



CJI says 'everybody wants name in newspapers' against Waqf Act



New Delhi, (HS) : The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a couple of fresh petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, with Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai remarking, "Everybody wants his name to be in the newspapers." A bench comprising CJI Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih said it would take up the matter already listed for hearing on May 20. When one of the fresh petitions was mentioned, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, objected to it, saying there could not be an "endless stream" of pleas challenging the Act.

The counsel for the petitioner submitted that he had filed the petition on 8 April and had removed the defects pointed out by the apex court registry on 15 April, but the plea had not yet been listed for hearing. "Everybody wants his name to be in the newspapers," the CJI observed. When the lawyer requested that his plea be tagged along with the pending petitions, the bench said, "We will decide that matter." The bench promptly dismissed the petition. Another similar plea brought up later was also summarily rejected with the remark, "Dismissed." When the petitioner's counsel sought permission to intervene in the pending matters, CJI Gavai responded: "We already have too many intervenors." On 17 April, the apex court had decided to hear only five of the total number of petitions filed before it. The bench said it would consider arguments on 20 May to pass interim directions on three key issues: the power to denotify properties declared as waqf by courts, waqf-by-user or waqf by deed. The second issue raised by the petitioners pertains to the composition of state waqf boards and the Central Waqf Council. The petitioners contend that only Muslims should be members, excluding ex-officio positions. The third issue concerns a provision which states that a waqf property will not be

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Operation Sindoor: Delegations to Launch India's Global Diplomatic Blitz From May 22

New Delhi, (HS) : In a massive diplomatic push, the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has decided to dispatch multi-party MP delegations to key world capitals to expose Pakistan's hand in the recent Pahalgam terror attack and to build global support against cross-border terrorism.

The 48-member cross-party delegation will present India's evidence against Pakistan and New Delhi's stance to foreign governments and institutions while travelling to various countries from May 22 to June 1. According to sources, the delegation will be led by Minister of Parliamentary and Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju and will be divided into eight groups, consisting of six members each. It is expected to include several big names from the BJP-led government and the Opposition parties, including Congress MPs Shashi Tharoor, Manish Tewari, Member of Parliament from Punjab Vikramjit Singh Sahney,



Asaduddin Owaisi, etc. Sources say the move to send the delegation of MPs comes amid increasing attempts by Pakistan - and notably, remarks from US President Donald Trump - to internationalise the Kashmir issue, which India insists remains a bilateral matter. The initiative marks the first time the Modi government has deployed elected representatives from across the political spectrum as diplomatic

envoys to counter Pakistan's propaganda on a global stage. The focus will be two-fold: To brief nations on the devastating Pahalgam attack in which 26 people were killed, and to clarify that India's 'Operation Sindoor' specifically targeted terror infrastructure - not civilians - within Pakistan-occupied regions. "The aim is to break the narrative being spun by Pakistan and its sympathisers," said a

senior official involved in the planning. The Ministry of External Affairs, in collaboration with Intelligence and Defence agencies, is also preparing detailed dossiers and talking points. The Indian embassies in respective countries will amplify the MPs' efforts by coordinating meetings and providing strategic ground support. The MPs are expected to spotlight how Pakistan has, for decades, used terror as a state policy to destabilise India, citing specific Intelligence on terror camps, recruitment networks, and evidence of ISI involvement.

The delegations will also underscore how Pakistan's retaliatory actions after 'Operation Sindoor' only further confirm its active role in sheltering and promoting terror groups. The global diplomatic blitz is aimed not just at isolating Pakistan diplomatically, but also at strengthening India's position ahead of key international forums and bilateral engagements.

CM Leads Sindoor Yatra, Salutes Indian Armed Forces & Women's Strength



Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Friday participated in the Sindoor Yatra at Master Canteen Square, held to mark the success of Operation Sindoor. The yatra, organized by the Mission Shakti Department, served as a powerful tribute to India's armed forces and a celebration of women's empowerment across the state. Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Majhi stated, "Operation Sindoor is more than just a name. It is a unique fusion of the Indian

Army's valour and the dignity of Indian womanhood. Through this yatra, we honour our brave soldiers who safeguard the nation."

The march, which began from Master Canteen and concluded at Rama Devi University, witnessed the participation of thousands of women, symbolizing collective strength, unity, and patriotism. Notable participants included Sergeant Lieutenant Commander of Indian Navy Ananya Dalabehera and

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Renovation Work of Ratna Bhandar to Resume from June 28

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : The renovation work of the Ratna Bhandar and sanctum sanctorum of the Puri Jagannath Temple is set to resume from June 28 to July 6. During this period, the focus will be on repairing the outer Ratna Bhandar. The renovation work of the inner Ratna Bhandar is almost complete, with only the flooring work remaining. The temple administration has decided to complete the remaining work, including laying stainless steel beams in the outer Ratna Bhandar and replacing damaged stones. Earlier, 9 stainless steel beams were installed in the inner Ratna Bhandar, and a total of 277 stones were replaced, with 148 of them being used in the inner Ratna Bhandar. The decision to resume work was taken in a meeting held at the office of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration, chaired by the Chief Administrator of SJTA, Arabinda Padhee. The meeting was attended by technical core committee member N.C. Paul, Superintendent Archaeologist, and other officials. It is pertinent to mention that as per the previous decision, the Ratna Bhandar renovation work was halted from April 29 to June 27. However, it has now been decided to utilize this period to complete the remaining work in the outer Ratna Bhandar. The meeting also discussed proposals to gold-plate the inner doors and silver-plate the outer doors of the Ratna Bhandar. Further discussions will be held to finalise these plans. The renovation work, which began on December 17, 2024, has seen a total of 193 hours and 5 minutes of work completed in four months. The renovation work, which began on December 17, 2024, has seen a total of 193 hours and 5 minutes of work completed in four months.

Lightning Claims 11 Lives Across State

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Kalabaisakhi storms wreaked havoc across Odisha on Friday, leaving 11 people dead in different districts including Koraput, Ganjam, Jajpur, Dhenkanal, Balasore, and Mayurbhanj. Among the deceased were five women and three minors. The storm's destructive impact led many to refer to the day as "Black Friday."

According to reports, in Koraput district, four people lost their lives in separate lightning incidents. Das Jani, a 32-year-old resident of Khalpadi village under Charangul panchayat in

Semiliguda block, was killed by lightning while fishing near Lenziguda village. In another tragic event in Paradiguda village under Odiapentha gram panchayat of Laxmipur block, Budri Mandinga (60), her granddaughter Kasa Mandinga (16), and Ambika Kashi (35) were struck by lightning while taking shelter in a hut near their paddy field. All three died on the spot and five others were injured. In Ganjam district, Rita Goud (30) from Kebiri Brahmapur under Belaguntha police station was struck by lightning while

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CM Launches Dubuna Mine on OMC's 70th Anniversary

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Odisha, a state rich in mineral resources, holds a leading position in India, with over 41.9% of the country's total mineral reserves. For over 60 years, the Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) has been responsibly exploring and extracting mineral resources from nature's reserves. OMC has made significant contributions to enriching the state economically, said Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi while addressing the 70th Foundation Day of OMC as the chief guest.

Speaking at the event organized at OUAT's Krushi Sikshya Sadan in Bhubaneswar, the Chief Minister highlighted that OMC began its journey in the 1960s with a turnover of just ₹1 crore and has achieved a turnover of ₹23,600 crore in the financial year 2024-25 through mineral production and sales. Today, OMC ranks among the top five mineral-producing companies in the country. It has established itself not only in Odisha but across India as an exemplary profit-making State PSU. OMC is a key driver of Odisha's development and plays a crucial role in the nation's economic growth. He further noted that Odisha is an agriculture-dominated state, but relying solely on agriculture will not lead to progress. There are numerous opportunities to bring change in this regard. The government's goal is to transform Odisha into a mixed economy. To achieve this, more focus must be



placed on the manufacturing sector. The state has abundant raw materials needed for manufacturing. Previous governments failed to fully utilize Odisha's industrialization potential, but the current government has adopted a different approach, emphasizing value addition to minerals before sale. The government is committed to rapid industrialization through this strategy, he said. Through the e-auction platform of Odisha's Steel and Mines Department and the Long-Term Linkage Policy, over 80% of raw materials are being supplied to industries established in the state, he added.

The Chief Minister emphasized that workers are the backbone of development. A strong workforce strengthens Odisha. He thanked the workers for their contributions to making Odisha prosperous and urged for greater deployment of manpower alongside machines in

workplaces. He also praised OMC's CSR activities, noting that the corporation has successfully planted over 90 lakh trees for environmental protection. He advised planting more trees in the future, keeping industrialization in mind. OMC is also working on education, health, and sports development alongside environmental efforts. He suggested providing clean drinking water facilities in mining-affected areas and increasing CSR investments to enhance services in these sectors. Additionally, he stressed the establishment of an iron pellet plant in the mining region. During the event, the Chief Minister inaugurated the restart of the Dubuna iron ore mine in Barbil, the Tiring Pahar mine, and the Rengalbeda RR Colony's power supply. He also launched a 900 kWp solar plant at OMC's mines in the Koira mining area. To enhance operational efficiency, four IT modules-Logistics

Management System (LMS), OMC Finance Management System (OFMS), OMC Plot Land Utilization System (OPLUS), and OMC Recruitment Management System (ORMS)-were launched. The Chief Minister presented awards to OMC's top-performing mines for 2023-24 and 2024-25 in three categories: Best Mining Area, Best Mine, and Safest Mine. A magazine on OMC's CSR initiatives was unveiled by the guests. Notably, the Dubuna mine has an annual iron ore production capacity of 3 million tons and a manganese production capacity of 0.05 million tons. The mine holds reserves of 25.77 million tons of iron ore and 2.6 million tons of manganese. Steel and Mines Minister Bibhuti Bhushan Jena, who attended the event, highlighted OMC's role in transforming Odisha's industrial landscape, stating that 18 OMC

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Operation Sindoor Just Trailer, World Will See Full Picture: Rajnath

New Delhi, (HS) : Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Friday that Operation Sindoor was just a trailer and the Indian armed forces will show the full picture at the right time. "Operation Sindoor isn't over. What the world saw was just a trailer, and the Indian armed forces will show the full picture when the right time comes," Defence Minister Singh told the air warriors and security forces at the IAF airbase in Gujarat's Bhuj. Lambasting Pakistan for nurturing terror factories on its soil, the Defence Minister said that the rogue nation was forced to realise the power of BrahMos missile.

"Just like the way, any

habitual offender or a criminal with past antecedents is kept under watch, we have put Pakistan under probation. The ceasefire is not a cessation of action. If Pakistan doesn't mend its ways and engages in misadventures again, our forces will teach it a firm lesson. Again!" he said. Minister Singh's direct warning to Pakistan came while he visited the airbase along with Air Chief Marshal AP Singh and congratulated the forces for the successful execution of Operation Sindoor. "There is an old saying in our country, 'Din mein taare dekhna'. Made in India BrahMos missile showed 'raat ke andhere mein din ka ujala' to Pakistan..." he roared, while



forces shouted in support. "Just 23 minutes were enough for the Indian Air Force to crush terrorism being nurtured in Pakistan. What you did during Operation Sindoor made us all proud," the Defence Minister told the warriors. He further vowed to uproot terror and punish their handlers anywhere in the world, while reiterating India's new security doctrine, which stresses on punitive measures rather than forgiveness for those who terrorise the nation. He further told the armed forces, "Through Operation 'Sindoor', you have shown the world that it is not a symbol of adornment but of your valour and firm resolve." Rajnath Singh

also questioned the funding of Pakistan by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), under the Extended Fund Facility programme. "Pakistan will spend a large portion of the funds received from the International Monetary Fund on terror infrastructure in its country," he stated. Notably, the IMF had released the second tranche of \$1.023 billion to Pakistan, which has been largely relying on the bailout package for survival.

Another Defence Minister offered a stark warning Friday about the Pakistan government's plans to "spend tax collected from its citizens... to give Rs 14 crore to Masood Azhar",

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Inflation Data

Data released over the past couple of days shows that the inflation rate, both at the wholesale and retail consumer levels, has moderated in April. The wholesale inflation rate - measured by the Wholesale Price Index - grew by just 0.9 per cent last month, which is a 14-month low. But wholesale price inflation hasn't really been the problematic bit for India in recent years. Over the past 24 months, it has either been negative (which means wholesale prices were falling) or fairly low. The more significant news is on the retail inflation front, which is the rate that policymakers target and consumers worry about. Retail inflation - measured by the Consumer Price Index - came in at 3.2 per cent in April, the lowest level in six years.

To be sure, retail inflation has been moderating lately - it was 3.3 per cent in March. Yet this is the variable that has tested the Reserve Bank of India's "comfort zone" (of 2 per cent to 6 per cent) in the past few years. Since the end of 2019, there have been several months and even quarters when retail inflation was above 6 per cent and even above 7 per cent - thanks to repeated supply shocks either due to unseasonal weather at home (like rain), the Covid pandemic or disruptions due to the Russia-Ukraine war. The last financial year's retail inflation was pegged at 4.6 per cent - much closer to the RBI's target of 4 per cent, and the lowest it has been since 2018-19. Some estimates suggest that India's inflation is likely to moderate further in the current financial year; analysts at ICICI Securities, for instance, peg FY26 inflation at 3.5 per cent - a sharp fall from the 6 per cent level that sustained right through FY21 to FY23. This benign outlook is primarily based on assumptions of a moderation in crude oil prices, which, in turn, brings down costs across sectors, and an "above normal" monsoon, which boosts farm output. Given the stress on prices in the recent past, the sustained moderation in the inflation rate since the start of the 2025 calendar year is not just a welcome relief for consumers but also opens up policy space. On the fiscal side, the government has already hiked excise duties on petrol and diesel by Rs 2 per litre in April to shore up an additional Rs 300 billion in revenues as crude oil prices moderated. On the monetary policy front, these readings suggest that consumers can expect the RBI to cut another 50 basis points over the next two policy reviews slated for June and August.

17th May

World Hypertension Day

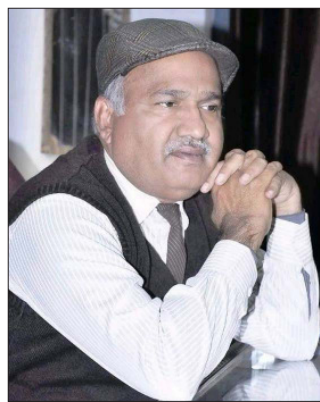


World Hypertension Day is observed annually on May 17 to raise awareness of hypertension and encourage hypertension prevention, detection, and control. Hypertension affects more than one billion people around the globe and over 30% of the adult population in the world. It is the primary risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, particularly coronary artery disease and stroke. Besides, hypertension is also a risk factor for chronic kidney disease, heart failure, arrhythmia, and dementia. That's why sharing information about this condition is essential.

World Hypertension Day was initiated by the World Hypertension League (W.H.L.). W.H.L. is a non-profit international organization founded on January 4, 1984, dedicated to preventing and controlling hypertension at the population level. World Hypertension Day was first launched on May 14, 2005. Since 2006, W.H.L. has been observing May 17 of every year as World Hypertension Day. The day is aimed at increasing awareness of hypertension due to the lack of appropriate knowledge among patients with hypertension. Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is a medical condition when the blood pressure in the blood vessels is continuously elevated. The more blood your heart pumps and the narrower your blood vessels are, the higher your blood pressure becomes. High blood pressure typically does not cause symptoms, but long-term high blood pressure can result in coronary artery disease, stroke, chronic kidney disease, heart failure, arrhythmia, and dementia. Since there are usually no symptoms, you need to have a screening to identify your blood pressure.

Hypertension has two types: primary (essential) hypertension and secondary hypertension. Primary hypertension does not have an identifiable cause, while secondary hypertension does, including obstructive sleep apnea, kidney disease, and certain medications such as birth control pills or some prescription drugs. Some methods for the primary prevention of hypertension include: maintaining body weight for adults; engaging in regular aerobic physical activity, such as brisk walking; reducing dietary sodium intake; consuming a diet rich in fruit and vegetables; and limiting alcohol consumption.

Decreasing Greenery, Increasing Hazards



Vijay Garg

Recently, a forest harvesting spread over about four hundred acres in the Kancha Gachibowli area of Telangana drew the attention of the entire country to its attention and attention. The Supreme Court took suo moto cognizance of this sensitive issue. A bench of Justices BR Gavlin and Justice Agustin George Christ made a sharp note in the matter asking the state government a number of stern questions and banned any kind of activity in the area until the next hearing. The court clearly asked what emergency was finally created due to which the forest had to start in such a hurry? Was the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) certificate taken for this project and whether the deforestation was duly taken permission from the Forest Department? The case came to light when the registrar of the Telangana High Court sent some pictures related to this harvesting to the Supreme Court, which clearly saw the cutting and ground levelling activities of trees through heavy machines. Those photographs also clarified that this work was being carried out at night. The location is the Hyderabad University Pass, where the Telangana government

was planning a construction plan of a grand iti park, but the same area is also the natural habitat of many types of wildlife, including peacocks, deer and other protected species. A heartbroken video on social media came into the spotlight, with dark bulldozers moving and hearing fearful sounds of the morons around. It shocked the conscience of the common masses. The video was getting clear that not only the trees, but the entire ecosystem is being brutally murdered. This forest was not merely a group of green trees but a shelter of thousands of organisms. Even in another case over the wildest felling of trees illegally by a temple management, the Supreme Court made strict remarks in the past, saying that no one allows cutting of trees like this. It is not only wrong from the environmental point of view but also unacceptable in religious terms. Even in that case, the 16194 Supreme Court. Had asked why there is so much compulsion to cut trees and whether the state has obtained environmental impact assessment certificate? Just a few days ago, the apex court took a strong stand for each tree carrying a fine of Rs. one lakh for each tree, even over hundreds of trees illegally cut around the Taj Mahal in Agra. The court said that cutting large numbers of trees is worse than killing a human being, so no mercy should be shown on those who harm the environment. The apex court had admitted to the rampage of the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) in that case, saying that 454 trees were cut in Dalmia Farm, Mathura-Vrindavan, which is a serious environmental crime. The committee had recommended a fine of Rs. one lakh per tree (total Rs. 4.54 crore) for this act. These



observations of the Supreme Court of the country on the harvesting of trees illegally at large put forth the protection and environmental responsibilities of trees across the country. The Supreme Court initiative has expected that such destructive efforts will be held strongly and will curb the tendency to sacrifice nature in the name of development. The court has made a clear message from these decisions of itself that the felling of trees should not be taken lightly. These court decisions are also messages for areas in the country where trees are being indiscriminately harvested. Pollution situation in Delhi has become critical due to the felling of trees.

Human life is dependent on trees only because from these we get oxygen. Oxygen present in the atmosphere is considered to be oxygen. According to environmental experts, we must plant so many trees around us so that at least for our family, we can fulfill oxygen ourselves. A person needs a considerable amount of oxygen throughout the day, that's why environmentalists say plantation tax is necessary to produce oxygen for ourselves otherwise

just as we drink water by buying a water bottle today, our coming generation will be constrained to buy pure air bottles in the coming time. If there will be no oxygen in the atmosphere, life will end on the earth, so it is a great demand for time to emphasize more and more plantation." According to a rapt, a healthy tree leaves so much oxygen every day, giving six-seven people an oxygen, but in the absence of enough trees, the same tree now has to give oxygen to about 20 people. In fact, the amount of oxygen used to be in the atmosphere earlier has come down to ten percent in the absence of trees. As a result, the lungs have started causing infection problems with asthma and heart disease due to not getting enough oxygen. Large shady trees like neem, banyan and peepal, who are 50 years old or older, get up to 140 kg of oxygen daily. According to environmental experts, trees of about two hundred years old peepal, neem, banyan, etc. secrete enough oxygen daily. In such a situation, it is not hard to predict how heavy damage the environment is caused by cutting such a shady old tree. That is

why such shady trees have been the ancient Indian tradition of planting in their surroundings. Neem, Banyan and Tulsi, etc., leave oxygen for more than 20 hours a day, while Peepal then secretes oxygen for more than 22 hours a day. Bamboo trees produce 30% more oxygen than any other tree. Depending on the price of oxygen found from a healthy tree, the tree costs several lakh rupees annually. Lack of clean air in people are trapped in the trap of diseases, their fertility is bearing. Functionality is also affecting cancer, heart disease, asthma, bronchitis, lung infection, pneumonia and number of paralysis patients are increasing rapidly. Large share of people's earnings costs only on treatment. Nonetheless, given the rapidly occurring climate change and the decaying state of pollution, it now needs to understand that the greatest contribution in the oxygen present in our atmosphere is that of tree-plants itself. So they have to be saved.

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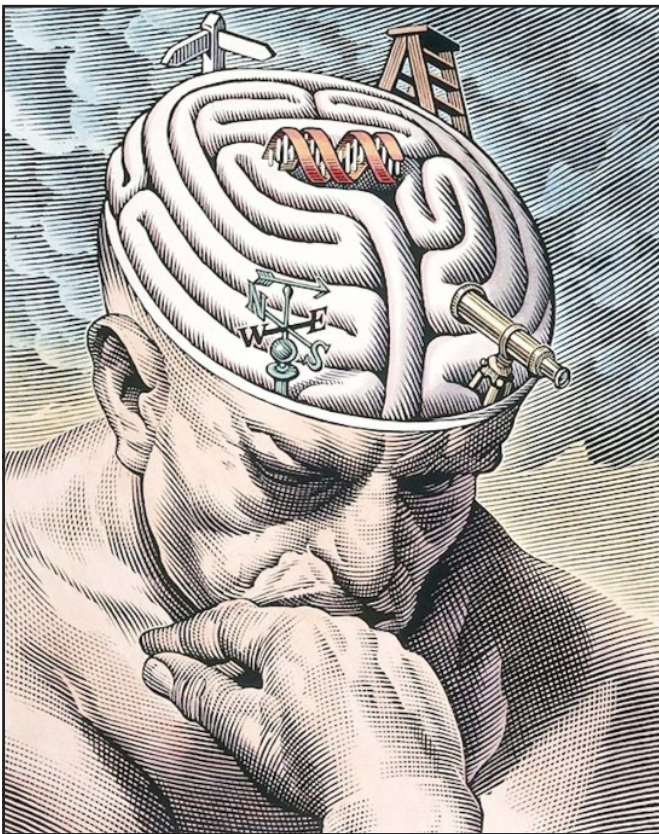
Let's not confuse morals and ethics

Dr. Ram Prasad Ray

Many of us use the words 'morals' and 'ethics' interchangeably. But the two are not the same, and when we confuse one with the other we may create a lot of problems. I learnt the distinction between morals and ethics from an unlikely source: a popular television drama serial. One of the characters - a professor of theology - explained the difference succinctly. Morals, he said, are the codes of behaviour that we can, and, indeed, must, apply to ourselves. Our codes of behaviour are conditioned by many things: what is appropriate, or inappropriate, in the faith system we subscribe to, and in our social and familial environment. Morals are what Sartre might call the 'facticity' of our individual situation: who and what I deem myself to be in terms of my religious beliefs, or lack of them, my social obligations, and the choices I make in my personal life.

Ethics are the codes of conduct and behaviour that we apply to all societies, in general, including those which are totally foreign and unfamiliar to us. In many cases, the two codes, of morals and ethics, coincide. For instance, to take the life of another human being is deemed to be wrong, both morally and ethically.

To defend yourself and your country against aggression is not only ethically sanctioned, but is also in many cases an ethical duty which goes by the name of patriotism. But, if you are a believer in the Gandhian code of ahimsa and are a conscientious objector to any



form of violence, your personal code of moral behaviour could be at variance with an objective code of ethics. Much of the confrontation taking place in the world today is caused when individuals and societies seek to project their moral codes and make them the ethical obligations of others. My moral code, based on my religious beliefs, may prohibit me from eating certain foods. That's fine. But do I have the right to impose my code of dietary morality on others whose social environment and religious convictions might be totally different from mine?

Much the same holds true for other moral codes, such as appropriate, or inappropriate, form of dress in public, gender relations, rights of inheritance, among other social customs. What is morally right,

according to one individual or community, might not be so for another. But if I try to make my moral code your ethical obligation I am transgressing against you. And that's just one of the crossroads we face when it comes to the often different directions our morals and ethics might have to choose between. The right-wing academic Alan Bloom decried what he called 'moral relativism' which he believed had undermined the Protestant values of American civilisation. By asserting the moral hegemony of American values over all others, couldn't Bloom be accused of 'ethical imperialism'? In the interplay between morals and ethics there are no right answers, only right questions.

**Camp Assistant, Central
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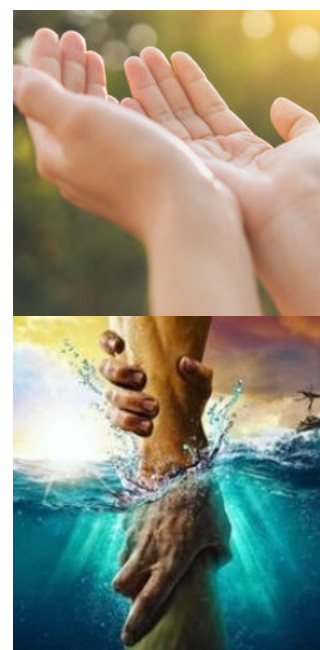
Be Thankful for Hand of God

Kishore Kumar Jena

Thanksgiving is a time to be grateful for the immense blessings in our lives. We must first and foremost, give thanks to the One who brought creation into being. The Divine's unseen hand supports us every moment of our lives, and for this, we must be grateful. We need to be thankful to the Almighty with every breath in this human existence. It is only because of His grace that we have this human birth - a golden opportunity for our soul, which has been separated from its Source for eons, to extricate itself from the wheel of transmigration and return to God's abode.

Positive creation comes only when we drive away our negative feelings from our mind. Asking the help of the god only in our difficult times will not reach god's ears as he will swept away from any selfish prayers. Bowings our heads and making a false worship and offering sacrifices only for personal benefits will not make us to know the god. Only indispensable love knows to find the god within ourselves. Only our respectful offerings are not through our material goods to god as god lives in disguise in our mind. We can not seek blessings of god by showing our riches and false prayers.

To avoid hardness of heart, we must submit our hearts to God's Word and God's ways, especially in times of trial. We desperately need new hearts, for we are unable on our own to soften our hard hearts. We can become like Jesus only when we allow God to rid us of our old, hardened hearts



and give us new hearts. A change of heart toward God requires a supernatural transformation. When we are born again, God performs a heart transplant, as it were. He gives us a new heart. It is that great change which God works in the soul, when He brings it into life; when He raises it from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. It is the change wrought in the whole soul by the Almighty Spirit of God, So is every one that is born of the Spirit.

But we should remember that the heart of the devotee is the abode of God. He dwells, no doubt, in all beings, but He especially manifests Himself in the heart of the devotee. A landlord may at one time or another visit all parts of his estate, but people say he is generally to be found in a particular drawing-room. The heart of the devotee is the drawing-room of God.

**Advocate, Bangali Sahi,
Cuttack**

Augmentation of Coaches in Howrah-Puri Vande Bharat Express to Enhance Passenger Comfort

Bhubaneswar, In response to the growing demand for faster and more comfortable rail travel between Howrah and Puri, Indian Railways has announced 25% augmentation of 22895/22896 Howrah-Puri Vande Bharat Express with additional coaches. Starting today, the train will operate with 20 coaches, in place of earlier 16, adding four additional AC Chair Car Coaches.

This augmentation includes the addition of four AC Chair Car Coaches, aimed at accommodating the growing number of passengers traveling on this prestigious semi-high-speed train service. The upgraded rake composition will now consist of 16 AC Chair Car Coaches, 2 Executive Chair Car Coaches and 2 Crew & AC Chair Car Coaches. The decision to augment the train was made after a thorough review of passenger patronization and travel demand, highlighting the Puri-Howrah Vande Bharat Express as one of the most



sought-after routes for both daily commuters and tourists. The enhanced capacity is expected to improve travel convenience, reduce waitlists and further popularize this premium train service.

Patronisation of the train has seen a significant increase since its inception. Initially operating with an occupancy rate of 70-80%, the train has now reached an impressive patronisation level of over 110%. Currently, Train No. 22895 (Howrah-Puri) records 110.9% occupancy, while Train No. 22896 (Puri-Howrah) sees 109.2%. Specifically, patronage in AC Chair Car classes stands at 110.65%, and 103.19%

in Executive Chair Car coaches. Passengers have overwhelmingly welcomed the augmentation, as more number of passengers can now avail the services of the prestigious train. Many regular commuters and tourists have shared positive feedback on social media and railway feedback portals, appreciating Indian Railways' responsiveness and sensitiveness to public demand.

Enhanced coach capacity has also been applauded by public representatives, who have actively advocated for this upgrade in recent months. The Puri-Howrah Vande Bharat Express is a semi-high-speed train that connects Howrah Junction

in West Bengal to Puri in Odisha, covering a distance of 500 km in approximately 6.5 hours. The train operates six days a week, except Thursdays, with departures from Howrah at 6:10 am and from Puri at 1:50 pm. This train provides stoppages at seven stations: Khurda Road Junction, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Jajpur Keonjhar Road, Bhadrak, Balasore, and Kharagpur Junction.

The Vande Bharat Express features state-of-the-art amenities, including onboard Wi-Fi, infotainment systems, bio-vacuum toilets and comfortable seating arrangements. The train is designed to provide a safe and comfortable travel experience for passengers. The augmentation of the Howrah-Puri Vande Bharat Express is a testament to Indian Railways' commitment to enhancing passenger services and meeting the growing demand for efficient and comfortable rail travel.

Indian Bank opened New Branch in Hatasahi

Bhubaneswar,(DMC): Indian Bank inaugurated its new branch at Hatasahi under Pipili Block in Odisha. Being 8th branch in the district of Puri under ZO Bhubaneswar, Hatasahi branch opening marks a significant step in its mission to expand banking services at unbanked centre and foster financial inclusion in Odisha.

The Inauguration Ceremony was presided over by Chief Guest M. Aruna, Field General Manager, Indian Bank, Bhubaneswar. The occasion was also graced by the presence of Hrushikesh Tripathy, OAS & Tahasildar, Pipili and Ganesh Behera, Sarapanch, Hatasahi. Suman Kumar, Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar, Biswanath Das, Deputy Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar along with other ZO officials were also present on this occasion. The Event commenced with a ribbon-cutting Ceremony followed by



lighting of the lamp symbolizing the Bank's dedication to community service. On its inaugural Day, the branch opened 50 SB Accounts and 10 RD Accounts.

Currently Bank is running RD Sanchaya Lakhpati Campaign with attractive rate of interest @ 7.85% (Super Senior Citizens), tenure 15 months. FGM M. Aruna, in her inaugural

speech emphasized saving culture and disbursement of loans to Self Help Group (SHGs), reinforcing Indian Bank's commitment to rural development and inclusive growth.

ZM & DZM assured best service to be rendered to customers in response of which local customers and public present in the meeting place assured of business growth in future.

Fake Job Consultant Dupes Five Job Seekers Of 60 Lakh, Arrested

Bhubaneswar,(DMC): Nayapalli police arrested a person for allegedly duping five job seekers of Rs 60 lakh by promising them government jobs. The accused has been identified as Shobhan Ranjan Behera (27), a resident of Orakala under the Airfield police station.

As per reports, Behera, who holds an MCA degree, was running a consultancy firm named Sanjog Consultancy at IRC village in Bhubaneswar. Behera would lure job seekers by promising them jobs in government banks and central government departments in exchange for money. He would demand Rs 5 lakh for a bank job and Rs 10 lakh for a central government job. The accused would assure the job seekers



that he had connections with high-ranking officials and could secure jobs for them without any competitive exams. A complaint was filed by Debabrata Karna, a resident of Boudh district, who was promised a job in a state bank in exchange for Rs 6 lakh. Karna alleged that Behera took the money but failed to deliver the job. Further investigation

revealed that Behera had similarly duped four other job seekers. Behera had opened offices in Kolkata, Delhi, and Hyderabad, and was operating his fake consultancy business from these locations. The police are investigating the extent of Behera's operations and the number of people he may have duped. Nayapalli police

registered a case under section 123 of BNS and launched an investigation. The Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Jagmohan Meena has, meanwhile, appealed to anyone who may have been duped by Behera in the Nayapalli police case to come forward and report to the nearest police station.

The DCP, however, laid stress on the importance of verifying the authenticity of job advertisements and the credibility of companies before making any payments. "With job advertisements being published daily in newspapers and online platforms, the DCP has cautioned job seekers to be vigilant and thoroughly research the company and the job offer before parting with any money", maintained DCP.

Deputy CM Pravati Parida reviews OTDC projects, Sets vision for tourism growth

Bhubaneswar,(DMC): Deputy Chief Minister and Tourism Minister Pravati Parida on Thursday conducted a comprehensive review of the Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC), assessing ongoing initiatives and laying out a roadmap for future development in the sector. Chairing a high-level meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister evaluated the progress of various tourism projects across the state. The session included a detailed PowerPoint



presentation highlighting OTDC's current programs and activities. Senior officials, including Commissioner-cum-Secretary Balwant Singh and other departmental officers, were present at the

review. During the meeting, Parida urged officials to align their efforts with the vision of a developed Odisha and work towards positioning the state as a leading tourism destination. She stressed the importance of

implementing projects efficiently and with a renewed focus under the new government's approach. "The government is fully committed to overall development. Everything will now be executed in a fresh and dynamic style, ensuring there are no delays or obstacles," she stated.

This review follows a similar meeting held on April 4, during which the Deputy Chief Minister assessed key tourism initiatives, including eco-retreat programs and other OTDC-led projects.

BMC Launches Mass Dog Sterilization Drive To Tackle Stray Dog Menace

Bhubaneswar,(DMC): In a bid to tackle the growing issue of stray dogs in the Capital city, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has launched a mass dog sterilisation drive. Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das flagged off the initiative at the BMC headquarters, launching two dedicated vehicles for dog sterilisation. The sterilisation process will be carried out by the Vets Society for Animal Welfare and Rural



Development, a Hyderabad-based organisation. As part of the initiative, 2,000 stray dogs will be sterilised every month. The BMC estimates

that there are around 70,000 stray dogs roaming the city, and the initiative will cover all 67 wards. Mayor Sulochana Das said, "We often receive complaints of people being bitten by stray dogs. This initiative will help us tackle the dog menace and make Bhubaneswar a safer city for its residents. The BMC hopes that this initiative will make a significant impact on the city's stray dog population and prevent dog bites.

Dy CM Singh Deo Directs To Expedite Upper Lanth & Lower Indra Irrigation Project



Bhubaneswar,(DMC): A review meeting of Upper Lanth and Lower Indra Irrigation Project was held today at the Lok Seva Bhavan Conference Hall under the chairmanship of Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo. Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg was also present in this review meeting. Upper Lanth and Lower Indra Project has the potential to change the agricultural landscape of Odisha. With the

implementation of this project, 29,900 hectares of agricultural land in Balangir and Nuapada districts will get irrigation facilities. Not only agriculture but also allied agriculture will improve. As a result, the people of this area can become self-reliant by harvesting multiple crops in their land and can also earn a decent living from allied agriculture. Along with this, the major problem of distressed migration in these areas can be resolved, said Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh

Deo. Singh Deo directed the departmental officers to expedite the project. Deputy Chief Minister Singh Deo has also expressed to bring into his knowledge the instances that delays the procedures such as land acquisition, compensation payment, Central approval, Forest and Environmental clearances, resettlement of displaced families, etc. to expedite the project. Development Commissioner Anu Garg discussed various aspects of the project in detail with the officers. The meeting was attended by the Water Resources Department's Engineer-in-Chief, Chandrashekhar Padhy, technical team, senior officers, while the District Collectors of Nuapada and Balangir and Forest Officials joined the meeting virtually.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
RWS&S DIVISION, KENDRAPARA.
At : Ichhapur, Post : Shree Baladevjeu, Email: ceerwsskendrapara@gmail.com

INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB) [e-Procurement]
Bid Identification No. RWS/ 49...../2025-26
Letter No. 2897 / Dated. 15/05/25

1

The Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Kendrapara on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage bid in SINGLE cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible Electrical contractors for External electrification works of different Rural Piped Water Supply Schemes in Kendrapara District.

2

Name of the work : External electrification work of RWSS point of PWS Scheme to 40 LPCD Retrofitting PWS to Karandiapatna Zone-Two at Samala under Marshaghai Block in Kendrapara district.

3

No. of Work : 01 No. (One) only

4

Value of the Work : ₹ 11.04 Lakhs

5

Concerned tender inviting : Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Kendrapara

6

Cost of Bid documents (Rs.) : ₹ 6000/- (Online)

7

Cost of EMD @ 1% (Online) : ₹ 111,000/-

8

Class of Bidder : " HT "

9

Period of Completion : 30 days

10

Availability of bid documents in the website : From date. 21.05.2025 at 10.00 A.M to date. 04.06.2025 till 5.30 P.M

11

Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification : Up to 23.05.2025 up to 5.30 P.M

12

Date of Opening of Bid : 05.06.2025 at 11.00 A.M onwards

The bidders have to participate in the tender through ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be had from the website i.e. <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>. The bid shall be accompanied with valid Contractor Registration Certificate, PAN, GST, No relation certificate in Schedule-A, Affidavit in support of authenticity of documents in Schedule-F and information regarding current litigation in Schedule-E. Subsequent corrigendum / addendum if required shall only be appeared in the above website

Executive Engineer,
RWS&S Division, Kendrapada

OIPR- 25004/11/0033/2526

EAST COAST RAILWAY

WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR ENGAGEMENT OF TEACHERS ON CONTRACT BASIS

Employment Notice No. ECoR/Pers/06/Engagement/Contract Teacher/200/25
Dated : 13.05.2025

It has been decided by the competent authority to conduct a WALK-IN-INTERVIEW for engagement of Teachers in Mixed Higher Secondary School/ Khurda Road on contract basis. The Khurda Road Railway Division is inviting applications from willing, eligible candidates for engagement as teachers (PGT, TGT, PET, PST, ART & CRAFT TEACHER, BALVATIKA TEACHER, LIBRARIAN) in the Mixed Higher Secondary School, Jatni.

Grade	No. of Required Teachers	Consolidated remuneration per month	Venue, date & time of interview
PGT (English Medium)	03	₹ 27,500/-	
TGT (English Medium)	06	₹ 26,250/-	
TGT (Odia Medium)	08	₹ 26,250/-	04.06.2025 (Wednesday)
PET	01	₹ 26,250/-	05.06.2025 (Thursday)
PST	01	₹ 21,250/-	Time-08:30 Hrs Onwards
BALVATIKA TEACHER	01	₹ 21,250/-	
ART & CRAFT TEACHER	01	₹ 21,250/-	Mixed Higher Secondary School, Khurda Road, Jatni
LIBRARIAN	01	₹ 26,250/-	

The Walk-in-Interview will be held on the above scheduled date according to Subject wise.

NB : For detailed terms & conditions, candidates may please refer to the official website www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in ➤ About us ➤ Division ➤ Khurda Road Division ➤ Recruitment.

PR-137/Q/25-26

Sr. Divisional Personnel Officer /
Khurda Road

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban 2.0 launched



Puri, (DMC): In Puri Municipality Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban 2.0 was launched at Town Hall this afternoon. Puri Lok Sabha MP Dr Sambit Patra, who was the chief guest at the event, said that it is everyone's dream to own a home. It is a resource for the next generation. The process to realize this dream has started in Puri urban area from today. The appropriate applicant will apply for Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban 2.0 through online mode. They will be given work orders after verifying these. Therefore, make your own house by donating labour diligently, and at the same time complete the work

within the stipulated four months and six months and get a sum of Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 10,000 respectively. Hon'ble Puri MLA Sunil Kumar Mohanty Many people in urban areas are crying without houses. This is an opportunity for them. He urged them to make them aware along with selection of beneficiaries as per merit. Additional District Magistrate Administration Sarat Chandra Behera attended the meeting and requested the applicants to be well informed about the necessary rules and government arrangements for urban housing and apply. Municipal Executive Officer Abhimanyu Behera presided over

Over 28 Kgs Ganja Seized, 9 Arrested



Nuapada/Khariar Road, (DMC): Nine persons have been arrested for allegedly smuggling Ganja and over 28 Kgs of the contraband and nine mobile phones seized from them by the Jonk Police in Khariar Road, Nuapada District, Superintendent of Police G.R. Raghavendra said on Friday in a Press Meet held at DPO Nuapada. On a tip-off, Jonk Police led by IIC Pradeep Kumar Dharua, Addl.IIC Ranjan Kumar Nayak, Sub Inspector S.K. Khamari raided the place and arrested nine persons. The nine arrested persons were Raghubir Singh (29), Sakti Singh (25), Jeevraj Singh (22), Anish Khan (20), Jitendra Kumar Atal (24), Sanjaya the Kumar Shani (31) all are of Gujarat , Bidur Duria (29) of village Jethupali PS Komna in Nuapada District, Raju Sahu (35) and Rekhram Sahu (55) of Ward No-17, Mongrapali, District Nuapada. They were caught red handed by the Jonk Police Khariar Road near Railway bridge, Mongrapali while contraband ganja were kept in their Air Bag and sitting there for deal. The total 14 number of bulks ganja packets have been seized & sealed having 28 kg 375 grams. All the nine persons were arrested under section 111(4), BNS r.w.sec (20) (b) (ii) C of NDPS Act. Jonk Police Station IIC Pradeep Kumar Dharua, Addl SP Nuapada Ranjit Nayak were present in the press meet. The investigation of this case is in progress, said SP Nuapada.

A shocking incident in Paralakhemundi..... Minor girl murder's mother with lover's help -Incident came to fore in Instagram Chat

Paralakhemundi, (DMC): A shocking incident of a minor girl killing his mother with the help of his lover has come to the fore at Telisundhi Sahi in Paralakhemundi of Gajapati district. Though the incident had occurred on April 29, it came to the fore in the girl's Instagram Chat on May 16. The deceased identified as Rajalaxmi Kar was staying in a rented

accommodation in telisundhi Sahi for the last four years and her minor daughter was studying in Class VIII in the Kendriya Vidyalaya. However, the girl fell in love with a local youth and had a physical relationship with him. When Rajlaxmi got to know about it, she strongly objected to it. The girl rattled with the objection, conspired with his lover and decided to remove the thorn from

her way forever. Accordingly, on April 29, she mixed sleeping pills in her mother's food and later choked her to death with the help of her lover and another associate. Later, they took Rajlaxmi to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) stating that she died of cardiac arrest. Then the accused girl took the body to Bhubaneswar and cremated it with the help of her relatives. But

later the relatives' suspicion was aroused when they somehow managed to see her Instagram chats. Following which , they approached the Paralakhemundi police for a probe. The police after a preliminary probe have detained the accused girl and her lover and recreated the crime scene at the rented house of Rajlaxmi. Notably, the accused girl was rescued from the road when

she was only seven-day-old and she looked after her well-being. The deceased's brother Shiv Shankar Mishra has alleged that the girl's lover and his associate have stolen a necklace of 10 grams of Rajlaxmi which she was wearing. The Model police are carrying out further investigations. The incident after coming to light has triggered shockwaves in the town.

Aditya Birla Public School Shines in CBSE Board Exams 2025

Rayagada, (DMC): Aditya Birla Public School, Rayagada, a premier educational institution in the region, has once again maintained its reputation for academic excellence with an outstanding performance in the CBSE Board Examinations 2025. The school recorded a 100 percent pass rate in both Class X and Class XII, reflecting its strong academic foundation and dedicated faculty. In Class X, 47 students appeared for the examinations, and among them, 8 students secured 90 percent and above demonstrating the school's consistent emphasis on high academic standards. Shrinjini Sarkar, daughter of Mr. Jayanta Sarkar and Mrs. Sharmila Sarkar, topped the school with an impressive 96.6%. Soyam Sriyansi Sahoo, daughter of Mr. Gyana Ranjan Sahoo and Mrs. Surekha Sahoo, secured the second position with 96.2%, while the third position was achieved by Rohan Semili, son of Mr. Shisir Kumar Semili and Mrs. Rita Bhatra, with 95.8%. In Class XII, all 9 students who appeared for the examinations passed with flying colours. Hibah Beig, daughter of Mr. Mazharullah Beig and Mrs. Hina Beig, emerged as the school topper with 84%. The second position was secured by Aunbhav Naik, son of Mr. Lambudhar Naik and Mrs. Sakuntala Naik, with 82%, and the third position got Prachi Pandey, daughter of Mr. Ramnarayan Pandey and Mrs. Saroj Pandey, she scored 81.4%. The school management extended heartfelt congratulations to all the students, teachers, and parents for this remarkable collective achievement. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Aniruddha Tiwari, Principal of the school, expressed his joy and admiration for the students' hard work and the dedication of the teaching staff. He said, "We are thrilled with the outstanding performance of our students in the CBSE Board Exams. This achievement is a testament to the school's commitment to providing quality education and nurturing talent. We congratulate our students, teachers, and parents for their collective efforts." Students and parents expressed immense gratitude for the school's supportive environment and academic guidance, which played a key role in their success. Aditya Birla Public School, Rayagada, is devotedly run by Utkal Alumina International Ltd. The administration is committed to maintain high standards supporting students in achieving their full potential. It extends heartfelt congratulations to the students, teachers, and parents on this remarkable achievement. The voice of the locality says that the outstanding performance in the CBSE Board Exams reflects the school's dedication to nurture smart future leaders and responsible world citizens.

Naveen Jindal leads Tiranga Yatra for success of Operation Sindoor

Angul, (DMC): In a remarkable tribute to India's armed forces and national unity, Jindal Steel & Power (JSP) organized a grand Tiranga Yatra at its Angul plant to celebrate the resounding success of Operation Sindoor, a historic and strategic mission that showcased the exceptional professionalism, discipline, and courage of the Indian Armed Forces.

The Yatra was led by Honourable Member of Parliament (Kurukshetra) for the third term, Chairperson of JSP and President of the Flag Foundation of India, Shri Naveen Jindal, whose presence added deep symbolic resonance to the event. The rally proceeded through JSP's Angul township and concluded at its monumental flagpole - a site of great pride for the JSP community. Thousands of employees, their families, stakeholders, and local residents participated with fervent patriotism, waving the Indian National Flag and chanting "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and "Vande Mataram." This Tiranga Yatra was organized to honour Operation Sindoor, which has become a defining moment in India's modern military history and a symbol of the unprecedented solidarity of our



citizens for the cause, as well as the precise strength and invincibility of India's Defense Forces. Shri Naveen Jindal, a long-standing advocate for the dignity of the National Flag and a national leader who championed every Indian's right to display the Tiranga with pride and dignity, addressed the gathering with heartfelt emotion.

Shri Jindal mentioned, "Operation Sindoor has greatly boosted our confidence. We are all grateful to the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, and the armed forces. Our self-confidence has risen tremendously. Our brave soldiers have responded valiantly, and we are very proud of them. No terrorist can ever again attack innocent citizens. If they throw stones, India will retaliate with bullets. Our country will respond with all its energy and strength." He announced that JSP and all its employees with their one-day salary will contribute Rs. 5 cr for the welfare of Army,

PF martyrs, families and affected Civilians families in the Country. He added that this Tiranga Yatra is a symbol of love and gratitude for the Indian Armed Forces. The sight of thousands walking together under the Tiranga was a moving display of solidarity and national pride. The event concluded with a ceremonial tribute to the Armed Forces, a cultural showcase by local artists, and reaffirmation of JSP's enduring commitment to national service and community development.

Inspired by this unique initiative, prominent community opinion makers also joined the Tiranga Yatra, lending their voices to the spirit of unity and patriotism. Their participation highlighted the widespread support and enthusiasm for the cause. Together, they strengthened the message of national pride and solidarity. Executive Director (In Charge) of JSP Shri Pankaj Malhan, Executive Director Mr. Damodar Mittal, CHRO Shri Dillip Sihna, and other senior officials were present at this grand event, underscoring the company's strong leadership and commitment. Together, the Jindalites under the tall leadership of Sri Jindal celebrated the spirit of patriotism and unity.

KuberABDO Asit Patra under VigilanceRaids



Jajpur, (DMC): On the allegation of acquisition disproportionate assets (DA) beyond his known sources of income by Sri Asit Kumar Patra, Addl. Block Development Officer (ABDO), Dharmasala Block, simultaneous searches are being conducted by Odisha Vigilance led by 8 DSPs, 9 Inspectors and other supporting staff on the strength of search warrants issued by Hon'ble Special Judge, Vigilance, Cuttack at his following 7 places in Jajpur, Cuttack, Bhadrak & Bhubaneswar.

During raids One four storeyed building with area approx. 6000 Sqft located at Chorda, Jajpur Road, One 2-BHK Flat No.404 (A) with area approx. 1000 Sqft at 4th floor in Metro Avenue Apartment, Chauliaganj, Cuttack, One newly constructed double storeyed building with area approx. 4000 Sqft at Jajpur road in the year 2023-24, One triple storeyed building with area approx. 2000 Sqft at his native village Garadeswar, Jajpur town,

One shopping complex recently constructed comprising 2 rooms with total area 300 Sqft at Jajpur road, 5 nos. of high value plots including 4 plots in posh area of Jajpur road and 1 in Danagadi town.. Gold ornaments 200 gms, Cash of Rs.1,85,000/-, Bank deposits over Rs.65 lakhs ,2 no's of two wheelers have been detected and attached by the team.

However it was a good step taken by the Vigilance. In Jajpur there are many corrupted officers in R & B Baruan division, Some JEE in Bari block, VLVs those are regular involved in Corruption, they should be also raided by the unit, citizens in the district reacted. One of a social youth in Bari alleges that vigilance should take an keen eyes at Bari -Bidrupa Road works where the divisional officer has taken highest PCs for why local people dissatisfied.

From Page- 1

CM Leads...

Priyadarshini Acharya, wife of Pahalgaon martyr Prashant Satpathy, both of whom walked in solidarity with the cause. The Chief Minister drew symbolic parallels between the sindoor and national pride: "When an Indian woman applies sindoor, it represents her resolve to protect her family. It symbolizes both danger to enemies and victory for our people. That is why Prime Minister Modi aptly named this mission Operation Sindoor." He went on to praise the role of women in the armed forces, citing the examples of Colonel Sofiya Qureshi and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh, calling them icons of modern Indian womanhood. "I see the same courage and brilliance in all of you today," he said, while highlighting the Odisha government's commitment to women's empowerment through various schemes and opportunities.

CM Launches...

mines are now operational. These mines not only produce minerals but also lay the foundation for a strong, self-reliant Odisha. Through advanced production and modern technology, OMC is strengthening Odisha's economic growth. He urged officials and employees to make OMC more dynamic. Development Commissioner Anu Garg stated that by properly utilizing natural resources, Odisha has transitioned from a weak economy to a middle-income economy. OMC has performed well for years, but continuous development requires adopting new technologies. Additional Chief Secretary of the Steel and Mines Department and OMC Chairman Surendra Kumar delivered the welcome address, while OMC Managing Director Sudhanshu Mohan Samal proposed the vote of thanks. All departmental officers and employees under the corporation attended the event.

Lightning Claims...

near a mango orchard. She was taken to Bhanjanagar hospital but was declared dead. In Tanarada village, Narmada Polai (38) was injured after being struck by lightning while sitting outside her home. In A. Barida village under Kabisuryanagar police station, 13-year-old Omprakash Pradhan died while playing cricket in the village playground. In Jajpur district, lightning killed two boys in Burusahi village under Anjira panchayat of Dharmashala block. Tara Hembram (9) and Jakhun Chatar (12) were struck while playing in the field in the afternoon. In Dhenkanal district, Surushi Biswal (40) from Kusumundia village under Mahabirod police station was killed by lightning while standing in front of her house. In Kabara village under Gandia police station, 45-year-old Sanatan Dian was struck by lightning while returning from a field. His body was found with severe burns and he died at the spot.

CJI says...

treated as such if the collector, after inquiry, determines that the property is government land. On 17 April, the Centre assured the top court that it would neither denotify waqf properties, including "waqf by user", nor make any appointments to the Central Waqf Council and state waqf boards until 5 May.

Operation Sindoor...

designated an 'international terrorist' by the United Nations and head of the banned Jaish-e-Mohammed group that was behind the 2019 Pulwama and 2016 Uri attacks. Mr Singh prefaced that cautionary note by saying Pak had begun rebuilding terrorist infrastructure destroyed by India during Operation Sindoor - New Delhi's military response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack by another Pak-based terror group, the Lashkar-e-Taiba. This rebuilding, the Defence Minister claimed, would be funded by the Pak government by diverting the \$2.1 billion it is to get from the International Monetary Fund as aid money.

Drinking water problem at Sadar Block



Jagatsinghpur, (DMC): About 150 families of Jorakul & Odapada village of Alipingal Panchayat under Jagatsinghpur Sadar Block are in crisis of Drinking water since long. Only Tube well in that area is about to defunk due to fall of water level. Though these two villages situated on the bank of Devi river but the river is dead now. These people somehow collect water from river Debi for day to day use but now the river is dead.

Now about 1300 population of 150 families depending upon one tube well. But that tube well not functioning properly due to fall of water level. It is unfortunate that these two villages not yet enrolled in "Basudha" scheme. The Block authorities and RWSS Department are least concerned about the problem of Jorakul & Odapada village. Local MLA Amarendra Das said that by 25 th December 2025 all Villages will be connected by pipe line as per direction of Chief Minister.

The Excise team's raid and seizure of liquor

Bargarh, (DMC): Yesterday at 3 PM, an intense excise raid unfolded in the quiet village of Kantapali, orchestrated by the dedicated Sadar Excise team from Bargarh. The target was the residence of an alleged illegal liquor seller, Sri Naresh Behera. As the excise officers meticulously searched Naresh's home, they unearthed a significant stash of illicit liquor.

The situation escalated dramatically when Naresh's wife and son fiercely intervened, wielding a sharp weapon known as a tangia. In a chaotic confrontation, they attacked the excise team, shattering the rear window of a government vehicle and injuring one constable in the process. In response to this alarming incident, a formal complaint has been lodged with the Town Police in Bargarh, who are now poised to continue their investigation into the matter.

Wild Bees Attacked During Rituals : 7 Injured

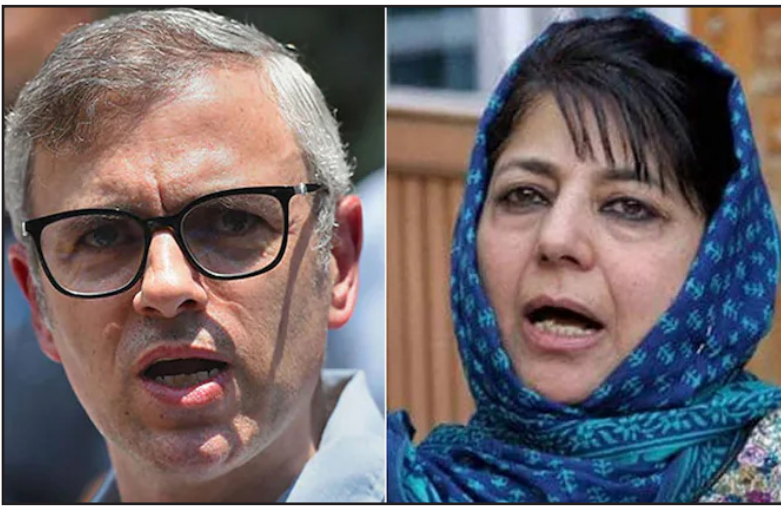
Paralakhemundi, (DMC): While busy on prayers on Sankranti at a temple at Mohana of Gajapati district, suddenly devotees attacked by wild honey bees. As a result 7 persons were attacked. Immediately they were taken to nearest hospital & all are safe now, said doctor who treated them.



Omar Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti's Spat over Pak Water Pact

New Delhi, (HS) : A public spat broke out between Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and his predecessor Mehbooba Mufti on social media on Friday over calls for revival of the Tulbul Navigation project after the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty. Ms Mufti accused Mr Abdullah of adopting "provocative" measures amid ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan. Mr Abdullah, however, alleged that the former Chief Minister was trying to score "cheap publicity points" and "please some people" in Pakistan by opposing the idea.

The Tulbul Navigation project - that seeks to rejuvenate the Jhelum-fed Wular lake in Bandipora district - was launched in 1987 but paused in 2007 amid objections from Pakistan that it violated the Indus Waters Treaty. With India suspending the Treaty on April 23, a day after the Pahalgalam terror attack, Mr Abdullah on Thursday called for resumption of work in the project on Wular Lake. In a post on X, the Chief Minister said that since the water pact



with Pakistan has been kept in abeyance, "I wonder if we will be able to resume the project". "The Wular lake in North Kashmir. The civil works you see in the video is the Tulbul Navigation Barrage. It was started in the early 1980s but had to be abandoned under pressure from Pakistan citing the Indus Water Treaty," he wrote on the micro-blogging

platform. The National Conference leader said that if completed, the Tulbul project can help in using the Jhelum river for navigation purposes. "It will give us the advantage of allowing us to use the Jhelum for navigation. It will also improve the power generation of downstream power projects, especially in winter," he added. Under the Indus

Waters Treaty governing six common rivers, all the water of the eastern rivers - Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi amounting to around 33 million acre feet (MAF) annually - has been allocated to India for unrestricted use. The waters of western rivers - Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab - amounting to around 135 MAF annually have been assigned largely to Pakistan. Ms Mufti, however, launched a scathing attack on Mr Abdullah and labelled his call as "irresponsible and dangerously provocative". The Chief Minister's call to revive the Tulbul Navigation Project amid tensions between India and Pakistan is "deeply unfortunate", she said in a post on X. "At a time when both countries have just stepped back from the brink of a full-fledged war - with Jammu and Kashmir bearing the brunt through the loss of innocent lives, widespread destruction and immense suffering - such statements are not only irresponsible but also dangerously provocative," she said. The Peoples Democratic

Party (PDP) chief said the people of the Union Territory deserve peace as much as anyone else in the country. "Weaponising something as essential and life-giving as water is not only inhumane but also risks internationalising what should remain a bilateral matter," she said. The former Chief Minister's comments evoked a sharp response from Mr Abdullah, who accused her of attempting to "please some people across the border".

"Actually what is unfortunate is that with your blind lust to try to score cheap publicity points and please some people sitting across the border, you refuse to acknowledge that the IWT has been one of the biggest historic betrayals of the interests of the people of J&K," he told his rival. "I have always opposed this treaty and I will continue to do so. Opposing a blatantly unfair treaty is in no way, shape, size or form warmongering, it's about correcting a historic injustice that denied the people of J&K the right to use our water for ourselves," he added.

SCdirects the West Bengal government to pay 25% DA



New Delhi, (HS) : The Supreme Court has directed the West Bengal government to pay 25% DA (Dearness Allowance) to State government employees said reliable reports on Friday. According to reports, a bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Sandeep Mehta issued an interim order directing the West Bengal government to make the payment within three months and posted the matter to be heard next in August. Earlier today, teachers protest outside Bikash Bhawan against the CM Mamata Banerjee-led State Government over 26,000 teachers losing their jobs in connection with the SSC recruitment case, following a Supreme Court judgment which held that the whole appointment process was tainted. Last night, several teachers were injured as a clash erupted between protesting SSC teachers and police personnel in front of Bikash Bhawan, after the Police resorted to lathi charge to disperse the massive crowd.

J-K: Budgam Police arrests 3 terrorists associates affiliated with Lashkar-e-Taiba

Budgam, (HS): In the ongoing efforts to dismantle terror networks, Budgam Police in Jammu and Kashmir have arrested three terrorist associates linked with the proscribed terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), said an official press release from the Kashmir Police. The arrested individuals have been identified as Muzamil Ahmad, Ishfaq Pandit, both residents of Aglar Pattan and Muneer Ahmad, a resident of Meeripora Beerwah. The arrests were made in the Kawoosa Narbal area of Magam town of Budgam, the release stated. On their apprehension, arms and ammunition, including one pistol and one hand grenade, were recovered from their possession. In this regard, a case has been registered at Police Station Magam under relevant sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), and further investigation has been taken up. During the investigation, it surfaced that the arrested individuals were in close contact with active LeT terrorist Aabid Qayoom Lone, son of Abdul Qayoom Lone, and a resident of Wussan Pattan, who had exfiltrated to Pakistan in 2020 and subsequently joined the LeT outfit. The said terrorist/handler is currently operating from Pakistan and is involved in radicalising local youth, motivating them to join terrorist ranks, and directing them to carry out terror-related activities in the Narbal-Magam area of District Budgam. The arrested associates were acting on his directions and were tasked with executing terror activities in the area, as well as attempting to radicalise and lure other youth into terrorism. Further investigation is underway. This comes after heightened India-Pakistan tensions when India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7 in response to the April 22 Pahalgalam terror attack in which 26 people were killed.

Tanot Mata temple reopens near Ind-Pak border as tensions ease

Jaisalmer, (HS) : Tanot Mata temple near the India-Pakistan border reopened for devotees on Friday as tensions between India and Pakistan eased. During the tension between India and Pakistan, daily worship rituals continued despite the closure. Priests appointed by the Border Security Force (BSF) had led these rituals. During the entire time, the everyday work of the temple had continued. There was no break. The villagers were allowed to visit the temple, but there were certain restrictions. However, it is now open for all the devotees," BSF DIG Yogendra Singh Rathore told ANI. On Thursday night, a special aarti was organised at the Tanot Mata temple in the presence of the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of the Jaisalmer North sector, Yogendra Singh Rathore. All the officers and jawans of the battalion were present for the aarti, and everyone took blessings from the Goddess. Speaking to ANI, DIG Rathore said, "Yesterday (Thursday), we organised a special aarti at the temple. And you know, for BSF, the Tanot Mata holds a special place. It is not just a matter of respect for us, but also a tradition that we worship her at the border." The BSF oversees the Tanot Mata temple, renowned for its ties to miraculous occurrences, particularly during the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971. In the 1965 and 1971 India-Pakistan wars, the Tanot Mata temple located in Rajasthan emerged as a symbol of faith and strength, despite many bombs being dropped nearby without detonating. Tensions between India and Pakistan escalated when India launched Operation Sindoor in the early hours of May 7, targeting nine terror sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), resulting in the deaths of more than 100 notorious terrorists. This operation was a retaliatory response to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgalam, Jammu and Kashmir, which claimed the lives of 26 people, including one Nepali national.

Turkish Aviation Firm Celebi Goes to Court After Centre Revokes Clearance

New Delhi, (HS) : A day after its security clearance was revoked by the Centre citing national security reasons, Turkey-based aviation firm Celebi has approached the Delhi High Court and challenged the decision. The Centre's move had come in the wake of Turkey's support for Pakistan during hostilities with India after Operation Sindoor.

On Thursday, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security had revoked the security clearance for the ground handling and cargo services provider, which serves nine major airports in India. The order had said that the security clearance was being cancelled "in the interest of national security". "Celebi Airport Services India Pvt Ltd is a Turkey-based company that provides ground services at many airports in the country. Turkey had openly supported Pakistan. In view of the current situation, this has become an issue of national security. Keeping



security in mind, Celebi has been banned in the country," Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol had said. On Friday, Celebi Airport Services India approached the Delhi High Court and challenged the Centre's decision, claiming that "vague" national security concerns were cited without reasoning, a report by news agency Reuters said.

Seeking that the decision be set aside, the company argued that it would impact 3,791 jobs and investor confidence. It also claimed that the order was issued without any warning. Responding to the Centre's announcement on Thursday, the company had said it is not a Turkish organisation and has no links with any foreign government.

India's Defence Renaissance Under PM Modi

Sabyasachi K.

New Delhi, (HS) : Pakistan launched a large-scale attack along India's western border, deploying 300 to 400 drones and missile-like systems across 36 locations from Ladakh to Kutch. The offensive, backed by artillery shelling and armed drones across the Line of Control, was intended to overwhelm India's air defence systems. While some Indian casualties were reported, the response was swift, calculated, and importantly, powered by indigenous defence capabilities. India retaliated with precision using homegrown missile systems, artificial intelligence-enabled surveillance drones, and smart munitions. Enemy radar systems were destroyed, and significant losses were inflicted without breaching international borders. This strategic and restrained counterstrike highlighted a new chapter in India's defence narrative-marked by growing self-reliance and technological sophistication.

At the heart of this transformation is the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. For a country to be truly sovereign, it must be capable of defending itself with its own resources. For decades, India depended heavily on



foreign military imports, effectively outsourcing key elements of national security. Under Modi's leadership, a focused push toward indigenous production has redefined India's defence priorities and capabilities. A major advancement in this direction is Akashteer, an advanced Air Defence Control and Reporting System developed by Bharat Electronics Limited for the Indian Army. Fully automated and integrated, Akashteer significantly enhances India's real-time air defence coordination, marking a shift towards smart, networked warfare

infrastructure developed entirely within the country. Another significant milestone came in 2022 with the commissioning of INS Vikrant, India's first indigenously designed and built aircraft carrier. With a displacement of 43,000 tonnes when fully loaded, INS Vikrant places India in an elite group of countries capable of building their own aircraft carriers. Its induction into the Navy strengthens India's presence as a formidable maritime power and reflects its shipbuilding expertise. Strategic acquisitions have further enhanced India's defensive edge. Despite

considerable diplomatic pressure from the United States, India went ahead with the purchase of the Russian S-400 air defence system in a deal worth five billion dollars. Similarly, the acquisition of 36 Rafale fighter jets from France has bolstered India's air superiority, particularly with the inclusion of SCALP long-range missiles that allow deep precision strikes without violating enemy airspace. The results of these efforts are visible in the numbers. Currently, 60 percent of India's defence needs are met through domestic production, a remarkable jump from previous decades. Major private companies like Tata Group, Adani Defence, and Larsen & Toubro are now actively contributing to the manufacturing of advanced systems such as radars, artillery, and electronic warfare tools. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, India's arms imports grew by just 4.7 percent between 2014-2018 and 2019-2023, despite increasing defence requirements. A Nomura report estimates a massive opportunity of 138 billion dollars in defence procurement from FY24 to FY32. By FY30, defence

capital expenditure is projected to rise to 37 percent of the total budget.

Investor sentiment reflects this momentum. Shares of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Bharat Electronics Limited have seen dramatic growth-HAL now trades at Rs 4,500 and BEL at Rs 316-reflecting a 1,400 percent increase in value over five years. Defence exports have reached a record Rs 21,083 crore in FY 2023-24, marking a thirtyfold increase in a decade and reaching more than 100 countries. International observers have taken note. Austrian air warfare expert Tom Cooper called India's retaliation during Operation Sindoor a clear-cut victory, attributing it to India's superior firepower and layered air defence systems. He noted that Pakistan's call for a ceasefire stemmed directly from being outmatched.

Under Prime Minister Modi, India's defence production has surged to Rs 1.27 lakh crore in 2023-24, a 174 percent increase since 2014-15. With a growing focus on indigenous capabilities and strategic clarity, India is asserting itself as a modern military power built on innovation, resilience, and self-reliance.

Truck Rolls Back, Misses Woman on Scooter by Inches



Kerala, (HS) : A Kerala woman had a near-death experience after a truck lost control on an incline and rolled backwards into her scooter on the road to Kozhikode Medical College. The incident reportedly occurred around 7:30 am on the uphill stretch between Peringalam town and the medical college, near CWRDM. The woman, identified as Ashwathi, a resident of Ozhayadi, was riding her red scooter behind a truck carrying hollow bricks when the mishap occurred. According to CCTV footage reviewed, the truck, which had halted on the slope, suddenly began sliding backwards. The woman, riding just behind it, tried to reverse but could not do so in time. The truck hit her scooter, throwing her onto the road. The vehicle then crushed the scooter and continued rolling until it came to a halt after hitting a roadside tree. She had a miraculous escape. The truck missed her by inches as she fell to the side. Locals, alarmed by the loud crash, rushed to the scene and quickly took her to a nearby hospital. She reportedly suffered minor injuries and is out of danger. Police are investigating the incident, and a case has been registered. Preliminary reports suggest a possible mechanical failure in the truck's braking system.

Covid Cases Spike in Hong Kong, Singapore as New Wave Spreads

New Delhi, (HS): Health authorities in densely-populated Hong Kong and Singapore have warned that Covid-19 cases are spiking, as a resurgent wave spreads through Asia. The virus' activity in Hong Kong is now "quite high," Albert Au, head of the Communicable Disease Branch of the city's Center for Health Protection, told local media this week. The percentage of respiratory samples testing Covid-positive in Hong Kong recently reached its highest in a year. Severe cases - including deaths - also reached its highest level in about a year to 31 in the week through May 3, the center's data shows. While the resurgence is yet to match the infection peaks seen in the past two years, rising viral load found in sewage water and Covid-related medical consultations and hospitalizations suggest the virus is actively spreading in the city of over 7 million people. Rival financial hub Singapore is also on Covid alert. The city-state's health ministry released its first update on infection numbers in



almost a year this month, as the estimated number of cases jumped 28% to 14,200 in the week through May 3 from the previous seven days while daily hospitalization rose around 30%. Singapore now only provides case updates when there is a noticeable spike.

While the increase in cases could be due to factors including waning population immunity, there is no indication that the circulating variants

are more transmissible - or cause more severe cases - than during the pandemic, Singapore's health ministry said. The surge in two of Asia's biggest cities comes as Covid has risen across the region in the past few months, with waves of the now-endemic disease swelling periodically. Health authorities have called on people to keep their vaccinations updated, reminding high-risk individuals to get booster shots.

Unlike other respiratory pathogens that tend to be more active during colder months, Covid's comeback just as much of the northern hemisphere enters into summer shows the virus can still sicken a large swath of the population even when the weather is hot. Hong Kong singer Eason Chan also came down with Covid and had to cancel his concerts in Kaohsiung, Taiwan originally scheduled for later this week, the concert's official account on Chinese social media Weibo said Thursday.

China is on track to see a Covid wave reach last year's summer peak, according to data from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The Covid test positivity rate more than doubled among patients seeking a diagnosis at hospitals across the mainland in the five weeks through May 4. Meanwhile, Thailand's Department of Disease Control has reported there have been two cluster outbreaks this year, with cases rising after April's annual Songkran festival, which brings together crowds.

Pakistan Deputy PM Draws Flak After Citing Fake Image To Praise PAF In Parliament

Islamabad, (H.S): Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has come under widespread criticism for citing a fake newspaper image praising Pakistan, circulated over social media platforms, falsely claiming it to be from the UK-based paper The Daily Telegraph.

Ishar Dar referred to the fake image describing Pakistan Airforce (PAF) as the 'undisputed king of the skies', during his speech in the Parliament session on Thursday. Dar, while praising the PAF for its success, stated "The Telegraph newspaper writes, 'Pakistan Airforce is the undisputed king of the skies.' Alhamdulillah," prompting thumping praise from the parliamentarians. However, many were quick to realise that Dar had cited and quoted a fake image, which had nothing to do with The Daily Telegraph. The



fake picture, which is AI-generated, was shared across many social media platforms, and many Pakistani journalists had shared it, praising what they thought was part of the global recognition of the country's PAF in its defence and counter-attack capabilities. However, it was revealed later that the picture was fake. It is pertinent to note that since the India-Pakistan tensions escalated and

both sides carried out major attacks against each other, social media was flooded with many images, news and claims, all of which later turned out to be fake. Though Dar has been called out for his mistake during his speech in Parliament, no clarification has been issued by him yet. It would not be wrong to maintain that during the recent conflict between Pakistan and India, Islamabad has relied on

social media posts as 'proof' to back many of its claims, including that of shooting down at least 5 Indian fighter jets, which now, have increased to six. Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif was called out by many, after he relied on unverified social media posts to claim that at least five Indian jets were shot down.

When asked by a CNN news anchor about the proof of the claims, Asif said "the proof is all over social media". Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, during his speech at PAF airbase Kamra on Thursday, claimed that at least six Indian fighter jets were shot down by Pakistan. This includes 3 Rafales, 1 SU-30MKI, 1 Mirage 2000, and 1 MIF-29. However, this also remains a claim that needs proof to back it, something that is yet to be brought to public knowledge.

Death toll from Lassa fever rises to 138 in Nigeria

Abuja, (H.S): The death toll from the Lassa fever outbreak in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, has risen to 138 since the beginning of this year, public health authorities said. In a statement on its website, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) said that 717 confirmed cases have been recorded so far.

At least 18 out of the 36 states in the country have been affected by the viral haemorrhagic disease so far this year, with the southern states of Ondo and the northern states of Bauchi and Taraba the worst-hit, accounting for more than 71 per cent of the total confirmed cases, the NCDC said. This development, according to the public health agency, has "signalled persistent hotspots despite nationwide interventions". With the latest death toll, the case

fatality rate has risen to 19.2 per cent, the NCDC said, noting that overall, this rise in the casualties figure remained alarming. The public health agency said young adults between the ages of 21 and 30 are the most affected, with the median age of infection reported at 30 years. It noted that more males than females had been affected, with a male-to-female ratio of 1:0.8.

The NCDC identified poor health-seeking behaviour, high treatment costs in some areas, and limited awareness in high-burden communities as major challenges. It has so far activated a multi-sectoral incident management system to coordinate nationwide response efforts. In 2024, Nigeria reported 214 deaths from Lassa fever, according to the NCDC, Xinhua news agency reported. According to the World Health

Organisation, Lassa fever is an acute viral haemorrhagic illness caused by Lassa virus, a member of the arenavirus family of viruses. Humans usually become infected with the Lassa virus through exposure to food or household items contaminated with the urine or faeces of infected Mastomys rats. The disease is endemic in the rodent population in parts of West Africa.

Person-to-person infections and laboratory transmission can also occur, particularly in healthcare settings, in the absence of adequate infection prevention and control measures. Diagnosis and prompt treatment are essential. The overall case-fatality rate is 1 per cent. Among patients who are hospitalised with severe clinical presentation of Lassa fever, case-fatality is estimated at around 15 per cent.

Man Charged With Arson After Fire At British PM's Home



London, (H.S): A 21-year-old man has been charged with arson with intent to cause a fire at British Prime Minister Keir Starmer's home, the Metropolitan Police said. According to the police statement released on Thursday, Roman Lavrinyovych, a Ukrainian national, faces three counts of arson with intent to endanger life. The charges, authorised by the Crown Prosecution Service, relate to three incidents: a vehicle fire in NW5 on May 8, a fire at the entrance of a property in N7 on

May 11, and a fire at a residential address in NW5 in the early hours of May 12, Xinhua news agency reported. The suspect was arrested early Tuesday in connection with a series of suspected arson attacks, including the fire at a property owned by Starmer. The investigation has been led by the Met's Counter Terrorism Command due to its links to a high-profile figure. In the early hours of May 12, emergency services responded to a fire at the Kentish Town home where Starmer lived before becoming

Prime Minister and moving into 10 Downing Street. Police were alerted by the London Fire Brigade (LFB) to reports of a fire at the residential address at 1:35 British Standard Time. Damage was caused to the property's entrance but nobody was hurt. A car that PM Starmer had sold to a neighbour last year was set alight four days earlier on May 8 on the same street.

One person was helped to safety by firefighters wearing breathing apparatus, LFB said. Bethan David, head of the Crown Prosecution Service counterterrorism division, said: "The Crown Prosecution Service reminds all concerned that criminal proceedings against this defendant are now active and that he has the right to a fair trial." "It is extremely important that there should be no reporting, commentary or sharing of information online which could in any way prejudice these proceedings."

India Remains Fastest-Growing Economy at 'Precarious Moment' For World: UN

United Nations, (H.S): India remains the fastest-growing large economy and is expected to record a 6.3 per cent growth this fiscal year, while the global economy faces a "precarious moment," according to the UN.

India remains one of the fastest growing large economies driven by strong private consumption and public investment, even as growth projections have been lowered to 6.3 per cent in 2025" from the 6.6 per cent made in January, Ingo Pitterle, a senior economic affairs officer, said on Thursday. The UN's mid-year update of the World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) report said India's economy is projected to grow a tad faster next year at 6.4 per cent, even though it is also 0.3 per cent lower than the January projection. "The world economy is at a precarious moment," the report warned. Heightened trade tensions, along



with policy uncertainty, have significantly weakened the global economic outlook for 2025. "It's been a nervous, time for the global economy," Shantanu Mukherjee, the director of the Economic Analysis and Policy Division, said at the release of the WESP.

In January this year, we were expecting two years of stable, if subpar growth, and since then, prospects have diminished," he added. Against this picture, the growth of the world's fifth-largest economy, India, contrasts with the global rate of 2.4 per

cent this year, and that of other major economies, according to the WESP. The projection for China is 4.6 per cent, for the US 1.6 per cent, Germany (negative) -0.1 per cent, Japan 0.7 per cent, and the European Union 1 per cent.

Resilient private consumption and strong public investment, alongside robust services exports, will support economic growth" for India, the report said. On inflation and employment, the WESP saw positive trends for India.

Inflation is projected to slow from 4.9 per cent in 2024 to 4.3 per cent in 2025, staying within the central bank's target range," it said. "Unemployment remains largely stable amid steady economic conditions," it said, but added a note of caution that "persistent gender disparities in employment underscore the need for greater inclusivity in workforce participation". The WESP drew attention to the risks to the export sector from the US tariff threats.

While looming US tariffs weigh on merchandise exports, currently exempt sectors - such as pharmaceuticals, electronics, semiconductors, energy, and copper - could limit the economic impact, though these exemptions may not be permanent," it said. The International Monetary Fund last month projected India's economy to grow by 6.2 per cent this year and 6.3 per cent next year.

Russia-Ukraine Peace Talks To Be Held in Istanbul Amid Lingering Differences

Ankara/Istanbul, (H.S): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said that a Ukrainian delegation would attend the upcoming peace talks in Istanbul with a commitment to ending the conflict with Russia, though he would not personally show up at the negotiating table. At the Ukrainian embassy in Ankara following talks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday, Zelensky told reporters that Ukraine would send a delegation to Istanbul.

Zelensky said Ukraine remained committed to dialogue but expressed doubts about Moscow's intentions, Xinhua news agency reported. He told reporters that Ukraine did not see "any decision-makers" from the Russian delegation who will be present at the talks. The delegation will be led by Ukrainian Defence Minister Rustem Umerov, alongside professionals, including military and intelligence officers,



Zelensky remarked, noting that Ukraine is awaiting confirmation from both Washington and Moscow on the exact schedule for the talks, which are expected to take place either Thursday or Friday.

On top of that, Zelensky stressed that he is ready for discussions if an unconditional ceasefire will be discussed at the level of leaders. Meanwhile, Vladimir Medinsky, head of the Russian delegation and senior aide to President Vladimir Putin, said that his team has the necessary competencies to conduct negotiations and will focus on "finding possible solutions" and common ground through a constructive approach. Speaking outside the Russian consulate in

Istanbul, the diplomat said that Russia views the fresh negotiations with Ukraine in Istanbul as a "continuation" of the peace process disrupted in 2022, claiming that his team's objective is to secure a lasting peace by "addressing the underlying causes of the conflict".

Addressing reporters separately after a NATO foreign ministers' meeting in Turkey's Antalya, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said that both Russia and Ukraine have, in principle, expressed their willingness for a ceasefire. However, each has its own considerations: Ukraine favours an immediate, unconditional ceasefire, while Russia maintains that certain modalities must first be understood and agreed upon. Fidan said the Ukraine-Russia negotiations have now reached a certain stage, urging both parties to make concessions and take steps towards establishing a common peace.

UAE, US Presidents Hold Talks In Abu Dhabi To Boost Partnership

Abu Dhabi, (H.S): President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan held talks with visiting US President Donald Trump at the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi, reaffirming the commitment of both countries to deepening their strategic partnership, media reported. The two leaders on Thursday discussed ways to strengthen cooperation across a range of sectors, including investment, energy, advanced technology, artificial intelligence, and industry, according to UAE's state news agency WAM.

Sheikh Mohamed highlighted the depth of UAE-US relations, which he said span over five decades, Xinhua news agency reported. He reaffirmed the UAE's dedication to global peace, stability, and prosperity through multilateral cooperation and close coordination with international partners, especially the US. The two sides also exchanged views on regional and international developments of mutual concern, with particular attention to

maintaining security and de-escalating tensions in the Middle East. Trump praised Sheikh Mohamed's leadership and noted that bilateral relations have continued to grow stronger under his guidance. Also on Thursday, the two Presidents jointly unveiled an artificial intelligence campus in Abu Dhabi, the largest AI campus outside the US. Sheikh Mohamed underscored the UAE's commitment to deepening cooperation with the US in light of their longstanding efforts to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in the Middle East and around the world.

This, he noted, is in line with the UAE's unwavering support for global stability, peace, and development through multilateral international cooperation. During the meeting, both leaders affirmed their joint aim to further enhance the UAE-US strategic partnership. Sheikh Mohamed also emphasised that over the years, the UAE has remained a reliable partner of the US in

addressing common challenges. The UAE, President Sheikh Mohamed said, is determined to continue strengthening this friendship for the benefit of both nations and their peoples while working together in support of peace and stability regionally and globally. Sheikh Mohamed pointed to the future-focused partnership between the UAE and US that has been further strengthened by President Trump's support, particularly in the fields of the new economy, advanced technology, and artificial intelligence.

For his part, the US President praised the leadership of Sheikh Mohamed, affirming that relations between the UAE and US have reached new heights and continue to grow stronger. To mark the state visit, Sheikh Mohamed hosted a dinner banquet in honour of President Trump and his accompanying delegation. President Trump also signed the guestbook at Qasr Al Watan, expressing his pleasure at visiting the UAE and meeting with Sheikh Mohamed.

Gaza, (H.S): At least 80 Palestinians were killed and dozens of others wounded in Israeli airstrikes across Gaza, said Palestinian medical sources. The Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis reported that 54 people, including women and children, were killed in strikes on the southern city, according to a press statement on Thursday.

According to Gaza-based health authorities, the Gaza European Hospital, the only hospital providing medical follow-up care to cancer patients in the enclave, was out of service due to recent Israeli attacks, Xinhua news agency reported.

The Israeli attacks "caused significant damage to infrastructure, such as sewage lines, damage to internal departments, and destruction of roads leading to the hospital," the authorities said in a press statement. Meanwhile, medical sources told Xinhua news agency that 26 others were



killed in Israeli airstrikes on Gaza City and other areas in northern Gaza. The airstrikes came after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned on Tuesday that the Israeli military would enter Gaza "with full force" in the coming days to press forward with efforts to defeat Hamas.

Israel resumed large-scale military operations in Gaza on March 18, ending a two-month

ceasefire. Since then, 2,876 Palestinians have been killed and more than 7,800 injured, according to health officials in Gaza.

The total Palestinian death toll since the war erupted on October 7, 2023, has reached 53,010, the officials said on Thursday. Israel is using a policy of "reducing space and emptying populated areas to pressure citizens," Mahmoud Basal,

spokesperson for the Civil Defence in Gaza, told Xinhua on Thursday. He also claimed that thousands of people spent the night in the streets amid threats of strikes on schools and shelters housing the displaced, adding that Israeli forces were obstructing emergency teams from reaching victims and systematically destroying Civil Defence infrastructure.

Since October 2023, the Israeli Army has pursued a brutal offensive on the Gaza Strip, killing more than 53,000 Palestinians so far, most of them women and children. A US-backed humanitarian organisation will start work in Gaza by the end of May under an aid distribution plan, but has asked Israel to let the United Nations and others resume deliveries to Palestinians now until it is set up. No humanitarian assistance has been delivered to Gaza since March 2, and a global hunger monitor has warned that half a million people face starvation in Gaza.

QCOs have earned industry support because they have helped Indian manufacturers access global markets: Shri Piyush Goyal

New Delhi, (PIB): Every QCO introduced so far has eventually earned the support of the sectors because they have not only improved product quality but also helped Indian manufacturers access larger markets. The Government is committed to building a system that ensures consumer safety and industry competitiveness. This was stated by Shri Piyush Goyal, while emphasizing on the importance of implementation of QCO for electrical appliances at the Stakeholder Meet convened by DPIIT in New Delhi yesterday.

The meet discussed the issues being faced by the Industry in the implementation of Horizontal QCO on "Safety of household, commercial and Similar Electrical Appliances" notified by DPIIT on 20th September, 2024. The industry presented their concerns and highlighted issues faced by them in the implementation of the Horizontal QCO on various electrical appliances on IS 302



(Part1): 2008 as revised vide IS 302 (Part1): 2024/ IEC 60335-1: 2020. Industry overwhelmingly supported the intent behind QCOs to ensure only high-quality products to be manufactured and sold in India. However, they requested for notifying QCOs on finished goods first followed by QCOs on components and raw materials, considering the complexity of global supply chains. They also recommended mapping domestic manufacturing capacities and available technologies to align

compliance timelines. A phased rollout was also proposed. Major concerns raised by the Industry inter alia included the following-ambiguity as regards to coverage of DC Supplied Appliances and Battery-Operated appliances; non-availability of product manuals and test labs all 85 appliances included in the illustrative list; lack of certification by domestic manufacturers as well as foreign manufacturers; insufficient time available for getting the BIS certification for domestic as well

as foreign manufacturers; addressing the issue of legacy stock and non-acceptance of non-BIS marked products on e-commerce platform. Hon'ble Commerce and Industry Minister acknowledged concerns raised by the industry and agreed to consider the request to extend the implementation timeline of the QCO, as well as the issue of legacy stock.

He requested industry to come up with the proposal for setting up more testing facilities with modern technology in public funded labs, labs in public sector enterprises and labs in State Government institution etc. so that that robust and accessible testing infrastructure will be made available for the industry pan India. Shri Jitin Prasada, Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce and Industry mentioned that "the Ministry remains firmly committed to a consultative and collaborative approach in

implementing QCOs. Together, let us ensure that 'Made in India' globally stands for safety, quality, and trust". DPIIT is working towards ensuring sectoral readiness for the QCO and identifying gaps in testing infrastructure to ensure a smooth rollout. DPIIT is closely working with BIS to streamline the testing and certification ecosystem, making it more accessible, efficient, and affordable, particularly for MSMEs.

These initiatives reflect the Government of India's unwavering commitment to developing world-class products of exceptional quality within the country, aligning with the vision of creating an Aatmanirbhar Bharat" or self-reliant India. The meeting witnessed the proactive participation of representatives from leading Industry players and Industry Associations like CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, CEAMA, RAMA, ICEA, IFMA, SMTA as well as Bureau of Indian Standards

India's Apparel Exports Clock Strong Growth In April Driven By US Market

New Delhi, (H.S): India's Textile & Apparel (T&A) exports have continued their upward trajectory, recording a growth of 7.45 per cent in April 2025 compared to the same month of the previous year. This positive trend was primarily driven by the strong performance of the apparel segment, which registered a robust 14.43 per cent growth year-on-year, an analysis of the data released by the Ministry of Commerce showed. Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) Chairman Rakesh Mehra said: "The current growth of 14.43 per cent in apparel exports seems to be mainly driven by increased shipments to the United States, following the announcement of reciprocal tariff measures by the U.S. administration." Mehra also welcomed the signing of the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which is expected to provide further impetus to India's T&A exports by improving market access of Indian products in the UK market and expressed his optimism for increased T&A exports in the months to come.

During April 2025, Indian textile exports were about 2.61 per cent higher as compared to the same month last year, while apparel exports registered a growth of 14.43 per cent during the month to touch the \$ 1.37 billion mark compared with \$ 1.2 billion in April last year. The April figures reflect an acceleration in the growth rate as the Indian T&A sector posted a growth of 6.3 per cent during 2024-25 compared to 2023-24. India total exports of goods and services clocked a robust 12.7 per cent growth in April to touch the \$73.80 billion mark compared with the corresponding figure of \$65.48 billion during the same month last year, despite the global economic uncertainties triggered by the US tariff hikes, according to figures released by the Commerce Ministry on Thursday

India's Current Sugar Season To End With 52 Lakh Tonnes Of Buffer Stock: ISMA

New Delhi, (H.S): India's 2024-25 sugar season is projected to conclude with a net sugar production of approximately 261 to 262 lakh tonnes which will leave a comfortable buffer stock of 52 lakh tonnes to meet domestic demand, the Indian Sugar & Bio-energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) said on Friday. The production includes 257.44 lakh tonnes of sugar produced up to mid-May in the current season, along with an estimated 4 to 5 lakh tonnes anticipated from the special crushing season in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the ISMA statement explained."

The season commenced with an opening stock of 80 lakh tonnes. Considering the projected domestic consumption of 280 lakh tonnes and export estimates of up to 9 lakh tonnes, the closing stock is likely to be around 52 - 53 lakh tonnes. This reflects a comfortable buffer, ensuring that the country has a sufficient sugar stock to meet its

domestic sugar demand," ISMA said. Approximately 27 lakh tonnes of sugar has been diverted for ethanol production up to April 30, 2025, during the current season. An additional 6 to 7 lakh tonnes are expected to be diverted over the remaining season, ISMA further stated. The latest figures show that as of May 15, 2025, sugar production in the ongoing 2024-25 sugar season has reached 257.44 lakh tonnes, with two sugar factories still continuing operations across the country.

These two operational factories are located in Tamil Nadu, where the main crushing season is still underway. To augment production, several factories in South Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are expected to resume operations during the special crushing season, which typically runs from June/July to September. Historically, the production in the special season in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu contributes approximately 4 to 5 lakh tonnes of sugar for the current

season. The industry body also said that the 2025-26 sugar season is shaping up to be promising, buoyed by several positive developments across key sugar-producing regions. In the southern states, particularly Maharashtra and Karnataka, sugarcane planting has shown significant improvement, thanks to a favourable southwest monsoon in 2024. Supported by strong cane availability, the stage is set for a timely start to the crushing season in October 2025. In the northern belt, including Uttar Pradesh, varietal replacement initiatives are expected to yield tangible benefits.

These efforts are expected to result in higher cane yields and improved sugar recovery rates. Adding to this positive momentum are climate forecasts from both the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and Skymet, which predict a normal southwest monsoon in 2025.

Mumbai, (H.S): Economists expect the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) dividend to the government to surpass a record over Rs 2.5 lakh crore this year as the central bank earnings, through the sale of dollars to prop up the rupee as it sharply depreciated during 2024-25, are reported to have shot up. This higher profit will be transferred to the government as a dividend in 2025-26.

The previous record dividend transferred to the government stands at Rs 2.1 lakh crore during 2024-25 which helped to keep the fiscal deficit in check, while enabling the Finance Ministry to continue with its expenditure on big ticket infrastructure projects to spur growth and social welfare schemes to uplift the poor. This was a record jump from the Rs 87,416 crore transferred to the government in 2023-24 for the profit made in 2022-23. Similarly, the government is expected to get another booster shot through the RBI dividend in the current financial year as well." Among the RBI's earnings, forex transactions are expected to



be most significant in light of the in light of the central bank's measures to lower rupee volatility by strong dollar purchases earlier in fiscal 2025 and difference in the current versus historical exchange rate.

Add to this the interest income on government securities and earnings from funds extended to banks in midst of previous tight liquidity. "This transfer could amount to a record high at around Rs 2.5-2.7 lakh crore this year," said Radhika Rao, senior economist at DBS Bank. Earnings on forex transactions are expected to be substantial with gross dollar sales tracking at \$371.6 billion in fiscal 2025 till February compared to \$153 billion in fiscal

2024, according to Gaura Sengupta, chief economist at IDFC First bank. She estimates the RBI dividend to be between Rs 2.6 lakh crore to Rs 3 lakh crore, according to an NDTV Profit report.

The higher dividend creates fiscal space of 0.1 per cent to 0.2 per cent of GDP, estimates Sengupta. With support from the higher-than-budgeted RBI surplus and savings on a few expenditure heads, the central government is in a fairly strong position to counter the growth slowdown risks and any potential emergency spending requirements. Apart from helping to lower the fiscal deficit, the RBI dividend will be a significant

infusion to core liquidity in the banking system during the current financial year. This will help to keep interest rates low and allow banks to extend more loans to corporates and consumers to accelerate economic growth and create more jobs. The RBI board of directors met on Thursday to review the economic capital framework which is the basis for deciding the surplus transfer or amount of dividend to be given to the government.

The meeting comes ahead of deciding and approving the surplus transfer to the government. The transferable surplus is determined on the basis of the ECF adopted by the Reserve Bank on August 26, 2019, as per recommendations of the Bimal Jalan-headed Expert Committee to Review the extant Economic Capital Framework of the RBI. The Committee had recommended that the risk provisioning under the Contingent Risk Buffer (CRB) be maintained within a range of 6.5 to 5.5 per cent of the RBI's balance sheet.

India's GDP Growth in Q4 of 2024-25 Expected At 6.8-7 Per Cent



New Delhi, (H.S): The Indian economy is expected to grow at 6.8-7 per cent in the fourth quarter of the financial year 2024-25, driven by the agriculture sector, according to a Bank of Baroda report released on Friday. For the full financial year, the estimate has been pegged at 6.2-6.4 per cent with the report stating that India's economy continues to be better off than its global counterparts on the back of strong macroeconomic fundamentals.

Going ahead for FY26, growth will be at a similar level of 6.4-6.6 per cent with brighter prospects supported by monetary easing, lower inflation, sound domestic demand aided by a budgetary push and sustained capex spending, according to the report. However, any geopolitical conflict and global tariff imposition can have an adverse impact on this optimism, it points out. The report states that robust agriculture growth is expected at 7.7 per cent in Q4FY25.

This will be much higher growth compared with 0.9 per cent growth noted in Q4FY24. This has been on the back of the record foodgrain production as has been noted in the 2nd advance estimates which

includes estimates for both kharif and rabi crops. Growth in Q4, though higher than Q3, is, however, uneven across sectors with a few of them registering better growth than others. On the industry side, the mining sector is expected to clock 1.5 per cent growth in Q4FY25 against 0.8 per cent growth registered for the same period last year. On the other hand, growth in the manufacturing sector is likely to soften down to 1.8 per cent from 11.3 per cent in Q4FY24.

This is partially attributable to an unfavourable base and also to weaker corporate earnings. Lower profit margins were visible in the corporate performance of industries such as iron and steel, capital goods, textiles, amongst others. The deceleration was noted despite softer commodity prices. Slower growth is also expected in the electricity sector at 5.5 per cent compared with 8.8 per cent in Q4FY24.

The construction sector is expected to grow at a solid pace on the back of the improvement in steel and cement output in Q4. Sustained thrust on government capex bodes well for this sector. For services, a mixed trend has been visible. Marriage season and Mahakumbh are expected to boost not only the hospitality sector, but also sectors such as

transport, logistics, food and beverages, amongst others. The trade, hotels and transport sector is likely to expand by 6.4 per cent in Q4 from 6.2 per cent in Q4FY24. GST tax collections continue to grow at a steady pace. Financial sector growth (6.6 per cent from 9 per cent) is expected to grow at a slower pace amidst lower credit growth in the same period. Public administration and defence will register some acceleration amidst an uptick in net revenue expenditure. On the outlook ahead, the report states that rural demand in FY26 is likely to continue the upward momentum given the expectation of a favourable monsoon.

Neutral ENSO conditions are expected to prevail in the coming months (NOAA), which bodes well for agricultural growth. Consumption is also expected to pick up pace, as this will be supported by the higher disposable income amidst new tax incentives. Furthermore, continuity of easing cycle given lower inflation will provide a cushion to growth. Lower commodity prices are expected to offer further support."

Based on the above, we expect the Indian economy to clock 6.4-6.6 per cent growth in FY26. However, there are downside risks to these projections, especially for the external sector, emerging from the global stage, given the evolving global tariff challenge. Although any possible bilateral trade between the US and India will be positive. Additionally, any adverse geopolitical conflict or extreme weather condition is likely to act as a growth hindrance," the report said.

India-UK FTA: Bilateral trade projected to surge by 15 pc annually until 2030

New Delhi, (H.S): The bilateral trade between India and the United Kingdom (UK) is expected to increase by around 15 per cent annually until 2030, factoring in the aspect that the free trade agreement (FTA) will come into effect in a year, a report showed on Friday.

The recently concluded free trade agreement (FTA) between India and Britain offers a strategic opportunity for Indian companies to expand their footprint in the UK market, stimulate domestic manufacturing and contribute to economic growth, according to the report by CareEdge Ratings." This landmark FTA also fosters investment, joint ventures, and collaboration in the service sector, thereby deepening economic ties. Going forward,

this agreement marks a pivotal shift in India-UK economic relations, unlocking new opportunities for businesses, strengthening manufacturing, and enriching consumer markets," said D Naveen Kumar, Associate Director, CareEdge Ratings.

Currently, the trade value between the United Kingdom (UK) and India is approximately 2 per cent of India's total trade value, although it has been growing steadily at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11 per cent over the last decade. The UK and India entered into a free trade agreement (FTA) on May 6, following approximately three years of negotiations. Under the agreement, India will reduce tariffs on 90 per cent of British goods, with 85 per cent becoming

completely duty-free over a period of 10 years. In return, Britain has agreed to lower its tariffs on certain products, resulting in 99 per cent of India's exports to the UK facing zero duties."

Some of the benefits of FTA for Indian exporters would include improved market access, stable supply chains, increased competitiveness, higher volumes and new avenues for growth," the report mentioned. The FTA is expected to boost India's exports by significantly reducing tariffs, easing trade barriers leading to improved market access and make Indian products more price competitive, thereby increasing their demand in the UK. Additionally, this has provided some relief to exporters who have been facing sluggish sales and

uncertainty about potential reciprocal tariffs from the US. In key sectors such as automobiles, whisky, industrial machinery, and pharmaceuticals, significant gains are set to be made through steep tariff reductions and simplified regulations.

According to the report, the India-UK FTA is poised to create substantial opportunities for Indian gems and jewellery makers by tapping into the UK's affluent consumer base and well-developed luxury market. The tariffs range from 8 per cent to 14 per cent for various electrical and engineering goods. With their removal under the India-UK FTA, Indian manufacturers are poised to gain a clear competitive edge over other global suppliers, said the report.

Govt Approves 187 Startups For Tax Exemption To Boost Growth

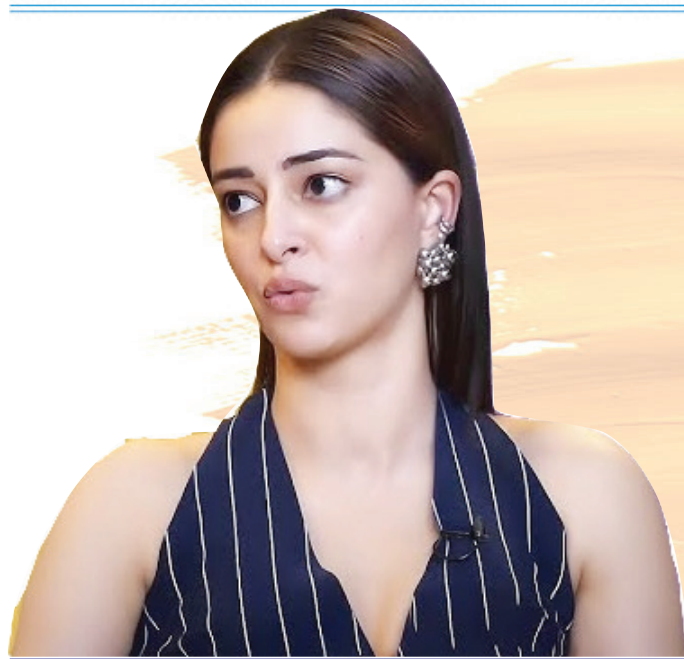
New Delhi, (H.S): In a significant boost to India's startup ecosystem, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has approved 187 startups for income tax exemption under the revamped Section 80-IAC of the Income Tax Act, according to an official statement issued on Thursday. According to a DPIIT spokesperson, the tax benefit allows eligible startups a 100 per cent income tax deduction on profits for any three consecutive years within a 10-year window from the date of incorporation. The scheme is designed to support emerging businesses in their formative years, encouraging innovation, job creation, and wealth generation. Of the total approvals, 75 startups were cleared during the 79th Inter-



Ministerial Board (IMB) meeting and another 112 during the 80th such meeting held on April 30. With this, over 3,700 startups have now been granted exemptions since the scheme's inception. In a key announcement during the Union Budget 2025-26, the government extended the eligibility window for startups to claim benefits under Section 80-IAC. Startups incorporated

before 1st April 2030 are now eligible to apply for the exemption, giving more time and opportunity to new ventures to benefit from this financial relief. Pertinently, the revised evaluation framework introduced by DPIIT has made the application process more structured and transparent. Complete applications are now reviewed within 120 days,

ensuring faster decision-making and reducing procedural delays. Startups that were not approved in the latest round have been encouraged to reassess and refine their applications. The DPIIT has advised applicants to focus on demonstrating technological innovation, market potential, scalability, and a clear contribution to employment and economic growth. "The government's continued support underlines its commitment to fostering a robust, future-ready startup environment aligned with the vision of a self-reliant and innovation-led New India," the spokesperson said. Further information on the tax exemption process, eligibility criteria, and application details is available on the official Startup India portal, the spokesperson added.



Ananya opens up about all chatter around her changing body

Ananya Panday addresses body shaming and societal pressures on women, sharing her experiences of being criticized for her changing body.

Ananya Panday is tired and done with all the chatter around her changing body. In a chat with content creator Lilly Singh, Ananya spoke about how the social media loves to speculate about her changing body, without knowing the truth. Ananya

spoke about how earlier in her life, people would bully her for being too skinny, and now, think that she has got things done to make her butt bigger. "I feel like you can never win. I was 18 or 19 when I started out, and I was really skinny. Everyone used to kind of make fun about that. They were like, 'Oh, you have chicken legs. You look like a matchstick. You are like a flat-screen TV. You don't have tits. You don't have an ass.' So that was what it was

first," she said. "Now that I'm growing up and naturally, my body is filling out, they were like, 'Oh, there's no way. She's got her butt done. She's got this done.' You can never win."

Ananya feels all of this happens because she is a woman. "It's constantly for anything you do. No matter what shape you are, no matter what size you are. People will constantly have something to say and criticise especially with women. I don't feel like they do that to men at all. The

hate that comes towards women is a lot more." Ananya did say that perhaps the beauty industry and celebrities are also to blame, considering how strictly they keep up the facade of perfection. "I also feel like it's our fault also, because we have set unrealistic beauty standards in films. As an actress, I have put that message out there in the films and the songs that I've done." She, however, said that she is trying to rectify

that but being her natural self in real life.

Ananya Panday recently opened up about the films that had an impact on her growing up. Speaking to Lilly Singh, Ananya Panday called herself a Dharma fan and named Kuch Kuch Hota Hai and Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham as the films that stayed with her growing up. She also acknowledged how films like Luck By Chance, Jaane Tu Ya Jaane Na and Wake Up Sid portrayed 'real' women on screen.

Ajay And Arshad's Dhamaal 4 to Release on Eid 2026



The 4th instalment of the superhit film franchise Dhamaal now has a release date. The makers of the film have booked its release on Eid 2026. The film boasts a stellar star cast including Ajay Devgn, Riteish Deshmukh, Arshad Warsi, Sanjay Mishra, Jaaved Jaaferi, Sanjeeva Shaikh, Anjali Anand, Upendra Limaye, Vijay Patkar and Ravi Kishan.

Dhamaal 4 promises a laugh riot like never before. The film's

shooting is currently underway in Mumbai. This comes after the crew finished an extensive first schedule in Malshej Ghat of Maharashtra. Last month, Ajay had shared an update about the film and announced the wrap of the first schedule of 'Dhamaal 4'. He shared some pictures with co-stars Arshad Warsi, Jaaved Jaaferi, Anjali Anand, Sanjay Mishra, and Sanjeeva Shaikh, and wrote, "The madness is BACK! #Dhamaal4

kicks off with a bang - Malshej Ghat schedule wrapped, Mumbai schedule rolling! Let the laughter riot begin". The starting of the 'Dhamaal' franchise was marked by the release of 'Dhamaal' which was released on 7 September 2007. The film gave birth to two sequels, 'Double Dhamaal', which was a direct sequel to the first film, and 'Total Dhamaal'. The first two films featured Riteish Deshmukh, Arshad Warsi, Jaaved Jaaferi, Saanand Verma, Ashish Chaudhary, Karan Deol, and Sanjay Dutt in lead roles.

The third installment also featured Ajay Devgn, Anil Kapoor, Johnny Lever, Boman Irani, Mahesh Manjrekar and Madhuri Dixit along with the original cast, but Sanjay Dutt did not appear in the third film. Gulshan Kumar and T-Series present, in association with Devgn Films, a T-Series Films, Maruti International, Panorama Studios production.

'Perfectionist in copying': Sitaare Zameen Par trolled for likeness to Champions



Last night, Bollywood's Mr Perfectionist Aamir Khan finally unveiled the much-awaited trailer of his next film Sitaare Zameen Par. Also starring Genelia Deshmukh and 10 debutant actors, the film is a sequel to Aamir and Darshel Safary's 2007 masterpiece Taare Zameen Par. Ahead of the release, Genelia's actor husband Riteish Deshmukh had reviewed the trailer as 'extraordinary'. Fans agreed to this review when the trailer was dropped and lauded Aamir, who is playing a 'tingu' coach of a basketball team. However, later a clip went viral on social media drawing parallels between Sitaare Zameen Par and the 2018 Spanish film Champions. This served as

a game changer, because Aamir is now being trolled.

According to the Wikipedia page of the Aamir Khan and Genelia Deshmukh-starrer, Sitaare Zameen Par is based on the 2018 Spanish film Champions. The Spanish film was originally inspired by a basketball team of individuals with intellectual disabilities in Burjassot, Valencia. It was later remade in Arabic, German and English. But netizens are now trolling the Aamir film for being a 'frame by frame copy' of the Spanish movie. Some claimed that the team could have opted for a sport more relatable for India than basketball, such as cricket or hockey, whereas others are comparing it to Aamir's box office

bomb Laal Singh Chaddha (2022), which was an adaptation of Forrest Gump (1994). One such netizen claimed, "After the Forrest Gump fiasco, he should have stayed away from remakes or adaptations .. yeh bhi pitegi lagta hai," whereas a troll wrote, "Perfectionist in copying the film frame by frame." Another comment read, "Everyone praises Aamir for his scripts but literally every movie of his is a copy or rip off from somewhere," whereas a social media user pointed out, "The problem that I see in this movie is we have a very niche audience who understand Basketball... Atleast they should have changed the sport like cricket let's , football , hockey... Thoda relatable lagta."

However, some fans did come out in the film's defence. For instance, one netizen stated, "Official remake hai bhai toh of course usme konsi nayi baat hai," whereas another wrote, "You're acting like people in India have all seen Champions and it's a massive hit here. No one gives a shit if it's a remake as no one has seen the original, all that matters is if it's a good film."

Paresh Confirms His Exit from Hera Pheri 3: "Yes It's a Fact"

Paresh Rawal's iconic character Baburao Ganpatrao Apte from the Hera Pheri series has a massive fanbase.

Back on January 31, 2025, director Priyadarshan had confirmed that Hera Pheri 3 was officially in the works. What got the excitement soaring all the more is that the OG trio - Akshay Kumar, Paresh Rawal, and Suniel Shetty were coming back in the third instalment. But now Paresh Rawal has confirmed his exit from Hera Pheri 3. The actor told Bollywood Hungama, "Yes, it's a fact." An industry insider was further quoted in Bollywood Hungama, sharing, "There was a time when Akshay Kumar was out of the film, in 2022. Even though he's the soul of the series hence, his exit led to disappointment. But thankfully, he returned to the franchise. Based on that episode, we hope Mr Rawal can also be back in the series." Hera Pheri had first released in theatres in 2000. Followed by Phir Hera Pheri in 2006. With the growing advent of social media, several humorous clips of the two Hera Pheri films started circulating online. Many memes were also created, especially with Paresh Rawal as Baburao who has the most loyal fans.



Hence the announcement for Hera Pheri 3 had sent ripples of excitement among movie lovers who were eagerly waiting for it. However, industry experts are still hopeful that an alternative can be worked out and Paresh Rawal returns back to being Baburao again in the third part of the hit franchise.

Bumrah vs Gill for test captain: Former Indian opener picks



New Delhi, (HS) : India's hunt for the next Test captain seems to be over, with multiple reports suggesting that Shubman Gill is set to succeed Rohit

Sharma in the longest format. Gill, who is already India's vice-captain in ODIs and T20Is, seems to be beating the favourite Jasprit Bumrah to the role, leaving many

unimpressed. While Bumrah was India's vice-captain in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, leading the first Test in Rohit Sharma's absence, the Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee reportedly prefers Shubman Gill because of the pacer's poor injury record.

Gill's impressive show as a leader in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 campaign has also impressed many, instilling confidence in the decision-makers to give the baton to the top-order batter. As per a report in the Times of India, Gill held a lengthy discussion with Team India head coach Gautam

Gambhir at the latter's residence when the Gujarat Titans had arrived in the national capital for a match against Delhi Capitals. The two reportedly spoke for four to five hours, with Test captaincy, understandably, being the biggest point of discussion. When GT took on the Mumbai Indians at Wankhede Stadium on May 6, Agarkar is said to have also had a discussion with Gill. As per the report, the selection committee is convinced to give long-term captaincy responsibility to Gill, having been impressed by his development as a leader.

IPL 2025 Restart

New Delhi, (HS) : The Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 season has officially resumed after a brief suspension, reigniting the race for the coveted playoff spots. With 13 matches left in the league stage, teams are recalibrating their strategies following key player exits. Several players have withdrawn due to personal reasons or international commitments, prompting franchises to make crucial squad adjustments. The IPL has introduced updated replacement rules, allowing teams to sign short-term players for the remainder of the season. However, these replacements cannot be retained ahead of the next auction. Teams such as Chennai Super Kings, Mumbai Indians, and Royal Challengers Bengaluru have reshuffled their squads to maintain their competitive edge. While some franchises have secured experienced replacements, others are banking on young talents to step up in high-pressure matches. As the competition intensifies, fans eagerly await the upcoming clashes, which will determine the final four teams advancing to the playoffs.

Rohit's Message as Wankhede Stadium Stand Named after Him Unveiled

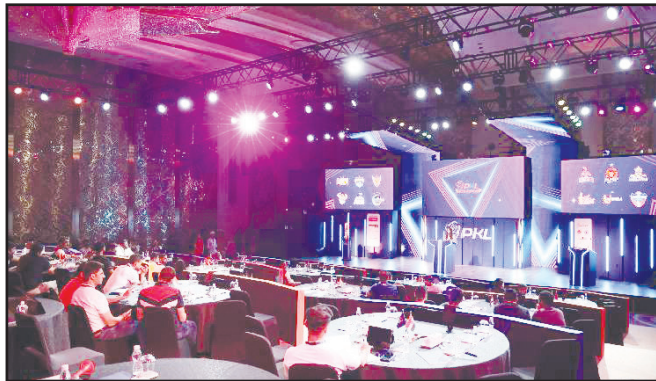


Mumbai, (HS) : Rohit Sharma received a massive honour from the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) as a stand with his name was unveiled at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Friday. The Rohit Sharma Stand was officially unveiled in an event at the iconic venue in the process of Rohit's parents and wife Ritika Sajdeh. Sunil Gavaskar, Sachin Tendulkar, Vinoo Mankad, and Dilip Vengsarkar are other cricket stars to have a stand named after them at the venue. During the event, Rohit delivered an emotional speech and expressed his wish to play an ODI encounter for India at the Wankhede Stadium in the near future.

"Firstly I would like to thank everyone who has come here to make this event so special. What is going to happen today, I never dreamt of it. As a kid growing up, wanting to play for Mumbai, for India, no one thinks about things like these. For me, it's like any other sportsman who wants to give their best. Serve the nation, the country as much as possible. While doing that you try and achieve a lot of things. A lot of milestones are created but something like this is really special. Wankhede is such an iconic stadium, there are so many memories here," said Rohit while addressing.

"For me to have my name amongst the greats of the game and the world's top political leaders, I cannot express what the feelings are. For that I am really really grateful, honoured and very thankful to all MCA members and not to forget the Apex Council Member. For me to be honored, while I am playing makes it special. I have retired from two formats but I am still playing one format. It'll be a surreal feeling when I come here and play on the 21st against the Delhi Capitals, representing Mumbai Indians. It'll be a very special feeling." "It will even be more special when India plays whichever team here, that'll make it even more special. To get this honour in front of my mom, dad, my brother and his wife and my wife. I am so so grateful for all the people in my life, for all that they have sacrificed. Of course my team Mumbai Indians are here, who are waiting for my speech to get over so they can start training," Rohit added.

PKL Season 12 Player Auction to be Held May 31 & June 1



Mumbai (HS) : The players' auction for the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) Season 12 will take place on May 31 and June 1 in Mumbai, organisers said on Friday. The Season 12 Auction comes after the successful conclusion of PKL Season 11, which saw Haryana Steelers win the trophy for the first time after beating three-time champions Patna Pirates in the final on December 29, 2024. The league's journey began in 2014, and over the past 11 seasons, there have been 8 different champions. Season 11 of PKL - held from October 18 to December 29, 2024 - was a significant milestone, as the league entered its second decade, which further solidifies PKL's position as one of India's premier sporting leagues, enabling sustained growth and interest in kabaddi. The upcoming player auction for PKL 12 gets the ball rolling for yet another glorious chapter of rivalries, a passionate title defence, and the unmatched energy of kabaddi fans from across India, and the globe. Anupam Goswami, business head of Mashal and league chairman of Pro Kabaddi League said, "We are happy to announce the dates for the PKL Season 12 Player Auction. The PKL Player Auction is the launch-pad for our teams to demonstrate their strategy, determination, and ambition to become high-performers for the upcoming season. It also serves as a platform to showcase the wealth of global talent for India's indigenous sport. We look forward to seeing how teams tap into our rich talent pool to build their squads at the upcoming PKL Season 12 Player Auction."

Virat Set for First Action in IPL 2025 Restart

New Delhi, (HS) : After a 10-day pause triggered by military tensions between India and Pakistan, the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 is set to roar back to life this Saturday. And it does so with a blockbuster clash in Bengaluru - Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) versus Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) - where the spotlight will undeniably shine brightest on one man: Virat Kohli. The former India captain, who stunned fans earlier this week by announcing his retirement from Test cricket, is expected to be the emotional centrepiece at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. Fans have responded in kind, planning to don white jerseys in tribute to Kohli's storied red-ball career. But if history is any indicator, Kohli will be focused more on runs than reverence. And with RCB poised for a playoff berth, the 36-year-old might be ready to pen a new chapter in his T20 legacy.



Before the break, RCB had surged to second in the standings with 16 points from 11 matches, riding on a four-match winning streak. A victory on Saturday could all but seal their place in the playoffs, and they appear well-equipped to resume from where they left off. The return of foreign stars such as Phil Salt, Tim David, Liam Livingstone, Romario Shephard, and Lungi Ngidi has come as a massive boost. Skipper Rajat Patidar, who had suffered a finger injury against Chennai Super Kings (CSK), was seen batting fluently in the nets - a reassuring sign for the think tank. One concern remains: the absence of Devdutt Padikkal due to injury. Mayank Agarwal, who has been slotted in as his replacement, will have a big role to play at the top. Meanwhile, the status of Josh Hazlewood remains uncertain owing to a shoulder issue.

But even without a full-strength XI, RCB's core group is showing signs of cohesion and confidence. And with Kohli potentially inspired by his Test farewell, KKR could be in for a long evening.