

Dumani Mail

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Government ramps up sale of 5-kg LPG cylinders, assures no fuel shortage

New Delhi: Government has stepped up sale of small 5-kg LPG cylinders which is available across-the-counter at LPG distributorships on showing valid ID proofs. Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas has said that about 6.6 lakh bottles 5-kg LPG cylinders have been sold since March 23 after government ramped up supplies to meet demand.

Unlike the subsidised domestic 14.2-kg cylinders, 5-kg cylinders are priced at market rates and do not require any address proof for procurement from a nearby LPG distributorship. The ministry said there are no reports of shortages at LPG distributor points, with more than 51 lakh domestic cylinders delivered on April 4 and online bookings accounting for 95 per cent of total demand. Government has said that it is taking comprehensive measures to ensure uninterrupted



fuel supply, safeguard maritime operations, and assist Indian nationals amid the evolving situation in West Asia. Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas emphasised that there is no shortage of petrol, diesel or LPG

in the country and urged citizens to avoid panic buying. People have been advised to rely on digital platforms for LPG bookings and refrain from unnecessary visits to distributors.

Government has also accelerated the expansion of piped natural gas (PNG) connections, with around 3.6 lakh households already connected and over 3.9 lakh new registrations recorded since

March. Citizens have been encouraged to adopt alternative cooking options such as PNG, electric cooktops, and induction systems to reduce pressure on LPG demand.

On the supply side, refineries are operating at high capacity with adequate crude reserves, and domestic LPG production has been ramped up. Additional kerosene allocations have also been made to states to support essential needs.

Authorities highlighted strict monitoring and enforcement measures to curb hoarding and black marketing. More than 50 thousand LPG cylinders have been seized since March, over 1,400 show-cause notices issued, and 36 distributorships suspended for violations. States and Union Territories have been directed to conduct daily inspections, issue regular advisories, and counter misinformation through coordinated communication.

NCW Chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar stresses awareness of women protection laws

New Delhi: Chairperson of the National Commission for Women Vijaya Rahatkar today said that the country has strong laws to ensure the safety and dignity of women and advised every woman to exercise their rights under the law. Addressing a workshop on Women-Centric Issues and Empowerment Initiatives, organised by Akashvani in New Delhi, she emphasised the need for gender sensitisation.

Mrs Rahatkar asserted that equal opportunity and equal respect must be ensured for both men and women. Mentioning key legislations such as the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013 and laws addressing domestic violence, the NCW chairperson pointed out that lack of awareness about these laws often prevents women from seeking justice.

She also underlined the importance of Internal Committees

under the POSH Act and said that their role is not limited to addressing complaints but also includes creating a safe, secure and respectful workplace environment. Mrs Rahatkar called for better infrastructure, awareness and trust-building measures so that women can report issues without fear. Addressing the gathering, Director General of News Services Division of Akashvani, Dhiraj M. Kakadia said that the workplace must remain safe and just, with zero tolerance for exploitation. He assured every woman that their complaints will be addressed through due process. He also urged women to raise genuine issues without fear, noting that misuse of legal provisions and false complaints weaken the credibility of real victims and the justice system. He announced that Akashvani will launch a joint initiative with the National Commission for Women to spread legal awareness on women's empowerment through a dedicated series.

Air India suspends flights to Israel till May 31 amid West Asia conflict

New Delhi: Amid the ongoing war in West Asia, Air India has suspended its flights to Israel. An Air India official said that the airline has suspended flights on the New Delhi-Tel Aviv route till May 31. Most of the leading airlines have suspended their operations on the Tel Aviv route, with only Israeli carriers operating under severe restrictions.

The suspension of flights has caused major worries among more than 40 thousand Indians living in Israel who wish to travel to India for personal or professional reasons, or even to escape the escalating tensions in the region. Indians looking to leave Israel have to go through Jordan or Egypt by entering the two countries through the land crossings. The Indian mission in Tel Aviv has been assisting those looking to travel through various means.

The embassy has also maintained regular contact with the community during the period, opening a 24x7 emergency line and also launching a massive registration drive. Ambassador J P Singh and the embassy team on Saturday held virtual discussion with Indian workers and students across Israel to listen to their concerns, assuring them of "constant support during the ongoing crisis, and beyond".

EAM Dr S Jaishankar discusses West Asia situation with leaders of Iran, UAE and Qatar



New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar spoke to Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani yesterday. They discussed the present situation in the West Asia conflict. Dr Jaishankar also held a phone conversation with UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan. It is understood that the conflict's impact on global energy supplies figured prominently in the talks.

Dr Jaishankar's phone conversations with leaders of the three West Asian nations came against the backdrop of a spike in tensions in the region after US President Donald Trump renewed his threat to Iran. Global oil and gas prices have surged after Iran virtually blocked the Strait of Hormuz, that handles roughly 20 per cent of global oil and LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas). West Asia has been a major source of India's energy procurement.

Delhi: 17-year-old stabbed to death in Jahangir Puri

New Delhi: A 17-year-old boy was stabbed to death in Delhi's Jahangir Puri area after a violent altercation stemming from a previous dispute. He was brought to Babu Jagjivan Ram Memorial Hospital (BJRM) with multiple stab injuries, where the doctors declared him dead.

According to the police, the incident took place on Sunday at around 6 pm at the Ramlila Maidan in Jahangir Puri.

The deceased's brother, Hakeem, who was also an eyewitness to the murder, alleged that Dilshad, Irfan, Imran, and Rizbul jointly attacked his brother (the deceased) with sharp-edged weapons.

Preliminary investigation suggests that the incident stemmed from a long-standing dispute between the two families.

It is reported that tensions escalated following personal relationship issues and a dispute



during Eid, which led the accused persons to carry out the deadly attack.

Police have registered a case and initiated an investigation. All the accused are currently absconding, and multiple teams have been formed to trace and apprehend them.

The police have appealed to

the public to maintain peace and not pay attention to rumours.

An investigation is underway, and further details are awaited.

Earlier on March 28, a 17-year old minor was killed while another suffered injuries after being stabbed by an individual during a wedding procession in

which two groups of boys started quarrelling on some issue at around 11:15 pm in Delhi's Rani Bagh.

A friend of the deceased said, "Our friend had attended a wedding. While he was there, a scuffle broke out among some children. He must have stepped in to intervene. An older individual present there saw the commotion, perhaps thinking he was hitting the children. They did not actually know whether he was hitting anyone or not. However, when he stepped into the middle of the altercation to intervene, that individual stabbed him with a knife. There were two of our friends who were stabbed. One of our friends has passed away, and the other is currently hospitalised," he said.

The police have apprehended the main accused and his accomplice. The weapon of offence, a knife, was also recovered.

Bomb threat prompts evacuation at DU's Ramjas and Miranda Colleges

New Delhi: Delhi University's Ramjas College and Miranda College were evacuated on Monday following a bomb threat, police said. According to the police, the college administrations received an email alerting them to a possible explosive device on

the campuses. Bomb disposal and sniffer dog squads have been deployed to carry out a thorough search. Students, staff, and faculty were evacuated as a precaution, and the search operation is ongoing.

19 newly and re-elected Rajya Sabha members take oath in parliament

New Delhi: Nineteen newly elected and re-elected members of the Rajya Sabha took oath in Parliament on Monday, marking an important moment for the Upper House.

Among those sworn in are five members from Maharashtra, including Ramdas Bandu Athawale, Maya Chintaman Ivnate, Sharadchandra Pawar, Ramrao Sakharam Wadkute and Jyoti Nagnath Waghmare.

Christopher Manickam, Anbumani Ramadoss, Constandine Ravindran, L K Sudhish, M Thambidurai and Tiruchi Siva are from Tamil Nadu. Five members from West Bengal include Babul Supriyo, Menaka Guruswamy, Rajeev Kumar, Rukmini Mallik and Biswajit Sinha, while three members Sanjiv Mishra, Dilip

Kumar Ray and Manmohan Samal are from Odisha.

Speaking after taking the oath, Sanjiv Mishra the BJD MP expressed his commitment to addressing key issues in Odisha. As a first-time Member of Parliament, he said he would return to the state to consult with party leadership, including Naveen Patnaik, along with MLAs and intellectuals, to shape future programs for both the state and the country. "I have become a Member of Parliament for the first time. From here, I will return to Odisha and, along with the President of the Naveen Patnaik and the leadership of the Biju Janata Dal, we will hold discussions with our MLAs. We will also consult intellectuals from Odisha and then decide how to move forward with our future



programs for both the country and the state. There are many issues in the state of Odisha that need to be addressed," said Mishra. Meanwhile, Congress MP Christopher Manickam emphasised his focus on safeguarding the interests of

Tamil Nadu. He stated that his priority would be to ensure the state is not overlooked by the central government. "I am a member from Tamil Nadu, and my priority will be to ensure that Tamil Nadu is not sidelined by the Central Government," he

said.

Union Minister Kiren Rijju also extended his congratulations to the newly sworn-in members. He highlighted the significance of the occasion, noting that the oath-taking took place even though Parliament was not in session, and expressed hope that the new MPs would contribute meaningfully to the functioning of the Rajya Sabha.

"It is a special occasion that the new Rajya Sabha MPs got the opportunity to take oath in the House despite the House not being in session. I congratulate the newly elected MPs and wish them success and good performance in the House. I hope they will help improve the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha by making their valuable contributions," he said.

On a special parliament session on Women's Reservation Amendment Bill, Rijju called for unity across political parties. He said the matter should rise above politics, stressing that women's empowerment is a collective national responsibility. He added that while several opposition parties have supported the initiative, the Congress and some others have yet to fully engage, though he expressed optimism that they would not oppose the measure.

"Congress isn't coming forward. Many other opposition parties have also praised the government's efforts. Women's reservation isn't a matter of any one party. It's a matter of the entire political parties and the country. Women's power, women's empowerment. This

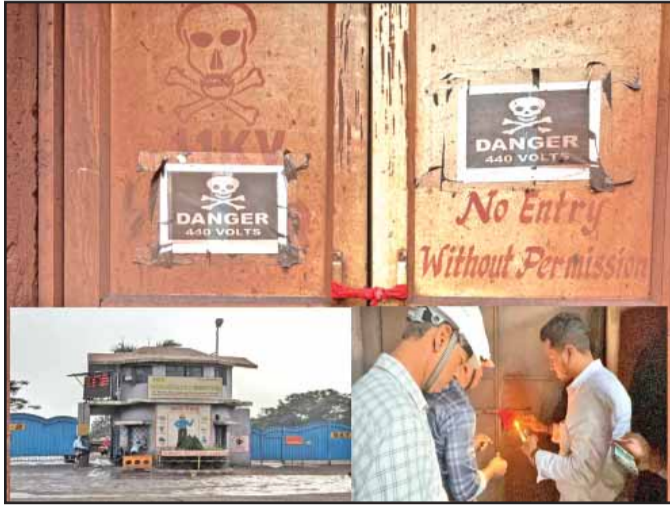
should be a collective effort. There shouldn't be any politics in this. We spoke to all the parties. Congress and a few other parties didn't come, but they won't portray themselves as anti-women. I hope they will not oppose it," said Rijju.

The special Parliamentary session to pass the Women's Reservation Amendment Bill will convene from April 16. The bill was passed by Parliament in 2023. The base for delimitation had originally been set at the 2011 census. The Delimitation Act will be amended accordingly. The Government is currently building consensus as this legislation will need 2/3rd majority to pass this legislation, making it crucial to secure support from opposition parties.

Rengali Shyam Metalics Unit Sealed Over Pollution Violations; Questions Over Selective Action

Sambalpur-06/04(DMS) : In a significant move, authorities have sealed the Rengali-based unit of Shyam Metalics and Energy Limited following directives from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), after long-standing allegations of environmental violations.

The company, which has been facing controversy for nearly 20 years, had earlier received at least six notices for failing to curb pollution. A recent inspection by a central team reportedly found 26 violations of environmental norms, prompting the CPCB to order closure of the plant from March 30. Acting on these directions, the administration sealed the unit,



marking a major enforcement action.

However, the company's

office reportedly remains open, raising concerns about incomplete implementation of

the closure order. The development has also led to public outrage, with locals demanding similar action against other polluting industries operating in Sambalpur and nearby Jharsuguda district.

The issue has taken a political turn, with discussions suggesting that the action came in the backdrop of tensions between the state government and a central political leader. Critics argue that despite years of violations under successive governments, strict action was delayed and only initiated recently.

Residents have long alleged that emissions and waste from the plant caused serious air and

water pollution, adversely affecting public health and the environment. The company had previously been fined approximately ₹199.98 crore for illegal ash dumping, a penalty that reportedly remains unpaid.

Further allegations include unauthorized occupation of land near the Hirakud reservoir and the creation of illegal ash dumps without proper clearance. Authorities had also been instructed to cut power supply and ensure compliance, but delays in enforcement had drawn criticism from various quarters.

The incident has intensified calls for stricter and uniform action against all industries violating environmental norms in the region.

Sangram Keshari Senapati's English Novel 'The Year She Disappeared' Unveiled by 'Abhilasha'



Balasure, May 6 : The English novel 'The Year She Disappeared' by Sangram Keshari Senapati was unveiled yesterday at a programme held at Azimabad. The book was released during the event 'Abhilasha Open Mic', organized at Mission Success Institute.

Among those present as guests were poet Abhilasha Padhi, Utkalika Rout, and A.P. Shubhkantha Samal. Based on a college-time love story, the novel has been published by Shubhapallaba Publication and is expected to appear in Odia in the near future.

It may be noted that this is Sangram's first English novel. His Odia novel 'Cigarette' is also scheduled to be unveiled next week by Timepass Publication.

The programme also witnessed the participation of several young poets and writers from Balasure, who presented their stories and poems. Musical performances and stand-up comedy were also part of the evening. This was the first open mic event organized by Abhilasha in Balasure, and the participating guests and poets showed great enthusiasm.

First Session of 'Mu Kuldiha Kahuchi' Held to Strengthen 'Save Kuldiha Campaign': Poets, Writers and Environmentalists Unite for Kuldiha



Balasure, April 6 : The first session of the cultural awareness forum 'Mu Kuldiha Kahuchi', formed to promote the 'Save Kuldiha Campaign' and protect the natural resources and environment of Kuldiha in Balasure district, was recently held at the Kumbhakhetra premises in Siadimal.

The meeting was presided over by noted environmentalist and retired headmaster Baman Chandra Mohanty. Poets, writers, artists, social workers and environmental enthusiasts including Binod Bihari Panda, Subasini Ji, Sushanta Mahapatra, Chittaranjan Pati, Shibusundar Sahu, Malati Dhal, young artist Dibya Prakash Parida, Ranjan Kumar Sethi, Krishna Nath, Tapan Kumar Mishra, Rupam Kar, Debashish Bhanja, Niladri

Behera and Chandan Sahu participated in the session and prepared a strategic outline for the protection and promotion of Kuldiha.

The participants emphasised the need to organise people living around Kuldiha and other heritage enthusiasts in order to build greater awareness about preserving the region's natural glory.

During the meeting, artist Kesu Das was unanimously appointed as the convenor of the forum, while Baman Chandra Mohanty was selected as president, Chittaranjan Pati as secretary and Dibya Prakash Parida as treasurer.

It was also decided that awareness-oriented literary and cultural workshops would be organised at different locations

around Kuldiha on every fifth Sunday. The next workshop is scheduled to be held at Oupada Bazaar on May 31.

The session also featured poetry readings on Kuldiha by poets Prabhakar Sahu, Subasini Ji, Malati Dhal and Shibusundar Sahu. A live sketch demonstration by artists Kesu Das and Dibya Prakash Parida became a major attraction for the audience.

The song 'Tu Kuldiha Rani', written by poet Sudhakar Sethi, was also presented and appreciated by the participants.

In his concluding remarks, president Baman Chandra Mohanty appealed to all present to extend their cooperation in making the upcoming sessions successful. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks proposed by Kesu Das.

Disabled minor raped, religious place vandalized after being found pregnant

Keonjhar : Tension erupted in Anandpur police station area today, after two groups clashed in Murgagothia village, followed by a group of people of tribal community vandalising the religious place of Christian community. This incident happened when the villagers came to know about the pregnancy of a fifteen years old disable minor girl by a 35-year-old married man of minority community came to limelight. The rape was taking place about four months back.

The agitated villagers

damaged the house of the accused and religious place and set ablaze some articles. Police forces deployed on the spot to maintain law and order in that village.

According to the police, the accused is a relative (uncle) of the victim, who converted to Christian few years back. He is working in Tamil Nadu. Villagers alleged that four months back, when the accused came to village has been raped the girl while going to take bath to village pond. On Sunday when the girl felt ill, family members

took her to medical, where they came to know about her pregnancy. After the news spread, there was a stir among the villagers. The agitated villagers gathered in the village and vandalized the religious place of the minority community in the village. In this group clash between two groups took place.

After receiving the information, the SubDivisional Police Officer, Anandpur along with police officers reached there with the police force and tried to control the situation.

Meanwhile, Superintendent of Police, Keonjhar Nitin Kushalkar went to the spot after getting the information to see the situation.

Debendra Kumar Champia, a villagers said " About four months ago, the disabled minor girl from the village was raped by the man while she was bathing in the pond. However, the victim did not inform her family about the incident out of fear. On Sunday, the minor girl fell ill, and her family admitted her to the hospital. It was found that the minor girl

was pregnant there. We want to arrest the accused and punish".

SDPO Anandpur Kamal Panda said " the situation is calm. Police force deployed in the village. After receiving a complaint today afternoon, a case has been registered. As the accused is working in Tamil Nadu, hence yet not arrested. A peace committee was formed among the villagers to maintain peace. After received opinion of both parties to keep peace, a report will be handed over to the Sub collector, Anandpur".(EOM)

The 20th state-level death anniversary ceremony of freedom fighter Late Gangadhar Mahapatra was celebrated with great grandeur.



Puri: The event was organized at the Sanskriti Bhavan auditorium. It was presided over by Dr. Neelkantha Pati. The Chief Guest was Justice Biraja Prasanna Satapathy of the Odisha High Court. Distinguished guests included Mr. Shitanshu Mohan Dwivedi, Chairman of the Odisha State Bar Council, and Mr. Sarat Chandra Behera, Additional District Magistrate.

All the guests spoke about the life ideals, sacrifice, patriotism, and contributions of Late Gangadhar Mahapatra, especially highlighting his role in the development of Odisha during his tenure as a minister.

On this occasion, the Odisha State Bar Council posthumously honored Late Gangadhar Mahapatra for his lifelong contributions. As in previous years, senior advocate Mr. Bijay Das of the Odisha High Court, Cuttack, and senior advocate Mr. Banabihari Nayak of Puri were honored for their services in the field of law.

For notable contributions to social service, Mr. Sushant Kumar Rath was honored. Mr. Pavitra Mohan Dalai, recognized as the best law graduate from Gangadhar Mahapatra Law College, was awarded the "Gangadhar Mahapatra Memorial Award."

The program began with the ceremonial lighting of lamps before the images of Lord Jagannath and Gangadhar Mahapatra. Advocate Shiva

Prasad Mishra welcomed the guests, while Mr. Umaballabh Mahapatra, son of Gangadhar Mahapatra and a senior advocate, introduced them and presented ceremonial shawls and bouquets.

The general secretary Chakradhar Mahapatra presented the editorial report, and the event concluded with a vote of thanks by executive editor Bipin Bihari Dalai.

A large number of admirers and well-wishers attended the ceremony. The event was supported by advocates Pushkar Mahapatra, Sitaballabh Mahapatra, Satyabrata Rath, Sarat Kumar Rayguru, Birendra Hota, Pramod Kumar Pradhan, Sarbani Das, and others.

Other attendees included Chandrasekar Maharana, Naresh Mohanty, Dr. Hemant Kumar Chhotray, President of Puri District Bar Association Premananda Mohanty, Dr. Badri Mishra, Basanta Kumar Mishra, Subas Chandra Parida, Yogeshwar Prharaj, Aditya Hriday Mishra, Sandeep Karmakar, Rabindra Kumar Behera, Dilip Samantaray, Ram Narayan Mishra, Pradeep Kumar Mohanty, Nab Kishore Satapathy, and many others.

Additionally, as every year, rituals were performed at Gangadhar Mahapatra's birthplace, Vishwanathpur. His statue was garlanded, incense and lamps were offered, and prayers were conducted before Lord Gopinath to mark the occasion.

Special Meeting of Puri District and Satyabadi Senior Citizens Forum



Puri: A special meeting of the Puri District and Satyabadi Senior Citizens Forum was held on Sunday at the Alsa Panchayat farmhouse premises in Satyabadi, under the (chairmanship) of District President Dr. Kartik Kumar Das. Hundreds of men and women above the age of 60 participated in the meeting. It was stated during the meeting that after the age of 60, when individuals often begin to feel vulnerable or dependent, the need for such organizations becomes even more important. District President Dr. Das emphasized that to strengthen the spirit of living a united life, it is essential for every member of the organization to possess self-respect, a sense of responsibility, and a positive attitude. On this occasion, members of both organizations enthusiastically celebrated the birthdays of former Supply Officer of Puri district Santosh Kumar Mohanty and retired Indian Army officer Kishore Pattanayak Nayak. Everyone extended their wishes and prayed to Lord Jagannath for their good health and long life. Satyabadi Senior Citizens Forum President and advocate Gundicha Baral discussed various issues faced by the organization during the meeting. Future plans and strategies were also deliberated upon by members of both organizations.

State-level poetry reading festival : A captivating atmosphere of Saraswat

Delang : On the occasion of the two-century-old famous Ghoradia Dayanachori Kunj Melan Festival, with the support of "Odisha Sahitya Academy", Bhubaneswar and the "Make in India and Media Parivar" and the Jalandhar Smuti Sahitya Pratisthan in Ghordia, the 11th annual Dayanachori Sahitya Asar, Saraswat Sadhak, Sadhikanka Samvardhana Utsav-2026 was held at the Dayanachori Melan Festival venue on Friday. The event was presided over by the managing director of the institution, Dilip Kumar Dhaudia. The chief guest was renowned writer, researcher, Vastu Shastra and Astrology expert Dr. Devi Prasad Mohapatra, keynote speaker, social worker and Health and Family Welfare Department officer Nagan Pradhan, guest of

honor, Sr journalist, poet and Delang Press Club President Prasanna Kumar Tripathi, senior children's writer and playwright Dr. Hemant Kumar Chhotaray, young social worker, lawyer and Dayanachori Lok Mahotsav Parishad President Shashi Shekhar Ray, teacher, poet and editor of Matiramahak Sahitya magazine Manas Ranjan Patnaik, local in-charge Sarpanch Kamini Prabha Rautray, Sri Radhamohan Dev Math Trust Director Prahallad Baliarsingh, editor of the priyabrat magazine poet Bipini Bihari Dalai, State Food Commission member and youth leader Priyabrat Samantray inaugurated the ceremony by lighting the main lamp and spoke about the history, tradition, art, He spoke about culture, Odia language and literature. In this



Asar, hundreds of renowned and self-styled poets from different districts of the state participated and recited their selected poems. Sakingopal poet Prashant Kumar

Mishra, poet Rohit Champatti, Dr. Prabhas Chandra Pradhan, Duttikrushna Mohanty, Harihar Balabantray, Niranjan Nayak, Suresh Chandra Biswal, Political

Circus' Shriman Gaba alias Ganesh Prasad, Adhikar Swain, poetess Sarojini Jena, Laxmipriya Dash, Benudhar Behera, Delang Sahitya Sansad editor and poet

Jyotsnamayee Swain, Mallika Singh, Pramila Patanaik, Mileena Sahu, Hrishikesh Padhi, Lingaraj Mahapatra, Dr. Niladri Nath Jagdev, lawyer and poet Vikram Keshari Champati Satyabadi Sahu, Namita Swain, Kailash Chandra Prusti, Swagatika Sundaray, Prasanna Kumar Tripathy, Pravat Kumar Sethi, Nalini Dash, Laxmipriya Jaysingh, Gitanjali Behera, Phulrani Pal, Vijayalakshmi Dash, Satyabadi Sahu, Borshail Sahitya Sansad Editor Poet Pradyumna Parida, Niranjan Samantraya, Ranjit Kumar Jena, Simanjita Barik. Laxman Kumar Sahu enthralled everyone with their recitation of prominent poems. All the poets were presented with appreciation letters by the institution! At the beginning of the program, after

the worship of Mahaprabhu Shri Jagannath and the song of Bande Utkal Janani, welcome songs, patriotic songs, Sambalpuri and dance songs were performed by the children. A dance drama based on Utkal culture and heroism by Kuni girls, directed by eminent poetess and Delang Children's Literature Society Editor Laxmipriya Dash, further enlivened the atmosphere. Various literary institutions and individuals were felicitated for their outstanding contribution in various fields. The stage management and poetry were coordinated by senior poet and advisor Ramesh Chandra Swain, Trustee Gitarani Ranjit thanked everyone for their cooperation, presence and success in the program.

Odisha MBBS Graduates Protest Over Delay in Appointment Letters

Bhubaneswar 06 April (H.S.): Hundreds of MBBS graduates staged a protest on Monday outside the office of the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) at Cuttack, expressing strong dissatisfaction over the delay in issuance of appointment letters despite successfully clearing the recruitment process.

The protesting candidates voiced concerns about growing uncertainty surrounding their professional future and urged the state government to intervene and expedite the appointment process.

According to the aspirants, the OPSC had invited applications in May last year to fill 5,284 Medical Officer posts. Of these, around 3,000 candidates



appeared for the examination, and 1,840 qualified. However, following certificate verification, only about 822 candidates have so far received appointment

letters.

A significant number of successful candidates—approximately 1,018 MBBS graduates—are still awaiting their

appointment orders. The candidates alleged that despite fulfilling all eligibility criteria and completing every stage of the recruitment process, they have not received any clear communication regarding the delay.

The protesters described the situation as unjust and demoralising, stating that the prolonged delay has left many in a state of uncertainty. They gathered peacefully outside the OPSC office, demanding immediate action and transparency from the authorities. The candidates have called upon the government to address the issue at the earliest and ensure timely appointments to avoid further disruption to their careers.

Shyam Metallics Factory Sealed in Sambalpur Over Alleged Pollution Violations

Bhubaneswar, 06 April (H.S.): The district administration has sealed the Shyam Metallics factory in the Rengali area of Sambalpur following directives from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) over alleged environmental violations.

The company faced accusations of causing air and water pollution, illegally creating ash mounds, and encroaching on land near a water body. The CPCB had issued closure orders on March 30 due to non-compliance, but the factory reportedly failed to implement any corrective measures.

On Monday morning, officials from the district administration and CPCB carried out the sealing operation. In the presence of security personnel, the main gate of the factory was locked, and the entire plant was sealed. Only office-related work is permitted to continue, with employees allowed entry and exit upon presenting valid identity cards.

Special Development Councils Are Not Just Positions, But Responsibilities: Deputy CM

Bhubaneswar, 06 April (H.S.): Reacting to the formation of the Special Development Councils, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida stated that these councils are not merely positions, but carry significant responsibilities.

Deputy CM Parida emphasized that the party's focus is on inclusive and comprehensive

development. Through this initiative, the aim is to involve every individual in accelerating Odisha's growth. She further noted that party workers who demonstrate dedication and diligence may gradually take on higher responsibilities, including positions comparable to Chief Minister or Deputy Chief

Minister in the future.

Highlighting the purpose of the councils, she clarified that this move is intended to make development initiatives more effective and provides both a responsibility and an opportunity for district-level party workers to contribute meaningfully to the state's progress.

Odisha Hosts 69th SGFI National Rugby Championship at Kalinga Stadium

Bhubaneswar, 06 April (H.S.): Odisha has commenced hosting the 69th National School Games Federation of India (SGFI) Rugby Championship 2025-26 for both boys and girls in the Under-17 and Under-14 categories. The prestigious national-level school rugby tournament is being held at Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar, and features players from across the country.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Shri Bhupendra Singh Poonia, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Sports and Youth Services Department, as the Chief Guest. Distinguished guests included Dr. N. Thirumala Naik, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, School and Mass Education Department; Shri Birendra

Korkora, Director of Secondary Education; Shri Jyoti Prasad Parida, Assistant Director (PET); SGFI Observer Shri Arvind Yadav; and international rugby player Dumuni Marandi. The championship will run from April 6 to April 10.

Addressing the participants, Chief Guest Shri Poonia encouraged the young athletes to compete with true sportsmanship and strive to represent their state and the country at the international level. SGFI Observer Shri Yadav praised the School and Mass Education Department and thanked the Odisha government for hosting the event at a world-class venue like Kalinga Stadium, expressing hope for more international-level

sporting events in the state in the future. International rugby player Dumuni Marandi also shared her experiences with the young athletes, inspiring them with her journey.

The Under-17 boys' and girls' competitions are scheduled for April 6 and 7, while the Under-14 categories will take place on April 9 and 10. The Under-17 championship features around 460 players representing 15 states and organizations, including Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, New Delhi, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, the CBSE Welfare Sports Organisation, and the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations.

Convocation Ceremony Held at Biju Patnaik State Police Academy

Bhubaneswar, 06 April (H.S.):

The convocation ceremony of the 9th batch of DSP probationers was held at the Biju Patnaik State Police Academy on Monday morning, marking the successful completion of their foundational training.

Director General of Police (DGP) Yogesh Bahadur Khurania attended the event as the Chief Guest and took the ceremonial salute during the parade. A total of five DSP probationers from the ninth batch successfully completed their training and participated in the ceremony.

Addressing the newly inducted officers, the DGP congratulated them and urged them to dedicate themselves to public service as a strong and responsible force within the Odisha Police. He emphasized that the high-quality training imparted at the academy would help shape them into competent, disciplined, and professional officers.

Highlighting future challenges, he advised the officers to tackle cybercrime, organized crime, and other emerging threats with courage and integrity. He also spoke about various initiatives undertaken by the state government to modernize and strengthen the police force, including the creation of new posts, recruitment drives, and



expansion of specialized units such as OSSF, OISF, and ODRAF, along with improved traffic management systems.

The DGP further stressed the importance of effective implementation of new criminal laws and enhancing public awareness. Reiterating the core motto of Odisha Police, "Service and Protection," he called upon officers to prioritize the safety of vulnerable sections of society, including women and children, while maintaining professionalism, sensitivity, and good public conduct.

During the ceremony, meritorious

trainees were felicitated for their outstanding performance. Srishti Pradhan was awarded the Governor's Medal and Trophy for being the Best Probationer, along with top honours in indoor subjects and the NICFS Medal. Sourabh Ranjan Pradhan was recognised as the second-best probationer and secured the highest marks in outdoor subjects, while Pankaj Majhi received the Director's Trophy for best performance in the AET course. The event was attended by senior police officials, including Academy Director S. Saini, retired officers, family members of trainees, and members of the media.

Odisha STA Bans Operation of Over-10-Year-Old Commercial Vehicles Registered in Other States

Bhubaneswar, 06 April (H.S.): In a decisive step to enhance road safety and passenger convenience, the State Transport Authority (STA) of Odisha has issued a directive prohibiting the operation of commercial vehicles registered in other states that are over 10 years old from the date of manufacture.

The Transport Commissioner-cum-Chairman of the STA has formally issued the order, instructing all Regional Transport Officers (RTOs) to enforce the resolution strictly across the state.

According to the directive,



approved during the 301st STA meeting held on July 19, 2023, commercial vehicles exceeding the 10-year age limit and registered outside Odisha will no longer be permitted to operate within the state. Authorities have also been directed to refrain

from issuing any new permits to such vehicles.

Furthermore, RTOs and Assistant RTOs have been prohibited from allowing ownership transfers, change of address, or accepting any form of transport tax for out-of-state commercial vehicles older than 10 years.

The official order states, "All Regional Transport Officers are instructed not to allow any change of address, transfer of ownership, or accept tax in respect of other State stage or contract carriage vehicles exceeding 10 years of age henceforth.

No Shortage of LPG, Petrol, or Diesel in Odisha: Supply Secretary Sanjay Singh

Bhubaneswar, 06 April (H.S.): The Odisha government has assured that there is no shortage of LPG, petrol, or diesel in the state. Supply Secretary Sanjay Singh stated that several measures have been implemented over the past month to ensure uninterrupted availability of essential fuels.

He clarified that while minor issues in the availability of petrol and diesel have been reported in a few locations, the overall situation remains stable and there is no cause for concern. He emphasized that there is no shortage of LPG in the state. Regarding 5 kg LPG cylinders,

Singh stated that oil companies are distributing them through e-KYC verification, and there are no issues

in their availability. Students and workers can obtain these cylinders by presenting valid identification.

Oil companies are also organizing camps at various locations to facilitate distribution.

63rd National Maritime Day and Merchant Navy Week celebrated in Paradip

Paradeep: Observed every year on April 5, National Maritime Day marks India's rich maritime legacy and acknowledges the relentless efforts of mariners, shipping professionals, and stakeholders who power global trade and connectivity. The occasion also serves as a reminder of India's aspirations to emerge as a leading maritime nation through innovation, sustainability, and robust port-led development.

Similarly, the 63rd National Maritime Day and Merchant Navy Week were celebrated with great pomp and show at the Odisha Maritime Academy premises in Paradip on Saturday. All the cadets of Paradip Maritime Academy, along with

the officers of the Navy, Paradip Port and the Maritime Department, were present to remember that historic day in 1919. The Indian ship SS Loyalty, which asserted its sovereignty over the waterways of the entire world community and resisted the British expansion of its dominance, set sail for the first time in 1919 from Mumbai to London. This marked India's presence on the seas and also secured its rights over the maritime routes of countries all over the world. National Maritime Day is celebrated in India every year on April 5 to commemorate this maiden voyage of SS Loyalty. Since 1964, this day has been recognized for the contribution

of the maritime industry to the Indian economy and has been honoring sailors. In this regard, the Forward Union celebrated the 63rd Maritime Day for the first time at the Maritime Academy complex in Paradip, remembering the history of those 63 years and the way India asserted its rights on the waterways today, which has benefited an economic and commercial perspective. On this occasion, an essay competition was organized for students of various schools and colleges of the Paradip area on the occasion of National Maritime Day. The officials present said that this will make the children aware of maritime history and will create interest among the children to

join the maritime sector in the coming days.

On the occasion, Senior Marine Engineer Manoj Kumar Mahant and MMD Surveyor Puranna Chandra Majhi were the chief guests in the program, while Paradip Port Authority Deputy Conservator Capt. Alekh Chandra Sahu was the guest of honor and Odisha Maritime Academy principal Manas Ranjan Behura was present as the guest and highlighted the celebration of Maritime Day and Merchant Navy Week and appreciated the organizers for organizing such program. All these programs were successfully conducted by FSUI branch representatives Sushant Kumar Swain and Himanshu Parida.


No-Shortage-of-LPG-Petrol

No Shortage of LPG, Petrol, or Diesel in Odisha: Supply Secretary Sanjay Singh

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Cuttack Municipal Corporation

Biju Bhawan, Choudhary Bazaar,
Cuttack-753001

Notice for inviting RFP for "Selection of Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) Agency for Redevelopment of Satichoua Crematorium at CMC"

Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) hereby invites Request for Proposal (RFP) from Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) Agencies for Redevelopment of Satichoua Crematorium at Cuttack Municipal Corporation. The interested and eligible Agency/Firms, as specified in Detailed Tender Call Notice (DTCN), may apply for the same in OFF-LINE mode. (For details visit <https://cmccuttack.odisha.gov.in>).

The bid documents comprising of eligibility criteria, instruction to bidders, etc. can be seen / downloaded, from CMC portal <https://cmccuttack.odisha.gov.in>, during the period as stipulated under critical date.

SL No.	List of Key Events	Critical Dates
1	Period of availability of bid documents in the website	From 5.00 P.M. of 06.04.2026 to 20.04.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.
2	Last date and time for submission of pre bid queries (Email id: cityeng_cmc@gmail.com)	09.04.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.
4	Upload Pre bid queries	10.04.2026 at 5.00 P.M.
6	Last date of receipt Hard copy of Bid through Speed Post/Registered Post (India Post)/Courier and by no other means.	20.04.2026 up to 5:00 P.M.
7	Date & Time of opening of Technical Bid	Date: 21.04.2026 at 12:00 P.M.
8	Date of Presentation	12:00 P.M. of 23.04.2026 at Mini Conference Hall, Biju Bhawan, Choudhary Bazar, Cuttack (If the time or date is changed, it will be intimated to the participating bidders via email)
9	Date & Time of opening of Financial Bid	27.04.2026 at 05.00 P.M.

The complete bidding documents, fee details, descriptions of items and key dates can be viewed/downloaded from the website: <https://cmccuttack.odisha.gov.in> Please note that CMC reserves the right to accept or reject the Bid process at any stage without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Sd/-
Commissioner,
Cuttack Municipal Corporation

13001/56/2627

Comprehensive Exploration of Odisha

It is said, "Brevity is the soul of wit." In that sense, ace journalist Bhaskar Parichha's book, *Odisha - 500 Years of Turmoil, Mayhem and Subjugation*, has already created ripples in the intellectual domain and in the minds of history-loving people. The high priest of history, E. H. Carr, in his magnum opus writes, "History would not be worth writing or reading if it has no meaning." Parichha's presentation of 500 years of Odisha's history is a capsule that contains all the crucial challenges and possibilities, while seeking meaning and purpose.

This book is a procession of facts and events, governed by inexorable laws. It is the result of objective analysis, documenting the most monumental challenges Odisha has confronted, written in lucid English, in an impassioned yet impartial manner, with remarkable objectivity. Things deeply embedded in Odishan culture—the valour of the warrior class and a liberal intellectual tradition—permeate the narrative in an impressive manner throughout the book, exhibiting the craftsmanship of the writer.

The cover of the book is unique, drawn from Odishan folklore. The structure of the book is well organised; it is not a history textbook but reads like a lyrical love story. The format, in that sense, is quite revolutionary, with a chronological arrangement of history that speaks and enthral. Citings from the writings of Abu Fazal, Arnold Toynbee, and Barrister Madh usudan Das make it compelling reading.

In his Foreword, noted literary critic and bureaucrat Haraprasad Das writes, "Odisha, for many, is either a glorious mystery that faded into civilizational history or an aspirational model of cultural osmosis that blends the North-South Vindhyan divide into a living whole." That is the marvel of this history book—it not only chronicles, but enchants.

The narrative revolves around the concept of Odisha's spiritual journey, politics, society, and economics. Parichha has beautifully captured the evolving politics through a quest for Odia identity, while striving to preserve rich traditions and welcoming modernity in an ever-changing cultural landscape. Odisha's historical maritime trade boasts a great legacy and a vibrant culture across the Bay of Bengal and far beyond India's boundaries into Southeast Asia. There have been major shifts, of course, but the way Parichha chronicles them is rhythmic.

The ups and downs—from the Na'Anka famine, a sad reminder of the apathetic and callous attitude of the British Empire resulting in colossal loss of lives, to the downturn after MukundaDev—are portrayed with depth and sensitivity. Equally striking are the triumphs of KapilendraDev, who envisioned an empire rooted in Odisha's culture. Nevertheless, the book delves into the aggression of the Marathas, the Afghan invasion, the Muslim period, and the tumultuous British era, weaving this intricate history with coherence and depth.

The Paika Rebellion, the Nilgiri movement, the Khurda Rebellion of 1804, and the integration of princely states under the stewardship of the first Chief Minister, Dr. Harekrishna Mahatab—including the Quit India Movement and the iconic guerrilla warfare led by Veer Surendra Sai during the First War of Independence—are presented as living history, forming the flashpoint of the book.

After India became independent, Odisha marches on through trials and tribulations, yet never feels defeated. On the cusp of Independence, democracy finds its footing—with a farmer-first policy and an industrialising Odisha—continually battling natural calamities like floods and cyclones, yet standing like a solid rock after every disaster. What Parichha writes is the beauty of the resilience of the people of Odisha, and the spiritual leadership of Lord Jagannath, who, in legend, moves to the battlefield to fight for his sevak king.

The political landscape, once unstable after Independence, has now stabilised, and a rising Odisha is carving a niche for itself nationally and internationally, as Parichha highlights. The changes in occupational structure, the rise of soft power, modern farming practices, and industrial turnaround together narrate a story aligned with national goals of economic and inclusive growth.

The book is about a rising star beyond the horizon, in the firmament of history—immensely readable and scrupulously enjoyable. Blending rigorous scholarship with an engaging narrative, it is a comprehensive exploration of Odisha over the last five hundred years.

The analysis is insightful, the result of hard labor and scholarship, producing an erudite yet refreshingly accessible book that celebrates history as an act of curiosity, argument, and critical inquiry. Highly recommended.

Odisha - 500 Years of Turmoil, Bhaskar Parichha, Pen In books, Bhubaneswar

Lack of Experts: How to Get Kids Ready for AI

Dr. Vijay Garg

Criterion intelligence in the modern era is rapidly changing every sector including education, health, agriculture, industry and employment. But with this change comes a bigger challenge—the cost of money. When technology advances, human resources are not developed at the same speed. The biggest question in SE: Are we preparing our children for an AI future? Why the shortage of experts?

AI is a high-level field that requires knowledge—understanding of math, logic, data, and programming. But there is a growing lack of experts for several reasons:

the still-old curriculum in schools. The paucity of practical and experiential learning. Lack of equal access to technology. Lack of teacher training. The need to prepare children for AI. Many jobs in the future will be related to AI. So kids will have to learn not only book knowledge, but also thinking and problem-solving skills. (Critical Thinking) (creativity) (digital literacy). (adapting to change) The Role of Schools. Schools have to make changes in their education system:

Covering topics such as AI, coding and data science. Practical Education. Not just theory, but learning through projects and experiences. Teacher training. Making teachers aware of new technology. The role of parents. Parents also play a vital role in preparing children for AI: Making children aware of technology, motivating them to ask questions and learn new. Maintaining a balance of screen time, responsibility of government and society. Strengthening the digital infrastructure. equal educational opportunities in rural and urban areas. Skills development programmes for young people. The Importance of Human Values. Human values are no less important in the age of AI.

Rooted in Specifics of Kolkata

Bhaskar Parichha

No. 1 Akashganga Lane: The First Novel about the Gig Workers of Kolkata by Ashoke Mukhopadhyay, translated with sensitivity and nuance by Zenith Roy, is a strikingly contemporary novel that brings into sharp focus the precarious lives of urban gig workers. Set against the pulsating yet indifferent backdrop of Kolkata, the novel explores a world that is at once hyper-connected and profoundly isolating.

At the heart of the narrative is Sriman, a food delivery worker whose life is defined by anonymity and transience. He delivers meals to strangers, navigating the city's labyrinthine streets, yet remains invisible within the very system he sustains. Mukhopadhyay captures this paradox with quiet precision: Sriman's labour is essential, but his existence is

expendable. The gig economy, as portrayed in the novel, demands efficiency, obedience, and silence—qualities that gradually erode individuality and agency.

Equally compelling is the character of Mrittika Sen, a bike taxi driver whose experiences foreground the gendered dimensions of gig work. Through her, the novel examines the additional vulnerabilities faced by women in an already unstable ecosystem. The constant threat of being "logged out"—a chillingly impersonal metaphor for economic erasure—hangs over her life. Mukhopadhyay does not sensationalize her struggles; instead, he presents them with restraint, allowing their quiet intensity to resonate.

What elevates No. 1 Akashganga Lane beyond a social-realist narrative is its imaginative and philosophical layer. The titular Akashganga—a century-old

house—serves as a refuge, both literal and symbolic. Within its walls resides Bishan Basu, a figure who introduces Sriman, Mrittika, and others to the stars. This shift from the immediacy of urban struggle to the vastness of the cosmos is one of the novel's most poignant devices. It offers a counterpoint to the claustrophobia of gig work, suggesting that even in the most constrained lives, there exists a yearning for transcendence.

The recurring motif of the stars and the speculative question—whether these workers might one day need another planet to call home—imbues the narrative with a subtle dystopian edge. It reflects not only ecological anxieties but also a deeper sense of displacement. The idea that gig workers might carry their labour into another world is both darkly humorous and profoundly unsettling, underscoring the

inescapability of systemic exploitation.

Mukhopadhyay's prose, as rendered in English by Roy, is measured and evocative. The translation deserves particular commendation for retaining the cultural texture of the original while ensuring readability for a wider audience. Kolkata itself emerges as a character—its rhythms, inequalities, and fleeting solidarities shaping the lives of those who inhabit it. The author's background in documenting the city's social history is evident in the authenticity of detail and atmosphere.

The novel also succeeds in capturing the fragile solidarities that emerge among gig workers. Friendships, though often transient, provide moments of warmth and resistance. The shared experiences of precarity create a sense of community, however fleeting. Akashganga becomes a

space where these fragmented lives intersect, offering not solutions but solace.

No. 1 Akashganga Lane is a timely and thought-provoking novel that captures the human cost of the gig economy with empathy and insight. Through its blend of social realism and philosophical reflection, it offers a nuanced portrait of contemporary urban life.

Ashoke Mukhopadhyay has crafted a narrative that is both rooted in the specifics of Kolkata and resonant with global relevance, while Zenith Roy ensures that its voice travels beyond linguistic boundaries. The result is a work that lingers, prompting readers to look more closely at the invisible lives that sustain modern cities.

**No. 1 Akashganga Lane
Ashoke Mukhopadhyay
Niyogi Books
New Delhi**

Alone in a Crowd: The Truth About Modern Friendships

Dr Vijay Garg

In today's hyper-connected world, friendship has taken on a new form—one that is shaped by screens, notifications, and digital interactions. We are more "connected" than ever before, with hundreds or even thousands of online contacts just a click away. Yet, paradoxically, many people feel more isolated and emotionally distant than ever. This contradiction defines the reality of modern friendship: connected, yet alone.

The rise of social media platforms has revolutionized how friendships are formed and maintained. Distance is no longer a barrier; people can stay in touch across continents in real time. Old schoolmates reconnect, long-lost relatives find each other, and new friendships blossom in virtual communities. On the surface, it appears that human connection has reached unprecedented levels.

However, beneath this digital closeness lies a deeper emotional gap. Online interactions often lack the depth and authenticity of face-to-face communication. A "like," a quick comment, or a short message cannot fully replace the warmth of a genuine conversation, the comfort of shared silence, or the empathy conveyed through a simple touch. As a result, relationships may become shallow, sustained more by habit than by true emotional bonding. Another challenge is the illusion of companionship. Social media creates a curated version of reality, where people present only their happiest moments. This can lead to unrealistic comparisons and feelings of inadequacy. Seeing others constantly surrounded by friends and joy can make individuals feel lonelier, even when they are not. The presence of many connections does not necessarily translate into meaningful friendships.

Moreover, the quality of time spent together has diminished. Even when friends meet in person, they are often distracted by their devices. Conversations are interrupted by

notifications, and attention is divided between the real and the virtual world. This gradual erosion of presence weakens the foundation of genuine relationships.

Modern lifestyles also play a role. Busy schedules, career pressures, and geographical mobility leave little time for nurturing friendships. As people prioritize professional success, relationships sometimes take a backseat. Over time, this leads to emotional distance, even among close friends. Yet, it would be unfair to view technology as entirely negative. It has also enabled support networks, especially for those who feel isolated in their immediate surroundings. Online communities can offer a sense of belonging, encouragement, and understanding. The key lies not in rejecting technology but in using it mindfully.

To bridge the gap between connection and loneliness, individuals must consciously invest in meaningful relationships. This means prioritizing quality over quantity—fewer but deeper friendships rather than a large network of superficial ones. It involves being present, listening actively, and making time for real conversations. Small efforts, such as meeting regularly, sharing experiences, and expressing genuine care, can strengthen bonds significantly.

In conclusion, modern friendship exists in a complex space where digital connection coexists with emotional isolation. While technology has brought people closer in terms of communication, it has also distanced them in terms of true intimacy. The challenge of our time is to balance these two realities—to remain connected without losing the essence of what it truly means to be a friend.

Dr Vijay Garg Retired Principal? Educational columnist Eminent Educationist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab

"Moon's Secret Reservoirs Power the Next Space Journey"

Dr Vijay Garg

For decades, the Moon was considered a barren and dry world. But recent scientific discoveries have dramatically changed this perception. The detection of water on the lunar surface has not only reshaped our understanding of Earth's closest neighbor but has also reignited global interest in returning humans to the Moon.

The presence of water on the Moon was first strongly confirmed through missions like Chandrayaan-1 and later observations by NASA. Scientists found that water exists in multiple forms—frozen as ice in permanently shadowed craters near the poles and even as molecules trapped in sunlit soil. This discovery challenged the long-held belief that the Moon was completely dry.

More recently, space agencies have intensified efforts to locate and map these water deposits. Missions such as NASA's Lunar Trailblazer and upcoming rover-based explorations aim to identify where water is concentrated and how it behaves on the lunar surface. These efforts are not just scientific—they are strategic.

Water is the key to sustainable space exploration. It can be used for drinking, producing breathable oxygen, and even creating rocket fuel by splitting it into hydrogen and oxygen. This means future astronauts may not need to carry all essential resources from Earth,

significantly reducing mission costs and complexity.

The Moon's south pole has emerged as a particularly important region. Deep craters there remain in permanent shadow, preserving ice deposits that may have existed for billions of years. These frozen reserves could support long-term human presence and serve as refueling stations for missions to Mars and beyond.

Beyond practical uses, the discovery of lunar water also holds scientific significance. Studying it can provide clues about the origins of water on Earth and the history of the solar system. Scientists believe lunar water may have come from comet impacts or chemical reactions involving solar wind particles.

As a result, the Moon is no longer just a destination of past glory—it is becoming a gateway to the future. International collaborations, including efforts by NASA, ISRO, and JAXA, highlight a shared vision of building a sustained human presence on the Moon.

In conclusion, the discovery of water has transformed the Moon from a lifeless satellite into a promising hub for exploration and innovation. It is this vital resource that is fueling humanity's return to the lunar surface—this time, not just to visit, but to stay.

Dr Vijay Garg Retired Principal? Educational columnist Eminent Educationist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab

Beyond Fluency: Rethinking Spoken English Education

Dr Vijay Garg

Teaching a language requires an understanding of how learners acquire language, how errors can be addressed, and how communicative competence can be developed

A classroom full of learners stands with their hands over their hearts, repeating in unison: "From today, I will speak only in English. I can speak in English." The exercise resembles a pledge—solemn, collective, and hopeful. For many, it marks the start of a journey toward confidence and self-improvement. Yet, one cannot help but wonder: can fluency in a language truly be achieved through such declarations?

This scene is not unusual. With the onset of the vacation season, several spoken English centres appear across towns and cities, offering attractive packages and persuasive promises. Advertisements assure learners that fluency can be attained within two to three months. Some even guarantee a refund if the goal is not achieved. For students preparing for higher studies or job interviews or looking for social mobility, such claims are difficult to resist since English has become a global necessity and the pressure to acquire it quickly is immense. However, beneath these assurances, lies a more complex reality about how languages are actually learned.

In many centres, training is built around predictable conversational patterns. Learners are taught to introduce themselves, describe their hobbies and discuss their ambitions, and respond to routine questions. These are useful starting points but the method often relies heavily on memorisation. Students internalise fixed sentences and reproduce them with confidence, creating the impression of fluency in controlled environments.

Thinking in English Yet, language is not a set of ready-made expressions to be recalled on demand. It is a system that must be actively constructed in the mind. The first step in communication occurs in thought, where ideas take shape before being articulated. When learners rely primarily on memorised phrases, they struggle in unfamiliar situations that require spontaneous expression.

The reliance on translation further complicates this process. In many classrooms, concepts are explained in the regional language and then translated into English. While this may make learning appear easier, it prevents learners from thinking directly in English. Instead, they become dependent on a mental translation process, which slows communication and restricts originality. True fluency emerges only when the language

becomes a medium of thought rather than a tool of conversion.

A striking feature of some spoken English programmes is the neglect of essential components of language learning. Grammar, for instance, is often dismissed as unnecessary with the argument that spoken English requires only practice. While an excessive focus on rules can indeed hinder fluency, the absence of grammatical awareness leaves learners without the structural framework needed to form coherent and accurate sentences.

Pronunciation is another overlooked area. Few centres offer systematic training in phonetics, which is crucial to develop clarity and intelligibility. Without this guidance, learners rely on approximations influenced by their first language, leading to persistent errors that can affect academic and personal communication in academic and professional settings.

Equally important is vocabulary. Effective communication depends not merely on confidence but on the availability of words to express thought. Many students, including those educated in English-medium institutions, struggle with limited vocabulary. This restricts their ability to think and articulate ideas in English. Vocabulary building is a gradual

Pronunciation is another overlooked area. Few centres offer systematic training in phonetics, which is crucial to develop clarity and intelligibility. Without this guidance, learners rely on approximations influenced by their first language, leading to persistent errors that can affect academic and personal communication in academic and professional settings.

process that requires sustained exposure to reading, listening, and meaningful interaction. It cannot be achieved through short-term courses alone.

Quality and regulation The issue of trainer qualifications raises further concerns. In several centres, instructors are graduates, or even less, with minimal training in language pedagogy and limited professional experience. Teaching a language is not just about speaking it but requires an understanding of how learners acquire language, how errors can be addressed, and how communicative competence can be developed.

This situation bears an unsettling resemblance to the phenomenon of pseudo-medical practitioners who, without proper qualifications, work in

clinics or set-up their own practice. Reports of such cases frequently appear in the news, raising serious questions about public safety and professional standards. While the consequences in language education may not be as immediately visible, the long-term impact on learners' confidence and competence can be significant.

It would, however, be unfair to dismiss all spoken English centres. For many learners, especially those who hesitate to speak, these spaces provide an initial platform to overcome fear and build confidence. The concern lies not in their existence but in the methods they employ and the expectations they create.

Given the increasing importance of English in education, employment, and everyday communication, there is a need to view language training as a serious and responsible enterprise. Regulatory oversight could help ensure that centres maintain basic standards. Fluency cannot be packaged, priced, and delivered within a fixed duration. It is cultivated over time, through consistent practice, meaningful exposure, and intellectual engagement.

Dr Vijay Garg Retired Principal? Educational columnist Eminent Educationist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab

Indian Railways Approves 1,364 Crore Safety Overhaul: Kavach, Signaling Upgrades

New Delhi, 6/4(H.S.):The Railway Ministry greenlit projects worth ₹1,364.45 crore on Monday to bolster train safety, modernize signaling systems, and strengthen communication networks across key zones. A flagship initiative installs Kavach Version 4.0—the indigenous anti-collision system—on 232 Southern Railway locomotives at ₹208.81 crore, positioned as a game-changer preventing train collisions through automatic braking. Northern Railway secures ₹400.86 crore for upgrading optical fiber communication (OFC) over 3,200+ route km, enhancing signaling reliability and Kavach efficacy. North Central Railway gets ₹176.76 crore for 2x48 fiber OFC across 2,196 route km on high-density routes, fortifying communication resilience. South



Central Railway allocates ₹578.02 crore to convert panel interlocking to electronic systems at 49 stations, minimizing manual errors for

safer, more efficient operations. These initiatives form part of Railways' comprehensive upgrade strategy targeting elevated safety,

capacity, and operational efficiency. Enhanced Kavach rollout and signaling promise significantly safer passenger journeys ahead.

NCERT Book Authors Blacklisted Over Judiciary Corruption Chapter Seek Supreme Court Relief

New Delhi, 6/4(H.S.):Three academics blacklisted by the Supreme Court for authoring a controversial Class 8 NCERT textbook chapter on judicial corruption have approached the apex court seeking removal of adverse observations against them. On March 8, a bench led by Chief Justice Suryakant—having taken suo motu cognizance of the "Exploring Society: India and Beyond" textbook's content—ordered Professors Michel Danino, Suparna Diwakar, and Alok Prasanna Kumar disassociated from government-funded work.

The court condemned the chapter for deliberately fostering negative judicial perceptions among impressionable Class 8 students, questioning their knowledge or intent. The trio's lawyers mentioned their petitions before CJI Suryakant's bench, demanding listing post-curiae



advisals. The court directed post-curative listing. Previously, it mandated NCERT and Centre to withdraw all physical/digital copies nationwide, deeming any circulation contemptuous. The February uproar followed media reports on the "Role of Judiciary" chapter citing corruption; NCERT withdrew

it amid PM Modi's reported displeasure and Education Minister's regret. Court rejected initial apology as insincere, banned production/distribution, seized copies, and ordered syllabi board minutes probe—later forming an expert panel (ex-judge, academician, lawyer) to vet revisions.

Seven Foreigners Remanded to 30-Day Judicial Custody in Northeast Training Case

New Delhi, 6/4(H.S.):Patiala House Court sent seven foreign nationals—six Ukrainians and one American—to 30 days' judicial custody, accused of entering India to train ethnic groups in the Northeast. Their NIA remand ended Monday, prompting court presentation. The court noted the foreigners illegally entered Myanmar via Mizoram's protected zones, contacting ethnic groups. Charges include supplying illegal arms, providing combat training, and drone operation assistance—linked to Indian insurgent outfits. Per NIA,



they arrived on visas, bypassed Mizoram's Restricted Area Permit, infiltrated Myanmar for training, then reciprocated by arming/training ethnic warriors. A

major drone shipment from Europe allegedly routed through India. FIR invoked multiple UAPA sections for conspiracy, terrorism facilitation.

Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami campaigns in Bengal, holds roadshow in Bangaon

Kolkata, 6/4 (H.S.): With political activities intensifying ahead of the West Bengal Assembly elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has deployed Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami as one of its star campaigners in the state. On Monday, Dhami held a roadshow and addressed a public meeting in Bangaon in North 24 Parganas district in support of party candidates. Dhami also participated in the nomination programmes of BJP candidates Swapna Majumdar from Bangaon South, Ashok Kirtania from Bangaon North, Soma Thakur from Bagda and Subrata Thakur from Gaighata. During the visit, he appealed to voters to support BJP nominees. A large turnout was witnessed during the roadshow and the public meeting, which BJP leaders described as a



sign of growing public support. Addressing the gathering, Dhami targeted the ruling Trinamool Congress government, alleging that corruption and an atmosphere of fear prevail in the state. He alleged that the Trinamool Congress was functioning more

like a "syndicate" than a political party and claimed that cut-money and commission practices had become its identity. He further asserted that corruption and crime would be curbed if the BJP comes to power in the state. Dhami also highlighted the BJP's "double

engine government" narrative, stating that states with the same party in power at both the Centre and the state have witnessed faster development. He claimed that West Bengal too would see greater development and investment under such a governance model. Referring to the crowd at the Bangaon rally, Dhami said it reflected the public's desire for political change. He urged voters to ensure the victory of BJP candidates, saying it would pave the way for development and good governance in the state. Political observers believe that the BJP's strategy of deploying leaders from other states is aimed at strengthening its organisational presence and influencing voters. Dhami's visit is being seen as part of that broader campaign strategy.

Delhi High Court to Hear CBI's Plea Against Kejriwal Acquittal on April 13

New Delhi, 6/4 April (H.S.):The Delhi High Court will hear the Central Bureau of Investigation's (CBI) challenge to the trial court's order discharging former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and 22 others in the Delhi excise scam case on April 13. The court directed CBI to respond to the accused's plea seeking Justice Swarn Kanta Sharma's recusal from hearing the matter. Kejriwal, present in court Monday, stated he would argue personally—after Chief Justice DK Upadhyay rejected his and Manish Sisodia's earlier letter seeking the same. On March 16, the court granted time



for responses from all accused. Notices were issued March 9 after CBI appealed the discharge. The High Court had stayed trial court

remarks criticizing CBI and barred further money laundering proceedings linked to the excise case.

BJP Mission Continues: Uniform Civil Code, 'One Nation One Election' Under Serious Debate, Says PM Modi

New Delhi, 6/4 (H.S.):On the Bharatiya Janata Party's 47th Foundation Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared the party's mission far from complete despite major achievements in power, with Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and 'One Nation, One Election' sparking nationwide serious discourse. In a video message to party workers, Modi emphasized BJP's consistent prioritization of national interest. He expressed confidence that the party would continue confronting challenges with integrity, yielding positive outcomes as before. PM Modi listed transformative steps: scrapping hundreds of archaic British-era laws, constructing a new Parliament building to strengthen democracy, granting 10% reservation to economically weaker sections, criminalizing triple talaq, implementing Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), and consecrating Ram Temple in Ayodhya. "BJP doesn't



just promise—it delivers," he asserted. The party's goal remains building a developed, self-reliant India through selfless service. Modi urged workers to reinforce nation-service resolve, noting BJP uniquely inspires viewing the party as 'mother,' making

Foundation Day emotionally significant. Recalling Jan Sangh founder Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee's sacrifice for Jammu & Kashmir's integration, Modi noted decades-long Article 370 challenge ended decisively by BJP. 'Ek Bharat, Shreshth

Bharat' drives initiatives like GST ('One Nation One Tax'), One Nation One Ration Card, One Nation One Grid—unifying economy and nation. Success stems from lakhs of workers' sacrifice, penance, dedication—understood only by those devoted to BJP values. RSS inspiration instilled clean intent; BJP evolved into robust cadre-based force. Amid Emergency repression and violence, workers persisted, many sacrificing lives. National Democratic Alliance (NDA) pioneered country-first coalition politics—not mere power grab, but national goals achievement. BJP consistently advances women in organization and governance, commitment ongoing. As BJP nears golden jubilee, Modi called workers to embrace new goals, adapt to technology, strengthen nation-building roles with fresh energy amid ongoing state elections.

Dwarka Crash Victim's Mother Seeks CBI Probe in High Court

New Delhi, 6/4 (H.S.):The mother of Sahil Dhanesha, killed in a February Dwarka road accident, petitioned the Delhi High Court for a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe or court-monitored investigation by Delhi Police, alleging investigative lapses. Justice Saurabh Banerjee's bench will hear the matter today (April 6). The plea claims Delhi Police investigation serves the accused and accomplices to shield them. Petitioner states submitted evidence remains unverified. She challenges Juvenile Justice Board orders: the minor accused showed no remorse when produced February 4; granted bail February 10 without notice to family. Accused's father and associates allegedly influence proceedings. On February 3, Sahil rode a motorcycle when a high-speed SUV driven by a minor, collided violently, completely wrecking the bike. A second cab driver sustained grievous injuries.

Bastar Turns Development Focus Post-Naxal Eradication, Chhattisgarh CM Sai to Meet PM Tuesday

New Delhi, 6/4 (H.S.):With India declared Naxal-free, government attention shifts to comprehensive development of Chhattisgarh's Bastar region. Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Tuesday. High-Level Consultations Official sources confirm Sai will also confer with Home Minister Amit Shah. The meetings hold strategic importance for Bastar's future trajectory. Discussions center on "post-Maoist scenario"—crafting rapid development roadmap after Maoist influence wanes. Security gains achieved, Centre-state collaboration now accelerates mainstream integration. Sai presents detailed plan emphasizing infrastructure expansion, industrial growth, investment attraction, youth employment, and inclusive tribal development. Government eyes Bastar as new development model balancing security, economy, social progress.



Supreme Court Orders CBI Probe Into Arunachal CM Pema Khandu's Contract Favoritism Allegations

New Delhi, 6/4 (H.S.):The Supreme Court directed the Central Bureau of Investigation to probe claims against Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu for awarding contracts to companies owned by his relatives. A bench led by Justice Vikram Nath issued the order. The court mandated CBI commence investigation within two weeks, covering contracts from January 2015 to December 2025. The

verdict was reserved February 17; notices went to Home and Finance Ministries March 18, 2025. Counsel Prashant Bhushan argued state plunder: CM's wife and nephew's firms secured ~70 contracts worth thousands of crores, breaching Prevention of Corruption Act and ministerial conduct rules. State counsel dismissed the PIL as politically motivated abuse of law process.



Lumbini Lawmakers Urge PM Balen Shah to Seek India's Aid for Bhairahawa Airport Operations

Kathmandu, 6/4 (H.S.): Lawmakers from Lumbini Province urged Prime Minister Balendra Shah on Monday to immediately seek assistance from the Indian government to operationalize Gautam Buddha International Airport in Bhairahawa, located near the Indian border. During a meeting with directly elected House of Representatives members from Lumbini, Nepali Communist Party leader and parliamentarian Yamnath Pun (also known as Barshaman Pun) proposed urgent collaboration with India. He stressed expediting airport operations, advocating swift diplomatic engagement on air routes for international flights without further delay. Pun called for establishing a labor desk at Bhairahawa to regularize



international flights and unlock tourism potential, a suggestion endorsed by all attending MPs. They expressed concern over the airport's non-operation five

years post-construction, insisting no alternative exists to diplomatic initiatives with India for this border-proximate facility. Prime Minister Shah assured the

lawmakers he would promptly direct the Foreign Ministry and Civil Aviation Authority to initiate diplomatic talks with India on the matter.

Only India, Russia, China Hold Power to Halt West Asia War: US Economist Jeffrey Sachs

Moscow, 6/4 (H.S.): Jeffrey Sachs, American economist and Director of Columbia University's Center for Sustainable Development, asserts that only three global leaders—India's PM Narendra Modi, China's President Xi Jinping, and Russia's President Vladimir Putin—possess the capacity to de-escalate rising Iran tensions. In Russia Today's "New Order" program, Sachs warned that without joint intervention by these powers, the West Asia crisis risks morphing into global instability. He urged them to convince US President Donald Trump to end the conflict, emphasizing BRICS nations' (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) decisive role, as India currently chairs the bloc. Sachs highlighted perils



of prolonged conflict: Iranian retaliation to potential US bombing, economic fallout for Global South, and Trump's miscalculation of war costs. He accused segments of Israeli leadership of harboring a "6th century BCE mindset" and dismissed Pakistan's mediation claims, insisting BRICS alone can broker

peace. Praising India's stature to reject "American delusions," Sachs recommended collective action with BRICS partners, leveraging New Delhi's historic Iran ties for mediation. He cautioned India against aligning with Israel post-Gaza and labeled Western nations as US "vassal states," urging autonomy.

Iran Rejects US Ultimatum, Vows to Keep Strait of Hormuz Closed

Tehran, 6/4 (H.S.): Amid escalating tensions in the war-torn Middle East, Iran has firmly dismissed a stern warning from US President Donald Trump demanding the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz by Tuesday, heightening fears of broader conflict. Tehran rejected the ultimatum outright, branding Trump as "helpless" and "panicked," while asserting that it fears no threats and will not yield the strategic waterway. Iranian officials declared that the strait remains closed, daring adversaries to act as they see fit. According to Al Jazeera reports, Iran's central military command categorically dismissed Trump's 48-hour deadline, in which he threatened to devastate the country's critical infrastructure—such as power



plants—if no peace agreement is reached and the strait is not reopened. Trump warned that failure to comply would unleash calamity on Iran. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Ismail Baghaei emphasized that Trump's threats do not intimidate the Iranian people, who possess all necessary means for self-defense. He added that Iran has proven its

resolve since the war's outset, promising reciprocal retaliation against any strikes on civilian infrastructure, particularly power facilities. The channel further noted ongoing Israeli and US attacks on Iranian civilian and petrochemical sites, which have killed at least five people, including one in a strike on the Bushehr nuclear facility.

US-Israel Launch Intense Strikes on Iran After Hormuz Deadline Rejection, 34 Killed

Tehran/Tel Aviv/Washington, 6/4 (H.S.): Rejecting Washington's ultimatum to reopen the Strait of Hormuz by Tuesday, Iran faced relentless US-Israeli airstrikes launched after the February 28 integrated military campaign escalated West Asia's crisis. The attacks killed 34 people overnight. Iran responded with missile barrages on Israel and Gulf Arab states. President Donald Trump had warned of obliterating Iran's power plants if unmet; Tehran dismissed threats, vowing fitting retaliation. Al Jazeera reported continuous explosions over Tehran, fighter jets roaring low, striking Sharif University of Technology near Azadi Square. In Haifa, an Iranian missile hit a residential building, killing two with two missing; fresh strikes hit early Monday. Kuwait and UAE



activated air defenses against Iranian missiles/drones. Attacks targeted Kuwaiti power/water/desalination/oil plants, Bahrain oil

facility, Iraq's Sulaymaniyah via drone, and Iranian Kurdish militant bases in northern Iraq. Iran struck UAE telecom DU building (no injuries), Beersheba (sirens blared), Saudi downed two drones; Israel bombed Lebanon's Kfar Rumman, killing four in a car. Trump reiterated Tuesday strikes on bridges/power plants if Hormuz stays shut; Pentagon reports 365 US troops injured. Sharif University largely destroyed alongside hospitals, schools, oil/steel facilities in Karaj, Shiraz, Isfahan, Bushehr; Bandar-e-Lengeh (6 dead), Qom (5 dead), Tehran's Baharestan (13 dead)—total 34 fatalities. Iran hanged suspect Ali Fahim for January military intrusion attempt amid 1979 Revolution's bloodiest unrest.

Trump Reveals Precise Strike Timing on Iran in Unprecedented Truth Social Post

Washington, 6/4 (H.S.): US President Donald Trump has ignited global alarm by publicly disclosing what many interpret as the exact timing for potential American strikes on Iran's critical civilian infrastructure, should Tehran refuse to reopen the Strait of Hormuz for international shipping. In a Sunday evening post on his Truth Social platform dated April 5 at approximately 8:00 PM Eastern Time, Trump stated simply: "Tuesday, 8:00 PM Eastern Time!" Analysts view this as either a revised deadline for Iran to comply or a direct signal of impending military action, marking an extraordinary departure from conventional warfare protocol where operational secrecy is paramount. The provocative message follows Trump's expletive laced threats earlier that day, vowing to obliterate Iran's power plants, bridges, and other vital assets if no peace deal emerges within 48 hours. It comes amid the dramatic rescue of a US Air Force weapons systems officer whose F-15E Strike Eagle was downed over Iranian territory, further straining relations in the ongoing Middle East conflict.



Alexander Leonov, Lead Designer of Zircon Hypersonic Missile and BrahMos Programme Passes Away at 74

Moscow/New Delhi, 6/4 (H.S.): Renowned Russian missile designer Alexander Leonov, widely credited as a key architect of the hypersonic Zircon cruise missile and the Indo-Russian BrahMos programme, has died at the age of 74, according to Russian state-linked reports and defence-industry sources. His death marks the loss of one of Moscow's most influential hypersonic-weapons engineers at a time when advanced cruise- and ballistic-missile systems are central to Russia's global-power posture. Role in Zircon and BrahMos Leonov served as CEO and Chief Designer of NPO Mashinostroyeniya (NPO Mash), the Russian state-owned company that is the principal Russian partner in BrahMos Aerospace, the New Delhi-based joint venture developing the BrahMos and BrahMos-NG supersonic and hypersonic cruise missiles. Within this framework, he oversaw successive generations of



the BrahMos family, including the new-generation BrahMos-NG, which is being engineered for smaller platforms, reduced radar signature, and enhanced range. Beyond BrahMos, he is most closely associated with the 3M22 Zircon (Tsirkon) hypersonic cruise missile, a ship- and submarine-launched system capable of reaching speeds up to Mach 9—roughly nine times the speed of sound—and striking

maritime and land targets at ranges commonly assessed between about 400 and 1,000 km, depending on trajectory and altitude. Russian media describe Zircon as a cornerstone of Moscow's naval and coastal-strike capability, designed to outmanoeuvre existing missile-defence architectures. Broader contributions to Russian defence leadership, NPO

Mashinostroyeniya also played a central role in other major Russian missile and space-related systems, including the Granit and Bastion coastal-defence complexes, which employ the Oniks (Yakhont) cruise missile that forms the basis of the Indian-Russian BrahMos design lineage. Open-source defence analyses note that his bureau contributed to the combat-equipment elements of the Avangard hypersonic glide-vehicle system and to radar-surveillance satellites, underscoring his impact across both missile and space domains. Leonov was decorated with the title "Hero of Labour" in 2019, Russia's highest civilian honour, in recognition of his contributions to missile- and space-system design. Russian agencies describe him as a pivotal figure in modernising Russia's conventional and strategic-strike capabilities over the past three decades, particularly in the shift

from traditional cruise-missile architectures toward hypersonic platforms. Circumstances and legacy The exact place and cause of Leonov's death have not been formally disclosed by his employer or by official Russian channels, although several Russian-language outlets place his passing in early April 2026. International defence analysts stress that his work on Zircon and BrahMos-NG will continue to shape not only Russia's and India's arsenals, but also the calculus of naval and coastal-defence planning in the Indo-Pacific and European theatres. As hypersonic technology becomes a critical vector in global strategic competition, the death of an architect like Alexander Leonov underscores the enduring importance of individual designers in determining the character and reach of next-generation missile systems.

Bernie Sanders Slams Trump's Iran Remarks as 'Dangerous and Unbalanced'

Washington, 6/7 (H.S.): As tensions between the United States and Iran intensify over the Strait of Hormuz dispute, political rhetoric in America has sharpened, with Democratic Senator Bernie Sanders launching a fierce critique of President Donald Trump's recent statements. In a post on the social media platform X, Sanders condemned Trump's remarks as "dangerous and unbalanced,"

noting their timing on Easter Sunday as particularly alarming. He warned that such aggressive language risks escalating global tensions and worsening the already volatile situation in the Middle East. Sanders urged restraint and diplomacy over belligerent posturing, calling on Congress to intervene immediately with concrete steps to avert war. "This is a time for

restraint and diplomacy, not aggressive rhetoric," he emphasized. The exchange underscores deepening rifts within US politics amid the Iran crisis, particularly surrounding the Hormuz Strait standoff. Analysts suggest these pointed political barbs could influence both America's foreign policy



trajectory and regional dynamics in the coming days.

Pope Leo XIV's Easter Urbi et Orbi Message Calls for Peace Through Dialogue Amid Middle East Tension

Vatican City, : Pope Leo XIV on Sunday delivered a powerful call for global peace, urging nations and leaders to renounce violence and choose dialogue over domination amidst the ongoing conflict in West Asia. In his poignant Urbi et Orbi Easter message from Saint Peter's Basilica, the Pontiff appealed for an end to the indifference that has allowed suffering and bloodshed to continue unabated. "Let those who have

weapons lay them down! Let those who have the power to wage war choose peace!" the Pope declared. "Not a peace enforced by force, but a peace achieved through dialogue! Not one based on domination, but on mutual encounter and understanding." Reflecting on the significance of Christ's resurrection, Pope Leo XIV emphasized the triumph of life over death, light over darkness, and love over hatred. He spoke

of the resurrection of Jesus Christ as a beacon of Christian hope and an embodiment of non-violent strength, rooted in God's boundless love. "The resurrection of Christ marks the beginning of a new humanity; it opens the path to the true promised land, where justice, freedom, and peace reign. It is a place where all recognize one another as brothers and sisters, children of the same Father—who is Love, Life, and Light," the Pope said.

No Unusual Price Volatility in Essential Goods Amid West Asia Crisis, Government Confirms Ample 60.2 MMT Food Stocks

New Delhi, 6/4 (H.S.): The central government assured Monday that essential commodity prices show no abnormal fluctuations despite West Asia tensions, with continuous monitoring of wholesale and retail markets nationwide. Public Distribution Department Joint Secretary C Shikha, at an inter-ministerial briefing, emphasized close food security oversight. Buffer stocks exceed norms threefold: ~222 lakh metric tons (LMT) wheat and ~380 LMT rice—totaling ~602 LMT. States directed for strict action against hoarding, black marketing. National Food Security Act (NFSA) ensures grains for vulnerable populations; Open Market Sales Scheme intervenes for price stability. Imports from key



partners (Indonesia, Malaysia, Russia, Ukraine, Argentina, Brazil) continue steadily. Improved mustard production bolsters domestic supply; government vigilant for interventions if needed.

Crude Oil Prices Surge Past \$115/ Barrel Amid West Asia Crisis

New Delhi, 6/4(H.S.):Crude oil prices climbed above \$115 per barrel on Monday amid escalating West Asia tensions, straining household budgets as international benchmarks hit fresh highs. Brent crude futures rose \$1.71 (1.6%) to \$110.74 per barrel during trading. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude exceeded \$115 per barrel, driven by supply disruptions from shipping issues in key Middle East oil-producing regions. An HSBC report cautioned sustained prices above \$100/barrel could trigger severe fallout, potentially pushing inflation beyond 6%. Higher inflation would raise costs for food, electricity, transport, and daily essentials, directly hitting



consumers. Price rally followed US President Donald Trump's ultimatum to Iran—demanding Strait of Hormuz reopening by Tuesday 8 PM—or face strikes on power plants. Petrol/diesel demand spans agriculture, transport, factories, power generation; disruptions exacerbate economic pressures.

GeM Achieves 18.4 Lakh Crore Cumulative GMV, Emerges as Premier Digital Public Procurement Platform

New Delhi, 6/4(H.S.): Government e-Marketplace (GeM) crossed ₹18.4 lakh crore in cumulative Gross Merchandise Value (GMV), solidifying its position as India's leading digital public procurement platform. Commerce & Industry Ministry highlighted GeM's evolution into a transparent, efficient, inclusive system strengthening public economy. Surging participation from MSMEs, women-led enterprises, and startups drives procurement growth, connecting diverse businesses to government demand while promoting fiscal inclusion, sustainability, transparency. CEO Mihir Kumar noted the GMV feat reflects buyer-seller-institution trust in tech-driven procurement.



GeM prioritizes MSMEs, women entrepreneurs, SC/ST firms, startups via inclusive access. In FY 2025-26, MSMEs executed 68% of orders (47.1% GMV share). Over 11 lakh MSMEs registered; FY26 secured 51 lakh+ orders worth ₹2.36 lakh crore (20% YoY growth). 2.1 lakh+ women-led MSMEs garnered 28,000 crore+ orders (28% growth).

RBI MPC Meeting Underway Amid West Asia Tensions, Repo Rate Likely Unchanged at 5.25%

Mumbai, 6/4 (H.S.):The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), chaired by Governor Sanjay Malhotra, commenced its first three-day review for FY 2026-27 today (April 6-8) to assess interest rates and inflation amid West Asia crisis. Economists anticipate the repo rate remaining steady at 5.25%, navigating global uncertainties, elevated crude prices, and currency pressures. Decisions on policy rates and inflation targets will be



announced April 8. The repo rate—RBI's short-term lending rate to banks—directly influences loans, EMIs, savings, and investments. Last held at 5.25% in February 2026 MPC meeting; cumulative 125 bps cuts since February 2025, latest December 2025 (25 bps reduction). Six-member MPC (3 RBI officials including Governor, 3 external experts appointed by Centre) targets inflation control. FY27 schedule: June 3-5, August 3-5, October 5-7, December 2-4, February 3-5, 2027.

NMDC Raises Iron Ore Prices by Up to 11.1%, Effective April 5

New Delhi, 6/4(H.S.):India's largest iron ore producer, NMDC Ltd, hiked prices by up to 11.1% across grades, informing BSE, NSE, and Calcutta Stock Exchange. The revised rates took effect April 5 on a 'Free-on-Rail' (FOR) basis, excluding royalty, District Mineral Foundation (DMF) charges, NMET levy, GST, environmental cess, and other statutory dues. Grade-Wise Hikes From Bailadila mines (Chhattisgarh): Baila Lump (65.5% Fe): +10.4%Baila Fines (-10mm, 64% Fe): +11.1%—high-quality fines ideal for steel production. Share



Price Reaction NMDC stock sustained gains April 6, hitting an intraday high of ₹80.75 (+3% from prior close) on BSE. Record Production Backdrop FY 2025-26 saw NMDC achieve peak output of 53 million tonnes produced, 50.2 million tonnes sold—bolstering steel raw material supply amid robust domestic demand

Stock Market Roars Back: Sensex Surges 1,478 Points from Lows, Investors Gain 5.04 Lakh Crore

New Delhi, 6/7(H.S.):Domestic markets staged a sharp recovery amid Gulf peace proposal reports, reversing early losses. Sensex leapt over 1,478 points from intraday lows, while Nifty jumped 455+ points. Both indices closed higher: Sensex +1.07%, Nifty +1.12%. Post-initial dip, afternoon buying fueled gains across banking, financials, realty, IT, auto, capital goods, consumer durables, FMCG, healthcare, metals, PSEs, and tech indices. Oil & gas fell 1.03% under selling pressure. Midcap (+1.52%) and smallcap (+1.29%) indices outperformed. Market cap of BSE-listed firms hit ₹27.41 lakh crore (provisional), up ₹5.04 lakh crore from Thursday's ₹22.37 lakh crore—translating to massive paper profits. BSE saw 4,544 active stocks: 3,202 advanced, 1,153 declined,



189 unchanged. NSE: 3,001 traded (2,375 up, 626 down). Sensex's 30 stocks: 27 gained, 3 lost; Nifty 50: 45 up, 5 down. Sensex opened +157.98 at 73,477.53, plunged 590.89 to 72,728.66 on selling, recovered 1,478.80 to peak near 74,207 before settling +787.30 at 74,106.85. Nifty opened +67.20 at 22,780.30, hit 22,542.95 (-237.35), surged 455.40 to 22,998.35, closed +255.15 at 22,968.25.

Vinay Muralidhar Tonse Takes Charge as Yes Bank MD & CEO

New Delhi, 6/4 (H.S.):Vinay Muralidhar Tonse assumed the role of Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at Yes Bank on Monday, succeeding Prashant Kumar whose extended tenure ended April 5. Officially appointed for three years with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approval and subject to shareholder consent, Tonse brings over 35 years of banking expertise. His experience spans treasury, retail banking, corporate banking, international operations, and asset management—including prior MD role at State Bank of India (SBI). Yes Bank positions Tonse to steer the next growth phase, leveraging his SBI background managing retail business and operations across vast networks. Kumar's departure caps his tenure since stabilizing the bank post-2020 reconstruction.

Bullion Market Sees Marginal Decline as Gold and Silver Lose Sheen

New Delhi, 6/4(H.S.):Domestic bullion markets opened the trading week with tentative weakness in gold and silver prices during early sessions. Current Gold Prices Across Cities 24-carat gold is trading between ₹1,50,920 and ₹1,51,070 per 10 grams in most markets, while 22-carat gold ranges from ₹1,38,340 to ₹1,38,490 per 10 grams. In Delhi, 24-carat stands at ₹1,51,070 and 22-carat at ₹1,38,490; Mumbai quotes 24-carat at ₹1,50,920 and 22-carat at ₹1,38,340. Silver Prices Dip Slightly Silver is seeing a modest fall, trading at ₹2,49,900 per kilogram in Delhi's bullion market, reflecting subdued demand amid early volatility. City-Wise Breakdown Ahmedabad: 24-carat ₹1,50,970; 22-carat



₹1,38,390. Chennai & Kolkata: Both at 24-carat ₹1,50,920; 22-carat ₹1,38,340. Bhopal & Patna: 24-carat ₹1,50,970; 22-carat ₹1,38,390. Lucknow & Jaipur: 24-carat ₹1,51,070; 22-carat ₹1,38,490. Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar: 24-carat ₹1,50,920; 22-carat ₹1,38,340.

Stock Market Faces Early Pressure: Sensex and Nifty Slide Amid Volatility

New Delhi, 6/4(H.S.):Indian equities opened higher but quickly succumbed to selling pressure during early trade, with benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty exhibiting sharp swings between buyers and sellers. The BSE Sensex, after opening 157.98 points stronger at 73,477.53—peaking at 73,588.75 and dipping to 72,790.49—traded 518.10 points or 0.70% lower at 72,801.45 by 10 AM. Similarly, the NSE Nifty started 67.20 points up at 22,780.30, hit a high of 22,798.25 and low of 22,561.90, before falling 148.65 points or 0.65% to 22,564.45. Among heavyweight stocks, Trent Ltd surged up to 4.06%, with Wipro, Hindalco Industries, Coal India, and Tech Mahindra gaining 1.45–4.06%. In



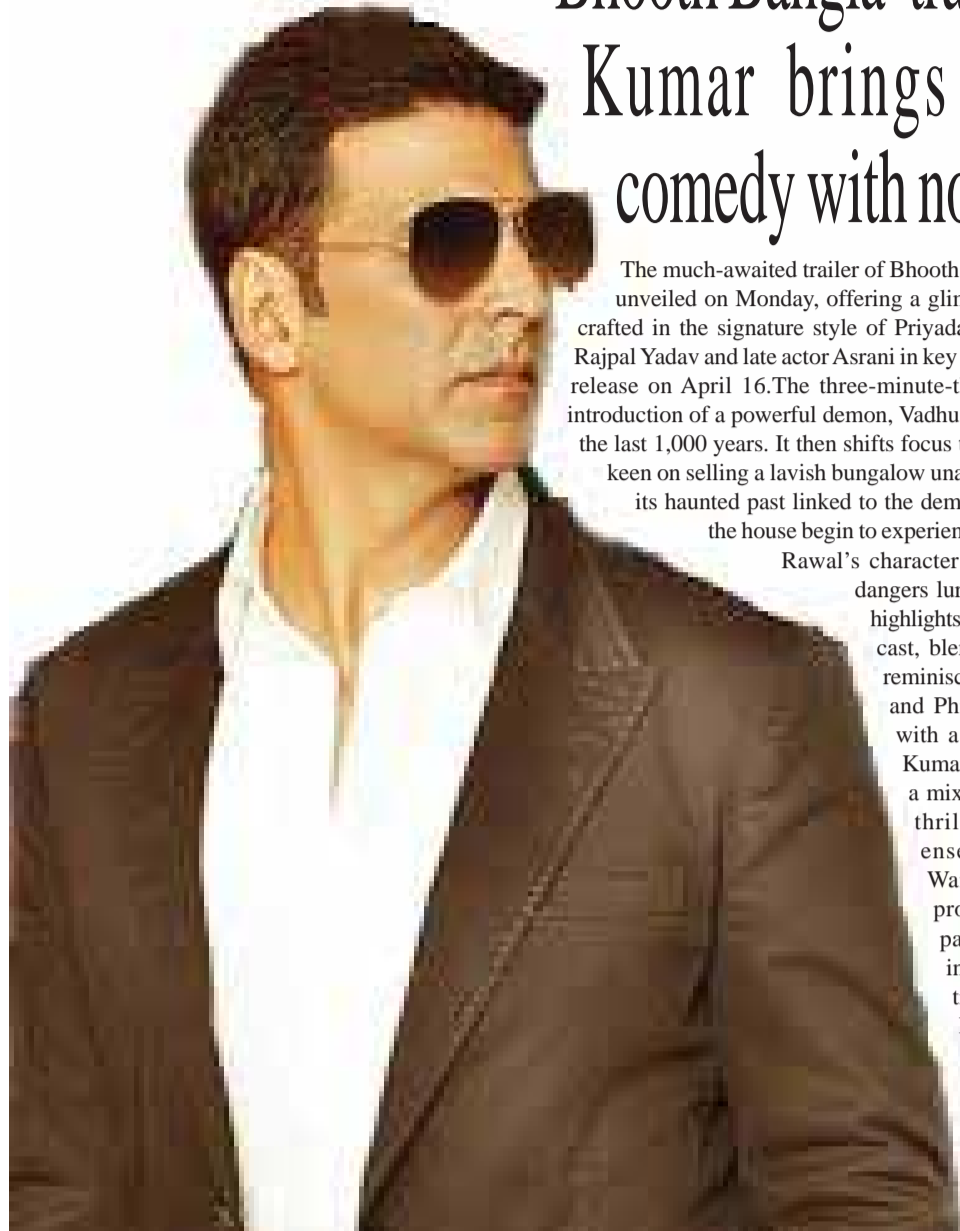
contrast, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Reliance Industries, Max Healthcare, InterGlobe Aviation, and Sun Pharmaceutical declined 1.23–1.42%. Of 2,765 actively traded stocks, 1,176 posted gains while 1,589 suffered losses. Sensex's 30 components saw 11 in green and 19 in red; Nifty50 had 17 gainers against 33 decliners. Markets had closed higher last Thursday—Sensex up 185.23 points (0.25%) at 73,319.55 and Nifty up 33.70 points (0.15%) at 22,713.10—before the Good Friday holiday.

Global Markets Mixed, Asia Trades Patchily Amid Tensions



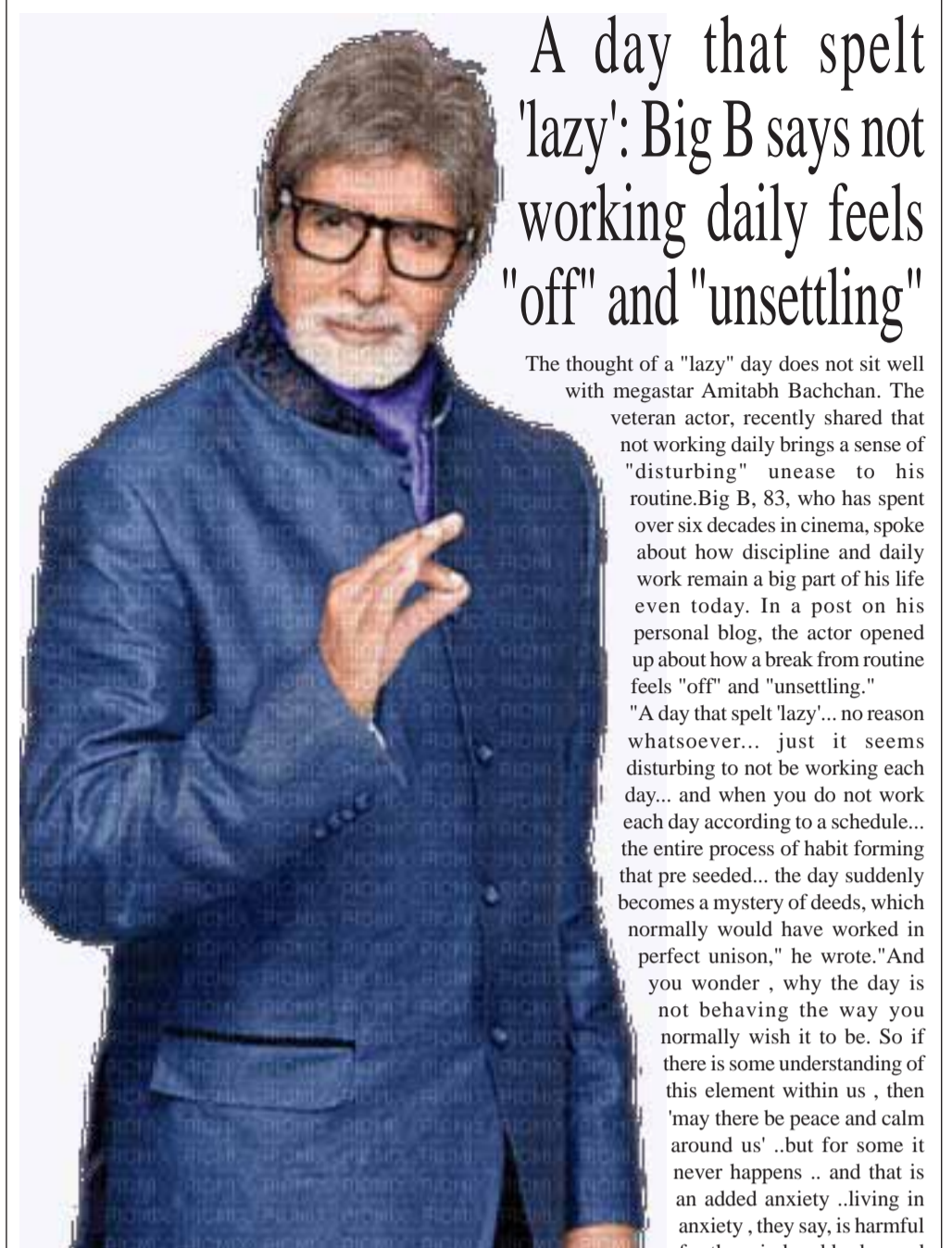
New Delhi, 6/4(H.S.): Global markets signaled caution on Monday, the first trading day of the week, with mixed cues following Good Friday closures in the US and Europe. Dow Jones futures dipped 0.09% to 46,390.02 amid West Asia conflict fears. Three of nine Asian benchmarks traded green, two in red; Hong Kong's Hang Seng, China's Shanghai Composite, Thailand's SET, and Taiwan Weighted remained unchanged due to holidays.

'Bhooth Bangla' trailer out: Akshay Kumar brings back horror-comedy with nostalgic twist



The much-awaited trailer of Bhooth Bangla, starring Akshay Kumar, was unveiled on Monday, offering a glimpse into a fun-filled horror-comedy crafted in the signature style of Priyadarshan. Also featuring Paresh Rawal, Rajpal Yadav and late actor Asrani in key roles, the film is slated for a theatrical release on April 16. The three-minute-three-second trailer begins with the introduction of a powerful demon, Vadhusur, said to have grown stronger over the last 1,000 years. It then shifts focus to Akshay Kumar's character, who is keen on selling a lavish bungalow unaware, or perhaps unconcerned, about its haunted past linked to the demon. As the story unfolds, residents of the house begin to experience eerie paranormal activities. Paresh Rawal's character is seen warning Akshay about the dangers lurking within the property. The trailer highlights engaging interactions between the lead cast, blending horror with slapstick humour reminiscent of classics like Bhool Bhulaiyaa and Phir Hera Pheri. The trailer concludes with a dramatic face-off between Akshay Kumar and the demon Vadhusur, hinting at a mix of action, comedy and supernatural thrills. Apart from the veteran comic ensemble, the film also stars Tabu, Wamiqa Gabbi and Mithila Palkar in prominent roles. Tabu's presence, in particular, appears to add a layer of intrigue and depth to the narrative. The trailer was shared by Balaji Motion Pictures on its official Instagram handle, teasing audiences with the caption: "Welcome to Bhooth Bangla. Yahan na toh log normal hain... Aur upar se Bangla bhi paranormal hai. Enter at your own risk." Presented by Balaji Motion Pictures, a division of Balaji

Telefilms Ltd, in association with Cape of Good Films, the film is produced by Akshay Kumar, Shobha Kapoor and Ekta R Kapoor.



A day that spelt 'lazy': Big B says not working daily feels "off" and "unsettling"

The thought of a "lazy" day does not sit well with megastar Amitabh Bachchan. The veteran actor, recently shared that not working daily brings a sense of "disturbing" unease to his routine. Big B, 83, who has spent over six decades in cinema, spoke about how discipline and daily work remain a big part of his life even today. In a post on his personal blog, the actor opened up about how a break from routine feels "off" and "unsettling."

"A day that spelt 'lazy'... no reason whatsoever... just it seems disturbing to not be working each day... and when you do not work each day according to a schedule... the entire process of habit forming that pre seeded... the day suddenly becomes a mystery of deeds, which normally would have worked in perfect unison," he wrote. "And you wonder, why the day is not behaving the way you normally wish it to be. So if there is some understanding of this element within us, then 'may there be peace and calm around us'... but for some it never happens... and that is an added anxiety... living in anxiety, they say, is harmful for the mind and body... and leading an anxious day, on the weakness of this phenomena is unrequired," he added. Bachchan recently wrapped up hosting the 17th season of 'Kaun Banega Crorepati'. On the film front, he was last seen in 'Kalki 2898 AD,' directed by Nag Ashwin. The film, which also stars Prabhas, Deepika Padukone and Kamal Haasan, performed strongly at the box office.

SPORTS

India Dominates World Archery Para Series with 13 Medals, Tops Standings

New Delhi/Bangkok, 6/4 (H.S.): Indian para archers delivered a stellar performance at the Hyundai World Archery Para Series in Bangkok, clinching 13 medals (7 gold, 3 silver, 3 bronze) to top the medal tally. The 22-member squad excelled across recurve, compound, and W1 events, showcasing remarkable skill and resilience that underscores India's rising global stature in para archery. Compound events led the charge with all three team golds: Sheetal Devi and Payal Nag won women's team; Toman Kumar and Shyam Sundar Swami took men's; Devi-Kumar pair



secured mixed. Vijay Sundi and Harvinder Singh claimed recurve men's team gold, boosting India's historic haul amid individual and team triumphs. Highlight: compound women's individual featured an all-India final, highlighting domestic depth. Archery Association of India president Arjun Munda hailed it as a historic, proud moment reflecting players' courage. Secretary General Virender Sachdeva noted inspirational impact, spotlighting rising star Payal Nag's fearless contribution alongside champion Sheetal Devi's world-class form.

ICC Nominates Samson, Bumrah for March Player of the Month

New Delhi, 6/4 (H.S.): The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced nominees for March Player of the Month on Monday, shortlisting India's Sanju Samson and Jasprit Bumrah in the men's category for their pivotal roles in the ICC T20 World Cup triumph. Samson dazzled with unbeaten 97 vs West Indies, followed by twin 89s in semi-final vs England and final vs New Zealand, steering India from tough spots to title retention. His late-tournament surge earned Player of the



Tournament honors. Bumrah's at 12.00 average (economy 7.00), lethal bowling claimed 7 wickets peaking with 4/15 in the final vs

New Zealand—defending 255 while conceding just 15. He dismantled key Kiwi batsmen like Rachin Ravindra and Mitchell Santner. Other Nominees, Voting Process South Africa's debutant Connor Esterhuizen (200 runs in 5 T20Is) completes men's shortlist. Women's contenders: New Zealand captain Amelia Kerr, Australia's Beth Mooney, South Africa's Ayabonga Khaka. Winners decided by expert panel (majority weight) plus global fan votes, announced second week monthly.

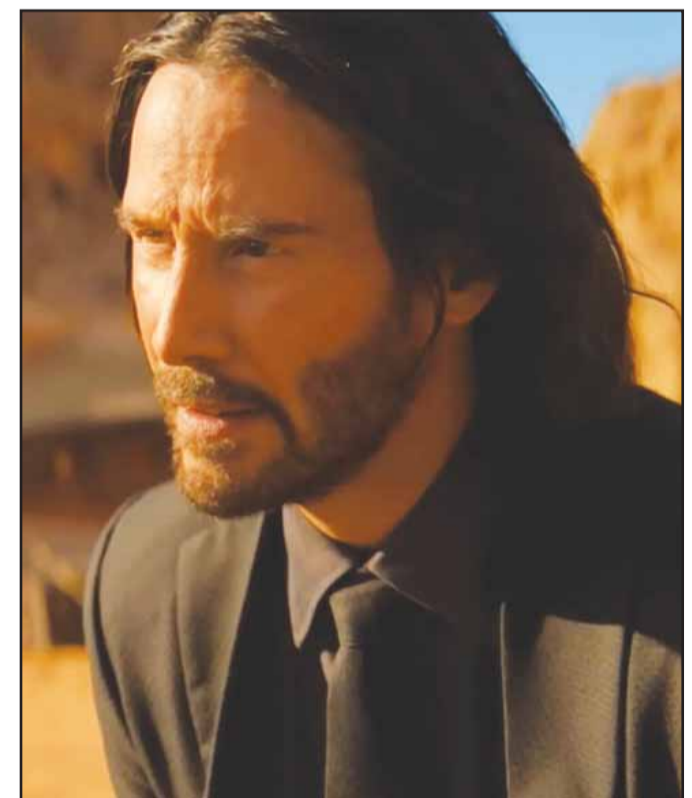
FIDE Candidates 2026 Round 7: Vaishali Secures Back-to-Back Win, Praggnanandhaa and Divya Draw

New Delhi, 6/4 (H.S.): India's Grandmaster R Vaishali notched her second consecutive victory in round seven of the FIDE Candidates Tournament 2026, defeating Tan Zhongyi to reach four points and claim sole second place. The middlegame appeared headed for a draw, but Zhongyi's errors on moves 36-38 (Rc6, Kg7, Ra1) proved costly. Vaishali capitalized with Rxf6 on move 38, winning a pawn and exposing Black's king. Kxf6 further weakened the

position, allowing precise coordination for the full point. Divya Deshmukh settled for a draw against Kateryna Lagno after building a promising rook endgame advantage, only to repeat checks (Rd8-Rd7--Rd8) and allow a comeback. In the open section, R Praggnanandhaa pressed Fabiano Caruana but settled for a threefold repetition draw. Anna Muzychuk drew Bibisara Assaubayeva to stay atop the women's standings with 4.5/7.

Go to work and respect who you're working with: Keanu Reeves shares advice for aspiring actors

Los Angeles: Hollywood star Keanu Reeves has offered candid and impactful advice for aspiring actors, stressing the importance of humility and respect in the film industry, according to E! News. During an interview with E! News, Reeves, who boasts a career spanning over three decades, shared his straightforward mantra for those looking to make it big in Hollywood. Reeves said during the interaction with journalist Will Marfuggi, while promoting his upcoming film alongside co-stars Cameron Diaz and Matt Bomer, "...go to work and respect who you're working with until they prove they don't get your respect." Diaz agreed with Reeves' perspective, adding that such advice applies beyond the entertainment industry. "Yeah. That's life," she remarked, reflecting on her own journey in Hollywood. The 'Charlie's Angels' star also pointed out the unpredictability of fame, saying, "There's no handbook or manual on being famous. You gotta just make it your own--you don't know what it's gonna be." She further encouraged young actors to seek guidance from those they admire, according to E! News. "Also, there's reaching out to other people that you admire, the way that they do it and asking them for some advice," she



added. Reeves, widely known for his role in the John Wick franchise, currently stars in the upcoming film Outcome, directed by Jonah Hill. The film follows actor Reef Hawke, played by Reeves, who is forced to confront his past mistakes amid a blackmail plot. "I would say if you're lucky like Reef, surround yourself with friends and keep your friends who maybe knew you before as well if you can," Matt advised, "who can really ground you and who are gonna be there by your side through the good and the bad and the ups and downs of it all," according to E! News. The film also marks a reunion between Reeves and Diaz, who previously starred together in the 1996 film Feeling Minnesota, according to E! News.

Rahul Arunoday Banerjee's death: Priyanka Sarkar Files FIR following husband's death

Days after the tragic death of Bengali actor Rahul Arunoday Banerjee, his wife, Priyanka Sarkar, has filed an FIR in Odisha, according to police officials. The 43-year-old actor drowned on March 29 during the shoot of a television serial at Talsari Beach near Digha, leaving the film and television fraternity in shock. Balasore Additional SP Debajyoti Dash confirmed that a formal complaint has been registered and an investigation is

underway. "The case has been registered on the basis of the report submitted by the complainant, Priyanka Sarkar, the wife of the late Rahul Arunoday Banerjee. Investigation has started and is currently in its preliminary stage. Balasore Police are making all-out efforts to uncover the truth behind this incident," he said. In response to Banerjee's death, the Bengali entertainment industry has announced an

indefinite strike starting April 7, demanding better safety measures on sets. The decision was formalized by the West Bengal Motion Pictures Artists' Forum during an emergency meeting on April 5 at Technicians' Studio in Kolkata. The meeting saw participation from prominent industry figures, including actor Prosenjit Chatterjee, along with directors, producers, and television channel representatives.