized the importance of embracing innovative, smarter, greener, and more resilient multimodal



transport systems to meet the growing demand for coal in distant consumption centers, especially in Southern and Western India. He called for close coordination among Ministries, State Governments, power generation companies (Gencos), coal producers, port authorities, and logistics providers to streamline infrastructure, optimize operations, and remove procedural bottlenecks for the successful implementation of RSR movement.

The consultation witnessed active participation from a wide array of stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Ministry

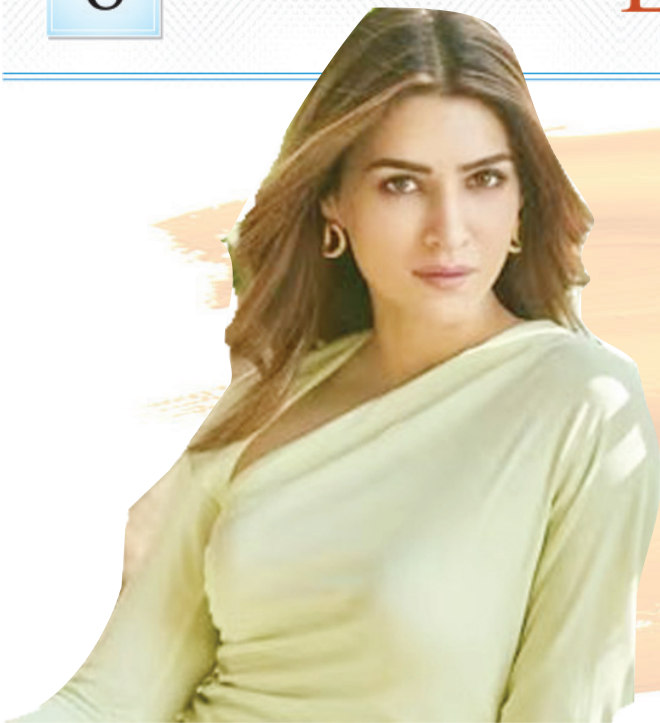
of Power, State Governments, Coal India Limited (CIL), captive and commercial miners, Gencos and port operators. During the discussions, stakeholders shared valuable insights and practical suggestions on enhancing intermodal connectivity, deploying mechanized coal handling infrastructure at ports, improving rake availability, and rationalizing port charges.

With a projection of transporting 120 MT of coal through the Rail-Sea-Rail (RSR) mode by FY 2030, the Ministry of Coal has set a target of 65 MT to be moved via this route by FY 2026. This goal will be supported by key initiatives such as the Telescopic Freight Circular issued by the Ministry of Railways,

which provides substantial freight savings, and the planned infrastructure expansion under the Rail Sagar Corridor to enhance port connectivity. Going forward, adequate rake supply and robust rail infrastructure connecting mines to ports will be crucial responsibilities of the Ministry of Railways. The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) will play a vital role by optimizing shipping and port handling charges and developing dedicated coal berths.

These coordinated inter-ministerial efforts are expected to provide strong momentum to the RSR model and significantly improve the sustainability and efficiency of coal transportation across the country. The Ministry reiterated its commitment to advancing multimodal coal logistics by fostering inter-agency collaboration, promoting infrastructure investment, and providing policy support to unlock the full potential of the RSR transportation model thereby supporting India's journey toward energy security and sustainable growth.





# Kriti to join Ranveer in Farhan's Don 3

Insiders reveal that actor Kriti Sanon's expected to sign the official paperwork within the next two weeks. Bollywood actor Kriti Sanon is poised to join Ranveer Singh in Farhan Akhtar's Don 3, having given her nod to the project in principle. According to a report by Pinkvilla, the 34-year-old National Award winning actor is likely to officially sign the film within the next couple of weeks. "Farhan Akhtar and the

creative team of Excel Entertainment were looking to cast an experienced actress with a screen presence on board Don 3, and Kriti Sanon fits the bill like hand in glove. She has the aura to play Roma on screen, and is excited to sign the dotted lines soon," a source was quoted as saying by the portal.

In 2023, it was confirmed that Ranveer Singh would take on the iconic role of Don-carrying the legacy

forward from Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan-Farhan Akhtar confirmed his return to direction after over ten years. Recently it was reported that Kiara Advani, who had been signed to play the female lead, had to opt out due to her pregnancy. However, now with Kriti stepping into the frame, the casting puzzle appears nearly complete. According to reports, Farhan has already wrapped up a

significant portion of the location scouting and is preparing to collaborate with an international stunt team on the film's action sequences. "Don 3 will be shot largely in Europe and the locations are already closed. The script is also locked, and all that remains now is slight polishing alongside the action design. The pre-production work will go on for the next few months, and the team is aiming to take the

film on floors by October/November 2025," the insider added.

Before joining the Don 3 schedule, Kriti Sanon will finish her ongoing commitments, including Anand L Rai's Tere Ishk Mein and Dinesh Vijan's Cocktail 2. Additionally, she is in discussions for a horror thriller titled Nai Naveli, also with Anand L Rai, which is being planned for a 2026 release.

## Kesari 2 director says it was 'important' to use f-word in Akshay film



Karan Singh Tyagi made his grand directorial debut with the Karan Johar-backed film Kesari Chapter 2: The Untold Story of Jallianwala Bagh. The film generated significant buzz following the release of its teaser, which featured Akshay Kumar using the F-word. Now, in an interview with Filmy Shilmy, Karan has responded to the stir, revealing that the team conducted thorough research and consulted historians before including the phrase in the film.

Karan explained, "It was very important for us to include the 'f\*k you' in the film because, for us, the whole point was to look

the British in the eye and say 'f\*k you' for what they had done. That was the courage we imbibed from Sankaran Nair's story, and it's the same courage we wanted to depict." When asked whether the phrase was historically accurate, the filmmaker said, "The term originated in the 16th century. We did our research, we spoke to historians, and conducted all necessary background checks." Earlier, during the trailer launch, Akshay Kumar also addressed his character, C Sankaran Nair, using the expletive in the teaser. He told the media, "Yes, I used that word. But what's surprising is that you noticed this, yet the phrase 'you

are still a slave' wasn't seen as a major insult? I think there's no greater insult than that. I would have been happier if you had pointed out the use of the word 'slave' rather than focusing on 'f\*k you.'"

Kesari Chapter 2: The Untold Story of Jallianwala Bagh is a historical courtroom drama produced by Dharma Productions, Leo Media Collective, and Cape of Good Films. The film stars Akshay Kumar as Advocate C. Sankaran Nair, who challenged the British Empire to uncover the truth behind the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. R Madhavan portrays Advocate Neville McKinley, Ananya Panday plays Dilreet Gill, Regina Cassandra essays the role of Parvathy Nair (Sankaran's wife), and Simon Paisley Day stars as General Reginald Dyer. In just four days, it surpassed the lifetime collection of Shahid Kapoor's Deva, earning 56 crore worldwide, and continues its dream run at the box office.

## Kartik to play "naag" in Karan's film 'Nagzilla'

Kartik Aaryan and Karan Johar have collaborated on a new film titled NagZilla. Earlier today, KJo dropped a motion poster of the upcoming project on Instagram. It features Kartik in a never-seen-before avatar. In the clip, Kartik Aaryan, in a pair of blue jeans, has his back facing the camera. He is standing inside a snake den, looking at the distant cityscape.



Interestingly, Kartik's human skin slowly transforms into a green and scaly texture, resembling a snake. Kartik Aaryan's voiceover can be heard in the background. He says, "Ichhadhari naag, Ruup badalne ke shakti rakhe wale saap. Jaise ki main. Preyamnadeshwar Pyare Chand. Umar 631 saal. NagZilla will be released in theatres, on August 14, 2026.

## Sunny promises fans Jaat 2 will be 'much better' than part one after lukewarm box office returns



Actor Sunny Deol has shared a video message for his fans, days after the release of his new film Jaat. Taking to Instagram on Sunday, Sunny posted a clip as he took a walk among the mountains. Dressed in warm clothes, Sunny expressed his gratitude to his fans. In the video, Sunny said, "Aap logo ne mujhe meri Jaat k liye dher saara pyaar diya. Main wada karta hoon, Jaat 2 isse bhi zyada acchi hogi (You gave me a lot of love for my film Jaat. I promise Jaat 2 will be even better than this)."

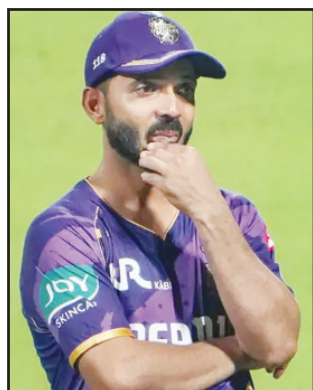
He added, "Main aksar waadiyon mein ghumne ajata hoon, kyunki mujhe bohot accha lagta hai. Kuch

dino mein main apni Border ki shooting k liye nikal jaunga (I often take a trip to the mountains because I like it a lot. I'll leave in a few days to shoot my film Border). Love you (blows a kiss)." Sharing the video, Sunny captioned the post, "Aapka pyaar hi hai meri taqat (flexed arms emoji). Aap sab ka josh hi hai meri safalta (Your love is my strength. Your zeal is my success) (raised hand emoji)." "Keep loving #Jaat and I feel overwhelmed and blessed seeing all the videos of you all celebrating #Jaat and Cinema! Keep 'em coming and share them with me, your love and emotions is what has made #Jaat a success (heart face and hug face emojis)," concluded his note. Jaat has been written and directed by Gopichand Malineni. The film is produced by People Media Factory and Mythri Movie Makers. It released in theatres on April 10. Sunny will reunite with Gopichand for the sequel to Jaat. He recently shared the news of the upcoming instalment on his Instagram. The poster featured Jaat 2 written over it. "#Jaat on to a New Mission! #Jaat2," read the caption of the post.

## KKR Coach Blames Rahane, Narine, Top Order Stars

**Kolkata, (HS) :** There is always huge pressure on the franchises to perform in the cash-rich Indian Premier League (IPL). The ongoing IPL 2025 is no different.

Following Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) loss against Gujarat Titans (GT), KKR mentor Dwayne Bravo rued over the fact that KKR's top-order has failed to provide good starts this season, making the job tougher for finishers like Russell and Rinku Singh. "Work needs to be done at the top to give the finishers a chance to finish off games like they have been doing all these years



for KKR. Yes, leg-spinners got Andre Russell out a few times, but I don't think that is a big concern. We just need to bat better (at the

top) to allow our finishers the chance to finish games," said Bravo. KKR captain Ajinkya Rahane also put the blame on batters after the 39-run loss to GT. "When you are chasing a big target, you expect a good start with your opening batters. That's what we are looking to get better as a batting unit. No complaints with our bowlers, I thought bowlers are doing a really good job. Game by game, they are improving a lot," said Rahane. "We know these conditions really well, but we need to bat properly, we need to bat well in the middle overs, that's what we are struggling with as a batting unit," he added.

## Kalinga Super Cup: Chennaiyin Name Strong Squad for Opening Game Against MCFC



**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** A motivated Chennaiyin FC will begin their Kalinga Super Cup 2025 campaign with a Round-of-16 match against Indian Super League (ISL) outfit Mumbai City FC at the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Wednesday, with a 2025-26 AFC Champions League Two, Qualifying Play-off berth up for grabs for the tournament winner.

Head coach Owen Coyle has named a strong squad for the

Kalinga Super Cup, led by attacker Connor Shields, and standout Indian performers Irfan Yadwad and Jiteshwor Singh, among others. Wilmar Jordan Gil and Daniel Chima Chukwu lead the attack, with the former aiming to become the outright top-scorer of the Super Cup. With eight combined goals across multiple editions, Jordan, the leading cup scorer in 2023, is a goal shy of Sunil Chhetri at the top of the all-time standings.

Chennaiyin head into the tournament on the back of a convincing 5-2 win over Jamshedpur FC in their final league game in March. Building on that momentum, the Marina Machans spent three weeks training locally and played a friendly against East Bengal FC in Kolkata to sharpen up for the Super Cup. "We're under no illusions how difficult the game will be-Mumbai City are a wonderful side, with some

outstanding players, both foreign and domestic. But, we're looking forward to the game, we've shown that when we are at our very best, we can stand toe-to-toe with the best teams," said Coyle in his pre-match press conference. "The Super Cup is a great opportunity for everybody because there is an AFC spot available. There's a huge incentive to have a go and win the cup," he added.

Chennaiyin FC's Full Squad for Kalinga Super Cup 2025: Goalkeepers: Mohammad Nawaz, Samik Mitra, Malhar Umesh Mohol Defenders: Ryan Edwards, PC Laldinpuia, Vignesh Dakshinamurthy, Ankit Mukherjee, Mandar Rao Dessai, Pritam Kotal, Edwin Sydney Vanspaul Midfielders: Jitendra Singh, Lalrinliana Hnamte, Jiteshwor Singh, Elsinho Dias, Lukas Brambilla, Farukh Choudhary, Maheson Singh Forwards: Connor Shields, Vince Barretto, Kiyan Nassiri, Wilmar Jordan Gil, Gurkirat Singh, Irfan Yadwad, Daniel Chima Chukwu

## Michael Slater Sentenced to 4 Years in Prison for Domestic Violence



**Maroochydhore, (HS) :** Former Australian cricketer Michael Slater has been sentenced to four years in prison after pleading guilty to multiple domestic violence charges, including assault, strangulation, burglary, and stalking. Despite the sentence, Slater will be released, having already spent over a year in custody following his bail denial in 2024. His remaining sentence is suspended for five years, meaning he could be sent back to prison if he commits another serious offence during this period.

## IPL: RR-RCA dispute escalates over match fixing allegations

**Jaipur, (HS) :** The Rajasthan Royals have become embroiled in a conflict with the Rajasthan Cricket Association (RCA) following contentious remarks by Jaydeep Bihani regarding the team's recent Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 match. Bihani, serving as the convener of the RCA's ad hoc committee, implied that the Royals' narrow 2-run defeat to the Lucknow Super Giants may not have been above board, hinting at potential foul play.

The Royals' management has taken action by filing a formal complaint with key figures in the state, including the Chief Minister, the Sports Minister, and the Sports Secretary, calling for strict measures against Bihani. Deep Roy, a prominent member of the franchise, has categorically denied the accusations, describing them as "false, baseless, and without any evidence." Bihani's assertions extend beyond the Royals' performance, as he accuses the team, in conjunction with the Rajasthan Sports Council and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), of attempting to marginalise the RCA's ad hoc committee from IPL-related affairs. The Royals have strongly criticised these claims, asserting that such statements are misleading and have tarnished the reputations of involved parties, including the Royals, Royal Multi



Sport Private Limited (RMPL), the Rajasthan Sports Council, and the BCCI. The team has highlighted their 18-year partnership with the state association and government, affirming adherence to BCCI regulations. Current IPL agreements stipulate that the Rajasthan Sports Council oversees IPL match hosting in Jaipur this season. The franchise has emphasised cooperation with both the Council and the BCCI, under state government oversight, to ensure a successful tournament.

## Harsha, Simon Removed from IPL Commentary at Eden Gardens

**New Delhi, (HS) :** Taking a strong exception to public criticism of their curator by Harsha Bhogle and Simon Doull, the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) has red flagged the two cricket experts and requested the BCCI not to assign them commentary duty for Kolkata Knight Riders home matches. Bhogle and Doull got embroiled in the controversy when the former New Zealand cricketer opined that KKR should relocate their franchisee if the curator was not paying any heed to team's request for spin-friendly tracks while Bhogle said the team should get the home advantage.

This was during a panel discussion on a popular website after KKR lost two of their first three home games. Infuriated by their comments, CAB secretary Naresh Ojha wrote to the BCCI nearly 10 days ago, requesting the removal of Bhogle and Doull from the commentary panel for their home games. Interestingly, during Monday's game between KKR and Gujarat Titans neither Bhogle nor



Doull was on commentary duty. However, sources close to Bhogle said the renowned commentator was not slotted for any KKR game. It could not be confirmed if the commentary roster was set before or after CAB's formal complaint. "Bhogle and Doull are no longer part of the IPL commentary team for KKR's home matches. However, the situation might change when Eden hosts the Qualifier 2 and the Final on May 23 and 25," a CAB official told. Ojha and CAB president Snehasish Ganguly were not available for a

comment. Both KKR captain Ajinkya Rahane and head coach Chandrakant Pandit had expressed disappointment over not getting the expected spin-friendly conditions.

Following KKR's defeat to Lucknow Super Giants in a high-scoring game, where LSG posted 238/3 and restricted KKR to 234/7, Rahane appeared frustrated when asked about the pitch at the post-match press conference. "There was no help for the spinners, let me make that clear," he said, adding that further remarks

from him could create a "bawal" (controversy). During an expert panel discussion, Doull suggested that the franchise consider relocation if their requests regarding the pitch were not met. "If he (the curator) is not taking heed of what the home team wants... they are paying the stadium fees, they are paying for what's going on in the IPL. If he's still not listening, then just move the franchise away. His job is not to pass an opinion on the game. That's not what he's paid for," Doull had said. Bhogle echoed similar sentiments: "If they are playing at home, they should get the kind of tracks that suit their bowlers. I saw something about what the KKR curator has said." The CAB, however, stood firmly behind its curator Sujan Mukherjee, maintaining that he has followed the BCCI guidelines, which state that no franchise can influence or dictate the nature of the pitch at a venue. The KKR think-tank had reportedly requested a more spin-friendly surface to support the likes of Varun Chakravarthy, Sunil Narine and Moeen Ali.