

### Malavika’s revelation

Malavika Mohanan speaks about how some individuals in industry present a false image of being respectful towards women

LEISURE | P2



### 100 days of Trump 2.0

Since US Prez Donald Trump has returned to office, he has waged an unpredictable campaign shocking the world order

INTERNATIONAL | P10



### FPIs extend investment

Foreign investors infuse ₹17,425 crore in the country’s equity markets, supported by a combination of factors

BUSINESS | P11



### Barca beat Real Madrid

Barcelona launches its bid for a treble after edging Real Madrid 3-2 in a thrilling Copa del Rey final

SPORTS | P12

## 6 including 4 minors drown

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Nayagarh/Cuttack/Keonjhar, April 27:** At least six persons including four minors lost their lives in three separate incidents of drowning across the state Sunday.

In the first incident, three minors drowned in a pond during play at Godibida village under Daspalla block of Nayagarh district. The deceased were identified as Umakant Nayak, 10, Ritesh Pradhan, 11, and Subham Khilar, 12. The fatal mishap occurred when the three slipped into the pond during play and drowned.

In a similar incident, a 14-year-old boy drowned while bathing in the Kathajodi river near Khananagar in Cuttack. The deceased was identified as Suryakanta Majhi. Locals and fire service personnel rescued him near the Khannagar railway bridge and took him to the SCB Medical College and Hospital, where the doctors declared him dead.

Meanwhile, in Keonjhar district, two youths drowned in the gorge of Patahara waterfall at Chandangiri under Harichandanpur police station limits when the duo was taking a selfie but slipped and fell into the gorge. The deceased were identified as Atul Ranjan Sahu, 20, and Rudra Narayan Mishra, 20, from Jagatsinghpur district.

## Rape accused marries victim in Ganjam jail

**Berhampur:** A 26-year-old man lodged in a jail in Ganjam district in a rape case, Sunday married the survivor in the premises of the prison, officials said. The marriage was solemnised in the jail premises in the presence of the family members of the bride and groom, several dignitaries and jail officials. Due to certain misunderstandings between the families of the bride and groom, the 22-year-old woman lodged a rape complaint against Behera and subsequently, he was taken into custody, said PK Mishra, an advocate of the bride. Now they have mutually agreed to their marriage, even though the groom is lodged in jail as an undertrial prisoner, he said.

P3

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



They are terrorists, not ministers, CMs, govt officials, or party workers! How can they discriminate based on religion?

## NEW NCERT TEXTBOOKS Mughals out, Mahakumbh in

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 27:** All references to Mughals and Delhi Sultanate have been dropped from Class VII NCERT textbooks, while chapter on Indian dynasties, ‘sacred geography’, references to Maha Kumbh, and government initiatives like Make in India and ‘Beti Bachao, Beti padhao’ are among the new additions.

The new textbooks released this week have been designed in line with the new National Education Policy (NEP) and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE) 2023, which emphasise incorporating Indian tra-

ditions, philosophies, and local context into school education.

When contacted, NCERT officials said these are only first part of the book and second part is expected in coming months. They, however, did not comment on whether the dropped portions will be retained in the second part of the book. The book now has all new chapters with no mention of Mughals and Delhi Sultanate throughout.

Another new edition in the book is a chapter called ‘How the Land Becomes Sacred’ that introduces concepts like sacred geography detailing networks of such places as 12 jyotirlingas, the char dham yatra, and the Shakti pithas.



Tourists return to Pahalgam a few days after the terror attack

PTI PHOTO

- 537 Pakistani nationals cross Attari border
- 850 Indians return from Pakistan
- NIA takes over Pahalgam attack probe
- Pak violates cease fire for 3rd day on trot
- Navy carries out anti-ship firing drills

seen at the Attari-Wagah border crossing.

A total of 850 Indians, including 14 diplomats and officials, have returned from Pakistan through the crossing located in Punjab in the last four days. Some of the Pakistanis might have left India through airports too, the officials said, pointing out that since India does not have direct air connectivity with Pakistan, they might have left for other countries. The deadline for exiting India for those holding SAARC visas was April 26. For those carrying medical visas, the deadline is April 29.

Any Pakistani, who fails to leave India as per the deadlines set by the government, will be arrested, prosecuted and may face a jail term of up to three years or a fine of a maximum ₹3 lakh or both.

According to the Immigration and Foreigners Act 2025, which came into effect April 4, overstaying, violating visa conditions, or trespassing in restricted areas could lead to three years in jail and a fine of up to ₹3 lakh.

“Terrorists and their backers carried out the Pahalgam attack to destroy Kashmir again as they did not like the return of peace and prosperity,” Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Sunday and vowed the “harsh-est” response to the “perpetrators and conspirators”.

As the Prime Minister, in his monthly Mann Ki Baat radio address, spoke of a “decisive battle” against terrorism, authorities in Jammu and Kashmir razed more houses of terrorists and rounded up their sympathisers in a stepped-up

crackdown on terror ecosystem after the Pakistan-linked ultras Tuesday shot dead 26 people, mostly tourists, in cold blood.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) formally took over the Pahalgam terrorist attack probe, registering a case in Jammu Sunday.

As the tensions between the two countries soared, the Pakistani military engaged in unprovoked firing along the Line of Control in the areas opposite Tutmari Gali and Rampur sectors for the third consecutive night, military sources said.

The Pakistan military was engaged in similar firing Thursday and Friday nights as well. “Our troops responded effectively with appropriate small arms fire,” said an Indian official.

While the Pakistan military has been put on high alert following India’s promise that it will hunt down those involved in the April 22 strike, the Indian Navy Sunday said its warships have successfully carried out multiple anti-ship firings, revalidating their readiness for long-range precision “offensive” strikes. “Indian Navy stands combat-ready, credible and future-ready in safeguarding the nation’s maritime interests anytime, anywhere, anyhow,” it said.

More P.9

# Exit-India deadline ends

## Villagers lynch siblings, burn bodies in forest

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khallikote/Berhampur, April 27:** A group of villagers allegedly lynched two siblings over past enmity at Shalabana village under Beguniapada police limits in Ganjam district, and later burnt their bodies in a nearby forest to destroy evidence, police said Sunday.

The deceased were identified as Sanjay Barik, 25, and his younger brother Ajay Barik, 23, of nearby Bhaliar village under Beguniapada police limits.

Both the siblings were history-sheeters with several cases registered in their names in multiple police stations of the district, Purushottampur SDPO Deepak Kumar Mishra said. Ajay was incarcerated in connection with the murder of former Beguniapada block chairman Debaraj Sahu in 2021 and recently came out on bail, police said.

The matter came to the fore after some locals spotted the partially burnt bodies of the brothers lying on Marei-Nuagaon road under Khallikote police and alerted the police. The SDPO, Beguniapada police and a scientific team rushed to the spot and launched an investi-



Sanjay Barik

Ajay Barik

gation. The charred remains of the bodies were collected and sent for post-mortem. A murder case (No. 220/25) was registered in this connection at Beguniapada police station.

According to police, the murders were motivated by old enmity and simmering pent-up tensions in the area.

Preliminary investigation suggested that the incident occurred when a religious ceremony was underway at Shalabana village. Meanwhile, Sanjay and Ajay arrived at the spot and reportedly engaged in an argument with some locals. Enraged, a group of villagers allegedly beat them to pulp, dragged them to a remote area in a nearby forest and killed them. They later set the bodies on fire in a bid to destroy evidence. An investigation into the incident is underway, police said.

# Rancho’s school finally gets CBSE affiliation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 27:** Druk Padma Karpo School, nestled in the cold desert of Ladakh and popularly known as Rancho’s school, has finally got CBSE affiliation more than two decades after it was founded. The affiliation was granted after several delays and rejections.

The school, which shot to fame after it featured in the Aamir Khan-starrer movie ‘3 Idiots’ in 2009, was so far affiliated with the Jammu and Kashmir State Board of School Education (JKBOSE).

Known for its innovative methods of teaching much before the new National Education Policy (NEP) proposed reforms



to move away from traditional rote learning, the school is now planning to expand till Class XII. “We have finally got the CBSE affiliation after delay of several years and our first batch of Class X students is now waiting for their CBSE board exam results.”

“Though we had all the

required infrastructure in place, excellent result record and focus on innovative ways of teaching and learning, we didn’t get the NOC from the JKBOSE despite several attempts all these years,” school principal Mingur Angmo told PTI.

As per the affiliation norms of the Central Board of Second-

ary Education (CBSE), schools require a ‘no objection certificate’ from the respective state board. The foreign schools require a similar document from the embassy concerned or the Consulate of India in the country concerned. The school has been trying to get the clearance since even before Ladakh acquired the Union Territory status. Even after the bifurcation, several schools in Ladakh continue to be affiliated to the Jammu and Kashmir board.

The 24-year-old school is named after Mipham Pema Karpo (1527-1592), who is revered as a great scholar, while Padma Karpo means ‘White Lotus’ in Bothi, the local language.

The school is now flocked by

tourists, making it a ‘must go’ point on the itinerary. A wall of the school’s building featured in the closing scene of the Bollywood film in which one of the characters, Chatur, tries to urinate but gets an electric shock as two kids throw at him a light bulb connected with wire from the first floor’s window.

While the ‘iconic idiotic wall’ — part of a building which was damaged in the 2010 flash floods — still remains on campus, the first floor, earlier made of bricks, has been replaced with wooden structures typically used in Ladakh. The school decided in 2018 to relocate the ‘Rancho’s wall’ to ensure students don’t get distracted due to inflow of tourists.



# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

**GaneshaSpeaks.com**  
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

**ARIES**  
Think positive today and watch the world around you changing. Regardless of how difficult things may seem, Ganesha advises you to take it without getting upset. If you set your mind to something, you can do it. You have the Midas touch today, so it is a good time to introduce a new strategy.

**TAURUS**  
You will be feeling listless, lazy and out of sorts today, and will tend to ignore and neglect important tasks scheduled for the day. Ganesha urges you to guard against this tendency as you could miss out on opportunities that others could then benefit from. That way, you will surely lose out professionally, particularly if you are in business.

**GEMINI**  
You have been ignoring a few problems that have been plaguing your family members for quite some time now. It's time you looked into the matter, says Ganesha. Irrespective of how difficult the challenges are, today you will emerge victorious. And amid dealing with mammoth challenges, there will be passionate, quite often sexual, interludes.

**CANCER**  
Your strange and unconventional behaviour doesn't always go down well with many people. If you think you are different, and maybe even better than others, it is advisable that you keep it under the wraps. The reason being that most people may not be able to understand you.

**LEO**  
You will feel more emotional today and share your feelings with your friends and near ones. For those who are searching for a life-partner, this might be the time when you will get hitched. You will develop a new perspective on some issues in the office. Your day will be different than normal, says Ganesha.

**VIRGO**  
A shadow grows large in your mind today. An unknown fear will haunt your day, warns Ganesha. But be ready to take a hike. You are most likely to end up spending on your foreign associates. Be careful of those expenses, says Ganesha.

**LIBRA**  
Sometimes, you lend a helping hand and people end up taking the entire arm. Well, that's kids for you! So beware, because young ones around you may try to take undue advantage of your sympathetic nature today, hints Ganesha. Minor issues and problems may dampen the high spirits that you are in today. But fret not, just keep a cool head and get back on track to being your charismatic self.

**SCORPIO**  
You may be bored with the same, old routine. In short, you feel like you are stuck in a rut and desperately need to do something exciting. Hanging out with friends of opposite sex may bring some respite to your restless soul.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Your business is all set to expand with you making the most of your overseas contacts. Effective communication skills will help you sail through your tasks. And you are making all the right moves to become the leader of your pack.

**CAPRICORN**  
Some people do backbreaking work throughout their life, and still don't taste the sweet taste of success. While in your case, success will be easy as pie. You are already loaded with work and some new projects – assignments will be added to that, today.

**AQUARIUS**  
You have already fulfilled your short-term objectives. But you are ambitious, and straightaway begin setting your long-term goals. But all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, says Ganesha. Leisure time with family will rejuvenate and prepare you for a better stint at work.

**PISCES**  
For those in the creative fields of marketing or advertising, today is an extraordinary opportunity to tweak your marketing mix into bringing in maximum profits with bare minimum efforts. Your health interests will also take priority now, and you will find yourself spending more time in the gym, says Ganesha.



## GWYNETH ON RUMOURED FEUD WITH MARKLE

Gwyneth Paltrow has addressed rumours of a feud with Meghan Markle, stating she doesn't know the Duchess of Sussex 'super well' to have any conflict. The actress mentioned they've only hung out a few times and expressed being 'proud' of Meghan, dismissing any suggestions of a feud.

## RYAN REYNOLDS' TEAM CREATES HISTORY

Wrexham AFC, owned by Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney, made history with their third consecutive promotion in the English football league. A dominant 3-0 win over Charlton Athletic Saturday secured their spot in the Championship for the upcoming season, marking a major achievement for the club.



# Malavika exposes hypocrisy in showbiz



## Arjun on what ignites his acting passion

**Mumbai:** Television actor Arjun Bijlani, who was recently featured in the song Ho Jaa, shared that music videos play a crucial role in keeping his passion for acting alive.

The actor, who has done more than 15 music videos, revealed that working on music videos helps him stay connected to his craft, allowing him to explore new dimensions of his performance and creativity.

Expressing the same, Arjun told this agency, "I usually do very story-based music videos. It keeps my passion alive for acting. It's like a small feature film in a span of like 4 minutes or 5 minutes where you perform. There's a story to it, and it's interesting, and obviously the music and the lyrics add so much to the overall value of the sound in terms of the product that you make. And I think people love music videos."

On the professional front, Arjun was last seen in the TV show *Pyaar Ka Pehla Adhyaya: Shiv Shakti* and was recently featured on *Laughter Chefs*. He has also made appearances in other shows, including *MTV Splitsvilla 14*.

IANIS



**Mumbai:** Malavika Mohanan, known for her performances in films like *Petta*, *Master*, and *Thangalaan*, has always been outspoken about the issues she observes within the film industry.

In a recent interview, she boldly addressed a critical issue she has noticed—gender bias and the hypocrisy of some actors in the industry. According to Malavika, certain actors wear a 'mask' of respectfulness, projecting an image of being considerate towards women when the cameras are on, but behaving quite differently when the spotlight fades. She explained that these individuals are skilled at maintaining a dual persona, speaking up about women's issues to earn public approval, while their true behavior often emerges behind closed doors.

Malavika expressed her disappointment in witnessing this behavior firsthand, pointing out the stark contrast between how some actors behave in public versus private.

She criticised the deep-rooted mindset that treats men and women differently in the industry, and questioned when this outdated attitude would finally come to an end. Her remarks shed light on the ongoing challenges within the film world, where gender disparities persist despite public displays of progressive values. By speaking out, Malavika has once again called for meaningful change, urging the industry to move beyond pretenses and truly embrace equality for all.

AGENCIES

## Shruti talks about complexities of love

**Mumbai:** In a candid conversation with a film magazine, Shruti Haasan opened up about her personal journey, reflecting on relationships, heartbreaks, and the valuable lessons they've imparted.

Known for her versatile roles in films like *Salaar* and *Ramaiya Vastavaiya*, Shruti didn't shy away from discussing the complexities of love. Addressing the often-posed question about her relationship history, Shruti remarked, "Oh, which number boyfriend is this?". She addressed the topic further by adding, "You're not understanding that for you, it's a number. For me, it's a number of

times I failed at having the love I want," emphasising how each experience shaped her. While she doesn't regret her past, Shruti acknowledged the sadness that can come with failed relationships but refrains from placing blame, recognising that people evolve differently.

Shruti also expressed her preference for relationships over marriage, stating, "I love relationships, and I love romance," emphasising mutual growth and understanding over societal expectations. Reflecting on her parents' separation, she noted how it taught her the importance of independence. In addition, she shared her ideal partner traits, including a good sense of humour, creativity and innovation. She believes that these traits contribute to a fulfilling and balanced relationship. AGENCIES



bracing the difficult yet necessary path toward recovery.

Sunday, Rhea took to Instagram to share a video of herself posing against a stunning backdrop of hills and mountain landscapes. Alongside the clip, the Chehre actress wrote, "Slowly let it go .. There's no shortcut to healing .. It's a journey just like life Happy healing to all my beautiful insta family #chapter2 @chapter2drip."

Rhea faced a major setback following the tragic death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. However, last month, the actress was cleared of any involvement in the case after an investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Rhea has now returned to her professional life and is currently seen as a part of the new season of *MTV Roadies*. She has appeared in films such as *Sonali Cable*, *Bank Chor*, *Half Girlfriend*, *Dobaara: See Your Evil*, and *Jalebi*. In 2024, Chakraborty made a significant impact with her new ventures, including a podcast and her fashion label, 'Chapter 2.'

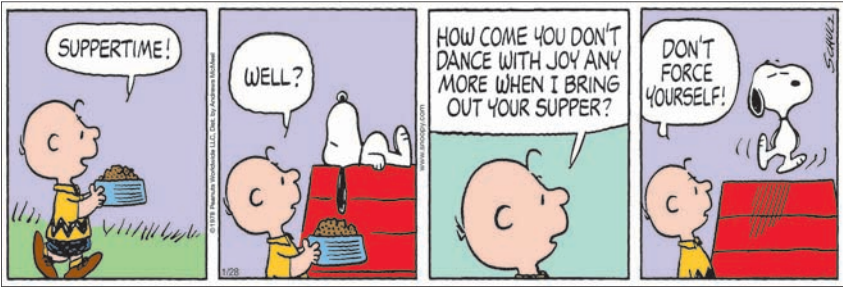
IANIS

## RHEA'S PATH TO HEALING

**Mumbai:** Bollywood actress Rhea Chakraborty opened up about the journey of healing, emphasising that there are no shortcuts to the process.

The actress, who has faced personal challenges in recent years, shared her thoughts on em-

## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

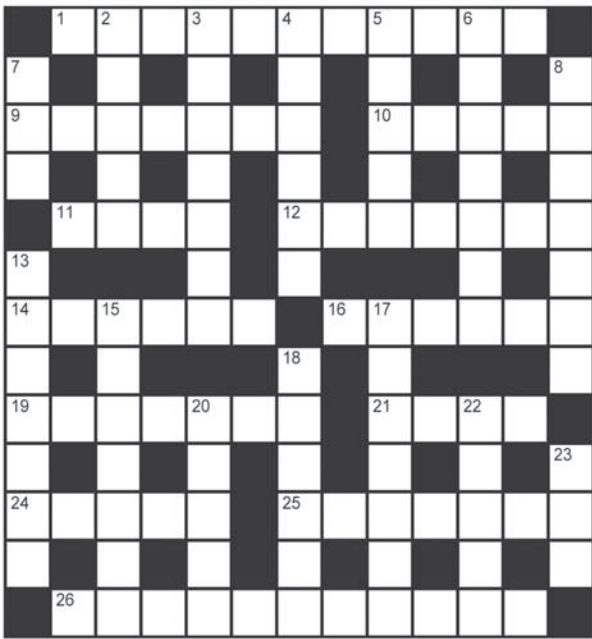


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



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### Across

- 1 They're made in hotels (4-2,5)
- 9 Defeat
- 10 Bit of Gothic architecture
- 11 Java neighbor
- 12 High-class
- 14 Zodiac symbol
- 16 Like some socks
- 19 Panorama
- 21 Rathskellers

### Down

- 2 Sleep disorder
- 3 Hard to pin down
- 5 Quarrel
- 24 Parcel out
- 25 Makes a boo-boo (5,2)
- 26 Get a conversation going (5,3,3)

### 6 Book

- 7 Do film work
- 8 It might be found in a cap
- 13 Real
- 15 Deep-dish pie
- 17 Tortoise
- 18 Beginning
- 20 Uncredited actor
- 22 No-frills
- 23 Choose

## 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.

7			3			1		
				8				
1			7	9				6
	1							5
		3						2
9			2		7	4		
		4		2				
			4			5		7
	5			8				

## SOLUTIONS

### CROSSWORD

M	O	S	C	O	W				S	E	E	K
E	U	B	B		F	X	I					
A	U	S	T	E	R		R	E	C	A	P	
D	H	L	I	A		E						
F	I	J	I		G	R	U	E	R			
				S	E			D		R		
		H	A	W	K	S		P	U	L	S	E
V	M				F		P					
I	M	A	G	I	N	E		T	R	E	K	
R	T	O	V	I	A							
A	L	E	R	T		E	N	G	A			
G	U	A		R		H		R	E			
O	A	R	S			A	T	H	E	N	S	

### SUDOKU

4	6	1	5	8	9	2	7	3
9	3	8	4	2	7	1	6	5
5	2	7	6	1	3	8	4	9
1	5	3	8	9	4	6	2	7
2	7	4	3	6	1	5	9	8
6	8	9	2	7	5	4	3	1
8	9	6	1	3	2	7	5	4
3	1	5	7	4	6	9	8	2
7	4	2	9	5	8	3	1	6

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW





SCINTILLATING SHOW

Artiste Rudraprasad Swain performs during ‘Pravrutti’, a cultural programme organised by Samakalpa, at Utkal Rangamancha GKCM Odissi Research Centre in Bhubaneswar Sunday



**NATURE'S ARCHITECT:** A weaver bird perched on its nest at Nandankanan Botanical Garden on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Sunday

PHOTO: RAJKISHORE MOHANTY

CM’s public hearing at Berhampur soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 27:** Nearly a week after conducting a regional public grievance hearing in Sambalpur, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Sunday announced that the Chief Minister's Grievance Cell will visit Berhampur soon. The CM said this while addressing the centenary year celebration function of the historic Bhimpur Advanced High School in Ganjam.

The centenary celebration at Bhimpur Advanced High School was attended by hundreds of students, alumni, teachers and locals.

In his keynote address, Majhi praised the legacy of the high school, describing it as a “pillar of knowledge and empowerment” in the region. He acknowledged the contributions of past educators and alumni in shaping not only the school's reputation but also the growth of the surrounding community. “This school has been a torchbearer of knowledge for a century. It has produced doctors, engineers, teachers and leaders who have contributed immensely to our society. Today, as we celebrate its centenary, we also look ahead to the future,” he said.

The CM took the opportunity to outline the state government's long-term vision for a prosperous and developed state by 2036, which will mark 100 years of Odisha's formation as a separate state. He emphasised that education will play



a central role in achieving this milestone.

“Odisha Vision 2036 is about inclusive growth, technological advancement, and sustainable development. But at the heart of all these efforts is education. An educated and skilled youth population is the strongest foundation we can lay for our future,” he said.

Majhi also announced that Bhimpur Advanced High School would be recognised as a ‘heritage school’. He instructed the Ganjam Collector to prepare a detailed project report (DPR) for infrastructure development at the school, ensuring that the school's legacy is preserved and further strengthened for future generations. All other demands made by the school will also be fulfilled by the state govern-

ment, he added.

The Chief Minister also highlighted the government's commitment to implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which had suffered a delay in Odisha during the previous government. He emphasised that under the current government, the policy is now being fully implemented, aiming to bring about a massive shift in the education sector.

He further emphasised that primary education in Odisha is undergoing a transformation under Godbarish Mishra Model Primary School Scheme. This new scheme aims at appointment of well-trained, qualified teachers at panchayat level, to ensure that quality education is accessible even in remote areas. In addition, he revealed that a significant portion of the state's Budget – a record ₹31,000 crore – had been allocated to bolster primary education this year.

The CM took a swipe at the previous government's 5T school system, calling it a “farce.” He stated that the initiative had failed to provide the promised digital infrastructure, with only 16 per cent of schools having internet access.

₹1L-cr investment for Ganjam

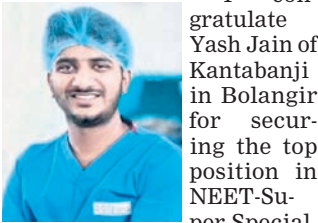
CM Mohan Charan Majhi said investments valued at ₹1 lakh crore will be brought to Ganjam district. More than 1 lakh people would get employment in the industrial units to be set up with the investment, Majhi told reporters after visiting the Budhi Thakurani temple in Ganjam. The Budhi Thakurani Yatra, a 25-day festival, will be concluded Monday.

Bolangir boy Yash tops NEET-SS exam

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 27:** Yash Jain from Kantabanji in Bolangir district has brought immense pride to Odisha by securing All-India Rank 1 in the prestigious NEET Super Specialty (NEET-SS) 2024 examination.

Recognising his remarkable accomplishment, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi extended his heartfelt congratulations to Yash through a social media post.



“I congratulate Yash Jain of Kantabanji in Bolangir for securing the top position in NEET-Super Special-

ty exam in the country. He has made the entire state proud. Yash's achievement will certainly inspire many other students in Odisha,” the CM said. Yash Jain pursued his MBBS from the renowned King Edward Memorial Hospital, Seth Gordhandas Sunderdas Medical College in Mumbai and completed his postgraduate studies from Government Medical College and Hospital, Nagpur.

The NEET-SS exam serves as the sole gateway to India's super-specialty medical courses such as DM (Doctor of Medicine) and MCh (Master of Chirurgiae or Master of Surgery).

Securing the top rank in such a competitive exam is a testament to Jain's unwavering dedication, hard work and academic excellence.

Flaws in OPSC, OSSC exams spark outrage

PNN & AGENCIES

**Cuttack, April 27:** Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) and Odisha Staff Selection Commission (OSSC) faced outrage when errors were detected in two major recruitment exams Sunday. The mistakes in the Civil Services Main-2023 and Excise and Traffic Sub-Inspector (SI) exams have infuriated candidates, who said such lapses are unacceptable given the exams' importance to their careers.

The OPSC's Civil Services Main-2023 Anthropology exam, held from 9am to 12pm and 2pm to 5pm, had a critical flaw. Questions from second paper appeared in the first and vice versa. Candidates were dismayed by the mix-up. OPSC acknowledged the error online but has not outlined remedial steps. The commission directed candidates to proceed with the exam using the provided question-cum-answer booklet. The OPSC has since assured all concerned that appropriate steps will be taken to address the situation while maintaining the integrity of the exam.

The OSSC's Combined Main Examination for Excise and



Traffic SI posts omitted syllabus sections like General English, Odia, and General Studies. After complaints, OSSC admitted the oversight, expressed regret, and proposed a supplementary exam. Candidates can submit suggestions for remedies via OSSC's website or email by May 4, 2025, but skepticism persists.

Examinees, who prepared extensively, are outraged. “Our future hinges on these exams,” one candidate said. Social media, including X, reflects widespread frustration, with claims that OSSC included irrelevant questions from unrelated exams. Both commissions' errors, despite apologies, have eroded trust.

‘Stranded’ flyers protest at BPIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, April 27:** A section of passengers late Sunday night staged a protest at the entrance of Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here, alleging that they were left stranded for hours after several Kolkata-bound flights were diverted to Bhubaneswar due to bad weather.

The passengers claimed that many of them, including children, were not given food or water after landing at the airport.

A student said she missed an examination after her flight was diverted to Bhubaneswar.

“I have been stranded for more than eight hours at the airport. I had to miss my examination due to this,” she said.

Bhubaneswar airport director Prasanna Pradhan said eight Kolkata-bound flights were diverted to Bhubaneswar between 10pm Saturday and 1:15am Sunday.

Out of these flights, six were cleared to return to Kolkata after a temporary halt, he said.

However, two Spicejet flights remained grounded as Bhubaneswar airport is a “non-operational airport” for Spicejet, the official said.

“Due to duty time limitation of the pilots and formal checking of the aircraft, the flights were detained here. The airline arranged buses and hotel accommodation for the passengers. However, some of them did not go to the hotels,” Pradhan said.

He also said that the airport authority provided refreshments to the stranded passengers, and they were set to depart for Kolkata in two flights.

Rape accused marries victim in jail

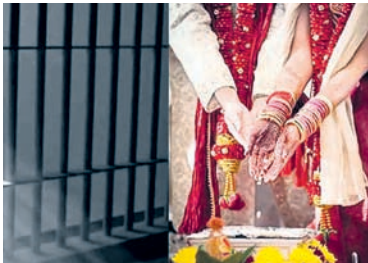
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Berhampur, April 27:** A 26-year-old man lodged in a jail in Ganjam district in a rape case, Sunday married the survivor on the premises of the prison, officials said.

The marriage was solemnised inside the jail in the presence of the family members of the bride and groom, several dignitaries and jail officials.

The entire sub-jail in Kodala wore a festive look, when the under-trial prisoner (UTP), identified as Surya Kant Behera of Gochhabadi in Polasara police station limits, tied the nuptial knot with the woman he was in love with before landing in the jail in November 2024.

Behera was working in Surat (Gujarat) before he was arrested by the police. Due to certain misunderstandings between the families



of the bride and groom, the 22-year-old woman lodged a rape complaint against Behera and subsequently, he was taken into custody, said PK Mishra, an advocate of the bride.

Now, they have mutually agreed to their marriage, even though the groom is lodged in jail as a UTP, he said. “After getting permission from the jail authorities and following all legal aspects, we have coordinated their marriage function,” said Tarin-isen Dehury, jailor of Kodala sub-jail.

He said the marriage was solemnised following the traditional Hindu rituals and in the presence of the family members of both bride and groom and other dignitaries.

The groom arrived at the venue in a decorated electric vehicle (EV), which was also arranged by the jail officials.

Elderly persons, present in the venue, blessed both bride and groom and wished them a happy married life. All the expenditure, including the marriage dresses for the groom, was borne by the families of the bride and groom. “We are only facilitating their marriage,” said Dehury.

The groom was again lodged in jail after completing the marriage function, while the bride returned home.

“We hope he will be released from jail soon and they lead a happy conjugal life,” said Bhaskar Behera, father of the groom.

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1050-2025A



# Congress slams govt over women’s safety



**BJP spokesperson Anil Biswal questions Congress over its track record in ensuring women’s protection**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 27:** The Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Sunday came down heavily on the state government over the alarming rise in the atrocities against women and minors, vowing to continue its fight for women’s safety in the state.

Addressing a press conference at Congress Bhawan here, Nagendra Kumar Pradhan, chairman of the OPCC’s

fact-finding committee on crimes against women, alleged that the law and order situation in the state has deteriorated drastically under the BJP-led government.

Senior Congress leader Manoranjan Das, Debasis Nayak, Anima Minz and others attended the presser.

Pradhan pointed out that since February 21, several minor girls in Odisha have either got pregnant in government schools or have fallen victim to heinous crimes like rape and murder.

Pradhan further said, “In just eight to nine months of this government, over 2,000 cases of atrocities against women, including murders and assaults, have been registered across various police stations,”

Citing about the recent case, Pradhan said, “On Saturday a

four-year-old girl was raped in Ganjam, whose body was recovered by the police. The state government has failed miserably to protect women.”

“Because of the lack of stringent measures, criminals are becoming confident to commit such heinous crimes repeatedly,” he added.

The fact-finding committee asserted that until every woman in Odisha feels safe, the Congress will continue its agitation against the state government.

In response to the claims, BJP spokesperson Anil Biswal said, “Congress has no moral authority to speak on women’s safety, given their poor track record in ensuring women’s protection during their rule.”

Biswal further added, “Under Congress rule, several high-profile rape cases occurred, including the Chhabi Rani and Anjana Mishra gangrape incidents, where two Congress workers were directly implicated. Additionally, the Deputy CM of Congress-led Karnataka admitted the state’s failure to protect women.”

“Our government has sent all the accused behind bars and our leaders are clean and have no links with any criminals like Congress. The allegation from the Congress party is completely baseless and false,” he said.



**BUDDING TALENT:** Students participate in drawing competition by Itikili Mitikili at Pathani Samanta Planetarium in Bhubaneswar, Sunday PHC: BIKASH NAYAK

# Samriddhi Utsav celebrates Odisha’s crafts

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 27:** The Samriddhi Utsav, held at Kala Bhoomi, here Sunday, celebrated Odisha’s rich handicraft heritage, bringing together over 200 artisans.

Organised by the Mahashakti Foundation, with support from TPCODL, the event showcased traditional crafts including Palm Leaf Engraving, Pattachitra Painting, Handloom Weaving, Applique Work, and Dhokra Art.

Artisans from Khurda, Dhenkanal, Kalahandi, and Cuttack displayed their work in ten vibrant stalls. The event highlighted the economic and cultural contributions of Odisha’s 1.6 lakh artisans, many of whom have passed down their skills through generations.

Dignitaries including TPCODL CSR head Pradeep Kumar Ghosal, TRIFED regional



director Narendra Nath Jha, and Mahashakti Foundation president Debashish Mahapatra participated in discussions on artisan development, sustainability, and improving

market access.

Two key publications—Samriddhi Catalogue and Kala Patrika (Kala Punaruthan’s quarterly newsletter)—were launched to promote artisan visibility and preserve craft stories. The second session featured interactive deliberations on the challenges and aspirations of artisans, followed by an Odissi dance performance. TPCODL’s Rashmi Pattnaik delivered the vote of thanks.

The event, coordinated by a dedicated team including Subham Purohit, Surajit Pattnaik, Adya Shruti Nayak, Rituparna Rath, and Shiny Khuntia, was a step toward empowering artisans and preserving Odisha’s timeless cultural legacy.

# A zero-waste celebration

**Bhubaneswar:** Unmukt Foundation recently celebrated Unmukt Utsav 2025 with the theme “Freedom from the Lens of a Child,” bringing together children, families, volunteers, and supporters in a vibrant celebration of creativity, courage, and community. The event set a new benchmark for zero-waste celebrations, with a strong focus on sustainability. The annual report 2024–25 was launched digitally, and the Unmukt Calendar 2025, printed on eco-friendly material, was unveiled. Guests received hand-painted glass bottles with money plants, reflecting a commitment to the environment. A selfie booth made from upcycled materials added fun, while waste was carefully segregated, with no single-use plastic. The event featured an inspiring art exhibition, showcasing 89 artworks by children exploring freedom, identity, and resilience. The opening ceremony included dignitaries such as Jagadananda of CYSD, Odissi dancer Ileana Citaristi, and karate player Valentina Velená.

# Man held for assault on uncle over dispute



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 27:** A 57-year-old man was arrested by Saheed Nagar police for allegedly assaulting his uncle in a violent attack over a dispute regarding medical treatment, Saturday evening. The victim, Janmejay Nayak, is currently in critical condition at a private hospital in the City, according to Saheed Nagar police Inspector-in-Charge (IIC) Suchitra Biryá Das.

The accused, Santibhusan Nayak, a resident of the Science Park slum area, has a history of mental health issues. The incident occurred around 5pm when Janmejay asked

Santibhusan to meet him outside his home to discuss seeking medical treatment. When Santibhusan refused and an argument ensued, he attacked his uncle with a stick in a fit of rage. The assault only stopped when locals intervened.

Janmejay was rushed to Capital Hospital and later transferred to SCB Hospital in Cuttack for further treatment. Following some improvement, he was discharged and moved to a private hospital in Bhubaneswar.

The police have booked Santibhusan under Sections 126 (2), 117 (2), 118 (2), and 109 (1), and 3 (5) of BNS. He was produced before a local court Sunday.

# KoS facility unveiled at RSC

*The new facility offers immersive 360-degree visualisations to bring scientific phenomena to life, enhancing experiential learning*

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 27:** In a significant step toward enhancing experiential science education, the Regional Science Centre (RSC) in Bhubaneswar launched its latest innovation—the Knowledge on Sphere (KoS) facility Sunday.

The inauguration was graced by dignitaries including Higher Education, Sports & Youth Services Minister Suryabanshi Suraj, Higher Education department principal secretary Aravind Agrawal, Central Re-



search & Training Laboratory director Manash Bagchi, and RSC project coordinator Kapil Jain. At the core of the KoS facility is a striking six-foot suspended globe that offers 360-degree visualizations of real-time and simulated scientific data. The facility brings global and cosmic phenomena to life, such as ocean currents, tectonic movements, planetary dynamics, and climate change, offering an immersive learning experience for students and educators alike.

What sets KoS apart is its

indigenous development. Using locally developed software and efficient projection technologies, the system presents a cost-effective alternative to international models, showcasing India’s growing capabilities in scientific visualisation and innovation.

The launch event featured demonstrations of topics like the Indian monsoon, Earth’s topography, and even theoretical scenarios like Earth’s axis tilting by 90 degrees. These visualisations captivated the audience, sparking curiosity and engagement.

More than just a tool for visual learning, the KoS is designed to inspire critical thinking and curiosity about planetary systems. With this new addition, RSC strengthens its position as a hub for science education and innovation.

# ECoR GM inspects rail infra projects in Western Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 27:** The East Coast Railway (ECoR) General Manager Parmeshwar Funkwal recently conducted an extensive inspection of key rail infrastructure and traffic facility projects across the Sambalpur–Jharsuguda section in Western Odisha.

During the visit, he inspected critical locations including Jharsuguda Road, Brundamal, Lapanga, and Sarla stations, reviewing project progress and the operational readiness of railway sidings essential for supporting regional industrial growth.

Accompanied by Divisional Railway Manager Subash C Chaudhary and senior officials, Funkwal focused on traffic management, infrastructure upgrades, and operational enhancements across the section.

A major highlight of the inspection was the newly-commissioned Freight Train Examination and Routine Overhauling (ROH) Facility at Sarla Station. Designed to handle 90 to 100 train examinations and 100 wagon ROHs monthly, the facility is expected to enhance operational efficiency by reducing BTAP wagon turnaround time by 30 per cent, improving freight handling capacity, and strengthening safety standards. This development is seen as a major boost for industries like steel, aluminium, and coal, fostering economic growth and job creation in the region. Funkwal emphasised the importance of robust coordination with industrial stakeholders to maximise operational efficiency and drive economic development. He also reviewed safety measures and stressed the need to upgrade passenger amenities, including waiting areas, lighting, drinking water facilities, and signage, to ensure safer and more comfortable travel experiences.

WEATHER

BBSR

CTC

Max Temp

38.1°

35.4°

Min Temp

25.0°

24.4°

Humidity

61%

66%

Rainfall

0.6

Nil

FORECAST

Partly cloudy sky with possibility of development of thunder/lightning

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I, Udayvanu Mallik, S/o Madhusudan Mallik, Resident of At/ PO - Narendrapur, PS - Tihidi, Bhadrak, PIN - 756129, Odisha, declare by this Affidavit No. - 3824 Dtd : 16.04.2025, that now onwards my son Aaryan Mallik shall be known as Aryan Mallik for all future purposes.

# Anzac biscuit myth and women’s wartime role

The Anzac biscuit stands as a cultural symbol, representing the bond between those on the home front and soldiers serving overseas during the First World War.

Often said to have been developed to survive the long journey to the trenches and boost soldiers’ morale, the biscuit’s story carries the charm of wartime folklore. Yet behind this appealing narrative lies a broader history—the story of women who worked tirelessly to provide comfort and supplies to troops.

**The biscuit myth**

Soldiers at the front did receive biscuits, but they were more akin to the hard, long-lasting “ship’s biscuits” of earlier centuries. Made from simple ingredients like flour, water,

and dry milk, these were tough enough to be used as stationery and often needed to be soaked or grated to be eaten.

Although baked goods were requested from the public, they had to meet strict requirements to survive the long transit. The recipe known today—featuring oats, coconut, and golden syrup—likely would not have lasted the journey, especially given the risk of ingredients like coconut becoming rancid.

The recipe we now recognise did not appear until several years after the war. While biscuits were indeed sent overseas, they were not the same as the Anzac biscuits we know today.

**Organised efforts on the home front**

A major volunteer organisa-



tion, largely led by women, coordinated the effort to provide soldiers with essential and comfort items. In 1917, a cookery book was published to raise funds, featuring the first printed biscuit recipe bearing the name ‘Anzac’. However, this version contained no oats or

coconut and was instead spiced and sandwiched with jam.

The organisation’s motto, ‘keep the fit man fit,’ reflected its goal: to support soldiers’ well-being beyond basic survival. Items such as socks, mittens, pyjamas, tobacco, and even gramophones and sporting goods were distributed. Women also operated canteens near the front, providing millions of mugs of tea, coffee, soup, and cocoa to weary troops.

One soldier recalled during the harsh winter how the thought of the canteen’s soup kitchen gave him strength to endure the hardships of trench life.

**The modern Anzac biscuit**

Today, strict guidelines protect the name and recipe of Anzac biscuits. However, early versions would not have

complied with these standards. It wasn’t until the 1920s that recipes combining oats and golden syrup— and later coconut— began appearing in newspapers.

This timeline shows that while biscuits were indeed sent to soldiers, they were not the iconic Anzac biscuits as we now know them.

**Beyond the biscuit**

Protecting the tradition of the Anzac biscuit helps preserve a shared cultural memory. But it’s important not to let the comforting myth overshadow the real and remarkable efforts of women during wartime—women who organised, mobilised, and provided tangible support, both at home and at the front.

(THE CONVERSATION)

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## 2 from WB killed, another injured in road accident

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhadrak, April 27:** Two persons were killed and another seriously injured when their motorcycle crashed into a protection wall of a bridge on NH 16 in Bhadrak district Sunday, police said.

According to police, three persons from West Bengal (WB) were travelling towards Cuttack on a motorcycle. The bike crashed into the protection wall near Banta Chak, throwing all three riders into the middle of the road. While two of them died at the spot, local residents rescued the critically injured youth and rushed him to the hospital, a police officer said.

The injured youth has been admitted to Bhadrak Medical College and Hospital for treatment.

Upon receiving information, police reached the scene, sent the bodies to Bhadrak Medical College for post-mortem examination, and launched an investigation into the incident, said Bhadrak Town Police Station inspector in charge (IIC) Sudhanshu Sekhar Mishra.

Preliminary investigation suggests that one of the deceased has been identified as Ased Ali, 23, from the Purba Medinipur district of West Bengal.

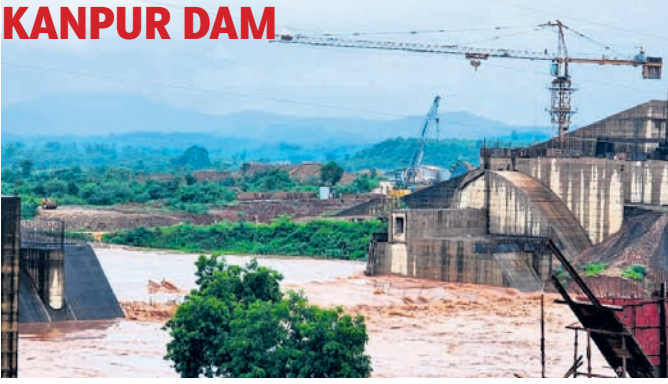
However, the identities of the other two are yet to be ascertained, he said. In another incident, a four-year-old boy was killed, and his parents and uncle were injured after their motorcycle hit a dumper on the Patnagarh-Gaisilet Road in Bolangir district, police said.

The boy was seated on the fuel tank of the motorcycle, while his uncle was riding it, and his parents were seated behind.

The boy died on the spot. The other three persons were undergoing treatment at a hospital.

# Decades old tech flaw leaves Baitarani downstream parched

## KANPUR DAM



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Joda, April 27:** An alleged technical flaw dating back to 1980s, when construction of the Kanpur dam on Baitarani river began, has rendered the downstream of the river go parched. The construction of the dam, the second major river dam project in Odisha, is yet to complete.

Sources said that the dam authorities, without making any alternative arrangements, have stopped the river's flow and are now building a depletion switch. As a result, the complete cutoff of water is severely impacting both agriculture and industry on the downstream of the river.

The Baitarani River originates from the Gonasika hill in Keonjhar district, flowing over 360 km before merging with the Brahmani river near Dhamara in Bhadrak district, and ultimately draining into the Bay of Bengal. A major dam project at the river's upper catchment area, near Kanpur under Joda block in Keonjhar district, was commissioned in 1968. The construction began in 1980 and is on its last leg.

However, the river's flow was abruptly stopped since last few days, causing significant resentment among

the local residents on the downstream who rely on the river for water. The lack of water and the resulting fall in groundwater levels have created a state of distress in the region.

While farmers have reportedly taken to protests, several industries that draw water from the river, including Jindal Steel and Power Ltd. (JSPL), Tata Steel, and BRPL are facing operational challenges.

The scarcity has prompted some industries to start laying their own pipelines to secure water supply.

Due to the reduction in water flow, water leakage from canal sluices is now visible, disrupting the supply of irrigation water to farmers' fields. The severe heat and drying up of water sources have left residents of the river basin areas facing acute hardships.

The water crisis is affecting a wide region, starting from the Kanpur dam and extending through Champua, Turumunga, Udaypur, Patana, Anandapur, and into Jajpur.

Prasad Ranjan Panda, a senior engineer of the Kanpur irrigation project, said a technical flaw from the 1980s has caused today's difficulties. He explained that river water was not properly conserved,

## Sub-Collector visits Kanpur dam

Meanwhile, Champua Sub-Collector Umakanta Parida visited the spot and took stock of the situation Sunday. He assured to take steps to supply water to the farmlands of farmers. Accompanied by Block Agriculture Officer Sarada Hansda and Assistant Agriculture Officer Ramamani Sahu, Parida discussed about ways to combat the present situation. He also interacted with project engineer Prasad Ranjan Panda and officials of Agriculture and Rural Water Supply departments, farmers and industrial firms on the issue. He said farmers will be supplied with water on priority basis as per the order of Keonjhar Collector Vishal Singh. A mega water pump of 170 HP will be used which will benefit 1,500 farmers in 10 villages, while 132 lift irrigation points has also been installed, he added.

and depletion switches were not installed at crucial points during the dam construction. "Because of that, efforts are now underway to build these depletion switches to retain water in the dam," he said.

However, the work is time-consuming, and, as a result, there is no flow of water into the river at present. Panda said by June, after the start of the monsoon, canal gates at the dam will be opened to allow high-volume water flow into the river.

"Had the depletion switches been constructed when the spillway was originally built, today's crisis could have been avoided," he said, adding, the installation of the switches will help stabilise the dam's structure and restore the river's natural water flow.

Panda assured that the work will be completed before the beginning of rainy season.



## Man beaten to death in Ganjam

**Bhanjanagar:** A 35-year-old man was allegedly beaten to death by his elder brother following an altercation in Brahmanapadar village under Tarasingh police limits in Ganjam district, Saturday night. The police have detained the accused brother, and his minor son, for questioning after the widow of the deceased, Balaram Gouda, lodged a complaint Sunday. According to reports, Balaram was residing in Bhanjanagar with his family. He worked as a painter. He had returned to his native village for some work Saturday night. After spending some time at his parents' house, he went to relieve himself. Later, an altercation reportedly broke out between Balaram and his elder brother Shankar, in front of the house over some issue. Following this, Shankar, along with others, allegedly tied Balaram to a tree along the village road and beat him up mercilessly. Their mother rushed to rescue Balaram but found he had already succumbed to his injuries. Balaram's wife, Sumitra Mallik, arrived in the village Sunday morning, and informed the Tarasingh police who have registered a murder case and detained Shankar and his minor son.

## Commuters suffer as amenity centre closed for 10 months



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Nandapur, April 27:** A way-side amenity centre built in Handiput under this block in Koraput district has remained shut for the past 10 months, leaving commuters and tourists inconvenienced without access to basic amenities.

The apathy of the concerned departments has sparked growing dissatisfaction among locals and visitors alike. The centre was built with funds worth several lakhs jointly by the state Public Works and Tourism departments to provide amenities like restrooms and waiting areas for vehicle drivers and tourists visiting various destinations in this block. However, the crucial facility has remained locked and unused for the last 10 months.

While the state and district administrations have been making efforts to promote tourism and create employment for locals, the situation at Handiput highlights a glaring exception. Few days back, the doors and windows of the toilets in the centre was found vandalised, prompting repair and appointment of two guards to maintain the facility. Despite this, tourists visiting nearby attractions such as Machhkund Duduma waterfall, Machhkund

hydropower project, Jolaput water reservoir, Balda Nag-eswari cave and hills, hilltop ponds, Muktiamba Raja cave, Mayurajholia waterfall, Nandapur Rani Duduma, the Batrisa Simhasana (Throne of 32 Steps), and Subai Jain temple continue to miss out on these basic services.

The lack of functioning amenities has dampened tourist enthusiasm to stop by the centre and use the facility. Adding to the concern is the silence of the Public Works department, the operating agency, and the state Tourism department, which has triggered public discontent.

When contacted, Koraput District Collector V Keerthi Vasan informed that while the Public Works department is responsible for construction, the Tourism department oversees operation of such roadside facilities. Both departments have been urged to make the Handiput and other similar centres across the district operational at the earliest.



**PARCHED THROATS:** Women of Bengel Sahi of forested Pichhulabeda village in Dumuria panchayat of Patana block in Keonjhar district collect water from a pit due to lack of drinking water facilities in the village

OP PHOTO

## Fund bungling alleged in awareness drive

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khaira, April 27:** Allegations have surfaced regarding the misappropriation of funds under 'Shubhadra Sachetanata' awareness programme in Khaira block of Balasore district with residents of 37 panchayats calling for a high-level probe into the matter.

The state government had launched a statewide awareness campaign March 5 to sensitise citizens on various social issues. Instructions were issued for organising rallies and roadside meetings

at the block and panchayat levels. Khaira block reportedly received the highest allocation of funds for this initiative.

According to official records, a total of ₹31.65 lakh was allocated across 12 blocks, including the district headquarters and Balasore Municipality. Of this, Khaira block alone received ₹3.07 lakh. Each of the 37 panchayats in the block was sanctioned ₹5,000, totalling ₹1.85 lakh. The remaining ₹1.22 lakh was reportedly spent on activities conducted at the block level.

A big rally was held from

block office to Medical Square, with participation of around 100 women. Reports suggest that ₹22,000 was spent on refreshments and placards for the participants, prompting residents to question the whereabouts of the remaining ₹1 lakh.

When approached for clarification, Khaira block CDPO Urmila Behera stated that the programme, which was organised in all panchayats, included activities such as rangoli drawing. She denied any misappropriation of funds, asserting that the expenditure was justified.

## Woman detained for misusing terror victim's photo to raise funds; let off

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasore, April 27:** The Cyber police here Sunday detained a woman for allegedly misusing the name and photograph of Pahalgam terror attack victim Prashant Satapathy to fraudulently collect money using social media.

Satapathy, who died in the attack in Jammu and Kashmir April 22, has been hailed nationwide as a hero. However, the woman, misused his image on social media to solicit funds without the family's knowledge or consent, a police official said. The matter came to light Saturday when Satapathy's family noticed the misuse, and immediately lodged a complaint with the Balasore Cyber Police Station. Acting swiftly, the cyber police tracked the accused – a writer by profession – to Angul district and brought her to Balasore Sunday.

In the presence of the family members, she admitted to her wrongdoings, claiming it was a mistake. She then apologised and agreed to return the collected money to the donors. However, the incident left the family deeply distressed. Priyadarshini Satapathy, Prashant's widow, said, "We have not sought any money from anyone, nor have we made any ap-



peal on social media. The entire nation regards my husband as a hero, and that honour is more than enough for me. I only wish that no other family suffers this way."

Jayanta Satapathy, Prashant's younger brother, emphasised that the family had never authorised any fundraising activities. "We disapprove of anyone collecting money using my brother's photograph. We request everyone to stay away from such unauthorised initiatives," he said.

Sushanta Satapathy, Prashant's elder brother, added that the wrongdoer confessed, apologised, and refunded the amounts received from contributors. "We then decided not to initiate any legal, or police action against her," he said. Police also refused to disclose her name following the admission of guilt and apologies.

## Silk City adorns new look for Budhi Thakurani Yatra

PNN & AGENCIES

**Berhampur, April 27:** Traditional arts and crafts have come alive in Berhampur during the ongoing biennial Budhi Thakurani Yatra, with chariots of the deity and storytelling arts being exhibited in various locations across the Silk City.

The 25-day-long festival, which started April 3, will end April 28 with the return of Maa Budhi Thakurani, the presiding deity of the Silk City, to the temple.

Thakurani Yatra is celebrated to mark the visit of the goddess to her father's house at Desibehera Street.

With dazzling lights and decorated pandals, the chariots of

deities like Sri Ram, Laxman, Parasuram, Jwalamukhi and Mahalaxmi, and the storytelling arts are the major attractions for visitors during the festival.

Some of the chariots, like 'Boita' (boats used by Odia sailors in ancient times), 'Doli' (swing) and 'Binchana' (hand fans), are also displayed at various places.

A total of 28 chariots were set up in the City on the occasion.

"The chariot of 'Boita' (Boita Rath), which has been placed at Bachuwari street, represents the rich maritime tradition of ancient Odisha and also Berhampur as the major business hub of the state," said Bhagaban Sahu, a retired history professor.

The chariots and 'kalakunjus'



(arts) have been put up in different localities to attract people to the festival and showcase the skills of artists. Every chariot has its significant linkage to the

festival, said Hrusikesh Panigrahy, a retired officer of All India Radio (AIR).

"We have been exhibiting the Jwalamukhi idol since 1939," said Tarini Sahu, one of the organisers of the chariot at Kalu Patra Sahi here. He said the idol was made in neem wood by one of the artists from Manjusha in Andhra Pradesh.

"Before the festival, we paint the idol to make it bright. Our budget to display with illumination is around ₹10 lakh, which is collected through donations," he added.

Similarly, the story of Sri Ramalila was displayed in the art form at the coconut market. This story of Ram is displayed in pictures in 113 frames.

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FOCUS COMMERCE

# THE ASSAULT ON TRADE



**It should be clear by now that appeasing Trump will only hasten the collapse of the multilateral trading system and further undermine democratic governance worldwide**

U.S. President Donald Trump's misguided trade war against the rest of the world could mark the beginning of the end for both his political dominance and his "Make America Great Again" (MAGA) movement – but only if Germany and Europe can coordinate a powerful international response.

The European Commission and the outgoing German government's biggest mistake was to signal a willingness to concede to Trump's demands, potentially turning his economic blunder into a political victory. It should be clear by now that appeasing Trump will only hasten the collapse of the multilateral trading system and further undermine democratic governance worldwide.

The European Union's response will be pivotal in determining whether the Trump administration (which is intent on dismantling the multilateral trading order) or China (which seeks to preserve it) will prevail. European leaders face a clear choice: stand for multilateralism and align with China or side with Trump's MAGA-fied United States. There is no third option. Germany and Europe cannot remain neutral in this conflict. Giving in to Trump's demands by pursuing a bilateral trade agreement would be tantamount to endorsing the end of multilateralism.

The EU's ongoing failure to push back against Trump's policies reflects shocking shortsightedness and political naivete. While the direct economic impact of Trump's tariffs on Europe will likely be limited, the long-term consequences – especially for Germany's export-driven economic model – could be dire. Yielding to Trump would threaten the very foundation of German prosperity, which depends more than that of any other European country on open global trade grounded in non-discrimination, fairness, and competition.

So, how should Germany and the EU respond to Trump's tariffs? The incoming German government – together with France, the United Kingdom, and other European partners – must defend multilateralism by aligning with China and imposing reciprocal tariffs on American goods.

In future negotiations with the US, European leaders must also insist on two key conditions. First, they should call for a renewed commitment to multilateralism as the foundation of the global trade system. That includes not only rolling back tariffs and other trade barriers to pre-crisis levels, but also revitalizing multilateral institutions like the World Trade Organization, which the US has systematically undermined by blocking the appointment of new judges to its appellate body.

Importantly, the focus should not be limited to the WTO. Other multilateral institutions such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank must also be empowered to play a more active role, particularly in representing and protecting the interests of the weakest economies in the Global South.

Second, Europe should push for fair competition and common rules, especially when it comes to regulating US-based tech giants. These companies pay little to no tax and routinely violate EU laws and regulations concerning data protection, ethical standards, and market competition.

The recent US court ruling that Google has indeed built an illegal monopoly in search underscores the urgency of the issue. As German Finance Minister Jörg Kukies recently observed, European countries are increasingly reliant on services provided by US tech giants. If the EU fails to act now, this harmful dependence will continue to deepen, making Europe even more vulnerable to Trump-style political and commercial blackmail.

Reviving multilateralism will also require meaningful concessions and reforms from China, the EU, and Germany to help correct global imbalances. Through massive subsidies and other forms of support for domestic firms, China has repeatedly undermined multilateral rules to gain unfair advantages. But Germany also must reduce its own gigantic current-account surpluses, which are largely driven by domestic regulations and other structural barriers that make it harder for foreign companies to enter its market.

Given that addressing these distortions could offer considerable benefits to American companies, there is good reason to believe that such a balanced trade agreement might appeal to Trump and encourage him to change course.

Despite its economic costs, Trump's global tariff war offers Europe a chance to establish itself as a mediator and defender of multilateralism in an increasingly multipolar world. It is high time that Europe stood up for its values and coordinated a unified response with partners like China, Canada, Mexico, the UK, and Japan.

By provoking a confrontation with all the world's major economies at once, Trump has made a serious strategic miscalculation. Pushing back may cost Europe in the short term, but allowing Trump to prevail and dismantle the multilateral trading system would be far more damaging – both to the EU economy and to democracy itself.

*The writer is a former senior manager at the European Central Bank.*

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Marcel Fratzscher

**BY PROVOKING A CONFRONTATION WITH ALL THE WORLD'S MAJOR ECONOMIES AT ONCE, TRUMP HAS MADE A SERIOUS STRATEGIC MISCALCULATION**



Bhabani Shankar Nayak

**THE NARRATIVE PROMOTED BY TECH MOGULS—THAT AI WILL REPLACE TEACHERS—IS A FORM OF PROPAGANDA DESIGNED TO FURTHER THE PRIVATISATION OF EDUCATION**

Will Artificial Intelligence (AI)-led robots take over classrooms and replace teachers? Will AI-driven technology undermine human connections in teaching? Will AI disrupt traditional classroom-based teaching and learning? As concerns about a so-called dystopian future for teachers and education grows, these fundamental questions reflect the fear surrounding AI-driven digitalisation of classrooms, educational processes, systems, teaching and learning environments. Adding to the debate, Microsoft co-founder and tech mogul Bill Gates has asserted that AI will replace teachers within the next ten years. While this may sound bizarre, it reflects yet another organised attack on education—one that seems to follow a strategic pattern of predictive propaganda. It is essential to expose the underlying strategies employed by tech moguls that aim to dismantle the collective foundations of education and learning.

Teaching and learning in a classroom setting are far from monotonous activities confined to a rigid curriculum. The dynamic interaction between teacher and students constantly reshapes the nature of the educational experience. As a result, two classes taught by the same teacher on the same topic can be vastly different from each other. Classrooms serve as spaces where both teachers and students learn from one another, building a collective

foundation of knowledge. They are not merely places for the transmission of information; they create and promote critical thinking, questioning, argumentation, articulation, observation, interaction, and the exchange of ideas. Through this collaborative process, knowledge is both processed and produced—whether in its essentialist form or as a tool for emancipation. Classrooms not only shape minds but also train hands. Such an experiential or hands-on learning is good for employability and generating critical consciousness for global citizenship. No technology can truly replicate the dynamic, human-centered nature of the classroom experience.

However, the narrative promoted by tech moguls—that AI will replace teachers—is a form of propaganda designed to further the privatisation of education, consolidating control in the hands of powerful online platform companies like Microsoft. Such a strategy is designed to generate further revenue for the rent-seeking techno-feudal platform capitalism. So, the greatest threat to education and educators today is not AI itself, but the techno-moguls who wield it as a tool to serve their interests.

New technologies help in processes of teaching and learning. It enhances the classroom dynamism and democratises teaching and learning processes. Technology facilitates in the

democratisation of classrooms and in the process of cocreation and dissemination of knowledge. Technology is an inseparable part of the classroom teaching and learning today. Technology plays a crucial role from attendance monitoring, classroom organisation to evaluation and feedforward processes in teaching and learning activities. The AI-led digitalisation of classroom has transformed the way teaching and learning takes place. It redefines teaching and learning environment where roles of educators have been already transformed.

Technology-driven transformations of classroom teaching and learning environments have the potential to accelerate deeper and faster learning, while also enhancing the creative capabilities of both teachers and students. Therefore, the accessibility, availability, and democratization of technology and its platforms are crucial for the educational empowerment of both students and teachers.

However, the techno-feudal environment perpetuated by the owners of technology and platform companies promotes an undemocratic, rent-seeking culture rooted in the digital divide—where access to and availability of technology depend largely on one's ability to pay. This environment not only promotes discrimination but also reinforces entrenched class divisions in a digital form, deepening existing

inequalities under the guise of technological progress.

Tech moguls like Bill Gates rarely speak about the democratisation of technology or ensuring universal access to digital education and skills for all irrespective of different backgrounds of the learners. Instead, the focus is often on replacing teachers with technology. This is deeply concerning, as teachers do far more than deliver content—they nurture creative thinking and critical awareness, enabling students to reflect on everyday realities while also acquiring skills for employability.

People like Bill Gates promote the individualisation of the digital learning environment, a model that prioritises profit while promoting a culture of compliance concomitant with the requirements of platform-based digital techno-capitalism.

It is essential to protect the collective foundations of classroom teaching and learning, while also democratising digitalisation and ensuring collective control over technologically advanced learning platforms. Only by doing so can we truly empower both students and teachers, and work toward a 21st-century education that is scientific, secular, technological, and universal—free from all forms of discrimination.

*The writer teaches at the London Metropolitan University.*

## No Friends Here

US President Donald Trump's remarks that there have always been tensions between India and Pakistan and the two countries will figure it out between themselves "one way or the other" sends a very clear message to India which, at present, is being goaded, by internal political pressure, to contemplate armed retaliation against its arch rival Pakistan over the recent terror attack that claimed the lives of 26 tourists in Pahalgam, Kashmir. "I am very close to India and I'm very close to Pakistan, as you know. And they've had that fight for 1,000 years in Kashmir. Kashmir has been going on for 1,000 years, probably longer than that. And it was a bad one yesterday, though, that was a bad one. Over 30 people," Trump said during a press gaggle with reporters aboard Air Force One on the way to Rome. This very assertion that the US is equally close to both India and Pakistan lays bare the apparent failure of our foreign affairs apparatus, irrespective of the tall claims to the contrary and the constant declaration by India's national television media that the PoTUS is a "dear friend" of our Prime Minister. Moreover, three months into his presidency, Trump has yet to appoint an ambassador to India, indicating the low priority this country holds on his agenda.

For starters, the terror strike on civilians, that too tourists, was possible due to utter intelligence and security failure. About two thousand tourists were picnicking in the Baisaran meadow, touted as a Mini Switzerland in Pahalgam, and there was not a single jawan of Central forces or the state police in the vicinity. The Centre's claim that the situation in the restive Kashmir Valley has become "normal" six years after the abrogation of Article 370 has perhaps led the administration into a state of complacency, leaving the unsuspecting tourists vulnerable to Islamist extremists. While most biased commentators are baying for Pakistan's blood, none has questioned, as yet, about accountability of the Indian security system that failed to react instantly and minimize loss of lives. The nation would like to know who is responsible for the multiple failures and who is answerable.

The Pahalgam massacre, one of the many deadly terror attacks to have struck India in recent years, has led New Delhi to further downgrade its ties with Islamabad with a host of measures including cancellation of visa for Pakistan nationals, closing the Attari-Wagah border and keeping the Indus Water Treaty, which has survived three wars, in abeyance. The national mood, to some extent, has been whipped up in favour of harsh retaliation against Pakistan in terms of military intervention even as the Centre has not yet declared how it proposes to punish the perpetrators, backers and handlers of terror. Many observers are of the view that the Pahalgam terror attack could be a trap that Pakistan has laid for India. First and foremost could be to distract its own people from the economic and other hardship plaguing that country. Pakistan is probably in great economic crisis and is, as is usual for it, managing to stay afloat primarily due to bailout packages from China and some Gulf countries. Also, there is growing discontent among the masses towards the country's all-powerful military. A war with India could change the national mood and unite all factions for a common cause.

Secondly, Pakistan has consistently leveraged the Kashmir issue as a political and ideological instrument. However, the recent attack in Pahalgam reveals a new aspect and that is the communal targeting of non-Moslems. The terror attack follows Pakistan army chief General Asim Munir's comments referencing the Two-Nation Theory, which initially provided the rationale for the Partition of India based on religion. While anti-India rhetoric has long been a part of Pakistan's military narrative, introducing a communal element is unusual.

Thirdly and most importantly, Pakistan may be acting at China's behest to harm India's interests. For, Beijing understands that a military conflict between Pakistan and India, even if a minor one, could damage India's economy which is already facing a host of problems. If India is perceived as unstable or engaged in warfare, most international companies that are withdrawing from China due to the ongoing trade war with the US might refrain from investing in India. Many analysts see China taking advantage of the situation in which India currently finds itself.

It should be amply clear to any impartial observer that India is all alone in this fight against terrorism with no country, neighbor or otherwise, willing to support it militarily. Adding to the problem is that our ties with all our neighbors, not just Pakistan, have greatly deteriorated. This leaves a lot to ponder for India's foreign policy makers because it is exactly their failure that has led this country to the present day isolation and mess that it seems to have fallen into.

### WISDOM CORNER

**The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time**

MARK TWAIN

**The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall**

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

**If you plan on being anything less than you are capable of being, you will probably be unhappy all the days of your life**

ABRAHAM MASLOW

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- **1926:** American author Harper Lee—who won national acclaim for her novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960)—was born.
- **1945:** Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, "Il Duce," who, after a series of military misadventures, became unpopular even among his fellow Fascists, was captured while trying to flee Italy and was executed on this day in 1945.
- **1947:** Norwegian ethnologist and adventurer Thor Heyerdahl and a small crew set sail from Peru aboard the primitive raft *Kon-Tiki* and arrived in Polynesia three and a half months later.
- **1952:** The Allied occupation of Japan came to an end after seven years of rapid social and economic change following the country's surrender in World War II.
- **1967:** At the height of the Vietnam War American boxer Muhammad Ali refused induction into the U.S. Army, citing religious reasons; his subsequent conviction was eventually overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court.

## 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)

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### Pioneering astrophysicist

Sir, India mourns the passing of Dr. Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan, an illustrious space scientist, education reformer, and visionary leader who left an indelible mark on the nation's scientific and academic landscape. Born in 1940 in Kerala, Dr. Kasturirangan's distinguished career spanned groundbreaking contributions to space research, notably through his leadership at ISRO where he advanced missions like INSAT-2, IRS-1A and 1B, operationalised PSLV, and laid the foundation for Chandrayaan-1. As a pioneering astrophysicist, he deepened India's understanding of cosmic phenomena, while his advocacy for environmental protection through the Western Ghats report highlighted his broader commitment to sustainable development. His visionary role in drafting the National Education Policy 2020 ushered a transformative shift in India's educational philosophy, emphasizing holistic and flexible learning pathways. Recognised with India's highest civilian honours—the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Vibhushan—Dr. Kasturirangan also served with distinction as Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University, member of the Planning Commission, and a nominated Rajya Sabha member. His legacy will continue to inspire India's scientific aspirations and educational renaissance for generations to come.

*Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD*

### Pleasure of reading

Sir, Books can be quiet friends, accessible teachers and patient companions. No entertainment is as inexpensive as reading books; nor any pleasure as lasting. As readers learn to read, the importance of reading to learn dawns upon them. Reading is a vocation as well as a vacation. An author only begins a book, and the reader finishes it. Top world leaders have been readers though the converse may not hold true. Nevertheless, readers are the leaders of their minds. Not sure how many of the present leaders think before they talk but certainly there are very few leaders who read before they think. Emotional and philosophical angles apart, reading literally preserves the intellectual prowess of an individual. Enhanced concentration and ability to focus better are the unsolicited gifts of reading. Memory, comprehension and analytical ability, besides writing skills, are known to receive a boost through reading.

*Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA*



BORN TO ROAR

Delhi zoo welcomes Asiatic lion cubs after 16 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: Lioness Mahagauri gave birth to four cubs Sunday, making it the first successful breeding of Asiatic lions at Delhi's National Zoological Park since 2009.

"The mother is looking after the cubs well so far," said zoo director Sanjeet Kumar, adding that they are being closely monitored as the "next 24 hours are crucial because it was Mahagauri's first delivery".

The five-year-old Asiatic lioness gave birth to the cubs this morning. The species is marked as 'Endangered' by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. The famous Delhi zoo last saw the birth of lion cubs



The five-year-old Asiatic lioness gave birth to the cubs this morning

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The famous Delhi zoo last saw the birth of lion cubs in May 2009, when two cubs were delivered

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For now, the newborn cubs will stay with their mother. They will only be shifted for medical checks depending

on how Mahagauri reacts, Kumar said. Mahagauri along with the cubs' father Maheshwar, a five-year-old Asiatic lion, was brought to the Delhi zoo from Gujarat's

Junagadh in 2021.

In recent years, Delhi Zoo has witnessed other big cat births too. Two Royal Bengal Tiger cubs were born in May 2023, although three from the

same litter were stillborn. In August 2022, three White Tiger cubs were born, but one died after four months.

The birth of the lion cubs comes as good news for the zoo, which has been facing criticism over a series of animal deaths. This month alone, a Thamin deer, a Gaur calf, and an Albino Blackbuck died.

In March, a female Dhole passed away and in February, the zoo lost a 15-year-old leopard, a 22-year-old jaguar, and a 15-year-old nilgai.

The zoo also made headlines recently after a leopard mauled a zookeeper during a transfer operation. Reports said the staff member involved had experience only

Mumbai: PNB's scam-hit branch now brews organic coffee

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 27: The Brady House branch of the Punjab National Bank (PNB) in Mumbai, infamous for a multi-million dollar scam involving diamondaire Nirav Modi and his uncle Mehul Choksi, has been turned into a cosy cafe.

Patrons sit on comfy chairs and plush sofas, sipping steaming cups of organic coffee with light music playing in the background on the premises, a stark contrast to the chaos that erupted after the duo defrauded the bank of more than ₹13,000 crore.

The premises in the Brady House building in the Fort area of south Mumbai were once at the centre of one of the biggest financial scams to rock the country.

Nirav Modi and his uncle Mehul Choksi allegedly siphoned off over ₹13,000 crore of public money from the PNB using LoUs and foreign letters of credit (FLCs) by bribing officials of the bank's Brady House branch between March 2011 and November 2017.

With Choksi's arrest in Belgium two weeks ago, the Brady House is again in the spotlight, but the operations of this branch were shifted to PNB House at Sir P M Road in Fort a few years ago.

The scam came to light in January 2018 when the PNB submitted a fraud report to the Reserve Bank of India and lodged a complaint with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Choksi and Modi had fled the country before that, and the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) have probed into the scam.

In March 2019, Modi was arrested in London on an extradition warrant based on the CBI and ED's charges against him and has been languishing in prison since.

Uddhav-Raj reunion buzz faces big hurdles

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 27: With speculations about rapprochement between Uddhav Thackeray and his estranged cousin Raj Thackeray gathering steam, leaders of the Shiv Sena (UBT) and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) have said that though it is a promising prospect, personal ties and organisational synergy are hurdles that need to be overcome.

The Thackeray cousins have sparked a buzz about a possible reconciliation, with statements indicating they could ignore "trivial issues" and join hands nearly two decades after they parted ways.

While MNS chief Raj Thackeray has said uniting in the interests of Marathi mannos is not difficult, former Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray has said that he was ready to put aside trivial fights, provided those working against the state's interests were not entertained.

The Sena (UBT) Saturday put up a cryptic post on its social media handles, saying, "Time has come to unite for the sake of Mumbai and Maharashtra. Shivsainiks are ready for the protection of Marathi asmita (pride)."

The cousins are currently abroad. Raj is expected to return in the last week of April, and Uddhav in the first week of May.

The reunion buzz has also come at a time when both parties have reached a nadir with regard to their electoral performance and are going through their toughest political phase.

The Sena (UBT) won 20 seats, while the MNS drew a blank in the 2024 assembly polls. Leaders of both parties have, however, said that though Uddhav's response to Raj's call



The Thackeray cousins have sparked a buzz about a possible reconciliation, with statements indicating they could ignore "trivial issues" and join hands nearly two decades after they parted ways

may have sparked speculation, it is easier said than done.

A Sena (UBT) leader said both cousins are of different temperaments.

The past baggage over more than two decades has resulted in mistrust towards each other — Raj had quit the Shiv Sena in 2005 and blamed Uddhav for it. He has made it clear several times that he could work under no one but Bal Thackeray.

Last week, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said family relations are not severed because of politics. But personal ties are not just restricted to two individuals — it is also about their immediate families, especially the sons of both the cousins — Aaditya (Uddhav) and Amit (Raj) — who are being groomed to helm the organisation eventually.

This will be different, unlike the alliance between the undivided Shiv Sena, Congress and the undivided NCP in 2019, said Prakash Akolkar, the author of

"Jai Maharashtra", a book on the history of Shiv Sena.

Maharashtra Minister and BJP leader Nitesh Rane had last week questioned if Uddhav Thackeray had consulted his wife Rashmi before responding to Raj's statement that triggered speculation of an alliance.

A Sena (UBT) leader acknowledged that coming together of the two parties is more difficult than it appears. The prospect of the two cousins coming together has enthused supporters of both parties, but it might not be the case with a section of cadres and party leaders.

"When we discuss seat-sharing agreements in Mumbai, how will the seats be divided? How will the winnable and non-winnable seats be divided? What about areas like Dadar and Worli, where both parties have a strong base? What about other cities where Sena (UBT) and MNS have their strength," an MNS leader said.

Delhi schools to launch 'Maa Yamuna Swachhta Abhiyan'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: The Delhi government has decided to launch the "Maa Yamuna Swachhta Abhiyan" across schools in the national capital with Chief Minister Rekha Gupta saying it was aimed at increasing sensitivity towards the need to revive the holy river.

According to officials, the main objective of this campaign is to increase sensitivity among children about the importance of the Yamuna River and to connect them with the broader cleanliness movement.

"The Yamuna River cleaning is an issue which is very close to our hearts. Through this school, we aim to send a message to children that the Yamuna issue matters to us. With everyone's support, we must speed up the cleaning process of the river," the chief minister said. "The Yamuna is not just



a river but the lifeline of Delhi. Inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Swachhata Abhiyan (Cleanliness Mission), through 'Maa Yamuna Swachhta Abhiyan' we are connecting children with the cause of cleanliness and environmental conservation," Verma said.

"If we educate our children today about the importance of rivers and the environment, they will grow into aware citizens tomorrow, playing a vital role in building a clean and green India. Delhi's future

is incomplete without a clean Yamuna", Verma added.

Under the "Maa Yamuna Swachhta Abhiyan, essay writing competitions, drawing and painting competitions, awareness walks and cultural programmes will be organised, a statement said.

The Delhi Jal Board will collaborate with the Directorate of Education to provide schools with necessary educational materials, awareness kits and other resources to support this initiative.



Police personnel participate in a dress rehearsal for a parade to mark the Maharashtra Day in Mumbai

PTI PHOTO

Asia's oldest newspaper Mumbai Samachar to digitise its rich legacy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, April 27: Asia's oldest active newspaper, 'Mumbai Samachar', which published reports on the first war of Indian independence in 1857, the death of legendary Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi and the birth of Congress, is turning a new page in its illustrious history by digitising its rich legacy.

Established in 1822 by Fardunji Marzban, a Parsi scholar, the newspaper's management has launched a new project to digitise and document the rich legacy of the Gujarati daily. Located in a colonial-era building in Mumbai's prominent Horniman Circle area, the newspaper has weathered many storms during its 203-year-old history, including a drop in subscription and readership after the advent of the internet, news apps and social media expansion, but continues its journey.

'We are in talks with different agencies to restore the old



files in our archives, which is a national legacy. Similarly, we want to create a website whose content will be about 10,000 stories published in the newspaper in the last 200 years,' Mumbai Samachar editor Nilesh Dave told PTI.

Dave said the newspaper recently launched its English website and will soon have Marathi and Hindi ones. "My

documentary — Mumbai Samachar 200 Not Out — will be screened at the Cannes Film Festival, being held from May 15 to 20. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched its trailer, while the documentary was released by Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Mumbai (in September 2024)," he said.

Started as 'Shri Mumbai Na Samachar' by Parsi scholar

Marzban, the newspaper primarily served as a source of information for traders, the majority of them Parsis and Marwaris, and details about goods coming on ships at the Bombay harbour. Founder Marzban hailed from Surat and was always interested in the printing business. When he came to Mumbai, he started a book-binding shop.

He got 150 subscribers and offered them a copy of the newspaper for ₹2 a month. Besides disseminating information about ships to traders, free death notes were published as community service, and later, news reports were also printed. The newspaper started getting advertising revenue from traders who wanted to send their goods by ships to other places. There were advertisements for dramas as well. Since 1841, there have been two Marathi editors of the paper — Janardhan Vasudev and later Vinayak Vasudev.

DELHI'S INITIATIVE Sheltering the stray cows

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta announced the measures at a public gathering at Gamin Gaushala in Bawana and stressed that she, her ministers and the BJP MLAs consider the cow as a mother figure ("Gau mata")

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, April 27: In a step towards addressing the issue of bovines straying on the national capital's roads, the Delhi government will survey cow shelters and frame a scheme to extend financial support for the smooth operation of such facilities.

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta announced the measures at a public gathering at Gramin Gaushala in Bawana and stressed that she, her ministers and the BJP MLAs consider the cow as a mother figure ("Gau mata").

Reminding the cattle owners that such animals were not allowed within the city limits, she suggested the bovines be housed at designated places like Ghoga Dairy, around 50 kilometres from Central Delhi. The chief minister said her government would conduct a survey of all cow shelters in Delhi and a scheme would



be drawn to provide financial assistance for the facilities to care for the cows in a holistic manner. It is the government's duty to take care of the old and ill cows wandering on roads after being abandoned and the dispensation is committed to fulfil its duty, Gupta added.

In its maiden budget session after coming to power in Delhi, the BJP government last month announced bringing a law for the conservation and protection of stray cows in the city. The proposed legislation would include strict enforce-

ment mechanisms to curb cow exploitation, illegal cattle trade, and owners' negligence.

Several BJP MLAs have repeatedly raised the issue of stray cows causing traffic congestion, sanitation hazards and more often than not accidents.

According to data provided in the assembly by Model Town MLA Ashok Goel, police received 25,393 stray cow-related complaints between January 1 and February 19 this year, primarily the bovines causing traffic congestion and accidents.



The counsel for CBI told the court on an earlier occasion the man was denied permission to travel abroad as it was a leisure trip and contended that if he was allowed to leave the country, he might not return. While allowing the man's plea the high court said the court must be conscious about ensuring the return of the applicant to face the pending legal proceedings which can be done by imposing appropriate conditions on him.







of the day

quote

There was no reason for Putin to be shooting missiles into civilian areas, cities and towns, over the last few days

DONALD TRUMP | PRESIDENT, US

The FBI sends our condolences to all the victims of the recent terrorist attack in Kashmir — and will continue offering our full support to the Indian government

KASH PATEL | DIRECTOR, FBI

The new hotline will deliver 24-hour access to medical staff intended to cover circumstances where people need to be seen immediately

MARK BUTLER | HEALTH MINISTER, AUSTRALIA

SHORT TAKES

Jae-myung frontrunner for South Korea prez

**Seoul:** South Korea's main opposition Democratic Party of Korea Sunday named Lee Jae-myung, the party's ex-leader, as its candidate for the snap presidential election slated for June 3. Lee has been leading opinion polls for weeks with a double-digit gap over contestants from the conservative People Power Party, which will name its candidate May 3. "From this point on, Lee Jae-myung is not only the candidate of the Democratic Party, but also the candidate of all the people yearning for the end of insurrection, an overcoming of the crisis, for those who seek unity and happiness," Lee said in an acceptance speech after winning his party's candidacy.

US deploys anti-ship missiles in Philippines

**Batan Island:** The US military has deployed an anti-ship missile launcher for the first time on Batan Island in the Philippines, as Marines unloaded the high-precision weapon on the northern tip of the archipelago, just a sea border away from Taiwan. US and Philippine forces separately unleashed a barrage of missile and artillery fire that shot down several drones acting as hostile aircraft in live-fire drills Sunday in Zambales province facing the disputed South China Sea. The mock battle scenarios over the weekend in the annual Balikatan exercises between the US and its oldest treaty ally in Asia, the Philippines, not only simulated real-life war. They were also staged near major geopolitical hotspots, which have become delicate frontlines in the regional rivalry between China and the US under former President Joe Biden and now Donald Trump.

Teachers, policemen clash in Nepal; 7 hurt

**Kathmandu:** At least seven teachers and a few policemen were injured in Kathmandu city of Nepal on Sunday as clashes erupted between the two sides during a demonstration for education reforms and a pay increase. The police used baton charges and water cannons to disperse thousands of agitating teachers who tried to break the security cordon to enter the restricted area in Nayabaneshwor area of Kathmandu, an eyewitness said. The witness said a few policemen also suffered injuries. Tens of thousands of school teachers from different parts of the country, demanding reforms in school education and an increase in pay and perks, have been staging demonstrations for nearly one month in Kathmandu.

'WE'LL DIE OF HUNGER'

The three rivers meant for Pakistan, a country of 240 million people, irrigate more than 16 million hectares of farmland, or up to 80% of the total

EUTERS

**Latifabad, April 27:** Spraying pesticides on his parched vegetables one street away from the Indus River, Pakistani farmer Homla Thakhur is worried about his future. The sun is at its peak, the river is running very low, and India has vowed to cut supplies upstream after a deadly militant attack in Kashmir.

"If they stop water, all of this will turn into the Thar desert, the whole country," said Thakhur, 40, before heading back to the river to refill the tank for the spray gun. "We'll die of hunger."

His nearly 5-acre (2 hectare) farm is located in the Latifabad area of the southeastern province of Sindh, from where the Indus flows into the Arabian Sea after originating in Tibet and snaking through India.

Thakhur's fears were echoed by more than 15 Pakistani farmers and several other experts, especially as rain has been scanty in recent years.

For the first time, India Wednesday suspended the World Bank-mediated Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 that en-



India hasn't got the kind of immediate infrastructure to halt the waterflows, especially during flood times, so this period creates a crucial window for Pakistan to address the inefficiencies in its water sector. There are a lot of inefficiencies, leakages

VAAQAR AHMED | ECONOMIST AND TEAM LEAD, OXFORD POLICY MANAGEMENT

tures water for 80% of Pakistani farms, saying it would last until "Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism".

India says two of the three militants who attacked tourists and killed 26 men in Kashmir were from Pakistan. Islamabad has denied any role and said "any attempt to stop or divert the flow of water belonging to Pakistan ... will be considered as an Act of War".

The treaty split the Indus and its tributaries between the nuclear-armed rivals.

Government officials and experts on both sides say India cannot stop water flows immediately, because the treaty has allowed it to only build hydropower plants without significant storage or dams on the three rivers allocated to Pakistan. But things could start changing in a few months.

"We will ensure no drop of the Indus River's water reaches Pakistan," India's water resources minister, Chandrakant Raghunath Paatil, said on X. He did not respond to questions about the fears in Pakistan.

Two Indian government offi-

Ukrainians decry US peace plan to surrender annexed-Crimea

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Kyiv, April 27:** A peace proposal by the Trump administration that includes recognising Russian authority over Crimea shocked Ukrainian officials, who say they will not accept any formal surrender of the peninsula, even though they expect to concede the territory to the Kremlin, at least temporarily.

Giving up the land that was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014 is also politically and legally impossible, according to experts. It would require a change to the Ukrainian constitution and a nationwide vote, and it could be considered treason. Lawmakers and the public are firmly opposed to the idea.

"It doesn't mean anything," said Oleksandr Merezhko, a lawmaker with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's party. "We will never recognize Crimea as part of Russia."

Unlike a territorial concession, a formal surrender



would permanently relinquish Crimea and abandon the hope that Ukraine could regain it in the future.

The Ukrainian public largely understands that land must be ceded as part of any armistice because there is no way to retake it militarily. Polls indicate a rising percentage of the population accepts such a trade-off.

But much of the public messaging about land concessions has suggested that they are not necessarily permanent, as when Kyiv Mayor Vitalii Klitschko told the BBC recently that Ukraine may need to temporarily give up land as

Trump's first 100 days: American prez overturning world order

Countries consider defense boosts, closer China ties amid US policy shifts as experts warn of lasting damage to American relations with traditional allies

REUTERS

**Washington, April 27:** He has launched an unprecedented global tariff war and slashed US foreign aid. He has disparaged NATO allies and embraced Russia's narrative about its invasion of Ukraine. And he has spoken about annexing Greenland, retaking the Panama Canal and making Canada the 51st state.

In the chaotic first 100 days since President Donald Trump returned to office, he has waged an often unpredictable campaign that has upended parts of the rules-based world order that Washington helped build

from the ashes of World War II. "Trump is much more radical now than he was eight years ago," said Elliott Abrams, a conservative who served under Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W Bush before being appointed US special envoy on Iran and Venezuela in Trump's first term. "I have been surprised."

Trump's second-term "America First" agenda has alienated friends and emboldened adversaries while raising questions about how far he is prepared to go. His actions, coupled with that uncertainty, have so unnerved some governments that they are responding in ways that could be difficult to undo, even if a more traditional US president is elected in 2028.

All this comes amid what the Republican president's critics see as signs of democratic backsliding at home that have raised concerns abroad. These include verbal attacks on judges, a pressure campaign against universities and the transfer of migrants to a notorious El Salvador prison as part of a broad-



er deportation drive.

This assessment of Trump's shakeup of the global system comes from Reuters interviews with more than a dozen current and former government officials, foreign diplomats and independent analysts in Washington and capitals around the world.

Many say that while some of the damage already done could



We are in a crisis. President Trump is threatening Canada. This threat is not only an economic threat, it is an existential threat

MARK CARNEY | PM, CANADA

THOUSANDS FLOCK TO FRANCIS' TOMB

Thousands of people filed past the tomb of Pope Francis from early Sunday morning, packing the Roman basilica where he had chosen to be buried in a break from tradition. No pope had been laid to rest outside the Vatican in more than a century, but Francis opted instead for burial in Santa Maria Maggiore (Saint Mary Major), located in the Italian capital's most multicultural neighbourhood



NO RESPITE

Gaza death toll breaches 52,000

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Deir al-Balah, April 27:** Hospitals in the Gaza Strip received the remains of 51 Palestinians over the past 24 hours who were killed in Israeli strikes, the local Health Ministry said Sunday, bringing the Palestinian death toll from the 18-month-old Israel-Hamas war to 52,243.

The overall toll includes nearly 700 bodies for which the documentation process was recently completed, the ministry said in its latest update. The daily toll includes bodies retrieved from the rubble after earlier strikes.

Israel ended its ceasefire with Hamas by launching a surprise bombardment March 18, and has been carrying out daily waves of strikes since then. Ground forces have expanded a buffer zone and encircled the southern city of Rafah, and now control around 50% of the territory.

Israel has also sealed off the territory's 2 million Palestinians from all imports, including food and medicine, for nearly 60 days. Aid groups say supplies will soon run out and that thousands of children are malnourished.

Israeli authorities say the renewed offensive and tightened blockade are aimed at pressuring Hamas to release hostages abducted in its Oct 7, 2023, attack that triggered the war. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to continue the war until Hamas is destroyed or disarmed, and all the hostages are returned.

coming," said Vohra, who was also India's Indus Commissioner and now advises the government occasionally.

"Without the information, they cannot plan."

And it is not just agriculture, a shortage of water will also hit electricity generation and potentially cripple the economy, economists say.

Nadeem Shah, who has a 150-acre farm in Sindh where he grows cotton, sugar cane, wheat and vegetables, said he was also worried about drinking water.

"We have trust in God, but there are concerns over India's actions," he said.

Ghasharib Shaokat of Pakistan Agriculture Research, a Karachi research firm, said India's actions inject uncertainty "into a system that was never designed for unpredictability".

"At this moment, we don't have a substitute," he said. "The rivers governed by the treaty support not just crops, but cities, power generation, and millions of livelihoods."



Iran port blast toll rises to 40, some 800 hurt



In this photo provided by Iranian Students' News Agency, ISNA, a helicopter drops water on the fire after a massive explosion rocked a port near the southern port city of Bandar Abbas, Iran

PTI PHOTO

**Muscat:** A massive explosion and fire rocked a port Saturday in southern Iran purportedly linked to a shipment of a chemical ingredient used to make missile propellant, killing 40 people and injuring around 800 others. Helicopters and aircraft dumped water from the air on the raging fire through the night into Sunday morning at the Shahid Rajaei port.

The explosion occurred just as Iran and the United States met Saturday in Oman for the third round of negotiations over Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear program. No one in Iran outright suggested that the explosion came from an attack. However, even Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who led the talks, Wednesday acknowledged that "our security

services are on high alert given past instances of attempted sabotage and assassination operations designed to provoke a legitimate response." Meanwhile, state TV reported the fire was under control and will be fully extinguished later Sunday. It also said activities have resumed at the port, showing footage of containers of a commercial ship being unloaded.

More than half of Americans, including one in four Republicans, think Trump is "too closely aligned" with Russia, and the American public has little appetite for the expansionist agenda he has laid out, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll

policy-making.

The fallout has already begun. Some European allies, for instance, are looking to boost their own defense industries to reduce reliance on US weapons. Debate has intensified in South Korea about developing its own nuclear arsenal. And specula-

tion has grown that deteriorating relations could prompt US partners to move closer to China, at least economically.

The White House rejects the notion that Trump has hurt US credibility, citing instead the need to clean up after what it calls former President Joe Biden's "feckless leadership" on the world stage.

"President Trump is taking swift action to address challenges by bringing both Ukraine and Russia to the negotiating table to end their war, stemming the flow ofentanyl and protecting American workers by holding China accountable, getting Iran to the negotiating table by reimposing Maximum Pressure," White House National Security Council spokesman Brian Hughes said in a statement.

What we're seeing is a huge disruption in world affairs. No one is certain at this point what to make of what's happening or what will come next

DENNIS ROSS | FORMER MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATOR FOR DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN ADMINISTRATIONS



of the day

Quote

Disruptive technologies tend to have a way of adapting. Because particularly what happens with AI is that progress in AI exponentially improves progress in AI. It is very self-referential in that sense

ASHOK KRISHI

GLOBAL HEAD OF AI AT TCS

We will expand into all critical minerals, whichever is of strategic interest to us, including not only minerals, including potash... Potash is there in Rajasthan... (There are) also chances of lithium association there (in the potash block). So we will look at that

ARUN MISRA

HINDUSTAN ZINC CEO

While this transshipment model isn't always illegal, it sits in a grey zone. It shows how businesses find creative ways to keep trade going -- often faster than governments can react. GTRI estimates Indian goods worth over USD 10 billion reach Pakistan via this route annually

AJAY SRIVASTAVA

GTRI FOUNDER

SHORT TAKES

India, Netherlands hold trade talks

**New Delhi:** India and European nation Netherlands have discussed ways to boost trade and investments ties during the visit of Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal to Hague. The visit assumes significance as India's exports to Netherlands are recording healthy growth despite global economic uncertainties. "Commerce Secretary Mr. Sunil Barthwal & Ambassador @ktuhinv met DG Foreign Economic Relations Mr. Michiel Sweers in The Hague to discuss strengthening bilateral trade and economic ties. Discussions focused on enhancing collaboration through the joint trade and investment committee (JTIC) and advancing strategic economic cooperation," the department of commerce said in a post on X. In 2024-25, India's exports to the Netherlands rose by 1.75 per cent to USD 22.76 billion as against USD 22.36 billion in 2023-24. The imports during the period stood at over USD 5 billion. During this visit, the commerce ministry's Joint Secretary Saket Kumar also met senior officials in Hague to discuss advancing cooperation in the startup and innovation ecosystem.

Goyal refutes Reddit post

**New Delhi:** Zomato Founder and CEO Deepinder Goyal has rejected an anonymous Reddit post alleging that things were "going off the rails" with the company, rebranded as Eternal, losing market share to Zepto Cafe and Swiggy and forcing employees to order from its food delivery platform. The post also claimed that the work culture has become "laughably inconsistent" with "toxicity" baked in, and the only thing keeping the company profitable now is platform fees, and the "crisis" compounded by "underpaid and overworked" delivery partners. In a post on X on Saturday, Goyal said, "All of this - reddit.com/r/StartUplndia! - is utter nonsense. Neither are we losing market share, nor will we ever force our employees to order on Zomato. Freedom of choice is something we stand for vehemently." He further said "it is embarrassing to even clarify this -- but doing it since many people reached out to me with concern. And thanks everybody for your concern.. appreciate it".



It is so sad that just for the profit of a few companies, just for the supernatural profits of a select few companies and possibly their shareholders, the world has to suffer

**PIYUSH GOYAL** | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

HYBRID MF INFLOW MODERATES IN FY25

Hybrid mutual fund schemes attracted ₹1.19 lakh crore in 2024-25, 18 per cent lower than the preceding fiscal, owing to market turbulence in the second half of FY25 triggered by corporate earnings slowdown and geo-political tensions.



FPIs extend investment in Indian equities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 27:** Foreign investors have infused ₹17,425 crore in the country's equity markets last week, supported by a combination of favourable global cues and strong domestic macroeconomic fundamentals.

This came following a net investment of ₹8,500 crore in the preceding holiday-truncated week ended April 18.

Globally, steady performances in major markets, expectations of a pause in US Federal Reserve's rate hikes, and a stable US dollar boosted risk appetite for emerging markets like India. Easing global trade tensions further lifted investor sentiment, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate director - Manager Research, Morningstar Investment, said.

Domestically, India's resilient growth outlook, moderating inflation, and an optimistic forecast of an above-normal monsoon for 2025 enhanced



confidence in the market. Together, these factors created an attractive investment environment for foreign investors, he added.

According to the data with the depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) made a net investment of ₹17,425 crore

in equities during April 21 to April 25.

Overall, FPIs pulled out ₹5,678 crore from the equities in April so far, taking the total outflow to ₹1.22 lakh crore since the beginning of 2025, data showed.

The initial part of the month

was marked by aggressive FPI selling, driven largely by global uncertainties stemming from the US tariff policy developments.

This reversal in FPI activity happened at a time of heightened tensions between India and Pakistan following the Pahalgam terror attacks.

This renewed interest in FPI activity has been caused by two important factors. One, the sustained rise in dollar, which triggered the momentum trade towards US equities, has reversed with the dollar index falling from a peak of 111 in mid-January this year to around 99 now, V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments, said.

Two, the steep decline in US growth expected this year will impact corporate earnings in US while the Indian economy will continue to remain resilient with growth of above 6 per cent accompanied by recovery in corporate earnings, he added.

Geopolitical issues to drive markets: Analysts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 27:** Geopolitical developments between India and Pakistan, quarterly earnings and macro data will be the key drivers of stock markets in the holiday-shortened week, say analysts. Trading activity of foreign investors, who were sustained buyers in the Indian market last week, and global trends would also guide movement in the market, they said.

Equity markets will remain closed Thursday for 'Maharashtra Day'. Further updates related to tariffs will also be watched by investors, experts noted.

Stock markets witnessed profit-taking in the last two sessions due to increased geopolitical tensions between India and Pakistan following the death of 26 people in a terror attack on tourists at Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir. "The upcoming holiday-shortened week also marks the beginning of a new month, making monthly auto sales data a key area of focus for market participants. On the macroeconomic front, investors will closely track the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) data and the HSBC manufacturing PMI data.

"Meanwhile, geopolitical developments between India and Pakistan will remain on the radar. On the corporate earnings front,

several prominent companies—including BPCL, IOC, Bajaj Finance, TVS Motor, and UltraTech Cement—are set to release their quarterly results. Globally, updates related to tariffs and trade will also be watched closely," Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Last week, the BSE benchmark gauge climbed 659.33 points or 0.83 per cent, and the NSE Nifty went up by 187.7 points or 0.78 per cent despite profit-taking in the last two sessions. Friday, the 30-share BSE barometer Sensex tanked 588.90 points or 0.74 per cent to settle at 79,212.53. The NSE Nifty dropped 207.35 points or 0.86 per cent to 24,039.35.

Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said, "Geopolitical developments between India and Pakistan could add volatility to the Indian market over the next few days. Meanwhile, stock/sector specific action would continue on the back of ongoing Q4 earnings announcements. Key results this week include those from largecaps like Ultratech Cement, Bajaj Finance, Trent, Ambuja Cements amongst others."

An interesting point in this reversal of FII strategy is that it has happened at a time of heightened India-Pak tensions following the Pahalgam terror attacks.

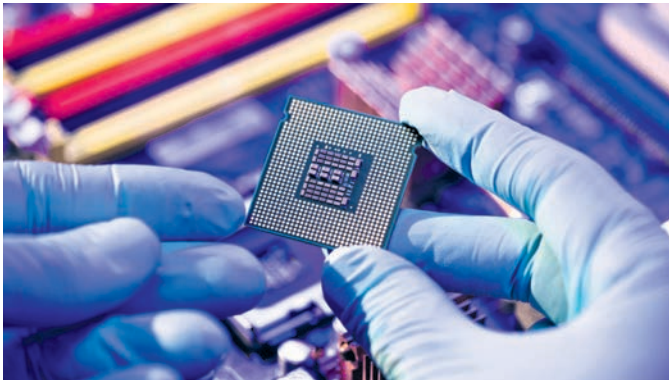
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 27:** India is likely to ask the US to ease export controls and grant it access to critical technologies on par with key American allies like Australia, the UK, and Japan under the proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA), sources said.

They added that India may seek these easing for sectors like telecom equipment, biotechnology, AI (artificial intelligence), pharmaceuticals, quantum computing and semiconductors.

The country is also seeking duty concessions for labour-intensive sectors like textiles, gems and jewellery, leather goods, garments, plastics, chemicals, shrimp, oil seeds, chemicals, grapes and bananas in the proposed pact with America. On the other hand, the US wants duty concessions in sectors like certain industrial goods, automobiles (electric vehicles particularly), wines, petrochemical products, dairy, agriculture items such as apples, and tree nuts, they said.

As part of the proposed BTA, one of the sources said, India may request the US to place it on par with other key US allies including Australia, UK and Japan regarding access to technology through easing of export



controls particularly in key areas like telecom equipment, biotechnology, and AI.

Easy access to cutting-edge technologies in these sectors would help boost India's innovation capabilities, enhance its technological infrastructure, and further push the country's economic growth. The commerce ministry, which is leading the negotiations for the agreement, declined to comment when asked about these issues.

According to think tank GTRI, the US has eased export controls to strengthen technology partnerships with close allies like Australia, the United Kingdom, and Japan. The changes are designed to make collaboration easier in critical sectors. It said that as part of the AUKUS security pact, the US has simplified rules for

Mcap of top valued firms soars by ₹ 1.18 lakh crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 27:** The combined market valuation of six of the top-10 valued firms soared by ₹1,18,626.24 crore last week, with Tata Consultancy Services stealing the show with maximum gains.

Last week, the BSE benchmark gauge climbed 659.33 points or 0.83 per cent, and the NSE Nifty went up by 187.7 points or 0.78 per cent.

Reliance Industries Ltd, HDFC Bank, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), State Bank of India, Infosys and ITC were the winners, while Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finance and Hindustan Unilever took a hit in their valuation.

The market valuation of TCS surged by ₹53,692.42 crore to ₹12,47,281.40 crore, the most among the top 10 firms.

Reliance Industries added ₹34,507.55 crore taking its valuation to ₹17,59,276.14 crore.

The market valuation of Infosys jumped ₹24,919.58 crore to ₹6,14,766.06 crore and that of HDFC Bank rallied by ₹2,907.88 crore to ₹14,61,842.17 crore.

State Bank of India's market capitalisation (mcap) climbed ₹1,472.57 crore to ₹7,12,854.03 crore.

The mcap of ITC went up by ₹1,126.27 crore to ₹5,35,792.04 crore. However, the valuation of Bharti Airtel tumbled by ₹41,967.5 crore to ₹10,35,274.24 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever by ₹10,114.99 crore to ₹5,47,830.70 crore.

The market valuation of Bajaj Finance fell by ₹1,863.83 crore to ₹5,66,197.30 crore and that of ICICI Bank by ₹1,130.07 crore to ₹10,00,818.79 crore.

Reliance Industries retained the title of the most valued firm followed by HDFC Bank, TCS, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever and ITC.

offering full parity.

"American officials could point to ongoing concerns about India's export controls, intellectual property protections, cybersecurity standards, and military relationships with Russia. Rather than blanket exemptions, Washington may suggest mechanisms such as trusted partner programmes, project-specific licences, or expanded licensing exceptions for select Indian entities," Srivastava added.

The terms of references (ToRs) have been finalised by India and the US for the proposed agreement, which include around 19 chapters covering issues such as tariffs, goods, services, rules of origin, non-tariff barriers, and customs facilitation.

To give further impetus to the talks in the 90-day tariff pause window, an Indian official team was there in Washington to iron out differences on certain issues before formally launching negotiations for the pact. The US remained India's largest trading partner for the fourth consecutive year in 2024-25 with bilateral trade valued at USD 131.84 billion. The US accounts for about 18 per cent of India's total goods exports, 6.22 per cent in imports, and 10.73 per cent in the country's total merchandise trade.

IPO investors in CPSE stocks get bumper returns

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 27:** As many as 15 out of 18 public sector companies listed over the last 8 years have given bumper returns with Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders topping the list by making investors richer by a whopping 3,700 per cent, according to an analysis.

The analysis shows that barring insurance companies, all central public sector enterprises (CPSEs), especially from

shipping and rail sectors, listed since May 2017 gave positive returns to investors who bought shares in the initial public offering (IPO) and have stayed invested in the company so far.

Besides, Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders, Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL), Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd and Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) provided over 1,000 per cent returns to IPO investors. Sector wise analysis reveals that Railways and Shipping

CPSEs have outperformed CPSEs in other sectors. Mazagon Dock, which listed on bourses in 2020 at an issue price of ₹145, was trading at ₹5,510.2 a share on April 22, 2025, despite a stock split in December 2024. Garden Reach Shipbuilders listed on bourses in 2018 at an issue price of ₹118. The shares are currently trading at ₹1,733.9 apiece, thus giving a 1,369 per cent returns to investors. Cochin Shipyard, which listed in 2017, has given returns of 590 per cent with share price

rising to ₹2,979.7 from the IPO issue price of ₹432. This return is despite a stock split.

Among Railways CPSEs, RVNL gave returns of 1,866 per cent, rising from 2019 IPO issue price of ₹19 a share to ₹373.6. Similarly, IRCTC shares jumped 1,110 per cent from ₹320 in 2019, to ₹3,872.75 a share. Others like RITES and IRCON International (listed in 2018) gave investors returns of 225 per cent and 243 per cent, respectively.

Economic uncertainty now higher than ever: IMF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Barcelona, April 27:** The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has just published its World Economic Outlook, and it does not take an expert to deduce that, even among some of the world's top economic minds, confident predictions are currently hard to come by.

Every spring the IMF and World Bank hold their Spring Meetings in Washington DC: a week of seminars, briefings and press conferences focusing on the global economy, international development and world financial markets.

At both the Spring Meetings and the Annual Meeting, held each autumn, the IMF publish-

es its global economic growth forecasts.

For its 2025 Spring Meeting the IMF has published a baseline forecast, as well as an addendum analysing the tariff events that took place between 9 and 14 April. According to the Fund's report, world GDP will grow by 2.8% in 2025 and 3.0% in 2026. For the euro area, growth will be 0.8% and 1.2% for 2025 and 2026 respectively.

These forecasts represent a substantial downward revision from IMF figures published just three months ago. Globally, growth in 2025 is down by 0.5% compared to the Fund's January update, with a reduction of 0.2% for the euro area.

One major shift is key to un-



derstanding the most recent IMF report and its pessimistic predictions: we live in a much more uncertain world than we did three months ago.

If one had to sum up the new

US tariff policy in a word, "unpredictable" would suffice, as the so-called "Liberation Day" of 2 April 2025 represented the largest tariff increase in modern history.

Just one week later, the US president then made two further announcements. First, a 90-day freeze on tariff hikes, apparently in search of bilateral agreements with the countries to which he had applied tariffs above 10%. Second, that China would be excluded from this exception, with tariffs on its products being raised to 145%.

This freeze means that until July EU goods being sold to the US will have a 10% tariff instead of the 20% that was announced on 2 April. However, the 10% applied by the new US administration is still much higher than the average tariff of 1.34% that was in force before 5 April. But what will the tariff be after these 90 days? What about in Decem-

ber? What about in 2 years' time? What goods will be exempted? How far will the trade war between China and the US go? The answer to all of these questions is: nobody knows. This uncertainty is evident in of the IMF's spring forecast. The IMF's world trade uncertainty index is currently 7 times higher than it was in October 2024, much higher than in the pandemic.

As far as the economy is concerned, this uncertainty is far worse than a high but definitive tariff. With a tariff, companies can at least reorganise their production chain, and consumers can look for alternative products. There is a cost, but at least businesses and consumers can plan for it.



KOUNDE LEAVES IT LATE TO WIN COPA DEL REY FOR BARCA AFTER 3-2 THRILLER

# Barca lift Copa del Rey cup



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Seville, April 27:** Barcelona has launched its bid for a treble after edging Real Madrid 3-2 in a thrilling Copa del Rey final with Jules Koundé scoring an extra-time winner.

Right back Koundé pounced on a pass by Luka Modric and fired into the low corner of Thibaut Courtois' net for the 116th-minute decider.

Barcelona will carry momentum from its record-extending 32nd Copa del Rey title into Wednesday's start of its Champions League semifinal series against Inter Milan. It also leads La Liga by four points over Madrid.

Pedri González dictated the game for Barcelona from midfield and scored from long range to take a 28th minute-lead at La Cartuja Stadium.

Madrid rallied with two second-half goals, with Kylian

**I am very proud of my team. We had trouble keeping control of the second half but again we showed our character. And then, we pulled it off at the limit when we were very tired**

JULES KOUNDE | RIGHT BACK, BARCELONA

**We left it all out but it wasn't to be. 5 more finals now, we've to give everything we have. Hala Madrid, hasta la muerte (Which roughly translates to Real Madrid, until death)**

JUDE BELLINGHAM | MIDFIELDER, REAL MADRID

Mbappé coming off the bench at halftime and scoring from a free kick in the 70th and midfielder Aurélien Tchouaméni's

header in the 77th making it 2-1. Ferran Torres leveled in the 84th to force extra time.

Barcelona has beaten Madrid in all three of the clásicos this season, including a 5-2 rout in the Spanish Super Cup final in January after winning 4-0 at Madrid in the league in October.

"This was such a physically demanding game, but we showed that we are a great team that never gives up," said Torres, who filled in perfectly for the injured Robert Lewandowski.

The loss to its fierce rival was another blow to Madrid after it was knocked out of the Champions League quarterfinals by Arsenal. This could have been its last title decider with Carlo Ancelotti in charge. The Italian coach said he will decide his future this summer amid speculation he is bound to take over Brazil.

Ancelotti, when asked about his future, said: "As I have said, I can continue, I can stop, it will be a topic for the coming weeks."

While Ancelotti's second stint in Madrid appears to be coming to an end, Hansi Flick has only added to his superb first season with Barcelona. The German coach has invigorated a group of players who seemed spent under Xavi Hernández and helped young players such as Lamine Yamal and Pau Cubarsí continue to grow into stars.

"I have to say thanks to the team because they had an unbelievable performance," Flick said. "A huge win in the Copa final is great for everyone and it gives us confidence for more."

King Felipe VI awarded the trophy to Barcelona captains Ronald Araújo and Marc-André ter Stegen, after the monarch returned to Spain following his attendance at the funeral

of Pope Francis.

The trophy is the first piece needed to repeat a treble that Barcelona won under Pep Guardiola in 2009 and Luis Enrique in 2015.

## Red for Rudiger on bench

Real Madrid defender Antonio Rudiger, who could face a lengthy ban after appearing to throw an object towards the referee in a fit of anger during the Copa del Rey final Sunday, apologised for his behaviour. In the final stages of the match, Rudiger and his Real teammates reacted angrily to a foul given against Kylian Mbappe shortly before the final whistle. Rudiger was so angry at the decision, and he appeared to throw an object towards the referee De Burgos Bengoetxea. The defender was then shown a red card, as were Vazquez and Bellingham, after the trio attempted to protest. Having been sent off, Rudiger was restrained by his teammates and was prevented from reaching the match official. "There's definitely no excuse for my behaviour last night. I'm very sorry for that. We played a very good game from the 2nd half on - After 111 minutes I was not able to help my team anymore and before the final whistle I did a mistake. Sorry again to the referee and to everyone I have disappointed last night," Rudiger posted on X.



## MILESTONE MOMENT

# LIVERPOOL BAG PREMIER LEAGUE TITLE

**The Reds lift their 20th league title, tying Manchester United for most in England's top division**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Liverpool, April 27:** Liverpool have been crowned the 2024-25 Premier League champions after their 5-1 win over Tottenham Hotspur at the Anfield Stadium. Goals by Luis Diaz, Alexis Mac Allister, Cody Gakpo, Mohamed Salah and an own goal by Destiny Udogie saw The Reds lift their 20th league title, tying Manchester United for most in England's top division.

It is fair to say that the Arne Slot era is off to a glorious start. The Dutch head coach came to Merseyside with a job not many thought was possible - replacing Jurgen Klopp - but Slot has led Liverpool to their second league title in the Premier League era, matching the German's tally.

It was Tottenham Hotspur who looked like they were in



the mood to delay the title celebrations when they fired early through Dominic Solanke in the 11th minute when he headed past Alisson via a James Maddison corner.

However Liverpool were not willing to lie down and equalized just five minutes later when Szoboszlai squared the ball to Diaz for a simple finish. The Reds snatched the lead eight minutes later when Ryan Gravenberch won the ball in the Spurs box and kay it off for Mac Allister who buried it into the top right corner to take the lead into half-time.

Cody Gakpo added to their tally shortly after the half when a corner fell for him inside the box and he danced around the

# MI crush LSG for fifth straight win

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 27:** In-form Mumbai Indians extended their winning run with a 54-run hammering of Lucknow Super Giants, recording their fifth consecutive victory in the Indian Premier League (IPL) here Sunday.

The hosts smashed LSG in a one-sided clash in which Suryakumar Yadav grabbed lead as tournament's leading run-scorer, with his 28-ball 54.

Suryakumar continued to plunder runs to become the leading run-scorer in this IPL, crossing the 400-run mark with his third fifty. The India T20 skipper also completed his 4,000 runs in the tournament.

Ryan Rickelton also sizzled with a 32-ball 58 that helped MI post a stiff 215 for seven being invited to take first strike.

With a handsome total to defend, Mumbai Indians juggled their bowlers cleverly as the visitors struggled to find response to the challenges thrown by the home bowlers.

With his wickets column not reflecting how well he has bowled since his comeback, pacer Jasprit Bumrah finally reaped the rewards to return with impressive figure of 4-0-22-4. He broke the back of LSG's chase with three wickets in the 16th over. In the process, Bumrah also went past Lasith Malinga (170) to become MI's leading wicket-taker in IPL history. LSG's chase was also marred by another poor outing for their captain Rishabh Pant (4). They were shot out for 161 on a perfect batting surface at the Wankhede Stadium.

Bumrah, usually reserved for later stages, was brought on early into the attack against a top-heavy LSG batting line-up and he produced immediate breakthrough in the third over.

Bumrah nailed Aiden Markram (9) with precision as he angled three deliveries straight into the right-hander, who hit the next one straight to Naman Dhir trying to fend off



IPL STANDINGS						
TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS	
RCB	10	7	3	0.521	14	
GT	8	6	2	1.104	12	
MI	10	6	4	0.889	12	
DC	9	6	3	0.482	12	
PBKS	9	5	3	0.177	11	
LSG	10	5	5	-0.325	10	
KKR	9	3	5	0.212	7	
SRH	9	3	6	-1.103	6	
RR	9	2	7	-0.625	4	
CSK	9	2	7	-1.302	4	

the pressure.

Pooran went after Deepak Chahar in the sixth over, slicing sixes off two wide full tosses and putting one into the stands over midwicket but his charge didn't last against MI's dependable right-arm spin option in Will Jacks (2-0-18-2).

In the seventh over, Suryakumar, placed at long off just before the first delivery from Jacks, ran to his left and took a sharp diving catch to get rid of the dangerous Pooran.

Jacks then had the out-of-form Pant caught at short third man off a meek reverse sweep, with LSG sliding to 60 for three.

**Brief Scores:**

**Mumbai Indians:** 215 for 7 in 20 overs (Ryan Rickelton 58, Suryakumar Yadav 54; Mayank Yadav 2/40, Avesh Khan 2/42) beat **Lucknow Super Giants:** 161 all out in 20 overs (Ayush Badoni 35; Jasprit Bumrah 4/22 ,Trent Boult 3/20)

## PAHALGAM AFTERMATH

# India withdraw team from Central Asian Volleyball event in Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lahore, April 27:** Pakistan Volleyball Federation Sunday said India have withdrawn their contingent from the next month's Central Asian Volleyball in Islamabad.

PVF official Abdul Ahad said India had confirmed sending a 30-member squad, including 22 players for the championship starting May 28 at the Jinnah complex. Following the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, where 26 tourists were killed, diplomatic tension has grown between the two nations.

"The Indian Volleyball officials have informed the regional body that their government has cancelled the NOC issued to them for the tournament after the incident in Pahalgam," Ahad said. "It is disappointing to know India has withdrawn from the championship and they will be replaced either by Afghanistan or Sri Lanka."

Teams from Iran, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are scheduled to compete in the event.

## SHORT TAKES

### Women pugilists shine

**Amman:** Nine of the 12 Women's U-15 boxers competing in the semifinals won their respective bouts to progress ahead, as 14 Indians were guaranteed a finals spot at the Asian U-15 & U-17 Boxing Championships after the eighth day of competitions. India was guaranteed 43 medals before the day's play began, but bronzes turned to silver and gold after Indian pugilist booked their place in the finals. In the Women's U-15 semifinals, Komal (30-33 kg), Navya (58 kg), and Sunaina (61 kg) secured dominant RSC (Referee Stopped Contest) victories. Khushi Ahlawat (35 kg), Tamanna (37 kg), Princi (52 kg), and Trushana Mohite (67 kg) posted convincing wins by clear points margins. Milky Meinam (43 kg) battled hard to edge out her opponent in a tight 3-2 result, rounding off a highly successful day for India's young female boxers. Svi (40 kg) and Vanshika (70+ kg) had received byes to the final.

### Bad show by shuttlers

**Xiamen:** India's lack of bench strength came to the fore as it slumped to a crushing 1-4 defeat against Denmark with top singles stars PV Sindhu and HS Prannoy losing their matches during the team's opening Group D match at the BWF Sudirman Cup Finals, here Sunday. Placed alongside Indonesia and England in a tough group, India needed a strong start to keep their qualification hopes alive but failed to deliver, conceding an unassailable 0-3 lead after losing the first three matches of the five-match tie. Denmark, playing without their top singles players Viktor Axelsen and Mia Blichfeldt, still proved too strong as India's star shuttlers Prannoy and Sindhu lost their respective matches in straight games.

### Women in Blue win

**Colombo:** Opener Pratika Rawal struck a fine half-century after spinners Sneh Rana and debutant Shree Charani starred with the ball as a clinical India outclassed Sri Lanka by nine wickets in the rain-hit opening ODI of the women's tri-nation series here Sunday. Oppen's trio to bowl, India bundled out Sri Lanka for 147 in a curtailed 39-over-a-side contest and chased down the modest target in 29.4 overs.

# Krunal's rare IPL fifty helps RCB thrash DC

*Royal Challengers Bengaluru extend unbeaten away run*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 27:** Krunal Pandya recorded his first fifty in IPL since 2016, helping Royal Challengers Bengaluru pull off a six-wicket win over Delhi Capitals on a challenging Feroz Shah Kotla track here Sunday.

Krunal (73 not out of 47 balls), who has part of every IPL season since his debut in 2016, paced his innings perfectly while battling alongside chase master Virat Kohli (51 off 47).

The duo shared a 119-run stand off 84 balls as RCB chased down 163 in 18.3 overs to extend their unbeaten run away from home.

RCB bowlers put a squeeze on Delhi Capitals in the middle overs through Josh Hazlewood and the spinners to limit the home team to 162 for six.

For RCB, it was their seventh win in 10 games while DC suffered only their third loss in nine matches. Both teams are on course to make the play-offs.

At 26 for three, RCB felt the heat before Krunal and Kohli bailed them out.

In his maiden season for RCB, Krunal has made valuable contributions with both bat and ball.

On Sunday night, Kohli played the perfect anchor as Krunal came up with timely hits on a difficult surface to deliver a fine win for his team. His straight hit through the line off Mukesh Kumar and an aerial drive over cover off the wily Kuldeep Yadav stood out among his four sixes.

Kohli's consistency has been remarkable this season and the knock against DC was his sixth 50-plus score in 10 innings. The highlight of his solid effort was the straight drive off Mitchell Starc.

The night, however, belonged to Krunal who collected only his second 50-plus score in 116 IPL innings.

Earlier, KL Rahul (41 off 39 balls) was the top-scorer for DC but it was Tristian Stubbs (34 off 18 balls) who helped the



hosts post a fighting total.

RCB put the opposition in to bat, expecting better batting conditions during the run chase.

Faf du Plessis (22 off 26 balls) returned from injury to join Abhishek Porel (28 off 11) at the top of the order but it was the latter who ensured DC reached 52 for two in the powerplay.

It was only towards the end of the innings that DC managed to get some momentum, all thanks to the blitzkrieg from Stubbs. The 18th and 19th over from Hazlewood and Dayal yielded 17 and 19 runs, enabling DC to cross the 160-run mark.

### Brief Scores:

**Delhi Capitals:** 162 for 8 in 20 overs (KL Rahul 41; Bhuveshwar Kumar 3/33) lost to **Royal Challengers Bengaluru:** 165 for 4 in 18.3 overs (Krunal Pandya 73, Virat Kohli 51; Axar Patel 2/19).