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English Daily



Supreme Court Judge's Big Remark



New Delhi, (HS) :

Caste-based reservation in the country has become like a train compartment and people who get into this compartment don't want to let others in, a Supreme Court judge said today. Justice Surya Kant, who will take over as Chief Justice later this year, made the observations while hearing a case related to reservations for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in local body polls in Maharashtra. Local body polls in Maharashtra were last held in 2016-2017. The key reason for the delay in holding posts in the legal fight over quota for candidates from Other Backward Classes (OBCs). In 2021, the Supreme Court struck down a Maharashtra government ordinance to implement a 27 per cent quota for OBCs. The court laid down a three-fold test: (1) setting up a dedicated commission to conduct contemporaneous rigorous empirical inquiry into the nature and implications of backwardness in local bodies of the state, (2) specifying proportion of reservation required to be provisioned in local body wise in the light of recommendations of the Commission, (3) total reservation for SCs/STs/OBCs shall not exceed 50 per cent. Since then, delays in data collection and litigation have stalled attempts to hold the local body polls in the state.

Advocate Indira Jaising, appearing for the petitioner, told the court that despite the identification of OBCs during delimitation, Maharashtra was not using the data for the local body election. She stressed the need to hold elections for local bodies soon and alleged that the state government was running local bodies unilaterally through handpicked officials. Advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for a petitioner in the same matter, told the court that within the OBCs, politically backward and socially backward classes should be identified for the purpose of reservations.

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'India's water used to go outside, it'll now...': PM on Indus Waters Treaty

New Delhi, (HS) : Waters from India's rivers will now be used for the country's interests, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday evening, speaking on the government's intention to curb the flow of water to Pakistan amid escalating tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad. "India's water earlier used to go outside; it will now be used for India's interests and will be utilised for the country," PM Modi said without naming Pakistan in the course of his address at a conclave organised by ABP network.

"Bharat ka paani, Bharat ke haq mein bahe ga (India's water will now flow for India)," he said. PM Modi's statement comes against the backdrop of the government taking steps to cut off water flow to Pakistan from the Baglihar dam on the Chenab river and preparations to taper down runoffs from the Kishanganga project on the Jhelum. India has paused the six-decade-old Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan, already strained by long-running disputes, after terrorists killed dozens of tourists in Kashmir's Pahalgam on April



22. Ever since, government officials have said earlier, the government had been exploring ways to use the river waters for the benefit of Indians. The Indus treaty, mediated by the World Bank allocates water from six rivers - the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej - between India and Pakistan. The prime minister also said that the government in the last 10 years has taken several tough decisions that were in the national interest

but were not implemented by previous governments due to a lack of political will. "To take big decisions, to achieve our goals, it is important that we put the country's interests at the top... Unfortunately, for decades, the thought process was otherwise, and the country suffered a lot. There was a time when, before taking any big decision, before taking any big step, it used to be said what will the world think. For various

reasons, such as votebank politics, et cetera, big reforms and big decisions were put on hold. No country can progress this way," he said. The prime minister said a country moves forward when decisions are only based on one parameter - the nation first. "In the last one decade, India has followed this policy of nation first and today we are seeing the results. In the last 10-11 years, the government has taken big decisions one after the other that had been put on hold," he said.

Asserting that "democracy can deliver", he reiterated in the last one decade, 25 crore people have been pulled out of poverty and the whole world got the message that democracy can deliver. The attack has brought the international community rallying behind India. The matter has resonated in the United Nations as well, which has taken Pakistan to task. The country is now preparing for an unprecedented civil defence security drill tomorrow to "train civilians and students for effective civil defence in the event of a hostile attack".

CM thanks PM, Civil Aviation Minister for approving Puri Airport



Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : A new greenfield airport, to be built at an estimated cost of ₹5,631 crore in Puri, has received in-principle approval from the Central Government, marking a significant step toward boosting Odisha's tourism and economic growth. Named Shree Jagannath Airport, the project will span 1,164 acres and be developed in three phases, with the capacity to serve 46 lakh passengers annually upon completion.

The airport is expected to enhance regional connectivity, making the sacred city of Puri more accessible for pilgrims and tourists visiting the iconic Jagannath Temple. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi expressed optimism about its impact, stating, "This airport will not only boost tourism but also drive economic progress, ensuring Puri becomes a seamless destination for visitors worldwide." The initiative aligns with Odisha's vision to modernize its tourism infrastructure while capitalizing on Puri's spiritual and cultural significance. The airport is anticipated to create jobs, stimulate local businesses, and position Odisha as a premier travel destination. Chief Minister Majhi extended his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Civil Aviation Minister K. Ram Mohan Naidu for their pivotal roles in securing approval for the project.

The Shree Jagannath Airport promises to be a game-changer for Odisha, blending heritage with modern infrastructure.

Security Drills to be Held at 12 Locations in Odisha Amid Ind-Pak Tensions



Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : In response to the recent terrorist attack in Pahalgam that claimed 26 lives on April 22, and amid rising tensions between India and Pakistan, the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs has announced a nationwide Civil Defence Mock Drill scheduled for May 7, 2025. In Odisha, the mock drill will be

conducted at 12 key locations.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has issued a formal letter to Chief Secretaries of all States and Union Territory Administrators, directing Civil Defence authorities to conduct comprehensive exercises on May 7 across 244 designated Civil

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Majhi Urges Mamata to Drop 'Jagannath Dham' Name for Digha Temple

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi urges West Bengal's Mamata Banerjee to stop using 'Jagannath Dham' for Digha temple, citing cultural and religious concerns. Amid the escalating controversy over the Jagannath temple in Digha, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Tuesday wrote to his West Bengal counterpart Mamata Banerjee expressing concern over the use of 'Jagannath Dham' for the local temple.

In his letter, CM Majhi urged the West Bengal government to refrain from using the term 'Jagannath Dham' for the local temple. "As you are well aware, Shree Jagannath Dham in Puri, Odisha, is one of the Char Dhams of Hinduism and holds unparalleled religious, spiritual,



and cultural significance, not just for the people of Odisha, but for millions of devotees across India and the world. The name 'Jagannath Dham' holds a unique and sacrosanct identity linked to Puri, and its usage in reference to any other temple or location hurts the sentiments and emotions of millions of pilgrims,

devotees, and the general public, besides diluting the distinct heritage of Shree Jagannath Dham, Puri," the letter read. "While we acknowledge and appreciate the devotion towards Lord Jagannath across regions, the use of the term 'Jagannath Dham' in official and promotional contexts for the Digha temple is

likely to cause confusion among devotees, dilute the historical identity of Puri as the original and revered abode of the Lord, and hurt the religious sentiments of the people of Odisha," the letter read further.

"In view of this, I request the Government of West Bengal to reconsider the usage of the name 'Jagannath Dham' in relation to the Jagannath temple recently established at Digha and refrain from using the term 'Jagannath Dham' in its official naming, communication, and promotional materials. I sincerely hope that the Government of West Bengal will uphold the spirit of inter-state respect and cultural sensitivity in this matter and take necessary steps to address our concerns," the letter stated.

Monsoon arrival in Andaman And Nicobar Islands likely by May 13

New Delhi, (HS) : The Southwest Monsoon has advanced and is likely to hit parts of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Andaman Sea on May 13, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) estimated. The monsoon normally advances around June 1 to Kerala and further heads northwards, usually in surges,

and covers the entire country by around July 15, this is the usual trend. But this year it appears that the monsoon shall arrive earlier than expected.

It is estimated that the monsoon shall arrive in Kerala shores by May 25, as estimated by the IMD, this shall be earlier than the usual date of June 1. However, the IMD maintains



that past data suggests that there is no direct association of the date of monsoon advance over Andaman Sea either with the date of monsoon onset over Kerala or with the seasonal monsoon rainfall over the country. The IMD forecast said that, in view of strengthening of southwesterlies in the lower tropospheric levels, there would

be fairly widespread to widespread rainfall activity and persistent clouds over various areas. The IMD has issued a press release in this regard which reads as follows: "Southwest Monsoon is very likely to advance into South Andaman Sea, some parts of Southeast Bay of Bengal and Nicobar Islands around 13th May, 2025."

Heatwave Scorches Odisha: Titilagarh Hits 39.5°C, Bhubaneswar at 36.7°C

Bhubaneswar, (DMC) : The sweltering heatwave conditions continue to grip Odisha, with several towns recording high daytime temperatures on Tuesday. Titilagarh remained the hottest place in the state, registering a maximum temperature of 39.5°C, according to the Regional Meteorological Centre in Bhubaneswar. Bhubaneswar recorded 36.7°C, while neighbouring Cuttack reported 35.6°C. Other towns witnessing extreme heat included Balangir (38.7°C), Jharsuguda and Sambalpur (38.6°C each), Bhawanipatna (38.5°C), Paralakhemundi (38.4°C), Boudh

(38.0°C), and Malkangiri (37.6°C).

Hirakud and Sundargarh recorded 37.2°C, Nayagarh 37.4°C, Khordha 37.5°C, and Sonapur 36.9°C. Talcher, Angul, and Rourkela also saw temperatures exceeding 36°C. "Odisha will continue to witness similar temperature levels for the next two days," said Dr. Sanjeev Dwivedi, weather scientist at the Regional Meteorological Centre. "After that, a gradual rise of 2 to 4 degrees Celsius in maximum temperatures is likely across many districts."

Other notable temperatures included Baripada (36.0°C),

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Pakistan asked 'tough questions' by UNSC members over Pahalgam attack

New York/New Delhi, (HS) : The United Nations Security Council members raised tough questions for Pakistan at its informal closed-door session on Monday, sources in New York told ANI. The 15-nation Security Council held deliberations on Monday afternoon amid growing tensions between India and Pakistan.

There was no statement published by the UN body following the "closed consultations" that were requested by Pakistan, a non-permanent member of the Council whose presidency for May is currently held by Greece. Sources told ANI that UN Security Council members raised



tough questions for Pakistan at its informal closed-door session. The members refused to accept the "false flag" narrative planted by the Pakistani side and asked whether the Lashkar-e-Taiba, a proscribed terror organisation with deep ties to Pakistan, was likely to be involved in the terror attack. Sources said there was broad condemnation of the terrorist attack and recognition of the need for accountability. Some members specifically brought up the targeting of tourists based on their religious faith. Many members expressed concern that Pakistan's missile tests and nuclear rhetoric were escalatory factors. Pakistan on Monday

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CRRR Infra

The swift urban development of Bhubaneswar and its neighboring city, Cuttack, has created an urgent demand for a contemporary transportation infrastructure. Traffic congestion has long characterized these urban centers, with major thoroughfares often experiencing significant delays, especially during peak traffic times. The busy NH-16 corridor in Bhubaneswar and the narrow roads in Cuttack frequently struggle to handle the growing number of vehicles, leading to extended traffic jams and increased air pollution. In response to this escalating issue, the Central Government has initiated discussions within the Cabinet regarding the Capital Region Ring Road (CRRR), which is intended to transform the transportation framework of Odisha's major urban areas, as highlighted by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari during his recent visit to the state. The CRRR initiative, estimated to cost Rs 7000 crore, plans to construct a 111-kilometer, six-lane expressway encircling Bhubaneswar. This project will be designed and implemented by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) under the Bharatmala Pariyojana scheme, with the goal of efficiently connecting the cities of Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Khordah, and Choudwar while alleviating congestion on internal city roads. The proposed route for the CRRR will begin at Tangi in Cuttack, passing through Barapada, Rajabati, Govindpur, Shankarpur, Banki, Bandhahat, and Haldia, before ending at Rameswar in Khurda. The CRRR's initial scale and complexity are impressive. The roadway will include nine strategically placed flyovers to ensure smooth traffic flow over major intersections, along with twenty-nine underpasses for vehicles to enable local traffic to navigate without disrupting high-speed highway operations.

Additionally, three pedestrian overbridges will be constructed to enhance safety for pedestrians in semi-urban areas. A significant bridge spanning the Mahanadi River will connect essential transit locations and further enhance intercity connectivity. Service lanes will be established on both sides of the road to provide safer access points for local traffic and minimize abrupt slowdowns on the main highway. The CRRR is set to significantly alleviate congestion on Bhubaneswar's central arterial routes, particularly along NH-16, which currently handles a substantial volume of interstate freight and intra-city travel. Heavy vehicles, such as trucks and long-distance buses, will be rerouted to the outer ring, thereby clearing essential urban roads for local traffic. This realignment is projected to reduce travel times through Bhubaneswar and Cuttack by as much as 40% during peak traffic hours, based on preliminary project assessments. The Capital Region Ring Road (CRRR) will establish a high-speed transit corridor that connects major hubs such as Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Khordha, and surrounding towns, bypassing inner city routes. This development is anticipated to significantly enhance logistics operations, facilitate interstate goods transportation, and improve emergency services by alleviating traffic congestion and reducing transit times. Furthermore, the ring road is poised to act not only as a means of decongestion but also as a catalyst for the establishment of new economic zones, industrial parks, and residential developments along its route. Improved connectivity is expected to attract investments in peripheral regions, promoting balanced regional growth. Ultimately, the CRRR will represent a pivotal advancement in Odisha's infrastructure landscape, signifying a major milestone for the capital region of the state.

7th May

Aces Day



ACES Day takes place on the first Wednesday in May. It takes place on May 7 this year. Twiddling the video game controller and punching air on TikTok videos is the maximum exercise most kids get these days. Project ACES (All Children Exercise Simultaneously) Day aims to change this. In the past few decades, there has been a stark rise in obesity among children and young adults. To reverse this trend, people are coming up with unique ideas to instill healthy practices in kids from an early age. As doing any activity with peers can be fun and adds to the motivation, Project ACES Day explores this idea to encourage kids to sweat it out.

ACES Day was started by Len Saunders in 1989 to encourage children around the country to exercise together. Project ACES Day perfectly lines up with National Physical Fitness and Sports Month and America's National Physical Education Week. Schools use this occasion to motivate students to adopt an active lifestyle. Workout sessions are organized in schools and local community centers across the country. While the choice of workout is often left up to the kids, the motto remains the same - to sweat it out and to do it with peers and friends. Walking, running, cycling, yoga, and aerobics are often preferred choices. Though, some schools even put on music and work out with some groovy moves. The session usually lasts from 15 to 45 minutes. The month of May is perfect for outdoor activities, however, in the case of bad weather, the event is taken to the school gymnasium or classrooms.

The media has touted this event as the "world's largest exercise class". And rightfully so as millions of children from across the country join in the effort to make it a remarkable movement toward fitness. As the modern lifestyle becomes increasingly sedentary, initiatives like Project ACES play a crucial role in reintroducing exercise and workouts among kids in an interesting way.



Subash Ch. Mishra

Economic Diary

In the recent days the President of USA is occupying most of the space in TV and print media across the globe for a few things - tariff on imports and exports leading to trade war, possible war in Iran, brokering peace between Ukraine and Russia and finally international student visa and effort to control the universities in USA. The steps relating to tariff were aimed at rejuvenating manufacturing activities in USA as promised by the Liberal Party during the Presidential election in 2024 under the slogan MAGA (Make America Great Again). The steps relating to international student visa was aimed at cutting down inflow of talents from outside to provide employment to locals. While all the four issues are sensational for the international media, the trade and tariff war have been at the centre of the controversy as US has alienated its traditional allies like Canada, Mexico and European nations due to tariff hike and entered in to a trade war with China. Import tariff was hiked by USA for all nations and then kept in suspended motion for some countries. In case of China it was increased to 245% and then set at 145% and again the President hinted that the tariffs will be rolled back for China if China comes for a negotiation. The unilateral actions on the part of USA have been providing good feed to the media and it is no less than a thriller drama for the

Trade Imbalance of USA

common man and a horror drama for the economists.

Historically, US was running trade surplus against rest of the world prior to 1960. When the second world war ended, USA was the only large country that remained financially strong and had a large market. Therefore, when the Bretton Woods agreements were made and several international institutions were created, US had the dominant voice in the matter. While the headquarters of UNO, IMF and World Bank were set up in USA, US dollar was linked to gold and became the reserve currency of the world. In 1971 USA discontinued linkage to gold and allowed USD to float. In 1960s and 1970s US was running trade deficit in some years and surplus in some years and the quantum of deficit or surplus were relatively small. In 1975, US had the last surplus trade balance. But after 1980s, it started running deficit continuously and slowly the quantum of deficit started rising. In 1985 it had started a trend of rising trade deficit with China. In 1990s it increased further and US had trade deficit with many Asian countries as well. After 2000, the trade deficit exceeded 2% of the GDP and in 2024 the deficit was USD 918 billion representing 3.1% of its GDP. The trade imbalance of USA is mainly due to higher level of consumer demand, gap between savings and investment and tariff and trade barriers imposed by some countries. Country-wise, US had large trade deficits against China (\$270bn), Mexico (\$157bn), Vietnam (\$113 bn), Ireland (\$80bn), Germany (\$76 bn), Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and Canada in 2024. US had a trade deficit of \$235 bn against EU and a much smaller deficit of \$41 bn against India. The trade deficit against China has been rising year after year as it has gone up from an average of \$ 35 bn per annum in 1990s to the present level which is eight times higher. In the post Covid period, China has



entered in to a high export regime due to demand for semi conductors, solar energy cells and electric vehicles. Since the trade deficit of USA has been rising, one section of Americans felt that America can reverse the trend by increasing tariff on goods imported from other countries. This will make imported goods more expensive and encourage local companies to manufacture goods which are otherwise imported now. Local manufacturing will help the economy and generate employment for Americans. Further, import of certain electronic goods from China has been seen as a threat to national security. Some law makers also believed that China has used unfair practices such as currency manipulation, wage suppression and government subsidies to promote exports. Therefore, the republicans in USA came to the conclusion that a higher tariff on all goods imported by USA should set right the wrong done to USA in all these years.

But the issue is whether American industries can produce the goods at a much cheaper rate than the imported cost. Though labour cost is one of the deciding factor in cost of production, it is not the sole deciding factor any more due to mechanization of most of the manufacturing operations. In fact, the labour cost in China is much higher than many other countries in Asia and South America. But China has

been able to reduce the manufacturing cost due to superior infrastructure, skilled and disciplined work force and economy of scale of operation. The federal minimum wage in USA is \$ 7.50 per hour whereas the actual wage of skilled workers is around \$20 per hour. As against this, the minimum wage in china is about \$ 1.8-3.00 per hour. Since the labour cost in USA is one of the highest in the world, US companies like Apple had to shift their operations to China and India. Secondly, considering the large market size and consumer base in China and India and availability of skilled work force, some of the other mobile makers have also set up factories in China and India. Further, wherever manual input is required to a larger extent like garments, footwear etc, it is wiser to get the manufacturing done where the labour is cheap. Manufacturing has been a major economic activity in USA after second world war. After China, USA is the largest manufacturer in the world. US manufacturing employs more than 12 million people. But manufacturing contributes only 10% to its GDP, agriculture about 6% and the remaining comes from the services sector. Due to higher cost of production, it is focusing on high value goods for manufacturing in USA and outsourcing lower value goods from relatively cheaper destinations. To shift back the manufacturing activities entirely

to USA will be a time consuming process. Further, unless the process is fully mechanized, manufacturing low value items may not be economically viable in USA. In the meantime, raising the tariff on imported goods will raise the price of such goods in USA and the US consumers will have to pay for it which will raise inflation. Further, though USA is a mineral rich country it still has deficit in aluminium and steel and it has to import these raw materials. Imposing a higher tariff on such metals will increase the cost of the final products and make them uncompetitive.

While some economists argue that holding a continuous trade deficit will harm the US economy and all other countries are enjoying at the cost of USA, some other arguments are put forward for US maintaining a deficit position. It is argued that since USD is the primary reserve currency of the world, the Rest of the World (ROW) can hold USD reserves if they have a surplus against USA. This allows USA to borrow the surplus money of the ROW at a much cheaper rate through bonds route. Some of the surplus money of the ROW also support the equity market in USA. Despite all the arguments for and against, what caused turmoil in the global market is the upswing and downswing in the tariff rates dished out by USA unilaterally. Creation of enemies out of long term allies and the threat to acquire Greenland and Panama canal by force and ignoring democratic institutions like judiciary, deporting people out of USA without following a process of law and going against universities to have a control of them passed on shock waves across the globe. This gave an impression that the US has deviated from its democratic principles and turned in to an imperialistic and autocratic country which has caused immense damage to the image of USA. It will take lot of time and effort for USA to regain confidence of the international community.

The author is a Retired Chief General Manager of Reserve Bank of India.

Try to build fulfilling relationships

Dr. Arundhati Devi

When faced with a problem, do we become defensive, self-protective, and blame others, or do we use obstacles as opportunities to become stronger, to learn and to expand? Meditation is a process of expanding our awareness. Through meditation, we discover deep within ourselves the soul qualities of peace, calmness and love – and an underlying joy that doesn't change under any circumstances.

This expansion of consciousness is the essence of spiritual growth, and our relationships can be an excellent catalyst in that process. When we nurture these expanded states in ourselves and in others, profound changes can happen in our relationships. Instead of demanding, even subconsciously, that others fulfil our "needs", we can rest in the inner fulfilment and contentment we experience in a meditative state. Thus cooperation replaces competition, and the joy of mutual giving replaces the tension of reciprocating demands. A great sense of relaxation comes as we realise that relationships are given to us primarily to help us learn and grow, especially in our ability to accept and to love. Relationships lived in this manner hold the promise of deep fulfilment.

Friendship is the purest form of relationship. We choose friends for the sheer pleasure of spending time with them. You will strengthen all of your relationships if you make friendship the foundation. We automatically want the best for our friends; we take delight in their



strengths, and overlook their weaknesses. We can laugh together with a friend, and, at times, cry together, and we understand that our friendship is more important than getting our own way. Close and enduring relationships like marriage need to be grounded in a strong foundation of friendship. Usually the first sign of the breakdown of a marriage is that the partners are no longer friends. Very important for all long-lasting relationships is an attitude of respect. Respect and love grow from the same root. Elements that build strong, healthy relationships: Communication: Learn to really listen to your partner and friends. The more you listen to the thoughts and feelings behind the words, the more you will begin to commune in your communication. For partners, deep communication is strengthened if you can share times of silence together, and even more if you meditate together. Try to bring out the best: Unrealistic expectations are poison for relationships. It is only you, not

others, who can make you happy or sad.

The fewer demands you make, the better. If you want a person to change, don't criticise what is wrong. Instead try to create a "magnetic opening" by modelling the right behaviour. True intimacy develops only in an atmosphere of trust. It is only when people feel secure that they are able to change. Share uplifting experiences: Your bonds with others will be greatly strengthened if you share experiences that are uplifting and expansive – things like walking in nature, helping others in need, or attending events where the mind is uplifted. When we are inspired, our auras begin to merge with those of our loved ones. One of the most bonding practices for a couple is to meditate together. By returning daily to your own centre, you will gather the strength you need to face all of life's demands.

Director & Secretary, International Indecency Prevention Movement, Cuttack

Begin training your mind to listen to you

Dr. Ram Prasad Ray

Spirituality is the science of understanding and managing the human mind. Bhagwad Gita, the essence of all Upanishads, has dealt with the human mind vividly. Krishna says, 'Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam' – One who has acquired skills to manage his mind is capable of executing any other worldly activity in a most efficient manner. In chapter six, verse 34 of the Gita, Arjuna expresses his doubt to Krishna about mind control. He says the mind is so restless and powerful that it is impossible to control it. However, in the very next verse, Krishna explains that while it is definitely difficult to control the mind, one can achieve control through abhyasa, continuous practice, and with a sense of vairagya, detachment.

Mind is perceived as a continuous flow of thoughts. Reportedly, an average of 80,000 thoughts are generated in a day. These thoughts are pertaining to our past experiences or future dreams. When we attach ourselves to a specific thought, we stay attached to it till we realise and become aware of the situation. This implies that a person who remains alert and observant of the thought process, does not get easily attached to any thought. This is what Krishna means when he says, be an observer of mind and remain always detached. This process of alertness sublimates the flow intensity of thoughts and the mind becomes less overpowering. As human beings, we may entertain some thoughts that indicates kama, desire. There is absolutely nothing wrong in it. But, there are possibilities of success and failure in fulfilling these desires. Depending on the

outcome, we become angry in case of failure, and become fearful of losing acquisitions in case of success. These emotions, emanating from desires, create turbulence and agitation in our mind, and consequently, we lose mental peace.

The Gita recommends the practice of Karma Sanyasa, an attitude of selfless, dedicated actions without desire for the fruits of these actions, which will eventually help the practitioner to achieve an expansive state of mind. Mind works like a pendulum, oscillating between two extremes of dualities. Consequently, our life experiences also oscillate between dualities of happiness-sorrow; love-hate, etc. While we do have little control over the external happenings, we can definitely control our emotional outcomes due to the external triggers, provided we have control over our mind. When our mind becomes subordinate to us, we achieve a state of middle path or Sthitapragnya, which has been explained by Krishna in 2:56 of Bhagwad Gita. The mind is a tool to achieve higher levels of consciousness, wisdom and bliss. But, the mind is also a double-edged sword, which could lead to low levels of human suffering, if not used properly. Hence, there is a need to understand the functioning of mind, the process to control it and make it subservient. A person who succeeds in controlling the mind and creating a state of inner silence gets access to Sat-Chit-Anand, the field of universal truth, wisdom and bliss.

Camp Assistant, Central Red Cross Blood Centre, Cuttack

Dy CM Pravati Parida Launches Selfie Contest For Mother's Day



Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Mother's Day 2025 will be celebrated worldwide on May 11. Under the aegis of the Women and Child Development Department,

Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida has launched an innovative initiative, the "Mother's Day Selfie Contest," running from May 6 to May 10. Participants are encouraged

to take a selfie with their mother, write two lines expressing respect and admiration for her, and tag the Women and Child Development Department using hashtags #MoBou, #WCD Odisha, and #MothersDay.

The department has requested that selfies, along with heartfelt messages, be posted on Facebook, Instagram, and X (Twitter). The top three

most touching and inspiring selfies and messages from each platform will be declared winners and awarded attractive prizes on Mother's Day, May 11. The winners' photos will be posted on the department's official social media handles. On May 11, at Ekamra Haat in Bhubaneswar, during the Mother's Day celebration, winners can claim their prizes by presenting valid identification.

The event will also feature various fun games for mothers. Women interested in participating in these games can register at Ekamra Haat on May 11 at 3:00 PM and join the fun activities. Winners of the games will be awarded during the event itself. The department has urged women to participate in large numbers in this program.

Week-Long Mock Drills in Odisha From May 7 To Train Citizens Against Air Raids

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The Odisha Home Department convened a high-level meeting at Lok Seva Bhawan on Tuesday to finalize preparations for statewide civil defence mock drills, set to begin Wednesday, May 7. The drills aim to train citizens on safety measures during potential enemy air attacks, amid heightened national security concerns.

The meeting held in the presence of Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department, Satyabrata Sahu, and Director General of Odisha Fire Services, Sudhansu Sarangi, brought together senior officials from police, fire services, and other departments to devise a robust action plan. Discussions centered on enhancing inter-agency coordination, optimizing response times, deploying resources effectively, and strengthening public



communication during emergencies. The week-long drills will cover 12 districts—Angul, Khordha, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Ganjam, Dhenkanal, Puri, Koraput, and Sundargarh—starting with urban areas and coastal zones. Sudhansu Sarangi explained, "A five-minute air raid warning siren will alert the public,

signaling the start of the drill, with another siren marking its end. The goal is to educate citizens on seeking shelter in concrete buildings during an attack." The Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) will lead efforts in coastal areas, supported by around 4,000 Apada Mitra volunteers. District

administrations will designate shelters for slum residents and mobilize NCC, NSS, local officials, and civil defence volunteers. The drills will also assess post-attack preparedness, including managing injuries and extinguishing fires. To ensure widespread awareness, district authorities will leverage public communication channels.

Disaster Emergency Response Centres at state and district levels will be operational from Wednesday, coordinating with shelter homes and district response units. The Ministry of Home Affairs noted that the exercise, planned up to the village level, seeks to enhance civil defence readiness across all states and union territories. The initiative reflects Odisha's proactive approach to safeguarding citizens amid escalating security concerns, ensuring preparedness for any contingency.

AMNEX Leverages AI To Empower Odisha Farmers With Timely Data

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): AMNEX, an organization leveraging artificial intelligence to analyze agriculture-based geographical data, has come forward to provide farmers with advance information.

Representatives of the organization made a presentation to Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment, Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, at the conference hall of Lok Seva Bhawan today. To further strengthen the agricultural sector, the use of advanced technical expertise is essential. Artificial intelligence makes it easier to access accurate data promptly.



Deputy Chief Minister Singh Deo stated, "Farmers, the backbone of our country, must receive timely agriculture-related information to reduce crop losses and enhance productivity. We are consistently taking appropriate steps to achieve this." Odisha is a leading state in utilizing digital technology for the

development of agriculture. Principal Secretary of the Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment Department, Dr. Arabinda Kumar Padhee, expressed that the use of such technology is paving the way for transforming a larger number of farmers into prosperous ones,

positioning Odisha at the forefront of this progress. AMNEX has previously provided technical support for initiatives like AgriStack-Digital Crop Survey and Farmers' Registry under the Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment Department.

Additionally, in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Agriculture, the organization is offering technical assistance for 33 crops. The meeting was attended by Director of Agriculture Shubham Saxena, Director of Horticulture Nikhil Pawan Kalyan and AMNEX representatives Parijat Kumar Das, Nitish Thakkar, Jayendra Puwar, and Anand Parija, among others.

BMC Gears Up For Civil Defence Drill To Counter Aerial Threats

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) is spearheading comprehensive preparations for a civil defence mock drill aimed at safeguarding lives and property during potential aerial attacks in a war-like scenario.

Under the leadership of BMC Commissioner Rajesh Prabhakar Patil, the initiative focuses on equipping residents with essential self-protection skills. Khordha District Collector Chanchal Rana conducted a thorough review of the preparations today at BMC's Integrated Command Control Centre. The drill, designed to simulate an enemy attack, will train citizens on safety measures, such as seeking shelter and responding swiftly



to emergencies. Rana held discussions with officials to ensure rapid response mechanisms and seamless communication systems during a crisis, emphasizing inter-agency coordination.

To support the public, a 24-hour control room has been established at the BMC office, with residents encouraged to contact 1929 for assistance. "Our goal is to ensure the public

is well-prepared and vigilant, adhering to government guidelines," Rana stated during the review.

He also conducted a video conference with medical, fire services, civil defence, and other departmental officers to align efforts for the drill. The preparations reflect Bhubaneswar's proactive

approach to civil defence amid heightened national security concerns. Key attendees included BMC Additional Commissioner Subhendu Kumar Sahu, Additional District Collector Rudranarayan Mahanty, Saflaymandit Pradhan, and Bhubaneswar Sub-Collector Manoranjan Sahu.

The mock drill underscores BMC's commitment to public safety, ensuring the city is ready to respond effectively to any potential threat.

FDP on preparing future managers to tackle emerging AI-driven scenario held at SOA

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The critical role of faculty in preparing future managers to navigate emerging risks and opportunities presented by AI technologies was stressed at an International Faculty Development Program (FDP) held recently at the Institute of Business and Computer Studies (IBCS), faculty of management sciences of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be University (SOA) here.

Ipsita Pradhan, Head of Enterprise Risk Banking, Financial Services Leader and Risk and Compliance Expert, Canara Bank, UK, was the resource person for the FDP. Pradhan, who works closely with the Chief Executive, Board Risk Committee and regulatory bodies to ensure international risk



management standards, delivered an insightful lecture shedding light on how AI was reshaping the risk management landscape across industries. She discussed real world case studies and provided actionable strategies for managing AI-related risks effectively.

The program was inaugurated by Prof. Bibhuti Bhushan Pradhan, Pro-Vice Chancellor and Registrar of SOA, who highlighted the growing importance of proactive risk

management in a rapidly evolving AI-driven environment. The inaugural keynote addresses were delivered by Prof. Ayasa Kanta Mohanty, Dean of IBCS and Prof. Manoranjan Dash, Associate Dean.

The FDP was coordinated by Dr. Bibhuti Bhushan Mishra, Associate Professor and Dr. Preeti Y. Shadangi, Assistant Professor of IBCS. Dr. Dhruti Sundar Sahoo, Associate Professor proposed the vote of thanks.

Youth Held With Brown Sugar Worth 26L in Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police on Tuesday arrested a youth and seized 263 grams of brown sugar valued at over Rs 26 lakh from the Labanagiri-Panchagaon Road under Airfield Police Station. The accused has been identified as Jyoti Krishna Samantray, a resident of Bomikhal area under Laxmisagar police station limits in Khordha district. Acting on a tip-off, an STF team conducted a raid in the area early in the morning. During the operation, the accused was apprehended and a significant quantity of brown sugar, along with other incriminating materials, was



recovered from his possession. According to reports, the accused failed to produce any valid documents for possessing the contraband and was subsequently arrested. He will be produced before the Court of the District

& Sessions Judge-cum-Special Judge at Khurda in Bhubaneswar. A case has been registered under Section 21(c) of the NDPS Act, 1985 (STF PS Case No. 10 dated 06.05.2025). Further investigation is underway.

Odisha's Go-Palan Yojana Gains Momentum With High-Yielding Cattle Induction

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): In a promising boost to Odisha's dairy sector, the state government's Go-Palan Yojana (GPY), launched under the Mukhyamantri Kamdhenu Yojana (MKY), has shown strong early success. Over the past three months, approximately 1,000 high milk-yielding cows have been inducted from outside the state, significantly enhancing local dairy productivity. The initiative, which supports farmers in

acquiring superior dairy breeds, has seen rapid progress, with cattle being brought in from outside the state—primarily from Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Tamil Nadu. The Go-Palan Yojana aims to transform the livelihoods of small-scale dairy farmers in the state by facilitating the procurement of cows that yield a minimum of 10 litres of milk per day, with a subsidy of up to 70% on the project cost. By engaging private suppliers



and enabling farmers to select cows of their choice, officials have ensured transparency and better outcomes for beneficiaries. The initiative is

being actively promoted at the highest level, with approval letters issued by the Minister of Fisheries & Animal Resources Development, Gokulananda Mallick, and Principal Secretary Suresh Kumar Vashishth during the recently held Matsya-Pranee Samavesh Odisha (MPSO)-2025. With high-quality cows now reaching remote areas, the program is gaining traction as a potential game-changer for Odisha's dairy

economy. The Go-Palan Yojana is not only registering a high rate of cow induction but is also witnessing faster subsidy disbursement, with district authorities releasing subsidies within 7-10 days of project completion. This swift execution is encouraging youth, cattle keepers, and livestock farming enthusiasts across the state to adopt dairy farming with greater confidence. One standout

example is Kandhamal district, which has become the first to successfully implement GPY projects for three beneficiaries—each of them women dairy farmers. The milestone highlights the scheme's inclusive vision, focusing on both economic development and gender equity. With high-yielding cows now reaching even remote areas, the Go-Palan Yojana is being seen as a potential game-changer in transforming Odisha's rural economy.

Health Secy Reviews Fire Safety In Govt Hospitals, Directs Measures To Ensure Patient Safety

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Health Secretary Aswathy S chaired a high-level meeting at Lok Seva Bhawan to review fire safety measures in government hospitals, ranging from Community Health Centres to medical colleges and hospitals, emphasising the importance of ensuring patient and staff safety.

During the review meeting, the Health Secretary, Aswathy S directed hospitals to prioritise fire safety in high-risk areas, including Operation Theatres, ICUs, SNCUs, and installations like CT scan and MRI machines. She emphasised safe electrical



connections, particularly with generators, to prevent short circuits. To enhance safety, it was decided that fire safety structures would be integrated into hospital building plans from the outset, eliminating the need for retrofitting later. Joint committees comprising fire officers, electrical inspectors,

engineers, and chief medical officers were tasked with inspecting government health facilities to identify fire safety gaps. They were directed to submit a detailed report with corrective measures and estimated plans within 15 days. Districts were instructed to implement necessary corrective

actions to obtain electrical and fire safety certificates. The state government has allocated approximately Rs. 300 crore to enhance fire safety in government health institutions. Secretary Ms. Aswathy assured districts that funds would be provided based on their corrective plans, emphasising timely completion.

To ensure ongoing safety, districts were directed to conduct regular mock fire drills with local fire officers, hold review meetings, and maintain electrical and fire safety

equipment. A state-level joint team will monitor progress through field visits. Mission Director Dr D Brundha, Managing Director Odisha State Medical Corporation Dr Pooma Tudu, Director Medical Education and Training Dr Santosh Kumar Mishra along with senior officers from Fire Service, Roads and Buildings, Ph.D, WATCO participated in deliberations. Special Secretary and Director Health Services Bijaya Kumar Mohapatra outlined the issues and updates for discussion.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar Email Address: semechircle104@gmail.com e-Procurement Notice- Bid Identification No.- ACEM/MDL-12/2025-26		A-124
1. Name of the Work	: Mechanical Gate Works	
2. No. of Works	: 01 (One)	
3. Category of executors	: SSI Units registered under DIC/ NSIC/ MSME for Irrigation Shutters / Hydro mechanical gates.	
4. Bid Identification No.	: ACEM/MDL-12/2025-26	
5. Estimated Cost	: Rs. 11,40,968/-	
6. Period of Completion	: 02 (Two) calendar months.	
7. Date & time of availability of bid documents in the Portal	: From dt.06.05.2025 (10.00 AM) to dt.19.05.2025 (5.30 PM)	
8. Last date/ time for receipt of bid In the Portal	: dt.19.05.2025 (up to 5.30 PM)	
9. Date and Place of opening of Bid	: dt.20.05.2025 (12.00 Noon onwards in the O/O the undersigned)	
10. Name of the Officer inviting bid	: Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar	
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in . Any further issue of Addenda/ Corrigenda/ Cancellation Notice shall be uploaded in the aforesaid website only.		
OIPR-32405/11/0065/		Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle Bhubaneswar

Goat herder scores A 1 over 90 in Matric Examination

Paralakhemundi, (DMC): From a goat grazing to reach A1: A daredevil stepping stone of Chandrasekhar Dalai from remote Gajapati district. Hardly savaged gripping of study atmosphere, where living with surrounding hills & eclipse better livelihood other than earning from patch of land, which still a cacophony to earn yearly food security. So disheartened with poverty & lost father Minaketan Dalai, Chandrasekhar young among 4 siblings had taciturn towards goat grazing.



Inhabitant of KMBhaliasahi of RUDayagiri block of Gajapati district reinforced to churn hapless livelihoods to support family. Here started a great beginning of his life to dream for bright career. Headmaster of KMBhaliasahi High School Ramachandra Dalbehera adored Chandrasekhar to reinstate towards study atmosphere. Though hardly thought to race towards brainstorming, Chandrasekhar still had

waywardness instead of giving attention towards studies. Still Headmaster built his patience to knock at that family's door to revive his study atmosphere. Destitute mother Babita Dalai & Chandrasekhar's uncle, too, sensitized on importance of studies time to time. Despite days scholar hope to attract Chandrasekhar on regular studies still rekindled. There a mission started by teaching staff led by Headmaster. At 5.30 am school door opened for extra

class. Teaching staff showed their belligerent efforts for 5 students including Chandrasekhar on regular attention. That indeed basked hope to carry on regular studies. Even teachers had to make notes for students. That feathered those creamy layers attention to cover those lessons. Day by day interest gripped among those few who nurtured their seriousness in studies.

Feeling smooth by guidance of those teachers like Biranchinarayan Mandal of Mathematics to carry forward all sizzles. Rest staff too well balanced on regular monitoring. Poverty seized out by pulling brain storming of Chandrasekhar. He forgot all his woes & weals of hazardous family rather joined on his mission towards studies. An aura of hope that reinstated hope at backward like Gajapati district which created miracle of 99.35 record results in HSC, as topper of state, an unbelievable stance & an incredible stand.

Senior Journalist Rajiv Lochan Ponda Passes Away, Journalistic Community in Mourning



Rayagada, (DMC): The sudden demise of senior journalist Rajiv Lochan Ponda has sent shockwaves through the journalistic community in Rayagada. Ponda, who was actively working in Rayagada, succumbed to a sudden health issue on April 30. According to reports, Ponda was traveling to Kolnara in his car when he suffered a sudden rise in blood pressure, leading to a loss of

control of the vehicle. The car veered off the road, and Ponda sustained a minor head injury. Despite initial treatment in Rayagada, his condition worsened due to a brain hemorrhage, and he was shifted to Maniupal Hospital in Bhubaneswar, where he breathed his last. Ponda's untimely demise has left a void in the journalistic fraternity. He was known for his amiable nature and was a beloved figure among his peers.

The Rayagada Press Union, of which he was an active member, has expressed deep sorrow at his passing, describing it as an irreparable loss. Ponda's mortal remains are expected to arrive at his residence near Mangala Temple in Rayagada at 5 pm, where final rites will be performed. The journalistic community and his acquaintances are mourning the loss of a dedicated professional and a cherished friend.

Adulteration of Milk at Tara sahi - joint enquiry by Sub - Collector & Food Inspector



Jagatsinghpur, (DMC): To-day joint enquiry made by Sub-Collector and Food Inspector, Jagatsinghpur at Tara sahi (Bali sahi) under Balikuda block about adulteration of milk. After regular allegation special team visited Tara sahi and found one mini chilling plant at Milk Collection centre. In charge of collection centre Ullas Das fled away from the spot. Sub-collector & Food Inspector found one mini chilling plan and 50 bags above milk powder from nearby room. This collection center supplies 1600 liters milk daily to OMFED chilling plant, Ambasal. Sample collected and sent for examination of adulteration of milk as stated by Food Inspector.

Green Paradip Trust felicitates 10th Topper

Paradip, (DMC): Dhruti Sundar Swain, a class 10 student of Paradip Saraswati Sishu Vidya Mandir, has topped the Jagatsinghpur district in the last matriculation examination by securing 95.5%, a maximum of 573 marks out of 600 marks. While this success has brought pride to the entire Paradip region, the student was felicitated by the leading volunteer organization 'Green Paradip Trust' formed by Paradip-based journalist at the Vidya Mandir premises on Tuesday morning.

The felicitation program was attended by the Principal of Sishu Vidya Mandir, Dharanidhar Parida and the father of the student, Dhananjay Swain along with the President of Green Paradip Trust, Rakesh Kumar Patnaik, Advisor Shukdev Jena, Sasanka Acharya, Sudhansu Nayak, Prasant Swain, Naran Behera, Vivekananda Rout, Rashmikiran Routray, Sanjay Rout, Birja Tripathy, Sanjay Senapati, Biraja Sethi, and Sangram Rout were prominently present.



Mok- Drill at Paradip on tomorrow at 4 PM

Jagatsinghpur, (DMC): After Terrorist attack at Pahle gaon, India getting ready for war against Pakistan. As per direction of Govt. Of India & State Govt 12 District of Odisha will start Mok- Drill to tackle emergency situation. In this regards Collector, SP, ADM of Jagatsinghpur called an emergency press-meet at Collector's chamber to-day at 2 PM. Giving information to Media Collector J. Sonal said that Paradip is more sensitive as major Paradip Port, IOCL, two Fertilizer Industries IFFCO & PPL with major pipelines are there.

Besides that from Mohanadi mouth to Devi Mouth 42 KM costal zone are more sensitive. For Costal Zone Sagar Mitra, Marine Police, Cost Guard, Fishery & Forest costal service are there and Indian Navy at Derp chana safe guard the coast. To-day after noon the place for mok-drill will decided after discussion with line department, CISF, Civil Defence and others. SP Bhabani Shankar Udgata said that, NCC, NSS, NGO's, Civil Defence will participate in Mok- Drill. After blowing of siren all will be allot but there is nothing to be panic. It is just a rehearsal to be allot.



Protest to arbitrary works of Sarpanch: Villagers made complaint with the Collector

Nuapada/Khariar Road, (DMC): The villagers of Dumerpani Gram Panchayat have made a complaint with the Collector Nuapada in the joint public grievances hearing camp against the Sarpanch & PEO on Monday.

In the leadership of Naib Sarpanch Kanti Sahu more than 40 villagers from Dumerpani Gram Panchayat went to the collector and submitted a complain letter against the Sarpanch and PEO of the Panchayat. As per the allegations, the Sarpanch and PEO are working all the development works of the panchayat as per their own wishes. The Naib Sarpanch and other members of the panchayat are being ignored. Even in the PMAY and Antyodaya Housing Scheme, the



beneficiaries are being selected as per their own will of the Sarpanch. Other members of the panchayat are fully neglected, said Kanti Sahu the Naib Sarpanch. Similarly, allegations of irregularities have been made in the formation of School Managing Committee (SMC) of Dumerpani School. The villagers have demanded a high-level

investigation from the administration. Kailash Pandey, Membai Majhi, Radhika Sahu, Tikeswar Sahu, Karan Sahu, Dumeswari Pandey, Dhaneswari Pandey, Bhagirathi Yadav, Tula Bai Pandey, Silestri Sahu along with more than 40 villagers from Dumerpani Gram Panchayat were present at the time of submitting complain letter.

Public hearing for setting up a beneficiation plant in Unchabali I&M mine

Keonjhar, (DMC): A public hearing has been held on Tuesday by the district administration to take the consent and view of the people of affected area for the assessment of impact on environment to be caused by establishment of a beneficiation plant in the lease area Unchabali Iron and Manganese mines in the Joda mining area.

The public hearing held under the chairmanship of Additional District Magistrate Ravindra Kumar Pradhan and Regional officer (RO), Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB), Keonjhar Prashant Kumar Kar present and heard the consent of the affected villagers. In the meeting, 40 villagers presented their views, while 14 gave their written opinions. In this, the villagers expressed their opinion and support the projects with placing some conditions and demands with the authorities. Among those, the main demands were to provide employment to local people



giving priority, education in the area, health, transportation, and street lighting in the villages. "In this plant, high-quality iron ore will be produced using new technology. The company has informed that 250 employees will be employed in this" said Debasish Manas Ranjan Sethy,

Mines manager Unchabali iron and Manganese mines. Company sources said that this mine, measuring 106.1127 hectares, was leased to M/s Indrani Patnaik in the year 1999 for 30 years. However, as per the new mining policy amendment, its lease period

has been extended till 2049. As now, low-grade iron ore is being extracted from this mine, which has no demand in the market. The company has made efforts to make the mine reuse with extracting suitable iron ore fines using morden technology and magnetic separation.

As a result, many people depending on this mine are facing the loss of their livelihood, company sources added. "The public hearing was held peacefully. Opinion of the public took" said Prashant Kumar Kar, RO, OSPCB.

War preparations have begun in Paradip

Paradip, (DMC): A special mock drill on the 7th May regarding will be organized on the instructions of the Union Home Ministry. A preparation meeting was organized at the Special Circuit House of Paradip on Tuesday. The District Magistrate and SP, along with the chief officers of all industrial establishments and various departmental officers, attended the said meeting.

The Union Home Ministry has directed the states to conduct mock drills to make the public aware. In this context, Sirens will be sounded at 12 sensitive places in Odisha. Ever since the terrorist attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir, tensions between India and Pakistan have been increasing. The Indian government has made it clear that revenge for the



Pahalgam attack will definitely be taken. In this context, a mock drill is going to be held in 244 districts of the country on May 7.

Full preparations have started in these districts from Tuesday i.e. today. The mock drill program will be conducted for a week in a phased manner. This mock drill will be held in coastal districts and urban areas. The siren will sound for the

mock drill at 4 pm. What to do if an enemy aircraft attacks will be informed. The siren will sound for about 5 minutes, the mock drill will start.

However, this is a routine event, so do not be afraid of it in any way, but in the interest and security of the country, the District Magistrate JS Sonal and Superintendent of Police Bhabani Sankar Udgata have appealed everyone to cooperate.

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Security Drills...

Defence Districts nationwide. This nationwide drill aims to evaluate and enhance the country's preparedness in responding to potential threats. In Odisha, the exercise will be conducted at 12 key locations, ensuring a thorough assessment of emergency response systems and protocols. The 12 locations in Odisha where the mock drill will be held include Balasore, Koraput, Bhubaneswar, Gopalpur, Hirakud, Paradip, Rourkela, Bhadrak, Dhenkanal, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara and Talcher. The decision is part of a nationwide Civil Defence Mock Drill initiative announced by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. The letter sent to all State and UT authorities directed that on 7th May 2025, a full-scale civil defence rehearsal be conducted in all 244 categorised Civil Defence Districts across India. The aim, as stated, is to enhance readiness and coordination at all administrative levels, down to the village. The Ministry specified that the drills are being held to assess and enhance operational efficacy, communication links with the Indian Air Force, civilian training, and response to hostile threats, particularly air raids. Odisha's drills are expected to closely mirror this national agenda. The announcement follows the April 22 attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, where 26 were killed in a terrorist ambush in which Pakistan-based terror outfits claimed responsibility for the assault. In response, India has given its armed forces a free hand, and civil defence mechanisms are being activated across the nation.

Heatwave Scorches...

Koraput (36.8°C), Dhenkanal (35.2°C), Bargarh (35.6°C), and Deogarh (34.2°C). Coastal towns such as Chandbali (37.0°C), Paradip (34.4°C), Kendrapara (34.4°C), Gopalpur (33.6°C), and Puri (34.8°C) also faced the brunt of the heat. The cooler spots included Daringbadi at 31.5°C and Nabarangpur at 33.5°C, offering little relief amid the widespread heatwave.

Pakistan asked 'tough...

conducted a training launch of a Fatah Series surface-to-surface missile with a range of 120 kilometres as part of the ongoing "Exercises Indus", Pakistan's efforts to internationalize the situation also failed. They were advised to sort out the issues bilaterally with India. Meanwhile, Dawn News has reported that water flows in the Chenab, recorded at the Marala head works, decreased from up to 35,000 cusecs on Sunday to about 3,100 cusecs on Monday morning. Chenab is very important for Pakistan's irrigation system, as its canals, including the UCC and BRB canals, irrigate a vast tract of agricultural land in Punjab. India had held the Indus Water treaty in abeyance following the Pahalgam attack and the shortage of water is seen as a likely fallout of that. In another setback for Pakistan, Lufthansa Airlines on Monday suspended operations via the Pakistani airspace, according to an official release of the German aviation group.

Supreme Court...

Justice Surya Kant then said, "Reservation in the country has become like train compartments, people who have got in don't want to let others come in. This is the principle of inclusivity. Governments are duty-bound to identify more classes. There are politically, economically and socially deprived people. Why should they not get the benefit (of reservation)? Only a few families and groups are getting the benefit," he added. The court will hear the matter again later in the day. Interestingly, the train compartment metaphor was used by Justice BR Gavai, who takes over as Chief Justice later this month, in his judgment that said the sub-classification of SC/ST categories is permissible and states can create these sub-classifications. "I find that the attitude of the categories in the Presidential List opposing such a sub-classification is that of a person in the general compartment of the train. Firstly, the persons outside the compartment struggled to get into the general compartment.

Remembrance meeting held for the demise of former vice president of PTOA



Paradip, (DMC): Former Vice President of Paradip Truck Owners Association (PTOA) Sarada Prasanna Rout passed away in a road accident on last 26th April. On Tuesday, a remembrance and memorial meeting was organized at the Truck Owners Association office premises in Paradip under the supervision of Association Advisor Ajay Kumar Sahu. Paradip Truck Owners Association President Biranchi Narayan Parida, secretary Rajesh Mohanty, Asst. Secretary Akshay Kumar Swain, Vice President Pradipta Gahan, Suryakant Parija, Smritiranjana Samantaray, Parvat Nayak and Advisor Madan Mohan and executive members Ambika Prasad Mohapatra, Bichitra Jena, Khageswar Lenka and other members were present. They discussed and highlights on Sarada Babu's contribution and his benevolent, friendly and strong-minded personality. Praying their deepest tribute to him, all a members saying that he will always be in the hearts of all truck owners of the association.

Cricket Extravaganza " Annex Cup- 2025" inaugurated



Jagatsinghpur, (DMC): The 18 th All India Night T- 20 Cricket Tournament-2025 inaugurated to-day evening by Local MLA cum Chief Advisor Amarendra Das. SP, Jagatsinghpur Bhawani Shankar Udgata, ADM, Jyoti Shankar Roy, Chairman Municipality, Tahasildar, Ex- Zilla parisad President, Principal SVM Collage, Executive Officer Municipality joined as guest and address the gathering. Meeting Presided by President of Organising Hindustan Sporting Club Mr. Susant Ranjan Swain.

Night T-20 Cricket Extravaganza by Hindusthan Spoting at SVM College ground and participation of cricketing stars of all over Odisha & out side will encourage the youth mass of Jagatsinghpur. To-day's inaugural match will played between Bapuji Cricket Club, BBSR and Solar Cricket Club Cuttack.

India & Pakistan Have Done to Hurt Each Other Since Kashmir Terror Attack



New Delhi, (HS) : The already-frosty ties between neighbouring India and Pakistan have nosedived to a new low after the religiously-targeted terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, in which 26 tourists, including one foreign national were shot dead last month. INDIA'S WARNING - After one of the worst terror attacks on civilians in Jammu and Kashmir in decades, India has taken a slew of measures, mostly diplomatic and administrative so far. New Delhi has also pledged to "hunt down" terrorists and their backers to the "ends of the Earth" and punish them "beyond imagination", suggesting a likely covert, kinetic, or military response to follow at a "time and place of choosing". To this, Pakistan, which has been practicing "cross-border terror" and has a history of financing and fostering terrorists in the country, as well as regions under its illegal occupation, has responded with whatever Islamabad and Rawalpindi (military headquarters) could muster up. The terror attack in Kashmir, in which 26 civilians were killed after being asked to prove their allegiance to Islam, came days after an inflammatory and communal speech by Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir. The terror attack was claimed by The Resistance Front, a shadow arm of the globally banned Pakistani terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba or LeT. WATER - India's first announcement after the attack with stern diplomatic measures against Pakistan was to put the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty in "abeyance" till such time that "Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism." India's decision to suspend the over six-decade-old water-sharing treaty, which has survived three wars - 1965, 1971, and 1999 - reflects the depths of New Delhi's frustration with Islamabad over Pakistan's use of terrorism as an "instrument of state policy". Under the agreement, waters of the Indus river and its tributaries - Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab, and Jhelum are to be shared between India and Pakistan, wherein water from the eastern three rivers would be used by India, while waters of the western three rivers would be shared with Pakistan. Technically, India being the upper riparian State, has rights over all six rivers, but on friendly terms, India had agreed to share the waters with Pakistan, where the natural resource is scarce. That is now put on hold indefinitely. Pakistan, which is heavily dependent on the water for its hydropower and irrigation, has said any attempt to stop or divert its flow will be considered an "act of war".

Gaganyaan Mission to be Held in First Quarter of 2027: ISRO Chief

New Delhi, (HS) : The launch of India's maiden human space flight -- Gaganyaan -- has been pushed to the first quarter of 2027, nearly five years later than the original schedule as it traces to ace technologies for such complex projects. The first uncrewed mission of the Gaganyaan project is expected to be launched later this year, which will be followed by two more similar missions in 2026, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman V Narayanan said at a press conference. "The first crewed mission is targeted for the first quarter of 2027," V Narayanan said and added ISRO would send a half-humanoid robot -- Vyommitra -- as part of the uncrewed mission before sending astronauts to low-Earth orbit. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the Gaganyaan project during his Independence Day address in 2018 and set a target of 2022 for achieving India's maiden human space flight. The project has run into several delays, partly due to the Covid pandemic that affected the training of astronauts, and complexities of mastering the crucial technologies required for the mission.

India rejects OIC statement on Pahalgam terror attack as 'absurd'



OIC's statement on the attack as "absurd" and said it was made at Pakistan's behest. "The OIC statement, issued at the behest of Pakistan, is absurd in refusing to recognise the facts of the Pahalgam terrorist attack and its cross-border linkages," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "This is yet another attempt by Pakistan, a country that has long engaged in cross-border terrorism, to manipulate and misguide the OIC group to issue a self-serving statement," he said. "We reject the OIC's interference on matters that are internal to India," Jaiswal added. According to the state-run Anadolu Agency of Turkey, which is part of the OIC since its establishment, the statement also said that India's "unfounded allegations against the Islamic Republic of Pakistan" were the factor behind escalating tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad. OIC further stated that the accusations by India risk exacerbating an already volatile situation, and reiterated its "principled position against, and condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomsoever and wherever." attempts to associate any country, race, religion, culture or nationality with terrorism." The tension between India and Pakistan rose following the April 22 terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, which killed 26 people, including tourists. Following the Pahalgam attack, India has taken strong countermeasures against Pakistan for its support of cross-border terrorism. India decided to hold the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 in abeyance until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism and closes the integrated Attari Check Post.

New Delhi, (HS) : India on Tuesday hit out at the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for refusing to recognise cross-border linkages to the Pahalgam terror attack. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) described the

MHA conducts key review meeting ahead of massive mock drill Identifies 19 'top priority' sites out of 250 districts

New Delhi, (HS) : The government has identified over 250 specially designated 'civil defence districts' across the country having sensitive installations like nuclear plants, military bases, refineries and hydroelectric dams, for the nationwide mock drill planned for Wednesday.

Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan on Tuesday chaired a key review meeting through video conferencing with chief secretaries of the states and the Union Territories (UTs) to finalise protocols for the massive mock drill conducted amid escalating tensions with Pakistan in the aftermath of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack.

The meeting was attended by chief secretaries and heads of civil defence from across the states besides officials from key Central forces and agencies including Directors General of Civil Defence and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). Officials said during the meeting, the participants identified "loopholes" in the defence mechanism. "We reviewed preparedness. Loopholes have been identified," a senior official of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) told. The state officials have been asked to involve students of educational institutions, employees of government and private organisations, hospital staff, railway and metro officials, besides uniformed personnel of the police, paramilitary and defence forces, while conducting the mock drills, the sources said. According to sources, officials have been informed that the areas having a cantonment, refinery or a nuclear plant should be



given special consideration as 'civil defence districts' depending on the requirement and exigency. A senior official said, "Such districts are designated by the respective state authorities, and we believe, the mock drills will be carried out in over 250 such civil defence districts across the country." The MHA had on Monday issued an advisory directing all states and UTs to conduct coordinated civil defence exercises on May 7. These drills will cover all of India's over 250 designated civil defence districts, many of which have been identified as vulnerable to various threats, including potential wartime scenarios. According to sources, out of the 250 sites, 19 have been identified as to be given 'top priority' in Wednesday's drill. The main objective of the exercise is to evaluate and enhance the preparedness of civil defence machinery in the face of any potential hostile attacks or emergencies. The mock drill will simulate a war-like situation and is expected to include the

operationalisation of air raid warning systems, including the sounding of sirens, coordinated responses from local emergency services, and public safety drills. "The idea is to prepare the nation and its administrative framework for contingencies that could arise in a hostile environment. The civil defence drill will be the first of its kind in decades and will test both infrastructure and human response across multiple regions simultaneously," an official said. This is the first such exercise since 1971. Notably, no such national-level civil defence drills were carried out even during the 1999 Kargil conflict (Operation Vijay). Officials stressed the importance of public cooperation, with local authorities expected to issue detailed advisories on how residents in vulnerable zones should respond during the drill. State disaster response forces, health departments, local police, and district administrations will all participate in the exercise. The backdrop to this drill - growing tension on the

western border - underscores the urgency. The April 22 attack in Pahalgam, in which several security personnel and civilians were killed, has intensified concerns over cross-border terrorism and the possibility of further escalations.

While the government has not made any official link between the mock drill and the current geopolitical climate, the timing of the exercise has raised eyebrows among analysts and defence observers. "This is a clear message that India is not taking any threat lightly. While it's a routine preparedness measure on paper, the scale and timing of the drill are clearly in response to the deteriorating regional security scenario," a senior retired military officer noted. As India prepares for the May 7 drill, authorities are urging citizens not to panic, assuring them that the exercises are strictly precautionary and designed to improve national resilience.

Key features of the proposed exercise: Operationalisation of air raid warning siren Operationalisation of hotline/radio communication links with Indian Air Force Activation and manning of control rooms/shadow control rooms Training of civilians, students etc on civil defence aspects to protect themselves in event of hostile attack Activation of civil defence services, especially warden services, firefighting, rescue service, depot, etc Provision of black out measures Provision for early camouflaging of vital installations Updation of CD plan and its rehearsal Updation of evacuation plan and its rehearsal Cleaning bunkers, trenches, etc

Police baton-charge TRE-3 aspirants protesting near CM's residence in Patna over delay in results

PATNA, (HS) : Police on Tuesday used baton charge to disperse a group of job aspirants protesting outside Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's official residence, demanding the release of supplementary results for the Teacher Recruitment Examination (TRE-3). Several protestors claimed they were injured in the police lathi-charge and warned of intensifying their agitation if the government failed to meet their demands. The TRE-3 aspirants said they had been protesting for the past four months, but had yet to receive a positive response from the authorities. The situation escalated when the protestors, holding placards and banners, allegedly refused to vacate the prohibited area near the Chief Minister's residence despite repeated instructions from police officials. They instead raised slogans against the state government and the Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC), which conducted the examination. Some protestors reportedly advanced towards the main gate of the Chief Minister's residence, prompting security personnel to intervene and disperse them. Police later used force to clear the crowd, leading to brief chaos in the prohibited zone. The situation was brought under control following the police action. Deepa Singh, a protestor from Siwan, criticised the state government for not releasing the supplementary results of TRE-3. "We are being treated like anti-social elements. We were holding a peaceful sit-in outside the CM's residence, but the police used force, injuring many," she told reporters. Madan Prasad, a resident of Vaishali district, said they had been protesting at the Gardaniabagh dhama site for over three months. He claimed that a delegation had earlier met Education Minister Sunil Kumar, who promised to consider their demands, but no action followed. "The TRE-3 aspirants acted out of sheer desperation," he said.

Train compartment those inside don't want others to come in: SC

New Delhi, (HS) : The Supreme Court on Tuesday compared reservation in the country with a train and said those who enter the compartment "don't want others to come in." A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh made the remarks while hearing a plea opposing the other Backwards Class (OBC) reservation in Maharashtra local body elections. Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for petitioner Mangesh Shankar Sasane, submitted that Maharashtra government's Jayant Kumar Bantia-led commission gave 27 per cent reservation to OBCs in the local body elections without actually ascertaining if they were politically backward. Justice Kant turned to Sankaranarayanan, "The thing is, in this country, the reservation business has become like a railway. Those who have entered the compartment they don't want anyone else to enter. This is the whole game. That is precisely the game of the petitioner also." Sankaranarayanan said compartments were being "added at the back also" and submitted political backwardness was distinct from social and educational backwardness, and the OBCs couldn't be automatically presumed to be politically backward. "Within the OBCs, politically backward and socially backward classes should be identified for the purpose of reservations," he said. Justice Kant said when one follows the principle of inclusivity, states were bound to identify more classes. "There will be social backward class, politically backwards class, and economically backward classes. Why should they be deprived of the benefit? Why should it be confined to one particular family or group?" he added.

From Blackouts to Taking Shelter: How War Prep Impacts Life of Civilians

New Delhi, (HS) : The country is preparing for an unprecedented civil defence security drill tomorrow to "train civilians and students for effective civil defence in the event of a hostile attack." The order came at a time when tensions between India and Pakistan are at their peak following the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 civilians were shot dead.

The last such drill took place in 1971 when India and Pakistan went to war, and the latter was split into two, and Bangladesh was formed. The armies of the two countries faced each other again in Kargil in 1999 and during Operation Parakram in 2001-2002, when India mobilised its troops toward the International Border and the LoC after the Parliament attack planned by terrorists operating out of Pakistan. When a threat of war looms over a country, the impact is felt not just by the security forces but also by civilians. There cannot be a knee-jerk reaction to an enemy attack. The Centre has outlined measures for civil defence in India, detailing how people should be trained to respond to an attack. A 2003 document published by the Directorate General Civil Defence outlines general principles of civil defence - A concept that started in 1962 during the India-China war. During the 1971 drill, civilians

were trained to protect themselves from air raids - a threat that seemed imminent because in 1965 Pakistan attacked Indian Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) like Pathankot, Ambala, Agra, Adampur, and Halwara. People were trained to take shelter in bunkers, how to dig trenches, and find a secure, fortified location to protect themselves from enemy bombing. A threat to water supply, public health, sanitation, and essentials is imminent, especially in areas near the conflict zones. The document calls for "Maintenance or restoration of a safe water supply and temporary measures of rendering water safe for drinking purposes and other essential uses." A possibility of water shortage is likely primarily due to damage to supply lines and their use in firefighting operations. "Adequate food inspection during an emergency, especially the inspection of emergency kitchens and canteens. Prevention of epidemics by mass inoculation."

When a threat of war looms over civilian areas, there's an impact on the movement of traffic, with restrictions on the use of lights in the evening. During the 1962 Indo-China war, 1965 and 1971 India-Pakistan war, there was a complete blackout in big cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and border cities. The 2003 document details



how lights on cars and other vehicles must be covered to aid in the blackout. "All lights capable of throwing a beam, carried on a motor vehicle, shall be screened," it says and lays down three methods. The first is by passing dry brown paper over the glass, one thickness on the lower half, and two thicknesses on the upper half -- this means a faint light will be emitted from the lower part of the headlamp." Before the start of the Second World War, Britain started preparing civilians for war from the 1930s, when Hitler came to power in Germany. German bombing raids were inevitable, poisonous gas could have been used against civilians

and between 1938 and 1939, over 44 million gas masks were distributed to people. From 1 September 1939, 'Blackout' was enforced. Curtains, cardboard and paint were used to prevent light escaping from houses, offices, factories or shops, which might be used by enemy bombers to locate their targets. Household holders could be fined if they did not comply. In Israel, the 1951 Civil Defence Law mandates the construction of bomb shelters in every home, apartment complex. For decades, Israelis have been trained to quickly respond to air raid sirens. During the Lebanon War of 1982, thousands of Israelis spent a long time in shelters.

Even in Ukraine, civil defence, despite its impact on regular movement, access to healthcare, water and other essentials, the Ukrainian government has ensured that digitalisation of public services has allowed the authorities and other providers of critical services to function adequately throughout the war. This has helped people access financial institutions like banks and ATMs to buy essentials, and the continuation of services like healthcare, education, etc.

Civil defence is essentially the defence of citizens by citizens, but a threat of an attack has a psychological impact on the population. During the 1971 war, Bombay was a strategic and tactical target for Pakistan and also the headquarters of the Western Naval Command. In an article for Deccan Herald, Michael Patrao, who was in primary school in 1971, writes, "There used to be mock drills in my school, St Anthony's High School, Santacruz, located not very far from the airport, a potential target. We were instructed to rush into the church when the siren (schoolbell) was sounded...On hearing the mock drill siren, we used to rush to the church." A video of an air raid drill from Mumbai showed people getting off a BEST bus and covering their heads when an air raid siren was sounded. Many took shelter in nearby structures.

M R Narayan Swamy, a veteran journalist, writes, "In 1971, L-shaped trenches had been dug outside our two-room government flats in Netaji Nagar, in south Delhi, so that people could take shelter in the event of a Pakistani air attack." The threat triggers an increased rate of anxiety and uncertainty. In Israel, at least two generations of citizens have grown up experiencing war and hiding in bunkers. Even for the Palestinians, since 1948, they have faced the brunt of war. Since 2023, thousands of Gazans have died and may have been displaced due to Israel's operation to finish Hamas. A report by the Council on Foreign Relations, "One in five people living in active or recent war zones has depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia. Trauma-induced mental health problems can even be passed down generations." In Ferozepur, Punjab, a blackout drill in the cantonment area was conducted last Sunday, reminding people of the 1971 war when the district was under attack by Pakistan. The drill is planned across 244 civil defence districts, and the focus will be on border districts and strategic locations. The security drill will help people prepare to act quickly and effectively during real emergencies.

UNSC Holds Closed Consultation on India, Pak Situation; President Sekeris Calls It Productive

United Nations, (H.S): The Security Council met in a closed session on the tension between India and Pakistan, and its President Evangelos Sekeris described it afterwards as a "productive meeting". As he left the meeting on Monday, he told reporters, "The Security Council is always helpful in such efforts" to de-escalate. "It is the responsibility of the Council".

"It was a productive meeting and helpful", he said. Since the meeting was a closed consultation, its proceedings are secret without official records. Assistant Secretary-General Mohamed Khaled Khari, who briefed the meeting, said on his way out that all want de-escalation. Asked how he viewed it, he said, "Situation is volatile", and would not elaborate. Russia's Deputy Permanent Representative Anna Evstigneeva, who attended the meeting, said, "We hope for de-escalation". Sekeris convened the



meeting at the request of Pakistan's Permanent Representative Asim Iftikhar Ahmad. Ahmad called for a closed consultation because countries that are not members of the Council are not allowed to participate in it under Council procedures. That effectively shut out India, while Pakistan, as a current elected member, attended. Before the meeting, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the

situation was at a "boiling point" and asked the two countries to "step back from the brink". "It is also essential - especially at this critical hour - to avoid a military confrontation that could easily spin out of control", he said. Condemning "strongly" the terrorist massacre of 26 people in Pahalgam last month, he said, "I understand the raw feelings following the awful terror attack". The Resistance Front, an affiliate

of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Tayiba, owned responsibility for the terrorist attack. Speaking to reporters after the consultation, Ahmad "categorically" denied India's charge that Pakistan was involved in the attack. He vacillated between militancy and conciliation. He referred to Kashmir as a disputed territory welling with mass discontent that is at the root of the problem with India, rather than terrorism, while also offering cooperation with India.

We are fully prepared to defend our sovereignty", he said." We reiterate our commitment to peaceful cooperative relations with all our neighbours, including India, [and] we remain open to dialogue", he added."In view of the gravity of the situation, the calls of dialogue and de-escalation and peaceful resolution of disputes as we also heard from the Council members today are most pertinent", Ahmad said.

Gabonese President Appoints New Government



Libreville, (H.S): Gabonese President Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema has appointed a new 30-member government headed by Alexandre Barro Chambrier, Vice-President of the government. According to the presidential decree by the Secretary-General of the Presidency, Guy Rossatanga Rignault, the new government has three ministers of state. Henri Claude Oyima, who leads the BGFIBANK group, has been appointed minister of state in charge of the economy, the budget, public accounts, debt and the fight against the high cost of living, reports Xinhua news agency.

Ulrich Manfoumbi, former spokesperson for the Committee for Transition and Restoration of Institutions - the military body that led the country during the transition - has been named minister of state responsible for transport and merchant marine. Camelia Ntountoume-Leclercq retains her position as minister of state for national education. Regis Onanga Ndiaye remains as foreign minister, and General Brigitte Onkanowa retains her

position as minister of national defence. Sosthene Nguema Nguema has been appointed Minister of Petroleum. The government includes 10 women, accounting for 30 per cent of its members. Among them is Louise Mvono,

who previously worked at the World Bank office in Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo, and has now been appointed minister of planning and perspective. Former presidential candidate Zenaba Gninga Channing has joined the government as minister of entrepreneurship and small and medium enterprises. Earlier on Monday, Alexandre Barro Chambrier, 66, has been appointed vice-president of the

government by presidential decree. This position replaces that of the prime minister, abolished under the new Gabonese constitution adopted by referendum on November 16, 2024. The vice president of the government is primarily responsible for coordinating government actions.

Seraphin Moundounga, former president of the Economic, Social, and Environmental Council, was promoted to vice-president of the republic, replacing Joseph Owondault Berre. Brice Clotaire Oligui Nguema, previously head of the transitional government, was elected president on April 12 with 94.85 per cent of the vote.

Three Dead, Nine Missing After Suspected Smuggling Boat Capsizes Off US San Diego Coast

Los Angeles, (H.S): At least three people were confirmed dead and nine others remain missing after a suspected smuggling boat capsized and washed ashore near San Diego, California according to authorities. Multiple agencies, including the US Coast Guard (USCG), responded on Monday morning to reports of an overturned vessel off the coast of Del Mar, Xinhua news agency reported. The panga-style boat - a small, open, outboard-powered fishing vessel - was found just north of Torrey Pines

State Beach and is believed to have been used in a human smuggling operation, according to media reports. The vessel was carrying at least 16 people, including at least two children, according to the USCG. A survivor informed first responders that nine individuals, possibly including one or two children, were still missing. Three bodies were found on the beach, according to a spokesperson from California State Parks. Authorities said four other people received cardiopulmonary resuscitation at the

scene, and three were transported to a hospital. The Encinitas Fire Department reported that three of the injured sustained mild to moderate injuries, while one person was in critical condition. Search and rescue operations are ongoing off the coast of Del Mar. The USCG is coordinating with multiple agencies, with the involvement of San Diego Fire-Rescue helicopters, a 45-foot Coast Guard response boat, and lifeguards using rescue boats and personal watercraft.

2 Killed, 42 Injured in Israeli Retaliatory Airstrikes on Yemen's Port City: Health Authorities

Sanaa, (H.S): Israeli warplanes conducted dozens of airstrikes on Yemen's Hodeidah province, killing at least two people and wounding 42 others, according to health authorities run by the Houthi militant group. The strikes caused significant damage to infrastructure, including a port, airport, and factories, escalating regional tensions a day after the militant group claimed a missile attack near Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport, which resulted in eight injuries, Xinhua news agency reported.



port, including cargo-handling facilities, and several private factories were also hit. Plumes of smoke were seen rising over the city, and residents described the attack as paralysing daily life. In a statement, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) confirmed the operation, saying approximately 20 warplanes struck Houthi targets along Yemen's western coast using 50 precision-guided munitions.

The targets, the IDF said, included what it called the "infrastructure of the Houthi terror regime." The mission was conducted about 1,700 km from Israel. The Houthi group claimed the attacks on Hodeidah were carried out jointly by the US and Israel. The IDF statement made

no mention of US involvement. The IDF said the strikes were "in response to repeated assaults by the Houthi regime against the State of Israel," referencing recent missile and drone attacks. The strikes on Hodeidah directly impacted the port, which serves as a critical lifeline for goods, medicine, and fuel to millions of people living in Houthi-controlled areas.

These attacks threaten to further disrupt the already fragile humanitarian situation in Yemen. Separately, Al-Masirah and local sources reported at least 20 US airstrikes on Monday targeting Houthi-controlled sites in the capital Sanaa, as well as in the northern provinces of Marib and Al-Jawf. There was no immediate

comment from US Central Command. The escalation follows a Houthi-claimed missile strike on Sunday near Ben Gurion Airport, outside Tel Aviv. Eight people were wounded, and airport operations were briefly halted. Israeli officials acknowledged that missile defense systems had failed to intercept the projectile despite multiple attempts.

The Houthis said the strike was retaliation for Israel's military campaign in Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pledged a forceful response, including against what he called the group's backers in Iran. The Houthis, who control much of northern Yemen including Sanaa and Hodeidah, have repeatedly launched missiles and drones toward Israel and Red Sea shipping lanes in recent months. They say the attacks are in solidarity with Palestinians and will continue until Israel ends its offensive in Gaza and allows unfettered humanitarian access.



Colombo, (H.S): Sri Lanka on Tuesday held the local government elections, following a seven-year hiatus and the first of its kind conducted after National People's Power (NPP), led by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, came to power last year.

Out of the total of 341 local bodies, the elections are being conducted for 339 bodies across the island nation, marking a significant milestone in the country's democratic process, according to local media reports. Sri Lanka's ruling party, the NPP, the main opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya, the United National Party, and the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna are contesting the election. Over 65,000 Sri Lankan police officers have been deployed for election duties to maintain law and

order. Local media reports further suggest that a record of 75,589 candidates, representing 49 recognised political parties and 257 independent groups are contesting in this year's elections. Additionally, a total of 17,156,338 registered voters are eligible to cast their ballots at 13,759 polling centres established nationwide.

Dissanayake, as the NPP leader, actively campaigned for the elections, hoping to break the grip of traditional parties at the local levels by taking control of the local bodies, according to local media reports. Last year, he achieved grand success in both parliamentary and presidential elections of the country, and therefore challenge for him in this local election would be whether he will be able to drive home the point that

voters are still with him. Meanwhile, the main opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) is under fierce pressure to deliver better at this election, as they suffered defeat at the last two national elections.

Another opposition party, the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna, led by Namal Rajapaksa, which was once the dominant political force in the country, also actively campaigned to bag as many votes as possible, Sri Lanka's leading newspaper, Daily Mirror, reported. The Election Commission of Sri Lanka and relevant authorities urged all eligible voters to resort to peaceful and democratic methods while exercising their rights and contributing to the advancement of local governance across the island nation.

Pakistan's Military Dictatorship And Its Impact On Democracy

News Delhi, (H.S): Pakistan's protracted struggle with democratic governance resembles less a narrative of political maturation and more a cautionary example of institutional domination. Though envisioned as a republican state by its founding leadership in 1947, Pakistan has consistently fallen short in establishing a truly democratic system. The primary actor behind this failure is widely recognised but seldom challenged: the Pakistan military. Over successive decades, it has embedded itself within the core of political authority, persistently undermining civilian leadership and weakening democratic institutions from within.

At present, Pakistan functions, at most, as a hybrid regime-a superficial civilian administration concealing a deeply embedded military establishment. Whenever public dissatisfaction with this setup intensifies, the military has repeatedly demonstrated its capacity to rebrand itself as the essential guardian of national security. It habitually relies on familiar narratives-Indian hostility, internal subversion, or foreign plots-frequently amplified through compliant media and affiliated non-state actors, to legitimise its dominant position. This dynamic was

evident when Army Chief General Asim Munir began employing political dog-whistles ahead of the April 22 Pahalgam attack targeting tourists in Jammu and Kashmir, anticipating a forceful Indian reaction that the military elite could exploit to consolidate public support. This militarised approach to governance stands in stark contrast to the political ideals of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's founding father, who envisaged an Islamic republic grounded in democratic principles, institutional probity, and socio-political equity.

Significantly, in his address to the 5th and 6th Ack Ack Regiments of the Pakistan Army-formations previously part of the British Indian Army-on 21st February 1948, Jinnah urged the military to uphold the values of "Islamic democracy, Islamic social justice, and the equality of manhood" within the geographical bounds of the newly established state. However, the very institution Jinnah aimed to redirect soon deviated from its intended path. While his landmark address to the Constituent Assembly remains celebrated as a clear expression of his ideological vision for Pakistan, it was largely disregarded by the Pakistan Army, whose gradual incursions into the political sphere steadily undermined the



constitutional values championed by Jinnah. This drift towards militarised governance began alarmingly within Pakistan's first decade, thereby derailing the democratic ambitions that had initially driven the post-colonial nation-building endeavour. It was this gradual consolidation of praetorian tendencies-evident in the steady erosion of constitutionalism and civilian authority-that ultimately led to the full-scale military coup of 1958. In this initial constitutional breakdown, President Iskandar Mirza conspired with General Ayub Khan to annul the 1956 Constitution, thereby dismantling the fledgling democratic framework. Ironically, Mirza was soon deposed by the very military machinery he had empowered,

ushering in a prolonged period of authoritarian military rule. This foundational rupture not only entrenched the military's hegemonic role within Pakistan's political system but also triggered a pattern of systemic instability that eventually led to the state's fragmentation with the secession of East Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. Since that time, the military's hold has only strengthened. Over the years, it has progressively extended its influence-not only within the political realm but also deep into the country's economic structures. The regime of General Zia-ul-Haq during the 1980s serves as a defining example. His tenure was characterised not only by the consolidation of military authority but also by a forceful

Islamisation drive that reconfigured Pakistan's societal landscape and further solidified the military's role as an ideological arbiter. By 2020, the Pakistan military's economic empire had evolved into a vast, multi-sector corporate entity, with an estimated value exceeding \$20 billion. Widely recognised for its pervasive presence across the economic landscape, the military's commercial and industrial reach spans the manufacture of basic goods-ranging from sewing needles to bottled water-as well as major infrastructural projects, including roadworks and property development.

A 2016 submission to the Pakistani Senate revealed that the armed forces oversee more than 50 business enterprises, encompassing ventures such as Askari Cement, Askari Bank, Fauji Meat, Askari Sugar Mills, shopping centres, and residential housing schemes. These operations are chiefly managed through four institutional bodies: the Fauji Foundation, Bahria Foundation, Shaheen Foundation, and the Army Welfare Trust (AWT). The consolidation and maintenance of this extensive politico-economic apparatus has emerged as a core institutional priority for the military establishment. As a result, the continuation of its hegemonic

control over civilian governance is no longer justified merely through conventional security arguments, but is now intrinsically linked to the protection of its substantial material interests and ideological influence-often to the detriment of democratic consolidation and civilian ascendancy. The cumulative impact of this militarised political structure has been the consistent undermining of civilian authority, which has persistently struggled to attain independent legitimacy or institutional continuity within Pakistan's governance system.

As a result, any civilian political figure whose rise threatens the entrenched dominance of the military establishment has routinely been sidelined through coercive or extrajudicial measures. A notable example of this pattern was the judicial execution of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1979-a politically motivated act following his removal in the 1977 military coup-triggered by his escalating popular support and increasing resistance to military oversight. This historical precedent echoes in the state's ongoing punitive campaign against former Prime Minister Imran Khan, whose present imprisonment is broadly viewed as retaliation for his overt challenge to the military's

entrenched influence within the political domain. These recurrent patterns of suppression underscore the military's persistent aversion to political independence and its structural compulsion to preserve hegemonic supremacy over democratic institutions. These structural imperatives collectively sustain the Pakistan Army's ongoing opposition to any meaningful process of democratic consolidation, thereby solidifying its authoritarian control over the state machinery. As a result, the system is designed not for democracy but for containment.

The continuation of this civil-military imbalance is not incidental; rather, it is systematically upheld through a complex interplay of institutional self-preservation, economic interests, and ideological dominance. Civilian institutions are permitted to operate only insofar as they do not challenge the primacy of the military. This is not governance; it is institutionalised authoritarianism cloaked in a democratic guise. From this cycle demands more than temporary outrage or symbolic acts of opposition. Removing the military from the political sphere requires a far more ambitious approach: a sustained, organised, and credible political movement-one capable of confronting both the ideological and material underpinnings of military rule.

MP Expects to Procure 85 Lakh Tonnes of Wheat This Rabi Season



Bhopal, (H.S): Madhya Pradesh is poised to surpass its anticipated wheat procurement target, expecting to secure 85 lakh metric tonnes (MT) against the initially projected 80 lakh MT. As of Tuesday, the state has already procured 76 lakh MT from 8.76 lakh registered farmers, according to the Minister for Urban Development.

The procurement process, which includes weighing exclusively from registered farmers, will continue for an additional five days. The state commenced its wheat procurement drive on March 15, offering a price of Rs 2,600 per quintal across its 4,000

designated procurement centres." Last year, we procured 40 lakh metric tonnes of wheat from 5.85 lakh farmers in Madhya Pradesh," the minister stated. He further noted that updated figures were expected soon, with procurement already reaching 81 lakh MT as of Tuesday.

The government now anticipates achieving a total of 85 lakh MT in this season's yield. Additionally, the minister announced that Rs 16,472 crore has been disbursed to farmers so far in payment for their produce. To streamline operations, the state government registered farmers via SMS notifications and provided the option to enroll

from home through a dedicated web or mobile application. Farmers could also register at facility centres located within Gram Panchayats, Janpad Panchayats, and Tehsil offices. If the anticipated volume is fully realised in mandis, farmers in Madhya Pradesh stand to receive a total support price of Rs 19,400 crore, along with an additional bonus of Rs 1,400 crore. The Central Government has also revised the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for wheat, increasing it by Rs 150 per quintal for the Rabi marketing season of 2025-26, bringing it to Rs 2,425 per quintal.

However, Madhya Pradesh will offer an elevated procurement price of Rs 2,600 per quintal, which includes an additional financial assistance of Rs 175 per quintal. Madhya Pradesh grows some low-irrigated high-yield varieties like Sharbati and Durum in the low rain fed area of Malwa plateau in districts of Sehore, Ujjain, Narmadapuram (erstwhile Hoshangabad), Harda, Raisen and Dewas. Among all these varieties, Sharbati is the most preferred variety as it contains high protein.

Moody's Pegs India's GDP Growth At 6.3 Per Cent For 2025

New Delhi, (H.S): Moody's Ratings on Tuesday pegged India's GDP growth at 6.3 per cent for 2025 and expects the economy to pick up momentum in 2026 to record a 6.5 per cent growth rate. Moody's forecast is in line with the IMF outlook, which sees India as the only major economy in the world to record an over 6 per cent growth rate in 2025." Uncertainty surrounding global economic policies is likely to take a toll on consumer, business and financial activity."

Moody's said in its Global Macro Outlook's May update. The rating agency had earlier projected a 6.5 per cent growth rate for India. Despite a pause and reduction in some tariffs, policy uncertainty and trade tensions, especially between the US and China, are likely to dampen global trade and investment with consequences across the G20 countries, Moody's said. Besides trade uncertainties, rising tensions are likely to weigh down growth. Geopolitical stresses



are another potential downside risk to the baseline forecasts, the rating agency said. In recent days, tensions have flared up between India and Pakistan in South Asia and China and the Philippines in the South China Sea.

These join unresolved wars in Russia and Ukraine, as well as the conflict in the Middle East, Moody's observed. "Costs to investors and businesses are likely to rise as they factor for new geopolitical configurations when deciding where to invest, expand and/or source goods," it added. Moody's, however, expects

India's inflation rate at 4 per cent in 2025 and 4.3 per cent in 2026, which will strengthen the macroeconomic fundamentals of the country and leave more headroom for the RBI to cut interest rates to spur growth." The Fed's policy path is not as important a consideration for emerging market central banks as it was this time last year.

Among other emerging market countries, we expect the Reserve Bank of India to lower rates further to support growth," Moody's said. The RBI has projected a 6.5 per cent GDP growth for India in

2025-26 amid global trade and policy uncertainties in the wake of the US tariff hikes. RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra recently said that "first and foremost, uncertainty in itself dampens growth by affecting investment and spending decisions of businesses and households. Second, the dent on global growth due to trade frictions will impede domestic growth. Third, higher tariffs will have a negative impact on net exports".

"However, there are several known unknowns - the impact of relative tariffs, the elasticities of our export and import demand, and the policy measures adopted by the government, including the proposed Foreign Trade Agreement with the USA," he said. This makes the exact quantification of the adverse impact difficult, he pointed out. Taking all these factors into consideration, real GDP growth for 2025-26 is now projected at 6.5 per cent, with Q1 at 6.5 per cent; Q2 at 6.7 per cent; Q3 at 6.6 per cent; and Q4 at 6.3 per cent, the RBI Governor said.

India's 1st Mortgage-Backed Pass-Through Certificates Listed on NSE

Mumbai, (H.S): In a major development for India's housing finance and debt markets, the country's first mortgage-backed Pass-Through Certificates (PTCs) were officially listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) on Monday. These PTCs have been structured by RMBS Development Company Limited and are backed by a pool of housing loans originated by LIC Housing Finance Limited. The issue size stood at Rs 1,000 crore, comprising 1,00,000 PTCs with a face value of Rs 1,00,000 each. The offering was fully subscribed, reflecting strong investor interest. This landmark issuance is also the first of its kind in India, where the coupon rate was discovered through the Electronic Book Provider (EBP) platform of the NSE. The final coupon was set



at 7.26 per cent per annum, and the instruments have a tenure of nearly 20 years. The PTCs carry a top-tier AAA(SO) rating from both CRISIL and CARE Ratings, and are issued in dematerialised form, making them tradable on the secondary market. The listing was carried out by M. Nagaraju, Secretary, Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, who

marked the occasion by ringing the ceremonial bell. In his remarks at the event, Nagaraju highlighted the crucial role of the housing and housing finance sectors in the broader economic landscape. He noted that housing has deep linkages with other industries, including infrastructure, and emphasised the urgent need to meet the country's growing housing

demand to support overall economic growth. He further added that securitisation, through instruments like these PTCs, can serve as a bridge between the housing finance market and the broader debt market. Stressing the importance of Residential Mortgage-Backed Securities (RMBS), Nagaraju said such instruments could be a game-changer for boosting liquidity and supporting the growth of the housing finance ecosystem in India. The listing ceremony was attended by several top officials from banks, housing finance companies, and other financial institutions, marking a significant step toward deepening the securitisation market and broadening investment opportunities in the country.

India Poised To Replace Japan as World's 4th-Largest Economy This Year: IMF

New Delhi, (H.S): India is poised to become the world's fourth-largest economy in 2025 with the country's nominal GDP rising to \$4,187.017 billion during the year to surpass Japan's GDP pegged at \$4,186.431 billion, according to the IMF's World Economic Outlook report.

According to the report, India continues to remain the world's fastest growing major economy and the only country expected to clock over 6 per cent growth in the next two years. Japan, on the other hand, is expected to be hard hit by the global trade war with its growth stagnating at 0.6 per cent for 2025 and 2026. The high rate of growth will see India's GDP increasing to \$5,584.476 billion in 2028 as



it overtakes Germany to become the third largest economy. The IMF has projected a zero growth rate for Germany in 2025 followed by 0.9 per cent in 2026 as it is expected to be hit the hardest among the European countries due to the ongoing global trade war.

Germany's GDP is projected at \$5,251.928 in 2028. The GDP of the USA, the world's largest economy, has been pegged at \$30507.217 billion for 2025 while that of China, the second biggest, is \$19231.705 billion. The US,

which has triggered the tariff turmoil across the globe, is expected to see its GDP growth slowing to 1.8 per cent this year, which is expected to decline further to 1.7 per cent in 2026, according to the IMF report. Similarly, the Euro Area is forecast to slow to a mere 0.8 per cent growth rate in 2025 before it makes a mild recovery at 1.2 per cent in 2026.

France is predicted to post a 0.6 per cent and 1 per cent growth for the next two years respectively. Spain is expected to do better than the others in 2025 as the only European country to clock a 2.5 per cent growth rate. However, it is seen slowing down to 1.8 per cent in 2026. The UK is expected to post a 1.1 and 1.4 per cent growth respectively for the next two years.

UPI QR codes record 91.5 pc surge to 657.9 million, credit card growth slows

Mumbai, (H.S): UPI QR codes have recorded the fastest growth in digital payments infrastructure in the financial year 2024-25, with a 91.5 per cent jump over the previous financial year to 657.9 million, according to the latest RBI data. The surge in UPI QR codes was accompanied by a slowdown in the growth rate of credit card transactions to 7.94 per cent year-on-year, while debit card additions registered a mere 2.7 per cent growth to 991 million. The growth in the number of UPI QR codes has been accelerating with the increasing deployment by platforms like Google Pay, Paytm, and PhonePe. The number of banks going live on UPI continues to



increase, and the total touched 668 in April, which is expected to increase the value of such transactions, according to bank officials. March saw a record Rs 24.77 lakh crore in UPI transactions, marking a 25 per cent increase in value and a 36 per cent increase in volume compared to the previous year. UPI has become the dominant method for digital transactions in India. Nearly four

out of five digital payments in the country were conducted on the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in the financial year 2024 (FY24), according to the Reserve Bank of India's annual report. UPI's share, compared to the cumulative volume of digital payments in the country, has grown steadily from 73.4 per cent in FY23 to 79.7 per cent in FY24. In FY20, UPI's share as compared to the volume of total digital payments in India was pegged at 36.8 per cent. The RBI is actively promoting digital payments through various initiatives, including the "Har Payment Digital" campaign, which aims to make every person in India aware of digital payments.

Indian Institute of Foreign Trade receives approval to establish off-campus centre at GIFT City, Gujarat

Gujarat, (PIB): The Ministry of Education, Government of India, has approved the establishment of an off-campus centre of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), New Delhi, at GIFT City, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The centre will be set up in accordance with the UGC (Institutions Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2023. The approval under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956, comes after IIFT's successful compliance with the conditions laid out in the Letter of Intent (LoI) issued in January 2025. These included submission of a development roadmap to

establish a multidisciplinary institution with over 1,000 students, availability of qualified faculty, detailed academic programmes, plans for a permanent campus, and creation of a state-of-the-art library. Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal, congratulated IIFT on receiving the approval, stating: "Heartiest congratulations to @IIFT_Official on getting approval to open its new off-campus centre in @GIFTCity., India's global financial hub. This paves the way for training talent in the institute's flagship

programme, MBA (International Business), besides short-term training programmes and research in the area of International Trade." The upcoming GIFT City campus will be located on the 16th and 17th floors of GIFT Tower 2. It will offer IIFT's flagship MBA (International Business) programme, along with specialised short-term training courses and research in international trade and related fields. The initiative aligns with the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which aims to promote multidisciplinary learning and

expand access to high-quality education. Established in 1963 under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, IIFT is a premier institution dedicated to capacity building in international trade. It was declared a Deemed to be University in 2002, holds an A+ grade from NAAC, and is accredited by AACSB, making it part of a select group of globally recognised business schools. The GIFT City campus is expected to significantly contribute to India's trade education ecosystem and support the nation's aspiration of becoming a global export powerhouse.

Vedanta Limited FY25 Profit zooms 172% to 20,535 crores Records highest-ever annual revenue & 2nd highest ever annual EBITDA

Bhubaneswar, (DMC): Vedanta Limited (BSE: 500295, NSE: VEDL) today announced its Consolidated Results for the fourth quarter and the full year ended 31st Mar 2025. Vedanta delivered robust financials with FY25 revenue soaring 10% YoY to ₹ 1,50,725 crores, its highest ever. The company's EBITDA for FY25 stood at ₹ 43,541 crores, up 37% YoY, second highest for the company. Vedanta's profit after tax for FY25 jumped 172% YoY to ₹ 20,535 crores.

The company's Q4 revenue reached an all-time high at ₹ 39,789 crores, up 14% YoY. In Q4, the company's EBITDA surged 30% YoY to ₹ 11,618 crores with an EBITDA margin of 35%2, up 465 bp YoY, highest in the last 12 quarters. The company's profit for the quarter was up 118% YoY at ₹ 4,961 crore. Vedanta's cash and cash equivalent for the quarter improved by 34% YoY on the back of Free cash flow (pre-capex) of ₹ 7,814 crore. The

company's total capital expenditure in the year stood at ₹ 12,626 crores, focused on volume expansion and supply chain integration. During the quarter, Vedanta's Return on Capital Employed (ROCE) improved by 371 bps YoY to 27%. The company's net debt for the quarter reduced to ₹ 53,251 crores with Net debt/EBITDA at 1.2x (vs 1.4x in Dec'24).

Vedanta has received credit rating upgrades from both CRISIL and ICRA to AA. The company recorded its ever-highest production of aluminium at 2,422 KT. While the company's zinc operations in India achieved highest ever mined and refined metal production at 1,095 KT and 1,052 KT respectively. Vedanta's iron ore business posted a growth of 12% with 6.2 Mt of iron ore production and the copper business posted annual copper cathode production at 149 KT. Commenting on Q4 FY25 results, Mr Arun Misra, Executive

Director Vedanta Limited said, "I'm pleased to report strong Q4 FY25 results, reflecting our consistent focus on operational discipline. This quarter concludes a year of exceptional achievement in FY25, where we not only delivered the highest-ever annual volumes for Aluminium and Zinc but also drove costs of production down significantly, reaching four-year lows for Zinc India CoP and ex-Alumina CoP at Aluminium.

Our outlook for FY26 is firmly focused on growth and efficiency. We are accelerating our transformation, driven by strategic projects like the Lanjigarh Alumina Refinery Expansion and Sijimali Bauxite Mine in Odisha, which are on track to significantly improve our cost position next fiscal. With multiple volume expansions projects set for completion in FY26, we remain confident in our ability to deliver another strong year. We remain vigilant, responsive to market dynamics, and fully committed to seizing

opportunities for long-term value creation." Mr Ajay Goel, CFO, Vedanta, said "This quarter, Vedanta has delivered an unprecedented financial performance, achieving the highest-ever quarterly revenue of ₹ 39,789 crore, reflecting robust 14% YoY growth. Our EBITDA surged to ₹ 11,618 crore, marking a 30% growth year-on-year, accompanied by an EBITDA margin of 35%, which is highest in last 12 quarters.

Our PAT soared to ₹ 4,961 crore, reflecting an exceptional 118% YoY growth, underscoring the unparalleled resilience and strength of our business. This outstanding performance has been driven by our continuous focus on operational excellence, disciplined cost optimization, and the advantage of buoyant market dynamics. Furthermore, Vedanta Limited balance sheet deleveraged by ₹500 mn in Q4 with a closing Net Debt of \$6.2 bn, enabling substantial improvement in leverage to 1.2x, reinforcing our robust financial foundation."

India Has 879.59 Metric Tonnes Of Gold, 511.99 MT Held Domestically: RBI

New Delhi, (H.S): The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had 879.59 metric tonnes (MT) of gold at the end of March 2025, of which 511.99 metric tonnes were held domestically, the Central Bank informed on Monday. While 348.62 metric tonnes of gold were kept in safe custody with the Bank of England and the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), 18.98 metric tonnes were held in the form of gold deposits.

In value terms (USD), the share of gold in the total foreign exchange reserves increased from 9.32 per cent at end-September 2024 to about 11.70 per cent at end-March 2025, according to the RBI's 'Half Yearly Report on Management of Foreign Exchange Reserves'.

During the half-year period under review, reserves decreased from \$705.78 billion in end-September 2024 to \$630.61 billion at end-January 2025, and were at \$668.33 billion at end-March 2025. During the period between end-December 2023 and end-December 2024, the external



assets increased by \$79.7 billion and external liabilities increased by \$76.1 billion. The foreign currency assets comprise multi-currency assets that are held in multi-asset portfolios as per the existing norms, which conform to the best international practices followed in this regard.

At end-March 2025, out of the total FCA of \$567.56 billion, \$485.53 billion was invested in securities, \$45.68 billion was deposited with other central banks and the BIS and the balance \$36.34 billion comprised deposits with commercial banks overseas. With the objective of exploring new strategies and products in reserve management while diversifying the portfolio, a small portion of the

reserves is being managed by external asset managers, informed the RBI. At the end of December 2024, foreign exchange reserves cover of imports (on a balance of payments basis) stood at 10.5 months (11.8 months at end-September 2024).

The ratio of short-term debt (original maturity) to reserves, which was 19.1 per cent at end-September 2024, increased to 22.0 per cent at end-December 2024. The ratio of volatile capital flows (including cumulative portfolio inflows and outstanding short-term debt) to reserves increased from 67.8 per cent at end-September 2024 to 74.3 per cent at end-December 2024, the Bank informed.



Bigg Boss 17 fame Soniya Bansal to quit acting: 'Industry didn't give me peace'

Actor Soniya Bansal, known for her stint on Bigg Boss 17, recently spoke to E!Times about her decision to quit showbiz and embark on a path of self-discovery. While the industry gave her recognition and fame, she shared that she never truly found peace.

Soniya opened up about losing herself in the pursuit of success and said, "We're so caught up doing everything for others that we forget ourselves. I realised I don't even know what my true purpose is anymore. In this race to be perfect, to stay relevant, and to earn more, I lost myself. Money, fame, popularity-I had it all. But what I didn't have was peace. And what use is money if you're not at peace? You may have everything externally, but if you're empty inside, it's a very dark

place to be."

She added that she now aspires to become a life coach, "I want to deeply explore what I truly want from life. This industry gave me recognition, but not stillness. It didn't allow me to breathe. I don't want to pretend anymore. I want to live authentically-for myself-and become a Life Coach and Spiritual Healer. You never know when your

life might change. You never know when death might knock. And if we haven't lived truthfully by then, what's the point of this entire journey?" Soniya began her acting career with the film Naughty Gang and went on to appear in films like Dubki, Game 100 Crore Ka, and Shoorveer. She made her Telugu debut in the action-thriller Dheera, alongside Laksh Chadalavada and Neha Pathan. In 2023, she participated in Salman Khan's Bigg Boss 17, though she was the first contestant to be evicted.

The actor has also featured in several music videos, including Khudgarze, Farak, Zindagi Do Roz Ki, and Nachan Da Time, among others. She has 6.5 million followers on Instagram, where she regularly shares updates and glimpses from her life. She will next be seen in the Telugu film Yes Boss alongside KL Havish.

Loved SRK's Met Gala 2025 look? Well Kajol did it first



Bollywood's beloved duo Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol have once again delighted fans-this time, off the big screen. After SRK made his much-anticipated debut at the Met Gala 2025 in a striking black tuxedo and layered jewellery, Kajol playfully recreated his look in a cheeky Instagram post, sparking a wave of nostalgia and laughter among fans.

On Tuesday, Kajol took to Instagram and shared a few pictures of herself wearing a black blazer and silver accessories.

Alongside her own photos, she included Shah Rukh's Met Gala look and asked fans to "spot the difference" between the two. She was seen wearing chunky bangles, multiple rings, a nose ring, and silver earrings to complete the look. Sharing the pictures, she wrote, "Hmmm, spot the difference," and tagged SRK. One fan wrote, "No difference, Kajol-he is the king and you are the queen." Another commented, "Teasing your best friend is a different kind of fun." Others

added, "Rahul & Anjali got reunited," "Best friend core," and "Ah, just like the old days." A fan even quoted Kuch Kuch Hota Hai: "Come on Rahul, come on Anjali, give us a picture together." Another wrote, "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai Anjali vibes," while one said, "The duo is unforgettable and beautiful." Fans flooded the comment section, asking for another film featuring the beloved pair.

Shah Rukh and Kajol remain one of Bollywood's most iconic on-screen duos. They have won hearts with their chemistry in films like Dilwale Dulhania Le Jaayenge, Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham, and more. Their off-screen camaraderie has also endeared them to audiences over the years. The two were last seen together in Rohit Shetty's Dilwale, alongside Varun Dhawan and Kriti Sanon. Since then, fans have been eagerly awaiting their reunion on screen.

Squid Game Season 3 release date revealed

Washington, DC: The third and final season of Squid Game is approaching, and the newly released teaser trailer offers fans a first glimpse at the dramatic culmination of Netflix's most popular show. The makers have also announced the release date of the third season. Squid Game 3 is set to premiere on June 27, exclusively on Netflix. Picking up from Season 2's devastating cliffhanger, as per the teaser, the third season thrusts Gi-hun (Player 456) back into the brutal heart of the games, determined to dismantle them once and for all. Still haunted by the betrayal and loss of his closest ally, Jung-hae (Player 390), Gi-hun faces new difficulties, including the Front Man, who shockingly infiltrated their rebellion disguised as Player 001.

Aamir's film "Sitaare Zameen Par" will release on June 20

Aamir Khan fans, brace yourselves for some exciting news. The makers of Aamir's much-awaited Sitaare Zameen Par have announced the film's release date. The movie, directed by RS Prasanna, will premiere on June 20.

Sitaare Zameen Par is the sequel to Aamir Khan's critically acclaimed 2007 film Taare Zameen Par. The family drama also featured Darshel Safary, Tisca Chopra and Vipin Sharma in key roles. On Monday (May 5), Aamir Khan Productions dropped the first-look poster of Sitaare Zameen Par on Instagram. The picture hints that Aamir Khan will slip into the shoes of a basketball coach. The actor played the role of an art teacher in the first film. Aamir Khan will feature opposite Genelia Deshmukh in Sitaare Zameen Par. The poster also introduces 10 debutants, including Aroush Datta, Gopi Krishna Varma, Samvit Desai, Vedant Sharma, Ayush Bhansali, Ashish Pendse, Rishi Shahani, Rishabh Jain, Naman Mishra, and Simran Mangeshkar. They are likely to bring a fresh energy to the movie. Sitaare Zameen Par is bankrolled by Aamir Khan and Aparna Purohit under the banner of Aamir Khan Productions. Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy will be crooning the music for the film with the lyrics by Amitabh Bhattacharya. Meanwhile, the screenplay is written by Divy Nidhi Sharma. The side note read, "A film celebrating love, laughter and happiness. Sitaare Zameen Par. Sabka Apna Apna Normal. 20th June Only In Theatres." On May 4, RS Prasanna teased fans about Sitaare Zameen Par. The director shared a vibrant post on Instagram that read, "Are you ready for our Sitaare?" Last



month, Aamir Khan spoke about Sitaare Zameen Par and his character in the film. The actor made a virtual appearance in front of his China-based fan club.

He said, "Sitaare Zameen Par... is about differently abled people. It's about love, friendship and life. Taare Zameen Par made you cry but this film will make you laugh. It's a comedy, but the theme is the same." Aamir Khan will be essaying the character of a "rude and politically incorrect" man, Gulshan, in Sitaare Zameen Par. Read all about it here.

'PKL Has Led to Remarkable Resurgence of Traditional Sports': CM

Mumbai, (HS) : Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi highlighted the remarkable global journey of India's indigenous sports, whilst acknowledging the remarkable resurgence of Kabaddi through the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) at the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) 2025. Speaking at the session titled 'Indigenous Sports: From India to the Global Stage,' Odisha CM emphasised how traditional games like Kabaddi have transformed from community pastimes to international sporting sensations.

"Indigenous sports are rooted in our history and culture. They have been integral to our communities since time immemorial, inculcating various virtues like teamwork, endurance, respect for nature and collective joy. This event is not just a celebration of these games, but a way of life - a culture that reflects the wisdom, resilience and creativity of our ancestors," said CM Majhi. The session highlighted how the PKL has helped in elevating traditional Indian sports to global recognition. Now entering its 12th season, PKL has revolutionised how indigenous sports are packaged, presented, and consumed by audiences worldwide. "We must acknowledge the remarkable



resurgence of traditional sports like Kabaddi. Thanks to initiatives like the Pro Kabaddi League, the sport has captured the imagination of millions across India," the Chief Minister stated. "We have brought Kabaddi into living rooms and into the hearts of people everywhere. What was once only played in small communities has now become one of India's most popular and commercially successful sporting leagues, inspiring young boys and girls across the nation," he added. The panel discussion featured key stakeholders in India's sports ecosystem, including Raksha Khadse, Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, Anupam Goswami,

Business Head of Mashal & League Chairman of PKL, Sudhanshu Mittal, president of the Kho Kho Federation of India; international sports consultant Nic Coward, Yannick Colaco, co-founder of Fancode, and international Kabaddi star Fazel Atrachali from Iran. Majhi further outlined a comprehensive vision for indigenous sports development. "Our vision is simple - to create champions in every village and to ensure that every child with a dream gets the right platform to start." "The transformative journey of indigenous sports has been remarkable, with Kabaddi emerging as a global phenomenon. From its early

recognition at the Asian Games to its landmark partnership with JioStar, Pro Kabaddi has evolved into a major force in the sports ecosystem," he said.

While concluding his speech, Majhi said, "Traditional games must be promoted and expanded to the global stage. Through these efforts, we can take our traditional sports to millions of people within and beyond India's borders," added the Chief Minister. "Preserving indigenous sports is preserving our soul. It is about giving our children a sense of rootedness and pride in their heritage. It is about building a future rooted in the strength of our past."

"No Cricket with Pakistan in ICC Events...": Gambhir

New Delhi, (HS) : India head coach Gautam Gambhir on Tuesday called for a complete halt to cricketing engagements with Pakistan at any forum, including Asia Cup and ICC events, in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack. At an ABP event, Gambhir said the national team should not be playing the arch-rivals till cross-border terrorism ends.

India have not played a full series against Pakistan since 2007 due to the tense relations between both countries. They only play each other at multi-team events and even that should be discontinued, said Gambhir. "My personal answer to this is absolutely no. Till all this (cross-border terrorism) doesn't stop there should not be anything between India and Pakistan," said Gambhir when asked about the future of Indo-Pak cricket in the current environment. In a terror



attack on April 22 in south Kashmir's Pahalgam town, 26 people, mostly tourists, were gunned down. Responding to the gruesome incident, India announced several measures against Pakistan, including suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, shutting down of the only land border crossing at Attari and downgrading of diplomatic ties

in view of cross-border links to the attack. "Ultimately this is government's call whether we play them or not. I have said this before also, no cricket match or Bollywood or any other interaction is more important than the life of Indian soldiers and Indian citizens," Gambhir said. "Matches will keep happening, movies will be made, singers will

continue to perform but nothing comes close to losing a loved one in your family."

Asked specifically about India playing Pakistan in the Asia Cup this year or the T20 World Cup, to be co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka next year, Gambhir placed the onus on the BCCI and the government. "This is not up to me, this is for BCCI and more importantly the government to decide whether we should play them or not. "Whatever decision they make, we should be absolutely fine with it and not politicise it." In the recent Champions Trophy, India played all their games in Dubai and not host country Pakistan owing to security concerns. As part of an agreement worked out between the BCCI, the Pakistan Cricket Board and the ICC, all India-Pakistan matches in ICC events will be played in a neutral country till the 2027 cycle.

IPL 2025 Playoffs Scenario for All 10 Teams Explained

New Delhi, (HS) : The race for the IPL 2025 playoffs is heating up as this year's competition reach its business end. With the match between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Delhi Capitals getting abandoned due to wet outfield, SRH became the third team after Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings to crash out of the race. However, seven other teams still have the chance to reach the Top 4 of the competition and although Royal Challengers Bengaluru are the clear favourites at the moment, Punjab Kings, Gujarat Titans, Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals are engaged in a tough fight for the playoff spots. A look at the IPL 2025 Playoffs



scenarios for all 10 teams - Royal Challengers Bengaluru - RCB are the favourites when it comes to securing their spot in the IPL 2025 playoffs. With 16 points from 11 matches, the Rajat Patidar-led side needs just one more way to potentially book their spot in the Top 4 with two wins more or less

securing their spot in the Top 2. Punjab Kings - The win over Lucknow Super Giants on Sunday hugely boosted PBKS' playoff chances and two wins in their next three matches will guarantee their spot. They can still qualify with just one win in their remaining matches but that will

depend on Net Run Rate and other teams' results. Mumbai Indians - With 6 victories on the trot, Mumbai Indians have been one of the best sides in the tournament recently. With 14 points from 11 matches, MI are placed brilliantly in the playoffs race and the Hardik Pandya-led side can book their spot in the Top 4 with 2 wins in the remaining 3 matches.

Gujarat Titans - GT have played just 10 matches and with 14 points, they need just 2 wins in their remaining 4 matches to book their spot in the Top 4 and take a big step towards their second IPL title. Delhi Capitals - The washed-out game against Sunrisers Hyderabad was a blow

to DC's playoff dreams but they can still qualify for the Top 4 with at least 2 wins in their remaining 3 matches.

Kolkata Knight Riders - The scenario is extremely straightforward for KKR. Win all three of their remaining matches and it will take them to 17 points from 14 points. That may also not be enough as in that case, their fortune will be dependent on NRR and results of the other sides in contention.

Lucknow Super Giants - LSG have the toughest road ahead as wins in their remaining 3 matches will take their points tally to 16. Their qualification will completely depend on the other results.

Virat Opens Up on Quitting Captaincy: 'I Needed to Be Happy'

New Delhi, (HS) : Cricket icon Virat Kohli has candidly spoken about the immense pressure of captaincy that led him to relinquish leadership roles for Team India and Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB). In a recent interview, Kohli revealed that between 2016 and 2019, the burden of expectations began affecting his mental well-being, prompting his decision to step down. Kohli admitted that he even considered leaving RCB during that challenging period, but ultimately chose to stay due to the deep-rooted connection and mutual respect he shared with the franchise. "The relationship I've built here is more valuable, and so is the mutual respect," he explained. Having captained Team India for nearly a decade, Kohli faced constant scrutiny both on and off the field. His decision to step away from leadership roles was driven by his desire to rediscover his love for the game, free from the pressures of captaincy.

