



LEISURE | P2



INTERNATIONAL | P10



BUSINESS | P11



SPORTS | P12

POST NEWS NETWORK

Both projects were approved by the Odisha government, the statement said. Among others, the SLSWCA also approved the proposals of Linde India Ltd (₹425 crore), Bhuvaneshwari Foods & Beverages Pvt Ltd (₹300 crore), ACME Clean Energy Pvt Ltd (₹366.50 crore), and Vasan Vihar Constructions (₹184.50 crore).

NATURE'S FURY: Roads closed as large waves batter the Wellington coastlines in New Zealand. Evidence

1

West Bengal's naming of a newly-built Jagannath temple at Digsha as 'Jagannath Dham' has come in for severe flak from devotees, priests and researchers, who have called for the removal of this 'self-styled' title as it hurts the sentiments of millions of devotees of Lord Jagannath across the world. They assert that only Puri should be referred to as 'Jagannath Dham' as is mentioned in scriptures and has been the practice over centuries. Scholars contend that it was Adi Shankaracharya who established four 'Dhams' in four corners of India – Puri in east, Dwarka in west, Badrinath in north and Rameswaram in south – and renaming any other temple as 'Dham' goes against the tradition and tenets of Hindu beliefs.

Bhubaneswar, May 2: Amid a row over the West Bengal government's portrayal of the newly inaugurated Digha temple as 'Jagannath Dham' and alleged use of surplus wood of the Puri shrine in the construction of idols there, state Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan Friday asked the Shree Jagannath

Most of it came tumbling down within a decade. But Langbroek and others believe the landing capsule itself — a spherical object about 1 metre in diameter — has been circling the world in a highly elliptical

Plus: Sovle



craft to fa

survive reentry. It was built to withstand a descent through the carbon dioxide-thick atmosphere of Venus, said Lang-

north and south latitude, or as far north as London and Edmonton in Alberta, Canada, almost all the way down to South America's Cape Horn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Noting that the party had extended all possible support to the Centre in the fight against terrorism at the last CWC meeting, Kharge said no clear strategy had come from the government even several days after the Bhabalgam attack. **DE**

DO

channels for allegedly disseminating “false, provocative and communally sensitive content” about India and has also strongly objected to the BBC’s reportage on the Babelgum

ASSOCIATED PRESS

“While not without risk, we should not be too worried,” Langbroek said in an email.

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“false, provocative and communally sensitive content” about India and has also strongly objected to the BBC’s reportage on the Pahalgam attack. The government’s move

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES

You have ideas aplenty! And you want to roll them out to anyone who will hear them. You are also in a mood to love and give. Are you thinking of taking your grandmother to the beauty parlour for a makeover? Ganesha approves.

TAURUS

Today is the day of showing care and concern to all family members, says Ganesha. There is a possibility that you may feel estranged from your spouse and your relationship might be in danger of hitting the dead end. Stay calm and avoid escalating the tension, for the sake of your family, if nothing else, advises Ganesha.

GEMINI

Today is an auspicious and fruitful day for you. You will become excited by every very small accomplishments. You will need to fulfill the demands made upon you by your family and friends. You will probably find yourself balancing the cheque book at home, or buying appliances for the house, says Ganesha.

CANCER

Alot can happen over a cup of coffee, and today a lot will. Things will be moving quite swiftly today; a little too swiftly to your liking. You will get a lot of authority at the workplace, and you will use it to the point of abuse. Your prime focus, however, will be your family.

LEO

You will receive extremely good news from your friends today. You will have co-operation and the support of your spouse. You will feel emotional today. Your understanding nature will make everything easy however. You are likely to be in a state of sensitivity with regards to feelings today, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

Look before you leap. Ganesha warns that there may be trouble brewing for you and it may catch you unawares. You will be very upbeat at work, and you realise that your high spirits benefit your colleagues too. You may reserve the evening for a quite time with your family, reminiscing the happy times spent together in the past.

LIBRA

Some things are always remembered with fondness. Today may be one of those days when you tend to get wistful and nostalgic. Let this emotion spur you on and later in the day, you may strive hard to reconnect with your near and dear ones. Listen to your heart. You can do nothing wrong today, as your charisma will be overwhelming.

SCORPIO

Get your family together today and spend most of the time with them, says Ganesha. If being practical is important, then have your close friends over at your place too. Aromatic dinner with your beloved is on the cards today.

SAGITTARIUS

All said and done, today Ganesha foresees you striking a fine balance between your profession and passion. Profession will win the hand during the course of the day. Your fitting in social circles is slated to take a back-seat as you tend to focus more on your work.

CAPRICORN

Today, you'll open a mix bag of surprises, opportunities, challenges, and not-so good fall of events. You'll have a tendency of letting the noticeable details fall between the cracks at work. This is certainly not a good trait to have, however, it will not harm you much.

AQUARIUS

It's time for some family bonding! You realise that you've neglected your near and dear. Now, you need to do something substantial to win back your family's approval. However, your sincerity alone will melt their hearts. Holding your sweetheart's hand at dinner is a perfect way to end the day, says Ganesha.

PISCES

Contemplating on the source which triggered problems for you recently will be the order of the day. Identifying the source is half the work done; eliminating it is just a matter of initiative and courage, says Ganesha.



TOM CRUISE'S SECRET TO PREPARING FOR STUNTS

Hollywood action legend Tom Cruise shared his secret to preparing for thrilling aerial stunts – a ‘massive breakfast.’ The action legend hanged off a military plane in the opening scene of *Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation*, and has done numerous nail-biting aerial sequences in the film series.

JEREMY RENNER ON WHY HE TURNED DOWN HAWKEYE 2

Jeremy Renner declined doing *Hawkeye 2* because he was offered lower pay after his fatal snow plough accident. In an interview, the actor claimed he was offered “half” of his salary from the first season of the Disney+ series in which he starred as the titular character.



Deepika on her early days in showbiz

Mumbai: At the Waves Summit 2025, Deepika Padukone, Shah Rukh Khan, and Karan Johar came together for a powerful discussion on India's evolving media and entertainment landscape. The two-day event aims to elevate the industry through global collaboration. During the session, Deepika and Shah Rukh shared a candid and heartfelt conversation, reflecting on their personal journeys and experiences in cinema.

When the topic turned to nepotism and the ongoing insider-outsider debate, Deepika offered her perspective. She noted that such terms are more commonly used today than when she began her career.

“When I started, it was just a new world. I was a 17-year-old girl from Bangalore,” she said.

Deepika recalled her early days, highlighting how Farah Khan cast her in *Om Shanti Om* without an audition. At the time, SRK was shooting *Chak De! India* in Australia, and she was simply told she would meet him upon his return. Deepika, who began as a model, acknowledged that her previous work helped, but emphasised that passion, dedication, and hard

work were what truly mattered. She also remembered the warmth she received from Shah Rukh on set. SRK, in turn, praised Deepika, especially as she embraces her new role as a mother.

AGENCIES



Kareena's Hollywood plans

Mumbai: Kareena Kapoor Khan made a striking appearance at the WAVES 2025 Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit Friday, May 2.

In a candid conversation with Karan Johar, the actress reflected on her journey in Hindi cinema and her views on venturing into Hollywood. Karan playfully reminded her of her old re-

mark on Koffee With Karan, where she had quipped, “*Sab bus pakad pakadke Hollywood jaa rahe hai*,” referring to Indian stars like Priyanka Chopra and Deepika Padukone pursuing international projects.

When asked about her own Hollywood plans, Kareena responded with trademark wit and pride, saying, “I’m right here. I’m very happy with my Indian movies and acting. I really enjoy it. I love dancing to our Hindi film songs. I really enjoy delivering Hindi dialogues. I’m a Sikhni from Bhatinda.” She emphasised her love for Indian cinema, its music, and the power of Hindi dialogue.

Karan also recalled her famous line from *Jab We Met*, “Main apni favourite hoon.” Kareena responded with warmth, saying the dialogue is more than iconic—it’s empowering. “Every woman should say it—I’m my own favourite.” It’s a reminder to love and value yourself, always.

AGENCIES

Bhumi in her romance era

Mumbai: Actress Bhumi Pednekar is currently in her ‘romance era’ and she’s radiating all the love and positivity that comes with it.

Taking to Instagram, the Bhakshak actress posted a graceful video of herself walking in a beautiful saree near a swimming pool, capturing the essence of elegance and charm. In the clip, Bhumi is seen striking different poses looking at the camera. She also added the trending track Hua Main x Finding Her by Shubhadip Dey to the clip. For the caption,

Pednekar wrote, “Because I’m in my romance era Are you feeling the love?!”

The actress exuded grace in a gold handwoven Ekaya Banaras saree paired with bold statement jewelry. This was her look from the recently concluded Wave Summit India 2025.

The *Mere Husband Ki Biwi* actress also shared videos of herself delivering a speech at the Wave Summit India 2025. She captioned one of the posts, “Had the opportunity to speak in front of our Hon. Prime Minister today for the Waves Summit 2025. The emergence of this platform is truly going to be disruptive for creator industry.”

IANIS

Curtains down on 3-day Swarangini at OUAT



Bhubaneswar: The College of Agriculture under Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) celebrated its three-day annual cultural festival ‘Swarangini’, organised by its dramatic committee ‘Chirantani’. The valedictory evening was graced Friday by the Hon’ble Vice-Chancellor of OUAT, Prof. Pravat Kumar Roul as the Chief guest who commended the students’ creative talents and underlined the integral connection between agriculture and culture in shaping society.

The event also featured a special appearance by celebrated Odia film personality, noted comedian Pragyan Ranjan Khatua. He entertained the audience with his trademark humour and recollected the memories of his college days.

The Dean of the College

Prof. Hrushikesh Patro, who chaired the session, emphasized the role of cultural events in holistic student development. The Dramatic Committee advisor Dr. Chakradhar Patra, in his welcome address, introduced the guests and highlighted the objectives of Swarangini.

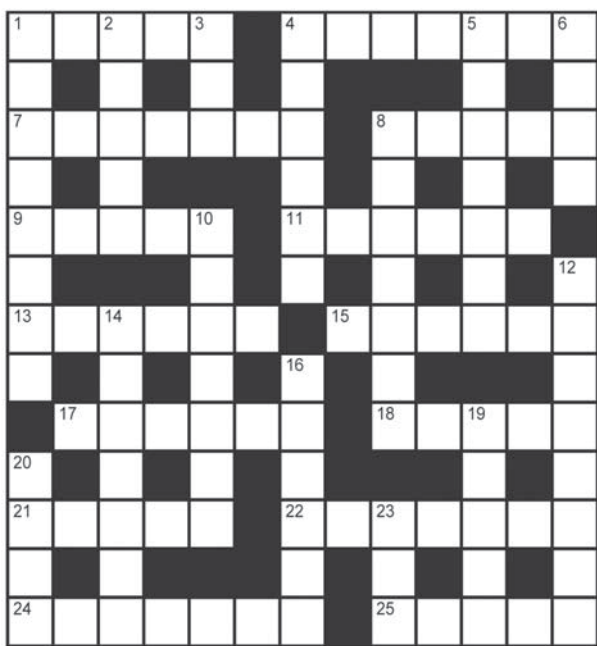
Sarthak Raut, Chairman of the dramatic committee presented the annual report and discussed future plans for the organisation’s growth. Co-Chairman Soumya Ranjan Dash delivered the vote of thanks, acknowledging the contributions of guests and volunteers.

Awards were presented to students who excelled in various competitions during the event. The concluding and prize distribution ceremony was anchored by third-year student Abhinash Nayak.

PNN

FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

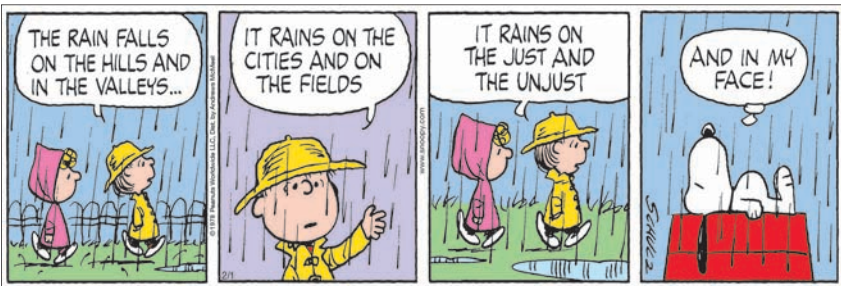
- Ward off
- An arc above
- Diapers
- Europe’s longest river
- Kind of stare
- Docket
- Modernise
- Poser
- To the rear, at sea
- Coffee shop order

Down

- Small motorboat
- New Guinea
- Luau souvenir
- Rapsallion
- Sturdy thickset canine

- Out of whack
- Hot spot
- Shake
- Rock bottom
- Watered-down locale
- Some litter members
- Lover
- Really, really dislike
- Inveigle
- Healed
- Can of worms?
- Summer cooler

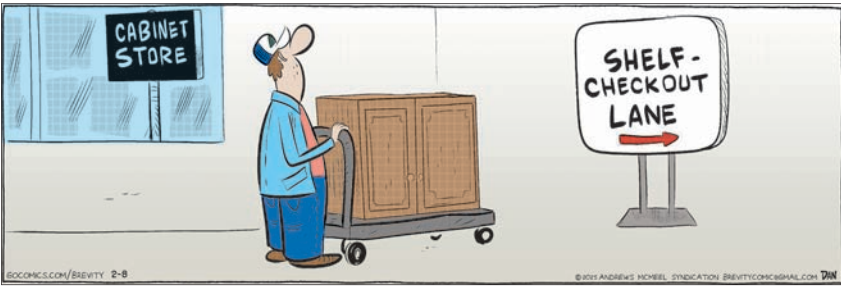
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Stewart School students shine in ICSE & ISC

Cuttack: Students of Stewart School, Cuttack have excelled in ICSE and ISC exams, with Tanisha Nayak securing the highest mark in the school in ICSE with 98.4 per cent. Gurubhakti Seba Rath and Bibhas Mishra followed with 97.8 per cent and 97.6 per cent, respectively. In ISC exam, Justin Alexander Joji topped the Humanities stream with 97.75 per cent, while Sohaib Akhtar excelled in Commerce with 94.75 per cent. Akshita Jenepha Behera scored 92 per cent in science.



CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Shrashti Gupta, W/o- Pankaj Gupta, R/o- Sohela, Dist.- Bargarh-768033 declare by this affidavit No.- 869 dated 10th April, 2025 that now onwards, I shall be known as Shrishti Jainarayan Gupta for all future purposes. Shrishti Jainarayan Gupta

By virtue of an Affidavit sworn before The Executive Magistrate, Bhapur, Dated : 25.04.2025, I, Joginath Mallik, S/o - Ainth Mallik, Address : At - Karabar, P.O. - Karabar, PS - Fategarh, Dist. : Cuttack-752063, declare that I have changed my name from Bhikari Mallik to Joginath Mallik. Henceforth, I shall be known as Joginath Mallik for all purposes. Joginath Mallik

By virtue of an Affidavit sworn before The Executive Magistrate, Badamba, Dated : 11.03.2025, I, Kasturi Dei, W/o - Gopinath Nayak, Address : At - Gopinathpur, P.O. - Singhanathpitha, P.S. - Badamba, Dist. : Cuttack-754031, declare that I have changed my name from Kasturi Nayak to Kasturi Dei. Henceforth, I shall be known as Kasturi Dei for all purposes. Kasturi Dei

By virtue of an affidavit before Executive Magistrate, Jajpur Road vide no.374/25. I have changed my daughters name from Sai Aradhya Gudi to Sai Aradhya Gudi. Hence she will be named as Sai Aradhya Gudi for all purposes from this day of declaration. S/d. Ramesh Chandra Gudi

LOST

I Sukanti Sahoo, W/o. Sunyabasi Sahoo, R/o. Village - Rengalipanchu, P.O. - Sahebi, PS. - Naktideul, Dist. : Sambalpur have lost somewhere the Sale Deed bearing No. 1641800323 dated 5.10.2018. Inspite of my thorough search I could not traced out the same.

Sahajog to link urban poor with govt schemes

A mobile app will soon be developed to connect eligible beneficiaries directly to the schemes, says H&UD Minister KC Mahapatra



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 2: The state government Thursday launched Sahajog, a first-of-its-kind initiative aimed at facilitating access to various government welfare schemes for the urban poor.

Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra officially launched the programme in Bhubaneswar.

Designed to ensure last-mile delivery, Sahajog focuses on identifying eligible beneficiaries in urban poor communities and connecting them to appropriate schemes through mass awareness, doorstep delivery of services, and strengthened

implementation mechanisms at the urban local body (ULB) and district levels, officials said.

Officials said housing support under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) would serve as the entry point for delivering other benefits to eligible families.

Launching the initiative, Mahapatra said the programme will run in campaign mode from May 1 to June 20, turning the effort into a mass movement. He added that eight District Collectors have been directed to form coordination committees and that a mobile app will soon be developed to connect eligible beneficiaries directly to the schemes.

He said after covering urban

areas, the initiative will be extended to rural beneficiaries.

The minister said that at present, over 15 lakh people across 44 ULBs in eight districts are included in the programme's first phase. The districts are: Khurda, Cuttack, Ganjam, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Bhadrak.

The initiative will initially focus on 14 priority schemes, including Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) ration cards under NFSA, Ayushman Bharat card, Labour and E-Shram cards, Subhadra Yojana, PM Vishwakarma Yojana, Madhubabu Pension Yojana, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Pipe Water Supply, PM Suraksha Bima Yojana, Garima Scheme, and others.

Housing benefits under PMAY (U) will act as the entry point, with other schemes being layered in to ensure comprehensive benefit delivery.

H&UD principal secretary Usha Padhee said, "We are taking initiatives for the weaker sections of society. As land, house, water, electricity are the basic needs of economically weaker sections, the department will function as the nodal agency of the initiative."

NAREDCO Mahi hosts Bhubaneswar Meet

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 2: National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) Mahi, in collaboration with ICC National Women's Entrepreneurship Council (INWEC), Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and MSME development and facilitation office (DFO), Cuttack hosted Bhubaneswar Meet on the third day of the INWEC National Women Business Mela 2.0 at the exhibition ground here Friday.

Aimed at empowering women and integrating them into mainstream business and the real estate ecosystem, the mela saw enthusiastic participation from entrepreneurs, industrialists, and startup founders across the state and beyond. Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy graced the occasion as chief guest and formally inaugurated the event. "Women today aspire to be self-reliant and empowered.

Business serves as a powerful platform for them to grow, innovate, and contribute meaningfully to national progress," she stated, praising NAREDCO Mahi for its efforts towards promoting women's participation in the real estate sector. Cuttack-Barabati MLA Sophia Firdous and MSME Deputy Director Nitisha Maan attended the event as guests of honour. Firdous noted the impressive growth of the event, and said, "From its humble beginning in 2022, the fair has grown significantly, reflecting the strength of women supporting women and building community-based employment."

NAREDCO Mahi chairperson Ananta S Raghubanshi highlighted the broader vision of the initiative, and stated, "This movement is now spearheading a transformation in the real estate sector. Our focus areas include promoting women in business, encouraging water conservation, and fostering the startup ecosystem."

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 2: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Thursday inaugurated two waiting centres for labourers here and announced that more such facilities would be opened across the state for the welfare of workers.

During the state-level International Workers' Day-2025 function here, he unveiled the two waiting centres at Dumduma and Kalpana areas in the City.

Each centre has facilities like drinking water, toilets and parks for workers.

The Chief Minister announced that such centres will soon come up in Cuttack, Rourkela, Sambalpur, Keonjhar, and Berhampur cities.

He also felicitated functionaries of various trade unions and distributed assistance under the Construction Workers Welfare Scheme for education, marriage, maternity, death, and funeral assistance.

"Since our government came



SAFETY AT STAKE: Damaged shade of a traffic post in front of Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar leans towards the road, posing threat to commuters, Friday

PHOTO: BIKASH NAYAK

NHRC: Take steps to protect the vulnerable from heatwave

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 2: In view of soaring temperatures in several parts of the country, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has asked 11 states, including Odisha, to take "immediate preemptive measures" to protect the vulnerable sections of society, who are at a risk of suffering heat-related illnesses.

The apex rights body, in a statement issued Thursday, highlighted data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) about the "reported death of 3,798 persons between 2018 to 2022 due to heat and sun strokes", and emphasised the urgent need for "integrated and inclusive measures".

The NHRC, in its letter sent

to chief secretaries of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan, called for provisioning of shelters, supply of relief material, amendment of working hours and availability of standard procedures for treating heat-related illnesses.

These states have been asked to "submit action-taken reports" to protect the lives of those vulnerable to heatwaves, especially the economically weaker ones, as per the existing SOPs or guidelines issued by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to mitigate the impact of heatwaves, it said.

In view of the heatwaves during summer, particularly in

the northern, central and western parts of the country, the NHRC has asked the 11 states to take immediate preemptive measures to protect the outdoor workers, the elderly, children and the homeless, who are at risk due to lack of adequate shelter and resources.

In its communication to the states, the rights panel has reiterated the guidelines of the NDMA to mitigate the impacts of heatwaves.

These guidelines include establishing and implementing SOPs for treating heat-related ailments and treatment protocols; activating public spaces such as schools, Anganwadi centres, and community halls with adequate ventilation, fans, drinking water, and basic medical supplies.

Bengal woman found dead in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 2: The body of a 28-year-old woman was found hanging from the ceiling of her rented accommodation near Utkal Vatika under Laxmisagar police station here Thursday night.

According to Laxmisagar inspector-in-charge (IIC) P Shyam Sundar Rao, "The deceased has been identified as Sarina Khatun, a native of Siliguri in West Bengal. The woman was residing along with her younger sister."

The reason behind Sarina taking the extreme step is yet unclear as no suicide note was found from the spot. Sarina's younger sister found the body hanging from the ceiling of the apartment when she returned from shopping around 9pm, and alerted the cops, Rao said.

He added that Sarina had parted ways with her husband a few years ago, and is survived by her six-year-old daughter. A UD case has been registered, and the body sent to Capital Hospital for post-mortem.

Oppn claims credit; BJP says not under pressure

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 2: The ruling BJP in Odisha has firmly rejected allegations that it acted under pressure from Opposition parties like BJD and Congress in approving the inclusion of caste enumeration in the upcoming national census. In separate press conferences, leaders from both the BJD and Congress claimed that the Centre's decision was the result of their longstanding demands.

Congress workers, led by OPCC president Bhakta Charan Das, celebrated the development with a 'Vijay Utsav' at the party's state headquarters Thursday evening.

Both parties took credit for Wednesday's decision by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) to include a caste survey in the next census. They maintained that the Cen-

tre had "bowed to pressure".

"Our leader Rahul Gandhi has been advocating for the caste-based census since a long time, both in Parliament and outside. They (BJP) criticised our leader and dismissed his arguments. But, now they have been forced to accept our demand," OPCC president Bhakta Charan Das said.

He criticised the NDA for taking a decade to take the decision. Das also took aim at the previous BJD government, which remained in power in Odisha for 24 years.

He noted that although the OBC population in the state is around 54 per cent, they receive only 11.27 per cent reservation in government recruitment.

He further expressed concern over the lack of OBC reservation in the education sector.

In a separate presser, BJD leaders Sanjay Das Burma, Arun



Kumar Sahoo, and Snehangini Chhuria emphasised that former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had been demanding a caste-based census since 2010.

"The recent decision of the Centre to go for caste enumeration is a result of our leader's consistent efforts," the BJD said in an official statement.

BJD MLA and former minister Arun Kumar Sahoo said Patnaik had first envisioned the idea of conducting a caste

enumeration in the country. "The Centre was finally forced to go for caste enumeration only because of the pressure mounted on them," Sahoo said.

Chhuria said, "Although the Central government has agreed for the caste-based census, it should not be used as an election stunt. Everyone knows that the Union government had opposed it earlier. Now that it is announced, there should be sincere steps to use it to ensure

social justice for all sections."

She said a caste-based census can ensure proper reservation not just for SCs and STs, but also for OBCs, thereby helping establish social justice in the country.

However, senior BJP leader and Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi rejected the allegations of the Congress and the BJD. "There is no pressure on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Everybody knows that the BJP government does not work under pressure from anybody. The decision to go for a caste enumeration is taken at the appropriate time," Sarangi said.

Addressing questions about the timing of the announcement ahead of the Bihar elections, Sarangi said, "There's nothing political about the timing. Look at it positively. If elections were the motive, the BJP could have made this move before the 2019 or 2024 general elections."

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No headway in creation of ESZ around Similipal

More than 50 unauthorised stone crusher units and over 100 illegal quarries are reportedly operating between Thakurmunda on the foothills of Similipal and Bangiriposhi in Mayurbhanj district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, May 2: Uncertainty continues over the proposal to declare areas surrounding the Similipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district as an eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) despite repeated efforts by the Forest department to move the process forward under provisions of the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

Although the Baripada forest division had submitted a proposal to declare an area of 0-5 km radius around the protected forest as a restricted zone, it remains stalled due to a lack of response from the state government. Sources said the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has directed the state government to clarify details regarding the buffer zone of the Similipal sanctuary, but no formal communication has yet been made.

As a result, unregulated settlements and illegal activities are reportedly on the rise in the areas meant to be environmentally protected. Forest officials said the aim is to curb human activities that may harm the ecosystem and protect the biodiversity in and around the national park.



A draft notification was issued proposing the declaration of 1,765.29 sq km area around Similipal and Hadagarh wildlife sanctuaries as eco-sensitive zone in January 2019. The draft suggested a boundary ranging from 0-10 km from the protected areas. However, after legal challenges were raised in the Orissa High Court, the proposed ESZ was scaled back to an area of 0-5 km radius.

Local residents had filed a petition in the Supreme Court seeking to restrict activity within 0-1 km radius around the area in question. In response, the previous state government had submitted documents to the court proposing that the area be declared as an ESZ. The Supreme Court, however, sought clarification on why this specific zone should be declared eco-sensitive.

As the case remains sub judice, reports suggest that illegal stone quarries and crushers continue to operate in the proposed eco-sensitive areas around Similipal. More than 50 unauthorised stone crusher units and over 100 illegal quarries are reportedly operating between Thakurmunda on the foothills of Similipal and Bangiriposhi in Mayurbhanj district.

Forest officials said that the proposal to declare the area as ESZ was aimed at limiting illegal activities such as mining, stone quarrying, and the establishment of polluting industries. The Forest department's intent was to use this declaration to help curb unlawful practices, given the region's ecological sensitivity.

However, a few individuals and groups with vested interest have opposed the initiative. Moreover, no final notification has been issued even after six years.

The MoEF&CC has indicated that it is awaiting a final and clear response from the state government. Environmental experts have expressed concern over the continued delay.

Moreover, the proposed ESZ declaration does not involve the displacement or relocation of local communities. Agricultural activities in the region will also remain unaffected.

When contacted, former wildlife warden and independent director of the Odisha Forest Development Corporation, Bhanumitra Acharya, said that a prompt clarification from the state government to the Supreme Court would help establish the ESZ as a protective shield for Similipal.

2 held for murder of 17-year-old girl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, May 2: Police Friday arrested two persons for the murder of a 17-year-old girl in Ganjam district, an official said.

The accused were identified as Muna Khan (20) of Antarabatia village, near Gopalpur, and a 16-year-old boy from Khurda district, police said.

The deceased, a student of the Industrial Training Institute (ITI), Berhampur, was in a relationship with Khan for the past few years, which ended recently for unspecified reasons, according to police.

On Thursday morning, both the accused went to the victim's house in Karapalli, under the jurisdiction of Gopalpur police station, while she was alone. An argument broke out between Khan and the girl.

During the confrontation, Khan allegedly threatened to harm himself if she did not agree to rekindle their relationship, police said.

"He then cut his hand with a blade. The girl attempted to intervene and tried to take the blade from him. She also tried to call her father. Khan then attempted to snatch the phone from her, leading to a struggle," police added.

At that point, the juvenile allegedly struck the girl on the head with a crowbar, causing her to collapse, police said, adding that Khan then cut the girl's hand before fleeing the scene.

Police recovered a crowbar, two razor blades, a motorcycle, and two mobile phones used in the crime.

The accused were apprehended while trying to flee from Berhampur, said Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M.

Govt officer alleges assault by BJD MLA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur, May 2: A government officer has lodged a police complaint alleging that BJD MLA Biswa Ranjan Mallick slapped him and also made a casteist slur against him.

Mallick, the MLA of Bari Assembly constituency, rejected the allegation levelled by Junior Revenue Assistant Amar Ranjan Nayak.

Police said they have started an investigation into the allegations.

In the complaint, the officer said that the MLA called him to the Bari block office at 12.45pm Monday.

"When I reached, MLA Mallick was sitting there along with the chairman and vice chairman of the block and some of his supporters. The MLA enquired about a specific file and then slapped me, besides abusing me about my caste," he alleged.

Minor girl molested at SSD hostel in Koraput

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nandapur/Lamtaput, May 2: A serious allegation of molestation has surfaced from a girls' hostel run by the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes Development department in Lamtaput block under Nandapur police sub-division in Koraput district.

According to reports, an unidentified youth entered the hostel and allegedly molested an 8-year-old girl student April 13 night. The incident came to light 17 days later, April 30, when the student was sent back home by the hostel authorities.

Observing her deteriorating health, her family questioned her and learned about the alleged incident. They subsequently lodged a complaint at the Machkund police station.

The incident has stirred political unrest in Lamtaput block. Superintendent of Police Rohit Verma, SDPO Debendra Mallik, and a special investigation team visited the hostel in Guneipada Thursday to probe the matter.

Machkund police have registered a case (33/2025), and Sub-Inspector Sukra Madhi has begun the investigation. The victim underwent medical examination, and her statement was recorded before a magistrate.



corded before a magistrate.

Despite the gravity of the incident, no arrest has been made so far. Public anger has intensified due to the delay in action and the lack of accountability on part of the hostel superintendent, who allegedly failed to report or act on the matter during the 17-day period.

The victim's family, accompanied by local political leaders and activists, staged a protest march to the Lamtaput police outpost Friday evening. They submitted a memorandum to Officer-in-Charge Srikant Ghosh, demanding the immediate arrest of the accused and strict action against the hostel authorities.

Due to the sensitivity of the case, SDPO Debendra Mallik declined to provide further comments regarding the ongoing investigation. Meanwhile, a few

local youths were detained for questioning as part of the inquiry.

Under the direction of the SP, police personnel from Nandapur, Padua, Baipariguda, Jeypore, and Koraput headquarters have joined the investigation and were seen examining the hostel premises Friday.

While the hostel superintendent has not issued any statement, District Welfare Officer Sunil Kumar Tandi confirmed that an internal departmental probe was underway.

According to Tandi, Assistant District Welfare Officer Arjun Nayak has already visited the hostel, assessed the situation, and held discussions with the victim's family. The student is currently receiving medical treatment, and further action will be taken once the medical report is received.

Labourer thrashed to death on Labour Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, May 2: A 22-year-old labourer identified as Arijit Jena from Jaraka village, died on Labour Day after allegedly being thrashed and tortured by the owner and staff of a private stone crusher unit in Jajpur district.

According to the complaint filed by Arijit's father, the incident occurred at Padmabati Crusher in Rahadpur under Jenapur police limits. Arijit, who had been working there for past three months, went missing April 27. His family traced him to the crusher unit owner's residence, where they found him chained and severely injured.

Arijit had suffered burn wounds from hot iron rods and multiple blows to his chest and groin area. His captors allegedly recorded videos of the torture and threatened his family. Despite being taken to a hospital later that morning, Arijit succumbed to his injuries at 3:30am May 1.

Cobras used in dance during wedding procession, rescued

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhadrak, May 2: The Forest department rescued three live cobras which were used in a dance performance during a wedding procession, an official said.

The incident took place at Chhedak village under Dhamra police station limits late Wednesday night.

A snake charmer and two performers – a man and a woman – entertained wedding guests (baraatis) by dancing to a popular 'Nagin' song as they were walking along Dhamra-Chandbali road.

The performers danced to the tune of drum beats and other musical instruments while carrying the snakes inside baskets or holding them in their hands.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of the Bhadrak Wildlife Division intercepted the procession and rescued the snakes.



"We have seized the snakes and are trying to identify the snake charmer involved. The Special Task Force (STF) has been asked to assist in the investigation," said Soubhagya Kumar Sahu, Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife).

However, nobody has been arrested in this connection, the DFO added.

The use of wild animals like cobra is a punishable offence under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

इंडियन बैंक

Indian Bank

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For details, please refer AAI's website www.aai.aero under Careers Section and Employment News/Rozgar Samachar dated 10.05.2025

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Executive Director (HR)

This is faithfulness, to admit and to manifest no other move-ments but only the movements prompted and guided by the Divine.

THE MOTHER

Clock’s Ticking

Seven years ago, the NSE International Exchange (NSE IX) was launched with much fanfare at GIFT City—India’s glittering bet on becoming the next Singapore or London in global finance. Fast forward to today, and it’s safe to say the hype hasn’t quite matched the hustle. Despite a carefully crafted framework and political will, NSE IX has slowly taken off. Enter Neeraj Kumar Gupta.

The former Union Finance Secretary and disinvestment czar has now become Chairman and Public Interest Director of NSE IX. With his decades of bureaucratic battle-hardened experience, from handling PSUs and equity ETFs to shepherding big-ticket policy reforms, Gupta’s appointment is considered a make-or-break moment for NSE IX.

What’s holding the exchange back? For starters, Indian companies still look outward—Singapore, London, New York—when it comes to raising capital. Global investors don’t see enough reason to shift their gaze inward. And GIFT City’s “unified regulator,” IFSCA, hasn’t yet lived up to the promise of being a true one-stop shop. It still leans heavily on the older regulatory machinery of SEBI and RBI, and frankly, that’s not going to cut it.

If NSE IX is to become the financial magnet it was meant to be, it must offer transactional ease that beats Singapore, not just mimics it. That means faster approvals, lighter compliance, and a smarter, investor-first playbook. Gupta knows how to break silos and get regulators to speak the same language—now’s the time to prove he can do just that. The clock is ticking.

CPC’s snail pace

It has been almost four months since the government initially approved the establishment of the 8th Central Pay Commission (CPC), and there have been no updates since then. Now, whispers are emerging that the gears are finally turning. But even those seem more like the creaking of bureaucracy than the hum of decisive action.

The government is inching toward finalising the terms of reference and picking the chairperson and members. That’s right—we’re still talking about forming the team. Not drafting a report. Not consultations. Just assembling the crew.

The usual 10-year ritual of reviewing salaries and pensions of Central government employees is supposed to factor in cost of living, economic conditions, and inflation. Fair enough. But when you consider that this affects nearly 50 lakh Central employees and 60 lakh pensioners, you’d think urgency would be baked into the process.

Instead, we get the classic slow burn. An internal circular last week invited applications to fill 35 posts on a deputation basis—so yes, the office is still under construction.

If all goes well (and that’s a big if), the 8th CPC will submit its report by mid-2026. Retroactive salary and pension adjustments may follow in 2027-28. That’s a full decade since the last revision in 2016. And with inflation nibbling away at paychecks, that’s a long time to ask people to wait. Do remember that people don’t spend “in principle”. They pay in reality. Time to pick up the pace.

Loud signal

Few blink when the government shuffles its babus. It’s like musical chairs—routine, rhythmic, and mostly unremarkable. But now and then, a tune changes. And this time, it did.

The latest round of administrative reshuffles has given us more than just a list of who’s where. It’s given us a clear frontrunner: the IAS batch of 1994. In an unusually bold sweep, nine officers from this cohort have been elevated from Additional Secretary to Secretary, and two more named Special Secretaries. That’s eleven heavy-hitters from the same batch, now occupying the highest bureaucratic perches in India.

It matters because this isn’t just paperwork. It’s a power play.

Many of these officers have previously served in high-trust zones like the Prime Minister’s Office and the Cabinet Secretariat—roles that tend to groom officers not just in governance but also in the government’s thinking. Arvind Srivastava, now Revenue Secretary, was with the PMO until recently. Anuradha Thakur, the incoming Economic Affairs Secretary, has spent time in the Cabinet Secretariat. Their current postings put them at the heart of India’s financial and economic policy engine.

The rise of this batch signals more than seniority or coincidence. It suggests consolidation, perhaps even calibration, of administrative leadership around a cohort closely aligned with the Centre’s priorities.

It’s not unprecedented for a batch to rise together. But the scale and the strategic positioning make this one worth watching. The batch of ’94 isn’t just stepping up—they’re stepping in, shaping what comes next.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let’s multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

The only solutions that are ever worth anything are the solutions that people find themselves.

SATYAJIT RAY

In a mad world, only the mad are sane.

AKIRA KUROSAWA

A story starts before we encounter it and concludes long after we have turned away.

ABBAS KIAROSTAMI

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1494:** European explorer Christopher Columbus encountered the island of Jamaica, which he named Santiago.
- 1815:** The Congress Kingdom of Poland was created by the Congress of Vienna as part of the political settlement at the end of the Napoleonic Wars.
- 1952:** The Kentucky Derby, the most prestigious American horse race, was televised nationally in the United States for the first time; the winning horse was Hill Gail, ridden by jockey Eddie Arcaro.
- 1979:** Margaret Thatcher of the Conservative Party was elected British prime minister, becoming the first woman in Europe to hold that post; she later became the longest continuously serving British premier since 1827.
- 1996:** At the first formal review of the 1980 Geneva Convention on Inhumane Weapons, the signatories agreed to curtail the use of land mines over the next decade.

FOCUS

TRUMP'S 100 DAYS

GLOBAL CHAOS

WE are barely 100 days into US President Donald Trump’s second term, but much is already clear. Trump 2.0 is starkly different: more confident and surrounded by a team determined to implement a far more sweeping agenda. Those staffing the administration – amplifiers more than restrainers, enablers more than guardrails – spent the past four years preparing for this moment.

Trump 2.0 is an activist, imperial presidency, at home and abroad. He seems to be everywhere, dominating public space and private conversations alike in much of the world. The contrast with his predecessor President Joe Biden could not be starker.

The administration’s principal policy goal thus far has been to make good on Trump’s campaign pledge to secure the United States’ southern border. But import tariffs – an across-the-board 10% baseline levy, plus additional country-specific tariffs, reaching 145% in China’s case – have become the defining initiative of his presidency.

Foreign policy is also substantially changed. The US has shifted from being a steadfast supporter of Ukraine to tilting decidedly in Russia’s favor. The shift appears to be motivated by a clear dislike for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and an embrace of Russian President Vladimir Putin for reasons unknown.

Trump, who boasted during his campaign that all he needed was a day to end the war, which he regularly blames on Biden and Zelenskyy, is now talking about walking away from diplomacy to end the war entirely. He is finding it difficult to make good on his campaign promise, in no small part because his pro-Russia

policy fails to give Putin any incentive to compromise or Zelensky the confidence to do so. The agreement to establish a US-Ukraine Reconstruction Investment Fund should help, but, to achieve a cessation of hostilities, much more will need to be done to assist Ukraine.

Europe and America’s other traditional allies receive no special treatment, either. This is certainly the case with tariffs, which tellingly spared Russia but severely hit Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Vice President JD Vance traveled to Munich in February to ignite a cultural clash with Europeans, while Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth openly raised doubts about the US commitment to Europe at NATO headquarters. This has spurred European preparations to support Ukraine if American assistance wanes and to achieve strategic self-sufficiency more broadly.

In the Middle East, the administration launched what could well prove to be a promising negotiation with Iran. The stage was set by Israeli military action against Iran and its proxies, the fall of the Assad regime in Syria, and

Iran’s worsening economy, all of which makes backing away from its nuclear program to avoid military attack and secure sanctions relief particularly attractive. If the Trump administration is willing to allow Iran limited uranium enrichment – a concession that may be required to secure a deal –it can expect criticism from some in the US and Israel. But Trump is strong enough to weather the pushback if it comes.

Otherwise, the Trump administration has essentially given Israel’s government a free hand to do what it wants in both Gaza and the West Bank. It seems to have lost interest in extending the Hamas-Israel ceasefire, as this would put it at odds with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, who appears to prioritize his coalition’s survival, through continuing military operations in Gaza, over freeing the remaining hostages.

The most unexpected dimension of US foreign policy, one neither previewed in Trump’s first term nor during the campaign, has been the focus on the Western Hemisphere. Canada and Mexico were sin-

gled out for early tariffs over alleged failures to control their borders. There were also heavy-handed calls to assert US sovereignty over the Panama Canal, Greenland, and Canada. More than anything else, these goals have triggered an anti-American backlash –even flipping the outcome of Canada’s recent federal election.

The biggest foreign-policy uncertainty remains China. On one hand, Trump granted TikTok waivers that allowed it to remain on Americans’ phones, despite uncertainty about whether he has the authority to do so. He continues to speak highly of Chinese President Xi Jinping and expresses confidence that the US and China will reach a deal.

But the massive tariffs he has levied on China mean that the US and Chinese economies will increasingly separate, if not actually decouple. Whether the tariffs are an attempt to gain bargaining leverage or are ends in themselves remain perhaps the biggest question in Sino-US relations.

Overall, Trump 2.0’s foreign policy is more unilateralist than isolationist. This will remain the case. Less clear is the extent to which Trump will move to reduce tariffs, re-think his pro-Russian stance on Ukraine, and press Israel to modify its approach to Gaza and the West Bank –policies that could revive US and global economic growth and bring peace to two regions that have known little of it. Much will depend on the choices of a man who, for better or worse, is already among the most consequential of US presidents.

The writer is a senior counselor at Centerview Partners, Distinguished University Scholar at New York University.

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SPECTRUM TERRORISM

Pahalgam & Pakistan: Connecting the dots

In a conference in Hyderabad on 24 and 25 April, I was asked by a fellow academic from Japan, if India was going to retaliate against Pakistan. I asked her a counter-question if some innocent tourists were killed anywhere in Japan by terrorists, what would have Tokyo done? She was evasive. But she seemed to persuade me that New Delhi should not take military action against Pakistan. That apart, to attack or not attack is the question I wouldlike to evaluate here.

The issue of military confrontation is engaging the thinking of the Indian strategists, observers, onlookers and world leaders. The last segment of stakeholders is concerned mainly because of the perilous prospect of use of nuclear weapons possessed by both countries. Let us evaluate this option or threat already issued by Pakistani media and leadership.

Since the Hiroshima and Nagasaki episodes, nukes have not been used by any country for over seven decades. Use of nukes spells disasters for the entire world including those who unleash

it. So, nukes were conceived as deterrents, not for actual use in years. Now, since the applicability of nukes is the remotest, even the deterrent effect is minimal. But one cannot rule it out by megalomaniacs, autocrats, rogue states and suicidal and self-destructive forces. One could rely on the collective wisdom of the world leadership, at least in their self-interest, to prevail upon the nuclear powers to desist from its use. If, in this case, the world leaders fail to prevent their client states, and allies, may God save this planet.

That said, what should New Delhi do? Should it take on Pakistan! But let us refine this formulation and make it politically correct. That is, India is not declaring a war on Pakistan. India has never invaded any country.

Many may contest the parallel between the 22 April massacre at Pahalgam and 7 October mayhem by Hamas in Israel. It is just because of the history of the controversial conflict between Israel and Palestine. But if you look only at these two pathetic events, the action-reaction continu-

um in both cases is comparable. New Delhi has the right and legitimacy to hunt down the terrorist manufacturing agencies and infrastructure in Pakistan.

Unless the Pakistani army dismantles the terrorist infrastructure and transparently delinks from terrorism, Pakistan is a target. India has been impressing upon the world that Pakistan should be pressed to stop breeding and harbouring terrorists. But the world leadership has not responded as they should have asked no country could be immune to this menace. On the contrary, vested interests like China have shielded Pakistan and its terrorists.

So, what should New Delhi do? India sits on a high moral ground, uses an ethical compass to navigate in global geopolitics. That will still be intact if it goes after terrorists who spill innocent blood. So, it is time the elephant shows its wild side to terrorism.

Having said that, like Lord Krishna advised in Mahabharata, that the war should be the last resort. One should try all avenues prior

to lifting the gun.

The Indian public is more understanding and accommodative. This agitation will subside if Pakistan is brought around. Pakistan should be made to forget Kashmir and return POK. This is indeed a big ask. But this is the only way to peace and stability in the region.

Admittedly, Pakistan will not give away POK. And Pakistan does not exist without lighting and stoking the fire in Kashmir. Pakistani leadership vows 5,000 years of conflict with India on Kashmir. So, India is back to square one. Make diplomatic moves to counter and isolate Pakistan. Tried, tested and exhausted. There will always be leaders like Xi Jinping and Erdogan who will prop up a failed state like Pakistan. So, India has to carry its own cross. Cowing down Pakistan to stop its nefarious actions against India is New Delhi’s call. It is the call of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The writer is Professor of Practice, NIIS Group of Institutions

INFA

Turn of fortune

Sir, Rohit Sharma’s resurgence in IPL 2025 was pivotal for Mumbai Indians’ playoff qualification. After a sluggish start—scoring just 56 runs in his first five matches—Rohit found his rhythm in the sixth game, delivering an unbeaten 76 against CSK, followed by a commanding 70 off 46 balls against Sunrisers Hyderabad. His form continued with a 53-run knock against Rajasthan Royals, contributing to MI’s formidable total of 217/2. This late bloom in form not only stabilized MI’s top order but also provided the aggressive impetus needed during the powerplay overs. Rohit’s partnership with Suryakumar Yadav, particularly their 63-run opening stand against CSK, exemplified this renewed vigor. The return of Hardik Pandya and Jasprit Bumrah further bolstered the team’s performance. Pandya’s leadership and Bumrah’s bowling prowess reinvigorated the squad. Strategic changes, including promoting SKY in the batting order and integrating emerging talents like Ashwani Kumar and Vignesh Puthur, added depth and versatility to the team. This blend of seasoned leadership and emerging talent propelled Mumbai Indians back into playoff contention, reaffirming their status as IPL stalwarts..

Gopalaswamy J, CHENNAI

Bloody business

Sir, talks are circulating about possible retaliatory military action by India against Pakistan following the spine-chilling terror attack at Pahalgam, in which 26 innocent lives were lost. Given the hostile relations between India and Pakistan, which have further escalated after the tragedy, there is a need for great caution and restraint from political leaders, the media, and the public to avoid any possibility of war breaking out between the two neighboring nations. Nationally and internationally, all possible efforts should be made to re-emphasize the need for de-escalation and to avoid war at any cost and under any circumstances. Reckless rumor-mongering and media irresponsibility, which can increase tensions and the possibility of war, should be dealt with sternly. Wars crush humanity, and as history teaches us, from the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings in 1945, wars are at once pointless, relentless, and endless. War is, after all, a bloody business.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

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TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgargh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Pawar's retort to Oppn's criticism on promises

Mumbai, May 2: Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar Friday suggested he was not the one who gave any farm loan waiver assurance before the polls, comments coming after the Congress accused the Mahayuti government of reneging on the promise of providing debt relief to farmers.

The Mahayuti alliance of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) registered a landslide victory in the November 2024 Maharashtra assembly elections by winning 230 out of the 288 seats.

Talking to reporters, senior Congress leader Balasaheb Thorat accused the Mahayuti government of not fulfilling the promises it made ahead of the elections.

"Farmers are going through difficult times and it is the responsibility of the state government to provide some relief to farmers. Ahead of the elections, the government made



The government is spending on some sectors like anything but has taken no decision on farmers' loan waiver. It is unfortunate to see that this state government is not keen on offering any relief to farmers

BALASAHEB THORAT | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

several promises and assurances but after coming to power it is not doing anything on it. So people feel that they have been cheated," he said.

"The government is spending on some sectors like anything but has taken no decision on farmers' loan waiver. It is unfortunate to see that this

state government is not keen on offering any relief to farmers," the former state minister said.

Later during the day, when reporters asked Pawar, who holds the finance portfolio, about Thorat's criticism, he refused to give a direct answer. "Did I give the assurance of

loan waiver ahead of the elections?" he asked in response to the question.

When it was pointed out that the assurance was made by the Mahayuti alliance, Pawar reiterated, "Did I give the assurance? Did I?" Soon afterwards he left the venue without speaking further.

Farmer leader Raju Shetti has also voiced his discontent and criticised the government for what he described as neglect of farmers' issues, including low market prices for key crops such as soybean and cotton.

In March this year, Ajit Pawar, while speaking at an event in hometown Baramati in Pune, had said the current financial situation of the state does not allow for a crop loan waiver and asked farmers to pay instalments in time rather than wait for an announcement in this regard.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had defended Pawar over the remark saying the latter had stated the "government's position".

Corbett tiger finds new home in Rajaji

The tiger was tranquilised and captured Wednesday from the Bijrani range of Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) for translocation to RTR to boost the tiger population there



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rishikesh, May 2: A five-year-old male tiger captured from the Corbett Tiger Reserve after being sedated was translocated to the Rajaji Tiger Reserve Thursday, officials said.

"The tiger has been kept in an enclosure in the Motichur range of Rajaji Tiger Reserve (RTR) for acclimatisation. Once he adapts to his new habitat, the tiger will be released into the wild," Chief Wildlife Warden Ranjan Kumar Mishra told PTI.

The health parameters of the tiger are alright and the

radio collar worn by it is functioning properly, Mishra said. The tiger was tranquilised and captured Wednesday from the Bijrani range of Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) for translocation to RTR to boost the tiger population there, officials said.

Earlier, four tigers were successfully translocated from the Corbett to the Rajaji Tiger Reserve. With the addition of the new tiger, there will be five tigers in the forests between Motichur and Chilla ranges now, two males and three females, RTR Director Saket Badola said.

CLASHES AFTER RAPE OF MINOR

HC asks authorities to curb tension in Nainital

Communal tension broke out in Nainital after the girl was allegedly sexually assaulted by the 60-year-old man hailing from the minority community

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nainital, May 2: Taking suo motu cognizance of the tension prevailing here after the alleged rape of a 12-year-old girl by an elderly man, the Uttarakhand High Court has directed the police to maintain law and order, prevent gathering of crowds and conduct checking of vehicles.

A division bench of the high court comprising senior Justice Manoj Kumar Tiwari and Justice Vivek Bharti Sharma Thursday also asked authorities to monitor the internet to check rumour-mongering.

Communal tension broke out in Nainital after the girl was allegedly sexually assaulted by the 60-year-old man hailing from the minority community. The accused Osman, who is a contractor has been arrested.

The court further said that in order to maintain peace and order, the police should issue appeals to people and intensify patrolling to ensure that a violent situation like the one in Haldwani's Banbhoolpura area does not arise in Nainital.

Several incidents of violence took place in Banbhoolpura area in February last year after a madrasa was demolished.

Deputy Advocate General JS Virk informed the court that a large police force has been deployed to maintain peace and order in Nainital, and vehicles coming towards Nainital from Haldwani, Kaladhungi, and Bhimtal are being checked.

Following the directions of the court, District Magistrate Vandana Singh and Senior Superintendent of Police Prahalad Meena issued a series of directions and public appeals in order to maintain peace.

Some shops owned by members of the Muslim community were vandalised and stones were hurled also towards a nearby mosque

Members of some Hindu outfits Thursday staged demonstrations outside the police station demanding stern action against the accused Wednesday. Some shops owned by members of the Muslim community were vandalised and stones were hurled also towards a nearby mosque. The protesters also demanded that the accused be hanged.



Kedarnath temple doors open for devotees

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 2: After months of anticipation, the sacred portals of Baba Kedarnath were opened for public darshan Friday. With this, the Char Dham Yatra has officially commenced, allowing devotees to embark on the spiritual journey to the Himalayan shrines for the next six months.

The doors of Kedarnath Dham were opened amid grand religious ceremonies and the chanting of Vedic hymns in the presence of thousands of devotees. The auspicious moment was marked by a festive and devotional atmosphere as pilgrims gathered to witness the spiritually significant event.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, who

has been actively monitoring the pilgrimage preparations, expressed his commitment to ensuring smooth travel and registration for the devotees.

Speaking on the occasion, he said, "I visited Rishikesh, the first halt of the Yatra, to review the arrangements. We've held discussions with stakeholders and directed officials to maintain active communication with pilgrims throughout the journey."

He further added, "We wait for the doors of Baba Kedarnath to open each year with great devotion. This year, the Char Dham Yatra began on April 30 on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya. I had the good fortune of being present at the opening of the Ganga shrine in Gangotri and

The doors of Kedarnath Dham were opened amid grand religious ceremonies and the chanting of Vedic hymns in the presence of thousands of devotees

feel blessed to be part of these divine moments. Two days from now, the doors of Badrinath Dham will also open."

Highlighting the efforts of local contributors, the Chief Minister appreciated the team handling logistics and transportation, particularly noting the contribution of

Himanshu Chamoli and his team. "I appreciate the efforts of Himanshu Chamoli and his entire team for ensuring good transportation and proper arrangements at the stations during the journey," he said.

"The traders along the pilgrimage routes are vital to the Yatra as it forms the backbone of their livelihood. Their role is invaluable to the state and region." This year, Kedarnath Temple has been adorned like never before. The Pushp Samiti from Rishikesh and Gujarat has decked the temple with a breathtaking 108 quintals of vibrant flowers. The colourful blooms have added an aura of divine beauty and fragrance to the already majestic shrine, leaving devotees mesmerised.

Pony ride operators were first to help: Pahalgam attack survivor

Patil, who underwent treatment at the army hospital in Pahalgam, returned to his home in Kamothe in Navi Mumbai Thursday night along with his wife

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 2: Pony ride operators were the first to help him after he was injured by a terrorist's bullet during the April 22 attack on tourists in Pahalgam, 60-year-old Subodh Patil said Friday.

Patil, who underwent treatment at the army hospital in Pahalgam, returned to his home

in Kamothe in Navi Mumbai Thursday night along with his wife.

Speaking to reporters, he became emotional recounting the incidents of that day, and thanked the pony ride operators who helped the injured after the attack.

"I was unconscious due to a bullet injury in the neck. When I regained consciousness, I found dead bodies around me. After seeing me moving, a group of pony ride operators came up and offered me water," said Patil.

"The pony ride operator we had hired was among them. He said I should not worry about my wife, she was safe."

"Another man helped me stand up, offering me his shoulder for support, and asked if I could walk," Patil recalled, adding they kept telling him not to



be scared. The pony ride operators took him outside the compound and gave him a cot to sit on.

"After some time they brought a vehicle, and took me to the medical facility of the Indian Army. From there I was flown out in a helicopter and shifted to the army hospital,"



Patil said. Narrating how the attack unfolded, he said the terrorists asked all the Hindu tourists, including him, to stand in a line.

Some of them pleaded with the terrorists, but to no avail. Whoever tried to resist was shot immediately.

A bullet grazed his neck, caus-

ing an injury.

Patil also remembered Desale, a resident of the nearby New Panvel township, who was one of the six Maharashtra tourists killed in the attack that day.

"We both had arrived at the site together," he said.

Desale opted for a ropeway ride, and he and his wife also had their pictures taken in the traditional Kashmiri attire, Patil recalled. When the terrorists opened fire, Patil and others in his group did not take notice immediately. "After some time the sound of gunfire increased, and we turned back and saw people were running to save their lives," he said.

Everything happened in a span of five minutes but he would never be able to forget those five minutes, said Patil.

Maha govt starts second phase of land title updating

Mumbai: The Maharashtra government has launched the second phase of its 'Jivant 7/12' campaign to update land records, Revenue Minister Chandrashekar Bawankule said Friday. The first phase of the exercise, including training of officials, was conducted earlier this year. "We have initiated the second phase of the Jivant 7/12 campaign" to ensure that farmers do not face any difficulties due to obsolete entries in land records. The government has issued an order to replace such entries with accurate, up-to-date information," Bawankule said. Outdated remarks, repaid agricultural loans, bonding encumbrances, mortgages, private moneylender loans, land acquisition disputes, non-agricultural orders, substandard land areas and women's inheritance claims will be removed (if they have become irrelevant)," the minister said.

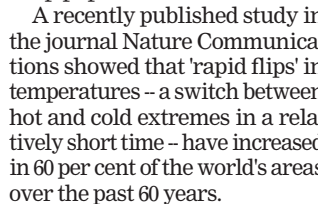
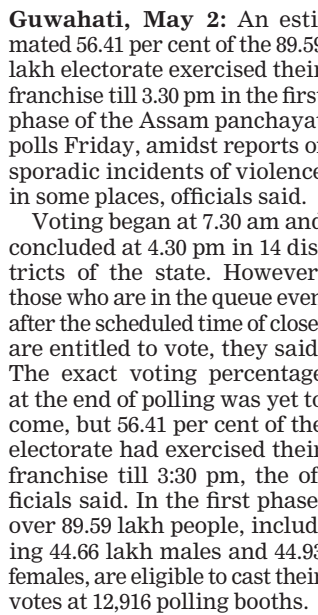
ZILLA PARISHAD, KANDHAMAL
(Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water Department)
TCN NO. 1745/2025-26/XLVIII-13/2025 Dated. 30.04.2025

TENDER CALL NOTICE

No.CAD-273 : Sealed tender(Percentage Rate) are invited from the interested "B", "C" & "D" Class Contractors in respected to each works, registered with the Govt. for execution of civil works under Zilla Parishad, Kandhamal, Phulbani. The detail notification is available at official website kandhamal.Odisha.gov.in . Interested Contractors fulfilling the eligibility criteria may submit their proposal(s) with EMD, Tender Paper Cost and document as per tender call notice. The bidder(s) have to submit their complete proposal(s) in all respect through Registered Post/Speed Post at the Zilla Parishad, Kandhamal, Phulbani should reach the undersigned on or before 19-05-2025 at 01.30 P.M. The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/- C.D.O.-cum-E.O.,
Zilla Parishad, Kandhamal,
Phulbani

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of the day

quote

If Delhi doesn't see planned development, such management issues will continue to arise. But today, the entire administration is on its toes to address these challenges



REKHA GUPTA | DELHI CM

Cleaning the Yamuna is both our commitment and responsibility. IIT Kanpur is working on AI-driven solutions to clean the Yamuna and tackle air pollution



DHARMENDRA PRADHAN | UNION EDUCATION MINISTER

In that case, the mission of self-respect and dignity initiated by Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar would have seen real success



MAYAWATI | BSP PRESIDENT

XPOST

OF THE DAY



Arrived in Vietnam leading the high-level Indian delegation with the Sacred Relics of Lord Buddha. Grand ceremonial reception was accorded by the Govt of Vietnam & Vietnam Buddhist Sanghas. The Holy Relics will be in Vietnam from 2nd-21st May 2025 for UN Vesak Day celebrations

@KirenRijiju

SHORT TAKES

4 killed as vehicle overturns in MP

Vidisha (MP): Four persons, including a woman, were killed and 13 others injured after a vehicle carrying a marriage party overturned in Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha district in the early hours of Friday, an official said. The incident took place around 3 am near Lateri town when a jeep carrying the marriage party was returning to Sironji from Indore, said Collector Anshul Gupta. One of the injured persons, who was in serious condition, was referred to Bhopal, while the rest are being treated in hospitals in Vidisha and Lateri.

Security tightened in Manipur

Imphal: Security has been tightened across Manipur as a precautionary measure ahead of the second anniversary of the start of the ethnic strife in the state May 3, 2023, officials said Friday. Police have intensified frisking and vehicle checks at key locations in Imphal, Churachandpur and Kangpokpi district headquarters to monitor the movement of anti-social elements. Security has also been beefed up in and around Khuman Lampak in Imphal, where the Manipur People's Convention is scheduled.

Fake doctor held

Dimapur: The police have arrested a man from Nagaland's Dimapur on the charge of practising medicine without the necessary qualifications or registration. The accused, a resident of NST Colony, was found to be posing as a doctor in the commercial hub of Nagaland, Dimapur, the police said in a statement. The arrest followed a formal complaint filed by the Nagaland Medical Council against him, a release issued by Commissioner of Police, Dimapur, said here Friday.



We are pledging that we will stand by PM Modi and the central government's every move to crackdown on terrorism

N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | AP CM

ULLU APP REMOVES AJAZ KHAN'S REALITY SHOW

Actor Ajaz Khan's reality show "House Arrest" has been pulled down from streaming platform Ullu after a snow-balling controversy over its sexually explicit content. A search for the show "House Arrest" on the Ullu app, known primarily for its adult content, yielded no results Friday. "Your search for 'House Arrest' did not find any matches", states the message that comes up on the site



Heavy rains kill seven across north India; flights delayed



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The unexpected downpour was caused by moisture and wind convergence over the region, fed by both the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal

A mix of weather systems created conditions for thunderstorms

New Delhi/Gurugram/Chandigarh/Lucknow/Shimla, May 2: Torrential rain lashed north India, including the Delhi-NCR region, early Friday, killing at least seven people, uprooting over 100 trees, and delaying more than 200 flights.

The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was blocked after the rain caused a landslide. A 28-year-old woman and her three children were killed when their house in southwest Delhi's Najafgarh area collapsed after a tree fell on it.

"Police and fire department officers pulled the family out of the rubble and rushed them to a nearby hospital in Jaffarpur Kalan, where four of them were declared dead," an officer said. In Uttar Pradesh, three people were killed and several injured in lightning strikes.

Two of them were labourers working on a road project under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Firozabad. A family trying to cover a haystack with a tarpaulin sheet was also hit.

Diksha, 17, was struck dead by a lightning strike in Etah district's Bhagwantpur village. Her sister, Sapna, suffered burns, so did her father and brother.

In Firozabad again, a lightning strike killed Satyendra, 35, and Vishnu, 25 on the spot on the Shikohabad-Nanemau road. A third, Devendra, 30, was injured and rushed to a hospital, police said.

The unexpected downpour was caused by moisture and wind convergence over the re-

gion, fed by both the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, the weather department said. A mix of weather systems created conditions for thunderstorms.

Roads in Delhi, Gurugram, Faridabad, and Mathura were inundated with water as commuters remained stuck in slow-moving traffic for hours. Between 100 and 200 trees were uprooted in Delhi alone, according to civic authorities.

In Faridabad, people were seen trying to pull out a half-submerged car stuck in waterlogged areas. Rows of vehicles were caught in a traffic jam in Ghaziabad. Delhi's Minto Bridge, ITO, Major Somnath Marg in RK Puram, and Khanpur were flooded with rainwater, causing heavy traffic jams in the areas. Traffic crawled on the Delhi-Gurugram Expressway while congestion was also seen at Hero Honda Chowk, Rajiv Chowk, and IFFCO Chowk.

Delhi received 77 mm of rain in just three hours beginning around 5 am. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a red alert for the city, urging people to remain vigilant. Three flights were diverted and more than 200 flights were delayed at the Delhi airport as thunderstorms and gusty winds disrupted operations.

An official said two flights scheduled to land at the Delhi

airport were diverted to Jaipur and one to Ahmedabad. Delhi Fire Services received around 100 calls of rain-related incidents during the 3-4 hours of storm and heavy showers.

In the Lutyens' Delhi area, at least 25 tree fall cases and 12 complaints related to waterlogging were received. Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (TPDDL) spokesperson said it received 22 power cut complaints, which were restored within a few minutes to one hour.

Distribution Company BSES said that in a few low-lying and waterlogged areas, the electricity supply had to be cut temporarily as a precautionary measure. The majority of Gurugram, a hub of scores of multinationals housed in swanky skyscrapers, was waterlogged.

The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was closed after the rain triggered mudslides in the Union Territory's Ramban district, a traffic police officer said. Flash floods were triggered in the Chenab River, prompting the authorities in the Reasi and Akhnour sectors to issue warnings against venturing near the riverbank.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed officials to visit affected areas, assess damage to crops and livestock, and ensure that relief is distributed immediately to those affected by lightning strikes, and rain-or storm-related accidents.

According to the IMD, west Uttar Pradesh is likely to witness rain and thundershowers at a few places May 3 and 4, accompanied by strong surface winds of 25-35 km/hr and gusty winds reaching 40-50 km/hr at isolated locations.

In east Uttar Pradesh, isolated rains are expected May 3 and more widespread showers May 4.

Thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds (30-50 km/hr) are also likely during this period. Himachal Pradesh capital Shimla and the surrounding area of Jubbarhatti were lashed by a hailstorm and rain, the weather office said.

The Tutikandi-ISBT Road was blocked for a few hours in Shimla after trees fell on three parked vehicles.



Students celebrate after Class X exam results were declared, at a school at Bolpur, in Birbhum. A high 86.57 per cent out of 9,69,425 candidates passed this year's Class X Madhaymik examination, the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education announced Friday morning

PTI PHOTO

Hailstorm in Shimla, surrounding areas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, May 2: Himachal Pradesh capital Shimla and its surrounding area of Jubbarhatti were lashed by a hailstorm, and other several places by heavy rain, the weather office said Friday.

The Tutikandi-ISBT road was blocked for a few hours in Shimla after trees fell on three parked vehicles, making it difficult for the Students to commute in the morning. Two rooms of a slate-roofed house were completely razed and a property burned down in a lightning strike in Khandera village of the Hamirpur district Thursday night.

Kuldeep Singh and his wife, who were sleeping inside the house, when the fire blazed were saved by the locals, officials said.

Kufri, Bilaspur, Reckong Peo, Bajura, Narkana, and Tabo were smitten by gusty winds, while thunderstorms lashed Shimla, Jubbarhatti, Sundernagar, Jot, Bhuntar, Murari Devi, Kufri, and Kangra, the Met said.

The Met has issued an orange alert of hailstorms at isolated places in the state Friday, and orange and yellow warnings of thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds with a speed of up to 30-50 kmph till next Thursday.

billion bailout package. As of December 31, 2024, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has committed 764 public sector loans, grants, and technical assistance totalling \$43.4 billion to Pakistan. ADB's current sovereign portfolio in Pakistan includes 53 loans and 3 grants worth \$9.13 billion.

ADB committed a \$320 million loan for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rural Roads Development Project to upgrade around 900 kilometers of flood-susceptible rural roads in the province.

In January 2025, the World Bank approved \$20 billion lending package to Pakistan for the cash-strapped country to overcome its challenges.

NATIONAL HERALD CASE

Court issues notice to Sonia, Rahul Gandhi



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 2: A Delhi court Friday issued notices to former Congress president Sonia Gandhi and leader of opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi in the National Herald money laundering case.

Special judge Vishal Gogne said their "right to be heard" was available at the time of cognisance of the chargesheet. "Right to be heard at any stage breathes life into fair trial," the judge said, posting the matter May 8. The judge also issued notice to Congress leader Sam Pitroda and Suman Dubey, and "Young Indian", Dotex Merchandise Pvt Ltd and Sunil Bhandari.

The chargesheet was filed under Sections 3 (money laundering) and 4 (punishment for money laundering) of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

In a 14-page order, the judge observed the "prosecuting agency ED does not come to any detriment if the accused is permitted to make submissions on the question of cognisance". "In this adherence to the principles of fair hearing, the right to be heard is not inconsistent with any of the powers vested in the ED for investigation or the presumptions as well as burden of proof stipulated under the PMLA," the order said.

During a brief hearing, additional solicitor general S V Raju, representing the ED, said the probe agency was "not opposing such a notice precisely because it is votary of fair trial". The court further said, "Besides, the proviso to

Section 223 of BNSS (Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita) is a salutary provision in furtherance of the right to be heard, as a part of fair trial. It is designed to protect accused persons against improper implication by permitting them to make submissions prior to the court taking cognisance of the offences in question."

The BNSS, the court noted, was therefore a progressive legislation and recorded among its objectives and reasons a "citizens centric criminal procedure" being the "need of the hour". Section 223 of BNSS grants an accused the right to be heard on the aspect of cognisance.

This "benevolent intent" of the BNSS should be read in favour of accused persons rather than the investigation agencies when a right to be heard is to be accorded at any stage of the proceedings, the court added.

"To summarise, the court finds that notice is required to be issued to the proposed accused persons for hearing on the question of cognisance upon the present complaint in terms of the proviso to section 223 BNSS. It is thus directed that notice be issued to the proposed accused persons in order that they may be heard on the question of cognisance upon the present complaint," the judge said.

The ED, which filed its chargesheet recently, began its probe in 2021 after a magistrate court took cognisance of a private complaint filed by BJP leader Subramanian Swamy June 26, 2014.

‘India asks IMF to review loans, grants to Pakistan’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 2: India will be asking global multilateral agencies, including the IMF, to have a relook at funds and loans provided to Pakistan, as New Delhi seeks to corner the neighbouring state diplomatically following the dastardly terror attack in Pahalgam last month which killed 26 tourists.

Authorities have identified five terrorists — including three Pakistani nationals — behind the massacre in Pahalgam. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Thursday termed Pakistan a rogue state that has been fuelling global terrorism. Meanwhile, Home



Minister Amit Shah said the terrorists who carried out the 'cowardly' Pahalgam terror attack would not be spared. The IMF Executive Board is scheduled to meet Pakistan officials on May 9 for first review of the extended funding facility, and

request for an arrangement under the resilience and sustainability facility.

The IMF Board will evaluate fresh \$1.3 billion arrangement for Pakistan under its climate resilience loan programme. It will also assess an ongoing \$7

Law aids vigilant, not those who sleep over their rights: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 2: The law aids the vigilant, not those who sleep over their rights, the Supreme Court Friday said and upheld a high court verdict over a property-related dispute in Bengaluru.

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan was hearing the issue over the forfeiture of ₹20 lakh paid as the first tranche of the total sale consideration of a property.

The bench, which elaborated on "earnest money" and "advance money" for being relevant to the matter, said the Karnataka High Court denied the relief of refund of advance

money to the appellant as he did not seek an alternative prayer for a refund in the suit.

The top court said it was a settled position of the law that the plaintiff might be amended at any stage of the proceedings to enable the plaintiff to seek an alternative relief, including that of the refund of earnest money, and the courts were vested with wide judicial discretion to permit such amendments.

It referred to a provision of the Specific Relief Act, 1963 and said the courts couldn't grant such relief suo motu. The provision of the Act, the bench said, was adequately broad and flexible to allow the appellant to seek an amendment of the



plaint for the said relief, even at the appellate stage.

The top court went on, "Here, it would be redundant to state that the law aids the vigilant, not those who sleep over their rights." The apex court deliv-

ered its verdict on an appeal challenging the high court's August 2021 order.

The bench noted the dispute arose from a claim for specific performance of a July 2007 agreement of sale with respect

The bench noted the dispute arose from a claim for specific performance of a July 2007 agreement of sale with respect to a property for a total sale consideration of ₹55.50 lakh

It noted ₹20 lakh was paid towards part payment and the agreement stipulated that the sale transaction would be completed with the payment of the balance amount within four months

to a property for a total sale consideration of ₹55.50 lakh. It noted ₹20 lakh was paid towards part payment and the agreement stipulated that the sale transaction would be completed with the payment of the

balance amount within four months. The appellant before the apex court first moved a trial court seeking a direction to the original owner to execute the sale deed and deliver the possession of the suit property. The trial court dismissed the suit following which he moved high court, which affirmed the trial court verdict observing the appellant failed to pay the balance sale consideration within the stipulated four months.

In its verdict, the top court said the only question that fell for its consideration was whether the appellant was entitled to refund of ₹20 lakh purportedly paid as "advance money".

of the day

quote

In the wake of the world aiming to reach net zero by 2050, there has been a return to realism where it is globally accepted that nuclear technology has a huge role to play in the energy mix as a key source to ensure countries achieve their energy security, energy sovereignty, and energy justice in the transition

DR KGOSIENTSHO RAMOKGOPA | MINISTER FOR ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY, SOUTH AFRICA

The people of Colombia want to vote for their fundamental rights, for their dignity

GUSTAVO PETRO | PRESIDENT, COLOMBIA

I've determined to find what I can do for the future of the Republic of Korea that I love and for all of us

HAN DUCK-SOO | FORMER PRIME MINISTER, SOUTH KOREA

SHORT TAKES

Drones strike ship carrying aid to Gaza

Tel Aviv: Drones attacked a vessel carrying aid to Gaza while it was off the coast of Malta Friday, the humanitarian group organising the shipment said. A fire broke out but was brought under control, authorities said. A nearby tugboat responded to a distress call from the ship, which was carrying 12 crew members and four civilians, Malta's government said. The Freedom Flotilla Coalition said in an email there were no injuries among those on board its vessel. Charlie Andreasson, who has been involved with the Freedom Flotilla for more than a decade, told The Associated Press that he had spoken to people on board who said there were two explosions and a fire broke out.

Vance says trade deal soon with India

New York: US Vice-President JD Vance has called Prime Minister Narendra Modi a "tough negotiator" and accused New Delhi of taking advantage of America, while predicting that India could be among the first countries to strike a trade deal to avert reciprocal tariffs. In an interview with Fox News Thursday, Vance said "good negotiations" were now on with India on tariffs. India is among the countries negotiating with the US to avoid the high import taxes, most of them on pause right now, announced by President Donald Trump. "Modi, the Prime Minister, is a tough negotiator, but we're going to rebalance that relationship, and that's why the president's doing what he's doing," Vance said during the interview.

Russia downs 121 Ukrainian drones

Moscow: Russia has downed 121 Ukrainian drones overnight in Crimea, the Black Sea, and other southern parts of the country, according to a media report Friday. "The Russian military repelled a series of Ukrainian drone raids overnight Thursday, downing a total of 121 UAVs," rt.com news website reported, quoting Defence Ministry officials. The ministry said 89 fixed-wing drones were intercepted over Crimea's Sevastopol, which is home to Russia's Black Sea Fleet. Another 23 drones were shot down over the Black Sea. The ministry said there was no damage on the ground. Sevastopol Governor Mikhail Razvozhayev said it was a massive raid which was foiled with the combined efforts of the naval and ground based air defence forces.

PAHALGAM TERROR ATTACK

Pak seeks pressure on India

The series of meetings with brotherly countries took place amid heightened tension between India and Pakistan after terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam April 22

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 2: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Friday urged brotherly countries, including Saudi Arabia, to impress upon India to de-escalate and defuse tensions heightened after the Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people.

Sharif separately met Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Maliky, UAE Ambassador Hamad Obaid Al-Zaabi and Kuwait Ambassador Nasser Abdulrahman Jasser in Islamabad when the Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's desire for peace and stability in South Asia, state-run media said here.

The series of meetings with brotherly countries took place amid heightened tension between India and Pakistan after terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam April 22.

The term brotherly countries is frequently used for Muslim countries, such as Saudi Arabia, UAE and Turkiye, with which Pakistan is having good credentials.



The term brotherly countries is frequently used for Muslim countries, such as Saudi Arabia, UAE and Turkiye, with which Pakistan is having good credentials

Radio Pakistan reported that while talking with Ambassador Nawaf, "The Prime Minister outrightly rejected baseless Indian accusations linking Pakistan to the Pahalgam incident without any evidence and reiterated his call for a transparent and neutral international investigation into the incident."

While sharing Pakistan's perspective on recent developments in South Asia after the Pahalgam incident, Shehbaz Sharif said, "Pakistan con-

demns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations".

He also highlighted the government's complete focus on consolidating the hard-earned economic gains of the past 15 months, with the support of friendly countries, including Saudi Arabia.

He added that it is inconceivable for Pakistan to act in an irresponsible manner to jeopardise its achievements and derail the country from the path of economic progress.

In another meeting, Sharif thanked the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ambassador Hamad Obaid Al-Zaabi for unwavering support to Pakistan.

He categorically rejected "the baseless accusations leveled by India in its desperate attempts to link Pakistan to the Pahalgam incident, without any evidence" and instead shared how Pakistan has been a victim of terrorism over the last few decades.

Occupy Northeast if India attacks Pak: Yunus' aide

Dhaka/New Delhi: A former Bangladesh army officer and close aide of Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus has suggested that Dhaka should collaborate with China to occupy India's northeastern states if it attacks Pakistan in response to the Pahalgam terror attack. Yunus' interim government Friday distanced itself from the remarks made by Major General (Retd) ALM Fazlur Rahman on his social media account. In a Facebook post Tuesday, Rahman wrote in Bengali, "If India attacks Pakistan, Bangladesh should occupy the seven states of Northeastern India." "I think it is necessary to start discussions with China on a joint military arrangement in this regard," he added. Rahman was appointed by the Yunus-led interim government in December 2024 as the chairman of the National Independent Commission assigned to investigate the killings in the Bangladesh Rifles revolt of 2009. Distancing itself from the former army officer's remarks, Bangladesh's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a media release Friday said, "The comments do not reflect the position or policies of the government of Bangladesh, and as such, the government neither endorses nor supports such rhetoric in any form or manner."

The Prime Minister said Pakistan has nothing to do with this and emphasised that he has offered to have a credible, transparent and neutral international investigation into the incident, the report said.

State-run news agency Associated Press of Pakistan reported that Sharif told the Kuwaiti Ambassador Nasser Abdulrahman Jasser that Pakistan was confident of its stance and had offered to the international community to conduct a credible, transparent and neutral investigation into the incident.

Trump threatens to strip Harvard's tax-exempt status

REUTERS

Washington, May 2: President Donald Trump said Friday he planned to strip Harvard University of its tax-exempt status, setting up another potential legal fight with the Ivy League school amid his wider crackdown on elite universities and the US education system.

"We are going to be taking away Harvard's Tax Exempt Status. It's what they deserve!" Trump said in a post on his social media platform, without specifying when he might take action.

Representatives for the Internal Revenue Service did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Trump's post and whether it was revoking the university's tax-exempt status.

Harvard, in a statement, said the move would be unlawful and unprecedented.

"There is no legal basis to rescind Harvard's tax-exempt status," the Boston-area school said. "The unlawful use of this instrument more broadly would have grave consequences for the future of higher education in America."

It would also cut money available for student scholarships, medical research and technological advancements that drive economic growth, Harvard added.

Since taking office in January, Trump has targeted major US universities by freezing fed-



Harvard says unlawful move would be unprecedented

No immediate comment from IRS

Trump's statement latest salvo against universities

eral funding, launching investigations, revoking student visas and making other demands. He has said higher education has been gripped by antisemitic, anti-American, Marxist and radical left ideologies.

Under federal law, the president cannot request that the IRS, which determines whether an organization can have or maintain tax-exempt status, investigate organizations.

Most universities are exempt from federal income tax under the US tax code because they are deemed to be operated exclusively for public educational purposes.

Trump's administration has escalated its fight against Harvard in recent weeks, probing its nearly \$9 billion in federal funding, seeking details on its foreign ties and threatening its ability to enroll foreign students.

Farage's Reform UK Party wins mayoral, parliamentary post

REUTERS

Widnes, England, May 2: Britain's right-wing Reform UK party won a vacant parliamentary seat, a mayoralty and control of three councils Friday in early results from elections that its leader Nigel Farage said proved it was now the real opposition.

The populist Reform, led by the veteran campaigner for Brexit, hopes Thursday's local elections in England will mark the breakdown of a century of domination of British politics by the governing Labour Party and Opposition Conservatives.

In the most closely watched contest, for the vacant parliamentary seat of Runcorn and Helsby, Reform won by just six votes after a full recount giving Farage's party its fifth seat in the House of Commons. Labour had won the seat in last year's national election with a majority of almost 15,000.

"It's been a huge night for Reform," Farage told reporters. "This is heartland Labour Party, their vote has collapsed and much of it has come to us."

The Conservatives - historically one of the most successful parties of any modern democracy - were now "toast", he said.

"You're witnessing the end of a party that's been around since 1832."

Andrea Jenkyns, a former Conservative minister who defected to Reform after losing her seat last year, became mayor of Greater Lincolnshire, which covers about a million people, making her the party's most powerful elected politician yet.

Reform also took control of Staffordshire county council, winning 32 seats, and Durham county council.

It was leading all parties in the initial tally of councillors elected, with nearly half of the more than 1,600 seats up for grabs on local authorities declared.



China 'evaluating' US offer to negotiate tariffs



REUTERS

Beijing, May 2: Beijing is "evaluating" an offer from Washington to hold talks over US President Donald Trump's crippling tariffs, China's Commerce Ministry said Friday, signalling a potential de-escalation in the trade war that has roiled global markets.

The United States has approached China to seek talks over Trump's 145% tariffs and Beijing's door was open for discussions, the commerce ministry said.

The US should be prepared to take action in "correcting erroneous practices" and cancel unilateral tariffs, the commerce ministry said in a statement, adding that Washington needed to show "sincerity" in negotiations.

"The US has recently taken the initiative on many occasions to convey information to China through relevant parties, saying it hopes to talk with China," the statement said, adding that Beijing was "evaluating this".

"Attempting to use talks as a pretext to engage in coercion and extortion would not work," it added.

China has repeatedly denied it is seeking to negotiate a way out of the tariffs with the United States, appearing instead to be betting that Washington makes the first move.

Trump's decision to single Beijing out for import duties of 145% comes at a particularly difficult time for China, which is struggling with deflation due to sluggish economic growth and a prolonged property crisis.

Beijing has expressed its anger at the tariffs, which it says are tantamount to bullying and cannot stop the rise of the world's second-largest economy.

Alongside leveraging its propaganda machine to hit back at the duties, China has quietly created a list of U.S.-made products it will exempt from its retaliatory 125% tariffs - including select pharmaceuticals, microchips and jet engines - Reuters has reported.

NEVER ARGUE

Caterham, who is 115, became the world's oldest living person, according to the Gerontology Research Group, after Sister Inah Canabarro, a Brazilian nun and teacher, died Wednesday at the tender age of 116

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, May 2: For Ethel Caterham, the trick to a long life — and in her case, it really has been — is not to argue.

Caterham, who is 115, became the world's oldest living person, according to the Gerontology Research Group, after Sister Inah Canabarro,

a Brazilian nun and teacher, died Wednesday at the tender age of 116.

"Never arguing with anyone, I listen and I do what I like," she said from her nursing home in Surrey, southwest of London, on the secret to her longevity.

She was born August 21, 1909, in the village of Shipton Bellinger in the south of England,



five years before the outbreak of World War I. She was the sec-

ond youngest of eight siblings. Travel has been in her blood, it's clear. In 1927, at the age of 18, Ethel embarked on a journey to India, working as a nanny for a British family, where she stayed for three years before returning to England, according to the GRG.

She met her husband Norman, who was a major in the British army, at a dinner party in 1931, and they were stationed in Hong Kong and Gibraltar, the GRG said. They had two daughters whom they raised in the UK. Norman died in 1976.

Hallmark Lakeview Luxury Care Home in Camberley,

where Ethel is a resident, posted pictures of her cutting a cake and wearing a "115" tiara in a Facebook post Thursday.

"Huge congratulations to Lakeview resident, Ethel on becoming the oldest person in the world! What an incredible milestone and a true testament to a life well-lived," it said in an accompanying statement. "Your strength, spirit, and wisdom are an inspiration to us all. Here's to celebrating your remarkable journey!"

The title of the oldest person ever is held by French woman Jeanne Calment, who lived to 122 years 164 days, according to Guinness World Records.



I hope every single one of you, you guys in front me, feel a sense of pride, because these are the products that actually make America work

JD VANCE | VICE PRESIDENT, US

QUAKE STRIKES OFF SOUTHERN COASTS OF CHILE, ARGENTINA

A 7.4 magnitude earthquake struck off the southern coasts of Chile and Argentina Friday, the United States Geological Survey said. No damage or casualties have been reported. Chilean authorities issued an evacuation alert for the entire coastal section of the Strait of Magellan, in the far south of the country



Business

Quote of the day

For centuries, India has gifted the world its wisdom, its beauty and its soul, but somewhere along the way our voice softened. But now, it is rising again. We are the very cradle of civilisation, a cultural force whose time has come once again



NITA AMBANI | CHAIRPERSON, JIOSTAR

It is important to revise the MSP of sugar and ethanol prices to align them with the prevailing cost of production in the interest of farmers, consumers, the ethanol programme, and financial institutions who have also invested heavily in the sugar industry



PRAFUL VITHALANI | CHAIRMAN, AISTA

Bolt fits into the way people live today. You're hungry, you want something now, and you don't want to compromise. We built Bolt for that moment. Seeing it scale to 500-plus cities in just a few months has been incredible. And this is just the beginning



ROHIT KAPOOR | CEO, SWIGGY FOOD MARKETPLACE

Q4 RESULTS

Godrej Properties profit dips 19%

New Delhi: Realty firm Godrej Properties Friday reported a 19 per cent decline in its consolidated net profit to ₹381.99 crore for the latest March quarter despite higher income. Its net profit stood at ₹471.26 crore in the year-ago period. Total income increased to ₹2,681.06 crore in the fourth quarter of the last fiscal year from ₹1,914.82 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding year, according to a regulatory filing. During the full 2024-25 fiscal, the company's net profit rose to ₹1,399.89 crore from ₹725.27 crore in the preceding fiscal.

IOB profit soars 30%

New Delhi: State-owned Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) Friday reported a 30 per cent rise in net profit to ₹1.051 crore for the March quarter, helped by a decline in bad loans and a rise in interest income. The Chennai-based lender had earned a net profit of ₹808 crore in the year-ago period. During the quarter, the bank's total income increased to ₹9,215 crore, as against ₹9,106 crore a year ago, Indian Overseas Bank said in a regulatory filing. Interest income grew to ₹7,634 crore during the period under review, from ₹6,629 crore in the corresponding quarter a year ago. On the asset quality front, the bank's gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) moderated to 2.14 per cent of gross advances, as compared to 3.10 per cent by the end of March 2024.

Marico profit surges

New Delhi: Homegrown FMCG firm Marico Ltd Friday reported a 7.81 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at ₹345 crore in the March quarter, driven by volume and revenue growth in India, along with robust international business. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹320 crore in the same period of the previous fiscal year, Marico Ltd said in a regulatory filing. Consolidated revenue from operations during the quarter under review stood at ₹2,730 crore as against ₹2,278 crore in the same period a year ago, it added.



For the June quarter, we do expect the majority of iPhones sold in the US will have India as their country of origin, and Vietnam to be the country of origin for almost all iPad, Mac, Apple Watch, and AirPods products also sold in the US

TIM COOK | CEO, APPLE

TARIFF UNCERTAINTY

S&P cuts India's FY26 GDP growth forecast

The INR/USD pair is witnessing significant fluctuations since the US tariff announcement and the rupee is currently hovering at 84-level against the greenback

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 2: S&P Global Ratings Friday cut India's growth projections by 0.2 percentage points to 6.3 per cent for the current fiscal year citing uncertainty over the US tariff policy and downside risks from its spillover to the economy.

In its report titled "Global Macro Update: Seismic Shift In US Trade Policy Will Slow World Growth", S&P Global Ratings said "we reiterate that there are no winners in a scenario of escalating protectionist policies."

S&P said among Asia-Pacific's major economies, China is expected to see its growth drop by 0.7 percentage points in 2025 to 3.5 per cent and in 2026 to 3 per cent.

S&P projected India's GDP growth to be 6.3 per cent in 2025-26 and 6.5 per cent in 2026-27 fiscal year.

In March, S&P had lowered the FY'26 GDP growth forecast to 6.5 per cent, from 6.7 per cent.

"The risks to our baseline remain firmly on the downside in the form of a stronger-than-anticipated spillover from the tariff shock to the real economy. The longer-term configuration of the global economy, including the role of the US, is also less certain," S&P said.

With regard to exchange



S&P projected India's GDP growth to be 6.3% in 2025-26 and 6.5% in 2026-27 fiscal year

In March, S&P had lowered the FY'26 GDP growth forecast to 6.5%, from 6.7%

rate fluctuations, S&P projected INR/USD exchange rate to be 88 by 2025-end from 86.64 in 2024.

The INR/USD pair is witnessing significant fluctuations since the US tariff announcement and the rupee is currently hovering at 84-level against the greenback.

According to S&P, the US economy is expected to grow 1.5 per cent this year and 1.7 per cent in the next.

The global rating agency said the US tariff policy will fall into three buckets -- China will be an individual case, reflecting the ongoing geo-

political rivalry, including long-standing tensions around the bilateral trade imbalance and "unfair competition."

Trade relations with the EU are likely to be complex, while Canada looks to take a firm stance on trade talks with the US.

"We expect most remaining countries will try to negotiate a settlement rather than retaliate," S&P said.

So far, the economic fallout from the tariff shock has been limited to drops in confidence indices and declines in nominal variables such as financial asset prices. It has yet to affect the real economy other than some front-running of imports to beat the tariffs.

That may be starting to change, as goods shipments from China have recently begun to decline, S&P noted.

Forex kitty jumps to \$688.13 billion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 2: India's forex reserves increased \$1.983 billion to \$688.129 billion during the week ended April 25, the RBI said Friday.

This is the eighth consecutive week of a rise in the kitty, which had jumped 8.31 billion to \$686.145 in the previous reporting week.

The forex reserves had touched an all-time high of \$704.885 billion in end-September 2024.

For the week ended April 25, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased \$2.168 billion to \$580.663 billion, the data released on Friday showed.



Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves decreased \$207 million to \$84.365 billion during the week, the Reserve Bank of India said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up \$21 million to \$18.589 billion, the apex bank said.

India's reserve position with the IMF was also up \$2 million to \$4.512 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

Manufacturing growth touches 10-month high

New business from abroad grew to the greatest degree in over 14 years at the start of the 2025-26 fiscal year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 2: The growth momentum in the Indian manufacturing sector improved in April, with output increasing at the fastest pace since June 2024, on the back of another strong expansion in order books, a monthly survey said Friday.

The seasonally adjusted HS-BC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose from 58.1 in March to 58.2 in April, indicating the strongest improvement in the health of the sector for ten months.

In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

A key factor contributing to the latest improvement in output growth was a sharp rise in new business. The manufacturing sector's rate of expansion was supported by better domestic and international demand.

According to the survey, the total sales were supported by a sharp rise in international orders.

New business from abroad grew to the greatest degree in over 14 years at the start of the 2025-26 fiscal year and this demand was led by Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas, the survey participants said. This positive trend was accompanied by notable rises in employment and purchasing activity.

"Manufacturers continued to enhance their staffing levels in April to meet growing output requirements. Exactly 9



The notable increase in new export orders in April may indicate a potential shift in production to India, as businesses adapt to the evolving trade landscape and US tariff announcements

PRANJUL BHANDARI | CHIEF INDIA ECONOMIST, HSBC

per cent of survey participants took on extra workers, with a combination of permanent and temporary contracts reportedly being offered," the survey said. Purchasing activity rose in tandem with new business growth, and the latest sharp expansion in input buying was also partly attributed to stock-building initiatives.

"Manufacturing output growth strengthened to a ten-month high on robust orders. Input prices increased slightly faster, but the impact on margins could be more than offset by the much-faster rise in output prices, of which the index jumped to the highest level since October 2013," , "Pranjul Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC, said.

VOLATILE SESSION

Indices end higher on FII buying

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 2: BSE benchmark index Sensex ended 260 points higher Friday buoyed by optimism surrounding a potential India-US trade deal, record high GST collection in April, and continuous foreign fund inflows.

Moreover, a firm trend in global markets also added to the positive momentum in domestic equities.

After a sharp rally in intra-day trade the 30-share BSE benchmark gauge later trimmed most of the gains and settled 259.75 points or 0.32 per cent higher at 80,501.99. During the day, the benchmark jumped 935.69 points or 1.16 per cent to 81,177.93.

In a volatile trade, the NSE Nifty eked out a marginal gain of 12.50 points or 0.05 per cent to settle at 24,346.70.

"The Nifty-50 surged over 1 per cent during today's session, hitting a high of 24,589 -- its highest level in CY25. However, profit-booking set in, causing the index to pare gains and close marginally higher. Optimism prevails in market sentiments over potential India-US trade deal, sustained



foreign fund inflows and record high GST collection in April," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

From the Sensex firms, Adani Ports jumped over 4 per cent after the firm reported a 50 per cent jump in its March quarter net profit and issued a higher year-on-year revenue growth forecast for the current fiscal, citing strong growth in port volumes and a robust rise in the logistics business.

Bajaj Finance, IndusInd Bank, State Bank of India,

ITR-3 form simplified for AY 2025-26

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 2: The Income Tax department has notified ITR form 3 to be filed by individuals and HUFs having income from business or profession.

The tax department in a post on X late Thursday night said ITR-3 for Assessment Year 2025-26 has been notified April 30. ITR-3 is filed by individuals and HUFs having income from profits and gains of business or profession.

The threshold for reporting assets and liabilities under 'Schedule AL' has been raised from ₹50 lakh to ₹1 crore, thus reducing the disclosure burden on middle-income taxpayers.

In Schedule Capital Gains



of the ITR, capital gains must now be split based on whether they arose before or after July 23, 2024.

In the Budget presented on July 24, 2024, the government had proposed to lower long-term capital gains tax on real

estate to 12.5 per cent without indexation benefit, from 20 per cent with indexation.

Indexation benefit allows taxpayers to arrive at the cost price of the property after adjusting for inflation.

With this, individuals or HUFs who purchased houses before July 23, 2024, can opt to pay Long Term Capital Gain (LTCG) tax under the new scheme at the rate of 12.5 per cent without indexation or claim the indexation benefit and pay 20 per cent tax.

Tax consultancy firm AKM Global, Partner-Tax, Sandeep Sehgal said the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has made key updates to ITR Form 3 for AY 2025-26, easing compliance for individuals

and HUFs with business or professional income.

"Dropdowns for deductions like Section 80C and section-wise TDS reporting have also been introduced, enhancing transparency, accuracy, and ease of filing. Overall, these changes reflect the CBDT's ongoing efforts to promote ease of compliance, improve data accuracy, and align reporting with emerging policy developments," Sehgal added.

Earlier April 29, the government had notified the income tax return (ITR) forms 1 and 4 for assessment year 2025-26, and made it easier for individuals with long term capital gains of up to ₹1.25 lakh from listed equities to file returns.

Soumya, Subhasish get top accolades



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 2: Subhasish Bose and Soumya Guguloth were named the AIFF Best Men's and Women's Players of the Year 2024-25 on the AIFF Awards Day Friday. The award function was held in Bhubaneswar on the eve of the Kalinga Super Cup 2025 final.

Among the dignitaries present along with AIFF President Kalyan Chaubey, were Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, Deputy Chief Minister of Odisha, Suryabanshi Suraj, Minister of Higher Education, Sports and Youth Services, Odia Language Literature and Culture, Bhaskar Sarma, IAS, Principal Secretary, Sports and Youth Services Dept, Manoj Ahuja, IAS, Chief Secretary, and Tankadhar Tripathy, President, Football Association of Odisha.

The Deputy CM said, "It is an honour to be present here on

this great occasion of the AIFF Awards. I remember in 2002 when Mr Priya Ranjan Das-munsi was the AIFF President, we revived the Kalinga Football Cup, which was started by the late Shri Biju Patnaik. During my discussion with Kalyan, we agreed that we'll do something about it, and I'm happy to say that what has been done with the Kalinga Super Cup is a great service, not only to the state of Odisha, but also the sport of football."

Apart from Bose and Guguloth, the other individual award winners were Khalid Jamil (Best Men's Coach), Sujata Kar (Best Women's Coach), Vishal Kaith (Best Men's Goalkeeper), Elangbam Panthoi Chanu (Best Women's Goalkeeper), Brison Fernandes (Promising Men's Player), Toijam Thoibisana Chanu (Promising Women's Player), Venkatesh R (Best Male Referee), Tekcham Ranjita

AIFF AWARDS 2025

- Men's Player of the Year:
Subhasish Bose
- Women's Player of the Year:
Soumya Guguloth
- Promising Men's Player of the Year:
Brison Fernandes
- Promising Women's Player of the Year:
Toijam Thoibisana Chanu
- Best Men's Goalkeeper:
Vishal Kaith
- Best Women's Goalkeeper:
Elangbam Panthoi Chanu
- Men's Coach of the Year:
Khalid Jamil
- Women's Coach of the Year:
Sujata Kar

Devi (Best Female Referee), Vairamuthu P (Best Male Assistant Referee), and Riiohlang Dhar (Best Female Assistant Referee).

Subhasish Bose became only the seventh defender to win the

AIFF Men's Player of the Year Award after Sandesh Jhingana (2021), Syed Rahim Nabi (2012), Gouramangi Singh (2010), Surkumar Singh (2006), Deepak Mondal (2002) and VP Sathyan (1995).

Bose captained Mohun Bagan Super Giant in a sensational season, winning both the ISL Shield and Cup, while breaking the record for most clean sheets in an ISL season. The 29-year-old also scored six goals for the Mariners. Bose became the first player from West Bengal to win the award since Nabi in 2012.

Soumya Guguloth became the first player from Telangana to win the AIFF Women's Player of the Year Award. The 23-year-old winger was the Indian top scorer of the IWL this season, netting nine goals to help her side, East Bengal FC, win the title.

Vishal Kaith was named the Best Men's Goalkeeper after a historic and record-breaking campaign between the sticks for

Mohun Bagan SG. He won his second ISL Golden Glove after amassing 15 clean sheets this season, and also became the first goalkeeper to reach a half-century of clean sheets in ISL history. Kaith marked his return to the national team starting line-up after seven years with two clean sheets against Maldives and Bangladesh.

The Best Women's Goalkeeper was awarded to Elangbam Panthoi Chanu. The 29-year-old kept seven clean sheets in East Bengal's IWL-winning campaign. Panthoi, who won the Promising Women's Player Award in 2017, played five matches for India in the past year. Midfielder Brison Fernandes picked up the Promising Men's Player of the Year Award. The 24-year-old had a breakthrough season for FC Goa, scoring seven goals and providing two assists in the ISL. Fernandes made his senior India debut in March 2025 against Bangladesh.

SHORT TAKES

KCA suspends Sreesanth

Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala Cricket Association (KCA) has suspended former India pacer S Sreesanth for three years for allegedly making false and derogatory statements against it in connection with the controversy surrounding Sanju Samson's omission from the Indian team for the Champions Trophy. In a statement, the KCA said the decision was taken at its special General Body meeting held in Kochi April 30. Sreesanth is currently a co-owner of Kollam Aeries, a franchise team in the Kerala Cricket League. Earlier, in relation to his controversial remarks, show-cause notices had been issued to Sreesanth as well as to the franchise teams Kollam Aeries, Alappuzha Team Lead, and Alappuzha Ripples.

Gauff routs Swiatek, Ruud beats Medvedev

Madrid: Coco Gauff overpowered defending champion Iga Swiatek 6-1, 6-1 to reach the Madrid Open singles final for the first time Thursday. Gauff broke Swiatek's serve three times in the first set and twice in the second to cruise to a 64-minute semifinal victory over the second-ranked Swiatek at the clay-court tournament. Swiatek had recovered from losing the first set 0-6 to Madison Keys Wednesday. Gauff will face either top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka or Elina Svitolina in the final. In the men's quarterfinals, Casper Ruud advanced by defeating Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 7-5 to become the first player born in 1990 or later to reach 30 tour-level semifinals on clay. The 15th-ranked Norwegian had been 0-3 against Medvedev in his career.

India eye positive end to tough Oz tour

Perth: Having endured three consecutive defeats, India will look to turn the tide by trying out new strategies when they clash with hosts Australia again in their fourth match of the five-game series here Saturday. The visitors, led by Salima Tete, had lost 3-5 and 2-3 to Australia 'A' in the first two matches of the exposure trip before going down 0-2 to Australia at the Perth Hockey Stadium Thursday. With one eye on the World Cup next year and the Hockey Pro League in Europe next month, the tour Down Under is the best opportunity for India to streamline their technique and tactics. But, unfortunately, they haven't met with success so far. The team is a good mix of experience and youth, and while it has made significant progress from the time it could not qualify for the Paris Olympics, a lot more needs to be done.

India's apex body for pickleball receives official govt recognition

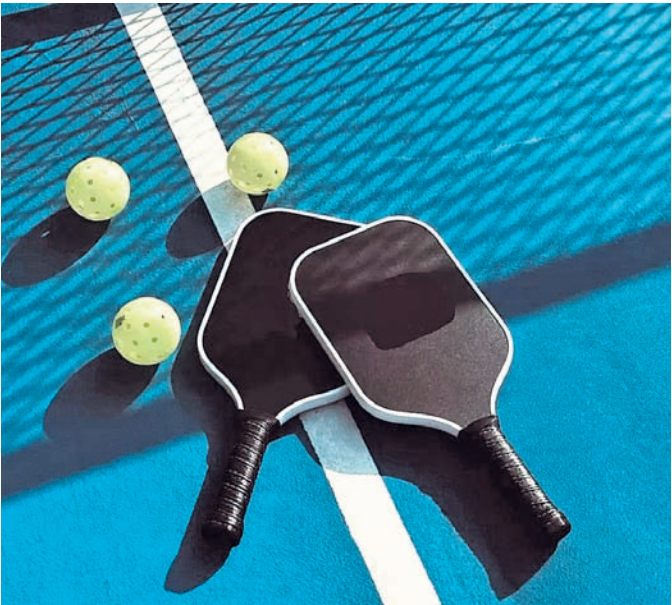
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 2: The Indian Pickleball Association (IPA) has now been officially recognised by the Government of India via the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to act as the national sports federation in the country. It has been entrusted with the responsibility to govern, promote, and develop pickleball across the country.

This landmark recognition validates IPA as the sole apex body for the sport in India and marks a turning point in its national and global journey.

With systematic and painstaking groundwork laid by the members of IPA and a fast-growing community behind it, IPA is ready to drive the next chapter building a nationwide ecosystem of access, excellence, and opportunity. This includes embedding pickleball in schools, communities, and elite training programs, and preparing Indian athletes for the global stage.

The Indian Pickleball Association envisions a robust and inclusive sporting ecosystem built on the following pillars 100,000 active registered players regularly participating in events and National-level competitions across all age groups. A comprehensive grassroots de-



This recognition is a historic milestone – but more importantly, it is a mandate to act. We are committed to building a world-class sporting structure for pickleball in India

SURYAVEER SINGH BHULLAR | PRESIDENT, IPA

velopment programme and the establishment of more National High-Performance Centres for elite training, in addition to existing Centres, are also part of the programme.

A key priority for the IPA

is youth player development, training and officiating, and professional pathways and events. To this end, the association is actively working to the rollout of pickleball in schools, through alignment with programmes like Khelo India Women's Pickleball Cup expansion, championing gender inclusion and hosting international coaches conferences to facilitate knowledge exchange and nationwide certification programmes for referees and coaches, creating employment and structure.

Liverpool title celebration shook Earth

THE SEISMOMETER RECORDED ACTIVITY INSIDE THE STADIUM FROM THE CROWD OF 60,415 – MOST NOTABLY ITS REACTION TO THE SIX GOALS SCORED DURING THE GAME

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Liverpool, May 2: Liverpool's clinching of the Premier League title on Sunday produced an actual seismic event, scientific data shows. Arne Slot's side secured the club's 20th top-flight championship on an unforgettable day at Anfield when they beat Tottenham Hotspur 5-1.

With the help of the University of Liverpool, the club was able to install a seismometer – an instrument that measures ground movement – in the Main Stand for the historic occasion in L4.

The seismometer recorded activity inside the stadium from the crowd of 60,415 – most notably its reaction to the six goals scored during the game. It shows Alexis Mac Allister's stunning strike in the 24th minute that put the Reds 2-1



ahead produced a peak magnitude 1.74 on the Richter scale. The second-biggest tremor within Anfield was caused by the goal Mohamed Salah scored in front of the Kop in the second half at a magnitude of 1.60. Cody Gakpo's effort

measured in at 1.03, the own goal from Destiny Udogie 1.35 and Luis Diaz's initially disallowed equaliser 0.64.

The data was processed and analysed inside the laboratory of the university's department of Earth, Ocean and Ecologi-

cal Sciences by research associates Dr Antoine Septier and Dr Farnaz Kamranzad.

Explaining the science behind the experiment, Ben Edwards, professor of engineering seismology at the University of Liverpool, said, "This experiment gave us a unique opportunity to use seismology to capture a scientific record of the magnitude of Liverpool's historic title-clinching win.

"Using state-of-the-art, seismic-monitoring equipment – normally deployed in earthquake zones like Chile and Italy – we recorded the incredible energy released both at the surface and below. Much like natural seismic events, these goals produced bursts of ground-shaking, triggered by the sheer passion of Liverpool fans. Their enthusiasm was literally powerful enough to move the Earth."

GT get campaign back on track with big win

SRH ALL BUT OUT OF PLAYOFFS RACE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, May 2: Gujarat Titans roared back to winning ways with a 38-run mauling of Sunrisers Hyderabad after Prasidh Krishna's outstanding bowling complemented Shubman Gill and Jos Buttler's explosive half-centuries in the Indian Premier League here Friday.

The result meant SRH are all but out of the playoffs race, even as GT boosted their prospects.

The trio of Gill, Buttler and Sai Sudharsan fired in unison to propel GT to 224 for six.

In reply, SRH were off to a good start too but could not sustain for long and were stopped at 186 for six. Abhishek Sharma top-scored for SRH with 74 off 41 balls.

This was after Gill blazed away to a 38-ball 76, and Sudharsan chipped in with a breezy 23-ball 48 while forging an opening stand of 87 runs in just 6.5 overs, following which Buttler took GT past 200 with his 64 off 37 deliveries.

Prasidh once again excelled with the ball for GT, finishing with excellent figures of 2/19 in 4 overs. The only cause of concern for GT this evening came when Ishant limped off the ground after failing to complete the final over.

SRH, though, meant business at the start of their innings as Mohammed Siraj (2/33) went for 22 runs in his first two overs, while Ishant Sharma conceded 20 in his first two.

However, a spectacular catch in the deep by Rashid Khan ended Travis Head's innings after he covered a lot of ground to reach the ball, having run from deep square leg and then change his direction to judge it to perfection.

Ishan Kishan got out for 13 after consuming 17 balls, as the required rate went over 14.

Despite the presence of Abhishek and Heinrich in the middle for SRH, the match was already in GT's bag thanks to the asking rate that gone past 16. Meanwhile, an upset Gill en-

IPL STANDINGS

TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS
MI	11	7	4	1.274	14
GT	10	7	3	0.867	14
RCB	10	7	3	0.521	14
PBKS	10	6	3	0.199	13
DC	10	6	4	0.362	12
LSG	10	5	5	-0.325	10
KKR	10	4	5	0.271	9
RR	11	3	8	-0.780	6
SRH	10	3	7	-1.192	6
CSK	10	2	8	-1.211	4

gaged in an animated chat with the two umpires over a review call involving Abhishek, who was seen trying to calm the GT captain.

Sent in to bat, Gujarat Titans skipper Gill got the innings underway with a flick off a loose Mohammed Shami delivery for a six.

Having conceded 11 runs in the first over, Shami looked off-colour as Sudharsan dispatched the seamer for five boundaries, including four on the trot.

SRH captain Pat Cummins brought himself into the attack, but the carnage continued as Gill launched into his opposite number, first greeting him with a cover drive and then playing an even better shot shot through the gap between mid-off and cover.

It was a forgettable start for Cummins as Gill smoked the Australian speedster for a maximum over deep mid-wicket to collect 17 from that over.

The best part of their game was that both Gill and Sudharsan were toying with the SRH bowlers without taking any risks and instead relied on class to get the runs.

Brief Scores:
Gujarat Titans: 224 for 6 in 20 overs (Shubman Gill 76, Jos Buttler 64; Jaydev Unadkat 3/35) beat **Sunrisers Hyderabad:** 186 for 6 in 20 overs (Abhishek Sharma 74; Mohammed Siraj 2/33, Prasidh Krishna 2/19)



ECB BARS TRANSGENDERS FROM WOMEN'S CRICKET

The ECB's decision came less than 24 hours after the Football Association took a similar resolution Thursday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, May 2: The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Friday banned transgenders from competing in women's and girls' matches with immediate effect, complying with a recent Supreme Court ruling that excludes them from the legal definition of women.

The ECB's decision came less than 24 hours after the Football Association (FA) took a similar resolution. A statement issued by ECB said that it is announcing a change to its regulations on the eligibility of transgender players after an "updated legal position" following the recent Supreme Court ruling.

"With immediate effect, only those whose biological sex is female will be eligible to play in women's cricket and girls' cricket matches. Transgender women



and girls can continue playing in open and mixed cricket," the ECB statement said. The ECB said while it was all for inclusivity in sports, the Supreme Court decision has prompted it to formulate new rules for women's and girls' cricket.

"Our regulations for recreational cricket have always aimed at ensuring that cricket remains as inclusive a sport as possible. These included measures to manage disparities, irrespective of someone's gender, and safeguard the enjoyment of all players. However, given the new advice received about the impact of the Supreme Court ruling, we believe the changes announced today are necessary."