



**Shri Mohan Charan Majhi**  
Chief Minister, Odisha

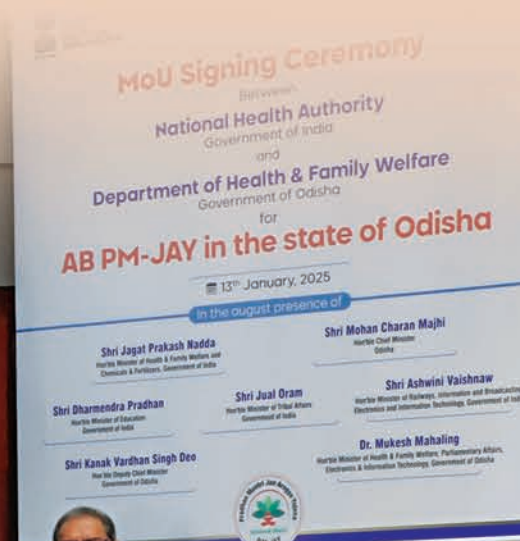
**Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (ABPMJAY)  
Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana (GJAY)  
Cobranded Card Distribution  
& Ayushman Vay Vandana Yojana (AVVY)**

**Union Health & Family Welfare, Chemicals & Fertilizers Minister**

### Chief Minister, Odisha

**Dr. Mukesh Mahaling**  
Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Parliamentary Affairs,  
Electronics & Information Technology, Odisha

**11 April 2025 | 2.30 PM | Baliyatra Ground, Cuttack**






FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com™

accuracy • reliability • trust


FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

ARIES




A plain Jane day. Work goes on as usual, and there is progress. But as Ganesha says, it's an ordinary day. Hum, whistle, doodle, and sip your green tea. While day dreaming, start planning your dream home. After all, that's where the first plan takes shape.

TAURUS




this is a bright, rosy day for students and scholars, particular who are engaged in, or are looking forward to higher studies, specializing in a particular professional stream. This a great day for making plans for higher studies abroad. Do not miss this opportunity. Plans made today are likely to materialize.

GEMINI



The day will be dedicated to spending quality time with children, predicts Ganesha. You will be overloaded with household responsibilities and will find it tough to deal with them. However, you will manage to do well and will be satisfied with the outcome.

CANCER



Today, it will be all about finding your comfort zone, and spending the day there. You are likely to spend most of the day with your close friends. Your smooth demeanour will help you breeze through all business deals. The opposite sex may find you irresistible.

LEO



Most battles are fought and won inside our head. Hence, Ganesha urges you to maintain a positive outlook today. The stars grant you the ability to double your efforts, and allow your imagination to take flight and chart new routes to success. This should curb your frustration of the last few days.

VIRGO




You will charm people with your flexibility of thought and willingness to adjust today. Those under the spell of love will see an unexpected turn of events; but don't panic, as things will eventually work out in your favour. Some quality family time is also on the cards.

LIBRA



Ganesha has a feeling that today may not be the best day to undertake any government dealings. Call it red-tapism, or bureaucratic procrastination, but it is highly unlikely that such tasks shall be fruitful today. This may test your patience, and in doing so, bring out your competency and efficiency to the fore, especially if you happen to be a public servant. Touché!

SCORPIO




It is about time you learn to deal with frustration in a more healthy manner. The right choice is always the hardest to make. Do not let sentiments sway you into hasty choices because they may feel right, but might also be extremely impractical. There may some strain on your relationship with near and dear ones.

SAGITTARIUS



You will enjoy the magic of the Midas touch today, feels Ganesha. In business, sheer brilliance will help you derive the best possible results in productivity and clinching new contracts. Your approach, in general, will be methodical, disciplined and systematic for most part of the day.

CAPRICORN



You have always been generous by nature, but your benevolent attitude will do you no good, warns Ganesha. People will try, almost blatantly, to take advantage of you, and for once, you will feel that being crafty and unrelenting would have helped kept those blood-sucking leeches at bay. But as the day progresses, you will thank the Almighty for all the precious things he made you the guardian of.

AQUARIUS



You zoom in on research and development today. Your fabulous work speaks volumes and your commitment pays off. You're keen to play Romeo today, and all your gimmicks and surprises will work wonders! Love on, says Ganesha.

PISCES



You set irreproachable standards for yourself, but what keeps your subordinates from grumbling about it is the efforts you make to help them achieve perfection in their endeavours, says Ganesha. You inspire, they aspire.



## SWANK: HOLLYWOOD WAS MORE PATRIARCHAL EARLIER

Hilary Swank says Hollywood was once patriarchal. She recalls that men wrote scripts without female perspectives. Swank notes the industry is now becoming more inclusive. She advises her younger self to carefully consider daily choices. Swank debuted in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* in 1992.

## JAMES CAMERON TURNS TO AI TO SLASH BUDGETS

Avatar filmmaker James Cameron has seemingly reversed his stance on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in filmmaking. In a recent interview, he shared that he wants to use AI to cut the cost of filmmaking without laying off half the staff.



# BHUMI ON HER FEARLESS CHOICES

**Mumbai:** Bhumi Pednekar broke into Bollywood with a bold and unconventional debut in *Dum Laga Ke Haisha*, playing a character far removed from the typical glamorous heroine. Starring opposite Ayushmann Khurrana, Bhumi embraced her role with authenticity, setting the tone for a career defined by fearless choices. “I didn’t have any other option but to be fearless,” she reflects. “My first film taught me that to make it here, I had to create my own space—my own genre.”

Determined to carve her niche, Bhumi leaned into stories often overlooked, choosing roles that others might hesitate to take. From heartland narratives to socially relevant and queer-centric films, she’s built a reputation for championing bold, thought-provoking cinema. “I’ve always wanted to lead in spaces where others might hold back,” she says, citing films like *Bhakhshak*, *Lust Sto-*

*ries*, *Sonchiriya*, and *Saand Ki Aankh* as personal milestones.

In her latest film, *Mere Husband Ki Biwi*, alongside Arjun Kapoor and Rakul Preet Singh, Bhumi continues to push boundaries. Now firmly established in the industry, she isn’t chasing competition—she’s defining her own path. “I’m proud of the space I’ve created,” she says. “And I want others to thrive within it too.”

AGENCIES



## Rashmika lives characters

**Mumbai:** Rashmika Mananna, often hailed as India’s Sweetheart, has won hearts across languages with performances that blend vulnerability and strength. Whether it’s the quiet intensity of Srivalli, the regal composure of Maharani Yesubai, or the emotional depth of Geetanjali, Rashmika brings a human touch to every character she plays. Reflecting on her process, she shared, “When you’ve been through enough—heartbreaks, happiness—you bring that emotional depth into your characters. All humans are layered, and I approach my roles with that understanding. I imagine myself having lived their lives.”

At just 28, Rashmika’s relatability and authenticity have earned her a massive and loyal fan base. Her grounded nature and emotional range allow her to connect deeply with audiences, making each performance memorable. From her small-town roots to becoming a household name, her journey is a testament to perseverance and self-made success.

Now, she’s set to step into uncharted territory with *Thama*, India’s first vampire cinematic universe. Alongside this ambitious project, she has a packed slate including *Pushpa 3: The Rampage*, *Animal Park*, *Kubera*, and *The Girlfriend*. Rashmika continues to break barriers, proving that with passion and grit, the sky’s the limit.

AGENCIES



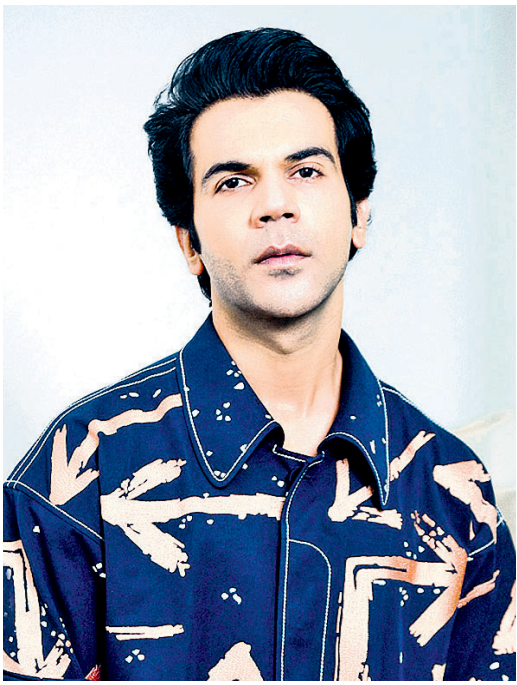
## Moments Rajkummar likes to relive

**Mumbai:** Bollywood actor Rajkummar Rao, who plays an about to get married guy caught in a time-loop in *Bhool Chuk Maaf*, says there are moments in his life that he would want to relive including the time he bagged his debut film *Love Sex Aur Dhokha* and saw *Stree 2* become a major box office success.

At the trailer launch press conference of the actor’s upcoming film *Bhool Chuk Maaf*, he was asked about the moments he would like to relive in his life.

“From my career, as an outsider, when you come to the city, it can be overwhelming; it is very tough. I know a lot of actor friends who’ve come to the city, and not everyone gets that opportunity. So, getting that first film is important for any actor who has come from outside. This happened to me in 2010,” Rao told reporters at an event here.

“I would like to relive that moment again and again. I would also love to relive the moment when my mother was with me when I won the first National award. Then when *Stree 2*



released and the first day box office number came we were like, ‘What...what has happened’,” Rao added.

PTI

## Nushratt’s career turning point

**Mumbai:** Actor Nushratt Bharuccha says her career took a significant turn with the 2021 horror film *Chhorii*, which has not only altered the audience perception of her but has also opened opportunities to do more female-led narratives.

“After *Chhorii*, I’ve had *Janhit Mein Jaari* and *Akelli* and now I’ve two-three other films, which I don’t know how it happened, it’s not like I’m going out there and choosing those films, I’m not. I’m very happy doing other films and other parts also. But somehow it’s (*Chhorii*) changed audiences and trade perception of me, a mixture of that is bringing more scripts that way,” the actor told the agency in an interview.

*Chhorii* is the remake of director Vishal Furia’s 2017 Marathi film *Lapachhapi*, which revolves around a pregnant woman named Sakshi whose unborn child is targeted by evil spirits.

The sequel, which will release April 11 on Prime Video, will pick up the story of Sakshi from where it left off in the first film and will bring back some key characters as well as introduce new scares. Known for massy entertainers like *Pyaar Ka Punchnama*, *Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweeti*, and *Dream Girl*, Bharuccha said *Chhorii* is the most demanding movie in her career.

PTI

### PEANUTS



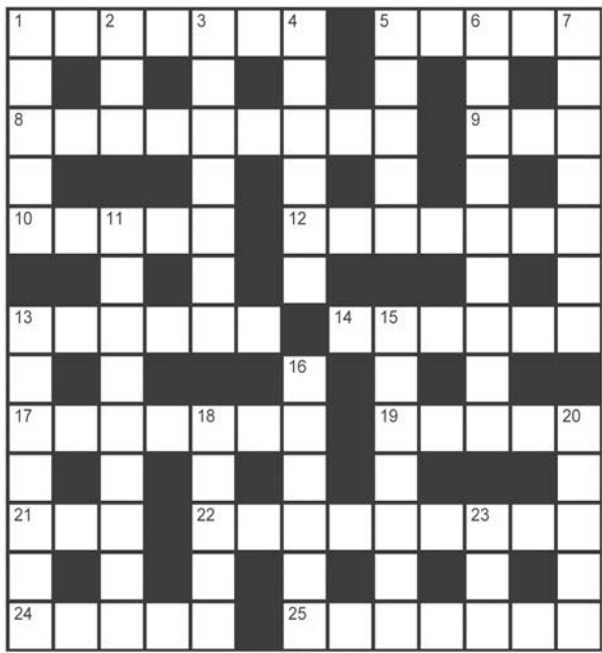
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



### CROSSWORD



Copyright ©2025 PuzzleJunction.com

#### Across

- 1 Hot spot
- 5 Theme
- 8 State of affairs
- 9 Shrew
- 10 Receded
- 12 Notched
- 13 Rebuffs
- 14 Lend a hand
- 17 Paving material
- 19 Estimate
- 21 Luau souvenir
- 22 All worked up

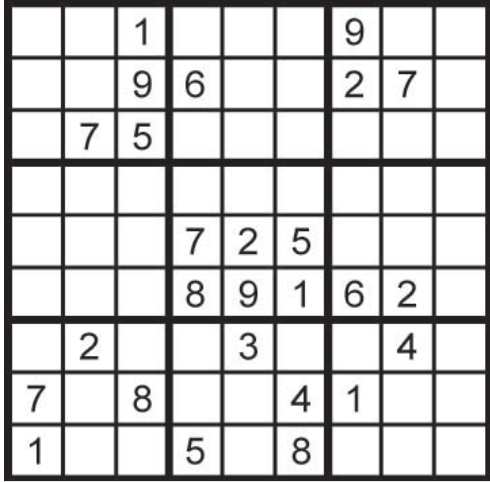
#### Down

- 24 Clan emblem
- 25 Purchase option (3,4)
- 6 Tease
- 7 Imagination part?
- 11 Pattern
- 13 1934 adventure classic, *The \_\_\_\_\_ Pimpernel*
- 15 Mean
- 16 Amble
- 18 Crosswise, on deck
- 20 Nonsensical
- 23 At once

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.

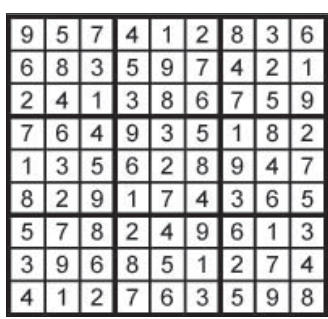


### SOLUTIONS

#### CROSSWORD



#### SUDOKU





## Cricket to feature in 2028 LA Olympics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 10: Cricket will feature six teams battling for top honours when the sport returns to the Olympics at the 2028 Los Angeles Games after a gap of 128 years. This was confirmed by the organisers on Wednesday.

Cricket last featured at the Olympics in the 1900 edition of the Games in Paris, where a one-off, two-day match between Great Britain and France was held, which is now recognised as an unofficial Test. At LA 2028, cricket will be played in T20 format, with six teams competing in both the men's and women's competitions.

Every team will be able to name a 15-member squad as a total of 90 athlete quotas have been allocated for each gender.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) consists of 12 full members in Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, England, India, Ireland, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the West Indies and Zimbabwe.

Another 94 countries form the associate members group.

Qualification criteria for the 2028 Games are yet to be confirmed for the cricket tournament but USA are likely to earn a direct spot at the quadrennial extravaganza as host nation, meaning only five teams will be allowed to make the cut through the qualification process. It is expected that top five teams in the ICC rankings with-in a certain cut-off date will qualify apart from the United States of America.

Cricket is one of five new sports which will feature at the next Olympic Games. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) approved cricket's inclusion for LA28 in 2023, along with baseball/softball, flag football, lacrosse (sixes) and squash.

Meanwhile, The Executive Board (EB) of the IOC Wednesday approved the event programme and athlete quotas for the LA Games, adding 22 more medal events as compared to Paris 2024. The IOC approved a record 351 medal events for the LA28 program and the athlete quota remains at 10,500, with an extra 698 quota places allocated for the five additional sports -- baseball/softball, cricket, flag football, lacrosse and squash.

## Oppn: Repeal Sec 44(3) of DPDP Act

NEW DELHI: Opposition INDIA bloc Thursday demanded repeal of Section 44 (3) of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP), Act contending that it destroys the Right to Information (RTI) Act. Amid concerns being raised by civil society groups over the section that bars revealing personal information regarding any individual, and its impact on the RTI Act, Opposition leaders alleged that the government moved certain amendments when the Act was being passed in Lok Sabha, which turned around the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) that had examined the Bill.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



HELPING HAND: Volunteers store water for birds in a container in a forest near Nilagiri in Balasore district as water bodies go dry amid scorching summer, Thursday

# Ayushman Bharat to benefit 3.5 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, April 10: Union Health Minister JP Nadda will launch Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana in the state Friday, a move that is expected to benefit around 3.5 crore people. Nadda is scheduled to arrive here around 1pm Friday after which he will head to Cuttack to attend a special event alongside Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, where the Ayushman Bharat scheme, the Ayushman Vay-Vandana Yojana and the state's Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana (GJAY) will be officially launched, BJP state president Manmohan Samal said.

Around 3.5 crore people are expected to benefit from these combined health assurance schemes, Samal said.

During the visit to Cuttack, the Union Minister will also inaugurate the new building of the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Post Graduate Institute of Paediatrics, officials said.

Nadda's itinerary also includes visits to AIIMS-Bhubaneswar and the Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET).



On April 12 morning, the BJP president will inaugurate a three-day training programme of all BJP MPs and MLAs in Puri. The training programme will be held from April 11 evening to April 13, Samal said.

According to official sources, the special event in Cuttack will also be attended by two Deputy Chief Ministers, KV Singh Deo and Pravati Parida, along with state Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling.

In addition, several senior state ministers—including Revenue Minister Suresh Pujari, Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan, and Panchayati Raj Minister Rabi Narayan

Naik—will oversee the launch of the schemes in 12 different districts across the state.

Officials said nearly 3.5 crore people from 1.03 crore families in the state will benefit from Ayushman Bharat and GJAY health insurance schemes.

Beneficiaries will receive free, cashless treatment at 29,000 empanelled private and government hospitals across the country.

Previously, this facility was limited to only 900 hospitals.

Under the Ayushman Vay-Vandana Yojana, all persons aged 70 years and above, regardless of income, will be eligible for coverage.

Each family will receive health insurance coverage of up to ₹5 lakh, with an additional ₹5 lakh allocated to female beneficiaries within the family.

If the family includes a member aged 70 or above, the total health coverage will be increased to ₹15 lakh, officials said.

Last month, the state cabinet approved a budgetary allocation of ₹27,019 crore for implementation of Ayushman Bharat and GJAY for a period of five years.

# Rana in India; key 26/11 players out of bounds

The government might be patting its back for managing to extradite Pakistan-born Canadian citizen Tahawwur Hussain Rana for his role in the diabolic 26/11 terror attack in Mumbai following a US court's ruling. However, considering that Rana, who ran a halal meat shop in Canada, has very little role to play in the deadly terror strike, as revealed by the chargesheet in the case, key conspirator David Coleman Headley still remains out of the bounds of Indian investigating agencies. The US, which promptly arrested Headley just before the 26/11 investigators got a whiff of his involvement in the Lashkar plot, has turned down possibilities of his extradition so far. Indian agencies have, until now, been able to conduct his questioning in a US prison, partially though, Headly (Daood Sayed Gilani) still remains the main facilitator of the carnage. India had sent an extradition request for Headley to US in December 2012, but a US court sentenced him to 35 years in prison, followed by 5 years of supervised release, for 12 terrorist acts. Given this background, Rana's extradition, or his subsequent interrogation, could help little in furthering anything noteworthy in the probe, people in the know of the development feel

AGENCIES

New Delhi, April 10: Tahawwur Hussain Rana, one of the key accused in 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, was brought to India after being "successfully

extradited" from US and was formally arrested and produced in a court here, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) announced Thursday.

The 64-year-old Canadian citizen of Pakistani origin landed

## Hailstorm claims 47 lives in Bihar, UP

Patna/Lucknow: At least 25 people were killed in lightning strikes and hailstorms in Bihar while 22 people lost their lives in rain-related incidents in Uttar Pradesh Thursday. According to Bihar CMO's statement, Nalanda reported 18 deaths, followed by two in Siwan, one each in Katihar, Darbhanga, Begusarai, Bhagalpur and Jehanabad. Similarly, UP relief commissioner's office said Fatehpur and Azamgarh districts reported three fatalities each. Two deaths each were recorded in Firozabad, Kanpur Dehat, and Sitapur districts. One person each was killed in Ghazipur, Gonda, Amethi, Sant Kabir Nagar, Siddharthnagar, Ballia, Kannauj, Barabanki, Jaunpur, and Unnao districts.

## BAIL TO RAPE ACCUSED

# Woman herself invited trouble: Allahabad HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Prayagraj, April 10: In a retrograde ruling, the Allahabad High Court has granted bail to a rape accused, observing that the complainant "herself invited trouble" by agreeing to go to the applicant's house after getting drunk, the news coming days after the Supreme Court intervened to stay an "insensitive" order passed by another HC justice in a rape attempt case. The woman is a student of MA and hence she "was competent enough to understand the morality and significance of her act", stated the order passed by Justice Sanjay Kumar Singh last month.

Earlier, it was submitted on behalf of the applicant that it was an admitted case of the woman that she was an adult and resided in PG Hostel. She, of her own volition, went to a restaurant with her female friends and their male friends where all of them drank alcohol together. Due to this, she

became very intoxicated.

The counsel for the applicant argued that the woman, along with her friends, stayed in the bar till 3am. Since she needed support, she herself agreed to go to the house of the applicant and rest. Her allegation that the applicant instead took her to his relative's flat and raped her twice is false and against the evidence on record, the counsel told the court.

It was argued that considering the facts as disclosed by the woman, it is not a case of rape but might be a case of consensual relationship. "This court is of the view that even if the allegation of the victim is accepted as true, then it can also be concluded that she herself invited trouble and was also responsible for the same. Similar stand has been taken by the victim in her statement. In her medical examination, her hymen was found torn but doctor did not give any opinion about the sexual assault," it said.

in Delhi in a special plane from Los Angeles Thursday evening, ending days of speculation of when and how he will be extradited, officials said.

In a statement late evening, the NIA said Rana was "formally arrested immediately after his arrival at Delhi airport".

Rana was escorted to Delhi by teams of NIA and National Security Guard (NSG), the agency said. An NIA team at the airport arrested Rana soon after he emerged from the airplane, upon completion of all the necessary legal formalities, it said.

The agency in an earlier statement said that it had secured the successful extradition after years of sustained and concerted efforts to bring to justice the key conspirator and "mastermind of the deadly attack" that claimed 166 lives.

## Double murder rocks Rourkela; 1 arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, April 10: Two separate murder incidents rocked the Steel City as a rag picker was found dead with his throat slit under Plantsite police limits while miscreants hacked a youth to death under Chhend police station Wednesday night, police said Thursday.

In the first incident, the rag picker was found murdered near Gandhi Road. The deceased was identified as Sudip Kar, 37, alias "Bangali", a resident of Madhusudanpali.

Police have arrested Sanjay Rabidas, 44, a native of Gaya in Bihar and currently residing near new bus stand area of Rourkela. Authorities also recovered a sharp-edged weapon allegedly used in the murder. Police registered a case and produced the accused in court Thursday.

In the other incident, a youth was hacked to death during a religious procession near Chhend. The victim, Mukesh Kar, 21, of Kalinga Vihar Cooperative Colony was reportedly attacked over past enmity. A case has been registered.

Police said five persons were detained for questioning on the basis of CCTV footage.

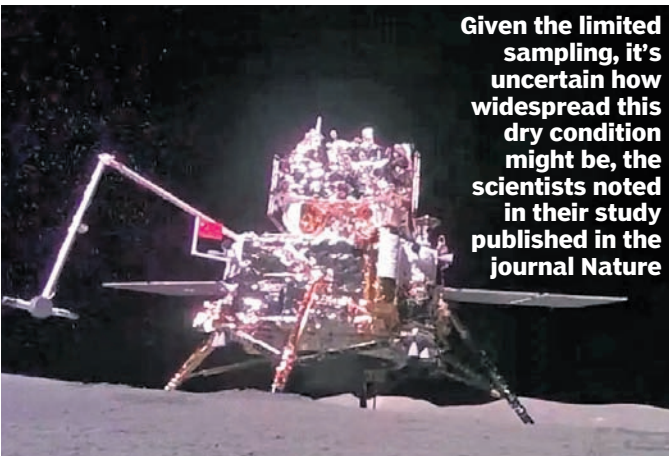
# Soil from moon suggests a thirsty far side

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cape Canaveral, April 10: Soil and rocks returned from the moon's mysterious far side suggest it may be drier than the side constantly facing Earth, Chinese scientists reported Wednesday. They, however, cautioned more samples are needed for a clearer picture.

A better understanding of the abundance of water in the lunar mantle can help explain how the moon evolved, the researchers noted. But it could also be all the more reason for astronauts to stick close to the near side of the moon as currently planned.

China became the first country to land on the moon's far side last year. The Chang'e 6 spacecraft scooped up the



Given the limited sampling, it's uncertain how widespread this dry condition might be, the scientists noted in their study published in the journal Nature

volcanic rock and dirt from the ancient, sprawling South Pole-Aitken basin, one of the largest impact craters in the solar system.

The Chinese Academy of Sci-

ences' Sen Hu said he and his team received 5 grams of soil samples, then selected 578 particles for detailed analysis using electron microscopes.

They estimated the water

abundance at less than 1.5 micrograms per gram, on the dry end of what's been found in samples gathered over past decades from the moon's near side. Measurements on samples from the near side have ranged between 1 microgram and 200 micrograms per gram.

Given the limited sampling, it's uncertain how widespread this dry condition might be, the scientists noted in their study published in the journal Nature.

"More far side samples are required for testing and further unraveling" how much water there is, Hu said in an email.

It's possible the impact that created this basin may have blasted water elements to the near side, leaving the far side depleted. Another possibility

is that the vertical distribution of water could be different between the two hemispheres.

Even if confirmed, the findings shouldn't drastically alter NASA's plans to send astronauts to the moon's south polar region, where permanently shadowed craters are believed to hold massive amounts of ice. This frozen water could be used for drinking, cooking and making rocket fuel.

NASA aims to send four astronauts around the moon next year under its Artemis program, the successor to Apollo, which put 12 men on the moon from 1969 through 1972. That would be followed by a landing near the lunar south pole by astronauts no earlier than 2027. China is seeking its own astronaut moon landing by 2030.



# Stadiums to come up in all 314 blocks: CM

## MAJHI ATTENDS 39TH NATIONAL SUB JUNIOR (BOYS) HANDBALL CHAMPIONSHIP



PNN & AGENCIES

**Keonjhar, April 10:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Thursday said Odisha government will construct stadiums in all 314 blocks of the state to strengthen sports infrastructure at the grassroots level.

The state government has allocated over ₹4,000 crore for construction of stadiums of various categories from village and block to district level. In every block, a stadium will come up on around 8 to 10 acres of land, Majhi said after watching matches of the 39th National Sub Junior (Boys) Handball Championship being held in Keonjhar.

Majhi also announced plans to set up 14 indoor swimming

pools and emphasised development in archery. He urged continued support from the government to further develop handball and train players to compete at the international level, calling for collaborative discussions on the matter.

The CM said apart from popular games like cricket, hockey and football, the state government has been encouraging sports like kho kho, kabaddi and handball.

He said the state government is taking all measures for the promotion of sports from the rural level and encouraging youngsters to actively participate in the initiative.

Majhi said Odisha organises the CM Trophy sports

tournaments to attract budding talents.

Earlier, Majhi greeted the athletes with chants of ‘Jai Jagannath’ and ‘Jai Maa Tarini,’ extending his best wishes.

Addressing the players, the chief minister said Keonjhar is renowned for handball, recalling that the first National Junior Handball Championship was held there in 1980. “After 45 years, we are fortunate to host a national-level event here once again,” he said.

Majhi highlighted the unifying power of the sport and noted that Keonjhar’s handball ground is the first synthetic playground of its kind in Asia.

The Chief Minister arrived in Keonjhar by a special helicopter and participated in the holy congregation of the State-level Sanatan Dharma Sammilani and 114 Kundiya Tridinatma Biswa Shanti Trishakti Mahayagna in Kalipadia. Later, he attended the golden jubilee celebration of Mangalpat Nodal High School in Birakesharpur village and watched a cricket match in Murusuan of the Sadar block.

He also attended the 37th annual function of Saraswati Vidya Mandir in Jhumpura, where he once served as a teacher before entering politics. Reflecting on his time there, he fondly recalled old memories and his circle of friends.



**MISSION ON WHEELS:** *Dharitri* and Orissa POST Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy and staffers of the English daily with environmentalist Prasanjit Das at the newspapers’ office in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

PGIC: BIKASH HAYAK

# Pedalling for a liveable tomorrow

Armed with a bicycle, a camping tent, and an unwavering spirit, Prasanjit Das from Murshidabad district of West Bengal has embarked on an ambitious mission— to cover 195 countries in 17 years for environmental conservation, peace, and health. His slogan —Pedal for Green, Plant for Peace, Donate Blood and Ride for Health — has resonated with communities across states as he continues his journey through Odisha. In a brief halt during his ride, Das, popularly known as Jojo Dada, sat down with **Orissa POST’s** **Debadurllav Harichandan** to talk about the road behind and the miles ahead.

- **What inspired this journey?**
- The worsening climate crisis — from global warming to urban flooding and extreme



weather events — compelled me to act. This journey is my way of spreading awareness and inspiring change. While it may seem like a daunting task, I am fully committed to seeing it through.

The mission is also a celebration of India’s diversity.

Every 50 to 100 kilometres, the language, the culture and the people — everything changes. It’s magical.

Swami Vivekananda’s ideals have been a major catalyst for my inner drive. His ideals of selflessness and unbreakable resolve guide me every day. He achieved the impossible, and I hope to do the same in my own way.

- **Where next?**

■ After completing the Odisha leg, I plan to pedal through Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, before taking a ferry from Nagapattinam to Jaffna in Sri Lanka — marking my first international stop.

- **Challenges ahead?**

■ The journey has not been without hardships. The hot weather in Odisha has been especially tough. To cope, I start early, avoid peak hours,

and set a daily target of 100 kilometres, beginning with an initial 40 kilometres stretch in the first 2.5 hours.

While tent offers me shelter, challenges like charging phone and occasional encounters with miscreants have tested my resilience. Still, the support and kindness I’ve received outweigh the setbacks.

Another hurdle has been financial support. Despite reaching out to non-profit organisations, I am yet to secure any backing. I’m hopeful that once the word spreads, some doors will open.

- **Message to fellow dreamers**

■ My advice to aspiring globe-trotters and changemakers is simple— Don’t see a bicycle as a barrier. What matters is taking that first step — or pedal. If your mission is strong, the road will carry you forward.

## City Apollo Hospitals, CP hold free health camp

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 10:** Apollo Hospitals Bhubaneswar, in collaboration with the Police Commissionerate, Bhubaneswar-Cuttack, organised a free health screening camp, aimed at promoting preventive healthcare and community wellness here recently. Several dignitaries and senior officials, including Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar chief operating officer and Medical Services director Alok Srivastava, Twin-City Police Commissioner Suresh Dev Datta Singh, additional commissioner Narasingha Bhola, ACP Suryakanta Mohanty, DCP Prakash Chandra Pal, DCP Suresh Chandra Patra and additional DCP Bidhubhusan Udgata.



More than 150 police personnel and officers from the twin-city participated in the event, reflecting strong engagement and support from the law enforcement community. As Eastern India’s leading tertiary care hospital, Apollo Hospitals Bhubaneswar showcased its cutting-edge healthcare capabilities during the camp. The hospital is renowned for its excellence in cardiac care, having performed over 30,000 successful cardiac surgeries, setting new standards in heart health.

The hospital is also recognised as a leader in liver and kidney transplant, with consistently successful outcomes that have transformed countless lives.

### WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	35.1°	34.8°
Min Temp	24.5°	23.6°
Humidity	71%	77%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
FORECAST	Cloudy sky	

# Pacts inked to boost edible oil production



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 10:** In a significant move towards achieving self-reliance in edible oil production and enhancing rural economic growth, the state government signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with three leading oil palm companies Thursday.

The initiative falls under the National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), a national programme aimed at increasing domestic edible oil production.

The agreements were signed by the Directorate of Horticulture, with Patanjali Foods Limited for Cuttack district, Tummala Agro Products Private Limited for Angul district,

and Livpalm Resources Private Limited for Dhenkanal and Jajpur districts. The key objective of these pacts is to develop large-scale oil palm cultivation in the state, which will help meet growing demands for edible oils and provide economic opportunities in rural areas.

Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, who was present at the signing ceremony, emphasised the state’s commitment to promoting sustainable agricultural practices and improving farmer livelihoods. “This initiative will not only expand oil palm cultivation in Odisha but also contribute to boosting edible oil production, generating rural employment, and supporting local farmers,” Singh Deo said.

**Bhubaneswar, April 10:** The renowned social worker, educationist and KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta was conferred with an honorary Doctor of Science degree by the University of Buckingham, UK, during its graduation ceremony Thursday. This marks his 65th honorary doctorate.

The prestigious recognition highlights Samanta’s extraordinary contributions to society through his tireless work in education and social service. “For the past 33 years, I have been dedicated to the betterment of society. This honorary doctorate will remain a cherished milestone in my journey,” said Samanta, expressing gratitude to the University for



the honour.

Samanta now holds 65 honorary doctorates from esteemed universities and institutions around the world, celebrating his exceptional efforts in education and community development. In awarding him the degree, the University of Buckingham acknowledged his transformative impact on

# 65th doctorate to Samanta

POST NEWS NETWORK

individuals’ lives.

The University of Buckingham, the only independent university in the UK with a Royal Charter, is the oldest of Britain’s independent universities.

The Senate was moved by Samanta’s inspiring life story—a testament to the power of perseverance, hard work, and social responsibility in transforming lives. His journey serves as a beacon of hope and a call to create a better world.

The event was attended by notable figures, including, Chancellor of the University of Buckingham Dame Mary Archer, vice-chancellor Prof. James Tooley, and Pro-Vice-Chancellor Prof. Harriet Dunbar-Morris, among other Council and Senate members.

## Charudutta Panigrahi gets Emily Dickinson Award

**Bhubaneswar:** Celebrated Indian author and poet Charudutta Panigrahi has been honoured with the prestigious Emily Dickinson Award for his latest poetry anthology, *Swirl & Still*. This compelling collection stands out for its originality and global outlook, with Panigrahi’s writing transcending geographical and cultural boundaries. His vivid imagination draws from personal yet universally relatable experiences, weaving deeply resonant narratives. From the evocative “Dusk at Rayagada” to the stirring “Monte Music,” *Swirl & Still* has garnered critical acclaim and is already being considered for several other international recognitions. The anthology masterfully blends the local with the global, positioning Panigrahi as a poetic voice that bridges cultures. Named after the iconic 19th-century American poet, the Emily Dickinson Award celebrates literary excellence and honours writers who, like Dickinson explore the human condition with depth and innovation.



# RANA IN INDIA; KEY 26/11 PLAYERS OUT OF BOUNDS

From P1...

“With the active assistance of USDOJ, the US Sky Marshal, NIA worked closely with other Indian intelligence agencies, NSG through the entire extradition process, which also saw India’s Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs coordinating with the other relevant authorities in the United States to take the matter to its successful conclusion,” the statement read.

Senior advocate Dayan Krishnan and special public prosecutor Narender Mann, who are representing the NIA, reached the Patiala House court premises shortly after news that Rana had landed in Delhi. Police officials asked mediapersons to leave and said they were ensuring the court

premises were fully vacant. The lawyers, however, refused to comment.

Special NIA judge Chander Jit Singh is hearing the case against Rana. Advocate Piyush Sachdeva from Delhi Legal Services Authority is representing the accused.

Meanwhile, tight security has been ensured outside the NIA headquarters at the CGO complex here and the entire premises has been cordoned off by security personnel of Delhi Police and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

Key roads outside and around the NIA office has been closed for any vehicular traffic. Entry and exit from gate no 2 of Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium metro station, which is opposite the probe agency’s office, has been barred.

The announcement that Rana would be finally extradited came when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the US capital in February. “We are giving a very violent man back to India immediately to face justice in India,” US President Donald Trump said at a joint press conference with Modi February 14.

Trump said his administration has approved the extradition of “very evil people of the world” Rana “to face justice in India”. Rana was lodged in Metropolitan Detention Centre in Los Angeles.

He was held in judicial custody in the US following proceedings initiated under the India-US Extradition Treaty for his extradition. The extradition finally came through after Rana exhausted all legal avenues to

stay the move.

The District Court for the Central District of California had ordered his extradition May 16, 2023. Rana then filed multiple litigations in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, all of which were rejected.

He subsequently filed a petition for a writ of certiorari, two habeas petitions, and an emergency application before the US Supreme Court, which were also denied.

“The extradition proceedings were initiated between the two countries after India eventually secured a surrender warrant for the wanted terrorist from the US government,” the NIA said.

Rana is accused of conspiring with David Coleman Headley alias Daood Gilani, and operatives of designated terrorist

organisations Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Harkat-ul-Jihadi Islami (HUJI) along with other Pakistan-based co-conspirators, to carry out the three-day terror siege of India’s financial capital. Both LeT and HUJI have been declared terrorist organisations by the Indian government under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

Among the 166 killed were US, British and Israeli nationals. Besides, 238 were injured in the mayhem carried out by a group of 10 Pakistani terrorists on a railway station, two luxury hotels and a Jewish centre after they sneaked into Mumbai through the Arabian Sea.

The terrorists had targeted multiple iconic locations in Mumbai, including the Taj Mahal and Oberoi hotels, Leopold

Cafe, Chabad House and Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus train station, each of which Headley had scouted in advance.

Rana would be the third person to be sent on trial in India in the case after Ajmal Kasab and Zabiuddin Ansari alias Abu Jundal. In November 2012, Ajmal Amir Kasab, the lone surviving terrorist among the Pakistani group, was hanged to death in Yerawada Jail in Pune.

Rana had served in the Pakistani Army medical corps before emigrating to Canada in late 1990s and started his immigration consultancy firm. He later moved to the US and set up an office in Chicago.

Through his firm, Rana gave cover to Headley to carry out reconnaissance mission in Mumbai so that the terrorists could launch the attacks.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-DayalAgency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Down Road Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.



## Body goes missing from burial ground

**Bhadrak:** The body of a woman allegedly went missing from a graveyard in Bhadrak district, prompting the police to launch an investigation. The incident happened in Maninathpur village in the Bhandaripokhari police station area. Three bodies went missing from the same graveyard last year as well. Locals now suspect the involvement of a racket that illegally supplies corpses to private medical colleges for research. Rukmani Samal had died 10 days ago, and as per customs in her community, she was buried in the graveyard. When her family went to the graveyard for the 10th-day ritual Thursday, they were stunned to find the burial site dug up and the body missing. Police have launched an investigation into the incident.

# Koraput breaks 7-yr record in finger millet procurement

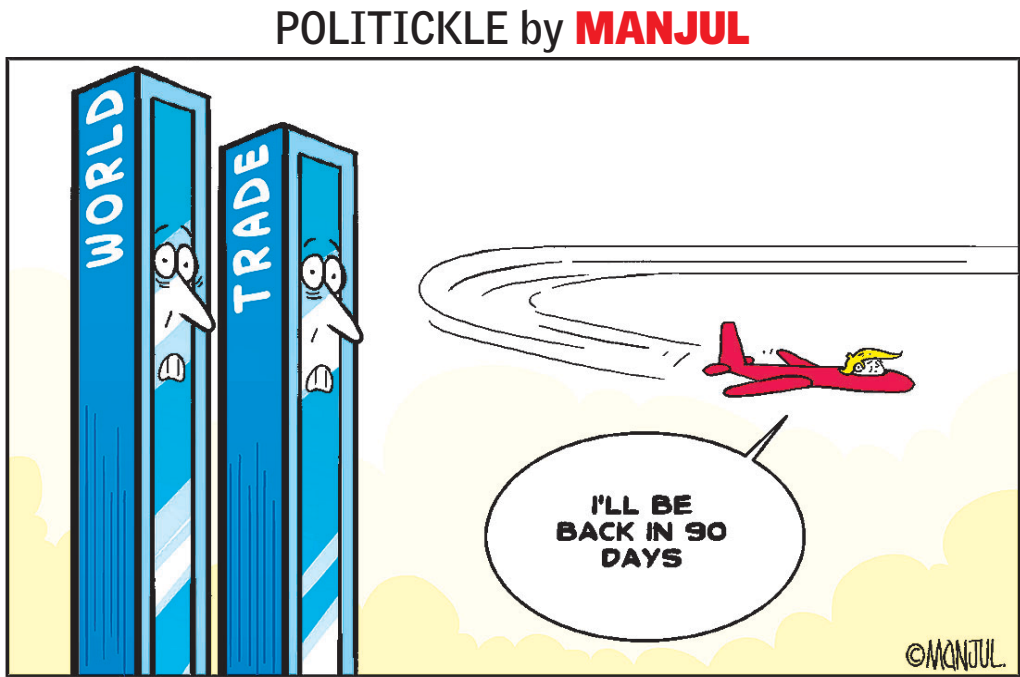
POST NEWS NETWORK

**Koraput/Nandapur, April 10:** Finger millet procurement in Koraput district has hit a seven-year high, thanks to the Odisha government's ₹2.10 per kg incentive scheme aimed at encouraging millet cultivation and supporting farmers, a report said.

According to Koraput Collector V Keerthi Vasan, the district has procured 2,39,875 quintals of millets from 14,574 farmers till April 7, nearly achieving 98.2 per cent of the targeted 2,44,200 quintals under the current procurement cycle.

Officials say the record-breaking feat is the result of a focused plan prepared for the 2024-25 fiscal year under the government's 'Shree Anna Abhiyan' initiative. The plan was executed jointly by the district administration, Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation of Odisha Ltd (TDCCOL), Millet Mission officials, and farmer producer organisation (FPO).

To ensure direct purchase from farmers, the administration deployed 21 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and Large Area Multipurpose Societies (LAMPs) across 14 blocks. The procurement was carried out at the minimum



support price (MSP) of ₹42.90 per kg, along with the state incentive of ₹2.10 per kg, bringing the total price to ₹45 per kg, directly credited to farmers' bank accounts.

The Collector noted that exceeding the target ahead of time has not only made farmers more self-reliant and economically empowered, but has also helped highlight the nutritional value of millets on a global platform.

The district administration has praised the collective efforts of millet farmers, FPOs, LAMPs, the Millet Mission, and TDCCOL for making the record-breaking procurement possible. The Shri Jaibik Farmers Producer Group has procured 34,950 quintals of millet from 2,382 farmers in the Nandapur block this year by establishing six procurement centers, according to district officials.

In the Lamtaput block, a re-

cord 41,000 quintals of millet have been collected from 2,597 farmers—making it the highest procurement block in the region.

Vasan informed that during the 2023-24 procurement season, 1,18,624 quintals of finger millet had been purchased from 8,232 farmers at the minimum support price (MSP) of ₹38.46 per kg.

To further encourage millet cultivation and production, the state government increased the MSP to ₹42.90 per kg from earlier ₹38.46. Additionally, it offered an incentive of ₹2.10 per kg to farmers, which helped promote higher output.

The collected millet will be utilised in several state programmes and will be transported and exported in and outside of the country, the Collector said. In a recent initiative by the School and Mass Education Department, the procured millet will be used to make 'millet (mandia) laddu' to be distributed among students under nutrition programme. Moreover, the state Women and Child Development Department plans to provide millet-based food products to its beneficiaries. "This aimed at boosting nutrition and ensuring effective utilisation of the procured grain," the Collector added.

## Vedanta Lanjigarh hosts 'Parichay'

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Lanjigarh, April 10:** Vedanta Aluminium, India's leading producer of smelter-grade alumina and a subsidiary of Vedanta Limited, recently organised 'Parichay' to celebrate women's empowerment and the rich cultural tapestry of Kalahandi. More than 2,000 women from 60 villages participated in the event.

According to a release, the event was the culmination of a month-long celebration. Throughout the month, Vedanta Lanjigarh engaged women from the remotest corners of Kalahandi through fun-filled games and community-building activities designed to boost camaraderie and confidence.

Speaking on the occasion, Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya, CEO – Vedanta Alumina business, said, "Women are at the heart of inclusive development. Through our women's empowerment project – Sakhi, we are proud to empower more than 5,000 women across Kalahandi, nurturing local enterprises and enabling social and financial independence. Parichay is a celebration of their spirit and success stories."

Parichay featured stalls by 18 self-help groups (SHGs), presenting a diverse array of handcrafted and organic products, including honey, kulthi dal, millet-based snacks, cold-pressed oils, spices, paper plates, and eco-friendly cleaning agents.

# Ayushman Dream Comes True

FREE TREATMENT FACILITY TO AROUND 3.5 CRORE ODIA PEOPLE

A promise made, a promise fulfilled. Today, joy echoes across the State. Millions of our brothers and sisters, who work outside as migrant labourers, now wear smiles of relief, their hearts filled with happiness and ecstasy.

Ayushman Bharat is being implemented in the State from today. I am delighted that the benefits of the Ayushman Bharat Jan Arogya Yojana, Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana, Ayushman Vay Vandana are now available for the brothers and sisters of Odisha from today. Hon'ble Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda will launch the scheme at the historic Baliyatra Ground of Cuttack.

The scheme is dedicated to around 3.46 crore people from about 1.03 crore families under which they will get the benefit of free treatment up to ₹5 lakh per annum while an additional free treatment facility of ₹5 lakh has been provisioned for women members of the family. Under this scheme, each member of the beneficiary families will get health card.

The Ayushman Vay Vandana Yojana is designed for senior citizens aged 70 years and above. The scheme provides ₹5 lakh free health cover to all senior citizens of the age 70 years and above irrespective of their socio-economic status. The women beneficiaries will get additional assistance of ₹5 lakh per year.

The beneficiaries will now have access to free and quality treatment in over 29,000 Government and private empanelled hospitals across India.

It is a revolutionary step in the health sector of Odisha which is a gift for the people of Odisha by the double-engine Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Centre. On this occasion, I congratulate all the citizens of the State.

The BJD Government did not implement the Ayushman Bharat scheme due to political vendetta. But after the formation of our government, we are committed to implement our Sankalp Patra in letter and spirit. Proper implementation of promises is the commitment of the double-engine Government. Moreover, JP Nadda Ji, the current Union Health Minister, in his capacity as the BJP national president had also repeatedly appealed to the former Chief Minister to implement the scheme.

Now, we all are delighted that the revolutionary scheme is being launched in Odisha none other than by Shri Nadda Ji.

Along with Nadda Ji, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had also requested the previous Government in the State to implement Ayushman Bharat in Odisha. But the previous Government did not pay heed to it thereby depriving crores of

poor people of quality and free treatment facility across the country. As a result, people of the State changed the Government.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Centre's flagship Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) on September 23, 2018 with aim to provide quality treatment facilities for poor families.

As a political activist, I along with my colleagues hit the streets on several occasions to implement Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Ayushman Bharat in Odisha. We had met the former Chief Minister requesting him to implement the scheme.

Being implemented by the National Health Mission, AB-PMJAY aims to provide coverage of ₹5 lakh per family annually to poor families. AB-PMJAY is the world's largest publicly funded health assurance scheme which provides health cover of ₹5 lakh per family per year to 55 crore individuals of 12.34 crore families.

In September 2024, in a significant move, the Union Cabinet led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved a major expansion of the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. Under this decision, all senior citizens aged 70 and above will receive health coverage, regardless of their income.

The previous BJD Government deprived the poor people of Odisha by not implementing the Ayushman Bharat Yojana. It did not implement the scheme fearing the popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

But, Ayushman Bharat was a necessity for Odisha. There is not a single State in the country where Odia brothers and sisters are not staying. Thousands of Odias migrate to different States in search of work. But due to lack of money, they were unable to go to hospitals. Now, they can access quality healthcare by showing Gopabandhu Jan Arogya card.

The scheme of the previous Government was only confined to limited hospitals in and outside the State. Now, the Ayushman Bharat scheme will be implemented in convergence with the State's Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana (G-JAY). As a result, not only those residing in the State but also the Odias staying outside will be benefitted a lot.

The scheme covers up to 3 days of pre-hospitalization and 15 days post-hospitalization expenses such as diagnostics and medicine.

The flagship scheme of Prime Minister Modi could not be implemented in three States, including Odisha. Now, this scheme to be rolled out in Odisha from today.

I am confident that the love, affection and support for Prime Minister Narendra Modi will pave the way for the successful implementation of the flagship scheme in our neighbouring State.



**MOHAN CHARAN MAJHI,**  
CHIEF MINISTER, ODISHA

# Jumbos from Odisha to be MP's safari attraction

PNN & AGENCIES

**Umaria (MP), April 10:** The arrival of wild elephants from Odisha and other neighbouring states at Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) in Madhya Pradesh, via Chhattisgarh, and their amicable existence with humans have proved to be a boon for the MP government as the latter is planning to showcase these gentle giants during safaris in near future.

The wild elephants that arrived from neighbouring states nearly six years ago gradually becoming a part of the safari experience at BTR in MP, said a senior BTR official.



"We are planning to showcase the wild elephants during safaris in the near future," said Prakash Kumar Verma, BTR's Deputy Director.

These elephants, initially wary of humans, have now started becoming friendly with tourists, offering a unique addition to the reserve's attractions.

The arrival of these elephants dates back to 2018-19, when around 40 jumbos migrated from Odisha via Chhattisgarh. Their numbers have since increased, and their behaviour has notably changed over the years.

Earlier, they would chase safari vehicles, creating concerns among visitors, Verma said.

He said when the elephants first arrived, their presence took both locals and authorities by surprise.

Villagers initially resorted to bursting crackers to drive them away, which only aggravated the elephants and led to more

damage, Verma added.

To address the situation, BTR collaborated with experts from southern states, NGOs, and reserve staff to train locals in alternative deterrent methods.

The villagers are told to use chilli smoke or herbal products instead of firecrackers, he said, adding that over time, elephants and locals have adapted to each other's presence, the BTR Deputy Director said.

Despite this progress, BTR witnessed a tragic event last October when 10 elephants were found dead. The deaths, reported between October 29

and 31, raised alarm across wildlife conservation circles.

Post-mortem reports later confirmed the presence of Cyclopiazonic acid in their viscera samples, indicating the elephants had consumed spoiled kodo plants or grains.

Over months, the wild jumbos became a part of the safari. They are roaming the core and buffer areas of BTR.

Sources said the authorities have not yet taken any specific measures to create dedicated water bodies or habitats for the pachyderms, but they are keen to integrate them into the safari experience.

# Woman sentenced to life for killing hubby

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bolangir, April 10:** The Bolangir District and Sessions Court recently sentenced a woman to life imprisonment for killing her husband in 2022.

Presiding Judge Pabitra Mohan Samal Thursday found Jashoda Bhoi, 30, guilty of murdering her husband, Dibyasingh Bhoi, and sentenced her to rigorous life imprisonment along with a fine of ₹10,000. In case of failure to pay the fine, the convict will have to serve an additional one year in prison.



According to case details, 22 October 2022, Rajanikant Bhoi of Mahipur village under Tushura police limits filed a complaint with the local police alleging that his daughter-in-law Jashoda had murdered his son, Dibyasingh.

A case (No. 162/22) was registered at Tushura police station, and then-officer Sanjeeb Pradhan conducted the investigation. Jashoda was subsequently arrested and later produced in a court.

The investigation revealed that the couple had long-standing marital disputes. On the night of October 21, 2022, during a domestic quarrel, Jashoda allegedly hacked her husband with an axe while he was asleep, resulting in his death.

Following a thorough trial, the District Judge declared Jashoda guilty and imposed the sentence.

The case was prosecuted by government advocate Subash Chandra Mahanta.

बैंक ऑफ इंडिया

Bank of India

BOI

Bank of India

BOI

Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015

DEMAND NOTICE

Notice under Section 13 (2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 for Enforcement of Security Interest

The Bank has granted following various credit facilities to the under mentioned Borrower & the amount outstanding dues mentioned below has not been paid in time. Therefore Demand Notice under Sec. 13 (2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 was issued by the Authorized Officer against the following Borrower of the **Bank of India, Sailashree Vihar Branch** but the same could not be served to the below mentioned parties. Therefore, the contents of the same including the amount outstanding, Loan amount and details of the secured assets are herein furnished below.

SAILASHREE VIHAR BRANCH / Name and Address of Borrower	Nature / Limit	Date of NPA / Date of Demand Notice	Amount as per Notice under SARFAESI Act	Details of the mortgaged properties
<b>Borrower: M/s. Sai Creations, Prop.: Mr. Shakti Prasad Panda, S/o.: Trilochan Panda, Add-1: At: HIG 11/117, Satya Sai Enclave, Near Manipal Hospital, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar-751030, Add-2: At: Flat No.: 101, Kripalau Residency, Patia Station Road, Bhubaneswar-751024</b>	<b>1) Cash Credit / ₹27,00,000/- 2) FITL / ₹4,07,300/- 3) GECL / ₹4,70,000/- 4) GECL / ₹3,40,000/- Total: ₹39,17,300/-</b>	<b>30.03.2025 / 02.04.2025</b>	<b>₹31,31,304.67 + Interest &amp; expenses thereon</b>	<b>1) Hypothecation of stock of fiber and wooden furniture, 2) All that part and parcel of Land and Building situated over Khata No.: 772/413, Plot No.: 2267/5269, Area: Ac.0.080 Dec., Kissam: Homestead at Mouza: Nimpur, P.S: Tangi, DSRO: Cuttack, Tahasil: Tangi Choudwar, Dist.: Cuttack, standing in the name of: Gobinda Chandra Sahoo, South: Renubala Mishra, East: Road, West: Railway Land</b>

As the above mentioned Borrower of the **Sailashree Vihar Branch** have defaulted in repayment of the principal loan/ facility in installments/ interest/ both, the account has been classified as **NPA**, in accordance with the directions or guidelines issued by the RBI. In spite of our repeated demands you (borrower) have not paid any amount towards the amount outstanding in your account, you have not discharged your liabilities. Hence, we are now constrained to make this publication of Demand Notice, required u/s 13(2) of the said Act and Rule 3 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. You are hereby called upon to pay the aforesaid amount alongwith further interest, cost, Incidental Expenses, Charges etc. within a period of **60 days** from the date of Notice, failing which we will take necessary action under the provisions of sec 13(4) of the said Act. against the secured assets including taking possession of your secured assets and sale them. If the dues are not fully recovered in the course of these actions against secured assets, then the Bank reserves the right to take action by filing recovery action against you before DRT/Court for recovery of the same. It may be noted that under the provisions of Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act, right of redemption is available to you, by paying the dues of the Bank together with all cost, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank at any time, till the date of publication of notice for public auction or inviting quotations or tender from public or private treaty for transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale of the secured assets. Please take note that as per sub section (13) of the aforesaid Act, after receipt of this notice, you are restrained from transferring or creating any encumbrances on the aforesaid secured assets whether by way of sale, lease, license, gift, mortgage or otherwise. **This notice is issued without prejudice to the rights of the Bank available under any other law.**

Place : Bhubaneswar  
Date: 11.04.2025

Authorized Officer  
Bank of India

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**

Tender Notice No. 05/ET/ SBP/ENGG/2025-26, Date: 04.04.2025

(1) e-Tender No. 01-eT-DENE-SBP-25

**Name of the Work:** EXTENSION OF TM CUM BALLAST SIDING TO ACCOMMODATE 40 BOBYS AT CHARMAL STATION UNDER JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER/AIRAKHOL OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

**Approx cost of the Work** ₹6,45,67,606.21, Bid Security: ₹4,72,900/-

(2) e-Tender No. 02-eT-DENE-SBP-25

**Name of the Work:** DEPLOYMENT OF ASSISTING STAFF FOR USFD TESTING IN SAMBALPUR DIVISION FOR THE YEAR 2025-26.

**Approx cost of the Work** ₹ 52,44,305/-, Bid Security: ₹ 1,04,900/-, Cost of tender form: ₹ 5,900/-

(3) e-Tender No. 07-eT-DENE-SBP-25

**Name of the Work:** EXECUTION OF PAYAND OTHER ALLIED WORK IN CONNECTION WITH REMOVAL OF PERMANENT SPEED RESTRICTION (PSR) OF CURVE NO. 32(UP) AT KM 6631-6717 IN JIJUMURA-KERE/JANGA SECTION OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

**Approx cost of the Work** ₹ 3,00,41,353.97, Bid Security: ₹3,00,300/-

Completion period for the work: 12 Months (for all tenders).

**Tender closing date & time :** at 1500 hrs. of 28.04.2025 (for all tenders).

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against any e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in)

**Note:** The prospective tenders are advised to revisit the website 15 (fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), Sambalpur


PR-22/Q/25-26



“

Spirituality is indeed the master key of the Indian mind; the sense of the infinitive is native to it.

SRI AUROBINDO



## China’s Marriage Crisis

New marriages in China reportedly plummeted by one-fifth last year, implying that the official number of births will likely fall from 9.54 million in 2024 to7.3-7.8 million in 2025. Thus, while China represents17.2% of the global population, it will account for less than 6%of births– comparable to Nigeria.

Moreover, China’s fertility rate in 2025 is expected to fall to 0.9births per woman (2.1 is the standard replacement level), just half of what officials predicted in 2016. So alarming is this demographic reality that early this month Chinese Premier Li Qiang announced that the government will be rolling out new policies to boost the birth rate.

But the marriage crisis will greatly undermine these efforts. Marriages already plummeted from 13.47 million couples in 2013 to 6.11 million in 2024 –albeit with some deviation in 2020-24,owing to the zero-COVID policy. Likewise, the overall marriage rate fell from 9.9 per 1,000 people to 4.3 over the same period, compared to 5.4 in Taiwan and 6.1 in the United States (2023).

Why is this happening? Unfortunately for the Chinese leadership, there is no single cause. Salient factors include the steady decline in China’s childbearing-age population; changes in lifestyle; the lingering effects of the (now-discarded) one-child policy on attitudes toward marriage and childbearing; the persistent oversupply of men; and high youth unemployment.

According to China’s2020 census, 61 % of babies are born to women aged 20-30. But the number of women in this cohort dropped from 111 million in 2012 to 73 million in 2024, and is expected to decline further, to 37 million by 2050. Even if the fertility rate were to rise somewhat, births would continue to fall rapidly.

Decades of sex-selective abortion in China have led to a shortage of brides and a soaring “bride price”(the groom’s family must, at a minimum, purchase a new apartment). While the typical biological sex ratio at birth is between 102 and 106 males per 100 females, China’s 2000 census showed a sex ratio (in 0-4-year-olds) of 120 nationally, 133 in Jiangxi Province, and 197 in Wuxue City, Hubei Province. Yet despite this profound asymmetry, there are still many “leftover women,” because many parents with a daughter (almost always an only child) have prioritized her education and economic independence over marriage, and placed excessive expectations on aspiring sons-in-law. The proportion of unmarried women aged 25-29 in China soared from 9% in 2000 to 33% in 2020 and 43% in 2023 – and this trend continues to accelerate.

When China implemented its one-child policy in 1980, it not only raised the barriers to marriage but also made divorce easier, further exacerbating the crisis. The divorce rate soared from 0.3 per 1,000 people in 1980 to 3.4 in 2019. Hence, in 2021, China implemented a new civil code, following the example of the United Kingdom and France, to require a 30-day cooling-off period for divorce. But while this reduced the divorce rate to two per 1,000 people, it had rebounded to 2.6 by 2023 – much higher than Japan’s rate (1.5).

The reproductive window for Chinese men and women is very short. A woman typically has 12% of her eggs left by age 30, and only 3% by 40. The risk of miscarriage increases from 10% for women under 30 to 20% at 35, 33-40% at 40, and 57-80% at 45. The chance of conceiving a child with Down syndrome increases with the mother’s age, rising from one in 2,000 at age 20 to one in 350 at age 35, and up to one in 30 at age 45. As the age of marriage is postponed, interest in raising children also declines.

That is why about two-thirds of babies worldwide are born to women aged 30 and under. In 2021, the mean age of mothers at first birth was 27 in the United States, 27 in Mexico, and only 21 in India. By comparison, the mean age at first birth for Chinese women has risen from 25 in 2000 to 28 in 2020, with an accelerating increase in recent years. In Shanghai, it increased from 30 in 2019 to 32 in 2024. Worse, the overall infertility rate in China has increased from 1-2% in the 1970s to 18% in 2020. More and more people are becoming infertile after marriage or after having their first child.

Traditionally Confucian-influenced regions have the lowest fertility rates in the world, partly because their overemphasis on education translates into an under emphasis on marriage and child bearing. As a result, such regions have a higher proportion of unmarried people overall, and the historical data suggest that it will be virtually impossible to boost their fertility rate even to 1.5 if the mean age of mothers at first birth exceeds 28.

Internationally, the legal minimum age for marriage is usually between 16 and 18. But in China, it was raised to 22 for men and 20 for women in 1980.People have grown so accustomed to marrying and having children later that lowering the age to 18 would do nothing new to boost the fertility rate.

The widespread postponement of marriage and childbearing, like the soaring proportion of unmarried people, is largely attributable to the government’s policies in pursuit of a talent dividend and “new quality productive forces.” These policies have led to an increase in undergraduate and postgraduate enrollment, from 2.21 million and 129,000, respectively, in 2000, to 10.69 million (much more than this year’s births)and 1.36 million in 2024.Meanwhile, China’s tertiary education enrollment rate has surpassed Japan’s, implying that its fertility rate will struggle to stabilize at Japan’s current level of 1.15.

Can China’s government resolve the contradiction between its economic ambitions and its demographic reality? Judging by its past efforts, no one should bet on it.

The writer, a senior scientist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, spear-headed the movement against China’s one-child policy and is the author of Big Country with an Empty Nest (China Development Press, 2013), which went from being banned in China to ranking first in China Publishing Today’s100 Best Books of 2013 in China.

©project syndicate



Yi Fuxian

When China implemented its one-child policy in 1980, it not only raised the barriers to marriage but also made divorce easier, further exacerbating the crisis

FOCUS

POLITICS

# A TALE OF TWO CMs



For the BJP, Nitish Kumar is a useful mascot who is needed to shore up their wider base ahead of the November Bihar elections

If ever there was an award for political gymnastics, Nitish Kumar would undoubtedly be in line for gold, with Chandrababu Naidu competing for a podium finish. From being staunch adversaries of Narendra Modi to becoming faithful allies, the transformation of these two chief ministers is almost complete. The manner in which the Janata Dal (United) and the Telugu Desam lined up behind the Wakf Amendment Bill in Parliament is further evidence of how quickly the dice has turned in the last ten months. From being in a position to call the shots in June 2024 after a hung parliament verdict, both Nitish and Naidu have now quietly accepted the BJP’s dominant position.

Nitish’s switch is unarguably the most graphic example of the de-ideologisation of politics in the quest for personal survival. It was, after all, the Bihar chief minister who had raised the flag of revolt against Narendra Modi when the latter was first anointed as the BJP’s prime ministerial face in 2013. Withdrawing from the NDA, the aim was to position himself as a secular bulwark against a ‘communal’ force, an apparently ideological and individual conflict that had simmered since the 2002 Gujarat riots. When Modi refused to wear a skullcap during a ‘Sadbhavana Yatra’ in 2013, Nitish was quick to strike back by claiming that ‘to run the country, you have to take everyone along... at times you will have to wear a topi (cap), at times a tilak (vermillion mark on forehead).’ It was the Bihar chief minister’s way of defining his version of ‘soft’ political secularism and contrasting it with the Modi brand of muscular Hindutva.

Twelve years later, it is apparent that the battle of contrasts has only one winner. The Nitish Kumar who was propped up as challenger number one and the architect of an anti-BJP ‘India’ alliance just two years ago is today a vassal in the Modi durbar. His declining personal health—a grim reality that can no longer be hidden from public

gaze—has only rendered him even more helpless to offer a semblance of a counter to the Modi juggernaut. His supporters may claim that their leader remains committed to Muslim welfare, but this appears increasingly like lip-service being paid to a constituency that has slowly been marginalised from the JD (U)’s political playbook. For the BJP, Nitish Kumar is a useful mascot who is needed to shore up their wider base ahead of the November Bihar elections. Post the elections, new alignments and fresh leadership possibilities are likely to emerge.

Chandrababu Naidu is a slightly more tricky case study. He presides over a state where the BJP is not a major stakeholder, and he possesses the administrative acumen and political experience to remain in power in Andhra Pradesh without being dependent on the BJP’s munificence. And yet, this is the same leader who had raged against Modi in the 2019 election campaign, even calling the prime minister a ‘terrorist’. Naidu’s politics has always revolved around having a transactional relationship with the Centre: he was, after all, the prop who held up both the United Front government and the Vajpayee-led NDA in a previous coalition era. Now, as chief minister, he has struck a similar ‘deal’ with the Centre: seeking maximum financial benefit for a cash-strapped Andhra Pradesh while also standing firmly with the Cen-

tre on contentious legislation.

In a sense, both Nitish and Naidu have made political survival an art form, one where a suitable elasticity in approach ensures longevity in power. Their political choices place a troubling question mark over the secular-communal divide that has underpinned contemporary politics and only expose the underlying hypocrisies of a political system where conviction is replaced by convenience. Their selective viewpoints reaffirm a political truism: ‘where you stand on an issue depends on where you sit’. In the process, secular constitutional values have been steadily hollowed out. Is Nitish Kumar a ‘secularist’ when he stands with the India alliance and does he turn communal only when he switches to the BJP? Ditto the case with Naidu.

What we are left with are only different shades of opportunistic ‘secular’ politics, all of whom can make their peace with communalists of all hues when required. The Congress perfected the art of running with the secular hare and hunting with the communal hound, one day bowing before Muslim communalists in the Shah Bano case, the next day cosying up to Hindutva flag-bearers while opening the gates of the Babri Masjid. The socialists and the wider Janata parivar, driven by fierce anti-Congressism, also played footloose with secular politics, aligning with the BJP when necessary to keep the

Congress out. Regional parties like the Trinamool Congress and the DMK have also aligned with BJP-led governments in the past, if only to share power at the Centre. Only the left parties have called out communal politics without demur, but the Left has shrunk into political irrelevance and hence can scarcely challenge dominant narratives.

This leaves a Modi-led BJP in a seemingly unassailable position. A party without a single Muslim MP in the Lok Sabha can claim that it is now a champion of ‘reforming’ Islamic practices, ending ‘appeasement’ and standing by the interests of ‘poor’ Muslims when all it is really doing is consolidating a Hindutva majoritarian worldview that looks at all other religions with suspicion and often unalloyed hatred. Those who might have challenged the BJP’s supremacy are either too enfeebled or too compromised now to mount a significant opposition. Nitish and Naidu supporters will claim that their leaders did push to ensure important amendments in the Wakf Act that addressed concerns of those who feared the bill was being bulldozed through, but the fundamental constitutional issue of freedom of religion has been severely undermined by the new law. What is left are the shattered pieces of a cracked secular mirror that maybe both Nitish and Naidu need to glance at occasionally. The disfigured reflection may remind them of just how far they have come in becoming enablers of discriminatory politics where once they prided themselves on being principled defenders of equality of all faiths.

Post-script: I was the first to interview Nitish Kumar when he left the NDA in 2013. When I asked him why he’d made the move, his instant response was: ‘I can’t work with a ‘tanashah’ (dictator).’ I wonder how the same Nitish Kumar would explain his pitiful situation today.

*The writer is a senior journalist and author of 2024: The Election That Surprised India.*

SPECTRUM

COMMERCE

## All eyes on Indo-US trade pact

The US has announced reciprocal tariffs on India but these are substantially lower than most countries. This gives India some comparative advantage though estimates suggest around two-thirds of India’s exports to the United States will bear the impact of the tariffs.

One may point out here that the Trump administration does not club India with countries like China, Mexico and Canada.

Experts feel that US tariffs have created a somewhat chaotic environment and there isn’t a consistent strategy visible. Countries at the receiving end of tariff firing have already responded differently. There have been counter retaliatory measures with say the European Union and Canada targeting US political constituencies and daily consumption items to put back pressure through higher domestic prices.

Regarding the farm sector, agriculture will be hit with a decline projected in dairy

products and marine products like shrimp while rice exports remain largely unaffected. There are reports of India reforming its MSP system for rice and wheat though this may take sufficient time and lower tariffs on farm products.

After the steep tariff hike, the jewellery market does not look bright as there may be a sharp decline in demand in the US market.

However, the textile sector holds out promise as India is at a relative advantage compared with countries such as Bangladesh and Vietnam.

Exemption of pharmaceuticals and semiconductor industries from the ambit of tariffs, at least for the time being, has been of great help to Indian exporters. Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance stated that this decision underscores the critical role of cost-effective, life-saving generic medicines in public health. India exported \$8 billion of pharma products to the US in 2024, which accounted for 40 percent of

the generic drugs consumed in the US and this is expected to increase this year. Though some believe that the pharma sector is not out of the woods and that a tariff is expected to be imposed later, it will not be big enough and the manufacturers and consumers will be in a position to share the burden and India’s export to the US market will not be affected.

Similar patterns exist in transport equipment. However, though not automobiles but auto components are a serious matter as India exports are around \$2.2 billion to the US. Tariffs may affect exports of auto components, but the bigger worry is whether US manufacturers may produce more locally and outprice imports.

The tariff has put an extra burden on most Indian products to the US with marine products, dairy, medical equipment, machinery and carpets being the hardest hit. Given that these are all labour-intensive sectors, the government may evolve a

strategy to push them aggressively however, much depends on the proposed Indo-US Bilateral Trade Agreement and, according to Niti Aayog’s experts, the final such treaty will aim to enhance the potential gains during the next five years or so. Some expect that the agreement may facilitate the possibility of increasing Indo-US trade in the coming years and may strengthen the Indian economy.

Meanwhile, the tariff war will drag down global investments and growth. The OECD has cut down its growth projections, noting that trade disruption will take a significant toll on the global economy, which is expected to slow down this year. Even the WTO has forecast that world trade will shrink as a result of these tariffs while the IMF has termed it sluggish. Obviously, the question before most analysts the world over is whether Trump wants to destroy the global economic order.

INFA

“

One is never afraid of the unknown; one is afraid of the known coming to an end.

JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI

“

Bread for myself is a material question. Bread for my neighbor is a spiritual one.

NIKOLAI BERDYAEV

“

Social progress can be measured by the social position of the female sex.

KARL MARX

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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)



OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010





DELHI



UTTARAKHAND

# CLOUDY SKY, LIGHT DRIZZLE BRING RELIEF TO DELHIITES

The India Meteorological Department has forecast light to moderate rain, accompanied by light thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph, in several parts of Delhi later Thursday evening

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 10: The weather in Delhi experienced a sudden change Thursday evening as the sky turned cloudy, followed by light drizzle and duststorm in some parts of the city, providing much-needed relief to Delhiites amid a heatwave that had gripped the national capital for the past few

days.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast light to moderate rain, accompanied by light thunderstorm, lightning and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph, in several parts of Delhi later Thursday evening. The monitoring stations at Ridge and Ayanagar recorded heatwave conditions Thursday, with the maximum tempera-



ture settling at 40.9 degrees celsius and 40.2 degrees celsius, respectively, according to the IMD. The city's primary weather station at Safdarjung

recorded a high of 39.6 degrees celsius, 4.5 notches above normal, while Palam reported 39.1 degrees Celsius, and Lodhi Road 39.6 degrees Celsius, the

IMD said.

The capital recorded the season's first heatwave Monday, when the mercury touched 40 degrees Celsius, according to the IMD. The minimum temperature Thursday was recorded at 25.9 degrees Celsius, nearly six notches above normal and the highest night temperature recorded in the month of April in the past three years, IMD data showed.

In 2022, the highest minimum temperature in April was recorded at 26.2 degrees Celsius. In 2024 and 2023, the minimum temperature in April did not touch the 25-degree mark.

The humidity level in the capital Thursday fluctuated

between 55 per cent and 30 per cent during the day, according to the IMD.

For Friday, the weather office has forecast thunderstorm with rain, with the maximum temperature likely to settle around 37 degrees Celsius, and the minimum around 24 degrees Celsius.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) in Delhi was recorded in the 'poor' category Thursday with a reading of 256 at 4 pm, as per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered 'good', 51 to 100 'satisfactory', 101 to 200 'moderate', 201 to 300 'poor', 301 to 400 'very poor', and 401 to 500 'severe'.

## Delhi CM Gupta announces riverfront at Najafgarh drain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 10: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta Thursday inspected several ongoing projects to clean the Yamuna river and announced a riverfront project along the Sahibi river, popularly known as Najafgarh drain.

The chief minister was accompanied by Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena and Water Minister Parvesh Verma.

The team inspected 50 acres of land belonging to the irrigation and flood control department and announced that the government has now decided to transform this land into a beautiful and grand public park.

"This land holds immense potential for the community and has long been left in a deplorable condition. We are now committed to converting it into a lush, accessible green space," she said. The plan also includes a proposed riverfront development along the Sahibi river, which passes through the area.

The chief minister also inspected the ongoing desilting work at supplementary drain in Wazirabad, Barapullah drain, Sunheri Pul drain and Kushak drain. "We are constantly monitoring the Yamuna cleaning process. Work to clean the 22 drains are being desilted so that the treated water from these drains when entering the river is as per prescribed standards," she told reporters here.

At the supplementary drain at Wazirabad, Gupta inspected 'surface aerators' -- used to increase the dissolved oxygen levels in water necessary for aquatic life. The process involves creating a disturbance in the surface of water with the help of rotators.

"All are working collaboratively for the benefit of Delhi citizens to prevent any issues related to waterlogging or pollution in the upcoming seasons, thereby enabling Delhi to function as a clean, healthy and safe city," she said. Hitting out at the previous AAP government, Gupta said that it did not pay attention to the untreated waste water flowing into the Yamuna through the drains. There are 22 large drains, including Najafgarh and Shahdara, where desilting work is currently ongoing.

The Delhi government's Urban Development Department had last year directed all concerned agencies to hand over these drains to Irrigation and Flood Department.

## Delhi Mayor writes to CM over user charges

A POLITICAL ROW HAS ERUPTED OVER THE IMPOSITION OF USER CHARGES FOR SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT BY THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF DELHI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 10: Delhi Mayor Mahesh Kumar has written to Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and objected to the decision to impose user charges for solid waste management.

The mayor has called it an undue burden on the public.

A political row has erupted over the imposition of user charges for solid waste management by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD).

The mayor alleged that the proposal to collect user charges along with house tax was never passed by the MCD.

"The proposal was not brought before the House and was instead implemented behind the scenes by Municipal Commissioner Ashwani Kumar. This decision goes against the interests of Delhi's residents," he said in his letter.

Kumar said the MCD must ensure that door-to-door services are provided to public before imposing user charges.

The work of the concessionaire garbage collection companies in all 12 zones is unsatisfactory, resulting in heaps of garbage everywhere, he added.

The mayor said the situation is currently worse in the western zone, central zone and southern zone.

There has been no coordination between the concessionaires and those who collect garbage from homes privately, said Kumar, adding sixty to seventy per cent of the garbage is collected through private services.

"Until the Delhi Municipal Corporation is fully capable of collecting garbage from every house, it will not be appropriate to impose such user charges," he said. The mayor urged Gupta to immediately direct the MCD to withdraw the decision, stating that citizens are already grappling with inflation and deserve relief, not additional financial pressure.

Responding to the development, BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said that a similar surcharge was proposed in 2021 by the then commissioner of the erstwhile East Delhi Municipal Corporation, but the BJP mayor at that time had halted its implementation.

In contrast, the current Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Mayor, Mahesh Kumar, is merely issuing statements without taking any concrete action, he added.

The BJP spokesperson said the mayor must answer "why he has neither called a meeting of the municipal house on this issue nor directed the commissioner to stop the collection of the user surcharge".

Citing media reports about the Uttarakhand government's decision not to impose any limits on the number of pilgrims visiting the Himalayan temples, SDC Foundation founder Anoop Nautiyal said it posed a serious risk

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, April 10: A local NGO Thursday emphasised the need to regulate the number of pilgrims visiting the Char Dham temples daily, warning that uncontrolled influx of devotees could be dangerous.

Citing media reports about the Uttarakhand government's decision not to impose any limits on the number of pilgrims visiting the Himalayan temples, Social Development for Communities (SDC) Foundation founder Anoop Nautiyal said it posed a serious risk.

Nautiyal said, "This effectively means that every registered pilgrim would be permitted to visit the shrines. Considering the rising rush of pilgrims with each passing year, regulating the number of pilgrims becomes more important."

"Without regulating the number of pilgrims based on the carrying capacity of the holy shrines, a situation of overcrowding and mismanagement could easily arise, posing significant risks to both the pilgrims and the region's fragile



environment," he added.

The annual Char Dham Yatra is scheduled to begin April 30, with the opening of the Gangotri and the Yamunotri temples. Last year, about 50 lakh devotees reached the Char Dham -- Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath -- located in the Upper Garhwal Himalayan region.

SDC Foundation is a Dehradun-based NGO working in areas such as climate change, environment, urbanisation and waste management.

Nautiyal said SDC Foundation had consistently urged the government to consider the carrying capacity of the Char Dham sites.

Referring to a detailed report released by SDC Foundation on the Char Dham Yatra in 2024 that lasted for 192 days, he said it documented the number of daily visitors to each shrine over a 28-week period. It included 14 data-driven graphs highlighting 10 key issues, alongside a special feature analysing media coverage and recommendations to simplify the registration process.

While the government has said all pilgrims would be allowed entry into the shrines, many have found that online registration slots are already full for specific days.

Nautiyal noted that the gov-

ernment had previously indicated a 60:40 ratio for online and offline registrations.

If pilgrims arrive in Uttarakhand under the assumption that everyone would be allowed, only to be turned away due to the slots being full, it could damage the state's reputation and create a chaotic situation, he said.

"The focus must now shift from celebrating record-breaking numbers to ensuring that the yatra is managed with consideration for the health and safety of pilgrims, preservation of local ecosystems and the welfare of communities that depend on these sacred sites," Nautiyal said.

# Uttarkashi village emerges as symbol of women empowerment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, April 10: Uttarkashi district's Matholi village has become a symbol of women empowerment and rural tourism as women are providing hospitality to tourists through homestays and taking them on village tours.

The women of Matholi village in the Chinyalisaur block have transformed their village

into a new tourist destination with their warm hospitality and skills.

From managing homestays to conducting village tours, everything is being handled by women.

The credit for turning Matholi from a regular mountain village into a tourist hotspot goes to a young local Pradeep Panwar who had to return to his village during the COVID-19

lockdown.

Using his prior experience in the tourism sector to his advantage, Panwar converted his nearby cowshed (locally known as "chhani") into a homestay and opened it for tourists.

At the same time, he trained local women in hospitality, cooking, trekking and village tours.

He also branded the village as "Bwari Village" to spread

the message of women empowerment far and wide. Bwari in local dialect means daughter-in-law.

Additionally, through events like the "Ghasyari Competition", he introduced tourists to unique aspects of village life that have been widely appreciated.

More women in the village are now coming forward to convert their own 'chhanis'

into homestays, Anita Panwar a resident of the village said.

Pradeep Panwar mentions that his homestay is now registered with the tourism department, enabling him to accept online bookings.

He started his homestay March 8, 2022, and since then, around 1,000 tourists have visited it, providing employment to around 20 women from time to time.

# Martyred IAF officer's parents seek change in govt policy

A pilot in the IAF, 33-year-old Squadron Leader Rai died in a plane crash December 4, 2023, near the Air Force Academy in Hyderabad while training a foreign cadet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, April 10: The parents of Squadron Leader Abhimanyu Rai, who died in a trainer jet crash, say they were ignored for entitlements and honours that went exclusively to their daughter-in-law and are demanding a change in government policy.

A pilot in the IAF, 33-year-old Squadron Leader Rai died in a plane crash December 4, 2023, near the Air Force Academy in Hyderabad while training a foreign cadet. He was flying a Pilatus PC-7 Mark-II aircraft, a trainer jet, with a foreign cadet under his training when it crashed near the Academy killing both of them.

Group Captain Amitabh Rai (retd) and his wife Chitraklekha said they lost their only son Abhimanyu in December, 2023

but they have not received even a word of condolence from the government so far.

They feel the policy for such cases needs to be tweaked to accommodate the parents of the martyred bravehearts apart from their wives.

"We know of at least a dozen parents of martyrs who have been ignored when it came to according entitlements, which went exclusively to their wives," Chitraklekha told PTI in an exclusive interview here Wednesday.

"One year and three months have passed since we suffered the worst tragedy of our life, losing our only son in a trainer jet crash near the Air Force Academy in Hyderabad. But we did not receive even a word of condolence to date from either the prime minister or the defence

## 'IGNORED' FOR ENTITLEMENTS



minister," Amitabh Rai said.

"Why should a word of condolence be the exclusive privilege of only the martyr's wife," he asked. He said in many cases, the wives of slain or martyred soldiers leave or ill-treat their in-laws after getting compensation and half the pension of their husbands. At times, they even drag them to court to

claim their share in their late husband's ancestral property, he claimed.

"The wife of a slain soldier is called a 'veer nari' (brave woman) but not his mother who gave birth to him, brought him up and inculcated in him a love for the country that was strong enough to make him lay down his life for it. Is it fair?"

asks Group Captain Rai.

"We know what it takes to groom your son like that and make him a soldier ready to die for his country. But, unfortunately, no one seems to take notice of the fact," says he.

The awareness that their son is not treated as a "martyr" despite having died in the line of duty only deepens their sense of hurt.

"As his death was not a 'battle casualty', they don't treat our son as a martyr. Our question is didn't he die for the nation?" asks Chitraklekha.

"My son had even served for one-and-a-half years in the prime minister's fleet," Group Captain Rai, who retired from the Indian Air Force (IAF) in 2017 after 32 years of service, said.

The plane crashed during a low-level navigation sortie, says the braveheart's father.

"My son was a dedicated soldier. The foreign cadet was admittedly weak in memory and slow in learning things. He also lacked confidence and

was not keen on continuing with his training."

"He had written all this in a letter to Abhimanyu. But as the passing out parade was near after which he was to be commissioned into the air force of his country, Abhimanyu decided to help him complete his training by taking him on the training sortie during which the jet crashed," his father said.

Asked why his son did not bring the foreign cadet's reluctance to complete his training to his superiors, Group Leader Rai said maybe he was under pressure. "He might have been hesitant to take the matter to the higher-ups because diplomatic ties between the two countries are involved. The trainer pilots are under pressure to complete the training process successfully," Rai said.

Training of cadets from friendly countries is done as part of a diplomatic exercise to strengthen ties with them and the resulting pressure comes

on the soldiers, he said.

It is an inherent flaw in the system which needs to be addressed, he said.

"An inquiry is underway to ascertain what exactly led to the crash and until that happens, we are assailed by all sorts of doubts about the circumstances at the time of the crash such as whether our son was overworked or under pressure or some error was committed by the weak and ill-confident foreign cadet under training," Rai said.

The Rais visited the crash site in Hyderabad and erected a memorial in the name of their martyred son at their own expense. The couple also visited the foreign cadet's country, met his parents and extended financial assistance to them as a goodwill gesture.

However, the loss of a son has not deterred Group Captain Amitabh Rai (retd) from training bright young boys free of cost to join the armed forces and serve their motherland with valour.











of the day

quote

With economic growth rates declining worldwide, it has become difficult to maintain and develop an economy solely on the strength of the private sector

LEE JAE-MYUNG | OPPOSITION LEADER, SOUTH KOREA

The government has been framing programmes, policies and regulations as per the advice received from the private sector

KP SHARMA OLI | PRIME MINISTER, NEPAL

We call on the relevant party to be correct and sober about China's role and refrain from making irresponsible remarks

LIN JIAN | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, CHINA

SHORT TAKES

Ex-Russian minister convicted in UK

**London:** A former Russian government minister became the first person Wednesday to be convicted in the UK of circumventing sanctions put in place after the illegal annexation of Crimea from Ukraine in 2014. Dmitrii Ovsianikov, who was appointed governor of Sevastopol in Crimea by Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2016, used a British bank account to illegally receive tens of thousands of pounds from his wife and accepted gifts and payments from his brother, prosecutors said.

Pak departs over 11,000 Afghans

**Islamabad:** Pakistan has deported over 11,000 Afghan refugees after a deadline for their voluntary return expired last week, Minister of State for Interior Talai Chaudhry said Thursday. Pakistan announced in January that all Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders should leave the country by March 31 or face deportation. Authorities launched a drive from April 1 to expel those falling into the category. "So far, 11,230 Afghans have been repatriated to their country," Chaudhry said while addressing a press conference.

Roof collapse: Death toll rises to 221

**Santa Domingo (Dominican Republic):** Memorials were taking place Thursday for a merengue star and others killed when a cement roof collapsed at a popular nightclub in the Dominican Republic, as the number of dead surged to 221 and crews searched for more bodies under the rubble. Mourners clad in black and white streamed into Santo Domingo's National Theatre, where Rubby Perez's body lay inside a closed coffin. Perez had been performing on stage at the Jet Set club early Tuesday when the disaster happened.

6,700 Indian Sikh pilgrims reach Pak

**Lahore:** Over 6,700 Sikh pilgrims from India arrived in Pakistan via the Wagah border Thursday to participate in Baisakhi Mela festivities and commemorate the founding of the Khalsa sect. Baisakhi marks the Sikh new year and commemorates the formation of Khalsa panth (saint-warriors) under Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. This would be the 326th founding anniversary of Khalsa. The main ceremony will be held here April 14 at Gurdwara Janamasthan Nankana Sahib.

The Iranian regime's reckless pursuit of nuclear weapons remains a grave threat to the United States and a menace to regional stability and global security

SCOTT BESSENT | TREASURY SECRETARY, US

KASH PATEL REMOVED AS ACTING ATF CHIEF

FBI Director Kash Patel was quietly removed weeks ago as the acting chief of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and has been replaced with the Army secretary, three people familiar with the matter have said



Russia, US swap spa worker, tech smuggler prisoners

REUTERS

**Moscow/Washington, April 10:** Russia released a Los Angeles spa worker Thursday sentenced to 12 years in jail for donating to a charity aiding Ukraine in exchange for a man accused of crafting a global smuggling ring to spirit sensitive US electronics to Russia's military. The exchange, which took place on the tarmac of Abu Dhabi airport, indicates significant detailed contacts between President Vladimir Putin's Kremlin and the administra-

tion of US President Donald Trump, who says he wants to strike a peace deal to end the war in Ukraine. Footage on Russian state television showed Ksenia Karelina, a dual citizen who was found guilty last year of treason by a Russian court for donating \$51.80 to a US-based charity providing humanitarian support to Ukraine, flying out of Russia. Arthur Petrov, a dual German-Russian citizen arrested in 2023 in Cyprus at the request of the US for allegedly exporting sensitive microelectronics, was shown walking past Kare-



lina towards a Russian plane where he underwent medical check-ups, complaining only of fatigue.

- Witkoff raised Karelina's case with Putin - US official
- US-Russian talks on Ukraine peace to resume soon
- Witkoff to travel to Moscow again soon
- Swap took place in United Arab Emirates

"Petrov was exchanged for US citizen Ksenia Karelina, who also holds Russian citizenship and was sentenced to 12 years in a penal colony for treason in the form of financial assistance to a foreign state,"

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), the main successor to the Soviet-era KGB, said. "We express our gratitude to the UAE leadership for their assistance," the FSB said. The UAE posted a picture of Karelina on the tarmac in Abu Dhabi beside a Russian plane. **LOVE AND SMUGGLING** Beyond the spymasters and high intrigue of Russian-US relations, Karelina's fiancé expressed joy and thanked Trump for his efforts to secure her release, saying their dog was awaiting her return. "I am overjoyed to hear that

the love of my life, Ksenia Karelina, is on her way home from wrongful detention in Russia," Chris van Heerden said. "I cannot wait to hold her. Our dog, Boots, is also eagerly awaiting her return." A US official said Karelina is expected to arrive at Joint Base Andrews, in Maryland, later Thursday. The United States lists a number of Americans - some dual citizens - who are in jail in Russia, including Stephen Hubbard who has been officially declared by Washington as wrongfully detained.

TRUMP'S TARIFF REPRIEVE

EU pauses countermeasures

REUTERS

**Brussels/Beijing/Washington, April 10:** The European Union will pause its first countermeasures against US tariffs after President Donald Trump temporarily lowered the hefty duties less than a day after imposing them on dozens of countries, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said Thursday. The Trump administration is weighing offers from more than a dozen countries on tariff deals and is close to reaching agreements with some of them, White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett said. "USTR has informed us that there are maybe 15 countries now that have made explicit offers that we're studying and considering and deciding whether they're good enough to present the president," Hassett told reporters at the White House, referring to the US trade representative. Principals in the administration's trade policy will meet at the White House Thursday to discuss how to prioritize the separate negotiations, Hassett

said. The EU was due to launch counter-tariffs on about 21 billion euros (\$23.25 billion) of US imports next Tuesday in response to Trump's 25% tariffs on steel and aluminium. It is still assessing how to respond to U.S. car tariffs and the broader 10% levies that remain in place. "We want to give negotiations a chance," von der Leyen said on X. "While finalising the adoption of the EU countermeasures that saw strong support from our Member States, we will put them on hold for 90 days." Trump's sudden decision Wednesday to pause most of his hefty new duties brought relief to battered markets and anxious global leaders, even as he ratcheted up a trade war with China. His turnaround, which came less than 24 hours after steep new tariffs kicked in, followed the most intense episode of financial market volatility since the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. US stock indexes shot higher on the news, and the relief con-



tinued into Asian and European trading Thursday. Before Trump's U-turn, the upheaval had erased trillions of dollars from stock markets and led to an unsettling surge in US government bond yields that appeared to catch Trump's attention. Trump kept the pressure on China, the world's No. 2 economy and second-biggest provider of US imports, with an increase of tariffs on Chinese imports to 125% from the 104% level that kicked in Wednesday.

He also signed an executive order aimed at reducing China's grip on the global shipping industry and at reviving US shipbuilding. **TRADE WAR WITH CHINA** China rejected what it called threats and blackmail from Washington. China will "follow through to the end" if the US persists, Commerce Ministry spokesperson He Yongqian told a regular press briefing. China's door was open to dialogue, but this must be based on mutual

- EU will pause retaliatory countermeasures
- Beijing may again respond after imposing 84% tariffs
- Trump admin weighing offers, close to some deals, Hassett says
- Global stock markets rally; Wall St set for lower open
- Oil prices down on fears of trade war and possible recession

respect, the ministry said. Beijing may again respond in kind after already imposing 84% tariffs on US imports Wednesday to match Trump's earlier salvo. Trump, who claims the tariffs aim to fix US trade imbalances, said a resolution with China on trade is also possible. But officials have said they will prioritize talks with other countries as Vietnam, Japan, South Korea and others line up to try and strike a bargain. China's yuan hit its lowest against the dollar Thursday since the global financial crisis.

B'desh court issues new arrest warrant against Hasina, daughter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dhaka, April 10:** A Bangladeshi court Thursday issued a new arrest warrant against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her daughter Saima Wajed Putul and 17 others in a graft case, accusing them of procuring a residential plot through "fraudulent" means. Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge Zakir Hossain Galib accepted the charge sheet Thursday, submitted by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). As the accused were abscond-

ing, the court issued arrest warrants against them. "Metropolitan Senior Special Judge Mohammad Zakir Hossain Galib issued the warrant accepting the ACC charge sheet in the case," the statutory graft agency's prosecutor Mir Ahammed Salam told reporters. He said the judge asked ACC to submit its investigation report May 4 for hearing the charge involving the piece of leased out land by state-run Rajdhani Unyan Kartipakkha (RAJUK) in Purbachal area on the outskirts of the capital Dhaka.

Nothing to do with Canadian national Rana: Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Islamabad, April 10:** Pakistan Thursday said that it has nothing to do with the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Rana, asserting that he is a Canadian national and has not renewed his Pakistani documents for over two decades. Born in Pakistan in 1961, Rana served in the Pakistan Army Medical Corps, before migrating in the 1990s to Canada, where he was given citizenship. "He is a Canadian national and as per our record he has not renewed his Pakistani documents for over two decades,"



Foreign Office spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan said while responding to a question during his weekly press briefing here. Though the spokesperson stopped short of providing details of "documents", such doc-

uments often include a national identity card for overseas Pakistanis and a passport. Rana is known to be associated with Pakistani-American terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the 26/11 attacks. Headley conducted a recce of Mumbai before the attacks by posing as an employee of Rana's immigration consultancy. A total of 166 people, including six Americans, were killed in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks in which 10 Pakistani terrorists laid a more than 60-hour siege, attacking and killing people at iconic and vital locations in Mumbai.

Rana is accused of plotting the attack and has been extradited from the US, years after the horrendous attack at the Indian financial hub shook the country. In the same press conference, Khan condemned the changes in the Waqf laws by India, calling it an "infringement over the religious and economic rights of Indian Muslims". "The passage of this discriminatory legislation is also reflective of the growing majoritarianism in India. There are serious apprehensions that it will contribute to further marginalization of Indian Muslims," he said while responding to a query.

GREENLAND 'FREEDOM CITY'?

As the Trump administration intensifies efforts to acquire Greenland from Denmark — or take it by force — some Silicon Valley tech investors are promoting the frozen island as a site for a so-called freedom city, a libertarian utopia with minimal corporate regulation, three people familiar with the matter told Reuters. The discussions are in early stages, but the idea has been taken seriously by Trump's pick for Denmark ambassador, Ken Howery, who is expected to be confirmed by Congress in the coming months and lead Greenland-acquisition negotiations, the people said. Howery, whose involvement with the idea hasn't been previously reported, once co-founded a venture-capital firm with tech billionaire Peter Thiel, a leading advocate for such low-regulation cities. Howery is also a longtime friend of Elon Musk, a top Trump advisor.

Howery declined to comment. The White House did not respond to requests for comment. Sources who spoke to Reuters requested anonymity to discuss private conversations. The vision for Greenland, one of the people said, could include a hub for artificial intelligence, autonomous vehicles, space launches, micro nuclear reactors and high-speed rail. The discussions reflect a longstanding Silicon Valley movement to establish low-regulation cities globally, including in the United States, which Trump himself promised to do in a 2023 campaign video. Proponents use different names for variations on the idea, including startup cities or charter cities, with the common goal of spurring innovation through sweeping regulatory exemptions. The administration's consideration of such a quixotic quest underscores the growing clout of tech magnates and Trump's



increasingly expansionist foreign policy. After campaigning on a largely isolationist platform, Trump has since his November election suggested taking back the Panama Canal, annexing Canada and redeveloping the war-torn Gaza Strip after seizing the beachfront land from displaced Palestinians. Greenland is about three times the size of Texas with a population of only 57,000. But the island is strategically

important to the US military, which has a base there, and contains substantial deposits of minerals, including rare-earths. Trump has refused to rule out taking Greenland by military force if Denmark won't sell it. "We have to have Greenland," Trump said late last month as his Vice President, JD Vance, visited a US military base on the island. Vance toured Greenland

- Silicon Valley investors propose Greenland as a libertarian 'freedom city'
- Trump's expansionist policy includes potential military acquisition of Greenland
- Greenland's strategic importance due to US military base and mineral deposits

with his wife Usha Vance, a visit that ignited protests from Greenlanders, who overwhelmingly oppose becoming part of America, polls show. The island is owned by Denmark but governs itself. Greenland's new prime minister, Jens-Frederik Nielsen, said the US visit signalled a "lack of respect." **'NEW MANIFEST DESTINY'** The freedom-city movement reflects a fascination with settling new American frontiers, rooted in nostalgia for the nation's 1800s western expansion. Expanding to Greenland "can be the dawn of a new Manifest Destiny," said tech investor

Shervin Pishevar, referring to the 19th-century philosophy that America was an exceptional nation with a God-given mission to conquer territory. Thiel, a libertarian and early Trump supporter, wrote in 2009 that he no longer considered democracy compatible with freedom and has advocated escaping politics by colonizing outer space or seasteading — building communities in un-governed oceans. Fellow venture capitalist Marc Andreessen, an informal advisor to Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), is part of a tech-investor consortium seeking to build a city on grazing land outside San Francisco. Another venture capitalist and informal DOGE advisor, Joe Lonsdale, also promotes low-regulation cities. In a statement to Reuters, Lonsdale celebrated "expanding our country to Greenland" but did not comment on plans for a city there. AGENCIES



of the day

Quote

Competitive salary structures, lower recruitment costs, and a strong talent pool contribute to India's position as a key global talent hub

**NILAY KHANDELWAL** | SENIOR MD, MICHAEL PAGE INDIA

As electric vehicle adoption accelerates in India, establishing a robust charging network is crucial, and with over 6,500 charging points and a focus on DC fast chargers, we are enhancing convenience, reducing charging times, and expanding accessibility for our customers

**BALBIR SINGH DHILLON** | HEAD, AUDI INDIA

While the demand and supply have been subdued in the past one year, the rise in input cost, including land, labour and construction material, over the past couple of years have led to firming up of housing prices

**SAMIR JASUJA** | FOUNDER AND CEO, PROPEQUITY

RESULTS CORNER

TCS profit dips 1.68%

**Mumbai:** India's largest IT services firm Tata Consultancy Services Thursday reported a 1.68 per cent dip in its consolidated net profit to ₹12,224 crore for the March 2025 quarter. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) - whose earnings marked the official start of IT results season - reported a total revenue of ₹64,479 crore in Q4 FY25, up 5.3 per cent over the year-ago period. For the full year FY25, TCS' net profit rose 5.76 per cent year-on-year to ₹48,553 crore. The IT heavyweight wrapped up the fiscal FY25 with a full-year topline growth of 5.99 per cent at ₹2,55,324 crore.

JLR's best-ever sales

**New Delhi:** Jaguar Land Rover India Thursday reported the best-ever performance in a fiscal with retail sales of 6,183 units in FY25, a growth of 40 per cent over FY24. Dispatches to dealers rose 39 per cent year-on-year to 6,266 units last fiscal. Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) India said retail and wholesale in the fourth quarter increased to highest ever level at 1,793 and 1,710 units, respectively, registering an annual growth of 110 per cent and 118 per cent in the two respective sales figures. Last fiscal, Defender was the highest selling model for the company logging a growth of 90 per cent, followed by locally-manufactured Range Rover and Range Rover Sport at 72 and 42 per cent, respectively, the automaker said.

Direct selling sector grows 4% in FY24

**New Delhi:** The direct selling industry achieved a 4.04 per cent of year-on-year growth in FY24, reaching an estimated value of ₹22,150 crore, according to the latest report released by the industry body IDSA. The direct selling industry, which has the participation of over 470 small and big firms in India, added about 1.86 lakh active direct sellers, bringing the total to about 88 lakh. "Over the past five years (2019-20 to 2023-24), the industry expanded at a CAGR of 7.15 per cent, growing from ₹16,800 crore to ₹22,142 crore," it said. In FY24, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Odisha, Haryana, New Delhi, Assam, and Gujarat emerged as the top 10 states.

The US appears determined to hit China hard, and if it wants to ensure a non-disruptive supply of goods to its consumers while keeping inflation in check, India remains one of the most reliable suppliers

**AJAY SAHAJ** | DIRECTOR GENERAL, FEDERATION OF INDIA EXPORT ORGANISATIONS

Moody's cuts growth forecast

The ratings agency downgrades India's 2025 GDP growth forecast to 6.1% citing US tariff impact



In a major relief for countries, US President Wednesday deferred by 90 days the reciprocal tariffs that was to come into effect from April 9 on 75 countries with which the US has a trade imbalance

with which the US has a trade imbalance.

The US, however, raised the tax rate on Chinese imports to 125 per cent "effective immediately".

However, the higher 10 per cent tariff, which was effective from April 5, will continue. In case of India, the additional duty of 26 per cent to be paid for exports to the US has been put on hold for 90 days.

Moody's Analytics said uncertainty is palpable, with tumbling and volatile equity markets headlining financial market turbulence.

The negative and pervasive impact of a sustained rise in uncertainty cannot be understated. Household and business sentiment is crumbling, and if the calamity continues, monetary policy easing that was sup-

posed to characterise 2025 will lose some of its potency, it said.

Also, households won't want to spend more when the environment is so uncertain, regardless of stronger purchasing power, and businesses will hold back on additional investment as they navigate chaos, Moody's Analytics said.

As tariffs increase the cost and complexity of trade, they weaken global growth prospects. "The 'Liberation Day' tariffs declared last week increased the odds of a global recession. Under those tariffs, inflation across Asia would stay subdued amid weaker trade and growth dynamics," it added.

Inflation in the US, however, would rise as tariffs increased prices of producer and consumer goods, Moody's Analytics added.

PMMY completes 10 years: Bol highlights achievements

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 10:** Bank of India, one of the leading public sector bank, has highlighted its achievements under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) which completed 10 years April 08.

The scheme has been instrumental in transforming the MSME financing landscape in India. It has played a vital role in terms of access to credit for micro enterprises. The scheme's tiered structure—Shishu, Kishore, and Tarun—has enabled the bank to disburse affordable, collateral-free loans to entrepreneurs.

PMMY has significantly expanded the bank's outreach to the micro-enterprise segment.

During the first five years of the scheme, it disbursed credit facilities aggregating to Rs 18,923 crore to 11,59,636 borrowers under the scheme. Cumulative disbursements during the 10 years period was Rs 17,364 crores to 43,65,580 borrowers i.e. growth of around 300%, both in volume as well as in value terms.

HEATWAVE PUSHES POWER DEMAND

Power demand in India surged in March as the temperature rose and the demand from industrial and commercial consumers soared, according to a Crisil Intelligence report released Thursday. Western and eastern central India witnessed 1-5 heatwave days during the month. As a result, power demand rose 6.9 per cent, around 50 per cent higher than the full-year average of 4.3 per cent



US stock futures dip after sharp rally

REUTERS

**Washington, April 10:** Wall Street's main indexes fell Thursday, coming off a blistering rally following US President Donald Trump's move to temporarily lower the heavy tariffs on dozens of countries.

The U-turn came less than 24 hours after the new tariffs took effect on most trading partners, lifting the S&P 500 to its biggest single-day percentage gain since 2008 Wednesday. The Nasdaq posted its biggest one-day jump since 2001.

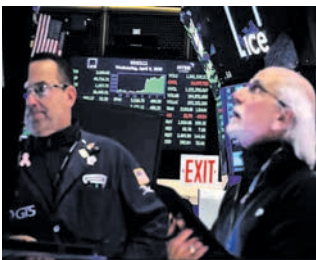
Trump also announced a 90-day pause on many of his new reciprocal tariffs, but raised them to 125% on Chinese imports from 104%. Beijing had slapped 84% tariffs on US imports to match Trump's earlier levy.

The European Union said it had agreed on a 90-day pause on counter-tariffs on US goods, which were due April 15.

At 09:35 am the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 718.88 points, or 1.77%, to 39,889.57, the S&P 500 lost 122.54 points, or 2.25%, to 5,334.36 and the Nasdaq Composite lost 457.83 points, or 2.67%, to 16,667.14.

Most S&P 500 sectors were in the red. Information technology and energy led the losses, falling 3.5% and 3.9%, respectively. Consumer staples was the only sector that saw gains.

Most megacap and growth stocks slid, with Tesla and Nvidia down more than 4% each. The CBOE Volatility Index - seen as Wall Street's "fear gauge" - fell from its August highs, but was last up at 36.17 points. The small-cap Russell



2000 was down 2.9%.

Meanwhile, data showed the consumer price index unexpectedly dipped 0.1% in March, in line with estimates and advanced 2.4% in the 12 months through March, compared with expectations of a 2.6% climb, according to economists polled by Reuters.

"We remain circumspect regarding the current inflation data, as these figures are reflective of a period prior to the implementation of recent tariffs," said Dan Siluk, portfolio manager at Janus Henderson. "We expect more volatility from inflation reads in the months ahead."

Traders now see nearly 90 basis points of interest-rate cuts in 2025, according to LSEG data.

Despite Wednesday's surge, the S&P 500 and the Dow are about 5% below levels seen before the reciprocal tariffs were announced last week.

Meanwhile, US bonds markets were sanguine after a sharp selloff in the last session, with the yield on the 10-year note dropping to 4.302% from its February peaks.

Automakers General Motors and Ford fell about 3% each after the previous session's gains. Downgrades from UBS and Goldman Sachs on the stocks added to their declines.

REMARKABLE TURNAROUND

FII, DII turn net buyers in March

Foreign and domestic investors pump over \$5bn into equity market

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mumbai, April 10:** Foreign and domestic investors showed strong confidence in the Indian equity market in March 2025, with both foreign institutional investors (FIIs) and domestic institutional investors (DIIs) emerging as net buyers, a new report said Thursday.

FIIs invested \$975 million while DIIs made even stronger contributions with \$4.3 billion in net purchases during the month, according to the JM Financial Securities' report.

The month witnessed a remarkable turnaround in FII sentiment. In the first half of March, up to the 19th, FIIs were net sellers, but they turned aggressive buyers in the latter half, pouring \$3.6 billion into Indian equities.

This shift helped push FII shareholding in Indian stocks



up to 16.8 per cent in March, compared to 15.9 per cent in February, the report said.

The sectors that attracted the most foreign inflows included banking, financial and insurance services (BFISI), telecom, and metals.

BFISI led the way with \$1.7 billion in FII inflows, followed by telecom at \$360 million, and metals at \$219 million.

Other sectors that gained investor attention, albeit at a smaller scale, were realty,

chemicals, media, and pharmaceuticals.

The report also highlighted that FIIs continued to maintain strong exposure in key sectors. BFISI, IT, Oil & Gas, Auto, and Pharma together accounted for nearly 60 per cent of total FII holdings in Indian equities.

The share of BFISI in FII Assets Under Custody (AUC) in India rose to 31.2 per cent in March from 30.8 per cent in February, while Pharma's share edged up to 6.9 per cent from 6.8 per cent.

However, IT services -- the second-largest sector for FII holdings -- saw its share decline to 9 per cent from 9.9 per cent in the previous month, influenced by ongoing geopolitical uncertainties.

Auto declined to 6.7 per cent from 7 per cent, while Oil & Gas remained unchanged, the report said.

World's largest fuel-efficient container ship MSC Türkiye docks at Vizhinjam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, April 10:** Billed as one of the world's largest and most fuel-efficient container ships, MSC Türkiye docked at Vizhinjam International Seaport, operated by Adani Ports and SEZ Ltd (AP-SEZ), in Kerala Wednesday.

This is the first time the giant vessel has docked at an Indian port, sources in the know of the development said.

Hailed as a landmark event in India's maritime history, the arrival of MSC Türkiye is seen as a major boost to the Vizhinjam port's growing reputation as a global transshipment hub and highlights its capability to attract ultra-large container vessels (ULCVs) from around the world.

MSC Türkiye, which is run by the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), is a modern engineering marvel. The vessel measures 399.9 metres in length, 61.3 m in width and 33.5 m in depth. The ship can load about 24,346 twenty-foot equiva-



lent units (TEUs), making it one of the largest container ships ever built.

Apart from its immense size, what distinguishes MSC Türkiye is its eco-friendly design. The vessel has been engineered with a priority on fuel efficiency and reducing environmental impacts.

Sources said it has a low-carbon footprint per container, which significantly decreases carbon dioxide emissions per tonne of cargo transported.

Flying the Liberian flag, the cargo ship represents a leap forward in sustainable global shipping.

MSC Türkiye's arrival augurs well with the ambitious plan charted out by APSEZ to turn Vizhinjam port, which was founded in 2015 and started operations last year, into a major marine hub worldwide.

Apple airlifts 600 tons of iPhones from India ‘to beat’ Trump tariffs

THE US TECH GIANT SELLS MORE THAN 220 MILLION IPHONES A YEAR WORLDWIDE, WITH COUNTERPOINT RESEARCH ESTIMATING A FIFTH OF TOTAL IPHONE IMPORTS TO THE US NOW COME FROM INDIA, AND THE REST FROM CHINA

REUTERS

**New Delhi, April 10:** Tech giant Apple chartered cargo flights to ferry 600 tons of iPhones, or as many as 1.5 million, to the United States from India, after it stepped up production there in an effort to beat President Donald Trump's tariffs, sources told Reuters.

The details of the push provide an insight into the US smartphone company's private strategy to navigate around the Trump tariffs and build up inventory of its popular iPhones in the United States, one of its biggest markets.

Analysts have warned that US prices of iPhones could surge, given Apple's high reliance on imports from China, the main manufacturing hub of the devices, which is subject to Trump's highest tariff rate

of 125%.

That figure is far in excess of the tariff of 26% on imports from India, but which is now on hold after Trump called a 90-day pause this week that excludes China.

Apple "wanted to beat the tariff," said one of the sources familiar with the planning.

The company lobbied Indian airport authorities to cut to six hours the time needed to clear customs at the Chennai airport in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, down from 30 hours, the source added.

The so-called "green corridor" arrangement at the airport in the Indian manufacturing hub emulated a model Apple uses at some airports in China, the source said.

About six cargo jets with a capacity of 100 tons each have flown out since March, one of

- Apple made discreet plan to boost India production
- Sunday shifts at Foxconn boosted iPhone shipments
- Indian government helped Apple clear customs faster
- Apple counts India as a new emerging manufacturing hub



them this week just as new tariffs kicked in, the source and an Indian government official said.

The packaged weight of an iPhone 14 and its charging cable come to about 350 grams (12.35 oz), Reuters measurements

show, implying the total cargo of 600 tons comprised about 1.5 million iPhones, after accounting for some packaging weight.

Trump consistently increased US tariffs on China, to stand at 125% by Wednesday,

from 54% earlier.

At the 54% tariff rate, the \$1,599 cost of the top-end iPhone 16 Pro Max in the United States would have surged to \$2,300, calculations based on projections by Rosenblatt Securities show.

SUNDAY SHIFTS

In India, Apple stepped up air shipments to meet its goal of a 20% increase in usual production at iPhone plants, attained by adding workers, and temporarily extending operations at the biggest Foxconn India factory to Sundays, the source added.

Two other direct sources confirmed the Foxconn plant in Chennai now runs Sundays, which is typically a holiday. The plant turned out 20 million iPhones last year, including the latest iPhone 15 and 16 models.

As Apple diversifies its manufacturing beyond China, it has

positioned India for a critical role. Foxconn and Tata, its two main suppliers there, have three factories in all, with two more being built.

Apple spent about eight months to plan and set up the expedited customs clearance in Chennai, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government asked officials to support Apple, one senior Indian official said.

Foxconn shipments from India to the United States surged in value to \$770 million in January and \$643 million in February, compared to the range of \$110 million to \$331 million in the prior four months, commercially available customs data shows.

More than 85% of the January and February air shipments of Foxconn were offloaded in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco.



# KLassic Rahul does it again

RAHUL'S WONDERFUL 93 AND SPINNERS' CRAFTINESS GUIDE DC TO SIX-WICKET WIN OVER RCB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, April 10:** The craftiness of spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Vipraj Nigam echoed in the assiduous unbeaten 93 of KL Rahul as Delhi Capitals overcame a top-order meltdown to score a six-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bengaluru in their IPL match here Thursday.

Once the Royal Challengers were restricted to 163 for seven, the Capitals just needed to bat with common sense but it was a rare commodity in their front-line batters on the night.

But player of the match KL Rahul, whose knock came off 53 balls with seven fours and six sixes, added 111 runs for the fourth wicket with an equally level-headed Tristan Stubbs (38 not out) to score their fourth victory on the bounce.

DC made 169 for four.

Rahul's innings was a prime example of risk management as he started at a slower tempo before shifting the gears seamlessly.

The way Rahul, who was dropped on five by Rajat Patidar off Yash Dayal, dealt with leg-spinner Suyansh Sharma and pacer Josh Hazlewood underlined his intelligent approach.

He was prudent against Suyansh, waiting for his chances to score runs on a sluggish track and carted him for a lone six — a sweep over mid-wicket.

But once Hazlewood returned for his second spell, Rahul used

IPL STANDINGS					
TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS
GT	5	4	1	1.413	8
DC	4	4	0	1.278	8
RCB	5	3	2	0.539	6
PBKS	4	3	1	0.289	6
LSG	5	3	2	0.078	6
KKR	5	2	3	-0.056	4
RR	5	2	3	-0.733	4
MI	5	1	4	-0.010	2
CSK	5	1	4	-0.889	2
SRH	5	1	4	-1.629	2

the extra pace to good effect to manufacture big shots such as a scorching six over the bowlers' head.

Stubbs too joined his partners with a couple of lovely straight hits off Bhuvneshwar to the fence as DC strolled home.

Earlier, the wizardry of Kuldeep and Nigam helped the Capitals stage a stirring comeback to restrict RCB to a below-par 163 for seven.

Left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep (2/17) and leg-spinner Nigam (2/18) adjusted their lengths beautifully to halt RCB after the Capitals chose to bowl first.

But Delhi's decision to field looked utterly obtuse as Royal Challengers went off the blocks like a galloping horse, going past the 50-run mark in just three overs.

Central to that charge was opener Phil Salt's turbo-charged



innings of 37 off 17 balls.

The England batter hammered Mitchell Starc for a sequence of 6, 4, 4, 4, 6 to collect 24 runs in the third over.

However, Salt got run out in a yes-no situation involving Virat Kohli (22, 14b). Kohli and Salt added 61 runs off 24 balls for the opening stand.

SCORECARD

Royal Challengers Bengaluru

Phil Salt run out (Nigam/Rahul) 37, Virat Kohli c Starc b Nigam 22, Devdutt Padikkal c Patel b Mukesh 1, Rajat Patidar c Rahul b Kuldeep 25, Liam Livingstone c Ashutosh b Mohit 4, Jitesh Sharma c Rahul b Kuldeep 3, Krunal Pandya c Ashutosh b Nigam 18, Tim David not out 37, Bhuvneshwar Kumar not out 1. **Extras:** 15 (lb-5, w-9, nb-1); **Total:** 163/7 in 20 overs; **Fall of wickets:** 1-61, 2-64, 3-74, 4-91, 5-102, 6-117, 7-125; **Bowling:** Mitchell Starc 3-0-35-0, Axar Patel 4-0-52-0, Vipraj Nigam 4-0-18-2, Mukesh Kumar 3-1-26-1, Kuldeep Yadav 4-0-17-2, Mohit Sharma 2-0-10-1.

Delhi Capitals

Faf du Plessis c Patidar b Dayal 2, Jake Fraser-McGurk c Jitesh b Bhuvneshwar 7, Abhishek Porel c Jitesh b Bhuvneshwar 7, KL Rahul not out 93, Axar Patel c David b Suyash 15, Tristan Stubbs not out 38. **Extras:** 7 (w-7); **Total:** 169/4 in 17.5 overs; Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-10, 3-30, 4-58; **Bowling:** Bhuvneshwar Kumar 4-0-26-0, Yash Dayal 3.5-0-45-1, Josh Hazlewood 3-0-40-0, Suyash Sharma 4-0-25-1, Krunal Pandya 2-0-19-0, Liam Livingstone 1-0-14-0.

## SHORT TAKES

### Hockey eves to tour Oz

**NEW DELHI:** The Indian women's hockey team will tour Australia for a five-match series scheduled from April 26 to May 4, Hockey India said Thursday. India will open the series with two matches against Australia A, followed by three games against the senior Australian team. The tour will begin with back-to-back matches against Australia A April 26 and 27, followed by three high-intensity games against the world No 5 ranked Hockeyroos May 1, 3 and 4. All fixtures will be held at the Perth Hockey Stadium. The tour will serve as vital preparation ahead of their European leg of the FIH Pro League 2024-25, which kicks off in June. Ninth ranked India enter the series on a high after a spirited performance against world No 1 Netherlands, securing a 2-2 draw and clinching the bonus point in a thrilling shootout in Bhubaneswar.

### Barca rout Dortmund

**BARCELONA:** Raphinha and Robert Lewandowski struck again to lead Barcelona to a commanding 4-0 win over Borussia Dortmund in the first leg of the Champions League quarterfinals. Lewandowski scored twice and Raphinha had a goal and an assist, leaving the Catalan club in a strong position to reach the semifinals for the first time since 2019. Lamine Yamal also scored as Barcelona dealt a commanding blow to the German side's hopes of advancing. The return match is next Tuesday at Dortmund, which was last year's runner-up in a final against Barcelona rival Real Madrid.

### FIA deputy prez resigns

**PARIS:** Turmoil at the FIA, the governing body for Formula 1 and other auto racing, has deepened after its deputy president for sport resigned in protest at how it is run. Robert Reid's resignation is the latest sign of discontent with the direction taken by the FIA under President Mohammed Ben Sulayem, whose tenure has seen numerous senior officials leave or be replaced. "I took on this role to help deliver greater transparency, stronger governance, and more collaborative leadership," Reid posted on social media. "Over time, those principles have been increasingly set aside and I can no longer, in good faith, remain part of a system that no longer reflects them."

## SHOOTING WORLD CUP

# Suruchi-Saurabh pair bags bronze on final day

Shooters clinched a total of eight medals with four gold, two silver, and two bronze



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, April 10:** Suruchi claimed her second medal of the competition while former Asian Games champion Saurabh Chaudhary bagged an International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) medal after two years, as the pair took bronze, winning the 10m air pistol mixed team match 16-8 over compatriots Manu Bhaker and Ravinder Singh, on the concluding day of the ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun Argentina 2025.

With two Indian Olympians on either side of the competitive divide, Saurabh emerged as the most consistent of the four shooters to help seal the deal with a 10.7 in the 12th and what ended up as the last series of the match.

Earlier, the Indian pairs had finished third and fourth respectively in qualifying behind two Chinese pairs. Suruchi and Saurabh shot a cumulative 581 while Manu and Ravinder were behind them with 579. The Chinese topped with identical scores of 582.

It was difficult to separate the two Indian pairs in the initial stages of the bronze match-up as both tied at six points apiece after the first six series of single shots fired by each shooter.

Suruchi and Saurabh then gained momentum with three straight series wins and despite Manu and Ravinder pulling one back, it was too little too late.

This is India's eighth medal of the Argentina World Cup and they now have four gold, two silver, and two bronze to show for their efforts.

# Dhiraj leads India into final

Men's recurve team assures second medal at Archery World Cup Stage 1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Auburndale (USA), April 10:** A jet-lagged Dhiraj Bommadevara, who landed in the US just hours before the competition due to visa issues, showed remarkable composure Thursday to guide the Indian men's recurve team into the final at the Archery World Cup Stage 1 here.

The fifth-seeded Indian team, also comprising seasoned campaigners Tarundeep Rai and Atanu Das, defeated Spain 6-2 to assure the country of a second medal at the season-opening World Cup.

India will now face third-seeded China in the gold-medal clash Sunday.

India had already opened their account with a bronze medal from the compound men's team event Wednesday.

Despite barely recovering from his long journey, Dhiraj stood tall alongside his senior teammates in a commanding performance.

The first set was tied 54-54, but the Indians edged ahead in the second set by a slender 55-54 margin, thanks to three 9s and two 10s -- including one 'X' (closest to the centre).

Leading 3-1, India held their nerve in the third set for another tie (56-56), before dominating the fourth and final set.

While the Indians shot 56, the Spaniards slipped with two 8s to manage only 53, sealing India's 6-2 victory.

Women's team knocked out



**India will now face third-seeded China in the gold-medal clash Sunday. The country had already opened their account with a bronze medal from the compound men's team event Wednesday**

Earlier, there was disappointment for the women's recurve team, which crashed out after a 2-6 loss to hosts USA.

The Indian trio of Deepika

# CSK, KKR clash: Dhoni returns as skipper

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, April 10:** A beleaguered Chennai Super Kings will have their task cut out against Kolkata Knight Riders after losing regular skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad to injury, as they look to break a frustrating run of defeats in the IPL here Friday.

Gaikwad has been replaced by MS Dhoni after a fracture to his elbow ruled him out for the rest of the season, with the veteran wicketkeeper-batter taking over as the leader again.

Heading into the critical game, in which a loss could spell more trouble for CSK, the home team is taking some solace from the batters' impressive show in the last match against Punjab Kings, which they lost by 18 runs after being set a stiff target of 219 in Mulanpur.

CSK are now hoping for a change in fortune at Chepauk, which has so far this season not afforded them the advantage it has been known to give in the past, something that has also forced longtime coach Stephen Fleming to express his frustration after a massive loss against Royal Challengers Bengaluru some days back.

CSK did not enjoy home advantage at Chepauk, which has been a significant factor in their previous success. The pitch has changed significantly, making it harder for them to read and adapt to.

For CSK to change the tide,



■ **Dhoni's return at the helm brings luck for CSK as the five-time winners try to overcome a string of defeats**

■ **CSK are placed ninth in the standings after four losses and a solitary win, while KKR are in sixth position with two wins and three defeats in five matches**

they have no option but to try and get acclimatised to the conditions here, and their spinners will have to find ways to succeed at a venue in which they have dominated for a prolonged period.

CSK will have to do course correction in order to get back to winning ways and as has been the case in last couple of weeks, a lot of the focus will again be on veteran Dhoni, who smashed a 12-ball 27 against PBKS with three sixes and a four.

The likes of Devon Conway, Rachin Ravindra and Shivam Dube will be entering the match on the back of some welcome runs, and that is one positive for CSK in these difficult times.

## BADMINTON ASIA C'SHIPS

# Sindhu, Rajawat lose; Kapila-Crasto in QFs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ningbo (China), April 10:** Double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and the promising Priyanshu Rajawat crashed out in the pre-quarterfinals of their respective events at the Badminton Asia Championships here Thursday.

The 29-year-old Sindhu, ranked 17th in the world, fought hard before going down 12-21 21-16 16-21 to world number four and third seed Akane Yamaguchi of Japan in women's singles contest that lasted one hour and six minutes.

India's campaign has ended in the men's and women's singles events.

However, the mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto entered the quarterfinals, beating Ye Hong Wei and Nicole Gonzales Chan of Chinese Taipei 12-21 21-16 21-18.

Kapila and Crasto will next face fifth seeds Chun Man Tang and Ying Suet Tse of Hong Kong. But the other Indian mixed doubles pair of Ashith Surya and Amrutha Pramuthesh exited after losing 11-21 14-21 against top seed Jiang Zhen Bang and Wei Ya Xin of China.



# Erigaisi loses to Nakamura, Carlsen through to semis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Paris, April 10:** Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi tried hard but succumbed to Hikaru Nakamura's experience as the American won handsomely to proceed to the last-four of the Freestyle chess tournament here Thursday.

Magnus Carlsen of Norway needed a draw to proceed to the next stage against Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan and the world No 1 achieved just that to move into the last-four stage alongside Fabiano Caruana of the United States, who came up with a fine effort to crash through the defences of Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France.