



## Nora’s dream

Actor Nora Fatehi reflects on her journey and shares a wishlist that every dance lover would envy.

LEISURE | **P2**



## English rule

US president Donald Trump signs order requiring English proficiency for US truckers, sparking concern among Sikh groups

INTERNATIONAL | **P10**



## Growth outlook at risk

Trade tensions and geopolitical risks pose a challenge to India’s economic growth this fiscal, a Finance Ministry report said

BUSINESS | **P11**



## Chithambaram joint first

Indian Grandmaster Aravindh Chithambaram finishes joint first at Superbet Rapid and Blitz tournament

SPORTS | **P12**

# JUSTICE GAVAI APPOINTED CJI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 29:** Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai was Tuesday appointed the next Chief Justice of India.

He would enter the office of the CJI May 14, a day after incumbent CJI Justice Sanjiv Khanna demits office.

The Law Ministry issued a notification announcing Justice Gavai’s appointment as 52nd chief justice of India.

As per laid down procedure, his name was recommended by CJI Khanna April 16 to the Central government. Justice Gavai will have a tenure of six months and he would demit office December 23 on attaining the age of 65 years. He is the senior-most Supreme Court judge after the incumbent CJI Khanna.

## WOMAN KILLED OVER SUSPECTED WITCHCRAFT

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bisoi/Rairangpur, April 29:** In a shocking incident, a 57-year-old woman was hacked to death allegedly by her nephew over suspicion of witchcraft in Judia village, under Bisoi police jurisdiction in Mayurbhanj district, Tuesday.

The deceased has been identified as Shakar Hembram. The accused, Dularam Hembram, 28, surrendered at the local police station. A case has been registered while the body was sent for a post-mortem.

According to the police, Dularam had suspected his aunt of practicing witchcraft and harbored a grudge against her following the untimely death of his five-year-old son. The incident occurred when the woman was relaxing on the verandah of her house after having lunch Tuesday. Acting under deep-rooted superstition, Dularam reportedly struck her on the head with an axe. She collapsed and died at the scene, bleeding profusely.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



What do you mean by PM is missing? He is there in every poll rally

# Zipline operator’s ‘Allahu Akbar’, gunshots go viral

AGENCIES

**Ahmedabad, April 29:** A video shot by a tourist in Pahalgam, appearing to have captured the moment the April 22 terrorist attack broke out, has gone viral on social media, showing the man capturing himself ziplining and the zipline operator saying ‘Allahu Akbar’ thrice.

As the tourist, identified as Rishi Bhatt from Ahmedabad, begins ziplining, the operator chants “Allahu Akbar” three times before releasing him.

The tourist recounted the terrifying moments of the terror attack, describing how he and his family narrowly es-



**CELEBRATION PARTY:** Abigail, the albino kangaroo at Marlow Bird Park, gets flowers for breakfast on her first birthday in Marlow, Germany, Tuesday.

PTI PHOTO

# Snooping for national security not wrong: SC

■ In 2021, the Centre faced attacks from all quarters over its alleged role in surveilling politicians, journalists, and activists using the Israeli military-grade spyware Pegasus. Soon, the Supreme Court ordered a probe into the claims and set up both technical and supervisory committees to investigate the matter. However, in a significant development, the top court, while hearing a batch of petitions seeking an inquiry into the alleged use of spyware, observed Tuesday that the report of the technical panel in the case will not be made public asserting that any findings touching on the ‘security and sovereignty’ of the country will not be disclosed. While individuals who want to know whether they are included will be addressed, the report cannot be made a document for public discussion, the apex court assured

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 29:** The Supreme Court Tuesday wondered what was wrong in using the ‘spyware against terrorists’ and said any report which



touched upon the country’s ‘security and sovereignty’ won’t be made public.

A bench of Justice Surya Kant and Justice N Kotiswar Singh indicated it may address individual apprehensions of privacy breach but the report of the technical committee was no document to discuss ‘on the streets’.

The bench said, “Any report which touches the security and sovereignty of the country will not be touched. But individuals who want to know whether they are included, that can be informed. Yes, individual apprehension must be addressed but it cannot be made a document for discussion on the streets.”

The top court added it will ex-

amine the extent to which the technical panel report could be shared in public.

Advocate Dinesh Dwivedi, appearing for one of the petitioners, said the question was whether the government had the spyware and used it.

The bench responded, “Please make submissions with regard to disclosure regarding individuals. The kind of scenario we are facing nowadays, let us be slightly responsible... We will see to what extent the report can be shared.”

The top court went on, “What is wrong if the country is using the spyware against the terrorists? To have spyware is not wrong, against whom you are using is the question. You can’t compromise with the security of nation. Private civil individual who has right to privacy will be protected under the Constitution,” the bench said.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal represented journalist Paranjay Guha Thakurta while Solicitor general Tushar Mehta appeared for the government.

The apex court posted the hearing July 30.

## ED attaches assets worth ₹1,428cr of Goldenland Group

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, April 29:** The Enforcement Directorate Tuesday said it has attached assets worth Rs 1,428 crore of Goldenland Group of Companies in a chit fund case.

In a statement, the ED claimed that its investigations have revealed persons, entities and companies associated with Golden Land Developers Ltd and GLP Developers Ltd illegally raised huge amounts of money from the public in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh in the garb of real estate development.

It had floated illegal financial businesses of lump sum deposits, recurring deposits, and monthly investment schemes, among others, in the guise of plot booking by alluring innocent people with the false promise of higher returns, the ED alleged.

“Large-scale diversion of cash to sister concerns and to the accounts of Directors and associates has also been unearthed,” it alleged.

“Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Bhubaneswar Zonal Office has provisionally attached assets having present value of Rs. 1428 Crore of M/s Goldenland Group of Companies under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PM-LA), 2002,” the statement said.

# Armed forces free to decide targets: PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 29:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted Tuesday that the armed forces have “complete operational freedom” to decide on the mode, targets and timing of India’s response to the Pahalgam terror attack, as he chaired a meeting with the top defence establishment.

During the high-level meeting, which was attended by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and the chiefs of three services, Modi affirmed that it is the national resolve to deal a crushing blow to terrorism, government sources said.

Modi expressed complete faith and confidence in the professional abilities of the armed forces.

“They have complete operational freedom to decide on the mode, targets and timing of our response,” a source quoted Modi as saying.

Modi has vowed to pursue the terrorists behind the attack and their patrons, a clear reference to Pakistan which has a history of sponsoring terror strikes in India, to the “ends of earth” and inflict the harshest punishment on them “beyond their imagination.”

## CONGRESS ASKS FOR SPECIAL PARL SESSION

**New Delhi:** Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge have written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, asking him to convene a special session of Parliament to discuss the Pahalgam terror attack and demonstrate a collective resolve. The letter read: “At this moment, when unity and solidarity is essential, the opposition believes that it is important to convene a special session of both Houses of Parliament at the earliest. “This will be a powerful demonstration of our collective resolve and willpower to deal with the brutal terror attack in Pahalgam on innocent citizens on April 22. It is our fond hope that the session will be accordingly convened.”

The PM’s tough assertions coupled with his government’s avowed muscular stand on the issues of national security have heightened expectations of a stringent counteraction from India.

# India’s Shubhanshu Shukla to travel to ISS May 29

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 29:** Axiom-4 to the International Space Station (ISS), piloted by Indian astronaut Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla with three other crew members, will be launched from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida at 10.33 pm IST May 29.

The announcement was made by Axiom Space, a US-based commercial human spaceflight firm, at a virtual press conference late Tuesday. Shukla’s travel to space, on-board SpaceX’s Dragon spacecraft, comes four decades after Rakesh Sharma’s iconic spaceflight onboard Russia’s Soyuz spacecraft in 1984.

Besides Shukla, the Ax-4

crew includes members from Poland and Hungary, marking each nation’s first mission to the ISS in history and the second government-sponsored human spaceflight mission in over 40 years.

Shukla will conduct seven experiments in space that are aimed at encouraging microgravity research in India, which hopes to build its own space station by 2035 and send astronauts to the moon by 2047.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has drawn up plans to focus on India-centric food for carrying out experiments on the ISS, including sprouting methi (Fenugreek) and moong (green gram) in microgravity conditions.

“We have a sprouting exper-



iment which tries to sprout green gram or moong and methi or fenugreek seeds,

which are believed to have medicinal properties,” Tushar Phadnis, Group Head for Microgravity Platforms and Research, said at the virtual press conference organised by Axiom.

“The idea is not just to stop with sprouting it there. The idea is also to see how these India-specific sprouts behave when they come back. They will undergo a lot of analysis in the labs of the respective PIs (principal investigators),” Phadnis said.

The Axiom-4 (Ax-4) mission will also include Slawosz Uznanski, European Space Agency (ESA) project astronaut, who will be the second Polish astronaut since 1978.

Tibor Kapu will be the

second national Hungarian astronaut since 1980.

Peggy Whitson will command her second commercial human spaceflight mission, adding to her standing record for the longest cumulative time in space by an American astronaut.

The Ax-4 crew will launch aboard a SpaceX Dragon spacecraft to the space station and spend up to 14 days at the orbiting laboratory.

“And when they’re brought back to Earth, they’ll be cultivated in plants not just once but over generations,” he added.

Overall, Ax-4 has a research complement of around 60 scientific studies, including the seven from India.



# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
The stars urge you to focus on your finances and savings, and today, you might remain very busy doing just that. But take care, says Ganesha, you don't want a sulking spouse when you go home. Don't cancel any plans; go ahead and enjoy that new film.

**TAURUS**  
this day you will have an urge to take a trip, be it a small one. Ganesha sees you enthusiastically making detailed plans and arrangements, arranging for funds and getting in touch with all those you desire to take along. It is possible that you may ultimately scrap your plans and choose to stay at home.

**GEMINI**  
Your physical appearance and personal attitude will see a marked improvement today, predicts Ganesha. A well-groomed you will climb up the popularity chart among peers, friends and members of the opposite sex. You will keep people under your spell with your wit and wisdom both at the workplace and at social gatherings. Romance is also in the air.

**CANCER**  
You will be firing all cylinders in the creativity department, says Ganesha. Even your colleagues may pitch in, and will give you new ideas to make your work better. Those looking for a new job will ace the interview and clear the selection process as easily as clearing the fog from their glasses.

**LEO**  
Karmic balance dictates an equitable distribution of joy and sorrow, says Ganesha. So if your day seems drab and depressing today, rest assured, your evening shall be all the more refreshing and exciting. Surround yourself with family and friends, as you will receive royal treatment from them.

**VIRGO**  
Play dodge ball with prejudice today. Do not let intolerance find shelter in you today, advises Ganesha. Instead, chances are you will seek to find love, affection and goodwill among those around you. Stay away from negativity as it may bog you down. Ganesha counsels you to have the courage to stand by your convictions.

**LIBRA**  
Lights, camera, and action! Be prepared as the limelight is focused on you on this very motivating and inspiring day, enabling you to attract excellent public praise. Today is an encouraging day to set in motion innovative projects, especially for those who desire to be their own masters and embark upon fulfilling self-financed ideas.

**SCORPIO**  
You are most likely to resent the dominating and overbearing nature of your partner today. Patience will probably go to the dumps in this case then. But Ganesha advises you to sit together and resolve all personality clashes and quarrels in view of the larger scheme of things.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Expect a call to late-night revelry and a chance to binge. But you don't seem to be in the mood to let your hair loose and party, says Ganesha. However tempting it may be, your serious side will take over and you shall deny the offer. No wonder they like that sensible head on your shoulders.

**CAPRICORN**  
You will start the day with verve and vigour, and will appear a completely different person at work. There will be a discernible change in your way of working, especially in terms of the level of energy and concentration you will put in. The switch to the new strategy will better your performance considerably and will make you feel that it was a good change after all.

**AQUARIUS**  
A productive day, as you will receive unrestrained support from your bosses and colleagues. Your creativity will reach its zenith and the resulting work will augment your reputation. The day will seem complete when you spend quality time with your family in the evening, says Ganesha.

**PISCES**  
Happiness shared is double the joy; sorrows shared are half the burden. Your family is the foundation of your success, and it is to them you will turn in times of failure as well. With their support, getting back to the top of the game will take no time, says Ganesha.



## GARY OLDMAN TENDERS APOLOGY TO DEMI MOORE

Hollywood legend Gary Oldman tendered an apology to actress to Demi Moore for his 'de-structive' behaviour on the set of *The Scarlet Letter*. Oldman starred opposite the actress in the 1995 romance classic. He has recalled how his 'intermittent bouts of boozing' on set left his castmate 'disappointed' in him.

## JACKIE CHAN TO BE HONOURED AT LOCARNO FILM FESTIVAL

Action star Jackie Chan will receive the career achievement honour at the 78th edition of the Locarno Film Festival, the organisers announced Tuesday. Chan, who has featured in films like *The Fearless Hyena*, *Who Am I?* and *Police Story*, will be honoured August 9, according to the festival's official website.



## Aamir's career turning point

**Mumbai:** Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan shared an insightful story about how a seemingly disappointing moment in his early career led to his big break in the film industry.

Reflecting on his college days, Khan revealed how being unexpectedly thrown out of a play set the stage for his first film role, ultimately shaping his path to stardom. In a heartfelt recount of how fate and timing aligned, the actor emphasised how crucial moments in life can lead to opportunities one least expects.

Aamir Khan reminisced about his college days, recalling his small role in a Gujarati play, *Pasiyo Rangaro*, where he was a background extra responsible for setting up bamboos. Though his only line, "We want Rangara," never made it to the stage, the experience was memorable. Just days before the inter-college competition, he was removed from the play as his mother wouldn't let him out due to a Maharashtra shutdown. Heartbroken, he watched rehearsals from the sidelines. But destiny intervened—a friend introduced him to a student filmmaker needing an actor. That film led to *Holi*, directed by Ketan Mehta, which eventually paved the way for his acting career. "If Maharashtra hadn't closed, I wouldn't be sitting here today," said Aamir.



## NORA'S WISHLIST

**Mumbai:** For Nora Fatehi, dance has never been just a profession—it's a language of dreams. As she reflects on her journey this International Dance Day, she shares a wishlist that every dance lover would envy: performing alongside Hrithik Roshan and facing off in an unforgettable dance battle with Madhuri Dixit.

"Hrithik's precision and effortless style are unmatched. Dancing with him on screen would be a dream come true," says Nora, who's admired for her explosive energy in hits like *Dilbar*, *O Saki Saki*, and *Naach Meri Rani*. As for Madhuri Dixit, Nora imagines a fiery yet graceful face-off: "Her elegance and my intensity—it would be a visual spectacle."

From her humble beginnings as a background dancer to becoming a Bollywood sensation, Nora's rise has been fueled by passion and per-

sistence. Known for her signature moves in songs like *Kusu Kusu* and *Kamariya*, she continues to push her limits. She calls classical Indian dance forms her most challenging pursuit, demanding precision, grace, and cultural depth.

Yet, it's in styles like Afro, belly dance, hip hop, and urban fusion where she feels most at home—raw, expressive, and instinctive. Through her initiative *Dance With Nora*, she hopes to inspire others to dream big, just like she always has.

AGENCIES



## Mouni on being typecast

**Mumbai:** Mouni Roy, who made a mark in Bollywood with films like *Gold* and *Brahmastra: Part One – Shiva*, is now gearing up for her next theatrical release, *The Bhoothnii*. The upcoming horror comedy, directed by Sidhaant Sachdev, is slated to hit theatres May 1 and features an ensemble cast including Sanjay Dutt, Sunny Singh, and Palak Tiwari. During the film's promotions, Mouni opened up about her journey in the entertainment industry and the challenges of being typecast.

In an interview, Mouni reflected on the struggles of transitioning from television to OTT platforms and eventually to big-screen cinema. She admitted it wasn't an easy road and emphasised that "there's no shortcut to success." She believes in consistency, clarity, and hard work, and mentioned that from the beginning, she knew what kind of roles she didn't want to do.

When asked about being typecast, Mouni responded with optimism and resolve. "I don't see it that way. People will always try to pull you down and typecast you, but why let them? You have the power to reinvent yourself, again and again," she said. Mouni, who made her acting debut with the 2011 Punjabi film *Hero Hitler in Love*, continues to evolve, making bold choices and carving her own path in the industry.

AGENCIES

## Nushrratt recalls spooky encounter

**Mumbai:** Bollywood actress Nushrratt Bharuccha recently shared a spine-tingling paranormal experience she had while staying at a hotel in Delhi. Recalling the incident on the podcast, she said what began as a routine overnight stay turned into a night of terror that she'll never forget.

"I was in a hotel for just five hours. I don't remember the name, but I remember the room number," she said. "Later, I told the receptionist never to assign that room to anyone again. I told them, 'This is a haunted room.'"

She explained that she was in transit and staying alone in the room before an early morning flight. Her hard-top suitcase was half-open on the bed, one side upright, the other flat, when she dozed off. "Suddenly, I heard a sound and thought the staff had come to wake me. I called out, 'Are you guys here? Is it time?' But there was no answer," she recalled.

To her shock, she found her bag on the floor, in the same position, with three items lying outside it. "I screamed and ran out in my nightdress. I told them, 'I'm leaving now—you can send the bag later. I'm never going back,'" she said.

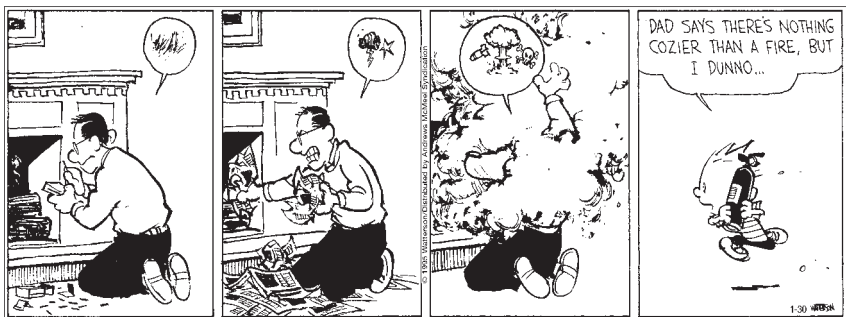
AGENCIES



## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBES

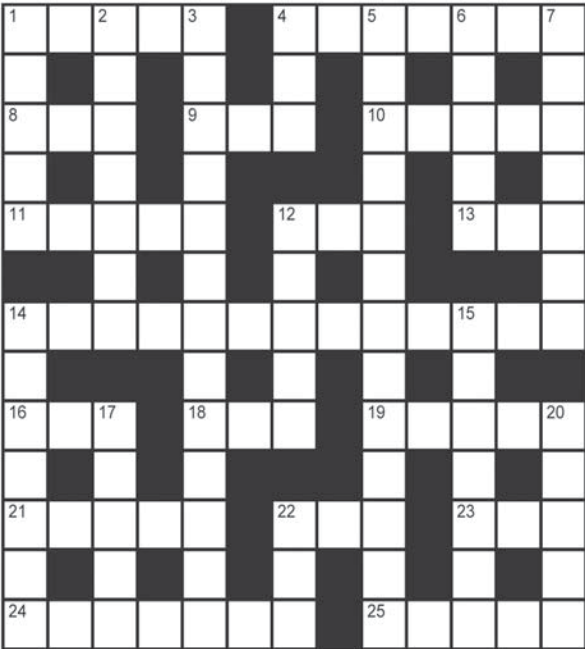


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD

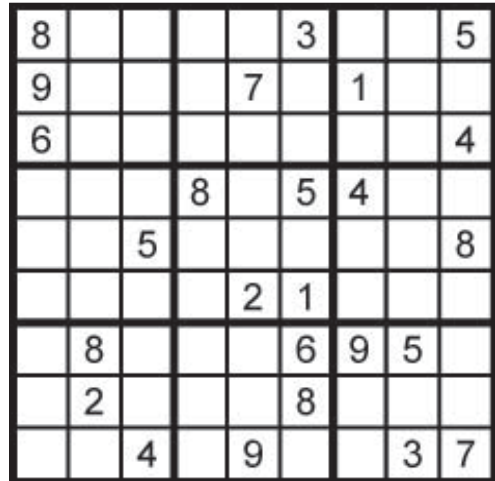


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- Across**
- 1 Béarnaise
  - 4 Joyous
  - 8 Possess
  - 9 Jeu de mots
  - 10 Terrestrial lizard
  - 11 Welsh dog
  - 12 Honey maker
  - 13 Sixth sense, for short
  - 14 Cracker adornment? (7,6)
  - 16 Seek damages
  - 18 Coquettish
  - 19 Young pigeon
  - 21 Willow twig
  - 22 Antagonist
  - 23 Clamour
  - 24 Russian chess master
  - 25 Twilled fabric
  - 3 Team spirit (6,2,5)
  - 4 Flipper
  - 5 Theatre cues (5,8)
  - 6 Boiling mad
  - 7 Case in point
  - 12 Small edible fruit
  - 14 Traditions
  - 15 Andes land
  - 17 True heath
  - 20 Pig out
  - 22 Recipe direction
- Down**
- 1 Zeno, notably
  - 2 Rattle

## SUDOKU

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



## SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW







# Odisha, Gates Foundation join hands for agri reform

New partnership to align Odisha’s agri policies with global best practices in sustainability, innovation, and climate resilience



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 29:** In a major stride toward agricultural transformation, the Odisha government Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The partnership is aimed at revolutionising agriculture in the state through inclusive, sustainable, and climate-smart practices. By integrating cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, precision farming, and data-driven innovations, the collaboration seeks to enhance productivity in the agriculture, dairy, and fisheries sectors.

The MoU was signed in the presence of key state officials and representatives from the Gates Foundation, with implementation set to unfold through a multi-year framework.

The Department of Agriculture and Farmers’ Empowerment (DAFE) and Fisheries

Odisha. This new initiative will serve as a collaborative platform, bringing together government agencies, research institutions, startups, NGOs, farmer organisations, and private sector stakeholders. The alliance will play a pivotal role in scaling climate-resilient practices and technologies across diverse agro-ecological zones in the state.

The event also witnessed the release of two important research reports. The Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP) unveiled its district-level Scoping Report Series, offering data-rich insights for the formulation of targeted Climate Action Plans.

In parallel, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) presented findings from its evaluation of the Comprehensive Rice Fallow Management (CRFM) programme, which highlighted improved utilisation of fallow lands and significant gains in pulse and oilseed production.

Principal Secretaries Suresh Kumar Vashishta and Arabin-da Kumar Padhee reiterated the state’s vision to integrate science, technology, and global expertise into its agricultural policies.

They stressed that the MoU would help unlock long-term, scalable solutions tailored to Odisha’s unique needs. The collaboration also aims to enhance digital infrastructure, boost agri-tech adoption, and promote inclusive development that is both climate-resilient and gender-sensitive.



**GRACEFUL MOVE:** Artistes from cultural organisation Udra perform at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday to mark World Dance Day organised by Odia Language, Literature and Culture department

PIC: BIKASH NAYAK

# RIE Bhubaneswar hosts cultural fest

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 29:** The Regional Institute of Education (RIE), Bhubaneswar recently came alive with colour, music, and creativity during a vibrant two-day cultural festival organised under the banner of Students’ Council Activities for the academic year 2024–25.

Inaugurated by Principal PC Agarwal, the event underscored the value of cultural engagement in building awareness, confidence, emotional well-being, and critical thinking—especially among aspiring educators.

The festival featured a diverse array of competitions designed to promote holistic development. Day one included events such as Flower Dec-



oration, Solo Classical Dance, Solo Freestyle Dance, Group Skit, Solo Song, Instrumental Music, and Group Classical Dance. The energy continued into day two with Rangoli Competition, Group Song, Solo Folk Dance, Mono Acting, Group Folk Dance, and Group

Freestyle Dance.

Students participated with great enthusiasm, filling the campus with artistic expression and cultural vibrancy. Faculty members served as judges, offering constructive feedback and motivating participants through their encouragement

# Odisha ramps up storm preparation

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, April 29:** With the summer cyclone season approaching, the Odisha government conducted a high-level preparedness meeting, chaired by Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja here Tuesday. The session reviewed departmental disaster management strategies, drawing on lessons from Cyclone Fani in May 2019.

Ahuja stressed the importance of early action despite the absence of any current cyclone alert. “Even though no storm warning has been issued yet, we must prepare as if one is imminent,” he said, urging all departments to maintain close coordination and stay on high alert.

He also directed the Odisha State Disaster Management



Authority (OSDMA) to ensure timely dissemination of cyclone alerts at the grassroots level.

Special Relief Commissioner and Additional Chief Secretary Deo Ranjan Kumar Singh presented the state’s preparedness roadmap. OSDMA officials highlighted advancements in weather monitoring, noting the operationalisation of Doppler Weather Radars in Baleshwar and Sambalpur, and ongoing up-

grades in Gopalpur and Paradip.

Director General of Fire Services Sudhanshu Sarangi emphasised the need to strengthen telecom infrastructure to maintain connectivity during extreme weather.

Chief Administrative Secretary Sanjay Kumar Singh proposed reinforcing the unified command system for post-disaster response, while prioritising essential services in cy-

## Heatwave plan

**Bhubaneswar:** Anticipating intense summer conditions, the Health and Family Welfare department has intensified heatwave preparedness across all 30 districts of the state. Spearheaded by Public Health director Nilakantha Mishra, the initiative includes distribution of ORS, IV fluids, air coolers, and power backups to health facilities. Special attention is being given to high-risk areas such as mining and industrial zones, where mobile health units and additional medical teams are being deployed. Meanwhile, frontline health workers are undergoing specialised training to effectively identify and manage heat-related illnesses.

clone-prone areas. Urban flood mitigation was also discussed, with Municipal Administration Director Arindam Dakua outlining drainage system improvements.

# Puri servitors urge boycott of Digha temple rituals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Puri, April 29:** Two prominent servitor associations of the Srimandir in Puri — the Suar Mahasuar Nijog and the Puspalka Nijog — have urged their members to refrain from participating in the consecration rituals of the newly-constructed Jagannath temple in Digha, West Bengal.

The consecration is scheduled for Wednesday, coinciding with the auspicious occasion of Akshay Trithiya, and will be attended by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

The Digha Jagannath temple, built by the West Bengal government at a cost of nearly ₹250 crore, is a replica of the 12th-century shrine in Puri. Located around 350 km from Puri, the new temple spans 24 acres and is expected to draw significant footfall from devotees,

especially from West Bengal, where the Jagannath cult has a strong following.

Despite acknowledging the religious significance of the new temple, the servitor groups in Puri have taken a firm stand on preserving the sanctity and scriptural integrity of rituals performed at the original Shree Jagannath Temple. Padmanava Mahasuar, president of the Suar Mahasuar Nijog, clarified that while there is no objection to servitors visiting the Digha temple as devotees, engaging in ritualistic duties, especially cooking, is strictly prohibited.

“There are hundreds of Jagannath temples across India, but the rituals at Puri are deeply rooted in scriptural traditions. Suars and Mahasuars are not just cooks — they are blessed servants chosen to serve the Lord directly. Their roles are unique and sacred, and should not be



reduced to catering services,” Mahasuar said.

Similarly, Puspalka Nijog, whose members are responsible for decorating the sibling deities — Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra, and Lord Jagannath — has also cautioned its members.

Secretary Harekrushna Singhari warned that anyone

found participating in rituals at the Digha temple would face disciplinary action, including possible social boycott within the servitor community.

Sudarshan Pujapanda, a senior servitor at the Puri temple, echoed this sentiment, stating that servitors must uphold the honour and tradition of Shree Jagannath Dham. “Our service

is not a profession but an act of unwavering devotion to Maha Vishnu in His Jagannath form,” he said.

Meanwhile, Rajesh Daitapati of the Daitapati Nijog confirmed that about 50 servitors from Puri have travelled to Digha upon invitation from the temple trust. However, he did not specify whether any were from the two opposing Nijogs.

A senior official of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration stated that while individual servitors are free to act on their conscience, the administration’s focus remains on maintaining the sanctity and continuity of rituals at the Puri temple. The Digha temple will be managed by ISKCON, while lakhs of devotees from West Bengal continue to visit the original shrine in Puri every year.

## WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	36.7°	35.2°
Min Temp	21.0°	20.8°
Humidity	76%	77%
Rainfall	2.3	2.2

**FORECAST**  
Partly cloudy sky with possibility of development of thunderstorm/lightning



## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	80,288.38 ▲ 70.01
NIFTY	24,335.95 ▲ 7.45
DOLLAR	85.130 ▼ 0.005
EURO	97.0840 ▼ 0.1800
GOLD	₹93,316 ▼ ₹843
SILVER	₹96,873 ▲ ₹454

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# Man found dead with throat slit in Chikiti

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chikiti, April 29:** A man was found dead with his throat slit near a pond alongside Dhanaghara-Maa Balakumari road under Chikiti outpost and K Nuagaon police station in Berhampur. The deceased was identified as Balaram Mahankuda, 35, a resident of Ram-pur village under Ramchandra-pur panchayat.

Following a complaint lodged by the victim's father Balmiki Mahankuda, a murder case (147/25) has been registered with K Nuagaon police who, with the help of a scientific team and a sniffer dog unit, have begun an investigation. Two suspects from Dhanaghara area were held for questioning.

Although the family claimed Balaram had no known enmity with anyone, police have launched an in-depth inves-tigation. CCTV footage from



FILE PHOTO

several key junctions is being examined. Preliminary find-ings suggest that the murder was premeditated. A mobile phone found in the victim's pocket may help police identify the culprits.

Some youths suspected of involvement are under police surveillance. Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M stated that the accused will be apprehend-ed soon.

Balaram had worked outside the state for many years. He re-turned home about a month ago and was sustaining his family by working as a driver. He vis-ited his sister's house at Chikiti Pentha on his motorcycle (OD 07 AV 5359) Monday evening. Around 9pm, he left his sister's home informing his sister that he would return home, but he did not.

Passersby spotted a body ly-ing by the pond side Tuesday morning and alerted the police. Chikiti outpost officer Ranjit Kumar Mahapatra reached the scene and seized both the body and the motorcycle.

The victim's father has al-leged that his son was mur-dered in a planned manner. Chikiti sub-divisional police officer Bishwamitra Harpal and K Nuagaon IIC Kishore Kumar Samal have visited the spot and are supervising the investigation.



**SUMMER SOLACE:** People buy ice apples from a roadside vendor at Munda Market in Sector-19 of Rourkela Tuesday as blistering heat makes life miserable

OP PHOTO

# Man dies as house collapses on him

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Udala, April 29:** A 41-year-old man died Monday night after a thatched house he had tak-en shelter in collapsed on him during a thunderstorm at Godhi-mara Chhak under this police limits in Mayurbhanj district.

The deceased was identified as Chaitanya Shankhuala, a resident of Bahubandha vil-lage. Police have sent the body for post-mortem and launched an investigation.

According to sources, Chait-anya was returning home from work when a thunderstorm ac-companied by heavy rain and gusty winds struck the area. In an attempt to protect himself, he rushed into the roadside thatched house for shelter.

However, a tree got uprooted and fell on the thatched house which caved in on him, killing him on the spot. Firefighters later recovered his body from the debris after being alerted by locals.

# Curtains down on Thakurani Yatra

**Berhampur:** The biennial Thakurani Yatra that began April 3 concluded here Tuesday with the idol of Goddess Budhi Thakurani being taken back to the temple dedicated to her in the morning. Thousands of devotees joined the return journey of the deity, which started Monday midnight from Desibehera Street, where a pandal was set up, signifying the goddess's paternal home. The rituals continued till 9:30am. Around 11 platoons of police, led by 50 officers, were deployed for crowd management and security, officials said. Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M said no untoward incident was reported in the incident.

# Jajpur oil reserve project hits roadblock



*A crucial underground oil storage project aimed at bolstering India's energy security has hit a roadblock in Jajpur district, as delays in land acquisition and rampant mining activities have stalled its progress despite official directives*

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, April 29:** The Jajpur district administration has ini-tiated steps for establishment of the country's fourth-largest underground oil storage facil-ity, known as Indian Strategic

Petroleum Reserve (ISPR), at the foothills of Dankari hill in Dharmasala tehsil area. As part of this process, Jajpur Collector P Anvesha Reddy, through a let-ter (No 5768/ Dt. 16/04/2025) has issued instructions to the Dep-uty Director of Mines (DDM)

and Dharmasala tehsildar to immediately halt operations in 13 black stone mines operating across the identified 400 acres of land in Dankari hill.

However, neither the Mines department nor the Revenue department has reportedly ini-tiated any significant action, though 14 days have elapsed to the passing of the directive.

An agreement regarding ISPR was signed between the state government and SPR authori-ties January 28, 2025.

To ensure national energy

security and contribute to the development of Odisha, efforts were made by the then Petro-leum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan to establish this proj-ect with a storage capacity of 4 million tonne (MT). An estimat-ed investment of ₹8,743 crore was proposed for the project.

The objective of the project was to facilitate crude oil dis-tribution during emergencies in the eastern region of the coun-try. Accordingly, the Ministry of Petroleum had requested the Chief Secretary of the state to provide the necessary land by July 29 in 2019.

In 2017-18 Union Budget, the Centre had allocated ₹3,800 crore for this underground oil reserve project. However, due to the presence of multiple black stone quarries in the proposed area, the process got delayed and the then BJD government could not provide the required land. It was also alleged that owing to the inaction by the then government, illegal black stone mining operators felt protected and continued to operate, there-by leaving the project in limbo.

# OISF vehicle mows down man in Talcher



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Talcher, April 29:** A 40-year-old man was crushed to death by a speeding Odisha Industrial Security Force (OISF) vehicle in Balandha area of Talcher Tuesday morning.

The deceased was identified as Sushant Sahu, a resident of Gurudwara area. Eyewitnesses claim that Sushant was on his way to Balandha market on a scooter when the OISF vehicle hit him head-on, resulting in his death on the spot.

The incident sparked out-rage, with a large crowd stag-ing a protest at the mishap site. According to sources, the ve-hicle fled the scene following the accident.

On being informed, Kaniha

police reached the spot and held discussions with the agitating locals, who dispersed later.

The locals have demanded adequate compensation for the victim's family and strict action against the driver responsible for the accident.

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Tender Notice No. PCMM/EP/ 2025-26/03, Date : 28.04.2025

TENDER NO.: 06255009, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : WIDER PRESTRESSED CONCRETE SLEPPER, QUANTITY: AS PERTS.

Tender Opening Date: dt. 23.05.2025

Regarding detailed notice, EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) and [www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in).

Principal Chief Materials Manager/ Bhubaneswar

PR-81/Q/25-26

# Tusker found dead in Salachua forest

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Thakurmunda/Anandapur, April 29:** A tusker was found dead near Salachua village under Karan-jia forest division and Satkosia Wildlife Sanctuary in Mayurbhanj district Tuesday morning.

Though the cause of the death remains unclear, a special team arrived from Baripada in the af-ternoon to probe the incident. A post-mortem of the carcass was con-ducted at Thakurmunda Veterinary hospital.

Officials, including Karanjia divisional forest officer (DFO) Sri



kant Nayak, ACF Madanmohan Mahanta, Satkosia range officer Rabindranath Mahanta, and other forest staffers reached the spot and are investigating the incident.

The dead tusker is estimated to be around 10 years old. The Forest department has stated that the exact

cause of death will be ascertained after the post-mortem report is re-ceived. According to reports, the tusker had been roaming alone in Salachua forest area for the last few days. The elephant had come to the pond behind the panchayat office to drink water around 7am Tuesday. However, around 9am, locals found the elephant dead a few metres away from the pond and informed the For-est department.

As the elephant had been in seem-ingly good health and was roaming normally just days prior, locals grew suspicious about its sudden death.

# Bhadrak man conserves 1,200 rare palm leaf manuscripts

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Basudevpur, April 29:** When people speak of library movement in Odisha, they often think of Nay-agarh's legendary Dasarathi Pat-maik, popularly known as 'Dashia Ajaa'. But another figure from Bas-udevpur region of Bhadrak dis-trict, 59-year-old Bikash Kumar Satapathy, has quietly carved out a similar legacy.

Satapathy, who runs a library and museum in Basudevpur, has preserved a rare collection of 1,200 palm leaf manuscripts.

His vast archive also includes more than 1,100 antique coins from India and abroad, rare and discontinued postage stamps, cen-tury-old radios, fossils of marine species, ancient clocks, tradition-al weights and measures, ancient betel box, lanterns, oil lamps, and handcrafted tools and weapons.

Satapathy said a passion grew in him when 'Dashia Ajaa' had visited his village carrying his iconic headwrap and staff. He met in Class VIII then. He met the library legend and interacted with him. Inspired by his words – Man is greater than wealth. Help as many people as you can – Satapathy began to envision his own contribution to the cause of mankind.

In 1990, he founded Lokanath Library and Museum in Madana-pur, a coastal village in Balasore



district's Bahanaga block. He named it in honour of his grand-father.

What began as a simple pas-sion for books soon turned into a full-fledged mission. Satapa-thy scoured several beaches for marine life specimens, contact-ed authors for books and maga-zines, reached out to scholars for palm leaf manuscripts, and even obtained rare coins from people staying abroad.

Today, his library has grown from a modest collection of 15 magazines to over 35,000 books and periodicals, a testament to a lifelong devotion to preservation and learning.

Despite doing post graduation in Odia language and literature, he turned down job opportunities to dedicate himself to the library movement. Undeterred by numer-

ous challenges including financial hardship, personal setbacks, and family issues, Satapathy trans-formed the library and museum into a major institution.

Following his matriculation, he published his first children's book, 'Shukhila Gachhara Dashati Pa-tra 'O' Dashati Phula' (Ten Leaves and Ten Flowers of a Dry Tree). After completing his higher sec-ondary education, he published another book titled 'Kau Koili' (Crow and the Cuckoo), which helped him build connections with several prominent writers across Odisha.

In 1996, he launched a chil-dren's magazine titled 'Bai Chad-hei', adding a new dimension to his editorial work. In 2006, he re-located the library and museum to ward no-12 under Basudevpur Mu-nicipality. Since then, research-

**Undeterred by numerous challenges including financial hardship, personal setbacks, and family issues, Satapathy transformed the library and museum into a major institution**

ers, students, and visitors have frequented the space to access ref-erence materials and view a wide collection of rare artifacts, all of-fered to the public free of cost.

He has been actively leading the 'Quit Mobile, Read Books' cam-paign for the past 10 years. He, along with his colleagues, visits schools and educational institu-tions to encourage children to adopt reading habits and mini-mise their screen time.

He also participates in various cultural fairs and public events, where he showcases rare exhib-its to educate younger generations about Odisha's ancient heritage and traditions.

According to him, the library and museum, which he runs in-dependently, aim to inspire young people to protect their roots, envi-ronment, and native villages.



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**GOLD AUCTION NOTICE**

The Sale by public Auction of ornaments pledged with the Bank in the following Gold Loan Accounts, details of which are given under will be held at the **Concerned Branch Premises on 16.05.2025 at 1.00 P.M.** The interested parties have to contact the Concerned Branch Manager For the Reserve Price of each Account. The interested parties for purchase of Gold ornaments may contact the Concerned Branch Manager for ascertaining the details of Gold ornaments put to sale & for terms & conditions of sale or the details of the ornaments. Parties interested in purchase of the Gold ornaments may participate in the auction.  
**Note: This Notice is also deemed to be 15 days Final Reminder Cum Auction Notice to Borrowers.**

Sl. No.	Name & Address of Borrowers / Gold Loan A/c. No.	Balance as on 28.04.2025 (exclusive of U.A.I. and other charges) plus future interest w.e.f. 28.04.2025	Net Weight (in Grams)	Gross Weight (in Grams)
<b>DEBAGARH BRANCH (2305), PLOT NO.: 1200 (P), SAI COMPLEX, NEAR PRIVATE BUS STAND, PO./P.S./DIST.: DEOGARH, ODISHA-768108, MOB.: 9777979269</b>				
1.	<b>Sushant Bhukta</b> , Vill: Khaparsahi, PO.: Debagarh, P.S.: Debagarh-768108 / <b>60476617967</b>	<b>₹31,214/-</b>	<b>6.800</b>	<b>9.250</b>
2.	<b>Babulal Bagha</b> , Vill: Khaparsahi, PO.: Debagarh, P.S.: Debagarh-768108 / <b>60479864221</b>	<b>₹21,300/-</b>	<b>4.600</b>	<b>5.700</b>
3.	<b>Babulal Bagha</b> , Vill: Khaparsahi, PO.: Debagarh, P.S.: Debagarh-768108 / <b>60481026035</b>	<b>₹65,000/-</b>	<b>14.00</b>	<b>24.050</b>
4.	<b>Jamuna Patra</b> , Vill: Badamanpur, PO.: Madhyapur, P.S.: Barkote-768110 / <b>60465347287</b>	<b>₹21,500/-</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>5.220</b>
<b>BYASANAGAR BRANCH (2035), AT: RADHARANI MARG, BANK STREET, NEAR IDFC FIRST BANK, JAJPUR ROAD, JAJPUR, ODISHA-755019, MOB.: 6370704862</b>				
1.	<b>Mamina Behera</b> , At: Dando Kenduapada, Bhadrak-756112 / <b>60510712375</b>	<b>₹55,000/-</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>15.670</b>
2.	<b>Mamina Behera</b> , At: Dando Kenduapada, Bhadrak-756112 / <b>60488009759</b>	<b>₹2,23,457/-</b>	<b>46.50</b>	<b>51.83</b>
3.	<b>Mamina Behera</b> , At: Dando Kenduapada, Bhadrak-756112 / <b>60488113761</b>	<b>₹1,00,000/-</b>	<b>19.75</b>	<b>20.290</b>
<b>BARIPADA BRANCH (2094), AT: LAL BAZAR, WARD NO.: 10, BARIPADA, ODISHA- 757001, MOB.: 6370704869</b>				
1.	<b>S K Raja</b> , At: Pyared Padia, Baripada Town-757001 / <b>60435847626</b>	<b>₹30,401/-</b>	<b>6.900</b>	<b>8.180</b>
2.	<b>Sourav Nayak</b> , S/o.: Sannat Nayak, At: Kalika, PO.: Hatigarh, Raibania-756033 / <b>60432328647</b>	<b>₹13,507.78</b>	<b>4.000</b>	<b>4.89</b>
<b>PARADIP BRANCH (1891), AT: AKSHARA MARKET COMPLEX, AT/PO./P.S.: PARADEEPGARH, DIST.: JAGATSINGHPUR, ODISHA-754141, MOB.: 6370704856</b>				
1.	<b>Laxman Das</b> , At: Padampur Sankha, PO.: Olarrah, Near Baghadi Bridge, P.S.: Erasama, Jagatsinghpur-754110 / <b>60509446291</b>	<b>₹50,994/-</b>	<b>9.200</b>	<b>11.500</b>

**The said Auction will be held on the following Conditions:**

- It is "as is where is" condition.
- The Successful bidder shall pay the entire bid amount by the next working day after the auction date and take delivery of the ornaments at his/her absolute risk and Responsibility and the said bidder shall not have any recourse to our Bank for any reason whatsoever.
- The Bank reserves its right to put to auction all or any of the ornaments pledged in the account as considered necessary or stop auction at any time without any prior notice and at its absolute discretion.
- The Bank has absolute discretion to either reject or accept any bid without assigning any reasons whatsoever.
- The Bank has right to adjourn/postpone the auction sale at any stage to any future date at the convenience of the Bank and no person shall be entitled to claim any prior notice or right therefore.
- If the successful bidder does not clear the bid amount and/or does anything which may give rise to a necessity of adjourning/holding Fresh auction sale, he/she shall be liable to indemnify the Bank to the extent of loss, If any caused on account of his/her lapses which may come in the way of completing the auction.
- The Bank does not guarantee the weight or purity of the Jewellery/coins, either of its gold contents or otherwise and Auction purchaser shall ensure to check the weight or purity of the jewellery/coins by himself/herself by its own and post Auction no claim in this reference will be entertained by Bank.
- The intending purchaser shall make an earnest money deposit of 25% of Reserve Price (to be computed as per the balance outstanding).
- If the successful bidder fails to pay the amount, the earnest money will be forfeited and the jewel may be resold.

**Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 30.04.2025****Authorised Officer, Bank of Maharashtra**



# HOW INTEL ‘GAPS’ OCCUR



As of now it is not clear why the Baisaran meadows, a popular picnic spot of tourists, which is 50 km from the Amarnath shrine, was left unguarded by any security group in the state working under the 'Unified Command'

the full picture, especially when the trends are short term. On several occasions agencies produce varied, incomplete, or even conflicting intelligence on security related subjects needing an able arbiter to sort out the differences to obtain a fuller picture for the decision-makers. This is the process of “Intelligence Arbitration.” If this fails, gaps occur as has happened many times. An intelligence arbitrator also brings in his own perspective to plug missing gaps in intelligence, even using media information, which is called “Open-Source Intelligence”.

There is a big difference between the processing of intelligence produced by law & order authorities and by national intelligence agencies. While national agencies produce what is called “strategic” intelligence, the state units churn out “tactical” information. “Strategic” intelligence is usually the long-term indication affecting the whole country or over a longer time frame while “tactical” is short term trends, affecting smaller areas like police action. However, counter-terrorist action especially with foreign interference could assume strategic and tactical dimensions, which necessitates the ability to study and anticipate how inimical foreign governments or foreign based groups like Lashkar would be working against us, which only national agencies are capable of handling.

Yet, there are cases when this process had failed even in

Western countries. The US 9/11 Commission which discussed these trends in detail in chapter 11 of their report (‘Foresight and Hindsight’) said that despite Osama bin Laden’s anti-American activities assuming serious proportions all over the world, no agency foresaw a scenario like 9/11 when US passenger planes were weaponised against the mainland. “The CIA did not write any analytical assessments of possible hijacking scenarios” while the North American Aerospace Defence Command imagined the possible use of foreign aircraft carrying weapons of mass destruction. None thought that al-Qaeda would use American planes. The Commission also hinted that the large presence of intelligence and security agencies in America had resulted in confusion and dilution of responsibility. The post of “National Intelligence Officer for Warning” in the CIA created in 1992 after the Gulf War who had the responsibility of issuing such warnings was abolished and the Counter-Terrorism Center (CTC) was given this responsibility. However, CTC did not issue a single warning on the possibility of weaponising passenger aircraft. In other words, a top-heavy intelligence structure did not result in better alerts.

In a similar manner I, as a member of the 26/11 Committee set up to enquire into police response, noticed the failure of the Maharashtra government in observing cer-

tain happenings outside their jurisdiction which, if studied, could have prevented the ghastly Mumbai attacks.

On 30 July 2006 CNN-IBN TV channel aired a survey of our Western coastal protection measures in the wake of the then National Security Adviser’s warning that our atomic energy installations might be targeted through sea borne Pakistani terrorists. Following this it was expected that the Maharashtra police would have strengthened coastal patrolling. The channel’s team found that coastal patrolling was nowhere to be seen: “Even though BARC is now heavily guarded by the CISF, it’s the approachability through the sea that is a cause for concern.”

The same channel aired another news item on 16 June 2007, which should have worried Mumbai and New Delhi. But it did not. The report said that eight suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba militants had infiltrated through the sea-route near Mumbai and two of them, Abdul Majeed and Mohammad Jameel, were arrested in Rajouri in March by J&K police. This was the first such known incident of terrorists taking the sea route.

The story reconstructed by the TV channel indicated that eight militants had left Pakistan on 23 February, transferred themselves into an Indian boat operated by alleged LeT operatives Asif and Abbas. On the Indian shore they were received by another operative named Sameer. The channel also interviewed J&K DGP Gopal Sharma who had said, “Two LeT men were arrested in Rajouri and they have informed that eight men came in and yes, sea route was used.”

Less than eighteen months later ten 26/11 terrorists used the same modus operandi with fake Indian (Hindu) identity documents to indulge in mayhem in Mumbai. The 2007 report had said: “Jameel initially had a student ID as Dheeraj from Chembur in Mumbai. The men even had fake documents from Delhi and Chandigarh and in Jammu they even had voter I-cards.”

The writer is a former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat.

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Vappala Balachandran

INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY AGENCIES OFTEN RECEIVE INFORMATION IN A HAPHAZARD MANNER, IN BITS AND PIECES, NOT REVEALING THE FULL PICTURE, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE TRENDS ARE SHORT TERM

In the wake of the massacre in Baisaran (Pahalgam), some reports claimed that it was an “intelligence” or “security” failure. As of now it is not clear why the Baisaran meadows, a popular picnic spot of tourists, which is 50 km from the Amarnath shrine, was left unguarded by any security group in the state working under the “Unified Command.” An unconfirmed report said that the picnic site was not “officially opened” and hence no security was detailed.

The purpose of this column is not to apportion blame for this lapse but to explain how “security threats” are processed by governments in general, and how these “gaps” occur. Since J&K is a sensitive area, intelligence agencies belonging to national civil, military and paramilitary departments have a large presence there, in addition to the state police intelligence department.

Although national intelligence agencies report to their headquarters, they do keep the Lt. Governor and the “Unified Command” under him apprised of any changes in the security scenario so that preventive mechanisms can be suitably altered depending on the local threat perception. However, such intelligence when reported to higher echelons like the Lt. Governor (in J&K law and order is still under the Lt. Governor) must be carefully verified as the action following such alerts has national and international ramifications.

Raw intelligence becomes policy for action only after an alchemic process of collection, collation, analysis, dissemination, arbitration, policy adjudication and decision-making. Any inter-space in this process would lead to a situation in which intelligence, including technical pointers already available in some form with any wing of a government, does not result in policy or action. This leads to an impression of “intelligence or security failure.”

Intelligence and security agencies often receive information in a haphazard manner, in bits and pieces, not revealing

## IN JEST THIS

# Ultra-processed foods may shorten your life



Melvin Durai

ANYTIME YOU SEE THE WORDS ‘MECHANICALLY SEPARATED’ ON A FOOD PACKAGE, THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO IS MECHANICALLY SEPARATE YOURSELF FROM THE FOOD

My wife, Malathi, enjoys cooking fresh vegetables, fish and meat. Rather than buying a ready-to-eat meal from a store and just heating it up in minutes, she prefers to stand in the kitchen for an hour or more, cooking a meal that is usually both tasty and healthy. I say “usually” because some oily or fatty foods are not particularly healthy, and some non-oily, non-fatty foods are not particularly tasty.

For the most part, Malathi works hard to keep her family healthy through her cooking. That’s what many women (and some men) do in countless homes, of course. But store-bought processed foods are becoming a larger part of diets around the world, especially among people with busy lives and higher incomes. Just buy a frozen pizza or frozen rice-and-curry meal, pop it in the microwave and you have a tasty meal that won’t kill you—not right away, anyway. It eventually might, though.

A new global study shows us just how much harm we might be causing by eating ultra-processed foods (UPFs).

The study, which analysed data from eight countries (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, United Kingdom, and United States), found that a 10 per cent increase in the calories you get from UPFs gives you a 3 per cent higher risk of dying prematurely—between the ages of 30 and 69. (Once you hit 70, you can only die maturely.)

The study, which appears in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, describes UPFs as ready-to-eat-or-heat industrial formulations that are made with ingredients extracted from foods or synthesised in laboratories, with little or no whole foods in their composition. You won’t find the words “industrial formulation” on any food package though, because no one would want to eat an “industrial formulation.”

A high consumption of UPFs has been associated with 32 dis-

eases, including cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, some types of cancer, and depression.

Study co-author Carlos Augusto Monteiro, emeritus professor at Brazil’s University of São Paulo, coined the term “ultra-processed” in 2009 when he developed the Nova classification, which assigns foods to one of four groups based on processing. Group 1 consists of unprocessed or minimally processed foods, such as fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, grains, legumes, fresh meat, eggs, milk and crushed spices. If you get all your calories from this group, you might live to be 200.

Group 2 consists of processed culinary ingredients, such as olive oil and other oils produced through crushing seeds, nuts, or fruits; salt, sugar, vinegar, honey, butter, and other substances used to season and cook.

Group 3 consists of processed foods, which are made by adding Group 2 to Group 1. These include cheese, canned vegetables, salted nuts, fruits

in syrup and canned fish. Even bread, cakes and snacks can fall into this group, as long as they’re made predominantly from Group 1 foods with Group 2 ingredients.

Group 4 consists of the foods we should all try to avoid: ultra-processed foods (UPFs). To identify a UPF, just look at the list of ingredients and if you have no idea what some of them are it’s probably a UPF. UPFs might have varieties of sugar such as fructose, high-fructose corn syrup, invert sugar, maltodextrin, dextrose and lactose. It might have modified oils such as hydrogenated or interesterified oils; and protein sources such as hydrolysed proteins, soya protein isolate, gluten, casein, whey protein and “mechanically separated meat.”

Anytime you see the words “mechanically separated” on a food package, the best thing you can do is mechanically separate yourself from the food.

## WISDOM CORNER

Never give up. Today is hard, tomorrow will be worse, but the day after tomorrow will be sunshine.

JACK MA

We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different and yet the same.

ANNE FRANK

The highest and most beautiful things in life are not to be heard about, nor read about, nor seen but, if one will, are to be lived.

SOREN KIERKEGAARD

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1789: George Washington becomes the first U.S. President. Washington took the oath of office on the balcony of Federal Hall in New York City. In the United States, he is venerated as one of the country’s founding fathers.
- 1897: English physicist J.J. Thomson announced that he had discovered the electron, which helped revolutionize the knowledge of atomic structure; he later was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics.
- 1916: Germany and its World War I allies become the first countries to use daylight saving time (DST). The rationale was to save energy to aid the war effort. Other European countries, such as the United Kingdom, first introduced DST later that year.
- 1926: Aviator Bessie Coleman, the first American woman to obtain an international pilot’s license from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, died after her plane crashed during rehearsal for an aerial show.
- 1945: German dictator Adolf Hitler and his wife, Eva Braun, committed suicide in a bunker in Berlin.
- 1975: The fall of Saigon marks the end of the Vietnam War. As Communist forces gained control of Saigon, South Vietnamese President Duong Van Minh, who had only been in office for 2 days, surrendered unconditionally.
- 1989: Italian director Sergio Leone—who popularized the “spaghetti western” with his hugely successful Dollar trilogy, which included the masterpiece The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly (1966)—died at age 60.
- 1993: Tennis ace Monica Seles is stabbed by an obsessed fan. Although the stab wound proved to be relatively harmless, the psychological ramifications meant that Seles did not play any tournaments for over two years.

## Letters TO THE EDITOR

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

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



**Nurture human resources**  
Sir, This refers to “Human capital formation key to economic growth.” **Orissa POST**, 29 April. India’s journey toward sustained economic growth hinges on one critical factor: human capital formation. In a country where over half the population is under 30, strategic investments in education, healthcare, and skill development are not just desirable—they are essential. Education serves as the foundation for a skilled and innovative workforce. Government initiatives like the National Education Policy (NEP) and Skill India are reshaping the learning landscape, aiming to improve outcomes and prepare youth for demands of a modern economy. Equally important is healthcare, which ensures that the workforce remains productive and capable of contributing to national development. But to unlock this on a broader scale, access must be expanded to rural and underprivileged communities. Human capital formation is not merely a social good—it is an economic necessity. If India can effectively nurture and mobilise its human resources, it will not only sustain growth but lead the world in the new knowledge-driven global economy.  
**N Sadhasiva Reddy**, BANGALORE

## Roaring success

Sir, The successful breeding of an Asiatic lioness at the Delhi Zoological Park is good news as these lions are exclusive to India in Asia. The Gir wildlife sanctuary of Gujarat is home to 674 lions, as against 523 in 2015, as per the 2020 census. The 30 per cent rise in the big cat number, over five years, was a much-needed shot in the arm for lion conservation efforts in the area. Asiatic lions are long extinct in both Turkey and Iran, two other countries that boasted of them. Way back in 2015, Gir had adopted the “direct sighting” method to count lions because of its accuracy. Also, modern techniques like the global positioning system (GPS), geo-reference and videography were put to good use by the government. Limiting mining activities and the speed of trains on tracks close to the sanctuary, too, have clicked. Availability of livestock for lions as prey base and CDV vaccines have saved the big cats besides flyovers and underpasses.

**Ganapathi Bhat**, AKOLA



# Crackdown on illegal Bangladeshi settlements

While the demolition drive is being spearheaded by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, around 2,000 policemen, headed by Joint Commissioner of Police-Crime Sharad Singhal, were deployed at the site to maintain law and order

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ahmedabad, April 29:** The civic authorities and police in Ahmedabad Tuesday launched a mega demolition drive in the Chandola lake area, days after illegal Bangladeshi immigrants were detained from the settlements built on the periphery of the water body, officials said.

While the demolition drive is being spearheaded by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, around 2,000 policemen, headed by Joint Commissioner of Police-Crime Sharad Singhal, were deployed at the site to maintain law and order, Police Commissioner GS Malik said.

Malik, who reached the lake to take stock of the demolition drive, told reporters that all police stations in the city were put on ‘alert’ to deal with any

situation in view of the demolition drive at Chandola Lake, a Muslim-majority area.

Singhal said the AMC started the drive early in the morning with 50 teams, each equipped with an earthmover machine.

“The last demolition drive at Chandola Lake was carried out in 2009. Recently, a survey conducted by the AMC revealed that government land had been encroached upon again, and shanties were constructed around the lake. Illegal Bangladeshi immigrants lived in areas like Siyasatnagar and Bengali Vaas surrounding this lake,” he said.

According to Malik, an FIR is being registered against Mehmood Pathan alias Lallu Bihari, the mastermind behind the encroachment on government land at Chandola Lake. He

## MASSIVE ENCROACHMENT DRIVE IN AHMEDABAD



also helped illegal Bangladeshi immigrants get rental accommodation and Aadhaar cards.

“We have deployed 2,000 policemen along with 20 companies of the State Reserve Police (SRP) to assist the AMC in clearing illegal constructions at Chandola Lake, which includes areas like Siyasatnagar and Bengali Vaas. Police in the entire city have also been put on alert. Strict action will be taken

if anyone tries to take the law into their hands,” Malik said.

He said even the minority community residing near the lake wants the authorities to take action against Bangladeshi immigrants living in illegal settlements.

The top cop said the authorities have also razed Pathan’s farmhouse built illegally on the banks of the lake.

“We have started the process

of registering a first information report against Pathan. He helped illegal immigrants get accommodations using bogus rent agreements and procured Aadhaar cards. It is also suspected that some people in the area had also acquired passports,” Malik said.

Deputy Municipal Commissioner DC Parmar said nearly 2,000 illegally built houses and other properties were identified for demolition, and 50 per cent of the work was completed by noon.

He said Chandola Lake is a water body, and no construction is allowed around the lake.

Earlier Monday, DGP Vikas Sahay said around 450 Bangladeshi nationals were found to be residing illegally in Gujarat after police launched a crackdown and detained nearly 6,500 undocumented people who are suspected to be citizens of the neighbouring country.

Sahay said following mega search operations in Ahmedabad and Surat, similar exercises were undertaken across the state, with 6,500 suspected illegal Bangladeshi immigrants detained and their identities being verified.

# Five cheetah cubs born in Kuno National Park



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhopal, April 29:** In a ground-breaking global effort to protect the endangered cheetah, a remarkable development has taken place in Madhya Pradesh’s (MP) Kuno National Park (KNP) in Sheopur district.

Nirva, a five-year-old female cheetah, has given birth to five cubs, marking a significant milestone in the ongoing translocation project.

Dr Mohan Yadav, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, shared this news on his X platform, stating, “Once again, Kuno National Park has brought us great news. Nirva, a five-year-old female cheetah, has delivered five healthy cubs, bringing the total number of cheetahs in the state to 31.”

He applauded the dedication of the Kuno National Park team and credited the achievement to India’s biodiversity conservation efforts under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav also joined in celebrating the event, sharing the update on X as well.

Earlier in the month, two cheetahs, Prabhas and Pavak, were relocated to Gandhisagar in Mandsaur as part of an intra-regional translocation initiative, reducing the cheetah population in KNP to 24. However, with the birth of these five cubs, the KNP cheetah population has now risen to 29.

India’s own Asiatic cheetah

“Once again, Kuno National Park has brought us great news. Nirva, a five-year-old female cheetah, has delivered five healthy cubs, bringing the total number of cheetahs in the state to 31”

DR MOHAN YADAV | CHIEF MINISTER, MADHYA PRADESH

went extinct in the mid-20th century, with its survival limited to a small, critically endangered population in Iran. To reintroduce cheetahs to Indian wildlife, eight Southeast African cheetahs -- a non-native subspecies -- were brought from Namibia in September 2022.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi released them into enclosures at Kuno National Park September 17, 2022. This historic moment signalled the return of the cheetah to India. Subsequently, in February 2023, twelve more cheetahs were brought from South Africa.

Efforts to reintroduce cheetahs in India date back to the mid-20th century. While proposals were made to Iran in the 1970s and Kenya in the 1980s, they met with limited success.

By 2012, India’s Supreme Court had initially deemed such translocation projects illegal, citing concerns about introducing a new species rather than restoring a native one. However, recent developments have revived this ambitious project, which is now showing promising results.

## MP first state to launch AI-based real-time forest alert system: Officials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhopal, April 29:** Madhya Pradesh has become the first state to implement an AI-based real-time alert system on a pilot basis for active forest management using satellite images, mobile feedback, and machine learning, an official said Tuesday.

The Artificial Intelligence system will enable the forest department to detect land encroachment, land use change, and forest degradation.

“Madhya Pradesh has become the first state in the country to implement an AI-based real-time forest alert system. This historic step has been taken towards active forest management in the state. This system works with the help of satellite images, mobile feedback and machine learning,” the official said.

This system is being implemented as a pilot project in five sensitive forest divisions including Shivpuri, Guna, Vidisha, Burhanpur and Khandwa, which have reported several encroachment and tree felling incidents.

It will be implemented at the state level, the official added. He said that based on Google Earth Engine, the AI alert system analyses multi-temporal satellite data and identifies land use changes using a custom AI model.

Every possible change is sent to the field staff through a mobile app so that they can confirm it by visiting the site.

Guna Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Akshay Rathore, who conceptualised the AI system for forest management, said this is the first time the forest department has combined satellite, AI, and field feedback in a continuous cycle, which improves itself over time.

The system is implemented under the leadership and institutional support of the Head of Forest Force (HoFF), Aseem Shrivastava, and Additional Principal Chief Forest Conservator of IT BS Annigeri.

“This system empowers forest staff to monitor and take immediate action. Alert generation and feedback process includes initial alert generation using Google Earth Engine to compare satellite images of three dates, identify changes in crops, wasteland, construction etc.,” Rathore said.

An official stated that each alert includes over 20 features, such as polygon alerts triggered by notable pixel changes, field verification for mobile app alerts, and uploads by field staff, including GPS-tagged photos, voice notes, and comments.

It also involves data enrichment with indexes like NDVI, SAVI, EVI, and SAR attributes.

# Tourist captures Pahalgam attack while ziplining

The 53-second video, shot using a selfie stick, showed people running for their lives, with one of them falling, apparently after being gunned down by a terrorist

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ahmedabad, April 29:** A tourist from Ahmedabad who was on a zipline ride at Jammu and Kashmir’s Pahalgam inadvertently captured on video the terror attack in which 26 people lost their lives last week.

In the video, which has gone viral on social media, Rishi Bhatt is seen enjoying the ride even as the attack unfolded on the ground below at Baisaran Valley April 22.

The 53-second video, shot using a selfie stick, showed people running for their lives, with one of them falling, apparently after being gunned down by a terrorist. Talking



to reporters, Bhatt said he had gone to Baisaran Valley with his wife and a child, and they decided to enjoy a zipline ride. While his wife and child took the ride safely and reached the other side, the firing started just as his ride began, said the Ahmedabad resident, who is in the event management business.

“When my son and wife reached down safely, and I started my zipline ride, the

first shots were fired. As soon as I landed, I saw that someone was asked about his religion and then shot,” he recalled.

Bhatt said he detached himself, jumped off the zipline and ran with his family. They hid in a blind spot where three to four others had taken refuge.

After around eight to 10 minutes, when the shots subsided, they started running again and managed to escape, he said.

# MP stubble burning alarmingly high

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhopal, April 29:** The Madhya Pradesh cabinet, in a move that balances leniency with determination, has announced the cessation of benefits under the ‘Kisan Samman Nidhi’ scheme and the procurement of farm produce at minimum support prices for farmers who burn wheat or other crop stubble in their fields.

State Urban Development Minister Kailash Vijayvargiya clarified the government’s stance, emphasising that while legal penalties will be avoided as far as possible against farmers, the importance of environmental conservation cannot be overlooked.



He stated, “The government will neither procure the produce from such farmers nor transfer the yearly ‘Kisan Samman Nidhi’ for those farmers who will keep on burning stubble.”

They may lose other benefits too, the minister said.

Under the ‘PM Kisan Samman Nidhi’ Central scheme, farmers currently receive Rs 6,000 annually in equal instalments of Rs 2,000 each, and wheat is procured at a rate of Rs 2,600 per quintal, including Rs 175 per quintal bonus for the ongoing Rabi season.

Despite stringent measures, Madhya Pradesh has emerged as the state

with the highest instances of stubble (locally known as Parali) burning, surpassing even Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

According to satellite data from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research-Consortium for Research on Agroecosystem Monitoring and Modelling from Space (ICAR-CREAMS), the state reported 28,705 fire incidents of stubble burning, generating 281,171 Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) across its 50 districts as of April 28.

CREAMS, a governmental body, employs satellite technology to oversee incidents of stubble burning nationwide. This data underscores the persistent nature of the issue.

For example, from April 1 to April 17, Madhya Pradesh recorded a staggering 13,411 incidents compared to only 13 in Punjab. While Punjab has reached only 444 cases of fire incidents in 23 districts by April 28, Madhya Pradesh’s numbers remain alarmingly high.

Efforts to curb this practice have ramped up across the state. Written appeals and video campaigns urging farmers to halt post-harvest stubble burning are being disseminated widely. Yet, in 2024 alone, Madhya Pradesh documented 11,382 fire incidents of this harmful activity.

In Madhya Pradesh, Sheopur led the tally with 2,508 cases, while Punjab’s Sangrur trailed with 1,725.

The satellite data as of Monday further revealed 176,237 fire occurrences linked to stubble burning across 177 districts within five major wheat-producing states of India, signifying the magnitude of this environmental challenge and the urgency to address it.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, GANJAM (R&B) DIVISION NO.II, BERPAMPUR

Phone/Fax: 0680-2233996, e-mail: sernb2.ganjam@gmail.com

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) [E-Procurement]

TENDER CALL NOTICE

Bid Identification No.SC (R&B)-GM-II-01/2025-26 No.5001 Dated 23.04.2025

No.B-62: 1) The Superintending Engineer, Ganjam (R&B) Division No. II, Berhampur on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in Single Cover System to be received in ONLINE MODE only for the work as detailed below:

2) Nature of Work : Building Work

3) No. of Work : 03 Nos.

4) Tender Cost : Rs.6,000/-

5) Class of Contractor : 'D' Class & 'C' Class

6) Availability of bid documents : From 03.05.2025 10.00 AM to 15.05.2025 4.00 P.M.

7) Date of Opening of Bid : 16.05.2025 at 11.30 A.M.

8) The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://tendersorissa.gov.in

9) The bidders must submit all the original uploaded documents within 03 days from opening. of the tender.

(Sd./-S.Panigrahi)

Superintending Engineer

Ganjam (R&B) Division No.II

OIPR-34080/11/0014/2526

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

Email Address: semechcircle104@gmail.com

No.A-84

Bid Identification No.-ACEM/MDL-03/2025-26

1. Name of the Work : Mechanical Gate Works

2. No. of Works : 01 (One)

3. Category of executors : SSI Units registered under DIC/NSIC/ MSME for Irrigation Shutters/Hydro Mechanical gates

4. Bid Identification No. : ACEM/MDL-03/2025-26

5. Estimated Cost : Rs.11,80,243/-

6. Period of Completion : 02 (Two) Calendar Months

7. Date & Time of availability : From Dt.28.04.2025 (10.00 AM) to 02.08.05.2025 (5.30 PM)

8. Last date/time for receipt : dt.08.05.2025 (upto 5.30 PM)

9. Date and Place of Opening: dt.09.05.2025 (12.00 Noon onwards in the O/o the undersigned)

10. Name of the Officer Inviting: Addl. Chief Engineer Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any further issue of Addenda/ Corrigenda/ Cancellation Notice shall be uploaded in the aforesaid website only.

Sd./- Addl. Chief Engineer

Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

OIPR-32405/11/0050/2526

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

Email Address: semechcircle104@gmail.com

No.A-88

Bid Identification No.-ACEM/MDC-07/2025-26

1. Name of the Work : Mechanical Gate Works

2. No. of Works : 01 (One)

3. Category of executors : SSI Units registered under DIC/NSIC/ MSME for Irrigation Shutters/Hydro Mechanical gates

4. Bid Identification No. : ACEM/MDC-07/2025-26

5. Estimated Cost : Rs.10,01,421/-

6. Period of Completion : 02 (Two) Calendar Months

7. Date & Time of availability : From Dt.28.04.2025 (10.00 AM) to 02.08.05.2025 (5.30 PM)

8. Last date/time for receipt : dt.08.05.2025 (upto 5.30 PM)

9. Date and Place of Opening: dt.09.05.2025 (12.00 Noon onwards in the O/o the undersigned)

10. Name of the Officer Inviting: Addl. Chief Engineer Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any further issue of Addenda/ Corrigenda/ Cancellation Notice shall be uploaded in the aforesaid website only.

Sd./- Addl. Chief Engineer

Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

OIPR-32405/11/0056/2526

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

Office of the Addl. Chief Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

Email Address: semechcircle104@gmail.com

No.A-85

Bid Identification No.-ACEM/MDL-04/2025-26

1. Name of the Work : Mechanical Gate Works

2. No. of Works : 01 (One)

3. Category of executors : SSI Units registered under DIC/NSIC/ MSME for Irrigation Shutters/Hydro Mechanical gates

4. Bid Identification No. : ACEM/MDL-04/2025-26

5. Estimated Cost : Rs.12,20,490/-

6. Period of Completion : 02 (Two) Calendar Months

7. Date & Time of availability : From Dt.28.04.2025 (10.00 AM) to 02.08.05.2025 (5.30 PM)

8. Last date/time for receipt : dt.08.05.2025 (upto 5.30 PM)

9. Date and Place of Opening: dt.09.05.2025 (12.00 Noon onwards in the O/o the undersigned)

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Sd./- Addl. Chief Engineer

Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar

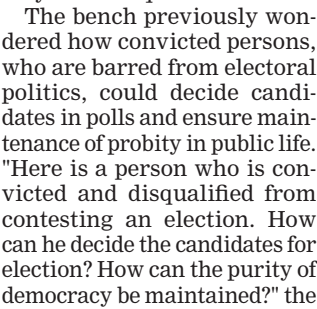
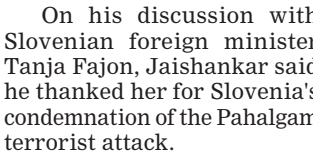
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All 10 were debunked as misleading or completely false.

**ONE:** A viral claim suggest-



Even a person who has been convicted of heinous crimes like murder, rape, smuggling, money laundering, loot, sedition, or dacoity, can form a political party and become its president or office bearer, it added.

A trade expert said India has a well established legislative, administrative and judicial framework to safeguard IPR that meets its obligations under the WTO's Agreement on Trade Related IPRs (TRIPS). The report also said patent issues continue to be of particular concern in India. "Among other concerns, the potential threat of patent revocations and the procedural and discretionary invocation of patentability criteria under the Indian Patents Act impact companies across different sectors. Moreover, patent applicants generally continue to confront long waiting periods to receive patent grants and excessive reporting requirements," the report said.

# Top court defers plea to stop convicts from forming political parties

The bench previously wondered how convicted persons, who are barred from electoral politics could decide candidates in polls and ensure maintenance of probity in public life. "Here is a person who is convicted and disqualified from contesting an election. How can he decide the candidates for election? How can the purity of democracy be maintained?" the

Even a person who has been convicted of heinous crimes like murder, rape, smuggling, money laundering, loot, sedition, or dacoity, can form a political party and become its president or office bearer, it added.

No suicide note was recovered from the room and the reason behind the extreme step by the boy is yet to be ascertained, Jawahar Nagar Circle Inspector Ramlaxman

The boy's uncle, who lives in Delhi, reached Kota Tuesday morning after learning about the tragic incident and the body was handed over to him after the post-mortem, he said, adding that further probe is underway. Seventeen coaching students died by suicide in Kota in 2024. In 2023, the number stood at 26.

The phone conversations came days after the UN Security Council (UNSC) issued a statement condemning the terrorist attack in Pahalagam, but not before Pakistan, backed by China, worked to water it down. Jaishankar spoke to his counterparts from Algeria, Greece, Guyana, Pana-

However, the statement was seen as "inadequate". The non-permanent members

On his discussion with Slovenian foreign minister Tanja Fajon, Jaishankar said he thanked her for Slovenia's condemnation of the Pahalgam terrorist attack.

All 10 were debunked as misleading or completely false.

**ONE:** A viral claim suggest-

'Pakistan' on X April 27, has garnered 54,000 views so far, and 61 other users reposted it.

**TWO:** Another video circulating online claimed to show an Indian journalist confronting Army officers over their alleged refusal to engage with Pakistan. However, the footage was from a March 2025 joint press conference by Gaurav Yadav, DGP of Punjab Police, and Lt Gen Mohit Wadhwa, chief of staff, HQ West.

**THREE:** A post alleged that Pakistani military posts suffered heavy losses along the Line of Control (LoC), backed by visuals of shelling. The video was found to be from May 2023, showing security forces clashing with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supporters during protests demanding Imran Khan's release in Pakistan.

**FIVE:** A video showing an explosion in the mountains was shared with the claim that the Pakistan Army had targeted

**SEVEN:** A baseless allegation that China would block rivers to India in retaliation for a supposed violation of the Indus Water Treaty was unsupported by any credible source.

**TEN:** A video claimed that the Indian Air Force had conducted surgical strikes on Indian civilians, resulting in casualties. In reality, April 25, 2025, a non-explosive drop tank accidentally fell from an IAF aircraft in Madhya Pradesh, damaging a house but causing no injuries, a fact confirmed by the local district administration.



of the day

quote

You all are the foundation and torchbearers of a developed India. The nation has high expectations from you. I am confident that through your service in every corner of the country, you will not only strengthen the spirit of unity in diversity but also bring glory to Haryana

**NAYAB SINGH SAINI** | HARYANA CM

Festivals couldn't be celebrated peacefully, youth were forced to migrate, and farmers were driven to suicide. Communities like the Musahars and Vantangiya were facing starvation

**YOGI ADITYANATH** | UP CM

The recent government directive to deport all Pakistani nationals from India has raised serious humanitarian concerns, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir. Many affected are women who came to India 30-40 years ago, married Indian citizens, raised families and have long been part of our society

**MEHBOOBA MUFTI** | PDP PRESIDENT

POST

OF THE DAY

Narendra Modi didn't brief LoP Rahul Gandhi on the Pahalgam attack But he is meeting RSS chief Bhagwat

at the PMO Does PM need Nagpur's green signal before acting on Pakistan? BJP must set aside ego for national unity #TerrorStatePakistan

@Politixc2029

SHORT TAKES

**ED seizes Rs 7.44 cr in liquor cases raids**

**New Delhi:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Tuesday said it has seized Rs 7.44 crore in cash after conducting searches at multiple locations in Madhya Pradesh as part of a money laundering investigation linked to alleged about Rs 50 crore worth irregularities in the liquor trade between 2015-16 and 2017-18. As many as 13 premises belonging to different liquor contractors in Bhopal, Indore and Mandsaur were raided under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) Monday.

**Tamil Nadu Assembly adjourned sine die**

**Chennai:** Tamil Nadu Assembly Tuesday adopted as many as 18 Bills including the Tamil Nadu Money Lending Entities (Prevention of Coercive Actions), Bill 2025 and the House was later adjourned sine die by Speaker M Appavu. When a Bill to amend the Goondas Act, to bring economic offences and violations of Bio-Medical Waste Management Rules under its ambit was taken up for scrutiny, main opposition AIADMK's Thalavai Sundaram spoke on dumping of waste from Kerala.

**3 men injured in police encounter**

**Gopalganj:** Three persons, accused of sexually assaulting a girl at a railway station in Bihar's Gopalganj district, were injured in an alleged gunfight with the police, officials said Tuesday. One of the accused was arrested from Bind Tola in the Kuchaikote police station area, they said.



**Electronic goods exports accounted for 14.65 million USD and this was nearly 41.23 percent share in the country. Last year, the state mopped up Rs 5.80 lakh crore through commercial tax**

**M K STALIN** | TN CM

**CISCE TO ANNOUNCE CLASS X, XII RESULTS TODAY**

The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) will announce the results for Class X and Class XI board examinations at 11 am on Wednesday, CISCE chief executive Joseph Emmanuel said Tuesday



**BSF lodges protest with Pak Rangers on jawan's apprehension**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi/Amritsar, April 29:** The Border Security Force (BSF) has lodged a protest with Pakistan Rangers in the case of apprehension of a jawan a week back after he had mistakenly crossed the international border in Punjab, official sources said Tuesday.

Earlier such inadvertent crossings on either side were resolved quickly, but this time the Pakistani side has remained "non-committal" on the whereabouts and the date of return of the jawan which could be due to rising India-Pakistan tensions after the Pahalgam attack, they said. The border force has also instituted an inquiry into the incident where Constable Purnam Kumar Shaw of the 24th battalion was caught by the Rangers April 23 after the jawan inadvertently crossed the IB along the Ferozepur district.

Officials told PTI that a protest note has been sent to Pakistan Rangers and they have remained "non-committal" on the whereabouts and the date of return of the jawan. About 4-5 flag meetings have taken place between the two sides but there is no final word on his return. A protest note has been given to the sector commander of the Rangers by the BSF, the officials said.

They said that the jawan is understood to have been moved to a Rangers' base along the Lahore-Amritsar sector and may be handed over to the BSF soon. The Rangers have maintained a stoic silence and have neither issued a protest note nor communicated about his condition they said.

Social media handles from Pakistan had issued pictures of Shaw last week where he was seen blindfolded and sitting in a vehicle and standing under a tree with his rifle, magazine with bullets, belt and other belongings kept on the ground, according to officials.

**Maha govt seeks to boost electric mobility under new EV Policy**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 29:** The Maharashtra cabinet Tuesday approved Electric Vehicle Policy 2025 as per which certain electric vehicles plying on highways will be given a toll waiver, and subsidies on purchase of such vehicles to boost their use to help bring down air pollution.

The policy was approved in the state cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

"The state government has approved a new Electric Vehicle (EV) policy, under which passenger EVs will be given subsidies. EV manufacturing and their use should increase in the state," Fadnavis said after the meeting. He said the charging infrastructure will be strengthened under the new policy and there will be charging facilities on the national highways at a distance of 25 km.



People take part in a procession taken out for the departure of palanquin of mother Ganga for Shri Gangotri Dham

PTI PHOTO

PAHALGAM ATTACK

# Kharge, Rahul ask PM for special Parl session

*Several Opposition MPs have made a similar demand to the government in the wake of the dastardly attack in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed last week, evoking anger and public outrage*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 29:** Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi have written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, asking him to convene a special session of Parliament to discuss the Pahalgam terror attack and demonstrate a collective resolve.

Several Opposition MPs have made a similar demand to the government in the wake of the dastardly attack in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed last week, evoking anger and public outrage.

In the letter to the prime minister, Kharge said, "At this moment, when unity and solidarity is essential, the opposition believes that it is important to convene a special session of both Houses of Parliament at the earliest. "This will be a powerful demonstration of our collective resolve and willpower to deal with the brutal terror attack in Pahalgam on innocent citizens April 22. It is our fond hope that the session will be accordingly convened," the leader of opposition in the Rajya Sabha



added. Gandhi too wrote a letter to Modi with the same request and said the Pahalgam massacre has outraged every Indian.

While the government has not made any response to the call for a special session of Parliament, sources discounted such a possibility and noted that the all-party meeting was called for the purpose of presenting a picture of national unity. A BJP leader claimed that the Opposition's demand is driven more by politics and cited the recent sharp attack on Prime Minister Modi by some Congress leaders.

AICC general secretary Jairam Ramesh shared in an X post the letters of the leaders of Opposition in both Houses and said it was a request for a special session regarding the Pahalgam terror attack.

Ramesh said the Parliament is the supreme political body in the country and it is not new as special sessions have been held earlier. "An all-party meeting happened, but the PM didn't attend, he was campaigning in Bihar. We hope that the PM will agree, attend, and take Parlia-

ment into confidence. After all, this is 'Team India', the PM is the captain of the team," he also said. In another post, Ramesh said that February 22, 1994, both Houses of Parliament had passed a resolution unanimously on J&K. "The time has come to reiterate, renew, and refresh it - and more. The Union Government should heed the call of the Leaders of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and convene a special session of the Parliament at the earliest," he said.

The Congress leader tagged the Parliament resolution which states the state of Jammu and Kashmir has been, is and shall be an integral part of India and any attempts to separate it from the rest of the country will be resisted by all necessary means and that India has the will and capacity to firmly counter all designs against its unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The resolution also demanded that Pakistan must vacate the areas of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, which they have occupied through aggression.

CUSTODIAL DEATH CASE

# SC denies bail to ex-IPS Sanjiv Bhatt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 29:** The Supreme Court Tuesday dismissed the bail plea of convicted former IPS officer Sanjiv Bhatt in a 1990 custodial death case in which he was sentenced to life imprisonment. A bench comprising justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta said there was no merit in his plea for bail or the suspension of sentence in this case.

"We are not inclined to grant Sanjiv Bhatt bail. The prayer of bail is dismissed. The hearing of appeal shall not be affected. The hearing of appeal is expedited," Justice Nath said while pronouncing the verdict. The bench also said the order on bail will not have any impact on the merit of the appeal pending before the top court.

The detailed judgement is awaited. Bhatt's appeal against his conviction and life imprisonment is presently pending in the top court.

Bhatt moved the top court in 2024 challenging the Gujarat High Court's January 9, 2024, order dismissing his appeal. The high court also upheld the conviction of Bhatt and co-accused Pravinsinh Zala under Sections 302 (murder), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC. The high court also dismissed the state government's appeal seeking to enhance the sentences of five other accused, who were acquitted of murder charges but convicted under Sections 323 and 506 of the IPC. On October 30, 1990, then additional superintendent of police Bhatt detained around 150 people following a communal riot in Jamjodhpur town after a 'bandh' call against the halting of BJP leader L K Advani's 'Rath Yatra' for the construc-



tion of a Ram temple in Ayodhya. Prabhudas Vaishnani, one of the detained persons, died at a hospital after his release. Vaishnani's brother accused Bhatt and six other police officers of torturing him in custody and causing his death.

Bhatt was arrested on September 5, 2018, in another case where he was accused of falsely implicating a man for drugs possession. The trial in the case is underway. Bhatt is also an accused in a case of alleged fabrication of evidence in connection with the 2002 Gujarat riots cases along with activist Teesta Setalvad and former Gujarat DGP R B Sreekumar.

Bhatt also hit the headlines when he filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court, alleging then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi's role in the 2002 riots. The allegations were debunked by a special investigation team.

He was suspended from service in 2011 and sacked by the Ministry of Home Affairs in August 2015 for "unauthorised absence". In the custodial death case, the Jamnagar court sentenced the other five policemen -- sub-inspectors Dipak Shah and Sailesh Pandya, and constables Pravinsih Jadeja, Anopsinh Jethva and Keshubha Jadeja -- to two years in prison.

# Inconsistent judicial decisions shake public trust: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 29:** The Supreme Court Tuesday observed inconsistent decisions from different benches shook public trust and outlined their consistency to be hallmark of a responsible judiciary.

A bench of Justices P S Narsimha and Joymalya Bagchi was hearing a matrimonial matter where two different single benches of Karnataka High Court had passed contradictory verdicts.

"The case at hand portrays a disturbing picture. While one judge refused to quash proceeding against the in-laws, inter alia, observing the wound certificate demonstrates the appellant was assaulted and

suffered simple injuries, another judge by the impugned order quashed the proceeding against respondent husband holding the medical certificate was not consistent with the allegations in the complaint, i.e., the wound certificate does not show the injuries were caused by a blunt weapon."

Justice Bagchi, who authored the verdict, censured the order passed by the second judge, who quashed the proceedings against the husband. "Having perused the impugned judgment, we are of the view the judge erred in law by embarking upon an enquiry with regard to the credibility or otherwise of the allegations in the FIR/chargesheet."

The top court opined the



judge compared the nature of assault described in the FIR in relation to the wound certificate and held the allegations to be untrue. In the process, the bench said, the judge per-

formed a mini-trial to quash the proceeding -- an exercise impermissible in law. The top court said though the order refusing to quash the proceeding against some of the in-laws was passed

earlier, it was inexplicable why it did not find a mention in the order quashing the proceedings against the husband.

"It was incumbent on the judge while quashing the proceeding against the respondent husband to refer to the earlier decision of the co-ordinate bench and distinguish the reasons therein to arrive at a different conclusion. Failure to do so infracts judicial propriety and discipline," the bench said. Consistency in judicial outcomes, it underscored, was the hallmark of a responsible judiciary.

"Inconsistent decisions coming out from different benches shake public trust and reduce litigation to a punter's game. It gives rise to various insidi-

ous sharp practices like forum shopping spoiling the clear stream of justice."

The top court said the high court judge "misdirected himself" in holding that the proceeding was malicious and an abuse of the process of the court as the matter was pending in the matrimonial court. "Offences involving cruelty on wife would invariably arise out of matrimonial disputes," it added.

Notably, the top court said the pendency of the matrimonial case couldn't per se lead to an inference that institution of criminal proceeding alleging assault supported by medical evidence and independent witness was a "product of malice and abuse of the court".



of the day

quote

I don't want anyone else to have to go through this," Aspinwall told reporters. "You see it happening all over the country. It's got to stop. Some way or another, it's got to stop

BRIAN KEMP | GOVERNOR, GEORGIA

In the South China Sea and East China Sea, China has made unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force

SHIGERU ISHIBA | PRIME MINISTER, JAPANESE

The resistance complied 100 per cent with the (ceasefire) deal and I tell state officials that it's your duty to guarantee protection

NAIM KASSEM | LEADER OF LEBANON'S HEZBOLLAH

SHORT TAKES

Spain, Portugal switch back on

**Madrid:** Spain and Portugal switched their power back on after the worst blackout in their history, though authorities offered little explanation for what had caused it or how they would prevent it happening again. Traffic lights were back on, train and metro services slowly returned and schools reopened. Commuters battled with delays to get back to work after an outage that had left people stranded in lifts and cut off from phone contact with their families. The sudden outage had seen the equivalent of 60% of demand in Spain drop in five seconds around midday Monday.

Japan, Philippines to start talks on 2 defence pacts

**Manila:** Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba said Tuesday that his country and the Philippines would start talks on two proposed defence pacts to further boost their security alliance and would continue to fight aggression in disputed Asian waters in an obvious rebuke of China. Ishiba and Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. also discussed in Manila the impact of the barrage of tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump and China's countermeasures on the global economy and free trade system, the Japanese premier said in a news conference with Marcos after their talks.

\$108mn sanctioned for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

**Peshawar:** The World Bank has sanctioned additional funding of \$108 million for improving the lives of women and girls by enhancing their access to essential services and economic opportunities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in northwest Pakistan. The Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Tourism Development (KITE) and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rural Accessibility Project (KPRAP) projects have an estimated value of \$30 million and \$78 million respectively.

Turkiye, Italy deepen trade, defence ties

**Rome:** Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni Tuesday observed the formal exchange of a dozen cooperation agreements, including on defence, as part of efforts to strengthen ties between the two Mediterranean nations. Erdogan was in Rome to attend a fourth so-called Intergovernmental Summit between Italy and Türkiye that aims to boost trade and cooperation. His visit comes at a time when Türkiye and Italy have expanded defence partnerships.



We've protected our kids before from cigarettes, alcohol, and drunk driving, and now we're protecting them from addictive technology designed to hijack their attention

KATHY HOCHUL | GOVERNOR, NEW YORK

A 6.2-MAGNITUDE QUAKE HITS OFF NEW ZEALAND

A 6.2-magnitude earthquake has hit off the west coast of New Zealand. There is no tsunami warning. The US Geological Survey says the quake occurred shortly after 1 am local time. It was 300 kilometers southwest of Invercargill, New Zealand, and 10 kilometers under the sea



Carney takes aim at Trump globally

REUTERS

**Ottawa, April 29:** Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney completed a comeback victory for the governing Liberals in Monday's election, positioning himself for a global role as a champion of multilateralism against US President Donald Trump's more protectionist policies.

The first person to lead two G7 central banks has the experience to earn immediate international credibility, experts say. Carney's tough words for Trump during the campaign have been closely watched in other parts of the world.

"Canada is ready to take a leadership role in building a coalition of like-minded countries who share our values," Carney said April 3 in Ottawa. "We believe in international cooperation. We believe in the free and open exchange of goods, services and ideas. And if the United States no longer wants to lead, Canada will."

Carney's Liberals beat the Conservatives, led by Pierre Poilievre, whose slogan "Canada First" and sometimes acerbic style evoked comparisons with Trump that may have cost him the election. The Conservatives for months had held a wide lead in the polls that evaporated after Trump slapped tariffs on Canada and threatened to annex the country. Canadians are shunning US goods and



Khalistan sympathiser Jagmeet Singh quits as NDP leader

Once a kingmaker in Canadian politics, Jagmeet Singh announced Tuesday that he is quitting as the leader of the National Democratic Party (NDP) after he lost his own election to parliament and his party suffered a rout. A Khalistan sympathiser at heart, Singh influenced former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who depended on him to keep his minority government in power, against India. Now, he has been personally defeated, and his party faces irrelevance. From the 24 seats the NDP had in the last House of Commons, it was down to an expected seven seats this time, having won four and leading in three. "I'm disappointed that we could not win more seats, but I'm not disappointed in our movement," Singh told his supporters. He said that he would give up the party's leadership as soon as a new leader is elected. He came in third in the Burnaby Central constituency in British Columbia, trailing the Liberal Party winner and the Conservative Party candidate.

trips in response.

While Carney remains prime minister, his Liberals appeared to win only a minority of seats in the House of Commons, making the government more fragile and dependent on smaller

parties to stay in power.

Australia holds an election May 3, and the major parties have closely watched the polling surge towards Carney, Australian political strategists said. As in Canada, voter

SNIPPETS

Sex offenders to be denied asylum under new UK law

**London:** Foreign nationals who commit sex offences will be excluded from asylum protections in the UK as part of the new Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill, the British government announced Tuesday. The UK Home Office said any conviction of a crime that qualifies a foreign national for the sex offenders' register will lead to them being denied refugee status. Under the United Nations' Refugee Convention, countries are entitled to refuse asylum to terrorists, war criminals and individuals convicted of a "particularly serious crime" who present a danger to the community - defined in the UK as an offence carrying a sentence of 12 months or more. "Sex offenders who pose a risk to the community should not be allowed to benefit from refugee protections in the UK. We are strengthening the law to ensure these appalling crimes are taken seriously," said Home Secretary Yvette Cooper.



Nepal to restrict Mt Everest to only those who have done 7k mtrs climbs



**Kathmandu:** Nepal is planning to restrict expeditions to Mt Everest only to those mountaineers who have climbed at least one peak above 7,000 metres aimed at reducing deaths in the high altitude zone, a media report said. Ever since New Zealander

Edmund Hillary and Nepal's Sherpa Tenzing Norgay summited the 8,849 metres (29,032 feet) high Mt Everest, popular as Sagarmatha in Nepali, May 29, 1953, thousands of climbers from all over the world, including India and Nepal, have been attracted to the highest peak in the world. Official data shows that since 1953's Hillary-Norgay summit, around 9,000 mountaineers have successfully scaled Mt Everest while over 300 have lost their lives. "The 8,848.86-metre Everest is about to get a stricter gatekeeper. No longer will just any climber with ambition and a permit be able to attempt the world's highest peak. A new draft law says: 'Prove yourself first'.

Trump signs executive order for truck drivers

Sikh advocacy group raises concern

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New York/Washington, April 29:** US President Donald Trump has signed an executive order mandating that truck drivers in America are proficient in English, a requirement that has raised concerns among Sikh advocacy groups who say it can have a "discriminatory impact" on truckers from the community and create unnecessary barriers to employment.

The Executive Order 'Enforcing CommonSense Rules of the Road for America's Truck Drivers' says that America's truck drivers are essential to the strength of the country's economy, its security and the livelihoods of the American people.

"Proficiency in English," which Trump has designated as America's official national language, "should be a non-negotiable safety requirement for professional drivers. They should be able to read and understand traffic signs, communicate with traffic safety, border patrol, agricultural checkpoints, and cargo weight-limit station officers," the order issued Monday says.



■ The Executive Order 'Enforcing CommonSense Rules of the Road for America's Truck Drivers' says that America's truck drivers are essential to the strength of the country's economy, its security and the livelihoods of the American people

"Drivers need to provide feedback to their employers and customers and receive related directions in English. This is common sense," the order said.

The order noted that while federal law requires that, to operate a commercial vehicle, a driver must "read and speak the English language sufficiently to converse with the general public, to understand

AAP leader's daughter found dead in Canada

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ottawa/Chandigarh, April 29:** A Punjab AAP leader's 21-year-old daughter who went missing three days ago in Canada's Ottawa has been found dead, according to authorities.

The Indian High Commission in Ottawa Monday confirmed the death of Vanshika Saini, the daughter of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Davinder Saini from Punjab's Mohali district.

She had gone to Canada two years ago to pursue higher studies after completing her senior secondary in Dera Bassi.

"We are deeply saddened to be informed of the death of Ms Vanshika, student from India in Ottawa," the High Commission said, adding that authorities concerned have taken up the case, which is now under investigation. In Punjab, her family urged the Centre for assistance in bringing back her body.

Vanshika went missing last Friday after leaving her residence at 7 Majestic Drive in Ottawa at around 8-9 pm to view a rental room, according to a social media post by an Indo-Canadian association linked by the High Commission.

According to the post, her phone was switched off at approximately 11.40 pm that night and she missed an important exam the next day, which it said was "completely out of character" for the student.

Vanshika's father said she



had always been a topper in her school and wanted to do something big in her life.

Davinder said he did not know what happened to her, adding that the family was told that the cause of death could be known only after a postmortem examination. "It is a great loss for the family and a tough time for us," said Davinder, who is the AAP's block president and is associated with AAP MLA from Dera Bassi Kuljit Singh Randhawa.

"I want that my daughter's body be brought back here," he said. AAP MLA Randhawa also expressed grief over the death. He said that efforts were being made to bring back the body to Punjab. Randhawa said AAP MP Raj Kumar Chabbewal and Rajya Sabha MP Balbir Singh Seechewal had been approached for their help in bringing back the body, and added that the MPs had contacted the Indian embassy.

The High Commission said it was in "close contact with the bereaved kin and local community associations to provide all possible assistance".

22 people killed in China restaurant fire

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Beijing, April 29:** Twenty-two people were killed in a restaurant fire in Liaoyang city of China's Liaoning province Tuesday.

The fire broke out at 12:25 pm, killing 22 people and injuring three others, the State-run Xinhua news agency reported.

There are no details about the incident, including the cause of the fire. AP reports the restaurant's manager was in police custody as part of the investigation. Chinese President Xi Jinping has urged all-out efforts to treat those injured.

He called for efforts to properly handle affairs related to the victims and console their families, promptly identify the cause of the fire, and hold those responsible to account per the law.

Xi also stressed the importance of forestalling major accidents to ensure public safety and social stability as the May Day holiday approaches, Xinhua reported. China celebrates May Day with five holidays.

Premier Li Qiang also urged full-scale rescue and treatment, adding that local authorities across the country should screen for safety hazards and strengthen the implementation of workplace safety measures to prevent such accidents. The Ministry of Emergency Management has dispatched a team to the site.

Fire incidents are common in China owing to staff ignoring safety features and a lack of training or pressure from their superiors.

Gaza's vital community kitchens may soon shut, halt free meals

REUTERS

**Cairo/Geneva/Gaza, April 29:** It took five hours of queuing at a community kitchen in Gaza's Nuseirat district for displaced grandmother Um Mohammad Al-Talalqa to get one meal to feed her hungry children and grandchildren.

But finding food may be about to get even tougher: Gaza's community kitchens - lifelines for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians after 18 months of war - may soon have no more meals to provide.

Multiple aid groups told Reuters that dozens of local community kitchens risk closing down, potentially within days, unless aid is allowed into Gaza, removing the last consistent source of meals for most of the 2.3 million population.

"We are suffering from famine, real famine," said Talalqa, whose house in the Gaza town of Mughraqa was destroyed by Israel. "I have not eaten anything since this morning."

At the Al-Salam Oriental Food community kitchen in Gaza City, Salah Abu Haseera offers what he fears could be one of the last meals for the 20,000 people he and his colleagues serve daily.

"We face huge challenges in keeping going. We may go out of operation within a week, or maybe less," Abu Haseera told Reuters by phone from Gaza.

Since March 2, Israel has completely cut off all supplies to the 2.3 million residents of the Gaza Strip, and food stockpiled during a ceasefire at the start of the year has all but run out. It is the longest



such closure the Gaza Strip has ever faced.

Community kitchens vary from one-room businesses to

regular restaurants. Thousands of people carrying plastic and aluminum pots to fill with free meals have been a common

sight in the enclave in the past months.

"The community kitchens, which the population in Gaza are relying more on, because there are no other ways to get food, are at a very big risk to shut down," Juliette Touma, spokesperson for the UN Palestinian refugee agency, UNRWA, told Reuters.

"We have 70-80 community kitchens still working in Gaza...In four to five days, these community kitchens will close their doors," Amjad Shawa, the director of the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Network (PNGO) in Gaza, told Reuters.

Shawa put the number of operational community kitchens in Gaza before the crossings closed at around 170. He said an additional 15 kitchens closed

down Monday.

MALNUTRITION

Gazans' state of nutrition is worsening.

About 10,000 cases of acute malnutrition among children have been identified across Gaza, including 1,600 cases of severe acute malnutrition, since the start of 2025, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said in a report late Monday.

"There has been an increase in reports of looting incidents, amid the desperate humanitarian situation...Over the weekend, armed individuals reportedly looted a truck in Deir al Balah and a warehouse in Gaza City," the OCHA report said.

The Gaza health ministry said at least 60,000 children were now showing symptoms of malnutrition.



of the day

quote

We believe building density of our presence in key markets allows us proximity and the ability to service our customers readily. The market opportunity associated with building brands and a pure play direct-to-customer business like ours remains immense

NOEL N. TATA | TRENT's CHAIRMAN

The National Career Service portal is a dynamic platform bringing job seekers and employers together, across India

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION MINISTER OF LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT

Despite the gradual demand recovery, we are optimistic due to structural changes like premiumisation, customer engagement campaigns, and India's rising affluence and evolving consumer aspirations

KAVINDRA MISHRA | SHOPPERS STOP MD AND CEO

SHORT TAKES

**Gold price up ₹1,050 per 10gm**

**New Delhi:** Gold prices climbed ₹1,050 to ₹99,450 per 10 grams in the national capital Tuesday on the back of fresh buying by jewellers and stockists ahead of Akshaya Tritiya, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Akshaya Tritiya, which is celebrated on the third day of bright half of Hindu calendar month Vaisakha, falls on April 30 this year. On Monday, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity declined ₹1,000 to ₹98,400 per 10 grams. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity jumped ₹1,100 to ₹99,000 per 10 grams against the previous close of ₹97,900 per 10 grams. So far this year, the yellow metal prices have added ₹20,500 per 10 grams or 26 per cent from ₹78,950 on December 31, last year. In addition, silver prices also bounced ₹3,500 -- the steepest in nearly three weeks -- to trade near an all-time high at ₹1,02,000 per kg on Tuesday. The white metal had closed at ₹98,500 per kg in the previous market session.

**IndusInd CEO steps down**

**New Delhi:** IndusInd Bank MD and CEO Sumant Kathpalia Tuesday resigned with immediate effect, taking moral responsibility of accounting lapses in the derivatives portfolio, having financial implication of ₹1,960 crore to the bank. This comes a day after the bank's Deputy CEO Arun Khurana had tendered his resignation on Monday. Its Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Govind Jain had quit in January before the lapses came to light. Kathpalia, Managing Director & CEO, has by his letter dated April 29, 2025, resigned from services of the bank with effect from close of working hours on April 29, 2025, IndusInd Bank said in a regulatory filing. "I undertake moral responsibility, given the various acts of commission/omission that have been brought to my notice. I would request that my resignation be taken on record at close of working hours today," Kathpalia said in a resignation letter addressed to the board of the bank.

Growth outlook at risk: FinMin report

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, April 29:** Trade tensions and geopolitical risks pose a challenge to India's economic growth in the fiscal year that started this month, potentially disrupting supply chains and pushing up prices, a finance ministry report said. "Uncertainties stemming from global developments constitute a key risk for the growth outlook for fiscal year 2025/26," the Ministry of Finance said in its monthly economic report released Tuesday.

The report, prepared by the ministry's chief economic adviser, warned that beyond trade, the perception of prolonged uncertainty could lead private companies to delay investment plans.

Last week, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) cut its economic growth forecast for India for the current fiscal year, citing increased trade tensions and global uncertainty.

The IMF has lowered its forecast for the South Asian country to 6.2% from the 6.5% it had forecast in January for the fiscal year that started on April 1.

The government said in its report that private companies



and policymakers must remain alert to the growing risks and "act urgently" to prevent uncertainty from feeding on itself.

It added that the federal government's projected path for reducing public debt would help boost the pool of domestic savings available for private investment, thereby supporting the economic growth.

"In contrast to normal times, action and execution have greater impacts now. It is an opportunity not to be missed," the government said.

Observing that the prospects

of the agriculture sector remain bright, supported by healthy reservoir levels and robust crop production in the current financial year, it said, manufacturing activity is showing signs of revival with robust business expectations.

Services sector activity continues to be resilient.

On the demand side, it said, the favourable outlook for the agricultural sector augurs well for rural consumption, which remains robust.

Urban demand is showing steady improvement, supported

Tariffs will exacerbate stress for MSMEs: Ind-Ra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 29:** India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) Tuesday said reciprocal tariffs will exacerbate stress for medium, small and micro enterprises (MSMEs) but mid-sized corporates have a greater cushion against unanticipated financial shocks.

With the worsening of operating conditions owing to the escalation of tariff war in April 2025, Ind-Ra expects MSMEs to turn more vulnerable, especially in the sectors where the impact of tariff war is negative. As of March 31, 2024, the agency's analysis suggested that 23 per cent of MSMEs remained stressed compared to 11 per cent for MCs (mid-corporates). MCs are better positioned than pre-COVID levels to manage business cycles.

A study of 1,898 listed and unlisted MSMEs and 1,055 MCs highlights that MCs have a greater cushion against unanticipated financial shocks than MSMEs, given their healthy financial metrics. "Capex intensity is usually low as MSMEs grapple more with working capital issues than MCs, and need adequate finance at competitive rates to manage those. Additionally, MSMEs - unlike MCs - are largely promoter-driven entities and lack a capable second line of management who have the knowledge and skill sets to bargain with lenders/suppliers/customers," Neermoy Shah, Associate Director - Emerging Corporates at Ind-Ra, said.

Ind-Ra opined that the reciprocal tariffs will exacerbate stress for MSMEs, with revenue below ₹250 crore and investment in plant and machinery below ₹5 crore as of March 31, 2024.

RUPEE RISES 27 PAISE

The rupee gained 27 paise to settle at 84.96 against the US dollar Tuesday amid a decline in crude oil prices and steady FII inflows. However, recovery in the US dollar and geopolitical tensions between India and Pakistan capped sharp gains in the domestic unit.



RBI's debt buying binge to act as de facto rate cut

REUTERS

**Mumbai, April 29:** The Reserve Bank of India's plan to buy 1.25 trillion rupees (\$14.66 billion) of bonds in May will likely lower the cost of overnight interbank funds, effectively acting as a rate cut, according to analysts.

The debt purchases are likely to increase the liquidity in the banking system, helping transmit the two rate cuts announced this year and also keep the effective cost of funds below the policy repo rate of 6.00%.

When the RBI buys bonds, it injects liquidity into the banking system, making it cheaper for lenders to borrow from each other overnight. This reduces overnight interbank lending rates, which are key short-term interest rates in the economy.

The RBI, under Governor Sanjay Malhotra, who took charge in December, has flooded the banking system with liquidity. The bond purchase plan in May will follow purchases of 1.20 trillion rupees in April and 2.83 trillion rupees in January-March.

The central bank is targeting bond purchases amounting to a surplus of around 1% of deposits, Malhotra said earlier this month, which works out



to about 2.30 trillion rupees to 2.50 trillion rupees. The weighted average overnight call money rate was at 5.93% on Tuesday but is expected to ease to 5.75%, the rate offered by the RBI to banks parking excess funds at the Standing Deposit Facility. Indian government bond yields declined on Tuesday after the May debt purchase plan was announced, with the 10-year bond yield hitting a low of 6.32%, after rising to 6.40% a day prior. With sufficient domestic liquidity, we can expect the weighted average call rate to fall further and align closely to the SDF rate, said Aditi Gupta, economist at Bank of Baroda.

It seems that for now, the RBI's intent is to target the quantum of durable liquidity and take it to at least 1% of deposits, with enough tolerance for higher values, Samiran Chakraborty, Citi's India chief economist, said.

Sensex extends gain on foreign fund inflows

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, April 29:** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ticked higher for the second straight session in a volatile trade Tuesday as investors turned cautious amid concern over geopolitical tensions.

However, intense buying in blue-chips Reliance Industries, Infosys and Tata Consultancy Services and unabated foreign capital inflows supported the domestic market.

The 30-share BSE benchmark gauge climbed 70.01 points or 0.09 per cent to settle at 80,288.38. During the day, it jumped 442.94 points or 0.55 per cent to 80,661.31.

The NSE Nifty ended marginally up by 7.45 points or 0.03 per cent to 24,335.95.

"After showing a sustainable upside bounce Monday, Nifty shifted into a consolidation with a small high-low range on Tuesday and closed the day higher by 7 points. After opening on a positive note, the market was not able to continue with the morning gains and slipped into minor weakness from the highs in the early part of the session. It later shifted into a range-bound action for the better part of the session," Nagaraj Shetti, Senior Technical Research Analyst at HDFC Securities, said.

From the Sensex firms, Reliance Industries, Tech Mahindra, Eternal, HCL Tech, Infosys, IndusInd Bank, Tata Consultancy Services and Bajaj Finserv were the biggest gainers.



**Intense buying in blue-chips Reliance Industries, Infosys and Tata Consultancy Services and unabated foreign capital inflows supported the domestic market**

In contrast, UltraTech Cement, Sun Pharma, Power Grid, NTPC, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the laggards.

The BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.23 per cent and small-cap index went up marginally

Apple investors seek clarity on AI strategy as iPhone sales decline

**Unlike rivals such as Samsung and Alphabet's Google, Apple has also been slow to roll out some important AI features it promised last year at its developer conference**

REUTERS

**San Francisco, April 29:** Apple is expected to face a string of questions over the delayed roll-out of key AI features and the impact of the Sino-U.S. tariff standoff on its business, when it reports results Thursday.

Even as Apple benefited from a rush of orders for its recently

launched lower-priced iPhone 16e in the January-March period ahead of potential tariffs, Wall Street analysts still expect the company will report a small fall in iPhone sales. That would mark a second straight quarter of declines.

The Trump administration has so far spared electronics from tariffs, but Washington has signaled that some levies could come in the coming weeks. The uncertainty has sent shares of Apple, which makes 90% of its products in China, down more than 16% this year, and wiping off over \$600 billion from its market value.

Apple will try to mitigate tariffs by shifting production of U.S.-bound iPhones to India, Reuters has reported. Analysts expect the company to spread some of the tariff costs through



its supply chain, while keeping price increases to a minimum to avoid losing market share.

"Tariffs are a sword of Damocles for Apple - dangling, disruptive and politically charged," said Eric Schiffer, chairman of Patriarch Organization, a California-based private equity firm that

holds Apple shares.

Unlike rivals such as Samsung and Alphabet's Google, Apple has also been slow to roll out some important AI features it promised last year at its developer conference.

Improvements to voice assistant Siri, a common ask from users and investors, have been

delayed to 2026, and Apple pulled a commercial that promoted AI functionalities that were not yet available.

AI features are especially important in China, where Apple has been losing market share to domestic rivals such as Huawei. Apple has partnered with Alibaba to offer AI services in China but hasn't offered a timeline for their roll-out.

iPhone shipments in China fell 9% in the March quarter, the only major smartphone maker to post a decline in the region, according to data from research firm IDC.

Despite these challenges, strong demand for the \$599 iPhone 16e in India helped Apple take the top spot for global smartphone sales in the quarter, according to Counterpoint Research.

Apple's cautious, priva-

cy-first approach to AI deployment has slowed its roll-out and left the company playing catch up, said Jacob Bourne, analyst at eMarketer.

"With tariffs threatening cost structures, Apple faces pressure to move faster on AI innovation and supply chain realignment - both of which are capital intensive".

Overall, Apple's revenue is expected to rise 4.2% in the January-March period, its fiscal second quarter, roughly matching the pace in the first quarter. Growth will likely be driven by upbeat iPad demand and growth in the services business.

iPad sales are expected to rise 9.1% in the second quarter, while the services business, Apple's biggest revenue generator after the iPhone, will likely grow 11.8%.



# Chithambaram finishes joint first in rapid section

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Warsaw (Poland), April 29:** Delivering under pressure, Indian Grandmaster Aravindh Chithambaram put it across Frenchman Alireza Firouzja in the final game to finish joint first with 11 points after the end of the rapid section of Superbet Rapid and Blitz tournament, a part of the Grand Chess Tour.

The Indian wild card entrant needed to match Firouzja and Slovenian Vladimir Fedoseev on points, and he got a little lucky after wild complications as the Frenchman lost on time from what could have been a drawn rook and pawns endgame.

Star performer R Praggnanandhaa bounced back in the event and jumped to joint fourth spot, scoring crucial victories over Romanian David Gavrilescu and Duda respectively in the last two rounds.

The Indian shares the fourth spot along with American Levon Aronian on 10 points.

With 18 blitz games still remaining in the first tournament of the Tour, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France is not far behind on nine points, a full point ahead of Deac Bogdan Daniel of Romania and Duda.

Gavrilescu stands ninth in the ten-player tournament on seven points, a couple of points more than former world champion Veselin Topalov who is in last spot.

Aravindh started the day with a victory over Duda who was outdone in the complexities arising out of an early piece sacrifice by the Indian.

The middle game offered chances for Duda but it was never easy to find precise



## STANDINGS AFTER RAPID

**1-3 ARAVINDH CHITHAMABARAN (IND), VLADIMIR FEDOSEEV (SLO), FIROUJZA ALIREZA (FRA)-11 EACH.**

**4-5: R PRAGGNANANDHAA (IND) LEVON ARONIAN (USA) - 10 EACH**

**6: MAXIME VACHIER-LAGRAVE (FRA) - 9**

**7-8: DUDA JAN-KRYSZTOF (POL), DEAC BOGDAN-DANIEL (ROU) - 8 EACH**

**9: DAVID GAVRILESCU (ROU) - 7**

moves in a jungle of variations that had to be navigated. Aravindh eventually won a rook back and the resulting position offered little resistance.

In the eighth round Ara-

vindh lost to Vachier-Lagrave, but that did not let his hopes down and a final victory over Firouzja ensured that the Indian would top the list in rapid section that offered two points

for a win and one for a draw. The scoring system will be back to normal in blitz section as the winning side will get a full point. However, with so many games still to come, it could be anyone's overall victory.

Praggnanandhaa found himself back on track after an indifferent start that had given him just five points in the first six games. The Indian played out a draw with Fedoseev and then the wins in last games ensured that remains within striking distance of the leading trio.

# Narine stars in KKR's 14-run victory over DC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 29:** Veteran off-spinner Sunil Narine snapped up three crucial wickets in the space of seven balls to help Kolkata Knight Riders beat Delhi Capitals by 14 runs and keep their playoff hopes alive in the IPL here Tuesday.

Sent in to bat, KKR, who came into the game with three losses in their last five matches, managed to post 204 for nine, riding on a blazing start by their top-order batters.

Chasing the total, DC were 62 for 3 in seven overs, but Faf du Plessis (62) and Axar Patel (43) kept them in the hunt with a 76-run partnership for the fourth wicket.

However, Narine (3/29) picked up three key wickets at a crucial juncture to derail DC's chase, as the hosts were restricted to 190 for nine in their 20 overs to succumb to their third loss in four home games at the Arun Jaitley Stadium.

With this win, defending champions KKR reignited their playoff hopes, though they remained at the seventh spot with nine points. DC stayed in the top four with 12 points.

KKR skipper Ajinkya Rahane's gamble to hand the ball to Anukul Roy paid off as the spinner dismissed Abhishek Porel (4) with his second delivery. Vaibhav Arora then trapped Karun Nair (15) lbw before a direct hit from Narine found KL Rahul (7) short of his crease, reducing DC to 62 for 3 in the seventh over. Axar Patel, who had left the field in the 18th over due to a hand injury, returned to join opener du Plessis. The duo negotiated the spinners well, adding 76 runs off 42 balls to keep DC in the contest.

Du Plessis smashed Chakravarthy for two fours and a six in the ninth over before bringing up his fifty off 31 balls.

Axar then took charge, clob-



bering three sixes and four boundaries in his 23-ball 43 to keep the scoreboard ticking.

However, Narine's return in the 14th over changed the game as he dismissed Axar and Tristan Stubbs (1) in the same over, before removing du Plessis with the second ball of his next to derail DC's chase.

With 59 needed off 30 balls, Impact Player Ashutosh Sharma deposited Harshit Rana over long-off, but Chakravarthy returned to remove him and Mitchell Starc in successive deliveries. Vipraj Nigam tried to mount a late charge with two sixes and three fours, but it wasn't enough.

Earlier, KKR got off to a flying start as Narine (27) and Rahmanullah Gurbaz (26) put on the team's highest opening stand of the season – 48 runs off just 17 balls.

On a better batting surface compared to the previous game, Narine took the attack to Dushmantha Chameera (1/46), smashing him for 25 runs in an over, including two sixes – one of them a one-handed slog over midwicket – and a four.

Gurbaz then took on Mitch-

ell Starc, hitting two boundaries and a six before edging to Abhishek Porel in the third over to end the stand.

Skipper Rahane (26) carried the momentum, hitting Starc for a six and a four, and then adding two more boundaries off Mukesh Kumar to take KKR to 79/1 at the end of the powerplay.

However, DC's spinners pulled things back. Vipraj Nigam (2/41) trapped Narine leg-before, before Axar Patel removed Rahane and Venkatesh Iyer (7) in quick succession, reducing the visitors to 117 for 4 in 10 overs. Young Angkrish Raghuvanshi (44) steadied the innings along with Rinku Singh (36), the duo adding 61 runs off 46 balls. Raghuvanshi struck two big sixes off Vipraj, while Rinku targeted Kuldeep Yadav, smashing two boundaries and a six in a 17-run over that helped KKR cross the 150-run mark.

However, KKR lost the momentum again as both Raghuvanshi and Rinku departed in quick succession, falling to Chameera and Vipraj respectively, just when they looked set to accelerate.

## Sacramento hires O'Neal as voluntary GM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New York, April 29:** Hall of Famer Shaquille O'Neal has agreed to become the general manager of the men's basketball program at Sacramento State under new coach Mike Bibby. A person familiar with the situation said Monday that O'Neal will take the voluntary job for the program that his son, Shaqir, recently joined as a player. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the school hadn't made an announcement.

ESPN first reported the news.

Bibby, the former NBA star for the Sacramento Kings, was hired as head coach for the Hornets last month as the school tries to raise its profile in collegiate athletics.



One of the first additions Bibby made was signing Shaqir O'Neal as a transfer from Florida A&M. Now Bibby has O'Neal's father involved in the program. O'Neal is the latest high-profile athlete to take on a general manager role at a college program. Stephen Curry was recently announced as the assistant general manager at Davidson and Trae Young has that same role at Oklahoma.

O'Neal won four NBA titles, three NBA Finals MVPs and a league MVP during his 19-year career in the NBA. He is currently an analyst on TNT's 'Inside the NBA' show. He also served as a minority owner of the Sacramento Kings from 2013-22.

Sacramento State went 7-25 this season under interim coach Michael Czepiel, who was promoted last spring after David Patrick left to take a job as associate head coach at LSU.

# Carlo Ancelotti seals Brazil deal: Reports

AGENCIES

**Madrid, April 29:** Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti has agreed to take over the Brazilian national team, several Spanish media outlets reported Monday.

The veteran Italian has one more year on his contract with the Spanish giants but after quarter-final Champions League elimination by Arsenal and Copa del Rey defeat by rivals Barcelona, is poised to depart the Santiago

Ancelotti has not hidden that a potential exit was on the cards and said his future was "a topic for the next weeks" after defeat by Barca Saturday.

Spanish media reported that Ancelotti would take over ahead of 2026 World Cup qualifiers in June, leaving Madrid before the Club World Cup starts in the United States this summer.

Brazil sacked Dorival Junior after a 4-1 thrashing by Argentina in March and are fourth in the South American qualifying



table for the tournament in the US, Mexico and Canada.

Ancelotti led Real Madrid to a Champions League and La Liga double last season, with Brazil stars Vinicius Junior and Rodrygo Goes vital parts of the team, and is one of the most successful coaches in the club's history.

In his first spell at Real Madrid, he led them to La Decima — their 10th Champions League triumph.

He has won the competition three times with Los Blancos over two stints, sacked in 2015 but returning in 2021 after Zinedine Zidane resigned.

# MAX PURCELL ACCEPTS 18-MONTH DOPING BAN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Sydney, April 29:** Two-time Grand Slam doubles champion Max Purcell has accepted an 18-month ban after breaching anti-doping rules, the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) said Tuesday.

The Australian player admitted to a breach of rules relating to the use of a "prohibited method" after unknowingly receiving an intravenous infusion of vitamins above the allowed limit of 100 milliliters in a 12-hour span and entered into a provisional suspension in mid-June.

Purcell said he'd informed the clinic he was a professional athlete and that the infusion had to be less than 100 milliliters.

The ITIA said the 27-year-old had received IV infusions of over 500 milliliters twice but his full cooperation and information sharing during the investigation had allowed



for a 25 per cent reduction in the sanction.

"This case does not involve a player testing positive for a prohibited substance but demonstrates that the anti-doping rules are broader than that," ITIA chief executive Karen Moorhouse said.

"It also shows the ITIA considers intelligence from a range of sources with the overriding aim to protect everyone covered by the tennis

anti-doping rules, and ensure a level playing field for all," Moorhouse added.

Purcell said the stress of the ongoing case had been "seriously affecting (his) quality of life" over the past few months.

"From being unable to sleep and eat properly, and refusing to be by myself, to developing nervous and anxious tics which I still currently battle day to day," Purcell said in a statement he posted on Instagram.

# Absoultely Insane! Cricket world heaps praise on Vaibhav Suryavanshi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, April 29:** "What were you doing at 14?" asked some of cricket's biggest names as they saluted the fearless and evidently gifted Vaibhav Suryavanshi for his blazing hundred in the IPL, describing the child prodigy as a star in the making.

After Suryavanshi, playing for Rajasthan Royals, smashed Gujarat Titans' Rashid Khan for a six over mid-wicket in Jaipur to become the youngest centurion in T20s last night, the cricketing world duly applauded his special feat.

"Vaibhav's fearless approach, bat speed, picking the length early, and transferring the energy behind the ball was the recipe behind a fabulous innings. End result: 101 runs off 38 balls. Well played!" the iconic Sachin Tendulkar, himself a child prodigy who went on to become one of the best batters in the game,



wrote on X. Suryavanshi broke former Rajasthan Royals batter Yusuf Pathan's record for the fastest hundred by an Indian with his 35-ball century. Suryavanshi was not even born when Pathan smashed a 37-ball hundred 15 seasons ago.

"Many congratulations to young #VaibhavSuryavanshi

for breaking my record of the fastest @IPL hundred by an Indian! Even more special to see it happen while playing for @rajasthanroyals, just like I did. "There's truly something magical about this franchise for youngsters. Long way to go, champ!" wrote Pathan.

India great Yuvraj Singh too

was left hugely impressed.

"What were you doing at 14?! This kid is taking on the best bowlers in the world without blinking an eyelid! Vaibhav Suryavanshi - remember the name! Playing with a fearless attitude. Proud to see the next generation shine!" wrote Yuvraj.

Former India opener Kris Srikanth called Suryavanshi the next superstar of Indian cricket.

"At 14, most kids dream & eat Icecream. Vaibhav Suryavanshi delivers a fabulous 100 against one of the contenders for IPL! composure, class, and courage beyond his years. We are witnessing the rise of a phenomena. Indian cricket's next superstar is here," said Srikanth.

The national T20 captain and Mumbai Indians star Suryakumar Yadav lauded the teenager as well and described his knock as a 'carnage of an innings'.

"Absolutely insane!" he posted on Instagram.

## Bihar CM announces ₹10L reward

**Patna:** Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Tuesday lauded 14-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi for becoming the youngest-ever centurion in T20 cricket, and announced a cash reward of Rs 10 lakh for his stellar performance. Suryavanshi lit up the IPL Monday evening with his 38-ball 101 that was dotted with 11 sixes and seven fours. A staggering 94 runs of the young Rajasthan Royals batter came in boundaries in the match against Gujarat Titans. "Congratulations and best wishes to Vaibhav Suryavanshi from Bihar, who has become the youngest player in the history of IPL to score a century. With his hard work and talent, he has emerged as a new hope for Indian cricket. Everyone is proud of him. "I had the opportunity to meet Vaibhav and his father in 2024... After his outstanding performance in the IPL, I congratulated him over phone. He will also be given a cash reward of Rs 10 lakh by the state government. I wish that he creates new records for the Indian team in the future and brings glory to the country," Kumar said in a post on X. Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary also congratulated Vaibhav in another post on X. "Every Bihari is proud of Vaibhav Suryavanshi. The NDA government stands with athletes at every step. Because of his exceptional performance, CM Nitish Kumar ji has announced a cash reward of Rs 10 lakh for him," he said.

India pacer Mohammed Shami wrote: "Vaibhav Suryavanshi, what an incredible talent.. Scoring a century at just 14 is unreal. Keep shining brother."

Former India women's team captain Mithali Raj was among the greats of the game who were left in awe of the teenager from Bihar.