



## Over dozen active terrorists in Kashmir Valley identified as suspects in Pahalgam attack



**New Delhi, (HS) :** The National Investigation Agency (NIA), continuing its investigation into the Pahalgam terror attack, has identified over a dozen Over-Ground Workers. Eight of them are from Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), and three each belong to Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Hizbul Mujahideen (HM). They are suspected of aiding the terrorists in executing the attack, sources said on Monday. Sources said, based on intelligence inputs, nearly 60 terrorists are active in the Kashmir Valley. However, the NIA has zeroed in on over a dozen of them, and they are now under the agency's radar as the investigation into the Pahalgam terror case progresses. The NIA has identified them from among the list shared by the Intelligence Bureau following recording of the statements of survivors of the terror attack, which claimed 26 lives and left several others injured, in their respective home states. Of the 14 active terrorists on the NIA's suspect list, most are in their 20s and joined Pakistan-based terror outfits after 2022. They are active in various districts, with five in Shopian, four in Pulwama, two in Anantnag, and one each in Sopore, Awantipora, and Kulgam. According to sources, Ahsan Sheikh of LeT is suspected of being involved in the Pahalgam attack, along with four others. His house has already been destroyed by security forces. The house of another suspect, Shahid Kutay, who is also associated with LeT, has also been razed. Another terrorist JeM's Asif Sheikh's name has also figured in the Pahalgam terror attack and this meant that it was possible that JeM helped LeT in the killings on the directions of Pakistan's spy agency ISI, the sources said. Sheikh's residence in Tral was also demolished by security forces on Friday. It is to be noted that the Jammu and Kashmir Police has already released sketches of three terrorists including two Pakistanis - Ali Bhai alias Talha Bhai and Hashim Musa alias Suleiman and local operative Adil Hussain Thoker and announced Rs 20-lakh bounty each on their heads.

## President Murmu Confers Padma Awards to 71 Distinguished Personalities

**New Delhi, (HS) :** President Droupadi Murmu on Monday conferred the prestigious Padma Awards to 71 distinguished individuals at the Civil Investiture Ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan's Durbar Hall. The honours included four Padma Vibhushan, 10 Padma Bhushan, and 57 Padma Shri awards, recognising outstanding contributions across diverse fields.

The event marked the first phase of Padma Award presentations for the year 2025. Click here to see the full list of 71 Padma winners. Renowned violinist L. Subramaniam was awarded the Padma Vibhushan for his exceptional contribution to the field of art. The late Osamu Suzuki, former CEO of Suzuki Motor Corporation, was posthumously honoured with the Padma Vibhushan for his contributions to trade and industry. His son and current CEO Toshihiro Suzuki accepted the award on his behalf. In the field of art, filmmaker Shekhar Kapur, actor and Andhra Pradesh legislator Nandamuri Balakrishna, actor S. Ajith Kumar, and the late singer Pankaj Udhas were awarded the Padma Bhushan. The award for Pankaj Udhas was received by his wife Farida



Udhas. Former Indian hockey goalkeeper P.R. Sreejesh was conferred the Padma Bhushan for his achievements in sports. Notable Padma Shri recipients included playback singer Jaspinder Narula for her contribution to music and Indian cricketer Ravichandran Ashwin for excellence in sports. Prominent Vedic scholar Ganeshwar Shastri Dravid was also honoured with the Padma Shri. He is credited with determining the auspicious timings for the consecration of Ram Lalla at the Ram Janmabhoomi temple in

Ayodhya and the foundation ceremony of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi. American author and researcher Stephen Knapp, known for his writings on Vedic culture and spirituality, was awarded the Padma Shri for his work in literature and education. The Padma Awards, among India's highest civilian honours, are presented annually to individuals for exceptional service in fields such as art, public affairs, science and engineering, medicine, social work, literature, and education.

Besides Sreejesh and Shekhar Kapur, prominent among those who received Padma Bhushan former Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Sushil Kumar Modi (Posthumous) and on his behalf his wife Jessie Sushil Modi. Late Ghazal maestro Pankaj Udhas's wife Farida Pankaj Udhas received the award on his behalf. In total 10 Padma Bhushan awardees received the distinction. Besides Padma Vibhushan and Padma Bhushan, 57 Padma Shri awards, including one to cricket R Ashwin were given.

## Four Odisha Receive Padma Shri from President



**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** Four distinguished individuals from Odisha were honoured with the prestigious Padma Shri awards by President Droupadi Murmu during the Civil Investiture Ceremony-I at the Ganatantra Mandap of Rashtrapati Bhawan on Monday. The ceremony saw the conferment of 4 Padma Vibhushan, 10 Padma Bhushan, and 57 Padma Shri awards for 2025. The Odisha recipients include Adwaita Charan Gadanayak, a renowned sculptor from Dhenkanal, recognized for his contributions to art; Dr. Ashok Kumar Mahapatra, former Director of AIIMS Bhubaneswar, honored for his exemplary work in medicine; Durga Charan Ranbir, celebrated for his achievements in art; and Pratibha Satpathy, acknowledged for her contributions to literature and education. The Padma awards are presented in three categories: Padma Vibhushan for exceptional and distinguished service, Padma Bhushan for distinguished service of a higher order, and Padma Shri for distinguished service in any field. The event was attended by Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, several Union Ministers, and other dignitaries. On Tuesday, the awardees will pay homage at the National War Memorial and visit Rashtrapati Bhawan and the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya.

## Odisha Pays Tribute to Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Das on His Birth Anniversary



**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi paid floral tributes to Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Das, fondly known as 'Madhu Babu' and the 'Grand Old Man of Odisha,' on his birth anniversary. Das, a revered freedom fighter and social reformer, was the key figure

behind the creation of Odisha as a separate state based on linguistic identity on April 1, 1936. "We offer our heartfelt tributes to Utkal Gourab Madhusudan Das on his birth anniversary," said Chief Minister Majhi.

He highlighted Das's pivotal role in leading the movement for a separate Odisha state and his lifelong dedication to the state's development, pride, and industrial growth. Majhi noted that Madhu Babu established several industries to promote Odisha's economic progress. Leaders from the opposition Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and Congress also honored Das on this occasion. BJD President and Leader of Opposition Naveen

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## Rain in Odisha to continue for five more days, check details

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** Rain with lightning and gusty surface wind in Odisha will continue for five more days, informed the regional centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday. The IMD also has issued orange and yellow warnings for the rainfall activities till 8.30 AM of May 3. Check the day-wise warnings of the weather department for rain in Odisha:

Day 1 (Valid upto 8.30 AM of April 29): **ORANGE WARNING:** Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 50-60 kmph very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two places over the districts of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Balasore, Sundargarh and Jharsuguda. **YELLOW WARNING:** Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 40-50 kmph very



likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two places over the districts of Angul, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Bhadrak and Kendrapada. Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 30-40 kmph very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two places over the districts of Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kalahandi,

Kandhamal, Nabarangapur, Nuapada, Koraput, Malkangiri, Rayagada, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Deogarh, Sonepur, Boudh and Balangir. Day 2 (Valid from 8.30 AM of April 29 to 8.30 AM of April 30): **ORANGE WARNING:** Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 50-60 kmph and Hailstorm, Heavy rainfall very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two

places over the districts of Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Keonjhar, Bhadrak and Jajpur. **YELLOW WARNING:** Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 40-50 kmph, heavy rainfall very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two places over the districts of Kendrapada, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Angul and Dhenkanal. Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 30-40 kmph very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Koraput, Malkangiri, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam and Gajapati.

Day 3 (Valid from 8.30 AM of April 30 to 8.30 AM of May 1): **YELLOW WARNING:** Thunderstorm with lightning

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## Odisha Intensifies Crackdown on Bangladeshi, Pakistani Infiltrators

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC) :** Odisha's Panchayati Raj Minister Rabi Narayan Naik on Monday announced that the state government is actively identifying Bangladeshi and Pakistani infiltrators at the panchayat level. A preliminary list of suspected foreign nationals

has already been prepared, detailing their locations, activities, and places of residence across villages and towns. In response to recent terrorist attack at Pahalgam, the Odisha government has accelerated efforts to detect and act against unauthorized residents.



Individuals living without valid visas or overstaying their permitted duration are undergoing thorough scrutiny. Authorities are cross-verifying identity documents such as Aadhaar cards and voter IDs to detect fraud or illegal infiltration. To strengthen the verification

process, local elected representatives and community members are being consulted for inputs and suggestions. Minister Naik assured that a comprehensive list of identified infiltrators will soon be submitted to the Home Department for further action.

## "Most Dishonourable Act Known As Honour Killing, Must Be Punished": Top Court

**New Delhi, (HS) :** Honour killing must get a strong measure of punishment, the Supreme Court on Monday said and upheld the conviction of 11 accused for the "dastardly murder" of a young couple in Tamil Nadu in July 2003. A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Prashant Kumar Mishra refused to interfere with the Madras High Court's June 2022 verdict that upheld the conviction and sentence of the accused persons, including two police officers. The bench said the victims -- Murugesan and Kannagi -- who were in their early twenties were killed by administering poison in full view of a large number of

villagers. The masterminds and the main perpetrators of this "macabre act" were none other than the father and brother of the woman, it added.

The top court observed the reason behind the murder was that Kannagi belonged to the "Vanniyar" community whereas Murugesan was a Dalit from the same village in Cuddalore district. The couple secretly married in May 2003. "So, at the root of this crime is the deeply entrenched hierarchical caste system in India, and ironically, this most dishonourable act goes by the name of honour-killing," the bench said in its 73-page verdict. Advocate Priyadarshini

Rahul appeared for Murugesan's family. "A crime is an act against the state. But a wicked and odious crime, as the one we have just dealt with, is the ugly reality of our deeply entrenched caste structure. Honour-killing, as these are called, must get a strong measure of punishment," it said. The bench awarded a compensation of Rs 5 lakh to Murugesan's family and said the amount was liable to be paid by Tamil Nadu government. The amount was stated to be over and above the amount directed to be paid as compensation by the sessions court and the high court. On the role of the police officers, the bench said both committed

the offences under Section 217 of IPC and the Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 as they neglected their duties and disobeyed the law by not registering the FIR at the first instance with the intention to save the culprits. Section 217 of the erstwhile IPC dealt with public servant disobeying direction of law with intent to save person from punishment, or property from forfeiture. The bench said Murugesan's family moved the high court, which in April 2004 directed hand over of the probe to CBI. Though the incident took place in July 2003, the trial was concluded only in September

2021, it added. "The long and inordinate delay which has been caused in this case, right from the lodging of the FIR, speaks volumes about the gross inefficiency at the hands of the prosecution on the one hand and dilatory tactics employed by the defence on the other hand, which together led to a slow trial," the verdict said.

Witnesses turning hostile was underlined to be one of the key events in the case. "This phenomenon is not new, in fact it is sadly a common occurrence in our criminal courts today, much to the despair and frustration of the prosecution," the bench said. "But then the

purpose of a trial court is to go to the truth of the matter. Whatever evidence is there before the court must be examined, tested, corroborated (whenever necessary), before a verdict can be finally given," it said. The bench noted one of the many reasons for witnesses turning hostile was the long delay usually caused in a trial. "This is again unfortunate but true in our country," it said, "and it took 18 years to pronounce verdict in the case by the trial court".

The court underscored the presence of "enough material" placed by the prosecution in the trial court turning sufficient to prove the guilt of the accused

beyond a reasonable doubt. The bench directed those on bail in the case to surrender within two weeks to undergo their remaining sentence. Of the total 15 accused who faced trial in the case, 13 were convicted. Of the 13, 11 were punished for murder and one of the convicts was awarded death sentence by the trial court whereas the rest were sentenced to life imprisonment. It came on record that the high court acquitted two accused. The two police officers were also convicted by the trial court and both were sentenced to life term.

The bench noted the high court commuted the death

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## Environmental Change

The time snow remains on the ground during the winter months in the Himalayan Hindu Kush Region (HKH) has been coming down drastically in recent years. Four of the five winters between 2020-21 and 2024-25 saw below-normal snow persistence. According to a report by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), released on Monday, the snow level plummeted to a record 23.6 per cent low in the winter of 2024-2025. When it melts in summer, the snow from the mountains contributes about a fourth of the run-off of the 12 major rivers in the region, including the Ganga, Indus, Brahmaputra, Mekong and Amu Darya. The winter season anomalies could, therefore, lead to reduced snow melt and, in turn, affect the water security of more than two billion people across these river basins, the ICIMOD report warns. The fall in river run-offs could have spinoffs on water availability for drinking, irrigation, and hydroelectricity generation. Low snow persistence is a classic fallout of climate change. The Himalayan region, for instance, is particularly vulnerable to high temperatures. Studies have shown that the rise in temperature in the Himalayas has exceeded the global average for at least four decades. An ICIMOD report of 2019 had warned that even if the global temperature rise is limited to the Paris climate pact's threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius, the HKW region will witness a warming of 0.3 degrees Celsius. Local developments like changes in the land system — the transformation of farmlands into urban areas — have combined with broader climatic changes to drive the temperature rise. Extra-tropical storms from the Mediterranean, for instance, are known to contribute to winter precipitation in the Himalayas. But weaker western disturbances in recent years seem to have disrupted the timing of seasonal precipitation, leading to shifts in snowfall patterns. In the coming months and years, policymakers will need a two-pronged approach to climate change. Even as they plan a transition towards greener forms of development, planners will need to find ways to shield people from the adverse effects of global warming. The ICIMOD report should occasion investments in better water management, drought-proofing agriculture, improvements in warning systems and greater regional cooperation on rivers and natural resources. The countries in the Subcontinent and China usually collaborate in global climate forums. However, riparian issues are amongst the most contentious in the region, and ecosystem-based approaches are often hostage to politics. Establishing comprehensive data-sharing systems for managing river flows, along with effective flood and drought alert mechanisms, can significantly reduce the vulnerabilities faced by individuals due to the impacts of melting glaciers and diminishing snowfall.

Additionally, creating a unified renewable energy grid will enhance resilience against these environmental changes, ensuring that communities are better prepared for the challenges posed by climate change. By integrating these systems, we can foster a more sustainable approach to resource management and improve the overall safety and well-being of affected populations.

29th April

## Day of Trees

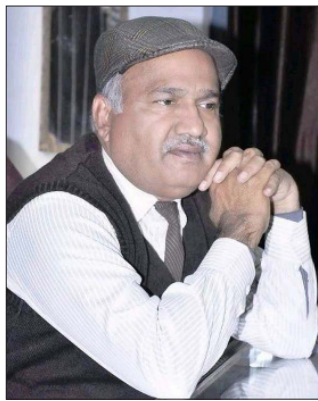


Day of Trees is observed in Colombia on April 29 every year, and Colombians celebrate the holiday by planting trees. Celebrated as Arbor Day in countries around the world, this tradition stretches back hundreds of years, to 1594, in the Spanish village of Mondoñedo. This village was the site of the first documented arbor plantation festival in history.

The first instance of the modern tradition of Arbor Day also happened in Spain, in the small village of Villanueva de la Sierra, in 1805. This initially Spanish tradition soon began spreading across the globe. The first Arbor Day in the United States, for example, was held in Lincoln, Nebraska, on April 10, 1872, during an annual meeting of the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture. On that very day, more than a million trees were planted in the state. Arbor Day soon spread to such other countries as Japan, Canada, Australia, and Colombia. Celebrated rather as Day of Trees in Colombia, this holiday is special to Colombians because of the country's acute environmental issues. More than 50 countries across the globe now celebrate Arbor Day, with a mission to combat deforestation and the resulting climate change. The Arbor Day Foundation has organized and helped streamline, improve, and encourage the observance of Arbor Day for more than half a century now. Formed in 1972, the A.D.F. works year-round to help the mission of planting trees across the world: it has collaborated with organizations to help maintain biodiversity in cities, counter deforestation, and help damaged trees recover. Individuals, communities, and organizations looking to further this cause can join the A.D.F. in its mission through its membership programs, fundraisers, and community tree recovery plans. The option to donate to the organization is available year-round, not just on or around Arbor Day.

The first arbor plantation festival in recorded history is celebrated in the Spanish village of Mondoñedo. The first modern Arbor Day is celebrated in Spain. Arbor Day is celebrated in Lincoln, Nebraska. The core purpose of this holiday is to encourage people to plant trees. What better way to celebrate than to plant a seed or a sapling? Arbor Day has a fascinating history, going as far back as the late 16th century. Spend a portion of your day immersed in it.

## Countless Species of Wild Animals have become Extinct



Vijay Garg

Wild animals are an integral part of our earth, but in the name of personal interests and development, humans have played a major role in ruthlessly destroying their natural habitats and have also wiped out flora. To maintain their existence on earth, humans need to maintain a balance between all the things given by nature, which they get in natural form. This is also called an ecosystem. The life cycle of many species of wild animals and rare flora on earth is now under threat. Countless species of wild animals have either become extinct or are on the verge of extinction.

Due to the environmental crisis, where the diversity of wildlife has been wiped out on a large scale with the disappearance of many species of animals around the world, there are clouds of crisis looming over the existence of thousands of

species. Wild animals and their diversity have been the basis of the process of continuous development of life on earth for billions of years. Wild animals and flora are included in this list which are not domesticated by humans. Providing protection to these wild animals, flora and their habitats is called wildlife conservation and people are also made aware from time to time for their conservation. Special days are also celebrated. All species of animals and plants together provide a very important ecological system and in the true sense, wild animals are our friends, so it is very important to take care of them. We should understand that as much as we have rights on this earth, other animals born here also have the same rights. But today, due to the polluted environment and the changing nature, there is a crisis looming on the existence of many species of animals and other plants all over the world. Focusing on the diversity of flora and fauna under wildlife awareness. To spread awareness about the benefits of their conservation, to remind the whole world about wildlife crimes and to inform about taking action against the decline in the number of these species caused by humans. The whole world has been seeing and suffering the consequences of environmental problems and natural disasters as a result of environmental



imbalance in a serious way for the last few decades. Almost every country has some wild animals that are a special identity of the climate of that country, but due to indiscriminate cutting of forests and other human activities, the habitats of wild animals are also being continuously destroyed on a large scale. This is the reason. The United Nations General Assembly has always strived to raise awareness about the world's wildlife and flora. Legal provisions have been made in India since the British era for the protection and conservation of wildlife, but the matter of concern is that despite this, many species of wildlife have become extinct in the last century. The World Wildlife Fund's 'Living Planet Report 2024' had made a shocking and alarming revelation a few months ago that between 1970 and 2020, there was a

catastrophic decline of 73 percent in the population of wildlife, including mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, etc. This decline in freshwater ecosystems has been 85 percent. Published every two years, this report shows how wildlife populations are being affected around the world. To protect wildlife from extinction, the 'Wild Elephant Protection Act' was first enacted in the country in 1872 during the British rule. After this, the 'Indian Forest Act' came into existence in 1927, making hunting of wildlife and illegal logging of forests a crime, under which punishment has been prescribed. After the country's independence, the 'Indian Forest Act' was passed in 1956 and in 1972, the 'Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972' was enacted with the aim of providing protection to wildlife in the country and controlling hunting, smuggling and illegal trade.

In the year 1983, the 'National Wildlife Scheme' was launched for the conservation of wildlife, under which national parks and wildlife parks were created to keep wildlife away from human encroachment and protect them. In January 2003, the Wildlife Protection Act was amended and the fines and punishments for offences under the Act were made stricter. However, it is very important for everyone to understand that the conservation of wildlife is a big responsibility of all of us because the diversity of wildlife is the natural beauty of the earth, therefore, protecting many species of endangered plants, animals along with their natural habitat is extremely important for environmental balance.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal  
Educational Columnist  
Malout Punjab

## Optimism leads to happiness and success

Dr. Meghana Mishra

Mk Gandhi said, “Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end up becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning.” To view the glass as being half full rather than half empty is an admirable quality. This kind of positive perspective is good for the mental and physical health of a person.

Positive outlook : Optimism puts us in a positive orientation towards the future, which in turn affects our beliefs and behaviour. Optimists believe that their own actions result in positive things happening and that they are responsible for their own happiness and they can expect better things to happen in the future. The greatest mystics and teachers, across the world, have told us that everything is energy. This has now been undeniably confirmed by modern science also that thoughts, too, are energy. While mind is static energy, thought is dynamic energy and its power is vibratory, formed by converting static into dynamic force.

Each time we entertain a specific thought, we emit a specific, corresponding frequency, an energy vibration. Like energy attracts like energy.



We attract to ourselves those things and circumstances that are in vibrational harmony with dominant mental attitude, habitual thoughts and beliefs. The more energy we give to a particular thought, the greater its power to attract its corresponding circumstance into our physical world through the law of attraction. The more powerful and optimistic your thought is, the more creative can be its effect. And more communication channels open up, lending greater clarity and effectiveness to all that you do. Thoughts can drive attitudes, actions and behaviours. We can use this powerful domino effect for empowerment, achievement, success, and self-actualisation. Therefore, replace unwanted thoughts with their positive equivalent.

Inner world : “Circumstances do not make a man, they reveal him.” Everything that we perceive in the physical world has its origin

in the invisible, inner world of our thoughts and beliefs. Every effect we see, hear and speak in our outside or physical world has a specific cause that has its origin in the inner or mental world. This is the essence of thought power. Put another way, the conditions and circumstances of our lives are as a result of our collective thoughts and beliefs. Every aspect of our life, from the state of finances to the state of health, success, happiness and relationships, simply mirrors our thoughts and beliefs. Happiness is the most intrinsic human nature, and hope is a primary, learnt condition, which can lead to happiness. Optimism is a primary, cognitive condition that spawns hope. In turn, happiness seems to reinforce optimism, leading to a cycle of happy, hopeful and optimistic life.

Director, Ashelles Public  
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Dr. Umesh Chandra  
Patra

To very few is it given to hear about the Atma. Many more who hear of the Atma, do not understand. Wonderful is the person who speaks of it. Intelligent is the person who learns of it. Most blessed is he who hears it from a knowing teacher and understands it.

The Katha Upanishad contains the story of the young and virtuous Nachikethas. When the father of Nachikethas gives away inferior gifts as part of a ritual ceremony, the boy tries to lesson the impact of this serious error in the judgement. The father gets angry and in disgust at his interference shouts that he is going to give the son away to Yama, the god of death. The son resolves that the words uttered by the father should not be untrue, so he proceeds to the residence of Yama to offer himself up as a ritualistic gift. The body spends three nights waiting to see the god. When Yama discovers his presence, he feels sorry that the boy had to wait so long, so he decides to grant him three boons, one for each night he waited. Nachikethas asks first that when he returns home, his father will have shed anger and gained mental equanimity and so welcome him home. Second, he asks to know the

secret of the absence of hunger and fear of death in the heaven worlds. Yama gladly grants these boons and further initiates his new disciple into the details of special ritual ceremony. Yama sees the reverence, intelligence, and eagerness of his new pupil and is much pleased with him. Nachikethas then asks for his third boon. He tells his new teacher.

“Sopme say that death is not the end; that there is an entity called the Atma which survives the body and senses. Teach me that secret of the Atma.” Yama at first resists and decides to test him to see if he is deserving of this unique knowledge. He offers him many other attractive boons involving worldly prosperity and happiness. But Nachikethas firmly declines these ephemeral favors. The alternative boons you hold before me can not assure me the everlasting benefit that Atmajnana (Atmic Knowledge) alone can bestow. Yama is again pleased with his pupil and decides he is fit to receive the highest wisdom. The remainder of the Upanishad contains his teachings to Nachikethas. The young disciple grasped the teaching immediately and thoroughly and putting them into practice, he attained to Brahman.

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## Nature is the effect and God is the cause

Puspamitra Mohapatra

Nature is the effect and God is the cause. God and Nature are not distinct entities; they are one unified whole. When we observe Nature, we see the divine manifestation of unity and purity, a giving and receiving between all beings amid the cycle of Earth's life-sustaining processes. Life is given to us humans for the ultimate goal of realising God. Nature helps us to do so. Hence, we must make careful use of Nature, with no thought of harm but rather a gratitude, reverence, and pure, selfless Love. Through the five elements from which Nature emanates, all necessities of life are provided. Earth, water, fire, air,

and space are pure in their original form, but impure human activities can defile them and result in harm to humans and other beings. It is our responsibility to show respect and gratitude for the purity in Nature and do our best to uphold it.

Within Nature, trees are perfect role models for unity and purity, while also teaching us selflessness and sacrifice. In all their rich variety and beauty, trees have been revered by humans since ancient times and they continue to deserve our reverence today, not only for the physical benefits they provide but for the spiritual ones too. They are an essential part of Nature through which we may realise God. Trees are the ultimate bearers of silence. They radiate

silence while at the same time absorbing sound. They stand resolute, poised, in a state of equanimity, ready for whatever comes their way. When we walk into a forest, we may feel a sense of awe and peace as the collective hush of the trees draws us into our own inner world. The silence can be so strong it is palpable. Forests provide this rare opportunity to encounter deep stillness in the outer world. In that sacred space, we may sense the changeless 'beingness' of all things, the presence of God.

Trees age slowly ... their life unfolds at a much slower rate than our own. We humans, however, are often hurried. We connect best with forests when we take slow,

contemplative walks beneath their canopy. And, if we want to deepen our spiritual connection, we simply need to stop, listen, and let the trees teach us. If we cannot go into a forest, we can connect with an individual tree close to home. It could be one struggling to thrive in a congested urban environment or an old one comfortably situated in a sprawling park, or it could be a shade tree in our backyard. We can sit and speak to a tree, as if talking to a friend, remembering that some trees have lived for hundreds of years and have weathered many storms. We may share our concerns about life and the state of the world, and let the tree know we are grateful for their presence and all

they provide. We can even give our tree a hug, as if we are hugging someone we especially love, really feeling it. We may then sit in silence, even meditate, and end with a prayer for our tree and all trees. Through these acts of silence, communion, love, and prayer, we may experience not only God's presence but also a knowing that everything is in its place and, despite life's challenges, all is as it needs to be. This acknowledgment of the valuable physical and spiritual roles of trees and our love for them will help protect life on Earth while also transforming us, thereby serving Sri Sathya Sai Baba's ongoing Divine mission.

Advocate, Orissa High Court,  
Cuttack



## 12 Pakistani Nationals Identified In Odisha, 1 Left For Pak: DGP Khurania



**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** A total of 12 Pakistani nationals have been identified in Odisha with 'quit-India' notices being issued to them, as confirmed by the Director General of Police (DGP) Yogesh Bahadur Khurania, on Monday. In a statement to the media, DGP

Khurania revealed that one of the Pakistani nationals has already departed from Bhubaneswar and returned to Pakistan. "We have identified 12 Pakistani nationals residing in the state and 'quit-India' notices have been served to them. We are closely monitoring the situation and one

person has already left the state. We are awaiting further instructions regarding those residing on long-term visas or whose visa applications are still under consideration," stated DGP Khurania. This action follows a directive issued by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on April 24, urging Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi to identify all Pakistani nationals in Odisha and facilitate their return to Pakistan by April 27. The departure of the individual comes amid rising tensions following the recent terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, where 26 people, including both civilians and tourists, lost their lives.

## Joint Public Hearing Camp Held. Khordha--28/4- A joint public hearing camp held by Collector



**Khordha, (DMC):** Chanchal Rana & Superintendent of Police, Sagarika Nath at Barasahi Gram Panchayat Meeting Hall under Khordha Block. Among others, ADM, Pratap Chandra Beura, Zilla Parishad Chief Development & Executive Officer, Jyoti Shankar Sahu, Sub-Collector, Khordha, Kishore Kumar Panda, BDO, Khirabdi Tanaya Sahu, Tahasilidar Bibhas Ranjan Panigrahi were present in this camp. A total of 95 grievances were received in this camp, out of which 78 grievances were individual & 8 grievances were

related to collective problems. The Collector Mr. Rana immediately resolved five grievance on the spot. 25 thousands rupees were given to Akshay Behera of Jagulei Patna, 10 thousands to Nakula Badajena of Keranga village & 15 thousands to Jogendra Behera of Barsahi from the CM, Relief Funds. A total of 30 thousand rupees were given as financial assistance to the complainants & 25 thousands rupees were given as financial assistance to Mili Behera of Barsahi from the District Red

Cross Fund for her health treatment. Later, Collector, Mr. Rana visited the Integrated Child Development Scheme, Mission Shakti, Odisha Livelihood Mission, Rural Housing, Drinking Water, Primary Health Camp, MGNREGS, Veterinary Awareness Stall. Among others, the Camp was attended by the Superintending Engineer, Rural Water Supply and Sanitation, Department, Mrs. Rashmita Das, Deputy Collector, Grievance, Artatrana Mallick, Assistant Collector, Grievance Bhubaneswari Kanhar, Chief District Medical & Public Health Officer, Dr. Rajya Shre Pattnaik, District Panchayat Officer, Shyamendu Nayak, Civil Supply Officer, Suguda Murmu, District Social Security Officer Dilip Hial, District Social Welfare Officer, Kusum Kumari Prahrag, District Information and Public Relations Officer Laxman Kumar Behera, district level officers of various departments & senior engineers & officers of the Line department were present.

## One Arrested for Cheating 15 Lakh on the Pretext of Getting A Job in the Railways

**Khordha, (DMC):** Amit Kumar Panda of Mukundaprasad village under Khordha Industrial Estate Police Station (IEPS) had a mental breakdown after the sudden death of his father. The accused came to know about Amit's search for a job from a private source. After that, the accused contacted Amit's mother over the phone.



The accused introduced himself as a former District Education Officer (DEO) He has good relations with the Railway Department officials & he assist Amit to get a job as an Assistant Station Master (ASM) in the Railway Department & asked him to pay 15 lakh for it. After that, Amit paid a total of 15 lakh to the accused through instalment in Phone Pay along with all his educational qualifications, the proof of which he submitted to

the Khordha Industrial Estate Police Station. After waiting for a long time, he came to know that he had been a victim of cheating & filed a written complaint at the Cyber Police Station in Bhubaneswar & the accused HDFC Bank account was frozen by the Cyber police.

After that the accused got angry and abused Amit's mother over the phone & threatened to ruin the future by making false allegations in the name of her son Amit at the police station. Hence she reported at IEPS. Police registered a case vide no- 104/25, U/S-318(4)/319(2)/296/

351(3) BNS & formed a team under the direction of IIC, IEPS Mrs. Gayatri Mishra, including, SI, Basudev Jaisingh, Sunita Behera and other police staff's & tracked the accused's mobile phone call recordings & arrested the accused.

The accused identified as Sukanta Paikaraya (46), S/O-Prananath Paikaraya, Vill-Ostapur, PS-Chandpur, Dist-Nayagarh was a disabled youth. During the police investigation, it was found that there are two cases registered against him in Khordha Model PS, Case no-600/2014, u/s-419 & Puri, Chandanpur, PS, Case no-149/2020, u/s-143/147/149/294/342/427/506 IPC, for allegedly impersonating a CBI officer & defrauding others. Police forwarded the accused to the Judicial Court of Khordha.

## 34-storey state-of-the-art IT tower may come up in Bhubaneswar

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** The Odisha government is reportedly mulling construction of a 34-storey IT tower in Satya Nagar, Bhubaneswar, marking a significant step in its efforts to establish the state capital as a leading technology hub in eastern India.

According to The Times of India, the tower in consideration, spanning six acres, is likely to feature three basements for parking, an observation deck, and a built-up area of 1.90 lakh square meters. The facility is expected to accommodate 8,000 professionals and include modern amenities such as a reception, lobby, club, library, and dedicated office floors. The Odisha Bridge Construction Corporation



(OBCC) has been entrusted with executing the project, with tenders already floated. This development follows Odisha Works Minister Prithviraj Harichandan's recent announcement of a transformative Twin City mega IT hub spanning 1,000 hectares

across Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. The broader initiative aims to strengthen Odisha's position as a competitive player in India's digital economy, offering 'Plug and Play' ready-to-use facilities for tech firms. In Bhubaneswar alone, the hub will provide 10 lakh square meters of

built-up space for startups, mid-sized firms, and multinational corporations. Situated near Smart Janpath and Cuttack-Puri Road, the Satya Nagar IT tower is strategically located to cater to private sector demands for premium office spaces amid rising entrepreneurship.

The Twin City hub, set for development over the next five years, along with the upcoming IT tower, signals Odisha's ambition to rival established tech corridors in other regions. With Bhubaneswar already emerging as a startup hotspot, these infrastructure upgrades aim to accelerate growth, positioning Odisha as a key centre for IT innovation and investment in eastern India.

## Felicitation for Traditional Artisans “Historical Tales Sans Barabati Fort Impossible in Odishan Context: Experts at 7th Anniv of CHW”

**Cuttack, (DMC):** The Millennium City of Cuttack always remains a testimony to the socio-cultural, educational and sporting metamorphosis of Odisha. In order to propagate and rediscover the historical roots in the city, the Cuttack Heritage Walks (CHW) has been conducting regular heritage walks and yesterday, it celebrated its 7th annual day at the Conference Hall of Odisha Cricket Association under the leadership of Dipak Samantarai, convener of CHW.

On this occasion several traditional artisans of the city were also felicitated as a token of love, gratitude and respect towards their dedication in continuing the age-old practices decade after decade. “The artisans, who were honoured by CHW, include: Pankaj Charan Sahoo and Biswanath Dey (silver filigree of Cuttack), Ashok Behera (horn work), Purna Chandra (Japane) Singh Jari work on the tableau of Goddess Durga and Urvashi (Baiyani) for making colourful clay dolls.” Eminent poet and retired bureaucrat



Pradeep Kumar Biswal chaired the special session of CHW and the participants and members of the heritage group, drawn from various walks of life participated in the discussions relating to heritage, culture and traditions of the silver city and expressed their concern over better, timely and sustainable upkeep of the heritage sites and traditions across the historic city.

“Chief speaker Professor Kharavel Mahanti in his speech declared that without the mention of the fort Barabati chronicling the history of Odisha is next to impossible. He, at length spoke about the status, location and historical perspective of the historic Fort Barabati during the

different periods of the Kalingan era, namely under the Afghan, Mughal, Marathas and Britishers. He also narrated how the greatest edifice of the Kalingan strength and power gradually and systematically withered and met with decline and loss.

Chief Guest and history enthusiast JP Jagdev and Guest of Honour Professor Sanjay Acharya highlighted, how, Cuttack has always played a pivotal role in glorifying the position and importance of Odisha both at national and international arena. “On this occasion CHW also felicitated Sanjay Baral, Ashoka Nayak, Dr. Kumar Aurojyoti, Debi Prasanna Nanda, Suresh Prasad Mishra, Malay

Pati, Srikant Singh, Trilochan Swain, Pankaj Sahoo, Bachan Maharana, Biswanath Dey, Ashok Behera, Purnachandra (Japane) Singh and Biswaranjan Dehury as Heritage Warriors. “Similarly, the heritage group also felicitated Asit Mohanty, Kishore Bit, Jivananda Mishra, Om Prakash Mohanty, Prof. Chinmay Jena, Hitesh Seth, Raja Parija, Bibhuti Bhusan Barik, Manoj Mohapatra, Jitendriya Singh, Kabita Pattnaik, Arunita Padhi, Kumar Prasanjeet Sahoo, Aditya Prasad Ghosh, Akash Pattnaik, Amar Prasad Patra, Byapti Pattnaik, Gobinda Chand (Utkala Sahitya Samaj).

Harekrishna Rout and Amiya Ranjan Mohapatra as Heritage Lovers.” “Among others, Dr Hemanta Kumar Parida, Bisweswar Das, Ajay Mishra, Biswaranjan Mohanty, Biswajit Sahoo, Dipa Samantrai were present. They also took part and narrated their experiences and views. “Hitesh Seth, a senior member of CHW proposed the vote of thanks. Odia lunch was served to the guests.

## Odisha Crime Branch Arrests 7 In Multi-Crore Pilgrim Accommodation Fraud

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** The Cyber Crime Unit of the CID, Crime Branch Odisha, has successfully apprehended seven persons, including the prime accused, who allegedly created a fraudulent website for 'Niladree Bhakta Nivas' in an attempt to defraud unsuspecting pilgrims seeking accommodation. The arrested persons have been identified as Anshuman Sharma (24), the prime accused;



Aravind Kumar (35) and Akash Kesharwani (33) from Uttar Pradesh; and Hiteshbhai Patra (39), Parth Parmar (25), Thakkar Karsanji Sobhaji (48), and Kureshi Mohammed Aslam (31) from Gujarat. According to an official press release, the case was initiated following a written complaint from the Chief Administrator of the Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri. The complaint sought action against the fake website, www.neeladribhaktanivas.in,

after it was revealed that numerous complaints had been received from the public and devotees. The fraudulent website was reportedly redirecting pilgrims to a mobile number via WhatsApp, where they were promised accommodation at the Neeladri Bhakta Nivas in Puri, with a request for online payment. The complaint further stated that the fraudsters were receiving payments into a savings bank account (Account No: 110217193478) at Canara Bank. Upon investigation, the

Cyber Crime Unit used technical tools to trace the hosting company of the fake website. It was discovered that Anshuman Sharma had created the website on May 22, 2024. The fraudulent site was swiftly taken down once the complaint was recorded. Another accomplice, Aravind Kumar, whose bank account was used for the illicit transactions, was also identified during the investigation.

Authorities have seized several items from the arrested suspects, including a laptop, mobile phones, SIM cards, details related to the Niladri Bhakta Nivas website, Aadhar cards, PAN cards, GoDaddy hosting information, and the registered SIM card used for the creation of the website. In further developments, two investigative teams have been dispatched to Gujarat (Ahmedabad, Anand District, Surat) and Uttar Pradesh to continue probing the case

under CID CB Cyber-Crime P.S. Cases No: 50/2024, 60/2024, 57/2024, and 03/2025. Akash Kesharwani (33) from Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, was arrested after Rs 3.7 lakh was transferred to his account. Seized items included mobile phones, Aadhar cards, and PAN cards. Further investigation revealed the involvement of additional current accounts in similar fraudulent activities."

Investigation into the case is ongoing. Our team will uncover other accomplices in this crime, its trans-India ramifications, and the money trail," the notification stated. The Crime Branch police also urged citizens to be cautious of unsolicited investment offers on social media and messaging apps. They advised always verifying before investing to avoid falling victim to cyber fraud and to report such incidents at the 1930 Cyber Helpline or at the nearest police station.

## APEDA committed to boost Odisha's agricultural exports

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) and Government of Odisha organized a workshop cum capacity building programme to boost agri products' exports from Odisha at Dr. M.S. Swaminathan Hall, Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT), Bhubaneswar on Saturday.

The event exhibited over 10 stalls represented by Farmer Producer Organisations (FPO)/ Farmer Producer Companies, women agripreneurs, departments of the Government of Odisha and exporters from all across Odisha. Several GI Tagged and Agri-Products from the state such as Koraput Kalajeera Rice, Nayagad Kanteimundi Brinjal, Ganjam Kunda Flower Products, Koraput Coffee, Kandhamal Haldi Powder,

Kendrapada Rasabali, Salepur Rasagolla, Khajuri Gud, Dhenkanal Magaj Ladoo and Mayurbhanja Kai Chutni were displayed at the University. Chief Guest and Deputy Chief Minister & Minister of Agriculture, Odisha Kanak Bardhan Singh Deo, in his keynote address highlighted the initiatives of the state govt. for increasing agricultural exports, particularly of the organic products harvested in the state.

He encouraged exporters to explore the array of products, including GI products from the state for promotion in the global marketplace. He appreciated the active collaboration of APEDA with the State Govt. towards increasing Agricultural exports from the State. The event featured three technical sessions focusing on key areas for boosting Odisha's agricultural exports. The



first session addressed the promotion of organic exports under the revised National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP), emphasizing organic certification, value chain development, and market access.

The second session discussed strategies to enhance rice exports from Odisha by leveraging unique varieties, improving logistics, and tackling export challenges. The

third session explored opportunities for value addition and export promotion of agri-processed and GI-tagged products, with a focus on strengthening logistics, cold chain infrastructure, and market linkages.

The program witnessed the participation of more than 400 stakeholders including the officials from State Government

department, Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology, FPO's, FPC's, and progressive farmers. On the sidelines of the event, APEDA being the Secretariat for the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) organised a stakeholder interaction with more than 30 organic grower groups of the State of Odisha. The discussions centered on the revisions in the NPOP

(8th Edition), which was recently launched on 9th January 2025, and clearing doubts and queries of the growers with respect to the new provisions. Sukanta Kumar Panigrahi, Member of Parliament and Member, Parliamentary Standing Committee-Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Food Processing in his address emphasized on

ODOP, use of Agri-Infra fund to support agri exports from the state of Odisha. He further emphasized that the dream of Vikshit Bharat by 2047 is possible by developing the overall agriculture export ecosystem which will help to gain competitive advantage, drive economic growth, create better jobs, and generate foreign exchange earnings.

Chairman of APEDA, Abhishek Dev in his welcome address highlighted the export-oriented strategy for agricultural products with special emphasis on organic products. He emphasized on the untapped potential of the state in terms of agriculture exports, particularly in organic products, owing to huge diversity and quantum of output. He assured that more such programs and export Conclaves will be conducted in future which

are highly important paradigms for boosting agricultural exports. He encouraged the FPO's and FPC's from the state for participation in key national and international Trade Fairs for market access, promotion and outreach.

The workshop cum capacity building programme followed by the Technical Sessions brought together key policymakers and experts from the Union and State governments, Industry and Academia aiming to build a robust export ecosystem in the state in the times to come. S. K. V. Singh Deo, Hon'ble Dy. CM & Minister of Agril. & FE & Energy, Govt. of Odisha addressing inaugural session of 'Agri-Products Export from Odisha : Capacity Building Program' in presence of S. J. S. K. Panigrahi, Hon'ble MP & Prof. P. K. Roul, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, OUAT



## TPSODL Celebrates Innovation Day 2025 with a Spirit of Creativity and Progress

**Berhampur, ((DMC):** Promoting a culture of creativity, collaboration, and continuous innovation, TP Southern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPSODL) celebrated Innovation Day 2025 with great enthusiasm at its corporate office on the occasion of World Creativity and Innovation Day. The event, themed "T&D Innovation Carnival," was inaugurated by CEO Mr. Amit Kumar Garg along with the senior leadership team. The celebration showcased a variety of innovative projects developed by different departments, including Network Engineering and Planning (NEP), Plant Engineering, Safety, Operations, Technology, and Commercial. It created a platform for employees to share creative



ideas that can bring real change to the power sector. The carnival included exhibitions, interactive discussions, and panel sessions that encouraged a culture of innovation, teamwork, and continuous improvement across

the organization. Employees presented new concepts and practical solutions that focus on improving the quality of power supply and consumer service. Some of the key innovation projects showcased in the

exhibition which includes smart automation controllers, improved use of SCADA systems, Low Tension (LT) automation, and new protection mechanisms to avoid power disruptions. These initiatives are expected to make power distribution more efficient and reliable for consumers. Innovation is central to TPSODL's goal of delivering safe and reliable electricity.

By adopting technologies like SCADA, GIS, and smart isolation systems, the company is improving operational control and efficiency. TPSODL is the first utility in Odisha to set up SCADA-enabled Area Power System Control Centers (APSCCs) across all circles, enabling real-time monitoring and faster response to power

issues. The integration of platforms like GIS, ADMS, and SCADA has streamlined operations and enhanced service delivery. TPSODL is also turning innovative ideas into action through technology labs, drone surveillance and mobile substations making its power distribution system smarter and more sustainable.

Mr. Amit Kumar Garg, CEO of TPSODL, said, "Innovation is at the heart of everything we do at TPSODL. It helps us grow and deliver better services to our consumers. I am proud of our team for their creativity and dedication in finding new ways to improve the power sector. Together, we are building a brighter and more reliable energy future for everyone."

## Major Fire Breaks Out At Paradip Plastic Pipe Stockyard



**Paradip, (DMC):** A major fire broke out at a plastic pipe stockyard near Zero Point in the Paradip area of Jagatsinghpur district on Monday, causing thick smoke to spread over Paradip and nearby areas. The fire broke out near the civil township of the Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)

stockyard. According to Paradip ADM Niranjan Behera, "The fire began near the IOCL stockyard around 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm. As soon as we were informed, we immediately alerted IOCL and their fire tender vehicle quickly arrived at the scene. Soon after, fire personnel from the Kujang fire brigade joined the effort,

working together to douse the flames." Behera added that "In addition to the fire teams, local police, including personnel from the Paradip Model police station, as well as fire department officers were present at the site. A total of 10 to 15 fire tender vehicles responded and the situation is now under control. We expect the flames to be completely extinguished within the next 30 minutes."

There is no cause for panic, and fortunately, no injuries have been reported. "Once the fire has been fully contained, IOCL's team will conduct a survey to assess the extent of the damage, Behera confirmed. The cause of the fire is still under investigation, with the company initiating inquiries into the incident.

## Students Deprived of Government Scheme

**Paralakhemundi, (DMC):** At Nuagaon of Katakaita panchayat of Gosani block of Gajapati district, at the outskirts of district headquarter, due to lack of caste certificates, those 10th passed students unable to get scope. More than 30 families are staying in that village. There is no road communication to that village. Those students with much difficulties studying at Tulasipadu school, which is farthest distance. They are going through farm fields due to lack of road communication. They are staying since last 35 years; but they are yet to get their domicile rights. For which those inhabitants not getting caste certificates. Various scopes for SC & ST students government supporting. But they deprived. Due to lack of homestead patta they can't enjoy higher studies. One Manuel Sabar is studying in college at Paralakhemundi without caste certificate. Puspanjali Sabar, Sandhyarani Sabar, Thomas Sabar & Baburao Sabar said that domicile rights they are lacking. While met with Sarpanch SLingaraju, he said very soon he will arrange their homestead pattas from ITDA. Forest & other departments given clearance. While interacted with Tehsildar Narayan Behera he said matter not reached at him. After getting grievances he will settle their issues.



## A humble tribute to Madhubabu: On the occasion of the holy birth anniversary of Utkal Gaurav Madhusudan Das



**Puri, (DMC):** Puri district administration, information and public relations office and other organizations garlanded the statue of Madhubabu in front of the Collector's office. ADM Revenue Dr Sarat Chandra Mohapatra garlanded the statue

of Madhusudan Das and highlighted madhubabu's contribution to the creation of a separate Odisha and language protection. Santosh Kumar Sethi, Deputy Director Information and publication relation dept. Additional Chief

Development Officer of Zilla Parishad Rajiv Behera, Deputy Collector Prashant Jena, Manisha Sarangi, Sahadev Sahu, Vivekanand Sahu, Chief Supply Officer Sanjeev Kumar Sahu, District Welfare Officer Bikash Kumar Mohanty, District Panchayat Officer Balram Patra, Chief District Agriculture Officer Pradeep Kumar Das were present on the occasion. Deputy Director Udayan Manjula Rath, RTO Robin Patnaik, Assistant Collector Ashutosh Dey, Witco Executive Engineer Vikram Rout, ARCS Swaroop Kar, Programme Officer Suhagi Hembram were also present on the occasion. Statues of Utkal Gaurav at other places were garlanded by various individuals and organisations.

## Tribute to St. Pope Francis with Candle Rally

**Paralakhemundi, (DMC):** At Gajapati district headquarter in Paralakhemundi a peaceful rally started to pay homage to St. Pope Francis. From St. Joseph Catholic Church candle rally started. Father Ajit Nayak, associate Jacob



Dhiren Nayak with Amod Bardhan, Sitaram, Lazar Lima with Fathers, sisters & other volunteers coordinated. From palace to college junction & police station rally reached at Catholic Church. With mass prayer program bid adieu.

## Tribute Meeting Organised in Gurukul Ashram Amsena : Tributes paid to Pilgrims killed in Pahalgam



**Nuapada/Khariar Road, (DMC):** On Sunday evening, a program of tribute meeting was organized in the Gurukul Ashram Amsena premises to protest against the attack on Pahalgam in Kashmir on the basis of religion and the brutal killing of 28 tourists. All the dignitaries present at the meeting strongly condemned the incident and paid tribute to all those killed in the attack. A silent prayer of two minutes was also observed.

Ashram Chief Swami Dharmanand Saraswati, Nuapada Collector & DM Madhusudan Dash, Dr. Bratanand Saraswati, Trustee Gurukul Ashram Amsena Kailash Marodia, Dr. Shiba Prashad Behera, Dr. Uday Charan Maharana, Dr. Ranjeet Singh Chhabda, Dr. J.L. Chandrakar, Advocate Ramesh Agrawal, Rakesh Jain, Lakhan Lakhmania, Shyam Kesharwani, Taleswar Dewangan, Rakesh Sharma along with all the Acharyas & Bramhacharies of Gurukul Ashram were present in this tribute meeting. Dr. Kunjdev Manishi conducted the proceedings of the programme. Dr. Bratanand Saraswati proposed vote of thanks.

## National FMCG Distributor's Meet held in Paradip : Highlights on Growing Threat of Quick Commerce & E-Commerce

**Paradip, (DMC):** A major gathering of India's distribution fraternity took place on Sunday in the port city of Paradip, Odisha, where national and state-level leaders of the All India Consumer Products Distributors Federation (AICPDF) came together for an important meeting hosted by the Paradip Coastal Distributors Association. The function was marked by spirited discussions, insightful addresses, and a strong message of solidarity.

The event was graced by National President of AICPDF, Dhairyashil Patil, Maharashtra, and Chief Patron Dr. P.M. Ganeshraam, Tamil Nadu. Representing the host state of Odisha were State President Girish Rath, State Secretary Mr. Manoj Dhanuka, and Vice President Mr. Shivaratna Maskara. The program saw enthusiastic participation from distributors, stockists, and trade stakeholders across Jagatsinghpur and neighboring districts. In his keynote address, Dhairyashil Patil delivered a



hard-hitting message on the alarming rise of Quick Commerce platforms like Blinkit, Zepto, and Instamart, which are operating with draconian business models, deep discounting, and predatory pricing. "These companies are distorting market dynamics, destroying traditional retail, and pushing lakhs of Kirana stores and distributors to the brink of collapse," he stated. He called for immediate regulatory action from government authorities and emphasized the need for all distributors to stay alert, united, and vocal in defending their rights. Dr. Ganeshraam, a respected veteran of the trade,

stressed on the significance of discipline, ethical business practices, and the implementation of a standard Code of Conduct by all distributors. "Only by maintaining internal accountability and supporting each other can we counter the external threats to our ecosystem," he said. He also appealed for a deeper bond between distributors and retailers, asserting that their survival and success are interlinked. Odisha State President Girish Prasad Rath highlighted the recent momentum gained by the distribution community in the

state through the impactful "Hum Hai, Hum Rahenge" campaign. "The campaign has infused a renewed sense of confidence and unity among the trade, and Odisha is now one of the most organized states in the AICPDF network," he shared. Mr. Manoj Dhanuka, State Secretary, called upon all stakeholders to strengthen organizational structures at every level—district, city, and taluka and prepare for a long-term strategy to face policy and market challenges. "Our strength lies in our unity. No single distributor can survive this onslaught alone "we must act as one family," he said.

Vice President Mr. Shivaratna Maskara appreciated the growing participation of young entrepreneurs in the trade and encouraged them to become active members of the Federation to shape the future of distribution in Odisha and India. The Paradip Distributors Association, the host of the event, was praised for their efficient organization and

hospitality. The Paradip Coastal Distributor Association President Mr. Tusharkant Parida, Working president Mr. Prakash Kumar Mohanty, Odisha Distributor Association vice president cum Paradip Distributor Association General secretary Mr. Pradip Kumar Swain, Coordinator Mr. Biswajit Das, Jagatsinghpur Fast Moving Consumable Goods (FMCG) Association president Mr. Parijata Mohapatra, general secretary Mr. Basant Sahoo, Maa Sarala Distributor Association president Mr. Sudhansu Pani, general secretary Satrugana Malla were reaffirmed their commitment to working closely with state and national leadership to protect the interests of distributors.

The meeting concluded with the unanimous adoption of a resolution reaffirming faith in the AICPDF's leadership and vowing to oppose unfair market practices, protect traditional retail, and promote a fair, competitive, and transparent FMCG ecosystem.

From Page- 1

## Rain in Odisha...

with gusty surface wind speed reaching 40-50 kmph with heavy rainfall very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Nayagarh, Puri, Gajapati, Ganjam and Khurda. Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 30-40 kmph very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two places over the districts of Angul, Dhenkanal, Boudh, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Koraput and Malkangiri. Day 4 (Valid from 8.30 AM of May 1 to 8.30 AM of May 2): YELLOW WARNING: Thunderstorm with lightning with gusty surface wind speed reaching 40-50 kmph with heavy rainfall very likely to occur in the afternoon/evening hours at one or two places over the districts of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Angul, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Balasore and Bhadrak.

## Odisha Pays...

Patnaik wrote, "I pay my tributes to Utkala Gourab Madhusudan Das, a symbol of Odia pride, on his birth anniversary. His unparalleled contributions to the formation of a separate Odisha state, industrial development, and the preservation of the Odia language continue to inspire us." Born on April 28, 1848, in Satyabhamapur, Cuttack district, Madhusudan Das was a distinguished lawyer and the founder of Utkal Sammilani in 1903, which spearheaded the campaign for Odisha's unification. His tireless efforts in social reform and industrial advancement left an indelible mark on the state. In recognition of his legacy, his birth anniversary is also celebrated as 'Lawyers Day' in Odisha.

## "Most Dishonourable..."

sentence to life term. While the conviction of one of the police officers was modified and his sentence was reduced to two years, the conviction and sentence of other cop was upheld by the high court.

## Not all electrical outlets have cable connections

**Subarnapur, (DMC):** In Patavadi Maruti Nagar, a suburb of Sonepur city, all the electric poles do not have cable connection. It is worth noting that since the cable connection has not been extended to all the houses in this area, people are bringing the line from a distant electric pole. As a result, people are facing a lot of problems by taking the line over the land and even over the houses. The cable wire has been extended up to the electric pole in front of the tube well of this area. Since the cable connection is not available at the 11KV electric pole adjacent to the yellow house nearby, the people around are bringing the line from a distant pole. Therefore, the residents of Maruti Nagar have demanded that the electricity department immediately extend the cable connection to this electric pole and other electric poles.

## The 5th Invitation Corporate Badminton Tournament 2025 concludes at Paradip Port



**Paradip, (DMC):** The curtains have drawn on the exhilarating 5th Invitation Corporate Badminton Tournament 2025], which concluded on last Sunday evening at Paradip Port Authority (PPA) Officers' Club. The two day tournament, which witnessed fierce competition and outstanding displays of skill from more than 100 badminton players across the state. Over the course, spectators were treated to captivating matches in various categories, including Men's & Women's Doubles, etc. The finals, held earlier in the day, delivered nail-biting finishes and showcased the immense talent within the badminton community. Team SAIL emerged as the champions & PPA as Runners Up at the tournament. They were awarded by P. L. Haranadh, Chairman, PPA. Nilabhra Dasgupta, Dy Chairman & A. K. Bose, Advisor, Traffic also graced the occasion.

## Tribute to St. Pope Francis with Candle Rally

**Paralakhemundi-** At Gajapati district headquarter in Paralakhemundi a peaceful rally started to pay homage to St. Pope Francis. From St. Joseph Catholic Church candle rally started. Father Ajit Nayak, associate Jacob Dhiren Nayak with Amod Bardhan, Sitaram, Lazar Lima with Fathers, sisters & other volunteers coordinated. From palace to college junction &



police station rally reached at Catholic Church. With mass prayer program bid adieu.

## Students Deprived of Government Scheme

**Paralakhemundi, (DMC):** At Nuagaon of Katakaita panchayat of Gosani block of Gajapati district, at the outskirts of district headquarter, due to lack of caste certificates, those 10th passed students unable to get scope. More than 30 families are staying in that village. There is no road communication to that village.

Those students with much difficulties studying at Tulasipadu school, which is farthest distance. They are going through farm fields due to lack of road communication. They are staying since last 35 years; but they are yet to get their domicile rights. For which those inhabitants not getting caste certificates. Various scopes for SC & ST students government supporting. But they deprived. Due to lack of homestead patta



they can't enjoy higher studies. One Manuel Sabar is studying in college at Paralakhemundi without caste certificate. Puspanjali Sabar, Sandhyarani Sabar, Thomas Sabar & Baburao Sabar said that domicile rights they are lacking. While met with Sarpanch SLingaraju, he said very soon he will arrange their homestead pattas from ITDA. Forest & other departments given clearance. While interacted with Tehsildar Narayan Behera he said matter not reached at him. After getting grievances he will settle their issues.



## No error in Allahabad HC order impleading Centre and ASI in Shahi Idgah mosque case, says SC



**New Delhi, (HS) :** The Supreme Court on Monday said that the order passed by the Allahabad High Court in the Shahi Idgah case, allowing the Hindu side's plea to amend their plaint and add the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) as a party, is prima facie correct. The high court on March 5 allowed an amendment application filed by the Hindu side (plaintiffs) permitting them to incorporate new facts into the suit and add the Union of India and ASI as defendants.

Challenging this HC order, the Muslim side had moved the top court and sought quashing of it. The Muslim side, in the top court, opposed the Hindu parties' application to amend the suit. They said it was a way to get around their defence, which was based on the Places of Worship Act. During the course of the hearing, the two-judge bench of the top court, led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna and including Justice PV Sanjay Kumar, refused to entertain the appeal of the Muslim side. "The Committee of Management of the Shahi Idgah mosque is absolutely wrong in their plea that the Allahabad

High Court's decision to allow the Hindu plaintiffs to do so was wrong," the court said. This order of the top court necessarily means that the Hindu plaintiffs have to be allowed to implead the ASI and the Union in the main suits filed on behalf of the deity. The apex court on Monday granted time to the Muslim side to file their reply and deferred the hearing to April 8. The complex is located adjacent to the Krishna Janmabhoomi temple, a site of significant religious importance for Hindus.

The mosque committee, in its appeal filed in the apex court, said the lawsuits filed by Hindu litigants over the dispute violated the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, and were therefore not maintainable. It is to be noted that Allahabad High Court judge Justice Mayank Jain had on August 1, dismissed the plea filed by the Shahi Idgah Masjid Committee challenging the maintainability of the suits filed by the Hindu parties seeking restoration of the Lord Krishna temple at the location where the mosque exists. The Hindu parties claimed in the HC that Sri Krishna's birthplace lies beneath the mosque and that there were many signs which established that the mosque was indeed a Hindu temple. On the other hand, the UP Sunni Central Waqf Board sought dismissal of the plea filed by the Hindu side. It argued in the HC that the suits of the Hindu side were barred under the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991 ('Places of Worship Act') that prohibited changing the status of any place of worship from what it was on the day of the country's Independence.

## New Pahalgam Attack Video Emerges, Shows Tourists Hiding Behind Kiosk

**New Delhi, (HS) :** A new video showing the helpless tourists at Pahalgam during the massive terror attack is being widely circulated online. Terrorists belonging to an offshoot of Lashkar e Taiba had mowed down 26 people -- only one of them a local -- during the attack on April 22. The video shows a number of men, women and children huddling around a kiosk of Kashmiri outfits in the middle of the picturesque Baisaran Valley. The sound of gunfire can be heard in the distance. The terrorists had targeted a group of tourists and had shot down the men. Some of the survivors claimed that they had deliberately killed the Hindus after confirming their religion. Since then, multiple videos of the massacre and the mayhem have emerged, documenting the terror and helplessness of the tourists and the courage and heroism of locals, who managed to save many lives, often at a great risk to themselves. The Kashmiri local who died was a pony handler, who had tried to save the lives of tourists on his ponies. He was shot by the terrorists when he was trying to shield a tourist with his body.

## J&K CM as Assembly moves resolution denouncing Pahalgam attack

**SRINAGAR, (HS) :** Jammu & Kashmir Assembly on Monday passed a unanimous resolution strongly condemning the terror attack at Baisaran meadow in J&K's Pahalgam in which 25 tourists and a local resident were killed. The resolution was moved by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary at the beginning of the special session of the Assembly today. The resolution described the attack as a heinous, barbaric, inhumane and cowardly act, and was unanimously adopted by the House after a three-hour-long discussion. "This House unequivocally condemns the heinous, cowardly act that resulted in the loss of innocent lives. Such acts of terror are a direct assault on the ethos of Kashmiriyat, the values enshrined in our Constitution, and the spirit of unity, peace, and harmony that have long characterised Jammu & Kashmir and our nation," read the resolution. On April 22,



a group of three Lashkar militants attacked tourists at Baisaran meadow, which is also called mini Switzerland, killing 25 tourists and a local resident, Syed Adil Shah, who attempted to snatch the weapon from the militants to save the lives of tourists. The House expressed its solidarity with the victims and their families. "We extend our deepest condolences to those who have suffered irreparable loss and affirm our collective resolve to share in their grief and support them in their hour of need,"

reads the resolution. The resolution also remembered the valiant efforts by Syed Adil Shah, the horse rider, to save tourists during the terror attack. "This House salutes the supreme sacrifice of Shaheed Syed Adil Hussain Shah, who, while bravely attempting to save tourists, laid down his life. His courage and selflessness embody the true spirit of Kashmir and shall serve as an enduring inspiration for future generations," it reads. The resolution praised the efforts of people in J&K in the aftermath of attack. "This House commends the people of Jammu & Kashmir for their extraordinary display of unity, compassion, and resilience in the aftermath of the attack. The peaceful demonstrations across towns and villages, and the spontaneous outpouring of moral and material support towards tourists, reaffirm the people's steadfast commitment to peace, communal harmony, and the rule of law," the resolution states.

## Rukhsar Trapped at Attari Border as Her Children Reach Pakistan

**Attari Border, (HS) :** In a significant development, Rukhsar, has found herself stranded at the Attari border after she was refused entry into Pakistan. The development follows the Indian government's recent decision to send all Pakistani nationals back to Pakistan in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack. Rukhsar, who was travelling to Pakistan, was stopped at the border because her Indian passport did not meet Pakistani entry requirements, while her children's Pakistani passports allowed them to cross over.

Her children, including her three-



year-old daughter, have already reached Pakistan, but Rukhsar remains in a state of distress, separated from them. Speaking exclusively to IANS, Rukhsar shared her emotional struggle. "I have four children, and my daughter is just three years old. They have gone back to Pakistan with their father. How can my children live without me? They need a mother to look after them. I need to be with them," she said, her voice filled with desperation. Rukhsar came to India to visit her mother, who is living in Old Delhi. She was supposed to join her family in Pakistan afterwards. However, her entry into Pakistan was blocked due to her Indian passport. "I came here to meet my mother after 13 years, but now I am stuck at the border. I am returning in the changed circumstances due to the attack, which should not have happened. My children are with their father in Pakistan, and I can't bear to be away from them," she added, visibly distressed. After being denied entry, Rukhsar has appealed to the Indian government to help her reunite with her family. "I request the Indian government to allow me to go to Pakistan. I want to take care of my children and husband," she said. Rukhsar's case highlights the growing challenges faced by families divided by the ongoing geopolitical situation. The authorities are yet to respond to her appeal.

## SC Drops Bail Cancellation Proceedings against Senthil Balaji After He Resigns as TN Minister

**New Delhi, (HS) :** The Supreme Court on Monday disposed of an application seeking recall of its decision which had enlarged DMK leader and former Tamil Nadu minister Senthil Balaji on bail in connection with a money laundering case linked to an alleged cash-for-jobs scam. A Raj Bhavan communique accepting the resignation of Balaji, who was Minister for Electricity, Prohibition and Excise in Tamil Nadu government, was placed before a bench of Justices Abhay S. Oka and A.G. Masih.

The Justice Oka-led Bench on April 23 told the senior DMK leader to choose between his ministerial post and bail in the money laundering case, as it dealt with an application claiming that Balaji may influence the case witnesses in his capacity as a minister. It had cautioned Balaji that if he did not step down from his minister post, it would recall its bail order, noting that the top court had made a mistake by ignoring the previous judgments against him. "We are giving him a choice. Freedom or post? [T]he judgment of the Madras High Court



records how, as a minister, you tried to influence witnesses by entering into a settlement with them, based on which proceedings were quashed," the bench had said. The Supreme Court had asked Balaji, who was immediately inducted into the Tamil Nadu Cabinet after he was granted bail, to decide by April 28 whether he preferred his liberty or his minister post. Following the top court's ultimatum, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin

on Sunday recommended the Governor to accept the resignation of Balaji and to reallocate his portfolios to other ministers. "The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has recommended to the Governor of Tamil Nadu to accept the resignation of V. Senthil Balaji, Minister for Electricity, Prohibition and Excise, and Dr K. Ponmudy, Minister for Forests and Khadi. The Governor has approved the recommendation," read a

Raj Bhavan communique issued. It added that Transport Minister S.S. Sivasankar has been given the additional portfolio of Electricity, while Housing and Urban Development Minister S. Muthusamy has now been designated as the Minister for Housing and Prohibition & Excise.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had, on June 14, 2023, raided Balaji's house and other places in Chennai, Karur, and Coimbatore and interrogated him about a job for a cash scam while he served as the Transport Minister in the AIADMK-led government. After several hours of interrogation, Balaji was arrested and sent to judicial custody. Even as the opposition demanded the immediate removal of Balaji from the ministry, CM Stalin did not succumb to the pressure. However, Balaji finally tendered his resignation on February 12, 2024, eight months after his arrest and ahead of his bail plea hearing in the Madras High Court. After the Supreme Court granted him bail, Balaji walked out of Puzhal Central Prison after 450 days and was inducted again as minister on September 29 last year.

## Siddaramaiah's Slap Gesture at Cop after He Loses Cool on Stage

**Belagavi, (HS) :** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah snapped at a police officer during a Congress rally today. The Chief Minister lost his cool and nearly slapped the Additional Superintendent of Police (SP) after he was shown black flags allegedly by BJP workers at the rally in Belagavi.

Standing on a stage, flanked by Congress leaders and workers, Siddaramaiah was seen calling the officer. The furious leader asked him how people were allowed to protest and wave black flags inside the rally venue. "Hey, come here, who's the SP? What are you guys doing?" the veteran Congress leader was heard saying before the audio became unclear. He even raised his hand, which seemed like a slap gesture, at Dharwad Additional SP Narayana Baramani. The police officer was seen swiftly stepping back. Siddaramaiah's action has drawn a lot of ire from his political opponents. "Power is not permanent," warned Janata Dal Secular or JDS, in a post on X. "Raising your hand to hit the police officer does not bring any glory to your position or dignity. Your term of office is only 5 years. But a government officer serves till the age of 60. Power is not permanent



for anyone. Correct your misconduct," read the post. Karnataka BJP spokesperson Vijay Prasad said, "Your act of raising your hand against a police officer is a disgrace of the highest order. Your arrogance has crossed all imaginable limits. This is an unforgivable display of contempt for the very institutions you are sworn to uphold."

"You must immediately and unconditionally apologise to the officer you sought to humiliate. Your insatiable lust for power is corrupting your judgment and dragging your office into shameful depths. Such despicable

behaviour is utterly unbecoming of any leader, let alone one occupying the highest seat of the state," she added. Former Union Minister and BJP MLA Basanagouda R Patil termed Siddaramaiah's behaviour as "unexpected" and sought an "unconditional apology" for the "insensitive behaviour". "The Chief Minister is demoralising not only the Police officers but also the entire Police Department. Such a mentality of harassing and manhandling Police Officers for lapses and loopholes deserves the harshest condemnation. I

urge the Chief Minister to offer an unconditional apology for his insensitive behaviour," he posted on X. Siddaramaiah's deputy and Congress leader DK Shivakumar, meanwhile, has warned the BJP over the black flags at the party rally. I am warning you (BJP). You have to set things right and advise your party workers against such acts. If not, I will not let any event of yours happen in Karnataka. We are ready for any type of protest. Let this be a warning. I am not requesting, I am warning you, that's all I want to say." This comes just a day after the BJP seized on the Chief Minister's "no need for war" with Pakistan comments. Siddaramaiah clarified his stand after the Pakistani media picked up his comments, and said that he did not say "complete no to war", but meant there should be war only if it is inevitable.

His remark came in the wake of a terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam that killed 26 civilians, mostly tourists. India has blamed Pakistan for the attack and taken several diplomatic measures against the country, including the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty.

## 'Indian Attack Imminent, Have Reinforced Forces': Pak Minister

**ISLAMABAD, (HS) :** Pakistan's defence minister said on Monday that a military incursion by India was imminent in the aftermath of a deadly terrorist attack on tourists in Kashmir last week, as tensions rise between the two nuclear-armed nations. The terror attack killed 26 people and triggered outrage in India, along with calls for action against Pakistan. India has accused Pakistan of backing the attack, the worst in years on civilians on April 22. Pakistan has rejected the charge.

"We have reinforced our forces because it is something which is imminent now. So in that situation, some strategic decisions have to be taken, so those decisions have been taken," Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif told Reuters in an interview at his office in Islamabad. Asif said Pakistan's military had briefed the government on the possibility of an Indian attack. He did not go into further details on his reasons for thinking an incursion was imminent. He said Pakistan was on high alert and that it would only use its arsenal of nuclear weapons if "there is a direct threat to our existence". The attack sparked a huge manhunt for the terrorists and India has identified two of them as Pakistani. Islamabad has denied any role and called for a neutral investigation. Since the attack, India has downgraded diplomatic ties with Pakistan, suspended the Indus Waters Treaty, announced the closure of the main land border crossing and withdrawn visas for Pakistan nationals.

Mirroring New Delhi's steps, Islamabad ordered the expulsion of Indian diplomats and military advisers, cancelled visas for Indian nationals and barred its airspace to Indian airplanes. Earlier today, the Indian government banned more than a dozen Pakistani YouTube channels over their "provocative" content. The banned platforms include the YouTube channels of Pakistani news outlets Dawn, Samaa TV, ARY News, Bol News, Raftar, Geo News and Suno News.





## South Korea: Lee Jae-Myung Tapped Presidential Candidate For Democratic Party



**Seoul, (H.S):** Lee Jae-myung, former leader of South Korea's Democratic Party, who is the front-runner in opinion polls for the upcoming presidential election, won the party's presidential nomination on Sunday. The human rights lawyer-turned-politician won 89.77 per cent of all votes cast in the party's primary, securing a majority of the votes needed to

avoid a runoff. Lee has put economic recovery as his top priority and voiced openness for talks with North Korea, reports Yonhap news agency. This marks the highest figure ever recorded in a presidential primary among DP-affiliated candidates since South Korea's democratisation in 1987. Gyeonggi Province Gov. Kim Dong-yeon came in second with 6.87 per cent, while Kim

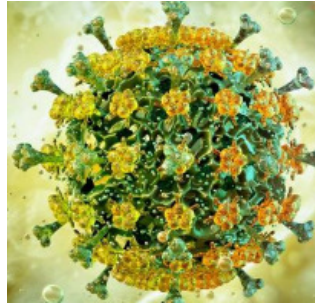
Kyung-soo, a former South Gyeongsang Province governor, won 3.36 per cent. "I will humbly fulfil the responsibility of achieving national unity, which is both the mission of politics and the president's top priority," Lee said in his acceptance speech. In 2022, Lee lost to former President Yoon Suk Yeol by just 0.73 percentage points. The presidential election is scheduled for June 3.

Additionally, the minor opposition Rebuilding Korea Party (RKP) also officially declared its support for Lee Jae-myung. "We declare that Lee is not only the DP's candidate but also the candidate supported by our party. We will dedicate all our efforts to ensure Lee's overwhelming victory," the RKP's acting leader, Kim Sun-min, said in a release.

## New Zealand Strengthens Preparedness For Potential Arrival of H5N1

**Wellington, (H.S):** The New Zealand government is stepping up preparations for the possible arrival of the H5N1 strain of avian influenza, emphasising the importance of a collaborative approach to tackling high pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

Biosecurity Minister Andrew Hoggard said on Monday that partnership with industry was crucial to the successful eradication of HPAI at a major commercial egg farm in Otago, South Island. The outbreak involved the less virulent H7N6 strain. "This was the first detection of HPAI in New Zealand, and it tested some of the plans that are being developed for the arrival of HPAI H5N1," Hoggard said. The Ministry for Primary Industries has now lifted strict biosecurity



controls at Mainland Poultry's Hillgrove Farm, which had been in place since the H7N6 strain was confirmed there in December last year, allowing the farm to begin repopulating."

Tracing did not detect any HPAI-infected chickens beyond the farm where the disease originated," Hoggard noted. He credited the swift containment and eradication of the disease to a focused response and strong support and expertise from the

wider poultry industry. New Zealand's robust biosecurity system and its relative freedom from pests and diseases continue to be key advantages for the country's farmers, he said. Hoggard added that the work undertaken to prepare for a potential H5N1 outbreak, a strain responsible for millions of bird deaths overseas, helped New Zealand respond effectively to the less severe H7N6 case, Xinhua news agency reported."

Our geographic isolation has protected us from H5N1 to date, but we can't afford to be complacent," he warned. According to the World Health Organization, Avian influenza A(H5N1) is a subtype of influenza virus that infects birds and mammals, including humans in rare instances. The goose/Guangdong-lineage of H5N1

avian influenza viruses first emerged in 1996 and have been causing outbreaks in birds since then. Since 2020, a variant of these viruses belonging to the H5 clade 2.3.4.4b has led to an unprecedented number of deaths in wild birds and poultry in many countries in Africa, Asia and Europe. In 2021, the virus spread to North America, and in 2022, to Central and South America.

Infections in humans can cause severe disease with a high mortality rate. The human cases detected thus far are mostly linked to close contact with infected birds and other animals and contaminated environments. This virus does not appear to transmit easily from person to person, and sustained human-to-human transmission has not been reported.

## 11 Dead In Vancouver Car Rampage, Suspect Charged With Murder

**Vancouver, (H.S) :** At least 11 people have died and several others were injured after an SUV drove into a crowd celebrating the Lapu Lapu Filipino festival in Vancouver, Canada, the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) said on Monday (Indian time). The police stated that the suspect, identified as 30-year-old Kai-Ji Adam Lo, has been charged with murder.

The black SUV was driven into the street festival of the Filipino community at E. 41st Avenue and Fraser Street shortly after 8 p.m. on Sunday (Indian time). "Eleven people have now died as a result of the mass-casualty event at the Lapu Lapu Day Festival. Our hearts are with all of the victims, their loved ones, and everyone who has been impacted by this act of violence. This is the darkest day in our city's history," the police department said in a statement. Interim Vancouver Police Chief



Steve Rai revealed that the driver has a significant history of interactions with police and healthcare professionals related to mental health. "A suspect has been charged with murder in the death of multiple festival-goers at a Filipino community block party Saturday night.

Eleven people, aged 5 to 65, were killed, and more than two dozen others injured when a man drove an SUV into a crowd of people celebrating the Lapu Lapu Day festival, near Fraser Street on East 43rd Avenue," the

statement added. According to the police, the 30-year-old Vancouver man was arrested at the scene after bystanders and witnesses intervened to detain him. "The BC Prosecution Service has now charged Kai-Ji Adam Lo, 30, with eight counts of second-degree murder.

Lo, a Vancouver resident, has appeared in court and remains in custody. The charge assessment is ongoing, and further charges are anticipated," the statement read. Police said some of the victims in Saturday's mass-

casualty incident remain unidentified. VPD has established a 24-hour assistance centre at the Douglas Park Community Centre, 801 West 22nd Avenue, for anyone who has not been able to contact a friend or family member. The VPD also urged witnesses who have not yet come forward to contact the Vancouver Police Department's Homicide Unit and speak with investigators.

Anyone with images or bystander video of the incident has been asked to upload it to an online portal so it can be reviewed by investigators. The Lapu Lapu Day, named after a Filipino indigenous leader who fought against Spanish colonisation in the 16th century, received official recognition from the province of British Columbia in 2023 and is broadly celebrated by the Filipino community in the region, where Vancouver serves as the largest city.

**Gaza, (H.S):** The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) said on Sunday that its flour supplies in Gaza have been depleted as Israel continues to restrict the entry of food and humanitarian aid. "UNRWA flour supplies also ran out earlier this week," it said on social media platform X."

Hunger is getting worse in Gaza. People, including many children, are hoping to get some food to survive through the warm meals distributed by charities. "About 3,000 of our trucks loaded with life-saving aid are ready to enter Gaza," it said, reiterating its call for lifting the blockade on the enclave to allow the delivery of urgent assistance to more than two million Palestinians, Xinhua news agency reported. Israel has blocked the entry of all humanitarian aid into Gaza since March 2. It then ended a two-month ceasefire with Hamas on March 18 and resumed deadly



air and ground assaults on the enclave. The renewed Israeli attacks have so far killed 2,151 Palestinians and injured 5,598 others, Gaza health authorities said on Sunday, adding the death toll in the enclave since the war began in October 2023 has risen to 52,243, with 117,639 injured.

On Friday, the UN World Food Programme said it had run out of food stocks in Gaza, as border crossings remain closed. UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini said that Palestinian children in the blockaded Gaza are starving. "The government of Israel continues to block the entry of food

and other basics," he said. "A manmade and politically motivated starvation." "Calls to bring in supplies are going unheeded." Since March 2, Israel has kept Gaza's crossings closed to food, medical, and humanitarian aid, deepening the humanitarian catastrophe, according to government, human rights, and international reports."

This is the longest closure the Gaza Strip has ever faced, exacerbating already fragile markets and food systems," it said, adding: "People are running out of ways to cope, and the fragile gains made during the short ceasefire have unravelled."

## Afghan Interim Govt Expresses Sympathy With Iran Over Port Explosion



**Kabul, (H.S):** The Afghan interim government has offered condolences and expressed sympathy with neighbouring Iran over a port explosion which caused huge casualties, the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement on Sunday. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan expressed its deep sorrow and offered condolences and sympathy with Iran, its people and families of the victims, said the statement, posted on social media by the Ministry's deputy spokesman Hafiz Zia

Ahmad. "The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, with deep sorrow and regret over the tragic explosion in Bandar Abbas, which has resulted in the loss of lives and injuries to hundreds of citizens, extends its heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the government and people of the neighbouring country," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. The government and people of Afghanistan stand by the people and government of neighbouring Iran at this tragic moment, the statement added as quoted by Xinhua news agency report. At least 25 people were

killed and 800 others injured in a huge explosion at a port on Saturday in Iran's southern province of Hormozgan, media reported on Sunday. Six people went missing in the incident that occurred at the Port of Shahid Rajaei. Preliminary investigations suggest that the blast was caused by the improper storage of hazardous materials, including sodium perchlorate, a chemical used in missile fuel.

The force of the explosion was felt up to 50 km away, causing significant structural damage and prompting a temporary suspension of port operations. In response to the incident, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has ordered a comprehensive investigation to determine the exact cause of the explosion. Authorities have declared a public health emergency in the region due to the release of toxic chemicals into the air, advising residents to stay indoors and take precautionary measures.

## 2024 Global Military Spending Hit \$2.7 Trillion In Record Surge

**Gaza , (H.S):** Amid changing geopolitical relations, wars and rising tensions, the year 2024 saw the steepest rise in worldwide military expenditure since the end of the Cold War, reaching \$2.7 trillion, researchers said Monday. The military spending increased worldwide with particularly rapid growth in Europe and the Middle East-- the epicentre of two major conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine-- according to a new report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)."

Over 100 countries around the world raised their military spending in 2024," SIPRI said, according to a Reuters report. "As governments increasingly prioritise military security, often at the expense of other budget areas, the economic and social trade-offs could have significant effects on societies for years to come," it added. In real terms, the expenditure rose



by 9.4 per cent globally compared to 2023, with 2024 marking the 10th year of consecutive spending increases.

The data showed that many European countries (including Russia) saw an "unprecedented" rise in their military spending amid war in Ukraine and doubts over U.S. commitment to the NATO alliance. With a 17 per cent hike, European military spending has reached beyond

the level recorded at the end of the Cold War, the data showed. Russia's military expenditure reached an estimated \$149 billion in 2024, a 38 per cent increase from 2023 and double the level in 2015.

This represented 7.1 per cent of Russia's GDP and 19% of all government spending. Ukraine's total military expenditure grew by 2.9 per cent to reach \$64.7 billion, which

amounts to 43 per cent of Russia's spending. At 34 per cent of GDP, Ukraine had the largest military burden of any country in 2024. "Ukraine currently allocates all of its tax revenues to its military... In such a tight fiscal space, it will be challenging for Ukraine to keep increasing its military spending," SIPRI said. Germany's spending also increased by 28 per cent, reaching \$88.5 billion, overtaking India as the fourth largest in the world. With this, Germany has become the biggest spender in Central and Western Europe for the first time since its reunification.

While some of the increases have been a result of European military aid to Ukraine, it has also been fuelled by concerns of potential US disengagement with the alliance. "There has really been a shift in European defence policies, where we will see large-scale procurement plans into the arms industry in the years to come," Xiao Liang, a researcher with the SIPRI, told AFP.

## Lynched For Belief: The Systemic Persecution of Ahmadi Muslims In Pakistan

**New Delhi, (H.S):** On April 18 this year, a 47-year-old car workshop owner was brutally killed with sticks and bricks as a mob of hundreds stormed his place of worship, while numerous others had to be rescued by police in the city of Karachi, Pakistan. This horrific incident, which should provoke national outrage and deep sorrow, failed to elicit a strong response from civil society or a decisive intervention from the state.

The reason lies in the fact that both the victim and the worship site belonged to the Ahmadi Muslim minority-- a community that routinely faces violent persecution, systemic political and bureaucratic discrimination, and institutionalised oppression within Pakistan. Each year, reports by governmental bodies, international human rights organisations, and community advocates document the persistent assaults on Ahmadi

Muslims in Pakistan by Islamist factions or radicalised mobs, with no meaningful intervention by the state. In some instances, the state appears overtly complicit in such actions-- for example, in March of this year, a 120-year-old Ahmadi place of worship was demolished by police following pressure and complaints from Islamist groups claiming the structure resembled a mosque. To offer a glimpse into the societal persecution faced by this community:

Ahmadi Muslim graves are frequently defiled and vandalised, while individuals endure constant harassment, targeted assassinations, mob violence, unofficial commercial boycotts, employment discrimination, and abuse on digital platforms. This is compounded by the alarming frequency of blasphemy accusations levelled against Ahmadi Muslims, for reasons such as possessing the Quran, inscribing Prophet Muhammad's



name on a wedding invitation, or engaging in prayer using language or gestures considered distinctly Islamic. While opposition to the Ahmadiyya community has existed since its inception in the late 19th century by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian in Punjab, the most critical blow to Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan was delivered through the 1974 constitutional amendment, which officially declared them non-Muslims. Despite sharing the majority of beliefs and practices with mainstream Muslims,

Ahmadis diverge in their recognition of Mirza Ahmad as the Mahdi or Messiah, a belief that conflicts with the Islamic doctrine of Khatam-e-Nubuwwat (the finality of the Prophet Muhammad). Subsequently, in 1984, General Zia-ul-Haq issued an ordinance prohibiting Ahmadi Muslims from performing Islamic rites or displaying religious symbols associated with Islam, such as erecting domes or minarets on their places of worship. In 1985, he also introduced segregated voter lists

based on religious identity, effectively requiring Ahmadi Muslims to renounce their beliefs in order to vote. This marked the onset of a formalised system of legal disenfranchisement and persecution, which continues today. Although the practice of separate electoral rolls was ended in 2002, Ahmadi Muslims were excluded from this reform.

The requirement to repudiate their faith has since permeated various aspects of governance, barring them from essential state services such as obtaining a passport. Notably, in October 2022, Punjab's provincial government mandated the inclusion of a declaration affirming the finality of the Prophet Muhammad within the marriage registration form. The emergence of the far-right Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), the group whose supporters were involved in the recent attack and killing of an

Ahmadi Muslim man in Karachi, has significantly deepened the climate of fear and marginalisation experienced by the community. The TLP rose to national attention in 2017 when it staged a three-week blockade of a major highway in Islamabad to protest a minor amendment to the electoral oath, which the group perceived as a dilution of the state's stance against Ahmadi Muslims.

The government ultimately conceded to their demand by reinstating the original wording, resulting in the resignation of Law Minister Zahid Hamid. Such is the influence of far-right sentiment that, in 2018, the Imran Khan-led PTI government succumbed to pressure from extremist groups and requested that Princeton professor Atif Mian resign from his role as Economic Adviser solely on account of his Ahmadi Muslim identity. While the systemic

exclusion of Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan was initiated and continues to be upheld by the state, the deep-seated societal animosity it has fostered has now grown beyond the state's control. Decades of intentional state policy targeting the community for political gain have inflicted lasting damage on the nation, fostering a society deeply afflicted by radicalism, self-destructive impulses, and toxic intolerance.

According to data compiled by the Ahmadiyya community, at least 264 Ahmadi Muslims were killed in targeted attacks, mob violence, and bombings between 1984 and 2018. It is important to note that even Pakistan's first and only Nobel Laureate, Abdus Salam, was not spared from the effects of this pervasive hostility-- his gravestone was defaced to erase the word 'Muslim' due to his Ahmadi Muslim identity.



## World Day for Safety & Health at Work: Vedanta Leverages Artificial Intelligence and Smart Tech to Transform Industrial Safety

**Bhubaneswar, (DMC):** On World Day for Safety and Health at Work, Vedanta Limited(NSE: VEDL) reaffirmed its commitment to a safety-first culture through a comprehensive suite of initiatives rooted in predictive and inclusive safety, supported by cutting-edge technologies.

The company has deployed a host of leading-edge technologies including Artificial Intelligence (AI)-led monitoring systems, drones, fatigue detection systems, smart helmets, and tele-remote operations, which are transforming industrial safety across its operations.The theme of World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2025 focuses on the impact of digitalization and artificial intelligence (AI) on workplace safety and health. As workplaces evolve with AI, robotics, exoskeletons, and remote work, these technologies bring both opportunities and challenges.Vedanta's zinc

business in India, is the first in country to deploy virtual reality (VR)-based winder training simulator system that mimics the working ofshafts (lifts) which are used for material and manpower movement. The company is also the first in India to introduce VR-based underground vehicle simulator that trains employees in driving the vehicle in mines. Vedanta's aluminium business has also deployed drones to perform inspections before material extraction at its operations.

In the company's oil & gas vertical, Vedanta has implemented an AI-based Safety Surveillance Monitoring System with AI cameras at strategic locations, resulting in an 80 per cent reduction in manual efforts thereby enhancing safety. Vedanta is also engaging with Shark Tank India participant Jarsh Safety, a startup involved in the development of smart safety wearables that is focused on reducing heat stress and



improving connectivity in various industrial setups.Vedanta is dedicated to ensuring safety across its operations, where every individual is responsible for workplace safety. The company has instituted a 'Community of Practice'and safety committees thatoversee the implementation of safety initiatives. At the core of this culture is 'visible-felt leadership', wherein business CXOs are expected to exemplify the highest levels of safety in their respective areas and serve as role

models for employees and business partners.Technology plays a crucial role inaugmenting such efforts by limiting human-machine interactionand enabling preventive safety measures. Vedanta's proprietary T-Pulse platform uses artificial intelligence to enhance safety in critical operational areas in real time. AI Detectshares short video insights of safety improvement opportunities with area supervisors and monitors action throughreal-time dashboards. Smart helmets with live audio-

visual connectivity guide employees on various workflows in real-time.Fatigue detection systems monitor and alert driver drowsiness, ensuring vehicle safety.Computer vision-led ladle monitoring at smelters prevents operation if safety interlocks arenot engaged.Ceramic sensors monitor temperature changes inside furnaces, predicting potential leaks in oil & gas business.

HMV and LMV simulators help drivers learn digitally before being deployed on field.A spokesperson from Vedanta Limited said, "At Vedanta, we believe the future of safety lies at the intersection of innovation, inclusion, and intent. By leveraging AI, smart systems, and people-first leadership, we are not just responding to risks-we're anticipating and preventing them. Our commitment is to create workplaces that are not only productive, but deeply safe, healthy, and future-ready." Vedanta continues to invest in

regular trainingin various aspects of health and safety, including fire and rescue training,to deeply embed safety into its work culture.This is especially important given the large number of contractual and floating workers who are on-boarded for specific, short-term activities. Notably, the company is the first in India to have all-women underground mine rescue teams and firefighting teams. Vedanta's approach to occupational health is holistic.

From hospitals in every operational townshipto complimentary annual check-ups, insurance, and access to mental health counsellors, the companyprovides healthcare facilities at employees' doorstep-addressing needs ranging from basic health services to cancer care through its flagship oncology center, the BALCO Medical Centre.Initiatives like the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon, Vedanta Pink City Half Marathon, Vedanta Zinc City Half Marathon,

sports tournaments, well-equipped gyms, swimming pools and sports complexes help foster a strong fitness culture amongst employees and their families.Vedanta's approach to safety extends beyond the confines of its operations. The company also supports local communities through training programs on basic fire safety, road safety, lightning safety, first aid, and even physical safety, includingself-defence initiatives.

The Vedanta Group is a global leader in critical minerals, energy and technology operating a diverse portfolio of world-class assets. It is the world's largest integrated producer of zinc, the third-largest global producer of silver, amongst the world's top aluminium producers, India's only private oil and gas producer, and one of the largest private power producers. With an eye on the future, the company is strategically expanding its business portfolio by venturing into rare earths, other critical minerals, and renewable energy.

## Adding 50 GW renewable energy yearly can end coal imports by 2029, save India \$66 bn

**New Selhi, (H.S):** If India adds 50 gigawatts of renewable energy every year, it could completely stop importing thermal coal by 2029 and save about USD 66 billion in foreign exchange between 2025 and 2029, according to a new report published on Monday. The total savings could be at least USD 173 billion from 2025 to 2034, the report prepared by think tank Climate Risks Horizon said.

The climate and energy think tank said the country's electricity sector remains heavily dependent on coal imports, with around 20 per cent or 206 million tonnes of thermal coal imported in 2023-24 at a cost of USD 21 billion.

Thermal coal imports have risen by 58 per cent between 2013 and 2023, but the value of these imports has increased by 124 per cent due to volatile global prices and a weakening rupee .it added. The report said imports surge during the summer months, when cooling demand pushes up electricity



consumption. Over the said period (2013 to 2023), India imported around 2,128 million tonnes of coal, mostly thermal coal used for power generation. The import of thermal coal has been increasing steadily at 3.7 per cent annually and has gone up to 40 per cent since 2013.

The think tank said India's dependency on imported coal poses both physical and financial risks. Physical risks arise with

any disruption in the supply of imported coal, either due to unforeseen political changes or natural disasters. The volatility in energy prices poses a significant financial risk to power companies and consumers dependent on imported coal, the authors of the study said.

The report warned that India's energy demand will continue to grow due to urbanisation, industrial growth

and the greater use of electric technologies.The per capita electricity consumption rose from 957 kilowatt-hour in 2013 to 1,331 kWh in 2022 and heatwaves linked to the climate crisis are further pushing up the power demand, it said. The think tank said a focused plan to aggressively expand renewable energy could significantly reduce coal imports.In 2023-24, India updated its renewable energy targets and now aims to have 500 gigawatts of non-fossil fuel energy capacity by 2030.

To achieve this, the government plans to add 50 gigawatts of renewable energy every year until 2027-28. Currently, India has about 151 gigawatts of renewable energy from solar and wind and around 200 gigawatts if hydro, small-hydro and biogas is included.To meet the 2030 goal, the country needs to add 50 gigawatts of renewable energy every year.In 2024-25, India added 24 gigawatts, the highest amount added in a single year so far.

## IRFC Shares In Red Ahead of Q4 Results Announcement Today

**New Selhi, (H.S):** IRFC shares will be in focus on April 28 as the board will declare audited financial results for the quarter and year ended March 31, 2025. Shares of IRFC (Indian Railway Finance Corporation) dropped in red in the morning session on Monday. The scrip was trading at Rs 128.49 at the time of writing this report, from the day's opening at Rs 128.00 apiece. Railway PSU will declare the audited financial results for the quarter and financial year ended March 31, 2025.

The board will also consider the market borrowing programme of the company for the financial year 2025-26. "this is to inform that meeting of Board of Directors of the Company, which was originally scheduled to be held on Tuesday, 29th April, 2025 stands rescheduled to Monday, 28th April, 2025 inter alia, to consider and approve:The Audited Financial Results for the quarter and financial year ended 31st March, 2025 and other financial statements namely Cash Flow Statement and Statement of



Assets and Liabilities for the year ended 31st March, 2025.ii. Approval of Market Borrowing programme of the company for the Financial Year 2025-26," the company said in the filing. In the previous session, shares of IRFC settled 3.52 per cent lower at Rs 128.70 apiece. The stock's 52-week movement indicates a high of Rs 229.05 and Rs 108.05, respectively. Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) is the dedicated funding arm of Indian

Railways. The company was set up in December 1986 for mobilizing funds from domestic and overseas markets to meet the pre-dominant portion of Extra Budgetary Resources requirement of Indian Railways. Stay updated with all the latest news on the Stock Market, including market trends, Sensex and Nifty updates, top gainers and losers, and expert analysis. Get real-time insights, financial reports, and investment strategies-only on News18.

## India's Index of industrial production records growth of 3% in March 2025

**New Selhi, (PIB):** As per the revised calendar, the Quick Estimate of Index of Industrial Production (IIP) will now be released on 28th of every month (or next working day if 28th is a holiday).

The index is compiled with data received from source agencies, which in turn receive the data from the producing factories/ establishments. These Quick Estimates will undergo revision in subsequent releases as per the revision policy of IIP. The IIP growth rate for the month of March 2025 is 3.0

percent which was 2.9 percent (Quick Estimate) in the month of February 2025. The growth rates of the three sectors, Mining, Manufacturing and Electricity for the month of March 2025 are 0.4 percent, 3.0 percent and 6.3 percent respectively.

The Quick Estimates of IIP stands at 164.8 against 160.0 in March 2024. The Indices of Industrial Production for the Mining, Manufacturing and Electricity sectors for the month of March 2025 stand at 156.8, 160.9 and 217.1 respectively. Within the manufacturing sector,

13 out of 23 industry groups at NIC 2 digit-level have recorded a positive growth in March 2025 over March 2024. The top three positive contributors for the month of March 2025 are - "Manufacture of basic metals" (6.9%),

"Manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers" (10.3%) and "Manufacture of electrical equipment" (15.7%). In the industry group "Manufacture of basic metals", item groups "Flat products of Alloy Steel ", "Pipes and tubes of Steel", "Bars and

Rods of Mild steel" have shown significant contribution in growth.In the industry group "Manufacture of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers", item groups "Auto components/ spares and accessories", "Axle", "Bodies of trucks, lorries and trailers" have shown significant contribution in growth.

In the industry group "Manufacture of electrical equipment" item groups "Electric heaters", "Transformers (Small)", "End facing connector for optical fibres and cables" have shown significant contribution in

growth. As per the use base classification, the indices stand at 168.2 for Primary Goods, 134.8 for Capital Goods, 173.1 for Intermediate Goods and 212.3 for Infrastructure/ Construction Goods for the month of March 2025.

Further, the indices for Consumer durables and Consumer non-durables stand at 138.5 and 147.9 respectively. The corresponding growth rates of IIP as per Use-based classification in March 2025 over March 2024 are 3.1 percent in Primary goods, 2.4 percent in Capital goods, 2.3

percent in Intermediate goods, 8.8 percent in Infrastructure/ Construction Goods, 6.6 percent in Consumer durables and (-)4.7 percent in Consumer non-durables (Statement III). Based on use-based classification,

contributors to the growth of IIP for the month of March 2025 are - Infrastructure/ construction goods, Primary goods, Consumer durables. Monthly Indices and Growth Rate (in %) of IIP for the last 13 months. Along with the Quick Estimate of IIP for the month of

March 2025, the indices for December 2024, January 2025 and February 2025 have undergone final revision in the light of the updated data received from the source agencies.

The Quick Estimate for March 2025, has been compiled at weighted response rate of 88 percent, whereas the weighted response rate for December 2024, January 2025 and February 2025 were 95 percent, 94 percent and 94 percent respectively. Release of the Index for April 2025 will be on Wednesday, 28th May 2025.

## SEBI Joins DigiLocker To Reduce Unclaimed Assets, Protect Nominees' Interests

**Mumbai, (H.S):** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Sunday collaborated with DigiLocker to help reduce unclaimed assets and protect investors.The partnership was revealed in a post by the National Stock Exchange (NSE) on the social media platform X."SEBI has partnered with DigiLocker to reduce unclaimed assets in the securities market and protect nominees' interests," said the exchange."

A secure way to manage digital documents-built with investors in mind," the NSE added.To minimise unclaimed assets bought by investors in the capital markets, the capital markets regulator has taken several initiatives, such as mandating the submission of contact, to simplify the transmission process. SEBI initiatives for unclaimed assets are norms for inactive accounts and folios; mandatory contact and bank details submission, nomination requirement or opt-out mandate,



simplified process of transmission and centralised reporting of investor demise. Alarmed at frauds related to securities market on various social media platforms, capital markets regulator this month issued an advisory for investors to exercise caution and due diligence to verify the genuineness of social media handles of SEBI-registered entities while accessing them. SEBI noticed an increase in frauds related to securities market on various social media platforms such as YouTube,

Facebook, Instagram, X (previously Twitter), WhatsApp, Telegram, Google Play Store and Apple Store, etc." With increasing adoption of digital communication platforms, it is observed that scamsters are enticing victims by giving trading calls in the name of providing education.

They also provide misleading or deceptive testimonials, promise or guarantee of assured or risk-free return etc. through various social media platforms," according to a SEBI statement. SEBI noticed unregistered investment advisory services being provided by entities that falsely claim to be registered intermediaries with SEBI or by showcasing fake certificates purportedly issued by the regulator.It also observed impersonation of SEBI-registered entities by fraudulent trading platforms, WhatsApp, Telegram channels which deceptively claim or suggest affiliation with SEBI-registered entity claiming to provide assured or risk-free return.

## Solid Monetary Frameworks Helped Emerging Markets Navigate Recent Crises : Gita Gopinath

**New Delhi, (H.S):** Emerging markets have shown strong resilience through recent crises by building strong monetary policy frameworks and committing to inflation targeting, IMF chief economist Gita Gopinath said on Sunday.Clear and careful communication will be key for central banks to maintain credibility and anchor inflation expectations in uncertain times, she posted on X social media platform."Kudos to emerging markets. They've actually demonstrated a lot of resilience after some pretty tough knocks, including the pandemic, including the energy crisis that we saw," Gopinath said during a recent IMF meeting, a video of which she posted on X.She further stated that "if we have to take a lesson from it, the reason that they had that resilience was that they built up good, solid monetary policy frameworks, the inflation targeting regime, maintaining that credibility and the commitment to it in an uncertain environment".Among



the emerging markets, India continues to remain the world's fastest-growing major economy and the only country expected to clock over 6 per cent growth in the next two years, according to an IMF report, which has trimmed the growth forecast for over 120 countries.According to the IMF chief economist, "Our 'April 2025 World Economic Outlook' projects significantly weaker global growth at 2.8 per cent for 2025 with growth downgrades for 127 countries making up 86 per cent of world GDP."The path forward requires clarity and predictability on trade policies. Countries should

address structural challenges to rebuild resilience and restore growth momentum, Gopinath added.The outlook report pegs the Indian economy to grow at 6.2 per cent in 2025 and 6.3 per cent in 2026, which is over 2 percentage points above second-ranked China's economic growth forecast at 4 per cent for 2025 and 4.6 per cent in 2026.According to Gopinath, "focusing on sound communication about committing to inflation, targeting on anchoring long-term inflation expectations - that's going to be very critical for the emerging markets".The RBI's Monetary

Policy Committee (MPC), in its 54th meeting and the first of the financial year 2025-26, unanimously decided to reduce the policy repo rate by 25 basis points, bringing it down to 6 per cent with immediate effect.The repo rate is the rate at which the RBI lends money to commercial banks, and a cut in this rate is aimed at boosting lending and investment.This decision comes at a time when global economic conditions are becoming increasingly uncertain. Trade tensions have resurfaced, leading to a decline in crude oil prices, weakening of the US dollar, softening bond yields, and corrections in equity markets. While central banks across the world are adjusting their policies to address domestic concerns, they are doing so cautiously.Within India, the outlook has shown signs of improvement. Inflation, particularly food inflation, has declined more than expected, offering some relief, though global and weather-related risks remain.





## Preity hits back at troll accusing her of 'usurping public money'

Preity Zinta reacted to an X user asking her "how many loans have been written off for her" during an AMA session. In February, after Congress Kerala claimed that Preity Zinta had given her social media account to a political party to get her 18 crore loan "written off", Preity clarified that the loan had been paid off over a decade ago. Now, during an AMA session on X, the actor reacted to an X user asking why she doesn't feel guilty about using public

money

An X user asked Preity during the AMA session, "Hey! How many loans have been written off for you till date? Why don't you have any scruples about using your position to usurp public money?" Replying to them, the actor wrote, "You sound like all those people out there that consume fake news and believe it to be true. For the last time, any and every news item that you have read about me and any bank loan - 18

crore, 1.5 crore or any other crore - is all FAKE NEWS. Hope that clears any doubt in your mind. How the media got it wrong, I don't know, but I'm sure there's more to it than just misreporting."

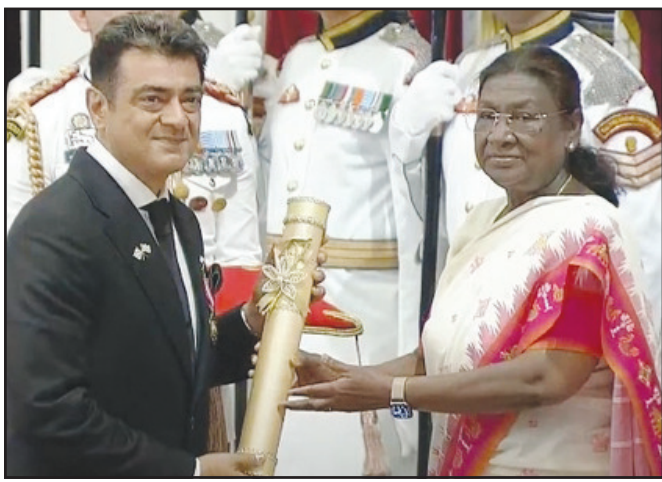
In February, sharing a report which also featured Preity's photo, Congress Kerala tweeted, "She gave her social media accounts to BJP and got 18 crore written off, and the bank collapsed last week. Depositors are on the streets for their money." In

response, Preity called it "vile gossip" and wrote on X, "No, I operate my social media accounts myself, and shame on you for promoting FAKE NEWS! No one wrote off anything or any loan for me." She added, "I'm shocked that a political party or their representative is promoting fake news and indulging in vile gossip and clickbait using my name and images. For the record, a loan was taken and FULLY PAID BACK - over 10 years ago. Hope this clarifies

and helps so there are no misunderstandings in the future (folded hands emoji)."

Preity will be making her comeback to the big screen after a seven-year hiatus. She was last seen in the movie Bhaiaji Superhit, which was released in 2018. She will next be seen in Rajkumar Santoshi's directorial Lahore 1947. The film is produced by Aamir Khan and stars Sunny Deol in the lead role. The film also features Shabana Azmi and Ali Fazal in key roles.

## Padma Awards: Balakrishna, Ajith, Arijit, Shekhar receive award from President



On Monday, the Padma Awards 2025 took place at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi. Celebrities like Nandamuri Balakrishna, Ajith Kumar, Sekhar Kapur, Arijit Singh and Ricky Kej received their awards from President Droupadi Murmu. Pankaj Udhas was honoured posthumously.

Indian celebrities from across the country attended the ceremony to receive their Padma awards. Nandamuri Balakrishna

dressed in traditional Andhra Pradesh clothing to receive his Padma Bhushan, while Ajith Kumar came dressed in a suit for the same honour. Shekhar Kapur and Shobhana also received a Padma Bhushan, while Pankaj Udhas' wife accepted the award in his honour.

The Padma Shri was awarded to Arijit Singh and Ricky Kej. The award ceremony was streamed live on YouTube. Several others in the field of

sports, medicine, business, and other fields also received awards on Monday. When the awards were announced in January, Ajith issued a statement that read, "I am deeply humbled and honoured to receive the esteemed Padma Award by the President of India. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu and the Honourable Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi for this prestigious honour. It is a privilege to be recognized at such a level and I am truly grateful for this generous acknowledgment of my contributions to our nation."

Shekhar had posted on X (formerly Twitter), "What an honour! Am humbled that the Government of India has considered me to be deserving of a #Padmanbhushan. Hopefully this award will make me strive harder to serve the Industry that I am part of, and the beautiful Nation that I am so fortunate to belong to. Thank you also to our film audiences of India, for I am because you are."

## Kesari Chapter 2 : Akshay's film crosses Khel Khel Mein, Sarfira numbers

Kesari Chapter 2 box office collection: Akshay Kumar, R Madhavan and Ananya Panday's courtroom drama opened to positive reviews, and it is translating into good business at the box office. The film has raked in over 65 crore till now, surpassing the underwhelming numbers of some of Akshay's previous films, including Khel Khel Mein, in just 10 days. As per the latest report on Sacnilk.com, Kesari Chapter 2 performed well on its first 10 days at the box office. The film was released in theatres on April 18.

As per the portal, the eighth day, which was also the second Friday, saw business of 4.05 crore. Day 9 registered 76.54% growth in the business with the collection of 7.15 crore. Day 10 (second Sunday) saw business of 8.10 crore, with 13.29% growth



in the business. Till now, the business of day 11 is 0.16 crore, taking the total collection to 65.56 crore (nett). The film is doing relatively well, especially when stacked up against some of Akshay's earlier projects. The business of his comedy film Khel Khel Mein after eight weeks was ₹39.29 crore, with inspirational Sarfira registering business of 24.85 crore in 34 days since

release. In fact, the film is expected to soon surpass the total business of Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, which is 65.96 crore in 56 days.

The Akshay Kumar-starrer has earned over 46 crore so far, as per Sacnilk.com. Also starring R Madhavan and Ananya Panday, the film released on April 18. Dharma Productions has produced the film.

## Aamir's Sitaare Zameen Par Trailer to Release with Ajay's Raid 2



There is a lot of excitement and expectations riding on Sitaare Zameen Par with Aamir Khan in the lead. Now, the trailer of the much-awaited film has officially been approved by the CBFC. In a post shared on X, film journalist Himesh Mankad shared that Sitaare Zameen Par's trailer has been given a UA certification with a runtime of 3 minutes and 29 seconds. It will release next week with Ajay Devgn's Raid 2, which hits theatres on May 1, 2025. Himesh

wrote, "SITAARE ZAMEEN PAR TRAILER LOADING - 3 MINUTE 29 SECONDS CUT LOCKED! Get-set-go as the theatrical trailer of #AamirKhan led #SitaareZameenPar is all set to unleash the digital world next week. Certified UA, with an approved run time of 3 minutes 29 seconds, the trailer will be attached to the prints of #Raid2. #SZPTTrailer."

Sitaare Zameen Par is a sequel to Aamir Khan's 2007 hit film Taare Zameen Par. The actor

recently made a virtual appearance in front of his China-based fan club, where he talked about his character in the upcoming film. He said, "My character in Taare Zameen Par was Nikumbh, who is a very sensitive person. In this film, my character's name is Gulshan, but his personality is exactly opposite to Nikumbh's. He is not sensitive at all. He is very rude and politically incorrect, and he insults everybody. He fights with his wife and mother. He is a basketball coach and he beats up his senior coach. He is a person with a lot of internal problems, and the story is how he changes with the film. How these people in the spectrum teach him what it is to be a good human being."

Directed by RS Prasanna, Sitaare Zameen Par will also see Darshel Safary returning and Genelia Deshmukh joining the cast. The official release date of the film is yet to be announced.

## BCCI plans 94-match IPL season by 2028; franchises speak to BCCI

**New Delhi, (HS) :** IPL chairman Arun Dhumal said the BCCI is seriously considering to expand the league to a 94-match home-and-away format from the next media rights cycle, which falls in 2028. The IPL currently has the 74-match format ever since Gujarat Titans (GT) and Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) entered the fray in 2022. "Definitely, that might be an opportunity. We've been discussing in-house in BCCI. Given how the interest of the fan is changing with regard to bilateral and ICC events, in regard to franchise cricket and T20 cricket, we'll have to talk more seriously about it and see how we can create maximum value for the stakeholders of the game."

"Ideally, we'd want a larger window, or to maybe go on from 74 to 84 or 94 at some point... So that every team gets to play against every team home and away, for that, you need 94 games," Dhumal was quoted as saying by ESPNCricinfo on Monday. There was talk around growing IPL to 84 matches for the ongoing season, but it was delayed due to tight scheduling. "Given the window and the kind of commitments that we have



with regards to bilateral cricket and ICC events, that may not be possible in the short term. But given the landscape, how it is changing and evolving over the years, maybe at some point in time we would look and take that option." "There's been so much cricket: we came back from Australia from a Test series, we had this Champions Trophy, and on top of that we have this IPL.

That is why it was decided that it doesn't make sense from going from 74 to 84 (in 2025), but whenever we think that the time is opportune, we'll take that call," added Dhumal. Dhumal also disclosed there is no plan to introduce new IPL teams. "Ten is a good number for now. Paramount is the interest in the tournament and the quality of cricket that we play. I don't see

any scope in the short term. Going forward, with how this whole landscape evolves, we'll take a call accordingly." Dhumal signed off by stating it would be fantastic for the IPL to have a first-time champion this year. Delhi Capitals (DC), Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB), Punjab Kings (PBKS) and Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) haven't won an IPL trophy yet and are in strong contention to enter the playoffs. "Every year, it's been growing. We are very glad how the fans have loved this tournament, and the broadcast numbers and in-stadia numbers are all phenomenal. We are hoping to carry on with this being a special edition, the 18th edition. We are very sure that it'll continue to grow in the way we've seen over the last 17 years."

"Definitely, I would want somebody who has never won the tournament to lift the trophy this year. DC has done exceptionally well over the last few years, but they've not won. Punjab Kings made it to one final, and RCB, off and on, have done well." "If some of these teams compete against each other in the final, we'll know for sure that we will have a new winner, then I'll be very happy for the tournament."

## Top 10 run scorers in IPL so far: Virat dominates, Surya & Sai behind

**New Delhi, (HS) :** The cricket enthusiasts are now currently witnessing some superb batting and bowling spells by Indian as well as players from other countries who are now sweating it out together in different teams of the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 season. If we look at the individual players' performance as far as batting is concerned, Indian players seems to be ahead of their counterparts playing for different franchise.

So far, ace batsman of Indian cricket team Virat Kohli is leading the points table with an orange cap. Virat so far has scored 443 runs in 10 matches playing for the Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) which seems to be having a dream run in this season of IPL. Virat Kohli has scored 6 fifties with a highest personal score of 73 runs while playing for the RCB in IPL season 2025. Mumbai Indians explosive batsman Surya Kumar Yadav is also not behind. He has so far scored 427 runs in 10 matches playing for his team in this IPL season. Sai Sudharsan, an Indian International cricketer, who plays for Tamil Nadu in domestic cricket and for Gujarat Titans in the IPL so far, has left a mark in this season. With four 50s under his belt, Sai Sudharsan is played on the third spot by scoring 417 runs in eight matches playing for the Gujarat Titans.



## Shoaib & Basit's YouTube Channel Blocked

**New Delhi, (HS) :** Pakistan cricket legend Shoaib Akhtar's YouTube channel couldn't be accessed in India on Monday morning. This comes shortly after India banned several Pakistani accounts. Though Akhtar's account isn't in the official list, fans couldn't find his channel on YouTube while searching on the website or app. Though old videos from the account could still be viewed on YouTube, the channel itself is no longer accessible. Shoaib Akhtar remains one of the most followed Pakistan cricket celebrities in India. He has often been a part of cricketing discussions on different sports and media outlets over the last few years. The former Pakistan pacer's account isn't the only one to have been restricted in India, with fans unable to access the YouTube channels of the country's former cricketers like Rashid Latif and Basit Ali too. These accounts are also not part of the official list, yet, their visibility in India has been restricted. While some of the accounts, which are part of the official list of banned channels released by the government of India, are fully suspended, the old videos of some are still accessible on YouTube. It isn't yet clear whether Shoaib Akhtar's channel was mistakenly missed or it is a part of a new list which could be released soon. The decision to ban certain YouTube accounts in India was taken following recommendations from the Ministry of Home Affairs in the wake of the April 22 terror attack at Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed. The government has also sent a formal letter to BBC over it terming terrorists "militants" in its reportage on the Pahalgam tragedy.



## Liverpool FC to Celebrate 20th League Title on May 26

**Liverpool, (HS) :** Liverpool FC victory parade will take place in the city on Monday. May 26 after the Reds secured a 20th league title. The Leader of Liverpool City Council, Councillor Liam Robinson, has formally invited the club to take part in a victory parade to celebrate the Premier League triumph and LFC has officially accepted the offer. The Bank Holiday Monday parade will take place the day after the final game of the 2024-25 season, where they will face Crystal Palace, and will begin in the afternoon. The 15km victory route, the same as the 2019 and 2022 parades, will start at



Allerton Maze in the south of the city. It will then travel northbound on Queens Drive towards the Fiveways roundabout and on to the Rocket flyover. From there, it will journey along, Queens Drive, Mill Bank, West Derby Road,

Islington, Leeds Street, The Strand before the Route finishes at Blundell Street. It is anticipated the parade will last between three and five hours. Liverpool were crowned champions for the second time in the Premier League - and a record-equalling 20th time

in the top flight - with Arne Slot leading the club to glory in his first season in charge. Sunday's 5-1 victory against Tottenham Hotspur means Liverpool moved out of reach of their nearest rivals in the table, Arsenal, with four matches still to play.