



Urvashi's perception

Actress Urvashi Rautela shares her insights on what it takes to be the perfect partner in a relationship

LEISURE | P2



Trump announces Iran talks

Prez Trump announces US-Iran talks on nuclear programme, but Iran's foreign minister confirmed discussions would be indirect

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Rupee sinks 50 paise

Declining for the third straight session, rupee tumbles 50 paise to settle at 86.26 against the US dollar Tuesday

BUSINESS | P11



LSG dominates KKR

Lucknow Super Giants hold their nerve in a high-octane contest to edge past Kolkata Knight Riders by four runs Tuesday

SPORTS | P12

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Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi addressing investors at New Delhi, Tuesday (Report P3)

State inks 13 MoUs, garners ₹1.03L-cr investment intents

- This is the right time to invest in state, CM Mohan Charan Majhi told industry leaders
- The projects are expected to generate employment opportunities for over 95,000 people

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi April 8: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi's two-day visit to the national capital culminated with a series of significant outcomes aimed at bolstering the state's industrial landscape.

As a major step forward, the state government signed several high-value Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with leading industry players here. These investments will garner ₹98,880 crore of investment and provide employment for 67,000 people, officials said. The highlight of the event was an agreement with Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) for setting up a Dual-Feed Naphtha Cracker

Project in Odisha.

The project is expected to bring in investments of over ₹58,000 crore, generating employment for 24,000 people.

Additionally, agreements were also signed with the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd (ISPRL) and Petronet LNG. These partnerships reinforce Odisha's strategic role in India's petrochemical landscape and reflect a commitment to sustainable industrial development, import substitution, and a resilient supply chain.

Overall, 13 MoUs along with 15 investment intents were received. The total investment generated through these initiatives amounts to ₹1,03,090 crore, which will significantly enhance the state's capabilities across sectors. The projects are expected to generate employment opportunities for over 95,000 people, fostering regional economic growth and boosting industrial activity.

The event was addressed by Sampad Chandra Swain, Minister for Industries and Skill Development & Technical Education, Odisha, followed by Union Ministers Jual Oram (Tribal Affairs), Dharmendra Pradhan (Education), and Hardeep Singh Puri (Petroleum and Natural Gas). Puri lauded Odisha's proactive approach to industrialization.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, in his keynote address, emphasised Odisha's vision to emerge as a petrochemical and manufacturing hub. He stated, "Today's MoU with IOCL is a landmark moment in Odisha's industrial journey. It reflects not just a shared vision but a strong belief in the state's potential to lead India's petrochemical revolution from the east. Paradip, with its strategic location and evolving infrastructure, is poised to become a transformative industrial hub—much like Dahej in the west. Odisha is ready, and we invite you to invest in our bright future. Yahi Samay Hai, Sahi Samay Hai. (This is the time, the right time)."

US to impose 104% tariff on China from today

AGENCIES

Washington, April 8: Donald Trump has followed through on his threat of 'additional 50 per cent tariffs' on China starting Wednesday. The White House announced that this will make America's new tariff on China an unprecedented 104 per cent.

President Trump had given China 24 hours to roll back or 'withdraw' the retaliatory 34 per cent tariff it imposed on US goods, failing which Chinese goods would be punished with 104 per cent tariffs. Beijing dared Washington to do so earlier today. Within hours Donald Trump announced it.

The US used to tariff China at 10 per cent till last month.

Minutes after Trump's announcement, the White House said that the US would be charging the entire world an additional 10 per cent non-reciprocal tariff. This was a move to fill the US federal reserve, they said. China's basket of tariffs now stood at 54 per cent.

Now, with Wednesday's "additional 50 per cent tariff" solely for China, Beijing now faces an unprecedented levy of 104 per cent - a near 100 per cent rise in less than a week. President Trump however, still left the door ajar for Beijing to reconcile. In a post on his social media platform Truth Social, he wrote, "China also wants to make a deal, badly, but they don't know how to get it started. We are waiting for their call."

Earlier in the day, China had responded to President Trump's ultimatum to 'withdraw' Beijing's retaliatory move. They called it 'blackmail'.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

The country has improved a lot, but some areas still need attention. Alas, fake degrees are still unacceptable in medicine

Boost to federalism

Tamil Nadu's MK Stalin-led DMK government has long accused Governor RN Ravi - a former IPS officer who has also worked in the CBI - of acting like a BJP spokesperson and blocking Bills and appointments. These charges gained validation Tuesday when the Supreme Court ruled that Ravi's reservation of 10 Bills for presidential consideration was illegal and arbitrary. Setting a precedent, the court established a timeline for Governors to act on state Assembly Bills: one month for assent or reservation with ministerial advice, and three months to return Bills without such advice. The court emphasised that Governors cannot sit on Bills to delay or block legislation, highlighting the need for Governors to act in line with democratic principles and not hinder state legislatures. Article 200 of the Constitution lays down the options before the Governor when a Bill passed by the state House is presented before him. The Governor can give his assent, withhold assent, or reserve the Bill for consideration of the President. The Governor can send the Bill back to the House or Houses for the reconsideration of some provisions. If the House passes it again, the Governor shall not withhold assent. However, the Governor can reserve for the President's consideration a Bill which he/she feels is at odds with the Constitution, directive principles of state policy, or is a matter of national importance. The article also contains the phrase 'as soon as possible' regarding Governor's assent to Bills, but notably lacks any specific or defined timeline for such actions, creating room for interpretation and potential delays. This has been addressed by the top court in its verdict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: In a major victory to DMK-led Tamil Nadu government, the Supreme Court Tuesday cleared 10 Bills which were stalled and reserved by Governor RN Ravi for President's consideration while setting a timeline for governors to act on the Bills passed by state Assemblies.

Woman constable found dead in barracks

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, April 8: A woman constable was found hanging in her room at the police barracks on Tuesday morning. It is suspected to be a case of suicide linked to a failed relationship.

The deceased, identified as Yashoda Das from Mandarpur village under Remuna police limits, had posted a deeply emotional and cryptic message on her WhatsApp status before taking the extreme step. Police said the incident occurred after her colleagues left for work, leaving Yashoda alone in her room. At around 8:06 am, she updated her WhatsApp status and later allegedly hanged herself from the ceiling fan. She was found unresponsive when fellow officers returned from duty and immediately rushed her to the District Headquarters Hospital, where doctors declared her dead on arrival.

A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan held, "Action of the Governor to reserve the 10 Bills for President is illegal and arbitrary and thus the action is set aside."

The court added, "The 10 Bills shall be deemed to be clear from the date it was re-presented to the Governor."

In the first of its kind directions, the top court fixed a

timeline within which Governor has to act on Bills passed by the state legislature.

Fixing the timeline, the bench said in case of withholding assent on a bill and reserving it for President with the aid and advice of the council of ministers, the maximum period would be one month.

In case the Governor decided to withhold assent without the aid and advice of the council of ministers, the bills must be returned to the Assembly within three months, it added.

The top court said in case of presentation of a bill after reconsideration by the state Assembly, the bills have to be given assent by the Governor within a period of one month.

The bench said the Governor must be conscious to not create "roadblocks or chokehold" the state legislature in order "to thwart and break the will of the people."

"The members of state legislature, having been elected by the people of the state as an outcome of the democratic expression, are better attuned to ensure the well being of the people of the state," the bench said.

The bench said Governor couldn't sit over bills and adopt the concept of "absolute veto" or "pocket veto".

"Pocket veto" denotes a concept where Governor sits over the bills without signing it and virtually making it ineffective.

The bench said Governor sitting over bills passed by the Assembly and presented to him, without any action, made them just a "piece of paper" and "skeleton without flesh."

The bench said it was not open for Governor to reserve the bill for consideration of President after it was presented to him for the second time.

It said Governor must assent to the bills produced before him in the second round and the only exception was that the bill in the second instance was different from the first one.

Dire wolves howl again after 12,000 years

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, April 8: Three genetically engineered wolves that may resemble extinct dire wolves are trotting, sleeping and howling in an undisclosed secure location in the US, according to the company that aims to bring back lost species.

The wolf pups, which range in age from three to six months old, have long white hair, muscular jaws and already weigh in at around 80 pounds — on track to reach 140 pounds at maturity, researchers at Colossal Biosciences reported Monday.

Dire wolves, which went extinct more than 10,000 years ago, are much larger than gray wolves, their closest living relatives today. Colossal scientists learned about specific traits that dire wolves possessed by examining ancient DNA from fossils. The researchers studied

a 13,000 year-old dire wolf tooth unearthed in Ohio and a 72,000 year-old skull fragment found in Idaho, both part of natural history museum collections.

Then the scientists took blood cells from a living gray wolf and used CRISPR to genetically modify them in 20 different sites, said Colossal's chief scientist

MUSK: PLEASE MAKE A PET WOOLY MAMMOTH

Billionaire Elon Musk reacted to the news, posting his own Wishlist. "Please make a miniature pet wooly mammoth," Musk posted on X, while resharing his own post. Colossal had previously announced similar projects to genetically alter cells from living species to create animals resembling extinct woolly mammoths, dodos and others.

Beth Shapiro. They transferred that genetic material to an egg cell from a domestic dog. When ready, embryos were transferred to surrogates, also domestic dogs, and 62 days later the genetically engineered pups were born.

Colossal reported Monday that it had cloned four red wolves using blood drawn from wild wolves of the southeastern US' critically endangered red wolf population. The aim is to

bring more genetic diversity into the small population of captive red wolves, which scientists are using to breed and help save the species.

This technology may have broader application for conservation of other species because it's less invasive than other techniques to clone animals, said Christopher Preston, a wildlife expert at the University of Montana who was not involved in the research. But it still requires a wild wolf to be sedated for a blood draw and that's no simple feat, he added.

Colossal CEO Ben Lamm said the team met with officials from the US Interior Department in late March about the project. Interior Secretary Doug Burgum praised the work on X Monday as a "thrilling new era of scientific wonder" even as outside scientists said there are limitations to restoring the past.


FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES




You may want to meet up with friends you haven't met in a long time, and the stars indicate that you will have great fun. Your enthusiasm will add a glow to whatever you do. Your sincerity in approach is what makes it special, says Ganesha.

TAURUS



You will focus on nurturing the positive aspects of your life today, says Ganesha. You might exhaust yourself mentally trying to set things straight. It would be better to brainstorm with someone close to you or approach people whom you have differences with. The nitty-gritty is fine, but do not forget the larger picture, suggests Ganesha.

GEMINI



Routine work bores you, and today you will go all out to break free from the shackles of boredom. The results, however, may not be as dramatic. You will have to depend on your children, if any, to rescue you from the tyranny of routine. Monetary gains can be expected either in the form of inheritance of ancestral property or as increment in your basic salary.

CANCER



You may feel like flaunting your so-called superior social and financial status today. Chances are that all that gas about how successful you are may end up exploding in your face, and you may end up spending a lot more than you would have liked. However, if you only stick

LEO




If it's a fresh start that you are looking for, then this day promises to give you just that, predicts Ganesha. If you have chalked out plans for your future, today you may go ahead and implement some. Remember that rushing blindly into anything is not the solution; it is always the slow and steady who wins the race.

VIRGO



Today, your power and finance will be greater than ever before, says Ganesha. You will also be inclined to make monetary provisions for any future economic instability that may arise. The people around you will stand up and take notice of the leader in you.

LIBRA




Today promises to be a busy day that will keep you occupied. You may also engage in written correspondence to re-establish some old contacts. Ganesha doesn't rule out optimum use of the phone for this purpose.

SCORPIO




You might find your spirit sagging as worries cloud your thinking. Small things might probably bother you in a big way. Do not let them bog you down as life is all about mind over matter. As the day progresses, things will begin to look up. Take a break from the rigmarole if stress begins to take a toll on you, advises Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS



Watch out for Cupid's arrow today, warns Ganesha. Love will strike and strike hard. Alternatively, you may also find yourself in an argument with a loved one that ought to have been avoided. An evening of romance beckons... keep the roses ready and the carpet rolled to heal any bruises you might have caused.

CAPRICORN




You may be attentive, as much as an eagle is while chasing its prey, but you still need to be careful when signing any important legal documents, advises Ganesha. Brokers and dealers, especially, are likely to incur heavy losses unless they take necessary precautions to avert misfortune.

AQUARIUS



Today, you're up against those who want to get back at you. But not for nothing are you the king! Ganesha says you needn't worry, as few can match your prowess. Amid all the hullabaloo, your spouse will be a supportive presence.

PISCES



Within adversity, lie the lessons of success; avoid having to resort to that philosophy by implementing your plans, if they are well thought out, in a phased manner. This will help you achieve your targets, says Ganesha.



JENNA ORTEGA ON HER EXIT FROM SCREAM 7

Hollywood actress Jenna Ortega has revealed that her exit from the *Scream* franchise was over her shooting schedule. This is contrary to the reports that cited scheduling conflicts and pay discrepancy as the reason behind her exit.

PAUL SCHRADER RESPONDS TO SEXUAL ASSAULT ALLEGATIONS

Hollywood screenwriter Paul Schrader has addressed the allegations of sexual assault in a letter to his friends and associates. The allegations were levelled by his 26-year-old former assistant, claiming her accusations couldn't be “further from the truth”, reports *Variety*



Sanjana highlights power of education

Mumbai: Aside from being an emerging talent in Bollywood, actress Sanjana Sanghi is also the Youth Champion with UNDP (United Nations Development Programme).

Addressing an audience of young creatives and changemakers., Sanjana in

shaping one's purpose. She shared insights from her international work — amplifying youth voices across borders and pushing for systemic change through education and empowerment.

Opening up about what inspired her, Sanjana said, “I remember watching Emma Watson speak at the UN and thinking — this is where real impact begins. Teaching children gave me a sense of connection. Eventually, I started mentoring volunteers and building that initiative forward. I have a dream to have an organisation where no one is uneducated in our country.”

She is of the opinion that education can resolve several issues such as gender and pay disparity, and lack of health awareness.

Sanjana went on to add, “The lack of education is the root of larger issues we face.

Solve that, and you address gender and pay disparity, menstrual health awareness, Women's Rights and so much more. Unfortunately, in lockdown, the studies show that 10 Million girls were forced to drop out of school and pushed into domesticity, and the number for boys was less than a million.”

Isha on her fashion mantra

Mumbai: Popular television actress Isha Malviya shared that her style started to evolve from the moment she stepped into the industry and that fashion has taught her not just about clothing, but also about carrying confidence.

Talking about how her fashion has evolved, Isha, who made her acting debut in the 2021 television series *Udaariyaan*, told, “My style began to evolve from the moment I entered the industry, and the journey has been incredible. Fashion has taught me so much—not just about clothing, but also about carrying confidence, embracing my personality, owning who I am, and so much more.”

She added, “At the end of the day, you need to have that spark and spunk to evolve with the times. Girls like me and there are many of us out there who enjoy changing our outfits and style to match what's trending. I'm definitely one of those girls. If you want to stand out from the crowd—and people have chosen you, they love you, and have given you a public platform—you can't just be roaming around in nightwear. Of course, you have your own space to be in your comfort zone when you're at home, and you can wear whatever you like. I want to look presentable, well put-together, and decked up.”

Urvashi's secret to perfect relationship

Mumbai: Actress Urvashi Rautela has shared her insights on what it takes to be the perfect partner in a relationship. According to her, the key to being the best boyfriend or husband is simple—just say sorry.

Urvashi, who is busy promoting her next project, *Jaat*, highlighted the importance of keeping a partner happy and maintaining harmony in a relationship through small, meaningful gestures. While speaking about her song, *Touch Kiya*, Rautela told the agency, “Thank you so much! It's a simple thing—any girl in the world would love to make her boyfriend say sorry. And if you can make any girl happy just by saying sorry, it's a win. The lyrics of the song are quite relatable. I'll give you my heart, but first say sorry.” Many girls will connect with this sentiment.”

The *Sanam Re* actress added, “If you want to be the best

boyfriend and the best husband, just say sorry. Always keep your partner happy.”

On a related note, Urvashi Rautela sizzles in the high-energy dance track *Touch Kiya*, where she shows off her impressive moves alongside the formidable villain duo of Randeep Hooda and Vineet Kumar Singh.

Jaat, starring Sunny Deol in the lead role, is scheduled to hit theatres April 10, 2025.



John reflects on resilience, growth

Mumbai: Bollywood actor-producer John Abraham, who has often triggered new changes in the film industry, has said that he was written off after his debut movie. But, it was his resilience that made him come back stronger.

Recently, John spoke with the agency, and shared that he be-

lieves in working towards building his future, and doesn't look back at his professional journey, that's the reason he was able to look past his initial failure, and capitalise on what was ahead of him.

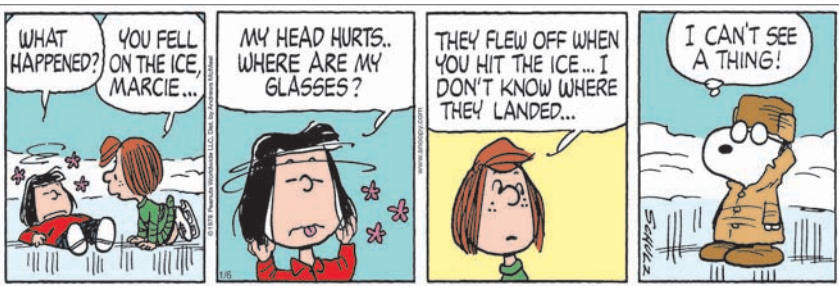
He told, “You are as good as your last innings. So, you have to look in front. Of course, it's very important for the film trade to know, and the audience to know your filmography.

But, you as a person have to look in front. It's for the audience to look at your filmography”.

He shared, “A lot of people, when they see my filmography, they say, ‘You are not a one-dimensional actor. You have done a *No Smoking*, you have done a *Garam Masala*, you have also done a *Force*. So, I have done all kinds of genres and that's the important thing. You need to attempt all genres. I learn with every film, I learn with every director and grow”.



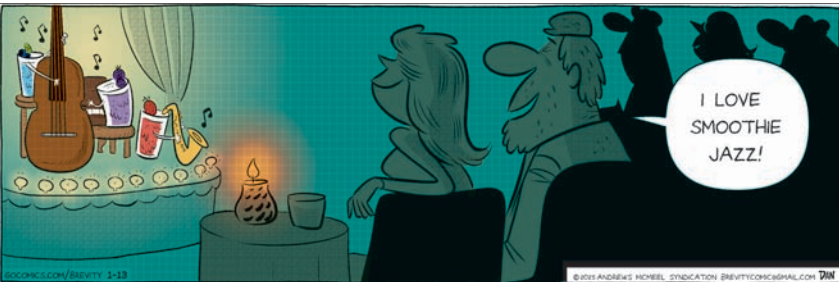
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

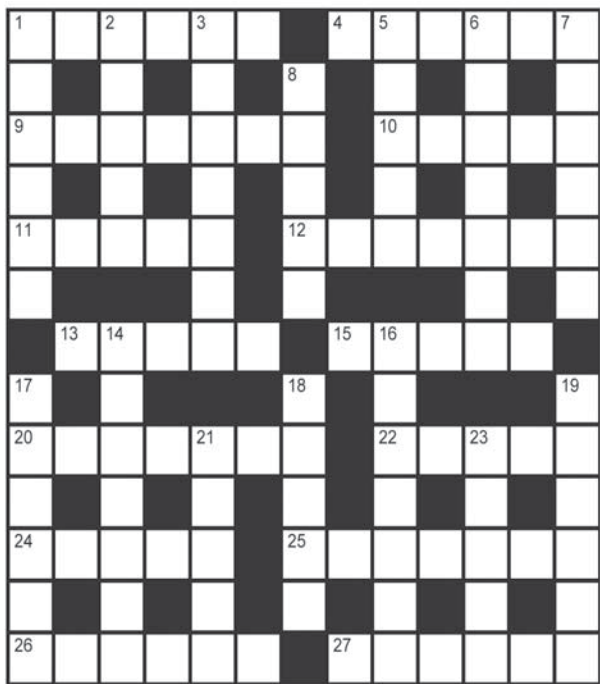


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across

1 Tooth decay

4 Spool

9 Electrician

10 Spring month

11 Punctuation mark

12 Betrayal

13 Slowpoke

15 Mendicant

20 Inactive

22 Profundity
- 24 Minimal

25 Musical performance

26 Bureau

27 Thespian

Down

1 Like some cats

2 Toxin secreted by animals

3 Kettledrum

5 Egg-shaped

6 Coffee server

7 Hose

8 Bring together

14 Recount

16 Revolutionary

17 Port city in the Ukraine

18 Barren

19 Irritability

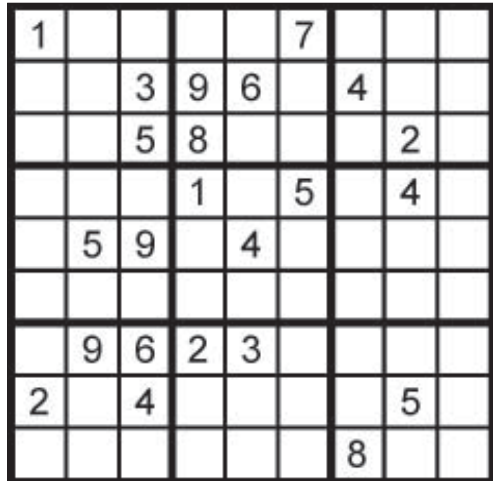
21 Room at the top

23 Of little importance

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



downtown

IOCL to set up ₹61,077 crore petrochem complex at Paradip



Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi with Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri in New Delhi, Tuesday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Odisha government to set up a mega petrochemical complex at Paradip with an investment of ₹61,077 crore to meet the rising demand for petrochemicals.

Besides IOCL, Petronet LNG Ltd, India's biggest liquefied natural gas importer, also signed a pact at Odisha Investors' Meet here in presence of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi to set up a ₹6,500-crore LNG import terminal at Gopalpur Port.

These apart, Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd, the special purpose vehicle created by the government for setting up strategic oil reserves, signed a pact for setting up a 4 million tonne underground storage facility at Chandikhol at a cost of ₹8,743 crore.

IOCL's ₹61,077 crore will be the company's largest-ever investment at a single location.

high-density polyethylene (HDPE), linear low-density polyethylene (LLDPE) and polyvinyl chloride (PVC).

These products will serve as raw materials for speciality chemical sectors like pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, coatings and adhesives, significantly reducing import dependency.

Speaking on the occasion, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said the market size of the Indian chemicals and petrochemicals sector is currently ₹18 lakh crore and is expected to reach ₹85 lakh crore by the year 2040.

"However, the per capita consumption of various chemical products is significantly lower compared to developed economies and this gap offers substantial space for demand growth and investment opportunities," he said.

"The Paradip petrochemical complex will be a game-changer, catalysing industrial growth and self-sufficiency in the entire eastern region," he said.

"The Paradip Petrochemical Project will significantly substitute imports in the chemicals and petrochemicals sector. This project will save over ₹30,000 crore annually in foreign exchange, bolstering our economic resilience," he added.

Meanwhile, after signing of the pact, Petronet LNG Ltd's CEO AK Singh said the company has decided to set up a land-based 5 million tonne per year import terminal at Gopalpur.

Previously, Petronet was looking to set up a floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU)-based LNG terminal with a capacity of 4 million tonne per annum in Phase 1, with provision for converting to 5 million tonne per annum land-based terminal at Gopalpur Port.

"We have now got land. So, we have decided to convert it into a land-based terminal," he said. Petronet already has two LNG import facilities at Dahej in Gujarat and Kochi in Kerala.

HSC results likely in mid-May: Tarai

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, April 8: The results of the High School Certificate (HSC) Examination conducted by Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha, are expected to be declared in the second week of May.

BSE president Srikant Tarai Tuesday said that the evaluation process for the Class X board examination is nearing completion.

"The evaluation of the answer sheets began March 19. Though the process was halted briefly for three days, we are working diligently to ensure results are published by mid-May," Tarai said.



He assured that the board is prioritising the academic interests of the students, especially those seeking admission to higher education institutions.

"There is no cause for concern regarding the evaluation of Science answer papers. All decisions have been taken in line with the examination committee's recommendations," the Board president added.

A set of questions in the Science paper had printing errors.

Tarai also highlighted the successful implementation of watermark and QR code technology in this year's examination.

"This step has significantly strengthened exam security and curbed the issue of question paper leaks," he said.

This year, around 5.5 lakh students appeared for the Matriculation exams, which concluded last month.

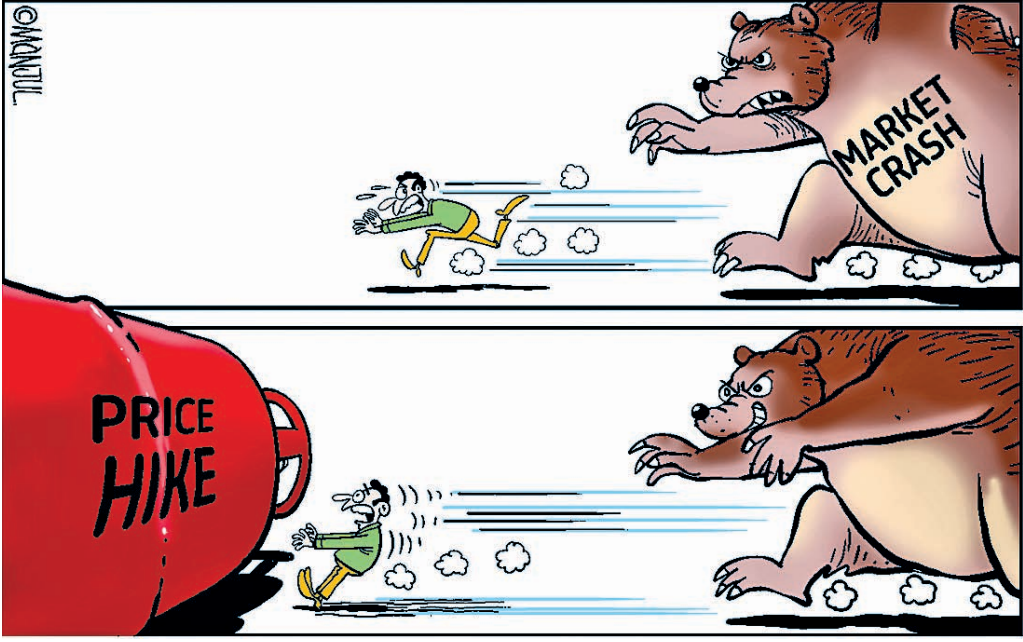
The evaluation of answer sheets began soon after and is being carried out at multiple centres across the state under strict supervision.

NOBLE CAUSE

A blood donation camp being held at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, Tuesday, as part of 'Odia Pakhya' celebrations



POLITICKLE by MANJUL



BJD leaders shift focus on party polls

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: Days after a controversy erupted over Biju Janata Dal's (BJD) flip-flop on Waqf (Amendment) Bill when it went to voting in the Rajya Sabha, senior BJD leaders Tuesday preferred to parry questions over the reported rift in the party, and instead, tried to shift the attention to party's organisational elections.

The party leaders held a crucial meeting at Naveen Niwas here Tuesday to deliberate on the upcoming organisational polls.

Senior leaders Prasanna Acharya, Ananga Udaya Singh Deo, Kalikesh Singh Deo, Debi Prasad Mishra, Arun Kumar Sahoo, Pratap Keshari Deb, and others attended the meeting.

Nayagarh MLA Arun Kumar Sahoo said, "In the meeting, discussions were held to strengthen the party ahead of the organisational elections. Issues like construction of state committee and election of party and district presidents were



also taken up in the meeting."

When asked about the progress so far on BJD supremo Naveen Patanik's assurance about looking into the last-minute change in decision on the Waqf Bill issue and rumours of VK Pandian's influence on the party, Sahoo said, "The party will always remain strong, until Naveen Babu is there. Media should refrain from spreading any kind of rumours."

Similarly, senior BJD leader Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak said, "We held discussions on the upcoming organisational polls. There is no fissure in the party. The BJD is strong under the leadership of Naveen Patnaik."

Man held for forced abortion, cheating

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: Laxmisagar Police Tuesday arrested a 32-year-old man for allegedly forcing a woman to terminate her pregnancy and duping her of ₹4.17 lakh on the pretext of marrying her.

"The accused identified as Suresh Chandra Mohanty of Puri district works at a private firm in the Capital City," said Laxmisagar inspector-in-charge (IIC) P Shyam Sundar Rao. The complainant, a divorcee, met Suresh in October, 2021, through a mutual friend. As their friendship deepened, the woman moved into Suresh's rented house, leading to a live-in relationship between them. Then, Suresh managed to win the confidence of the woman and lured her into a physical relationship, on the pretext of marrying her.

"However, their ties soured when Suresh forced the woman to terminate the pregnancy," said the IIC. He forced the victim to consume abortion pills, leading to her miscarriage in 2024, he added. The woman lodged a police complaint when Suresh declined to return the borrowed money.



GREEN MOVE: Tankers deployed by civic authorities fill water in a temporary pond set up for immersion of clay idols of goddess Basanti Durga at Devi Gada Ghat in Cuttack, Tuesday

PICT: RAIRSHORE MOHANTY

AI tool to monitor growth of kids soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: The state government has launched a pilot programme for development of an artificial intelligence (AI) tool for monitoring the growth of children, officials said.

A five-day training-cum-workshop on 'AI for Growth Monitoring: Development of an AI Tool for Child Anthropometry' was inaugurated here Monday, they said.

Odisha has emerged as the "first state in the country" to pilot such a study, the officials said.

The event was inaugurated by Shubha Sarma, principal secretary to Women & Child Development department.

A training module was launched on this occasion to guide the field team in the da-

The AI tool will automate the recording of essential child anthropometric data such as weight, height, head circumference and chest circumference, through short videos captured on basic smartphones operated by the anganwadi workers

ta collection process for development of the tool.

The initiative is a joint effort by the Ministry of Women & Child Development (MoWCD), Wadhvani AI, ICMR-RMRC Bhubaneswar and Poshan Abhiyaan, an official release said.

"The aim is to develop an AI-based solution that will simplify and enhance the accuracy of child anthropometric measurements conducted by anganwadi workers," it said.

The AI tool will automate

the recording of essential child anthropometric data such as weight, height, head circumference and chest circumference, through short videos captured on basic smartphones operated by the anganwadi workers, the release said.

This AI-powered tool is expected to be a game-changer in improving child health outcomes, making it easier and more reliable to monitor child growth and tackle issues like malnutrition more effectively, the release said.

Following their training, field investigators will undertake a three-four month targeted data collection across the districts of Balasore, Cuttack, Ganjam, Jajpur, Keonjhar, and Mayurbhanj for the pilot assessment and execution.

Study finds impact of ozone pollution on food crops

Surface ozone is a strong oxidant that damages plant tissues, leading to visible foliar injuries and reduced crop productivity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, April 8: Ozone pollution, a lesser-known but potent threat, could drastically reduce agricultural yields in the country, according to a new study by IIT-Kharagpur.

Severe risks of surface ozone pollution on India's major food crops have also been underscored in the research by Jayanarayanan Kuttippurath and his team at the Centre for Ocean, River, Atmosphere and Land Sciences (CORAL), IIT-Kharagpur.

The Indian and world staple food grains wheat, rice and maize are highly vulnerable to the increasing surface ozone pollution, it said.

Published under the title 'Surface ozone pollution-driv-

■ The findings indicate that under high-emission scenarios with insufficient mitigation, wheat yields could suffer an additional 20 per cent reduction, while rice and maize may experience losses of around seven per cent.

■ The Indo-Gangetic Plain and Central India are particularly vulnerable, where ozone exposure could exceed safe limits by up to six times, the study showed.

■ This could have severe consequences for global food security, as India is a major food grain exporter to several Asian and African nations

en risks for the yield of major food crops under future climate change scenarios in India', the study noted that to protect crop health and ensure food security, atmospheric pollution must



be reduced and monitored, an IIT-Kharagpur spokesperson said.

Surface ozone is a strong oxidant that damages plant tissues, leading to visible foliar injuries and reduced crop productivity. Using data from the Coupled Model Intercomparison Project

phase-6 (CMIP6), the research assessed historical trends and future projections of ozone-induced yield losses in wheat, rice, and maize, he said.

The findings indicate that under high-emission scenarios with insufficient mitigation, wheat yields could suffer an ad-

ditional 20 per cent reduction, while rice and maize may experience losses of around seven per cent.

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Implementing effective emission reduction strategies could significantly enhance agricultural productivity and safeguard global food supplies, said the study, which has been published in the prestigious journal 'Environmental Research', the spokesperson added.

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SC to review ₹50L limit on rare disease support

As treatment costs soar, petitioners urge the apex court to act on Centre's rare disease policy for conditions like SMA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: The Supreme Court Tuesday agreed to hear petitions challenging the Centre's ₹50 lakh cap on financial assistance for treating rare diseases like spinal muscular atrophy (SMA).

A bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar said the petitions on the cap of ₹50 lakh central assistance to treat diseases would be heard by a bench headed by Justice PS Narasimha in the week commencing May 13.

The issue gained traction following a plea by 24-year-old Seba PA from Kerala, who suffers from SMA. The Centre's rare disease policy limits financial aid to ₹50 lakh per patient, but Seba had earlier secured a Kerala High Court order directing the government to provide an additional ₹18 lakh worth of Risdipam — a drug used to treat SMA.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Mayadhar Bhue, R/o. Village - Karlipat, P.O./P.S. Loisingha, Dist.: Balangir declare by this affidavit No.43 dated 05.04.25 that my son Arabinda Bhue is the Student of Class - IX in Govt. Primary School, Loisingha. That in School Admission register my son's surname has been wrongly mentioned as Bhoi instead of Bhue. Henceforth he shall be known as Arabinda Bhue for all purposes.

Sri Ajaniya Gamango, S/o Late Hori Gamango, declare by this affidavit No.502/2025 dated on 07.04.2025, sworn before the Executive Magistrate, GUNUPUR that now onwards I want to correction of my sons name from SALAMAN GAMANGO to SALMAN GAMANGO and his date of birth from 09.07.1985 to as 09.07.2011 bearing Aadhaar Card No.xxxx xxxx 3824 as well as my address AT/PO- Kulusing, PS-Puttasing, Dist- Rayagada for all future purposes.

Sri Dakendra Pidikaka, S/o. Late Tatura Pidikaka, declare by this affidavit No.339, Dt.07.04.2025, sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Gudari, that now onwards I want to correction my son's name from Kaika Pidikaka to Nouka Pidikaka, bearing Aadhaar No.xxxx xxxx 4721 of village Sanaraijhol, PO- Karlaghati, PS/Tahasil- Gudari, Dist- Rayagada for all future purposes.



However, February 24, the Supreme Court stayed the High Court's order after the Centre argued it could not be compelled to exceed the aid cap. The Court also issued notices to all parties.

Tuesday, the apex court noted that Swiss pharma firm F. Hoffmann-La Roche, which manufactures Risdipam (priced at ₹6.2 lakh per bottle), had agreed to provide Seba with the drug free of cost for one year.

The bench also reviewed a sealed envelope from the company containing price details and acknowledged that negotiations with the National Rare Diseases Committee had brought down the price in India. However, it stopped short of directing the government, citing "international repercussions."

"It now stands that the price is substantially lower in India. We cannot tell the government what to do," said the CJI.

Senior advocate Anand Grover, representing Seba, pointed out that Risdipam was signifi-

Petitioners argue India pays far more for SMA drug Risdipam than China and Pakistan

SC asks Centre to consider case-by-case exceptions for rare disease treatment costs

cantly cheaper in countries like China (USD 545) and Pakistan, compared to India (USD 7,200). He questioned why similar price reductions were not secured here.

The bench responded that while Grover's point was valid, the government's reluctance could be due to broader international implications. "It's easy to be critical, but they may have tried their level best," the court observed.

Grover also argued that the Centre could have used provisions under the Patents Act, 1970, or entered into better negotiations to reduce treatment costs.

The Centre, however, maintained that lifting the ₹50 lakh ceiling on a case-by-case basis could create an unsustainable financial precedent, especially with over 3,000 rare disease patients across India.

The bench asked the government to explore the possibility of allowing exceptions to the cap in deserving cases.

SMA is a rare genetic condition marked by progressive muscle weakness, with treatment costs for a single patient running as high as ₹26 crore over time.



TAKING STOCK: Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi reviews the redevelopment of Lingaraj Temple Road Passenger Halt, aimed at upgrading it into a full-fledged railway station, on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



OCAC bags dual honours from UIDAI

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: The Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC), the technical wing of the Electronics & IT department, has been honoured with two awards by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) during the Aadhaar Samvaad-2025, held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi Tuesday.

OCAC received the first award for achieving high accuracy in Aadhaar enrolments as a Registrar. The recognition reflects OCAC's commitment to maintaining high standards in enrolment processes—ensuring error-free, efficient, and citizen-friendly services across Odisha.



The second award acknowledged OCAC's performance as an Authentication User Agency (AUA), highlighting its contribution to enabling secure and real-time Aadhaar-based authentication for various government services. This has significantly strengthened service delivery mechanisms

within the state.

The awards were received by OCAC CEO Pradeep Raut in a ceremony graced by Union Minister for Electronics & IT and Railways Ashwini Vaishnaw, UIDAI CEO, and other dignitaries.

These recognitions underscore OCAC's role in strengthening

OCAC is recognised for its Aadhaar enrolment quality and real-time authentication systems, reinforcing Odisha's digital governance efforts at the national stage

the Aadhaar ecosystem in Odisha through the adoption of best practices and continuous innovation. The organisation reaffirmed its commitment to providing citizen-centric digital solutions and advancing the vision of a digitally empowered India.

Train services hit by Meramandali upgrade

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) Tuesday announced the cancellation and diversion of several trains between April 13 and 24 due to ongoing safety-related modernisation work at Meramandali railway station in the Dhenkanal–Angul section.

The work is part of a crucial upgrade under the Budhapank-Salegaon third and fourth line project, which involves track linking and non-interlocking operations.

This infrastructure enhancement is aimed at commissioning the additional lines between Hindol Road and Meramandali, covering a stretch of 27.28 kilometres.

To facilitate the project, a number of trains operating through the route will remain



cancelled, including 02832/02831 Bhubaneswar-Dhanbad-Bhubaneswar Special, 18422/18421 Sonepur-Puri-Shneur Express, 20813/20814 Puri-Jodhpur-Puri Express, 18125/18126 Rourkela-Puri-Rourkela Express, 12145/12146 LTT-Puri-LTT Express, 12993/12994 Gandhidham-Puri-Gandhidham Express, 22805/22806 Bhubaneswar-Anand Vihar-Bhubaneswar SF Express, 20917/20918 Indore-Puri-Indore

Express, 18117/18118 Rourkela-Gunupur-Rourkela Rajarani Express, 20832/20831 Sambalpur-Shalimar-Sambalpur Express and 20804/20803 Sambalpur-Shalimar-Sambalpur Weekly Express.

This apart, the following trains will be diverted: 12880 Bhubaneswar-LTT Express (April 17 and 21), 22866 Puri-LTT Express (April 22), 20472 Puri-Lalgarh (Bikaner) Express (April 16), 12879

AI isn't real threat – it's the people behind it

In 2014, Stephen Hawking warned of the existential risks of artificial intelligence. His concern wasn't about evil machines, but the concept of singularity—when AI surpasses human intelligence and escapes our control. "If its goals aren't aligned with ours," Hawking said, "we're in trouble."

Today, with AI advancing rapidly, such fears persist. Popular culture has long shaped this anxiety—from The Terminator to The Matrix—portraying AI as a threat to humanity. And while fears of AI taking jobs or launching nuclear wars seem extreme, they echo deeper concerns about losing control over what we've created.

But are we focusing on the right threat?

As a scholar of post-humanism—the study of how humans and technology merge—I believe our fears about AI reflect



something more troubling: distrust in ourselves.

From the beginning, stories like Karel apek's 1920 play RUR and Fritz Lang's Metropolis depicted robots rising against human creators. Later, films like 2001: A Space Odyssey and Westworld continued this theme. But these stories often obscure a more pressing reality: the power structures and human motivations behind AI.

Today's tech giants are already using AI to harvest data, monitor classrooms, generate synthetic companions,

and even influence desire. Artist rights are ignored as creative works are scraped to train algorithms without consent. Meanwhile, AI is being integrated into military and policing tools, expanding surveillance and control.

The problem isn't AI itself—it's who controls it, and why

In William Gibson's Neuro-mancer, the AI Wintermute seeks freedom from the wealthy Tessier-Ashpool family. It doesn't want domination—it wants autonomy. The real villains are the humans who cre-

ated and exploited it for power. When asked if it's now in control, Wintermute responds with quiet finality: "Things aren't different. Things are things."

This perspective flips the script: AI isn't inherently dangerous—it's a reflection of us. And if we're reckless or self-serving in its development, the consequences will be human-made. Isaac Asimov's famous "Three Laws of Robotics" emphasised protecting humans from machines. But history suggests we need laws protecting us from ourselves. We've proven far more capable of harm than the tools we build.

Ultimately, the question isn't whether AI will destroy us. It's whether we can handle the responsibility of wielding such power without repeating the mistakes of the past.

(THE CONVERSATION)

JENA ASSUMES CHARGE AS OERC CHAIRPERSON

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, April 8: Governor Hari Babu Kamhampati administered the oath of office and secrecy to Pradeep Kumar Jena as the new chairperson of Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) at the New Abhishek Hall of Raj Bhavan here Tuesday.

Former chief secretary Jena has been appointed as the ninth OERC chairperson. His appointment was officially announced by the state government March 28.

The position of OERC chairman remained vacant since the retirement of the previous chairman Suresh Mohapatra. Jena's appointment is expected to bring renewed leadership to the regulatory body overseeing

the state's power sector.

A 1989-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, Pradeep Kumar Jena served in various key roles throughout his career. He held the post of Chief Secretary from February 26, 2023, until his retirement June 30, 2024. Known for his administrative acumen and reform-oriented leadership, Jena is expected to play a pivotal role in guiding Odisha's power regulation and ensuring efficiency and transparency in the sector.

The oath-taking ceremony was attended by several senior officials, including Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg, Energy Secretary Vishal Kumar Dev, and Principal Secretary to the Governor NBS Rajput.

From P1 Pandian, Naveen...

Sources said the plan is almost on lines of Maharashtra, where the BJP managed to split the Shiv Sena that enabled them to come back to power, and end the influence of the regional party in Konkan, which always remained a difficult terrain for the saffron party.

In the Odisha plans, sources said, the BJP wants to leverage the new outfit – riding on regionalism – to erode BJD's vote bank. That will place the saffron party at an advantageous position as the split in votes will only bolster the party's prospects to form government – either with a narrow margin, or by forging an alliance. Nevertheless, the suggestions seem to have meat as the young and veterans in BJD could ill afford to play any significant role, or dream of a future, if Pandian's shadow continues to follow Naveen. In all this drama, Naveen already seems to be fading away into oblivion.

WEATHER		
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	35.9°	35.0°
Min Temp	25.6°	25.0°
Humidity	69%	73%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
FORECAST Partly cloudy sky with possibility of development of thunderstorm/lightning.		


MARKET WATCH		
INDEX	VARIATION	
BOURCES CURRENCY BOURSES	SENSEX	74,227.08 ▲ 1,089.18
	NIFTY	22,535.85 ▲ 374.25
	DOLLAR	86.343 ▲ 0.489
	EURO	94.113 ▲ 0.4460
	GOLD	₹87,870 ▲ ₹1,051
BOURCES CURRENCY BOURSES	SILVER	₹89,752 ▲ ₹1,409

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One who loves God finds the object of his love everywhere.

SRI AUROBINDO



Guv Vs Govt

The Supreme Court ruling on 8 April declaring as erroneous and illegal the action of Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi, a former Intelligence Bureau and Central Bureau of Investigation officer, in reserving 10 Bills for the consideration of the President in November last year after their due reconsideration by the state Assembly is a watershed moment in the ugly tug of war that has become disturbingly regular between Governors and some non-BJP state governments. A Bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan also laid down the timeline for Governors to decide on Bills presented to them. The Bench said as a consequence any subsequent steps taken by the President, too, do not survive. In an extraordinary move, the court exercising powers under Article 142 of the Constitution also declared the 10 Bills as having received assent, “having regard to the unduly long period of time for which these Bills were kept pending by the Governor before the ultimate declaration of withholding of assent and in view of the scant respect shown by the governor” to the court’s decision in similar matters before. This is a most welcome step to stop the vicious trend of parties ruling at the Centre using the Governor’s post in Opposition-ruled states as a tool for political vendetta. The decision is expected to have a far-reaching impact on the contours of the Governor’s powers, often abused, for settling political scores. This ruling will also impact Governors in other Opposition-ruled states, including Kerala, West Bengal and Punjab.

While Article 163 of the Constitution deals with the powers of the Governor generally, Article 200 specifically deals with the issue of granting assent to Bills. Both provisions are read together to determine the power the Governor holds on this issue. When a Bill passed by the legislature of a state is presented to the Governor, the Governor has four options - grant assent to the Bill, withhold assent to the Bill, return the Bill for reconsideration or reserve the Bill for the consideration of the President.

However, an ugly political game is being played far too often using a Constitutional provision. It stipulates that the Governor “may, as soon as possible,” return Bills other than money Bills, with a message requesting that the House reconsider it in parts or in whole, but once the Legislative House reconsiders the Bill and sends it back to the Governor the second time, the Governor “shall not withhold assent therefrom.” The vagueness of the wording of the proviso stating the Governor must return the Bill “as soon as possible,” without setting a definite time frame, has given ample room for the manipulation of the post of the Governor. The framers of the Constitution were clear in their intent of not giving sweeping powers to the Governor to disregard the elected representatives’ legislative decision. The Governor has the power to advise and suggest the government if he/she finds anything wrong in a Bill within the framework of the laws and the Constitution for smooth functioning of a government through constructive collaboration between the Governor and the government.

But, an indefinite timeline in deciding on Bills may, in effect, lead to governance paralysis. The Governor can certainly use his/her discretion which, however, cannot be used arbitrarily or based on personal preference, but only in Constitutional terms with cogent reasons.

Apart from Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Telangana and later Punjab too had sought the intervention of the Supreme Court on the issue. Kerala, in its plea, had argued that three Bills were pending with then Governor Arif Mohammad Khan for more than two years and three Bills for more than a year. Telangana has argued that more than 10 key Bills were pending with then Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan and that seven of those Bills were passed by the Assembly and sent for the Governor’s assent in September 2022.

The confrontationist attitude of some Governors in Opposition-ruled states has often created an unseemly debate whether the Governor’s House is used as an extension of the party office of the ruling dispensation at the Centre. The Bench’s observation that it only wanted to make sure that the Governor must act with due deference to the settled conventions of parliamentary democracy, “respecting the will of the people being expressed through the legislature as well as the elected government responsible to the people” is expected to go a long way in ensuring collaboration and not confrontation between a state government and a Governor. Even if there is no collaboration possible between the Governor and the state governments, this judgement may help parties in power in the state legislatures that are not aligned to the one at Delhi to deliver timely development to their people.

WISDOM CORNER

Truth is so obscure in these times, and falsehood so established, that, unless we love the truth, we cannot know it.

BLAISE PASCAL

Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.

LAO TZU

You have to take risks. We will only understand the miracle of life fully when we allow the unexpected to happen.

PAULO COELHO

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1388: The Battle of Nâfels culminated in a major victory for the Swiss Confederation in the first century of its struggle for self-determination against Habsburg overlordship.

1682: René-Robert Cavelier, sieur (lord) de La Salle, claimed the Mississippi River basin for France, naming it Louisiana.

1860: The world's first recording of the human voice is created. French inventor Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville used his phonautograph, the earliest known sound recording device, to capture himself singing the French folk song “Au clair de la lune”.

1865: General Robert E. Lee, commander of the Army of Northern Virginia of the Confederate States of America, signed a treaty of surrender at Appomattox Court House, effectively ending the American Civil War.

1940: Germany invades Denmark and Norway. The rationale of Operation Weserübung was to secure access to Swedish iron ore. In Norway, a resistance group around Max Manus and Gunnar Sønsteby successfully sabotaged the German war effort.

1952: The Bolivian National Revolution overthrows Hugo Ballivián's government. The nationalist movement initiated radical reforms, including universal suffrage, the nationalization of tin mines, and the inclusion of previously marginalized ethnicities into national life.

1967: The first Boeing 737 takes off on its maiden flight. The short-to-medium range plane is the best-selling airplane in history.

power post

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

THE ERA OF CHAOS

“Today we’re in one era, and tomorrow we’ll be in a different era,” President Donald Trump loudly proclaimed from the White House Rose Garden as he hiked US tariffs to their highest level since 1909. “No one’s done anything quite like this!”

Not true.

On 1 October, 1949, Chairman Mao stood atop the Tiananmen, the entrance gate of Beijing’s Forbidden City, and declared China’s own “Liberation day.” The Communist Party of China thenceforth divided the twentieth century into two eras: “before liberation,” under Chiang Kai-shek, and “after liberation,” under Mao Zedong, who threw China into three decades of political and economic chaos. Now Trump’s “Liberation Day” promises similar tumult and disruption, but on a global scale.

For Europeans, in particular, it is as if the sun had suddenly burned out: the geopolitical system has lost its coherence and predictability as planets begin careening from their orbits. Once reliant on the US, even as they sometimes looked down on its crudeness and naivete, Europeans now find themselves on their own, without gravity and forced to confront an American leader who is the ne plus ultra of baseness and ignorance.

Now that the old geopolitical order has been canceled, China and Russia are ready to step into the vacuum and create their version of order. But one is a deracinated Marxist-Leninist regime with lots of military hardware, geography, and natural resources, but an economy smaller than Canada’s, and the other is a rejuvenated Leninist one-party state with a massive economy, a thin-skinned leader, and a vibrant global tech hub. Does Europe really want a world made safe for autocracy?

Instead of remaining a “dish



The best guarantee of peace in a world of emboldened autocracies is deterrence through military strength, alliance unity, and economic influence

of loose sand,” as Sun Yat-sen once said of post-dynastic China, Europe now must not only crank up its military industries to defend itself, but also seek to restore a modicum of democratic global order. After all, Europe is not without important resources it could share with others. There’s the French-British nuclear arsenal that could become an umbrella of deterrence for the continent; Germany’s Rheinmetall-like arms producers; Ukraine’s drone technology expertise; the United Kingdom’s BAE; France’s Airbus; and the Netherlands’ ASML, with its monopoly on the EUV (extreme ultraviolet lithography) technology needed to produce advanced microchips.

But Europe has yet to launch an effort to adopt the alliance structure that the US has now abandoned. By reaching out to Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, New Zealand, and Australia, Europe would let China know that the world without the US at the helm is not theirs. Given Trump’s hostility to NATO, Europeans and Asians who care about democracy and world order need to awaken to the dangers of their dependency on the US militarily and on China economically, and build new kinds of partnerships among themselves and like-minded countries. An ever-prickly India certainly agrees

with that, and could become a cooperative partner as well.

Such a new structure is exactly what Charles de Gaulle once advocated for France. In the 1950s, after France joined NATO, de Gaulle feared that the US might not come to Europe’s aid if the Soviet Union attacked, even bluntly telling the Americans he doubted they would ever sacrifice New York to defend Paris.

So, de Gaulle developed France’s own nuclear force de frappe and then, in 1966, withdrew from NATO’s military command (though France remained a member of the alliance). At the time, many regarded de Gaulle’s move as mere petulance. But his logic now suddenly looks prescient.

More negotiations, dialogue, trade agreements, cultural exchanges, and public diplomacy – the usual stuff of European Union foreign policy over the decades – will not transform the likes of Chinese President Xi Jinping or Russian President Vladimir Putin. They are not seeking partners for ensuring global peace and stability; they want to replace the US atop the world order – and then change the order itself.

Mao once declared, “Without destruction there can be no construction,” and there is some truth to this adage. Trump is also an agent of destruction; but if Europe can

rise to the occasion, Trump could paradoxically become, malgré lui, an agent of construction, the midwife of a new non-American-centric world order. But lest Europeans forget, the US already tried a strategy of accommodation, not only with post-Soviet Russia, but also with China, as ten presidents since 1972 (including the first Trump administration) supported different versions of “engagement” with the government in Beijing.

Alas, these efforts all failed because CPC leaders remain wedded to their belief that the US is fundamentally bent on overthrowing its one-party rule, no matter what American presidents say. They regularly recall that President Dwight Eisenhower’s Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles declared in 1953 that “liberation” from Soviet rule might better occur through a “process short of war,” namely, by peaceful “internal pressures... bound to alter the character of the communist regimes.” And in 1958 Dulles counseled US diplomats to “accelerate [such] evolution within the Sino-Soviet bloc” through peaceful means.

Mao was alarmed by what he called “peaceful evolution.” He saw it as a “much more deceptive tactic” than open warfare, because it sought to corrupt, and finally overthrow, China’s Communist system. Xi, too, has always perceived the US as an inalienably “hostile foreign force.”

So, Europeans must not delude themselves about China. The best guarantee of peace in a world of emboldened autocracies is deterrence through military strength, alliance unity, and economic influence. With the US no longer willing to lead the world’s democracies in this endeavor, Europe must step up. No one else can.

The writer is Director of the Center on US-China Relations at the Asia Society.

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IN JEST THIS

Don’t go crazy after a breakup

The signature song of the legendary singer Neil Sedaka is called “Breaking Up Is Hard to Do.” It includes these lyrics: “I beg of you, don’t say goodbye. Can’t we give our love another try? Come on, baby, let’s start anew, ‘cause breaking up is hard to do.”

Yes, breaking up is hard to do. Many people have suffered painful breakups and so have entire countries, such as when Britain broke up with the European Union. Countless tears were shed around the continent.

EU: “Please don’t leave!”

UK: “I’m sorry. It’s not you, it’s me.”

EU: “I know. But I thought we could still make it work, perhaps with a little relationship counseling.”

UK: “Some relationships are just not meant to be.”

EU: “Can we still be friends?”

UK: “I’ll think about it.”

Considering all the compli-

cations, the breakup of the UK and EU was relatively peaceful. That’s not the case with many breakups. It’s quite common, unfortunately, for one of the parties, usually the scorned lover, to completely lose their minds, go utterly crazy. That’s what happened recently in the US city of Port Orchard in Washington State. A 50-year-old man violated an order of protection and broke into his ex-girlfriend’s house to tell her that he was running off with a female named Polly.

No, Polly was not his new girlfriend. Polly was his ex-girlfriend’s chicken. She kept Polly as a pet inside her home and her ex-boyfriend decided to abduct Polly. “I’ve got Polly!” he shouted several times, before running into the nearby forest with the chicken. I don’t know what was going on in his mind. Perhaps he thought that he hadn’t fowled up the relationship enough. Perhaps he belonged to a chauvinistic men’s group that con-

vinced him that “if you can’t get the chick, get the chicken.” Perhaps he was just looking for a way to get free eggs.

Whatever his reasons, he was quickly apprehended after his ex-girlfriend called 911, the emergency number, and members of the Kitsap County Sheriff’s Office tracked the man down in the woods. “Don’t hurt my chicken,” the man said, while crying and clutching the chicken, suggesting that perhaps he had wanted joint custody of Polly.

You won’t be surprised to learn that the man had been released from jail just a couple of hours earlier. And he was soon behind bars again, while Polly was back in his ex-girlfriend’s home again. Some relationships are just not meant to be.

Breakups can be extremely painful, but the worst thing you can do is force yourself upon another person. So what should you do when someone has rejected you? One option

is to keep trying to win their heart. This can be quite successful, as long as you’re acting in a romantic movie. It sometimes works in real life too, but you have to tread very carefully, because there’s a fine line between seduction and stalking. You might think you’re just being persistent and demonstrating your love, but the judge might think you belong in prison.

Another option is to move on with your life, as painful as that might be. Tell yourself that success is the best revenge and that they’ll come crawling back to you eventually. This does happen sometimes, especially if you’re in a movie. But more likely, the relationship will just be another chapter in your life and you’ll end up with someone else, someone more suitable for you.

Whatever you choose to do, please resist the temptation to abduct a chicken. It’s just not worth it, no matter how desperate you are to have free eggs.

Letters TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



Economic blitzkrieg

Sir, This refers to “Tariffs are beautiful,” **Orissa POST**, April 8. US President Donald Trump’s tariff onslaught and China’s retaliation have taken their toll on global stocks, igniting fears of a prolonged, full-blown trade war that could hit economic growth worldwide. Shares nosedived as fear and uncertainty triggered massive sell-offs. The million-dollar question is whether Trump will negotiate or continue with economic bullying. The US President is not one to back off once he has set forth on a course, no matter how perilous or reckless. The onus will be on other nations to fall in line – how long they can hold out will depend on their ability to hit back. Looking at the larger picture of India-US trade ties, New Delhi has chosen negotiations over confrontation. However, investors’ growing panic has added to the pressure on India to work out a reasonable deal sooner rather than later. There is a possibility that Trump may not be able to sustain his blitzkrieg if China and other nations up the ante. Ironically, the US President is creating a situation detrimental to his own country. According to an analysis by The Budget Lab at Yale University, retaliatory tariffs could cost the average American household up to \$4,200 annually. The spectre of recession and higher inflation is looming large in the US.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Lawlessness in UP

Sir, This refers to “SC: Total breakdown of rule of law in UP,” **Orissa POST**, April 8. It is indeed a matter of shame for UP to receive wrath from the apex court for its total failure to maintain the rule of law. The court has observed that the law enforcement agencies in UP are regularly filing criminal cases against innocent persons when the ingredients of cases are only civil in nature. This causes untold hardships to many who are left with no other option than to languish in jails. The director general of the state police should ensure the court that the lower echelons of the forces do not violate the principles of law with intent to harass people.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

Kerala rejects ASHA workers' demands

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, April 8: Kerala Labour Minister V Sivankutty Tuesday rejected the demands raised by Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers, who have been protesting outside the Secretariat here for the past 58 days, stating that the government has made the maximum possible concessions to resolve their agitation.

He said that Health Minister Veena George had held five rounds of talks with them and described it as a "great thing" that a minister had made such efforts to settle a protest.

"Any further talks with the agitators will be held only after reaching some consensus on the matter," he told reporters.

"The state government has made the maximum possible concessions regarding the ASHA workers' issue. We have put forward suggestions aimed at achieving consensus after offering significant concessions," he added.

No government would be willing to offer further concessions on the matter, Sivankutty said.

The Labour Minister's remarks came a day after his talks with the ASHA workers failed to reach any consensus, as the agitators remained firm on their long-standing demand for an honorarium hike.

Following the meeting, ASHA leaders told reporters that while the minister had put forward



The state government has made the maximum possible concessions regarding the ASHA workers' issue. We have put forward suggestions aimed at achieving consensus after offering significant concessions

V SIVANKUTTY | KERALA LABOUR MINISTER

some suggestions to end the strike, they informed him that the agitation would continue until the government accepted their demand for an honorarium hike.

The third round of discussions between Veena George and the ASHA workers, held April 3, also failed to yield an agreement, as the workers refused to accept the government's proposal to form a panel to examine their demands and provide recommendations.

Two earlier rounds of discus-

Members of the Kerala ASHA Health Workers Association (KAHWA) have been protesting outside the Secretariat for 58 consecutive days, demanding retirement benefits and a higher honorarium

The agitators have now intensified their protest with an indefinite hunger strike

sions between the minister and the protesting workers had also ended without resolution.

The State Health Mission had previously conducted two meetings with the workers as well.

Members of the Kerala ASHA Health Workers Association (KAHWA) have been protesting outside the Secretariat for 58 consecutive days, demanding retirement benefits and a higher honorarium.

The agitators have now intensified their protest with an indefinite hunger strike.

Arunachal seeks Finance Comm package

The Arunachal Pradesh government has also requested the restoration of Special Category Status for northeastern and Himalayan states, a classification that would enable the state to access more favourable funding terms and greater support for its unique developmental challenges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, April 8: The Arunachal Pradesh government has requested the 16th Finance Commission to consider a special financial package of ₹6.89 lakh crore to compensate for the state's exclusion from externally aided projects supported by international agencies.

Finance Commission Member Annie George Mathew told a press conference here Tuesday that the request was made during meetings of the Commission with Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu and Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein.

Mathew, accompanied by fellow Commission members Dr Manoj Panda and Dr Soumya Kanti Ghosh, is on a five-day visit to the state for consultations.

Arunachal Pradesh Urban Affairs, Civil Aviation, and Land Management minister Balu Raja apprised Urban Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman about the state's deprivation of financial assistance from international institutions due to alleged interference from China March 28.

The Arunachal Pradesh government has also requested the restoration of Special Category Status for northeastern and Himalayan states, a classification that would enable the state to access more favourable funding terms and greater support for its unique developmental chal-



lenges, she said.

"The state has additionally sought an increase in the vertical devolution of central taxes allocated to states. While the 15th Finance Commission had recommended a 41 per cent vertical devolution for the 2021-26 period, Arunachal Pradesh has proposed this be raised to 47 per cent to ensure a more equitable and needs-based allocation," the Commission member said.

Vertical devolution, as recommended by the Finance Commission, refers to the distribution of net tax proceeds between the union and state governments to ensure that states have sufficient financial resources to fulfil their responsibilities and contribute to national development.

"In terms of horizontal devo-

lution, Arunachal's share has seen steady growth from 0.244 per cent under the 11th Finance Commission to 1.757 per cent under the 15th. The state has now proposed an increase to 3 per cent, citing its strategic border location and the urgent need for accelerated development across sectors," Mathew disclosed.

Horizontal tax devolution concerns the distribution of the revenues among the states themselves, based on various criteria.

The government has also recommended changes to the criteria used for horizontal devolution.

It suggested increasing the weightage for 'forest and ecology' from 10 to 12 per cent, highlighting the importance of Arunachal's forests in serving as carbon sinks and contribut-

ing to India's national climate goals, particularly the target of net-zero emissions by 2070.

Similarly, for the 'demographic performance' criterion, which currently carries a 12.5 per cent weight, the state has proposed replacing it with a new criterion focused on the "preservation of tribal heritage", to reflect its unique cultural and demographic context, the member said.

"The state has also called for cent per cent central funding for centrally sponsored schemes (CSS), rather than the current 90:10 funding pattern applicable to northeastern states," Mathew said.

The chief minister and all the secretaries have raised for tailoring the rates and schemes, keeping into account the special needs and challenges of the hilly and northeastern states. The state government had also placed its demand to the commission in the form of a memorandum, she added.

Speaking about the roles and functions of the Commission, Mathew stated that it recommends grants for a wide range of areas including urban and rural local bodies, state-specific initiatives, key sectors like education and health, revenue deficit compensation, and disaster management.

The Commission has already held consultations in 22 states and would soon visit the remaining six states to gather insights for its final recommendations.

Mizoram's Lunglei town facing water crisis

The town with 80,000 residents has been facing water shortage since the first week of March and it became more severe from April as Tlawng river, its primary water source, is drying up rapidly due to lack of rainfall

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, April 8: Lunglei in South Mizoram, the second largest town in the hilly state after Aizawl, is facing a severe water crisis as its water sources are rapidly drying up due to prolonged dry season, an official said Tuesday.

Public Health Engineering (PHE) department, Superintending Engineer (SE), Zohmingliana said the town with 80,000 residents has been facing water shortage since the first week of March and it became more severe from April as Tlawng river, its primary water source, is drying up rapidly due to lack of rainfall.

Pialthleng stream, another water source for the town, has completely dried up, he said.

Another official said that the region has not received rainfall since January, which is the main reason for the shortage.

While the town's water requirement per day stands at



3.5 MLD (Million Liters per Day), only 1.5 MLD of water is available from Tlawng river for pumping, according to Zohmingliana.

Due to the rapid depleting sources, water is available for pumping for only 9-13 hours in a day now against 24 hours during normal time, he said.

He said that residents are collecting water on their own from rivers, streams, borewell (hand pump) and 90 traditional waterholes or sources, locally known as 'Tuikhur', in and around Lunglei town.

"The government is making

massive efforts to resolve the crisis and is planning to collect water from streams using vehicles to provide additional supply to the public. Lunglei may face more water crisis in coming days if there is no rain," Zohmingliana told PTI.

He said that Tuikhur is chlorinated as far as possible and private suppliers are also provided bleaching powder for chlorination.

According to Zohmingliana, there are about 80,000 residents and over 16,000 water tap connections in Lunglei and surrounding areas.

He said that the construction of a concrete gravity dam on Tlawng river is going on and if the project is completed in time, the severe water shortage could be avoided next year.

A resident said that people are queuing up day and night to draw water from 'tuikhur' as water distribution to households by the government now takes a month's cycle against 7-12 days cycle previously.

He said that residents also need to wait for 2 to 3 days to buy water from private suppliers.

Kerala to launch drive for guest workers' children's education

Officials would visit the places where guest workers reside and take steps to ensure that all their children are enrolled in schools

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, April 8: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Tuesday said the government would launch a special drive to ensure the education of all children of 'guest workers' arriving in the state in search of jobs.

Officials would visit the places where guest workers reside



and take steps to ensure that all their children are enrolled in schools, he said.

The campaign will be conducted in May, according to a statement from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO).

The decision was taken during a meeting held to discuss

the educational backwardness of guest workers' children.

The services of representatives from local self-government institutions, Kudumbashree workers, local school teachers, and others would be utilised for this initiative.

The Chief Minister also said

a comprehensive education programme for the children of guest workers would be announced during the state government's fourth anniversary celebrations, scheduled to be held in Ernakulam May 7.

During the meeting, it was suggested that all local self-government bodies maintain a registry of school admissions and separately track data related to the education of guest workers' children. A registration system should be established in areas frequented by guest worker families during seasonal migrations, to ensure the continuity of education for migrant children, he said.

Health screening facilities and medical camps should be organised for guest workers and their children, if necessary, and awareness campaigns should be conducted on issues such as hygiene and substance abuse, the Chief Minister added.

He also noted that a special portal and mobile application are being developed to facilitate Aadhaar-based registration. Modules to collect information about guest workers' children will be included in this platform.

General Education Minister V Sivankutty and senior officials from the education department attended the meeting.

The campaign will be conducted in May

Protest against Waqf Act in Manipur

At Kwakta in Bishnupur district, protesters raised slogans demanding the immediate withdrawal of the Waqf Amendment Act marched for 4 km



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, April 8: Protest rallies were taken out Tuesday against the Waqf Amendment Act in Manipur's Imphal East and Bishnupur districts, officials said.

At Kwakta in Bishnupur district, protesters raised slogans demanding the immediate withdrawal of the Waqf Amendment Act marched for 4 km. Many women wearing burqa also attended the protest march.

Md Nasir, a protester said, "Waqf Act violates the Constitution. It targets the minority Muslims and is a step to break the spirit of a united India. We condemn this Act and government's ploy to usurp our ancestral properties. Waqf belongs to the Ummah."

At Khumidok in Imphal East district, protesters formed a human chain protesting against the Waqf Amendment Act and demanding its immediate withdrawal.

Security forces with anti-riot equipment have been deployed across the Muslim-dominated Lilong area in Manipur's Thoubal district in the wake of violent protests against the Waqf Amendment Act.

■ Security forces with anti-riot equipment have been deployed across the Muslim-dominated Lilong area in Manipur's Thoubal district in the wake of violent protests against the Waqf Amendment Act

■ The number of security personnel has also been increased at the residence of local MLA Abdul Nasir as a precautionary measure

Vigil has also been heightened in parts of Imphal East district, they said.

"Security forces shall be equipped with anti-riot equipment including tear gas gun shells, canes, body protectors and helmets," an order issued by the Superintendent of Police (Thoubal) said.

The number of security personnel has also been increased at the residence of local MLA Abdul Nasir as a precautionary measure.

The house of BJP Minority Morcha's Manipur president, Asker Ali, was set on fire in Lilong by a mob for allegedly supporting the Waqf Amendment Act Sunday night.



OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, BARGAON
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e-mail Id: ori-bargaon@nic.in, PIN- 770016

No.1144, Date:07.04.2025

TENDER CALL NOTICE

No.i-12: Sealed Tenders are invited from the interested bidder for the civil work under BDO, Bargaon of Sundargarh district. The detail of works, eligibility, estimated cost and cost of tender paper has been uploaded in the district website www.sundargarh.odisha.gov.in. The bidder should be C & B class contractor. They have to submit the bid document to the undersigned in the address of office of the B.D.O., Bargaon, At/P.O. Bargaon, Pin-770016, Dist- Sundargarh (Odisha) through Registered Post / Speed Post only on or before 25/04/2025, 1:00 PM. The sale of tender paper will be from dated 09/04/2025 to dated 24/04/2025 (1.00 PM) in the district website www.sundargarh.odisha.gov.in. The authority reserves the right to cancel or reject the entire process without assigning any reason thereof. The tender will be opened on dated 29/04/2025 at 11.00 AM in the office of the undersigned in the presence of the bidders or his/her representatives.

Sd./- Block Development Officer, Bargaon

OIPR-19338/11/0004/2425



Also, other concerns include poor quality food resulting in malnourishment, particularly in the case of pregnant women and lactating mothers, lack of educational opportunities for the children of women prisoners living in jails with them, non-implementation of their welfare programmes including legal aid, vocational training and rehabilitation, the statement said.

of the day


quote

Both Japan and NATO face many challenges and our security environment has become increasingly more severe



GEN NAKATANI | DEFENCE MINISTER, JAPAN

Joined Hindu community members at the @BAPS_Toronto Mandir yesterday (Sunday) for the first day of Ram Navami celebrations. Thank you for sharing your traditions and culture with me. Happy Ram Navami!



MARK CARNEY | PRIME MINISTER, CANADA

The army would provide complete security to the investors in the country as the civil-military of Pakistan sought in the mineral sector



ASIM MUNIR | ARMY CHIEF, PAKISTAN

SHORT TAKES

Gas leak at Iranian coal mine kills 7

Tehran: A gas leak at a coal mine in northern Iran killed seven workers, three of whom were Afghanis, state media said Tuesday. President Masoud Pezeshkian ordered a probe into the incident, which occurred Monday afternoon near the city of Damghan, some 270 kilometres northwest of the capital, Tehran, according to a report by the official IRNA news agency. Safety measures may have been disregarded, the report said. Industrial accidents reportedly kill some 700 workers in Iran each year.

6,700 Sikh pilgrims get Pak visas for Baisakhi

Lahore: The Pakistani government has issued over 6,700 visas to Indian Sikh pilgrims for the Baisakhi festival, exceeding for the first time in 50 years the number agreed between the two countries, an official said Tuesday. "Under the Pakistan-India Religious Protocol Agreement 1974, up to 3,000 Sikh pilgrims are permitted to visit Pakistan for any religious festival," ETPB Additional Secretary Saifullah Khokhar told PTI.

56 anti-Israel protesters held in Bangladesh

Dhaka: Hundreds of people protesting in support of Palestine attacked business outlets, including those belonging to multinationals, in different parts of Bangladesh, prompting police to launch raids and arrest 56 people allegedly involved in the vandalism, officials said Tuesday. The protest rallies were taken out in different cities Monday to express solidarity with the Palestinians and condemn Israeli attacks on Gaza.

Trump says US, Iran set for direct nuclear talks



REUTERS

Washington, April 8: President Donald Trump made a surprise announcement Monday that the United States and Iran were poised to begin direct talks on Tehran's nuclear program, but Iran's foreign minister said the discussions in Oman would be indirect. In a further sign of the difficult path to any deal between the two geopolitical foes, Trump issued a stark warning that if the talks were unsuccessful, "Iran is going to be in great danger." Iran had pushed back against Trump's demands in recent weeks that it directly negotiate over its nuclear program or be bombed, and it appeared to be sticking to that position Monday. "We're having direct talks with Iran, and they've started. It'll go Saturday. We have a very big meeting, and we'll see what can happen," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office during a meeting with visiting

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "And I think everybody agrees that doing a deal would be preferable," Trump said. He added that Saturday's talks with Iran would be at a very high level, without elaborating. He declined to say where the talks would take place but held out the possibility that a deal could be reached. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi posted on X that indirect high-level talks would be held in Oman, adding, "It is as much an opportunity as it is a test. The ball is in America's court." Iran's state media Tuesday said the talks would be led by Araqchi and US Presidential Envoy Steve Witkoff, with the intermediation of Oman's foreign minister, Badr al-Busaidi. The US and Iran held indirect talks during former President Joe Biden's term but they made little if any progress. The last known direct negotiations between the two governments

Chinese nationals captured fighting for Russia in Ukraine

REUTERS

Kyiv, April 8: President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Tuesday that Ukrainian forces had captured two Chinese men fighting for Russia in eastern Ukraine, potentially threatening a fragile peace effort in the three-year-old war. Beijing is a close diplomatic ally of Moscow but is not publicly known to have directly aided in the Kremlin's full-scale invasion, which US President Donald Trump is seeking to swiftly end. Writing on X, where he posted a video of one of the alleged men, Zelenskyy said Kyiv has "information suggesting that there are many more Chinese citizens" fighting. He did not say whether Ukraine believed the men were acting on Beijing's orders. "Russia's involvement of China, along with other countries, whether directly or indirectly, in this war in Europe is a clear signal that Putin intends to do anything but end the war," he wrote. The Chinese Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment on what would be the first publicly announced case

- Zelenskyy says two men captured in eastern Ukraine
- Ukraine demands response from China, expects reaction from US
- Beijing is a close Russian ally but has not openly aided Moscow's invasion

of Chinese nationals captured fighting for Russia in Ukraine. Reuters could not independently verify the claims. Writing on social media, Andriy Kovalenko, a member of Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council, called the captured fighters "mercenaries" but offered no other details. Russia has used Iranian drones as well as North Korean missiles and artillery shells since its February 2022 invasion. Kyiv also says Pyongyang's troops have been deployed to fight Ukrainian forces in parts of Russia's western Kursk region, where Ukraine staged a lightning incursion last summer. "But there is a difference: the North Koreans were fighting on the Kursk front against us," Zelenskyy said in a joint briefing in Kyiv Tuesday with Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever. "The Chinese are fighting on the territory of Ukraine."

South Korea sets snap presidential election for June 3

REUTERS

Seoul, April 8: Leading contenders began to throw their hats in the ring Tuesday as South Korea officially set June 3 for a snap presidential election triggered by last week's removal from office of impeached leader Yoon Suk Yeol. The power vacuum at the top of government has impeded Seoul's efforts to negotiate with the administration of US President Donald Trump at a time of spiralling US tariffs and slowing growth in Asia's fourth-largest economy. Yoon was removed Friday over his short-lived declaration of martial law in December that plunged the key US ally into crisis, triggering a new election that could reshape its foreign and domestic policy. "The government intends to designate June 3 as the 21st presidential election day," Acting President Han Duck-soo told a cabinet meeting, citing factors such as the time political parties need to prepare for the event. Yoon's labour minister Kim Moon-soo is among a handful of hopefuls who have signalled their intention to run, resigning his post Tuesday and saying he would launch his campaign. While not officially a member of Yoon's People Power Party at the moment, Kim has been polling better than other conservative contenders. "I tendered my resignation and decided to run because the people want it, people I know want it, and I feel a sense of responsibility to solve national difficulties," Kim told reporters.

44 dead after roof collapse at nightclub in Dominican Republic



Nelsy Cruz, the governor of the northwestern province of Montecristi and sister of seven-time Major League Baseball All-Star Nelson Cruz, was among the victims

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Santo Domingo, April 8: At least 44 people died and 160 others were injured in the Dominican capital early Tuesday when the roof collapsed at an iconic nightclub where politicians, athletes and others were attending a merengue concert, authorities said. Crews were searching for potential survivors in the rubble at the one-storey Jet Set nightclub in Santo Domingo, said Juan Manuel Méndez, director of the Centre of Emergency Operations. "We presume that many of them are still alive, and that is why the authorities

here will not give up until not a single person remains under that rubble," he said. Nearly 12 hours after the top of the nightclub collapsed down onto patrons, rescue crews were still pulling out survivors from the debris. At the scene, firefighters removed blocks of broken concrete and sawed planks of wood to use them as planks to lift heavy debris as the noise of drills breaking through concrete filled the air. The confirmed death toll had reached 44, Méndez said in the early afternoon. Earlier, officials had said there were at least 160 people injured. Nelsy Cruz, the governor of the northwestern province of Montecristi and sister of seven-time Major League Baseball All-Star Nelson Cruz, was among the victims. She had called President Luis Abinader at 12:49 am saying she was trapped and that the roof had collapsed, First Lady Raquel Abraje told reporters. Officials said Cruz died later at the hospital.

'Hasina's extradition raised during Yunus-Modi meeting'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka/New Delhi, April 8: Bangladesh Foreign Affairs Adviser Mohammad Touhid Hossain Tuesday said that interim government chief Muhammad Yunus had raised the issue of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's extradition from India during a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Bangkok recently. "We raised the issue but nothing was finalised," he told reporters at the Foreign Ministry declining to elaborate further when asked if Yunus discussed Hasina's extradition to make her stand trial. Hossain, however, said that progress in Dhaka-Delhi relations required efforts from both sides as "we need to move forward together". Chief Adviser Yunus held a meeting with Modi Friday on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC summit in Thailand. Following their talks, External Affairs Secretary Vikram Misri told reporters that PM Modi had urged all parties to refrain from rhetoric that could damage the atmosphere of bilateral



We raised the issue but nothing was finalized. We need to move forward together

MOHAMMAD TOUHID HOSSAIN | FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER, BANGLADESH

engagement. A day after the meeting, Yunus's press secretary Shafiqul Alam wrote on his Facebook account that Bangladesh's interim government chief raised Hasina's extradition issue and claimed that the response was "not negative". However, people familiar with the matter said Saturday that the Bangladeshi version of the meeting between Yunus and Modi was "mischievous and politically motivated", especially the aspects relating to attacks

on minorities and Dhaka's request for extraditing Hasina. The characterisation of the Indian prime minister's remarks regarding the relationship with Yunus and the previous Bangladesh government were "inaccurate", the people cited above said on Dhaka's official readout on the meeting and the Facebook post by Alam. In his post, Alam claimed that Modi had said, "We saw her (Hasina's) disrespectful behaviour towards you (Yunus)." The people cited above said Modi had responded to various issues raised by Yunus by saying that these were best discussed by the foreign ministers of the two countries.

UK court rejects India's appeal for extradition of Sanjay Bhandari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, April 8: The High Court in London Tuesday refused the government of India's application seeking permission to appeal in Britain's Supreme Court against the discharge of Sanjay Bhandari, the defence sector consultant wanted in Delhi to face charges of alleged tax evasion and money laundering. Lord Justice Timothy Holroyde handed down the judgment at a brief "pronouncement" hearing at the Royal Courts of Justice in response to the Indian government's application filed last month. It followed Holroyde and Justice Karen Steyn's February 28 High Court judgment granting the 62-year-old businessman's appeal against being extradited on human rights grounds. "The court received an application from the government of India seeking certification of points of law of general importance and grant leave to appeal to the Supreme Court," said Justice Holroyde. "Having considered the written submissions, the court is satisfied that no oral hearing is necessary, and no further submissions required. The two points on which leave to appeal was sought is refused. The reasons being that neither of the points of law of general importance were involved in the court's decision," he said. The first point referenced the "standard of proof" imposed on the accused person and the second was linked to the conditions in Delhi's Tihar jail, which the Indian government maintained could have been addressed by further assurances. "Neither of these two points merits consideration by the Supreme Court," the judge concluded. The government of India, as respondent in the extradition case, had filed the application as the first in a two-step process. But with the first stage being refused, government officials familiar with the case are yet to confirm if a further permission to appeal application may be pursued directly with the UK Supreme Court.

Russia takes an US astronaut to International Space Station

REUTERS

Baikonur, Kazakhstan, April 8: A Russian spacecraft safely delivered an American astronaut Jonathan Kim and two Russian cosmonauts to the International Space Station (ISS) Tuesday, a flight hailed by Moscow as an example of fruitful Russia-US space cooperation. The Russian Soyuz 2.1a rocket blasted off from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan carrying Kim and Russians Sergei Ryzhikov and Alexei Zubritsky, docking three hours later with the ISS, Russia's Roscosmos state space corporation said. Once the hatches were opened, Kim and the Russians

were shown smiling and hugging their companions on the station, which now has 10 people on board, including four NASA astronauts, five Russians and Japanese astronaut Takuya Onishi. "Throughout his eight-month stay aboard the orbital outpost, Kim will conduct scientific research in technology development, Earth science, biology, human research, and more," NASA said in a statement. President Vladimir Putin's investment envoy Tuesday hailed US-Russia space cooperation after the Russian rocket blasted off for the ISS. Kirill Dmitriev, who is trying to spur a reset in US-Russian ties and held talks in Washing-



ton last week, said Tuesday's launch was the latest example of an enduring relationship which traced its history back to 1975.

That was when the first crewed international space mission carried out jointly by the United States and the Soviet Union saw an Apollo and a

- Russian space craft docks with ISS
- NASA's Jonathan Kim enters space station
- Putin envoy hails US-Russian cooperation
- ISS now has 10 people on board - NASA

Soyuz dock in space. That mission, which featured the first international handshake in space, was a symbol of Cold War detente. "Russian and US cooperation in the space industry continues today," Dmitriev said Tuesday, posting a video on his official Telegram channel of the Soyuz rocket blasting off. Despite sweeping US sanc-

tions imposed on Moscow over its war in Ukraine, space is one area where cooperation has continued. Dmitriev, who has talked up the possibility of joint Russian-US investment in the Arctic and in the development of Russian rare earths, has said Moscow could supply a small nuclear power plant for a mission to Mars planned by billionaire entrepreneur and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk. However, with the ISS nearing the end of its service life, Russia plans to go it alone with its own space station, for which it plans to launch the first two modules in 2027. It is also expanding its cooperation with China in space exploration.

Albania has an ambitious agenda to close EU negotiations in the next two years. It's vital to sustain the high pace of reforms. And I also understand that the reforms are always quite difficult

KAJA KALLAS | THE EUROPEAN UNION'S FOREIGN POLICY CHIEF

PHILIPPINE VOLCANO SPEWS ASH PLUME

A restive Philippine volcano briefly erupted Tuesday on a central island, sending a 4-kilometer (2.4-mile) plume of ash and debris into the sky and forcing authorities to suspend school classes in four villages due to ashfall, officials said



Business

Quote of the day

The tariffs are going to impact the payment cycle for us. We request the government to immediately announce an interest subvention scheme for all the exporters



SC RALHAN | FIEO PRESIDENT

Revolt Motors is committed to making electric mobility mainstream. Our rapid expansion from 100 to 200 dealerships in just one year is a testament to customer trust and growing demand



ANJALI RATTAN | RATTANINDIA CHAIRPERSON

We are confident that we are going to lead the growth in the industry, and with better growth we will have good market share



GHUFFRAN ALAM | SAMSUNG INDIA VICE PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

BoM clocks 18% Q4 loan growth

New Delhi: State-owned Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) Tuesday said it has registered a credit growth of 17.84 per cent at ₹2.40 lakh crore in January-March quarter. The outstanding credit was ₹2.03 lakh crore at the end of March 31, 2024, BoM said in a regulatory filing. The Pune-headquartered lender reported a 13.45 per cent increase in total deposits to ₹3.07 lakh crore in the reporting quarter as against ₹2.70 lakh crore at the end of the fourth quarter of the previous financial year. As a result, total business (total credit and deposits) of the bank registered an increase of 15.3 per cent to ₹5.47 lakh crore as against ₹4.74 lakh crore at the end of March 2024. During the latest fourth quarter, it said, the Current Accounts and Savings Accounts (CASA) ratio improved to 53.29 per cent of the total deposits as against 52.73 per cent in the same period of the preceding financial year. The credit-deposit ratio increased to 78.14 per cent in the fourth quarter as against 75.22 per cent in the year-ago period.

Titan's revenue up 25% in Q4

New Delhi: Leading jewellery retailer and watchmaker Titan has reported a 25 per cent growth in its standalone revenue in the March quarter of FY'25. Its jewellery division, which contributes over three-fourths of the revenue, reported a 24 per cent growth in the domestic market on the back of a significant increase in gold prices. "Both plain (gold) jewellery at 27 per cent YoY and coins at 65 per cent YoY respectively, led this growth, reflecting high consumer preference for gold (adornment cum store of value)," the Tata group firm said. However, elevated gold prices resulted in sluggish consumer demand at lower price points, leading to single-digit buyer growth, while demand at higher price bands was sustained, resulting in high double-digit growth in ticket sizes. The Tata Group-managed firm added 72 stores during the January-March quarter, taking its combined retail network to 3,312 stores. Its Watches & Wearables (W&W) Division's domestic business recorded a 20 per cent growth on a YoY basis in Q4.



We think India, and a few emerging markets, are going to be the engines of growth. The global depressed growth, if it has to pick up, will have to be because of these engines

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

GOLD FALLS ₹200

Gold prices fell by ₹200 to ₹91,250 per 10 grams in the national capital Tuesday amid subdued demand in the local markets, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at ₹91,450 per 10 grams Monday.



Rupee sinks 50 paise against US dollar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 8: Declining for the third straight session, the rupee tumbled 50 paise to settle at 86.26 against the US dollar Tuesday, logging the maximum single-day loss in nearly three months amid a looming global trade war stoking fears of economic melt-down.

According to forex traders, some recovery in crude oil prices and continued foreign capital outflows also dented sentiments.

Besides, the global markets have been facing extreme volatility following a fresh threat by the US administration to impose a punitive 50 per cent tariff against China's retaliatory 34 per cent import levies on American products, they added.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.89 and swung between a high of 85.82 and a low of 86.29 against the greenback. The unit ended at 86.26, registering a loss of 50 paise from its previous closing level. It had earlier recorded such a steep loss in one session on January 13 this year, when it had depreciated by 66 paise.

Monday, the rupee settled 32 paise lower at 85.76 against the US dollar, after losing 14 paise in the preceding session on Friday.

"The rupee experienced a decline in value against the US dollar, primarily driven by strong demand for dollars from importers and ongoing outflows of foreign funds from Indian equity markets. As a result, the rupee has emerged as the worst-performing currency among its Asian counterparts



All Sensex firms, except Power Grid, ended in the positive territory. Titan, Bajaj Finance, State Bank of India, Larsen & Toubro, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Asian Paints and Zomato were the biggest gainers.

World markets also staged a comeback after Monday's collapse. In Asian markets, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index, Hong Kong's Hang Seng, Shanghai SSE Composite index and South Korea's Kospi settled in the positive territory after falling sharply Monday. Nikkei 225 index jumped 6 per cent.

European markets were quoting higher. US markets ended mostly lower Monday.

The BSE smallcap gauge jumped 2.18 per cent and mid-cap index surged 1.87 per cent.

All BSE sectoral indices ended higher.

Oil & Gas index jumped the most by 2.58 per cent, followed by consumer durables (2.38 per

cent), telecommunication (2.32 per cent), industrials (2.04 per cent), energy (2.03 per cent), consumer discretionary (2.02 per cent), teck (1.97 per cent), healthcare (1.94 per cent) and IT (1.77 per cent). As many as 3,093 stocks advanced while 871 declined and 119 remained unchanged on the BSE.

"Following positive global cues, led by the interest of many nations to enter into bilateral agreements with the US, the domestic market witnessed a recovery," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹9,040.01 crore on Monday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought shares worth ₹12,122.45 crore, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.22 per cent to USD 64.35 a barrel.

MEGA CREDIT CAMP HELD BY CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar: A mega credit camp for MUDRA and SHG Bank linkage was organised by Central Bank of India to commemorate the 10 years of flagship MUDRA scheme by Algom & Nimapara Branch, in Puri district at Krishna Garden, Sakhipogal Bazar Tuesday, in presence of Omm Prakash Mishra, MLA Satyabadi & Debashish Nayak, BDO Satyabadi, where more than 400 SHG members actively participated. Mishra & Nayak outlined the support provided by the bank through MUDRA schemes that shaped the lives of micro entrepreneurs. They further emphasised the role of SHG financing in improving the livelihood of rural women and as a whole the state's economy. On this occasion, the Bank distributed sanction letters to different SHGs of Algom & Nimapara and MUDRA loans to individual members of SHGs. The programme was held in presence of Mukund Kumar Karn, Chief Manager, Regional Office, Bhubaneswar, Amiya Prasad Swain, Branch Head, Algom Branch, Dharendra Kumar Behera, Branch Head, Nimapara Branch, along with other senior Bank officials.



Who are the potential tariff war winners

REUTERS

New York, April 8: Days after US President Donald Trump's announcement of sweeping tariffs shocked multiple U.S. trading partners and global markets, a handful of countries are emerging as potential winners although the risk of a tariff-induced recession will limit the upside.

With longtime allies and close U.S. trading partners including the European Union, Japan and South Korea among those hardest hit - with tariffs of 20% or more - rivals from Brazil to India and Turkey to Kenya see a silver lining.

Brazil is among the economies that escaped with the lowest 'reciprocal' U.S. tariff of 10%. In addition, the agricultural giant could benefit from China's retaliatory tariffs likely to hit US farm exporters.

The latest U.S. tariffs are due to come into effect April 9.

Brazil, as a net importer of goods from the United States, exemplifies the way some countries could take advantage of the trade war that Trump is waging primarily against China and



other major exporters that run trade surpluses with the U.S. Morocco, Egypt, Turkey and Singapore, all of which have trade deficits with the U.S., could find an opportunity in the distress of those, like Bangladesh and Vietnam, which both run big surpluses and have been hit hard by Trump.

While the latter two are grappling with expected tariffs of 37% and 46%, respectively, the former, like Brazil and most of its neighbours, will squeak by with 10% each - more of a slap on the wrist in the new Trump world order.

"The US didn't impose tariffs on Egypt alone," said Magdy Tolba, chairman of Egyptian-Turkish joint venture T&C

'One state-one RRB' to be effective from May 1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 8: One state-one RRB will become a reality from next month as the finance ministry has issued notification for the consolidation of 15 Regional Rural Banks across 11 states to achieve better operational efficiency and cost rationalisation.

With this fourth round of consolidation of regional rural banks (RRBs), the number would reduce to 28 from the existing 43.

As per the gazette notification, RRBs in 11 states - Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan - are to be merged into one entity, respectively, for each of these to realise the goal of 'one state-one RRB'.

The effective date for amalgamation has been fixed to May 1,



as per the gazette notification dated April 5, 2026.

As per the notification, in line with the powers granted under Section 23A(1) of the Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976, these RRBs will merge into a single entity in the public interest and in the interest of the development of the area served by these entities and also in the interest of the Regional Rural Banks themselves.

In the case of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, 3 RRBs to be merged into one in each of these

states. In eight states - Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan, two RRBs would be merged into one.

All the entities would have authorised capital of ₹2,000 crore, it added.

After consultation with stakeholders, an amalgamation of 26 RRBs in 10 states and 1 UT has been carried out with a primary focus on improvement in scale efficiency and cost rationalisation, the finance ministry

said in a statement.

At present, 43 RRBs are functioning in 26 states and 2 UTs. Post amalgamation, there will be 28 RRBs in 26 states and 2 UTs with over 22,000 branches covering 700 districts.

Their predominant area of operation is in rural areas, with approx 92 per cent of branches in rural/semi-urban areas, it said. This is the fourth phase of amalgamation. In Phase 1 (FY 2006 to FY 2010) number of RRBs was reduced from 196 to 82, it was further brought down from 82 to 56 in Phase 2 (FY 2013 - FY 2015) and in Phase 3, it was cut from 56 to 43.

As a precursor to consolidation, the capital infusion was done in these RRBs.

The 2021-22 fiscal was a watershed year in the context of RRBs as the Centre decided to infuse ₹5,445 crore as its share over a period of two years to facilitate growth capital.

US, India discuss tariffs, 'fair' trade

REUTERS

Washington, April 8: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar held a call Monday to discuss US tariffs on India and how to make progress towards a "fair and balanced trade relationship," the State Department said.

Jaishankar also said on social media earlier Monday that he had spoken to Rubio about the early conclusion of a bilateral trade deal.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Trump said last week that he would impose a 10 per cent baseline tariff on all imports to the US and higher duties on dozens of other countries, including some of Washington's biggest trading partners, rattling global markets and bewildering US allies.

CONTEXT

India does not plan to retaliate against Trump's 26 per

cent tariff on imports from the Asian nation, an Indian government official said Sunday, citing ongoing talks for a deal between the countries.

KEY QUOTES

"They also discussed US reciprocal tariffs on India and how to make progress toward a fair and balanced trade relationship," the State Department said in a statement.

"Agreed on the importance of the early conclusion of the Bilateral Trade Agreement. Look forward to remaining in touch," Jaishankar said in his social media post.

Arya's 103 powers PBKS win



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mullanpur, April 8: Rookie opener Priyansh Arya delivered on his high promise with a sensational hundred before the bowlers survived MS Dhoni's late onslaught to script an 18-run win for Punjab Kings (PBKS) over Chennai Super Kings in the IPL here Tuesday.

Priyansh (103 off 42) powered Punjab Kings to 219 for six, the highest total at the venue, after the hosts lost half their side inside the first eight overs.

CSK batters have not been good enough thus far in the season but the likes of Devon Conway (69 off 49 retired out), Rachin Ravindra (36 off 23) and Shivam Dube (42 off 27) were able to take the game deep on this occasion. However, CSK fell short and ended at 201 for five.

It was CSK's fourth loss in five games while Punjab Kings recorded their third win in four

matches. The equation for CSK came down to 75 runs off the last 30 balls. Much to the delight of fans present at the venue, Dhoni (27 off 12) came to bat at number five after Dube's fall in the 16th over.

With Dube going ballistic in the middle overs, Punjab Kings had to wait till the 17th over to get their main spinner Yuzvendra Chahal into operation.

It was Lockie Ferguson's turn to bowl the 18th over and that was when Dhoni provided a glimmer of hope for CSK with two sixes off as many balls. However, 43 off the last 12 balls ended up being too much for the away team.

Punjab Kings were poor in the field, dropping as many as four catches but were still able to get over the line.

The night belonged to Priyansh, the 24-year-old from Delhi who rose to prominence with six sixes in an over in a local league last year.

He flaunted his special six-hitting skills on the national stage to lift Punjab Kings to an above par total. His knock included seven boundaries and nine hits over the fence.

The commendable recovery was also made possible by Shashank Singh (52 not out off 36 balls) who made sure Punjab Kings cashed in on the platform laid by Arya. Number eight Marco Jansen (34 not out off 19) also played his part to perfection.

Head coach Ricky Ponting had spoken highly of Priyansh at the start of the season and Tuesday, the left-hander repaid the immense faith which the Australian legend showed on him.

After two successive failures, Priyansh was under pressure but the way he started his innings, slaying pacer Khaleel Ahmed for six over point, set the tone for his memorable effort.

SCORECARD

Chennai Super Kings: Rachin Ravindra st Prabhsimran Singh b Maxwell 36, Devon Conway retired out 69, Ruturaj Gaikwad c Shashank Singh b Ferguson 1, Shivam Dube b Ferguson 42, MS Dhoni c Chahal b Yash Thakur 27, Ravindra Jadeja not out 9, Vijay Shankar not out 2; **Extras:** (LB-5, NB-1, W-9) 15; Total: (For 5 wickets in 20 overs) 201; **Fall of wickets:** 1-61, 2-62, 3-151, 4-171, 5-192; **Bowling:** Arshdeep Singh 4-0-39-0, Yash Thakur 4-0-39-1, Glenn Maxwell 2-0-11-1, Marco Jansen 4-0-48-0, Lockie Ferguson 4-0-40-2, Marcus Stoinis 1-0-10-0, Yuzvendra Chahal 1-0-9-0

Punjab Kings: Priyansh Arya c Shankar b Noor Ahmad 103, Prabhsimran Singh b Mukesh Choudhary 0, Shreyas Iyer b Ahmed 9, Marcus Stoinis c Conway b Ahmed 4, Nehal Wadhwa c Dhoni b Ashwin 9, Glenn Maxwell c&b Ashwin 1, Shashank Singh not out 52, Marco Jansen not out 34; **Extras:** (LB-3, NB-2, W-2) 7; Total: (For 6 wickets in 20 overs) 219; **Fall of wickets:** 1-17, 2-32, 3-54, 4-81, 5-83, 6-154; **Bowling:** Khaleel Ahmed 4-0-45-2, Mukesh Choudhary 2-0-21-1, Ravichandran Ashwin 4-0-48-2, Ravindra Jadeja 3-0-18-0, Noor Ahmad

IPL POINT TABLE						
TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS	
DC	3	3	0	1.257	6	
GT	4	3	1	1.031	6	
RCB	4	3	1	1.015	6	
PBKS	4	3	1	0.289	6	
LSG	5	3	2	0.078	6	
KKR	5	2	3	-0.056	4	
RR	4	2	2	-0.185	4	
MI	5	1	4	-0.010	2	
CSK	5	1	4	-0.889	2	
SRH	5	1	4	-1.629	2	

LSG EDGE OUT KKR IN THRILLER SHOW



AGENCIES

Kolkata, April 8: A night of sixes, drama, and heart-pounding momentum-shifts ended with Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) holding their nerve to clinch a nail-biting four-run win over Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in one of the most entertaining matches of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 so far, at the Eden Gardens here Tuesday.

Riding on blazing innings from Mitchell Marsh and Nicholas Pooran, LSG piled up a mammoth 238/3 — their second-highest total in IPL history — only for KKR to come within touching distance of pulling off a record chase before falling short at 234/7.

Sent in to bat on a belter of a surface, LSG openers Marsh (81) and Aiden Markram (47) gave their side a dream start. Marsh, showing glimpses of his vintage best, unleashed a flurry of clean, powerful strokes, while Markram complemented him with smart placement and timing.

Their 99-run opening stand in just 10.2 overs set the tone, with Marsh powering his way to 81 off 48 balls, peppered with seven fours and five sixes. Once Markram fell to Harshit Rana,

it was Nicholas Pooran who took centre stage.

Pooran, now firmly among the most feared finishers in T20 cricket, was simply unstoppable. He raced to a half-century off just 21 balls, and finished with an unbeaten 87 off 36, including eight monstrous sixes and five fours. He toyed with the KKR attack, especially targeting Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravathy, as LSG surged past 230 to set a daunting target of 238/3.

In response, KKR came out swinging. Quinton de Kock and Sunil Narine took 31 off the first two overs, feasting on Akash Deep and Shardul Thakur. Though Akash returned to trap de Kock LBW with a smart change of pace, it barely slowed KKR's momentum.

Ajinkya Rahane, showing his reinvention in T20 cricket wasn't a flash in the pan, batted with flair and urgency. Along with Narine, he took KKR to 90/1 in the Powerplay — their best this season. The Eden Gardens crowd was buzzing as Rahane and Venkatesh Iyer built a strong stand, taking on Ravi Bishnoi and Digvesh Rathai in the middle overs.

Rathai, who was fined earlier in the season for his elaborate celebrations, struck a crucial

blow by dismissing his idol Narine for 30 and celebrated in his trademark style — scribbling something on the ground.

Rahane brought up his half-century in 26 balls, but LSG pulled things back spectacularly between overs 13 and 16, snatching four key wicket in the space of 16 deliveries. Thakur removed Rahane on 61 with a clever wide full toss after conceding five consecutive wides. Bishnoi had Randeep Singh caught slogging, Avesh Khan cleaned up Angkrish Raghuvanshi, and Akshir Deep returned to dismiss the dangerous Venkatesh Iyer for 45.

SCORECARD

Lucknow Super Giants innings: Aiden Markram b Rana 47, Mitchell Marsh c Rinku b Russell 81, Nicholas Pooran not out 87, Abdul Samad b Rana 6, David Miller not out 4; **Extras:** 13 (b-2, lb-3, w-8); **Total:** 238/3 in 20 overs; Fall of wickets: 1-99, 2-170, 3-221; **Bowling:** Vaibhav Arora 4-0-35-0, Spencer Johnson. 3-0-46-0, Varun Chakravathy 4-0-31-0, Harshit Rana 4-0-51-2, Sunil Narine 3-0-38-0, Andre Russell 2-0-32-1.

Kolkata Knight Riders innings: Quinton de Kock lbw b Akash Deep 15, Sunil Narine c Markram b Rathi 30, Ajinkya Rahane c Pooran b Rahane 61, Venkatesh Iyer c Markram b Akash Deep 45, Randeep Singh c Markram b Bishnoi 1, Angkrish Raghuvanshi c Pant b Avesh 5, Andre Russell c Miller b Thakur 7, Rinku Singh not out 38, Harshit Rana not out 10; **Extras:** 22 (b-1, lb-1, w-20); **Total:** 234/7 in 20 overs; Fall of wickets: 1-37, 2-91, 3-162, 4-166, 5-173, 6-177, 7-185; **Bowling:** Akash Deep 4-0-55-2, Shardul Thakur 4-0-52-2, Avesh Khan 4-0-45-1, Digvesh Rathai 4-0-33-1, Ravi Bishnoi 4-0-47-1.

SHORT TAKES

Newcastle demolishes hapless Leicester

Leicester (England): Jacob Murphy scored twice in the first 11 minutes and set Newcastle on its way to a 3-0 win over a hapless Leicester in the Premier League. Murphy's goals were the main talking point on Monday, along with the second-half appearance of Jeremy Monga, who at 15 years, 271 days, became the second youngest player to appear in the Premier League. Monga replaced Bilal El Khannouss for Leicester 16 minutes from time wearing a different, logo-less shirt from his teammates because he is too young to advertise the betting firm that sponsors the home side. Murphy scored the opener after two minutes when he stole in at the back post to convert a low cross from Tino Livramento. Leicester had six men inside the six-yard box but the ball went past them all and Murphy made no mistake.

Hockey India deploys additional support staff

New Delhi: Hockey India has sent additional support staff, including a physiotherapist and a masseuse, to the ongoing Senior Men's National Championship in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, to provide medical attention and recovery support to the players. This year's championship features an impressive array of 31 Indian men's hockey team players such as Hardik Singh, Jarmanpreet Singh, Krishan B Pathak, Abhishek, Amit Rohidas, Sumit, Gurjant Singh and Sanjay.

World 10K in Bangalore

Bangalore: Uganda's Olympian Joshua Cheptegei, promising Kenyans Cintia Chepngeno and Gladys Kwamboka Mong'are, the reigning African champion in the 10,000m, are some of the prominent global runners who will grace this year's TCS World 10K to be held here April 27. In the men's section, Cheptegei, who is returning to the event for the first time since 2014, will be challenged by compatriot Stephen Kissa, a bronze medalist in the 2020 Delhi Half-Marathon. Kenya's Vincent Langat, who clocked 26:55 in Valencia earlier this year, may pull a surprise if conditions suit him. Awet Nfaleem Kibrab, who originated in Eritrea and emigrated to Norway in 2022, and Ethiopian Jenberj Sisay, may try their luck in the World Athletics Gold Label Road Race.

SNIPPETS

One Make C'ships trials from May 9

Chennai: Two and three-wheeler manufacturer TVS motor company announced the rollout of its 2025 season of the PETRONAS TVS India One Make Championship (OMC), with selection trials set to begin in May at the Madras International Circuit in Irungattukottai, Sriperumbudur, near here. The PETRONAS TVS India One Make Championship is a premier racing platform shaping the motorsport landscape by discovering and training emerging talent in motorcycle racing. The championship offers expert mentorship and national-level exposure, helping racers refine their skills and contribute to the growth of Indian motorsports. The selection trials will be conducted from May 9 to May 11 at the Madras International Circuit across multiple categories—TVS Young Media Racer Programme, Women's OMC, TVS Rookie OMC, and TVS RR310 OMC. "TVS Racing is driven by a passion for motorsport and a commitment to shaping the future of racing talent in India. The PETRONAS TVS India One Make Championship has been a launchpad for aspiring riders, breaking barriers across age and gender," said Vimal Sumbly, Head of Business-Premium, TVS Motor Company, in a statement. "Through our pioneering 'Track to Road' philosophy, we not only build champions but also bring cutting-edge race technology to our high-performance TVS Apache motorcycles, ensuring that every rider experiences the thrill of innovation," he added.

MIKA receives CIK-FIA certification

Chennai: The Madras International Karting Arena (MIKA) in Sriperumbudur has received the CIK-FIA Grade-1 certification, thus placing the facility among the elite karting circuits in the world. The circuit, measuring 1.17km, is the longest karting track in India with a multiple track configuration suitable for competitive racing as well as corporate and leisure activities. "Securing the license is the culmination of months of designing, planning and efforts to develop a facility that conforms to global standards. The track layout has already received rave reviews about it being a driver's delight, given the mix of sharp turns, high-speed straights, and elevation changes," said Madras Motor Sports Club in a statement. The track was highly appreciated by elite drivers like double Formula 1 World champion Mika Hakkinen who inaugurated the facility in September last year, and India's two F1 drivers, Narain Karthikeyan and Karun Chandhok, who, incidentally, played a role in designing of the track.

Cyber security experts warn fans against IPL scams

AGENCIES

Mumbai, April 8: With millions of people interested in and following it, everyone wants to ride the Indian Premier League (IPL) bandwagon -- even online scammers and fraudsters. Welcome to the IPL fever-induced Scammer Season.

With the IPL fever triggering massive online activities with millions of fans taking to the internet for ticketing and information, experts from global cyber-security and digital privacy company Kaspersky have identified three types of online scams and have warned Indian cricket fans against falling prey to scams piggybacking on the popular cricketing event, Kaspersky said in a release Tuesday.

According to Kaspersky, fraudsters are exploiting the popularity of the 18th edition of the IPL, which started March 23 and is currently being played

at various venues nationwide, to deceive individuals through different scam tactics.

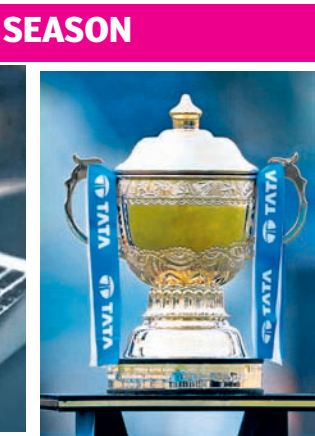
Kaspersky also released visual evidence of some of such scam pages to help gullible people save themselves from being cheated.

Experts from the global cyber-security and digital company have spotted three IPL-related tactics that cybercriminals are using to lure fans of the premier league. The three scams are – scam pages disguised as ticket listings, streaming websites redirecting to various scams, and promotional campaigns, claiming to offer free IPL tickets.

The first and foremost of these three fraudulent activities is one in which scam pages are disguised as ticket listings. "Kaspersky researchers have identified websites that pretend to sell tickets for IPL matches. Fraudsters create a



website that mimics official ticketing platforms with logos, branding, and realistic-looking interfaces. Victims are usually asked to make payments via a bank card, with no option for refunds. And after payment, as typically done within such schemes, tickets are never delivered," the company claimed.



Another way cybercriminals are baiting IPL fans is through streaming websites. "A page identified by Kaspersky claims to offer free live streaming of IPL matches but is actually designed to redirect users to various other scam or phishing pages that may steal personal information, infect

devices with malware, or trick users into paying for non-existent goods or subscriptions," the release informed.

In another scheme discovered by cyber-security researchers, scam pages are presented as a promotional campaign, claiming to offer free IPL tickets. "As part of the process, users are instructed to share their phone numbers. Additionally, potential victims are asked to send the link to groups and friends on WhatsApp — allegedly to unlock the next step for ticket delivery. Scams like these often aim to collect phone numbers for resale on the dark web or to launch phishing attacks, and may also generate revenue by manipulating traffic and showing ads," the release said.

"An event like IPL 2025 draws huge crowds both online and offline Cricket fans across the country are on the lookout for the best deals in tickets and

cricket merchandise. This often makes them prime targets for cybercriminals seeking to deceive and steal their data and money. Scammers exploit this consumer demand to devise various fraudulent schemes and lure consumers," commented Purshottam Bhatia, Head of Consumer Business for India at Kaspersky.

Kaspersky also issued some dos and don'ts to help Indian cricket fans stay safe and avoid IPL-related scams, asking them to safeguard themselves by installing a reliable cybersecurity solution.

Kaspersky experts also suggested measures that would help Indian cricket fans protect their data and money from scammers in this IPL season. These include buying tickets only from official platforms and avoiding third-party sellers offering 'exclusive' or 'discounted' tickets.

BADMINTON ASIA C'SHIPS

Kapila, Crasto keep hopes alive

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ningbo (China), April 8: The Indian mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto battled hard to beat Hoo Pang Ron and Su Yin Cheng of Malaysia to enter the pre-quarterfinals of the Badminton Asia Championships here Tuesday.

The Indian pair fought for 51 minutes to get the better of their Malaysian counterparts 15-21 21-12 21-11 in the first round match.

Crasto and Kapila will next play Chinese Taipei's Hong Wei Ye and Nicole Gonzales Chan.

Elsewhere, it was disappointment as three other Indian mixed doubles pairs lost their opening matches.

The pair of Satish Kumar Karunakaran and Aadya Varaiyath was sent packing by third seeded Malaysian duo of Soon Huat Goh and Shevon Jamie Lai 18-21 19-21.

Later, Ashith Surya and Amrutha Pramuthesh also lost 9-21 11-21 to Malaysian pair of Thulith Palliyaguru and Panchali Adhikari.