

Dumani Mail

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CBSE Results: Noida region's CBSE pass rate dips, lags behind national avg

New Delhi: Noida: The Noida region witnessed a decline in the pass percentage this year, lagging behind the national average after the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) declared the results on Wednesday.

While the national pass percentage saw an increase of 0.04 percentage points, Noida region witnessed a drop from 89.41% in 2025 to 87.66% this year.

The region recorded a pass percentage of 87.66%, lower than the national average of 93.70%, and was ranked 20th among 22 regions, indicating a decline in its overall performance.

According to CBSE data, over 313,000 students were registered from the Noida region, of whom around 310,000 appeared for the examination. The region covers multiple districts in western Uttar



Pradesh, including Gautam Budh Nagar, Ghaziabad, Meerut, Agra, Aligarh and Bulandshahr.

Despite the regional dip, there were some individual brilliance performances as well.

In Ghaziabad, Daksh Vasudeva, a student of Amity School, Sector 6,

Vasundhara, scored perfect score of 100%. "Scoring 500 out of 500 is a big achievement. He has always been a consistent performer since nursery, and now he is preparing for JEE," said his mother Shilpa Vasudeva.

"We are elated with our students' performance this year, with the school topper

achieving 99.2%. Several students also scored a perfect 100 in subjects such as German, Social Science and Sanskrit. While many are satisfied with their results, some students are considering appearing for the upcoming improvement exams in May to further enhance their scores," said

Dr. Gita Joshi, principal of Silverline Prestige School, Ghaziabad.

In Gautam Budh Nagar district, at Delhi Public School, Noida, Tanvi Caroli who secured an aggregate of 99.4%, said, "I wasn't expecting less than 98%. Scoring this much feels like a surprise."

Rina Singh, principal at the Ramagya School, Sector 50, Noida, which reported its highest aggregate of 99.6%, said that over 51% of students scored above 90%, while 22% students scored above 95%.

At Shiv Nadar School, Noida, the pass percentage stood at 100%, with top scores of 99% secured by Reet Narula and Gauransh Kaul. The school reported 49 students scoring above 90%. The school's principal, Anju Soni, said, "Their focus, resilience and hard work have brought laurels to the school."

Trishar Das of Amity International School, Noida, who secured an overall aggregate of 99.6%, said, "I think maintaining a positive mindset during the exam really helped me improve my results."

Rajya Sabha Chairman C. P. Radhakrishnan Administers Oath to Newly Elected Members

New Delhi: Rajya Sabha Chairman C. P. Radhakrishnan today administered the oath to the newly elected and re-elected members of the Upper House. Among those who took the oath are Nitin Nabin, Terash Gowalla, Jogen Mohan, Shivesh Kumar, Vinod Shridhar Tawde, Sujet Kumar, Laxmi Verma and Sanjay Bhatia of the BJP. Besides Ram Nath Thakur of JD (U), Upendra Kushwaha of Rashtriya Lok Morcha, Abhishek Manu Singhvi, Phulo Devi Netam, Karamvir Singh Boudh, Anurag Sharma, Vem Narendra Reddy of Congress and Promod Boro of UPP (L).

The House also paid obituary references to the passing of former Congress leader Mohsina Kidwai and renowned playback singer Asha Bhosle. Rajya Sabha Chairman Radhakrishnan said that Asha Bhosle is one of India's most iconic and versatile playback singers.

Mr. Radhakrishnan said Asha Bhosle lent her melodious voice to thousands of songs in multiple Indian languages, leaving an indelible mark on the soundscape of Indian music.

He said that she carved an unparalleled niche for herself in the world of music and cinema.

Mr. Radhakrishnan said Asha Bhosle lent her melodious voice to thousands of songs in multiple Indian languages, leaving an indelible mark on the soundscape of Indian music. He said that in recognition of her immense contribution to the field of music, she was honoured with several prestigious awards, including the Padma Vibhushan, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, and the National Film Award. Later, the House was adjourned for the day.

President Murmu stresses importance of Indian languages in nation building



New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu today said that everybody should learn other languages, but should not forget their own mother tongue. One should always keep one's own language at the forefront. President Murmu was speaking while addressing the 6th Convocation Ceremony of Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi University in Wardha, Maharashtra, today.

Stressing the importance of Indian languages in nation-building, the President said that we must build a strong, self-reliant, and developed India, and this is possible only upon the bedrock of Indian languages. She said that, powered by numerous initiatives, including the 'National Education Policy,' our country is advancing in

the right direction. Highlighting the role of Mahatma Gandhi Hindi A n r a s h t r i y a Vishwavidyalaya in promoting the Hindi language, President Murmu said, this university should propagate Hindi language literature along with Indian language and international literature also. She urged the students to respect the Indian language and to reestablish Indian knowledge system. She also informed that it was the same place Wardha, where Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti was established by Mahatma Gandhi, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and Dand Kaka Kalelkar. Prior to the Convocation ceremony, the President visited Sevagram Ashram in Wardha this morning.

Lok Sabha's strength to go up to 815, 272 of these for women; no state will suffer: Meghwal

New Delhi: The strength of the Lok Sabha will increase to 815, of which 272 seats will be reserved for women and neither men nor any state will suffer any loss due to the implementation of this quota, Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said on Thursday.

In his introductory remarks in the Lok Sabha on the three bills moved to amend the women's quota law and set up a delimitation commission, Meghwal also said that 272 seats out of 815 in the House is the simple formula of reserving 33 per cent seats for women. "According to the women's reservation bill, the strength of the Lok Sabha will increase to 815, of which women's quota will be of 272 seats," the minister said. According to the proposed legislations, there will be an increase of 50 per cent in the current strength of the Lok Sabha. "Neither men nor any state will suffer any loss after the implementation of the women's quota," he said.

Meghwal also said that there will be reservation for women belonging to SC and ST categories within the women's quota in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies.

Speaker gets Z category security after Delhi Assembly receives repeated bomb threats

New Delhi: The Delhi Assembly speaker has been provided Z category security cover in view of the repeated bomb threat e-mails received by the legislative body in the last few weeks, an official statement said.

The move comes after the series of targeted bomb threats and a recent high-profile security breach, the Delhi Assembly Secretariat said. The assembly secretariat and the speaker's office received approximately six to seven threatening emails since the budget session started on March 23.

Country all set to take historic step for women empowerment in special sitting of Parliament: PM Modi



New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday asserted that his government is resolutely moving forward for empowerment of women in the three-day special sitting of Parliament.

His remarks came ahead of the start of the special sitting during which the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam', commonly known as Women Reservation Act, will be amended for its implementation in 2029.

"In the special sitting of Parliament, beginning today, our country is all set to take a historic step towards women's empowerment. The respect for our mothers and sisters is the respect for the nation, and with this very spirit, we are moving forward resolutely in this direction," Modi said in a post on X in Hindi.

Delhi L-G Sandhu reviews fire service, calls for effective emergency response

New Delhi: Delhi Lieutenant Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu on Thursday reviewed the functioning of the Delhi Fire Service and directed officials to heighten vigilance for effective emergency response. In a post on X, the L-G said the focus of the review was modernisation, infrastructure upgrades, and strengthening personnel capacity of the Delhi Fire Service (DFS) to enhance its emergency response system. He also examined the proposed amendments to the Delhi Fire Service Rules, 2010, and emphasised the need for broad-based public consultations with residents, businessmen and traders to ensure that the framework is inclusive, practical and effective.

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Taxi catches fire on Delhi's Azadpur flyover; no injuries

New Delhi: A taxi caught fire in Delhi's Azadpur flyover on Thursday, an official of the Delhi Fire Services said. The DFS said that they received a call regarding the fire at 1.10 pm and rushed a fire tender to the spot. The blaze was brought under control and no injuries were reported, they said.

Three Major Reform Bills including Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026 Introduced in Lok Sabha

New Delhi: Union Law Minister Arjun Meghwal introduced the Constitution (One Hundred and Thirty-First Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Delimitation Bill, 2026, in Lok Sabha today. Home Minister Amit Shah introduced the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, in the House.

Introducing the Bills, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal termed the day as historic, saying the government is working to give political justice to women. He said the Constitution (One Hundred and Thirty-First Amendment) Bill, 2026, will ensure equality for women. Quoting Dr BR Ambedkar, Mr Meghwal stressed that the progress of a community is measured by the degree of progress which women have achieved. He said the time for the reservation of 33 per cent seats is here now.

The Law Minister said that to implement a uniform and legally consistent distribution of reserved seats

for women across the country, it would be necessary to increase the total number of seats in the Lok Sabha by 50 percent over the current strength. He added that with such an increase, the new strength of the Lok Sabha would be 815 members. He said that out of these, 272 seats would be reserved for women, which comes in addition to the existing allocation. Mr Meghwal said that this formula ensures that no group suffers any loss, and the relative strength of each state will remain unchanged in the future.

The Law Minister said that the results of Census 2027 are not expected to be available before the end of 2027 or the beginning of 2028. He informed that, therefore, the 2011 Census will be used for the readjustment or division of territorial constituencies and for the allocation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. He said this has also been clearly stated in the

objectives of the Bill. Mr Meghwal said the Narendra Modi government has brought a number of schemes for the economic and social upliftment of women. He cited MUDRA Yojana, Lakhpati Didis and Sukanya Samridhhi Yojana as among the schemes brought by the government.

Opening the discussion on the Bills for the Opposition, Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi said his party is in favour of women's reservation, but it should be simplified and not linked with delimitation. He said the reservation should be based on the existing 543 seats in the Lok Sabha. He alleged that the government is creating unnecessary delays in implementing the women's reservation and urged the government to bring it into force immediately.

Mr Gogoi reiterated that Congress has consistently supported women's reservation. He highlighted that senior Congress leader Sonia

Gandhi had earlier made a similar demand in Parliament, emphasising reservation for women.

Tejasvi Surya of BJP said that today is a historic day as the women of the country, who have been waiting for nearly four decades, are now set to receive their due share. He said, by introducing three new bills, the Narendra Modi government is fast-tracking the Women's Reservation bills.

Mr Surya said, the move is being seen as a significant step towards opening a new chapter in India's development journey. He emphasised that, for the first time, the Nari Shakti of the country will receive vocal, visible, credible, and tangible representation in the nation-building process.

The discussion is underway. Earlier, the Opposition members in the Lok Sabha had pressed for a division against the move to introduce the bills. After

use of vote slips, Speaker Om Birla announced that there were 251 AYES and 185 NOES.

Congress MP KC Venugopal had opposed the introduction of the Bills, alleging that these will undermine the federal structure of the country. Home Minister Amit Shah strongly rebutted that Mr Venugopal can raise only technical objections to the introduction of the Bill but cannot speak on the merits of bills. Samajwadi Party MP Akhilesh Yadav questioned the necessity to bring the Bills in such a hurried manner, saying that Census should be done first.

Home Minister Amit Shah replied that the process of Census has begun and the government has already taken the decision to conduct the caste census. TMC's Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar opposed the introduction of the Bills saying women's reservation is being made dependent on future delimitation exercise.

When the House assembled, Lok Sabha paid tribute to legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle, who passed away in Mumbai, at the age of 92. Paying tributes, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that the remarkable career spanning more than seven decades, she made an invaluable contribution to Indian cinema and music.

Mr Birla said, Asha Bhosle lent her voice to songs in numerous Indian and foreign languages, earning immense popularity and admiration. He said, in recognition of her outstanding contributions, she was honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2000 and the Padma Vibhushan in 2008.

The House also paid obituary references to the passing away of its Abu Hasem Khan Choudhury, Mohsina Kidwai and Hari Narayan Rajbhar. Members of the House also observed silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed.

District Collector Conducts Field Visit for Chandan Yatra



Puri: The District Collector, Divya Jyoti Parida, has advised that this year's Chandan Yatra of the Lord be conducted smoothly, in an orderly manner, and in accordance with tradition.

This afternoon, the District Collector visited the Chandan Chakata at Narendra Pushkarini and the boat (Chapa) venue of the Lord. During the visit, instructions were given to the concerned departments to ensure proper arrangements for maintaining law and order, traffic control, special vehicle movement systems, crowd management,

lighting, cleanliness and sanitation, information centers, drinking water facilities, cultural programs, and healthcare services during the Chandan Yatra.

During this field inspection, several officials were present, including Zilla Parishad Chief Development Officer and Municipal Corporation Commissioner Arugula Sneha, Shrimandir Development Administrator Debabrata Sahu, Executive Officer Abhimanyu Behera, City DSP Rashmiranjan Mahapatra, and other district-level officers.

Uda Pata Parva, festival of Pain for betterment observed



Keonjhar: 'Uda Pata Parva', an age-old festival in Keonjhar district, was observed in different areas on Tuesday, on the eve of 'Pana Sankranti'. The festival is observed mostly in the tribal community, where participants inflict various pains upon themselves to fulfill their desires and for the betterment of the community while worshipping their deities. Thousands of people witness the festival in Poipani village, Mushakhori, Kesdurapal, Jyotipur and other areas in Keonjhar district. This festival is famous in Thakurmunda in Mayurbhanj district.

According to their old belief, they sacrifice blood to appease the deities after fulfilling their desires by piercing their bodies with nails attached to a thread. Some offer cocks and goats on this day to satisfy the deity.

"During this day the devotees take part in the festival and rituals of the deities while fasting. On this day, they pierce their bodies with sharp nails attached to a thread or tie themselves to a round wooden swing with a cloth above the ground and fly," said Hrushikesh Mohanta of Poipani village.

According to the local people 'Uda' literally means 'flying', hence the local people

called it "Uda Pata Parva". To fulfill their desire as well as to express their gratitude to the local deities that 'Maa Basuli' after fulfillment of their desires, the devotee adopt such painful means.

From the river bed after worshipped the deity 'Maa Basuli' and offering blood with piercing the nail attach with thread in their body and hand, they move to the worship place. They were pulled with the thread and taken to the temple in swinging down position. There they were tied with in a wood of a circular swing and the swing moves around with the beat of bands, 'Ghanta' and 'Huluhuli' to cheer up them.

Apart from these painful practices, a number of cultural activities including open-stage opera, 'palla,' 'Daskathia,' folk dance and songs take place. The crowd enjoyed the whole night there. Additionally, the Mela provides an opportunity for tribal young men and women to choose their marriage mates.

Alekh Patra, a retired officer, said, "In this era of the internet and cinema, this hundred-year-old tradition continues. The government should take the initiative to protect and promote it to attract more tourists these days."

GCE Silver Jubilee Celebrations Academic Excellence Award to Professors

Keonjhar 15/04 (DMS): On the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of Keonjhar Mechanical College, several professors who have achieved outstanding achievements in the field of teaching have been awarded the 'Academic Excellence Award'. Assistant Professors Dr. Ranjan Kumar Mahapatra, Dr. Subrata Narayan Das, Dr. Umakant Behera, Dr. Soumya Ranjan Mallik, Dr. Sudhanshu Shekhar Mishra have been awarded this award.

Dr. Ranjan Kumar Mahapatra, who was working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry,

had been working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemistry since the establishment of the college in 2009, when there was a shortage of staff and no faculty in the new campus, he had been able to continue teaching smoothly with only the first semester students of B.Tech. At that time, despite the lack of roads and water supply, he continued to teach in a half-built classroom under very difficult conditions. For four consecutive years, he has brought glory not only to this engineering college, but also to the entire state. Along with

this, he has published more than 300 research papers in various prestigious research journals of the world, and has a rare record of appearing in 15 textbooks and 35 different textbooks on his own subject. As a result of which he was awarded this Academic Excellence Award.

When the college was started in 2009, the Principal of Parla Maharaja Engineering College, who was in the additional charge of the Principal of the Kendujhar Engineering College, seldom come here. So at that time, Dr. Subrata Narayan, as the in-

charge Principal, used to organize all the sports, cultural and examination activities of the students of the college along with teaching them. As a result of which he has been awarded this award.

Similarly, Dr. Umakant Behera, Dr. Soumya Ranjan Mallik, Dr. Sudhanshu Shekhar Mishra, after taking up teaching responsibilities here and there, have been awarded this award for their outstanding contribution towards teaching in their own department as well as other departmental responsibilities of the college, as the head of their department,

towards discipline in teaching and the department.

On the special occasion of the Silver Jubilee, the college's chairman Dr. Saroj Kumar Sadangi, the old students' association president Ajit Kumar Patra, the silver jubilee coordinator Dr. Soumya Ranjan Mallik, the silver jubilee co-coordinator Dr. Umakant Behera, the college's registrar Dr. Dayanidhi Jena, and the finance department in-charge Dr. Rakesh Ranjan Shukla were present and presented the awards.

DFO Rayagada Reviews Plantation Works and Strengthens Fire Preparedness

Rayagada I: In a proactive move ahead of the upcoming plantation season, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Rayagada conducted a detailed inspection of plantation works, fire preparedness, fire lines, and nursery activities in the Rayagada Range.

During the inspection, the DFO reviewed the survival rate of existing plantations and stressed the importance of proper maintenance and continuous monitoring to ensure healthy growth. Special emphasis was laid on fire prevention measures, with a thorough assessment of fire lines and preparedness to tackle potential forest fire incidents during the dry season.

The DFO also inspected nursery activities and highlighted the need for raising quality



seedlings to ensure successful plantation outcomes. The availability of healthy and robust saplings was identified as a key priority for the upcoming plantation drive.

Officials were directed to ensure timely execution of plantation works and proper distribution of seedlings before the onset of the season. The DFO emphasized coordination, accountability, and adherence to timelines for achieving better results. All staff of the Gumma Section were present during the inspection. Notably, Gumma Forester Ravi

Chandra Patra, Forester Padmabati Padhi, Gumma Forest Guard Labanya Majhi, and Rafukana Forest Guard Pradeep Kumar Sahu were present. The DFO appreciated their efforts and encouraged them to continue working with dedication towards forest conservation and management.

The inspection reflects the department's strong commitment to sustainable forestry practices, improved plantation success, and enhanced preparedness against forest fire risks in the region.

Paradip Port Hospital distributed curd water in the Summer



Paradip - Keeping in mind the summer heat, Paradip Port Hospital distributed cold curd water on the occasion of Mahavishub Sankranti. On this occasion, a special water distribution stall was opened near the hospital gate. Chief Medical Officer Dr. Bibhuti Bhusan Das formally

inaugurated the camp. Prasant Kumar Lenka and the doctors and staff of the Port Hospital cooperated in this camp organized under the supervision of Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr. Durga Prasad Sethi. However, such efforts of the hospital have been highly appreciated by the general public.

CBSE Class 10: Odisha girl creates history — Tina Rath scores 500/500 to become topper

Puri: In the Central Board of Secondary Education Class 10 board examination, Odisha student Tina Rath has created history by achieving a perfect score. Hailing from Puri, Tina secured 500 out of 500 marks, showcasing her exceptional talent at both state and national levels.

Tina is a student of Mothers Public School, Puri. She appeared in six subjects, scoring 100 marks in five of them, while obtaining 99 in Mathematics (Standard). As per CBSE rules, the best five subjects are considered, giving her a perfect aggregate of 500/500.

Her father, Sameer Kumar Rath, and mother, Renu Prava Das, are both associated with the IT sector. The family is overjoyed with her achievement. Tina credited her success to the

guidance of her parents and teachers. She aspires to become a cardiac surgeon in the future.

Tina shared that she studied regularly and with discipline throughout the year, dedicating around 10-12 hours daily. She emphasized focusing on difficult subjects and effective time management as key factors behind her success.

This year, over 2.4 million students appeared for the CBSE Class 10 exams across thousands of centers nationwide. The overall pass percentage exceeded 93%, with a large number of students scoring above 95%.

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi congratulated the successful students and wished them a bright future. He encouraged students to believe in their efforts



rather than just the results. Tina Rath's achievement stands as a strong example of hard

work, discipline, and dedication to goals. This young girl from a small city has proven that determination

matters more than resources, and her success will inspire many students across the country.

CM Majhi's Assurance in Barbil Sparks Renewed Optimism for the Barbil - banspani 'Missing Link'

Keonjhar: Barbil Bikash Parishad and civil society groups submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on April 13 during his visit to Barbil, demanding the 17 km length Banspani-Barbil rail link.

The CM laid the foundation stone for the much-awaited ₹1,581 crore Barbil Bypass-cum-Ring Road and inaugurated dozens of other projects worth hundreds of crores. During that time local people's groups submitted a detailed memorandum that prominently featured the rail project.

In response, Majhi assured residents that the Banspani-Barbil rail link "will be done very soon," that injecting fresh hope into a proposa.

According to sources, the Barbil-Banspani link, a small but critical "missing link" project in North Odisha's mineral-rich belt that would connect the mineral-rich Barbil station directly to Banspani station (Joda). Currently, mineral and passenger carrying trains cover an extra 60-70 km more through Jharkhand territory because of this small missing link.

For passengers, it will slash travel time on services like the Puri-Barbil Intercity; for freight, it would dramatically improve the movement of iron ore and other minerals from the Barbil-Joda mining hub to steel plants in Kalinganagar, Angul, Rourkela, and ports such as Paradip and Dhamra.

"This project was

identified many years ago. Decades of Delay, Strong Economic Case: First identified in the 2016-17 Railway Budget and later taken up by the Odisha Rail Infrastructure Development Limited (ORIDL), the project received in-principle approval from the Railway Board for pre-investment activities (surveys and DPR preparation). A draft Detailed Project Report (DPR) was prepared, estimating the cost at around ₹433 crore. Final Location Surveys were completed years ago, yet full sanction and construction funding have remained elusive" said Basant Kumar Mohanta, a member of the citizen forum in Barbil.

According to the memorandum, the project has since been merged into the larger

Barbil-Bimlagarh-Rourkela Steel Corridor package — a 198.73 km network of new lines and doublings with a total estimated cost of ₹12,479.84 crore. "According to South Eastern Railway (SER) Monthly Confidential Demi-Official (MCDO) reports from late 2025, this package boasts a Financial Internal Rate of Return (FIRR) of 11.05% and an exceptionally strong Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR) of 26.54%. Such high FIRR figures—driven primarily by massive transport cost savings on iron ore and coal, time efficiencies, accident reduction, and induced industrial growth—underscore the project's socio-economic viability far beyond typical railway benchmarks" member of Barbil

Bikash Parishad mentioned.

Odisha, India's leading steel-producing state with a current capacity exceeding 40 MTPA and an ambitious target of over 130 MTPA by 2030, relies heavily on efficient mineral evacuation. The Barbil-Banspani link and the broader Steel Corridor are seen as essential enablers for this growth, reducing logistics costs, decongesting existing lines, and supporting green steel initiatives by lowering emissions through rail over road transport.

Including other demands the local citizens of Barbil Bikash Parishad not only reiterated the rail link demand but also pressed for restarting the Barbil-Puri Intercity train and other connectivity improvements. Activists and residents have long

highlighted how the current detour hampers daily life and economic activity in this mining-affected region.

The CM's public assurance during the visit—coinciding with major rail infrastructure announcements—signals growing political recognition of these long-pending issues.

This comes amid a broader push for rail development in Odisha, including record allocations in the Union Budget 2026-27 and ongoing SER proposals. However, the project's shift from an ORIDL-funded model (with 100% state funding initially envisaged) to a participative Steel Corridor framework involving mining companies and SER reflects evolving funding strategies. Although surveys are complete

and a combined DPR has been with the Railway Board since 2023 (with updates in 2025), land acquisition and full financial clearance remain the next critical steps .

CM Majhi's words on 13 April 2026 have given the project renewed momentum and revived the hope of local people. For the people of Barbil and North Odisha's mining communities, the message is clear: after years of advocacy, the short rail link that could redefine regional connectivity may finally be on the fast track. The coming months will test whether this optimism translates into tangible progress, such as land acquisition notices, budget allocations, or a formal sanction, local people said. (EOM)

IMD Issues Heatwave Alert for 10 Odisha Districts as Temperatures Set to Rise

Bhubaneswar, 16 April (H.S.): The intense summer heat continues to grip Odisha, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) warning of a further rise in day temperatures by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius over the next two days.

The Regional Meteorological Centre in Bhubaneswar has issued a heatwave alert for several districts located in the western and interior parts of the state. The districts under alert include Bolangir, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Angul, Boudh, Kandhamal, Sonepur, and Sambalpur.

According to the weather department, heatwave conditions are expected to intensify in these regions, prompting



authorities to urge residents to take precautionary measures. The advisory highlights the need to avoid prolonged exposure to direct sunlight, remain hydrated, and take necessary steps to prevent heat-related illnesses.

In addition to rising temperatures, coastal districts are likely to experience high humidity levels over the next seven days. The combination of heat and humidity is expected to make weather conditions increasingly

uncomfortable, adding to the overall stress on residents.

Manorama Mohanty, Director of the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre, stated that temperatures are likely to increase further in the coming days. She

emphasized that humid conditions would persist in coastal areas, while interior districts would continue to experience heatwave conditions.

The IMD has reiterated its advisory for residents in the affected districts, particularly Bolangir, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Angul, Boudh, Kandhamal, and Sonepur, to remain cautious and take preventive steps to cope with the extreme weather.

With the heatwave conditions expected to persist, authorities are closely monitoring the situation and have urged the public to follow safety guidelines to minimize health risks during the ongoing spell of extreme heat.

Odisha Launches Statewide Door-to-Door Digital Census Drive

Bhubaneswar, 16 April (H.S.): Odisha on Thursday launched a comprehensive door-to-door digital census, marking a major administrative initiative aimed at collecting detailed demographic data across the state. The exercise will continue until May 15, with authorities deploying a large workforce to ensure accurate and efficient data collection.

More than 90,000 officials have been engaged in the enumeration process, visiting households to gather information. To supervise the operation, 15,140 supervisors have been appointed. Primary school teachers have been assigned the role of enumerators, while high school teachers are functioning as supervisors to oversee field activities.

Each enumerator has been tasked with collecting data on approximately 800 individuals. On average, an official is expected to cover 150 to 200 households during the one-month exercise. In addition to data collection, officials will also carry out house listing and numbering,



while interacting with the head of each household to record responses.

The census will include a structured questionnaire comprising 33 questions. These questions cover a wide range of socio-economic indicators, including the type of housing and construction materials used, food habits of households, and ownership of assets such as two-wheelers and four-wheelers.

Prior to the full-scale enumeration, officials have been allotted a three-day preparatory period for mapping activities. During this phase, they will identify their assigned areas,

familiarize themselves with local conditions, and estimate the number of houses and families. This groundwork is scheduled to continue until April 18.

The actual enumeration process will commence on April 19 following the completion of the mapping phase. All data collected during the exercise will be recorded digitally, ensuring streamlined processing, improved accuracy, and easy accessibility for administrative planning and policy formulation.

Officials stated that the digital approach is expected to enhance transparency and efficiency, making the census a key step toward data-driven governance in the state.

Former Nuapada District Labour Officer Convicted in Bribery Case, Sentenced to 3 Years

Bhubaneswar, 16 April (H.S.): In a corruption case, former District Labour Officer (DLO) of Nuapada, Sarat Kumar Panigrahi, has been convicted and sentenced to three years of simple imprisonment by a vigilance court.

According to official sources, the verdict was delivered on April 16, 2026, by the Hon'ble Special Judge, Vigilance, Bhawanipatna. The court also imposed a fine of ₹80,000 on the convicted retired official.



Panigrahi, who served as District Labour Officer at Khariar Road in Nuapada district, was charge-sheeted

by Odisha Vigilance in connection with Koraput Vigilance Police Station Case No. 3 dated January 7, 2021.

He was booked under Section 7(a) of the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018.

The case pertained to allegations that he had demanded and accepted a bribe of ₹40,000 from a trainer for facilitating the registration of 200 labourers. Following the conviction, vigilance authorities stated that steps will be taken to initiate proceedings for stoppage of pension benefits of the retired officer, subject to approval from the competent authority.

Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi Congratulates CBSE Top Scorers



Bhubaneswar, 16 April (H.S.): Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has congratulated two meritorious students from Odisha for securing a perfect score of 500 out of 500 in the CBSE Class 10 examinations.

In a social media message, the Chief Minister praised students Tina Rath and Alisha Bishwal for their outstanding academic achievement, calling it a matter of pride for the state. He said the result reflects how girls can excel in every field when provided with equal opportunities and proper support.

Highlighting the importance of women's empowerment, the Chief Minister stated that "Nari Shakti" remains a key priority of the government. He described the achievement as a true reflection of "Nari Shakti Vandan," emphasizing that guidance and opportunity can enable girls to reach the highest levels of success.

The Chief Minister extended his best wishes for the bright future of both students and also congratulated all successful candidates of the examination. He added that such accomplishments serve as an inspiration for other students across the state.

Class 8 Student Found Hanging in Odisha Hostel, Probe Underway

Bhubaneswar, 16 April (H.S.): A Class 8 student was found hanging inside a school hostel in Umerkote area of Odisha's Nabarangpur district on Thursday, triggering shock and concern among locals and authorities.

The deceased has been identified as 12-year-old Prashant Bhatra, son of Parameswar Bhatra of Badakumari village. He was a student of Bhamini Ashram School under Umerkote block.

According to initial

reports, the student had returned to the hostel from his home just two days before the incident. He was found hanging inside the hostel premises under circumstances that are yet to be ascertained.

On receiving information, police reached the spot, recovered the body, and initiated an investigation. Officials stated that the exact cause of death is still unclear, and all possible angles are being examined.

The incident has raised serious concerns over the safety and supervision of students in residential school hostels. Locals have questioned how such an incident could occur without the knowledge of school authorities, including the headmaster and hostel warden.

Authorities have assured a thorough probe into the matter, and further action will be taken based on the findings of the investigation.

Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi inaugurates Jupiter International-AMPIN's integrated solar cell and module manufacturing facility in Bhubaneswar

April 15, 2026 : Kolkata : Jupiter International Limited and AMPIN Energy Transition Private Limited inaugurated their joint venture manufacturing platform, AMPIN Solar One Private Limited, in Bhubaneswar. The facility was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri Mohan Charan Majhi, on 8th April, marking a significant push to strengthen domestic solar manufacturing.

AMPIN Solar One Private Limited is the joint venture of AMPIN Energy Transition Private Limited and Jupiter International Limited, established to build and operate an integrated solar cell and module capability in India.

Commenting on the inauguration, Mr Alok Garodia, CMD Jupiter International Limited, said, "The inauguration of the manufacturing facility of AMPIN Solar One Private Limited is a significant step aimed towards building a stronger domestic manufacturing backbone for India's energy transition. This platform brings together scale, manufacturing depth and quality-focused execution, so as to enable the reliable supply of high-performance cells and modules from within the country. We are proud to partner with AMPIN and the Government of Odisha in advancing clean energy ambitions"

Odisha AM/NS India Gymnastics High Performance Centre hosts elite gymnastics coaching program

April 15, 2026 Bhubaneswar : In a major step to elevate gymnastics coaching standards across Asia, Odisha AM/NS India Gymnastics High Performance Centre (HPC) proudly hosted the World Gymnastics Academy – Artistic Level 1 Coaches Education Program at Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar. This milestone marks the first-ever delivery of a globally benchmarked FIG Academy Coaches Education Program at the HPC, reinforcing its growing reputation as a regional hub of excellence. The five-day program brought together around 50 coaches from across Asia, who were selected for the course through online examination conducted by World Gymnastics.

Out of the nine coaches selected from Odisha, five are from the Odisha AM/NS India Gymnastics High Performance Centre namely Ankita Baidya, Mohit Manro, Barindrita Roy, Sachin Sharma, and Pareswar Pushpalak. The program was led by internationally acclaimed FIG Academy Experts, Men Artistic Gymnastics (MAG) specialists Damien Millot (Course Leader) from France and Jonathan Martin from Belgium along with Women Artistic Gymnastics (WAG) experts Andrei Levit from Poland and Monica Calabro from Argentina. Together, they imparted advanced, globally aligned coaching methodologies to participants. The intensive curriculum covered critical apparatus and disciplines including MAG & WAG Vault, MAG Pommel Horse, WAG Floor, WAG Beam and Floor combinations, and WAG Artistic Preparation, along with a wide range of technical skills essential for modern day gymnastics coaching. The program is expected to create a lasting impact by enhancing coaching standards, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and contributing to the development of athletes capable of competing at the highest international level. All the five coaches from HPC successfully completed the Level 1 certification program. Notably, in the men's category, Sachin Sharma emerged as the topper of the certification program, with Mohit Manro ranking third. This shows the advanced coaching expertise being nurtured at the centre.

Dawn-to-Dusk Bandh Disrupts Normal Life in Odisha's Birmaharajpur

Bhubaneswar, 16 April (H.S.): Normal life was significantly disrupted in Birmaharajpur area of Odisha's Sonepur district on Thursday as a 12-hour bandh was observed following tensions over an alleged incident during an Ambedkar procession.

The shutdown, enforced from 6 am to 6 pm, was called by Bajrang Dal and Vishva Hindu Parishad after claims emerged that a photograph of Lord Shri Ram was torn during a procession held on Wednesday. The incident reportedly triggered strong reactions, leading to the call for the bandh.

The impact of the shutdown was widespread across the town. Shops and commercial establishments remained closed, while both



government and private offices suspended operations. Educational institutions also remained shut for the day. Vehicular movement was severely affected, with roads largely deserted and public transport operating minimally.

Members of Bajrang Dal

staged picketing at multiple locations to enforce the bandh, contributing to the near-complete shutdown of normal activities. Residents largely stayed indoors, and only essential movement was reported during the day.

Authorities maintained strict vigilance to prevent any

escalation of tensions. Police personnel were deployed at sensitive locations across Birmaharajpur to ensure law and order. Officials confirmed that security arrangements were intensified, and continuous monitoring was carried out to avoid any untoward incidents.

Despite the disruption,

essential services were kept under close watch to ensure that there were no major inconveniences to the public. Law enforcement agencies coordinated efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region.

Condemning the alleged act, organisers demanded strict action against those responsible for hurting religious sentiments. A case has been registered at the local police station, and an investigation is currently underway.

Local residents also expressed support for the bandh, stating that the incident had deeply hurt public sentiments. Authorities have urged people to remain calm and cooperate with the administration as the investigation progresses.

First-Ever Chilika Book Fair to Begin in Balugaon from April 24



Bhubaneswar, 16 April (H.S.) Bhubaneswar: The town of Balugaon in Odisha's Khordha district is set to host the first-ever Chilika Book Fair, scheduled to take place from April 24 to April 28, 2026.

The five-day literary event will be organised on the premises of Balugaon College, situated on the banks of the scenic Chilika Lake. A preparatory meeting for the event was held at the residence of Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan, who chaired the discussions regarding arrangements and coordination. Representatives

of the Cuttack and Bhubaneswar Publishers' Association attended the meeting and confirmed their participation in the fair. They also offered suggestions to ensure the successful organisation of the event.

According to organisers, around 80 stalls will be set up by reputed publishers from across Odisha, showcasing a wide range of books across genres. In addition to book stalls, food stalls will also be installed to cater to visitors during the event. The fair aims to create a vibrant cultural and literary atmosphere for

students, readers, and the general public.

On the inaugural day, April 24, Deputy Chief Minister Prabhathi Parida and Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan are scheduled to jointly inaugurate the Chilika Book Fair.

Officials said the initiative is expected to promote reading habits and strengthen literary engagement in the region. The location near Chilika Lake is also anticipated to attract significant public interest, making the event both a cultural and educational attraction.

FICCI Appoints Anant Swarup as Secretary General

NEW DELHI: The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has appointed Mr Anant Swarup as its Secretary General, effective 15th April 2026, reinforcing the organisation's senior leadership at a pivotal moment for Indian industry.

Mr Swarup brings to the role over three decades of

distinguished experience in public policy, trade remedies, logistics, regulatory reform, and international negotiations, having served in various leadership positions across the Government of India and, recently, in the private sector. A 1992-batch Indian Railway Personnel Service (IRPS) officer, Mr Swarup has served

in key positions such as Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Director General of Trade Remedies, Executive Director to the Union Minister of Railways, and First Secretary representing India at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva.

The Energy Shock

Delimitation Furore

THE Centre's proposed delimitation exercise has caused a furore in Opposition-ruled states, particularly in South India. The Union government's plan to use the 2011 Census as the basis for reallocating Lok Sabha seats has triggered fears that the federal balance could tilt in favour of highly populous states in the Hindi heartland. Opposition parties have reiterated that they fully support women's reservation; their grouse is that it's being used as a pretext to aggravate inequality among states. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin and his Telangana counterpart A Revanth Reddy have accused the Centre of exploiting the demographic arithmetic to undermine cooperative federalism.

The necessity of greater representation for women in Parliament and Assemblies cannot be disputed. However, the proposed linkage between the implementation of women's reservation and delimitation — and that too based on a 15-year-old Census — is fraught with complications. Hasty redrawing of parliamentary constituencies without thorough deliberations can only deepen Centre-State mistrust. The timing — right in the middle of an election cycle — is questionable too.

The principle of "one person, one vote, one value" must be balanced against the realities of India's development trajectory. Southern states, which have historically invested in population control, education and public health, now find themselves at risk of being penalised for their performance. Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan has rightly questioned whether such an approach sends a dangerous message: that governance and demographic discipline may lead to diminished political influence. Delimitation is essentially a political act with far-reaching consequences. If pursued without sensitivity to regional balance, it risks widening the north-south divide and eroding trust in the Union's fairness. There is a dire need to reconcile representation with equity, ensuring that India's diversity remains its strength, not its fault line. A simple, viable solution would be to provide 33 per cent reservation to women on the basis of the existing strength of Parliament.

Name Deletion

THE clock is ticking for lakhs of people whose appeals against the deletion of their names from West Bengal's electoral rolls are pending in appellate tribunals. The Supreme Court has refused to issue directions allowing aggrieved residents to vote, saying that their petition is "premature" and they must exhaust their remedies before the appellate authorities. The tribunals have their work cut out as two-phase polling will be held in the state on April 23 and 29.

From the outset, the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state has been marked by a bitter confrontation between the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the Election Commission of India (ECI). The entire exercise has been under judicial scrutiny over the past few months amid allegations of "politically motivated" deletions of voters' names. The onus is on the tribunals to expedite the adjudication process.

Even though many claims have already been dealt with, the scale of omissions and the anxiety among affected voters cannot be dismissed lightly. The right to vote, as the apex court noted, is not merely constitutional but deeply "sentimental" — a marker of belonging and citizenship. When individuals fear disenfranchisement or, worse, detention, the issue transcends procedural technicalities. Transparency in deletions and swift disposal of appeals are essential to ensure that no eligible voter is left out.

Making matters worse, the Centre-State conflict has not remained confined to the SIR row. The arrest of Vinesh Chandel, co-founder of the Indian Political Action Committee (IPAC) — a consultancy firm working for the TMC — by the Enforcement Directorate in a money-laundering case has emerged as a new flashpoint. With political tensions mounting by the day, free and fair polls in Bengal hinge on the credibility of Central institutions and the cooperation of the state authorities.

The necessity of greater representation for women in Parliament and Assemblies cannot be disputed. However, the proposed linkage between the implementation of women's reservation and delimitation — and that too based on a 15-year-old Census — is fraught with complications. Hasty redrawing of parliamentary constituencies without thorough deliberations can only deepen Centre-State mistrust. The timing — right in the middle of an election cycle — is questionable too.

Suresh Chandra Sarangi

The oil shock has derailed today's world economy, reduced growth and shattered the myth of geo-politics. The Iran-Israel conflict is one of the greatest impasse that the global community faces today. Since economic systems across the world is linked to trade, finance and energy, the regional conflict had broader ramifications and has triggered much global economic disruption. The instability caused to the world economy will be far reaching and shall bring significant disruption in growth momentum. The April 2026 World Economic Outlook of IMF, the global economy will slowdown to 3.1% in 2026 and India may clock a 6.5% growth, in view of the protracted geopolitical fragmentation. Downside risks are high, including a spiralling of oil prices, with global inflation raising its ugly head.

The immediate consequences of the war was the first reaction of the oil market, as the traders were worried about the likelihood of global supply chain disruption, a cut in the production level, skyrocketing of prices for barrel, changes in the supply route of oil, and a general spike in the oil prices, world over. The increased prices affects the energy sector to its core, it ripple through transportation, affecting the end users with disturbances that has affected significantly the manufacturing sector, Agriculture sector, and the cost of living going

Delayed shipments, higher prices, delayed deliveries, of raw materials and finished goods on account of enhanced transportation charges, are headlines difficult to overcome. The shock has disturbed the financial markets, investors sentiment, created uncertainty, with currencies and exchange system under continued pressure. Currencies are facing depreciation, and the oil shock has steered a great financial shift, including lasting impression on investment pattern and economic growth.

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Delayed shipments, higher prices, delayed deliveries, of raw materials and finished goods on account of enhanced transportation charges, are headlines difficult to overcome. The shock has disturbed the financial markets, investors sentiment, created uncertainty, with currencies and exchange system under continued pressure. Currencies are facing depreciation, and the oil shock has steered a great financial shift, including lasting impression on investment pattern and economic growth.

The weaker economies are confronting hard realities, as the supply of LNG and PNG are in short supply, with exorbitant prices. This has affected the consumer confidence, business decision making, and slowdown naturally creeps in with stagflation/ recession looming large in the horizon. In an increasingly more interconnected globalised world, the oil shock has a global manifestation. It is another thing that the world security is at stake, food security in doldrums, and the oil shock has affected the prices of fertilisers and the farmers distress knows no bounds. Middle East today remains the epicentre of the oil shock and theatre of intense

geopolitical participation, and the political economic dynamics throws new challenges to the energy markets and world's security infrastructure.

NATO today is a divided house. The other sensitive areas are river, sea waterways like the Panama canal, the Suez canal, the Red Sea are future choke points that only highlights the fragility of global systems. It puts question on the efficacy of the UN system and its failure to guard world peace. The Strait of Hormuz, that narrow passage of water is the centre of attraction over oil and nobody knows whether it is going to be cause of intensified pressure and power politics.

Why is it so? The energy concern is that despite talk of climate risk, Paris agreement, oil consumption is on increase. The pace of consumption outpaces the production. There is limited discovery of oil. The way the population is rising, the world has added a sizable population that is having an exponential growth. Coal, oil, and natural gas, are going to be depleted. But our standard of living requires it more and more. Now developing nations consume more and the result of use of fossil fuels has been at the centre of development and all human necessities.

The discovery of oil was a crucial turning point in human

history. The energy transition from coal to fossil fuels in the 20th century was a charismatic journey of oil. In 21st century the oil became a robust economic engine. On the eve of formation of OPEC, the oil cartel, the world faced a major challenge. But the international settlement making it linked to dollars, called the petrodollar, was a powerful change. In the international oil payment settlement system, dollar became the king and oil purchase or sell took place with dollar only therefore, the story of oil after 1973 is intrinsically intertwined with dollar and the growth of American economy. There lies the crux of the matter and why Trump attacked Venezuela and made Maduro a prisoner in American prison.

Next came the attack on oil fields in Iran and Iran's attack in neighbouring countries who have supported American base in their land. Critics say, Trump's attack of Iran along with its long time partner Israel was not so much in controlling Iran's nuclear arsenal, which was nearing completion, but in as much as it gains control of the Middle East oil. Trump's decision to blockade the strait of Hormuz is a story of brinkmanship in International politics. Trump's statement that the toll collection will be done by USA from the ships that enters

the Strait of Hormuz is a frontal attack on Iran's territorial sovereignty and also a deadly strike against the balance of power system. As per newspaper reports, China's vehement opposition to American interference is giving an indication that international relations and politics is based on national interest. So oil is on boil. This commodity, since its birth and throughout its journey, faces the biggest challenge, when the superpowers forcibly want to control the oil management for their own benefit, without looking into the problems the world faces today.

This oil shock 2.0, driven by power politics in West Asia, is a major disruption in world energy prices. Oil prices hovered around 115 barrels for some time a week ago. Some countries do rationing. Some countries face short supply and people skipping their meals or transitioning into traditional forms of energy like wood and coal. Countries are planning to go for alternate sources of energy, such as wind power, solar power. Because the world will come to a standstill in the absence of oil and modern life and civilization would face the maximum disruption, without oil.

The sooner the UN interferes and the superpowers should come forward for a peaceful resolution of the present impasse, the better, failing which the energy shock may prove fatal. In the worst case, if it is not amicably resolved, the strait of Hormuz may write the epitaph of the oil.

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Should we not pitch the voice for 33% women reservation



Dr. Tapan Chand

Centuries of struggle for women for right place in our society has brought this Nari Shakti Bandan Adhiniyam 2023. This Law should have been passed 30 years back but moment came in 2023 and Nari Shakti Adhiniyam was passed with the backing of all political

parties. In Lok Sabha the bill was passed with 454 votes in favour and only 2 votes against and in Rajya Sabha it was passed unanimously with 214 votes in favour and none against. All shades of political opinion are unanimous in its implementation. We should not allow this historic opportunity to lapse on procedural or technical ground. Since Prime Minister himself is guaranteeing there will be no discrimination of any state or any region, all parties may together workout a formula of seat sharing so that population alone does not become the sole criteria. States and Union are already sharing their tax

resources through formula driven resource allocation and population is not taken as the sole criteria. This precedence need to be kept in view. Let us make one solid voice for resurgence of Nari Shakti who are 50% of our population and waiting for years to get their due place and justice.

In past number of Women Empowerment steps have been taken which have built up right kind of backup preparing the women to takeover their due position in state Legislature and Parliament. With the increase of total seats from 543 to 850 (815 for states and 35 for Union territories) All states will gain in absolute terms, In case of

Odisha the existing number of 21 may rise to 31 formula based. We should not get stuck up with percentage of representation compared to other state marginally falling below.

Variation in comparative percentage does not necessarily mean voice of the state will diminish. It is credibility, personality and proper presentation of the issue that makes the voice strong. The issue of representation need to be discussed and solution found out acceptable to all. Divisive politics should not over cloud the lofty ideals of 33% reservation of Women in state legislature and parliament. The entire nation is eager to

welcome women representation.

We have taken a historic step, we should continue to take such steps to its logical conclusion. This historic step will place India far ahead of many developed countries like Japan, Russia, USA, Canada etc in matters of women representation in political formulation. The democratic stature of the largest democracy of the world will go up making it a model for others to follow. Increased women participation is necessary for realizing Viksit Bharat Vision which envision development of all sections of society more particularly women.

—Former CMD NALCO

“The Human Brain: The Blueprint for Next-Generation AI”

Dr Vijay Garg Artificial Intelligence (AI) has made remarkable progress—from voice assistants to self-driving cars—but it still falls short of true human-like intelligence. While machines can process vast amounts of data, they struggle with adaptability, reasoning, and common sense. To bridge this gap, scientists increasingly believe that the key lies in better understanding the human brain—the most powerful and efficient intelligence system known.

The Brain: Nature's Original AI The human brain is often described as the inspiration behind modern AI. Artificial neural networks—the backbone of today's AI—are loosely modeled on how neurons in the brain connect and communicate. However, this resemblance is only superficial.

The brain consists of billions of neurons working in parallel, constantly adapting through experience. It learns efficiently from limited data, generalizes knowledge across contexts, and integrates emotion, memory, and perception seamlessly. In contrast, current AI systems require massive datasets and still struggle with flexible thinking.

Why Current AI Falls Short

Despite impressive achievements, today's AI systems have key limitations:

Lack of adaptability: AI models often perform well only in specific tasks.

Data dependency: They require enormous amounts of labeled data.

Poor generalization: Skills learned in one domain rarely transfer to another.

Limited understanding: AI identifies patterns but does not truly "understand" them.

These limitations arise because current AI focuses more on mathematical optimization than on replicating how the brain actually works.

Learning from Neuroscience Neuroscience offers valuable insights that could transform AI:

1. Neuroplasticity The brain constantly rewires itself based on experience. Incorporating similar adaptive learning in AI could lead to systems that improve continuously without retraining.

2. Energy Efficiency The brain operates on roughly 20 watts of power, far more efficient than energy-hungry AI systems. Brain-inspired computing could reduce AI's environmental impact.

3. Multitasking and

The human brain is often described as the inspiration behind modern AI. Artificial neural networks—the backbone of today's AI—are loosely modeled on how neurons in the brain connect and communicate. However, this resemblance is only superficial.

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Integration

The brain processes vision, sound, memory, and emotions simultaneously. AI systems are still largely modular and isolated.

4. Learning from Small Data Humans can learn new

concepts from just a few examples. Replicating this ability would revolutionize AI applications.

Researchers are already exploring these ideas through fields like neuromorphic computing and spiking neural networks, which aim to mimic real neural behavior

A Two-Way Relationship

The relationship between AI and brain science is not one-sided. While neuroscience inspires AI, AI is also helping scientists understand the brain better. Advanced algorithms analyze brain imaging data, uncover hidden patterns, and simulate neural processes.

This mutual exchange is accelerating discoveries in both fields.

Emerging Breakthroughs Recent developments highlight how closely AI and neuroscience are converging:

Scientists have trained living neurons to perform computations, opening doors to hybrid biological-AI systems.

New AI architectures are being designed to adapt like the human brain, potentially leading to more general intelligence.

At the same time, challenges such as AI "hallucinations" show how far we still are from true

understanding.

The Road Ahead: Toward Human-Level AI

To build stronger AI, researchers are moving toward Neuro AI—a fusion of neuroscience, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence. This approach aims to create systems that:

Learn continuously like humans

Adapt to new environments

Use memory and reasoning together

Understand context, not just patterns

Such systems could lead breakthroughs in healthcare, education, robotics, and beyond.

Conclusion

Artificial intelligence began as an attempt to mimic the human brain, but it has only scratched the surface. The more we learn about how the brain processes information, adapts, and evolves, the closer we get to building truly intelligent machines.

In the end, the future of AI may depend not just on faster computers or bigger datasets—but on unlocking the mysteries of the human mind itself.

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

Supreme Court Refuses Hearing on Mandatory Voting Petition

New Delhi, 16/4(H.S.):The Supreme Court declined to entertain a plea seeking compulsory voting for all voters nationwide. A bench led by Chief Justice Suryakant ruled it a policy matter beyond judicial purview, directing petitioner Ajay Goyal to approach competent authorities. The petition demanded directives enforcing voting mandates and barring non-voters from government benefits. CJI Suryakant questioned enforcement feasibility: "In a rule-of-law democracy, voters should cast ballots voluntarily through awareness campaigns—not court-



ordered arrests." He highlighted practical hurdles: Justice Bagchi traveling to West Bengal on workdays, or impoverished

workers prioritizing earnings over polls. "We cannot compel participation," the bench affirmed.

Saket Court Issues Notice to TMC MP Mahua Moitra Over Varanasi Iftar Controversy

New Delhi, 16 /4 (H.S.):Delhi's Saket Court has summoned Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra in a case stemming from her social media post on an Iftar party held on a boat in Varanasi's Ganga River. Additional Sessions Judge Sonu Agnihotri issued the notice while hearing a revision petition challenging a magistrate's refusal to register an FIR against her; next hearing is May 16.Final-year law student Ram Pravesh Dubey filed the revision after the Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) dismissed his March 30 plea seeking FIR under Bharatiya



Nyaya Sanhita sections 196(1) (prejudicial to national integration), (promoting enmity), 197(1)(c) 299 (outraging religious feelings),

and 353(1)(b) (spreading rumours).Dubey alleged Moitra's March 19 X post—questioning arrests of 14 Muslim men for the March 15 Iftar event where non-veg waste was allegedly discarded in the river—hurt his religious sentiments, aimed to incite communal discord, and stoke anti-Muslim bias.The JMFC ruled no prima facie case existed, finding no evidence Moitra's statement disrupted social harmony, insulted religious beliefs, or incited inter-community offences. "No cause to proceed further," the order stated, lacking records of actual disharmony.

Delhi High Court Rejects Stay in Assault Case Against CM Rekha Gupta



New Delhi, 16 /4 (H.S.):The Delhi High Court declined to halt ongoing trial court proceedings in the assault case against Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta. A bench led by Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani also ordered dismissal of the accused's petition challenging the trial court's order framing charges. Tis Hazari Court on December 26, 2025, directed charges against Rajesh Khimji and Tahsin Syed for the attack. Tahsin faces Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita sections 221, 132, 109(1); Rajesh 109(1), 115(2), 221, 132—covering attempt to murder,

obstructing public servant, and criminal conspiracy.Delhi Police's 400-page chargesheet, filed October 18, 2025, details Rajesh's motive: a dream where a dog beside a Shivaling urged action as Delhi's strays suffered. He viewed Facebook videos blaming Gupta and had fasted in Ayodhya over monkeys in May.Outraged by Gupta's support for Supreme Court's August 11, 2025, stray dogs shelter order, Rajesh attacked during her August 20 public hearing. Police allege conspiracy with Tahsin in the Civil Lines breach. Next hearing set for May 21.

Nitin Nabin Among New Rajya Sabha Members Takes Oath as House Adjourned

New Delhi, 16/4 (H.S.):On the opening day of Parliament's special three-day session, BJP President Nitin Nabin and other newly elected members took oath in Rajya Sabha Thursday. Chairman C.P. Radhakrishnan administered oaths to the inductees before proceedings adjourned till 11 a.m. Friday.Tributes and Agenda PreviewRajya Sabha paid homage to former member Mohsina Kidwai and singer Asha Bhosle. Friday's session launches debate on the Constitution Amendment Bill for women's reservation plus two others, following Lok Sabha discussions; passage eyed tomorrow.Fresh Voices Sworn InRadhakrishnan swore in Terash Gowala, Jogen Mohan (both BJP Assam), Sujit Kumar (BJP Odisha), Dr. Abhishek Manu Singhvi, Vem Narendra Reddy (Congress Telangana), Vinod Kumar Tawde (BJP Maharashtra), Anurag Sharma (Congress



Himachal), Sanjay Bhatia (BJP Haryana), Promod Boro (UPPL Assam), Karmveer Singh Baudh (Congress Haryana), Phulo Devi Netam (Congress Chhattisgarh), Lakshmi Verma (BJP Chhattisgarh),

Shivesh Kumar (BJP Bihar), Ramnath Thakur (JD(U) Bihar), and Upendra Kushwaha (RLM Bihar). He congratulated all.Nitin Nabin posted on X: "Taking oath today as Rajya Sabha member

marks a new chapter in national service. This proud moment commits me to amplify Bihar's voice, advance Viksit Bharat, and fulfill public aspirations with unwavering dedication."

India and Austria Sign Multiple Pacts, Including Food Security Deal

New Delhi, 16 /4 (H.S.):Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Austrian Chancellor Christian Stocker held high-level delegation talks Thursday at Hyderabad House, focusing on bolstering bilateral cooperation. Key agreements, including one on food security, were inked to deepen ties across trade, investment, technology, and global issues. External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal attended the meeting.Earlier, Christian Stocker paid floral tribute at Rajghat, commemorating Mahatma Gandhi's legacy of peace, non-violence, and global harmony. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal noted on X that the Chancellor reflected on Babu's timeless ideals during the poignant visit.

Women's Quota Bills Spark Fierce Debate in Parliament

New Delhi, 16 /4 (H.S.):Three pivotal bills advancing women's reservation in Parliament were tabled Wednesday during a special session, igniting immediate opposition backlash. Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal introduced the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Delimitation Bill, 2026, while Home Minister Amit Shah presented the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026. Congress leader K.C. Venugopal accused the government of attempting to "hijack the Constitution." Samajwadi Party MP Dharmendra Yadav demanded quotas for Muslim women, deeming the laws meaningless otherwise; Akhilesh Yadav echoed this, questioning provisions for half the population. Shah retorted sharply, deeming religion-based reservations unconstitutional and suggesting the SP field Muslim women candidates freely. The exchange underscored deep partisan rifts on equity and secularism.

Supreme Court Spurns Plea Against Tetra Pack Liquor Sales in UP

New Delhi, 16/4(H.S.):The Supreme Court refused to hear a petition challenging alcohol sales in tetra packs in Uttar Pradesh. A bench headed by Chief Justice Suryakant directed petitioner Meenakshi Tiwari to submit her representation to relevant authorities. The CJI remarked that those wishing to buy liquor could do so in any form, questioning court intervention. While noting

no explicit excise policy authorization for tetra packs, the bench acknowledged a February 4, 2025, administrative order permitting small packs, now on record.Counsel argued the packaging endangers children and students, who could easily conceal them in schools or colleges. The court upheld deference to state policy on such matters.

Parliament Gears Up for Women's Quota Revolution and Bold Seat Redraw

New Delhi, 16 /4(H.S.):The Indian government will table three pivotal bills in a special parliamentary session today, paving the way for transformative electoral reforms. These measures aim to activate women's reservation ahead of the 2029 Lok Sabha elections and redraw constituency boundaries after decades of stasis, signaling a bold step toward gender parity and equitable representation.The trio of legislation includes the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026; the Delimitation Bill, 2026; and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026. At their core lies the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, a cornerstone proposal designed to enforce 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies by kickstarting the delimitation process.

India and Austria Champion Lasting Peace in West Asia: PM Modi

New Delhi, 16 /4 (H.S.):Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized Thursday that amid global tensions impacting all nations, military conflict cannot resolve crises—only dialogue and peace can. Speaking at a joint press conference with Austrian Chancellor Christian Stocker at Hyderabad House, he affirmed India and Austria's shared commitment to enduring stability in Ukraine and West Asia.PM Modi called for reforming global institutions to tackle rising challenges and reiterated both nations' resolve to eradicate terrorism. He hailed Stocker's visit—first by an Austrian Chancellor in four decades—as historic, building on the 2026 India-EU Free Trade Agreement's fresh chapter.Boosting Trade, Innovation, and Mobility The trip will accelerate trade and investment, blending India's



"speed and scale" with Austria's "expertise" for reliable global tech and supply chains. Collaboration deepens in defense, semiconductors, quantum technology, and biotechnology; a new IIT Delhi-Montan University pact marks progress.PM Modi announced enhanced nursing sector mobility

under the 2023 Migration and Mobility Agreement, alongside startup-research ties and an India-Austria Working Holiday Programme. Austrian tunneling prowess shone in Delhi Metro and Atal Tunnel; firms now drive green energy and urban development.This landmark visit propels bilateral ties into a dynamic new era.

Harivansh Narayan Singh Set for Unopposed Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairmanship



New Delhi, 16 /4(H.S.):Harivansh Narayan Singh, nominated by the President, filed his nomination Thursday for Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman at the secretariat, positioning him for a third term following two prior elections as JD(U) MP.Election occurs Friday, with opposition opting out over procedural grievances, ensuring his uncontested return.Opposition Boycotts, Cites Key Grievances Congress leader Jairam Ramesh announced the boycott on X,

clarifying no intent to disrespect Harivansh while hoping for greater accommodation in his new tenure. He listed three objections: Lok Sabha's vacant Deputy Speaker post for seven years; unprecedented nomination of a presidential appointee; lack of opposition consultation.Last month, President nominated Harivansh post his April 9 tenure expiry, leaving the role vacant since. As Vice President's ex-officio Chairman absence, the Deputy steers proceedings.

New Delhi, 16 /4 (H.S.):The government tabled three pivotal bills linked to women's reservation in the Lok Sabha on Thursday, the opening day of Parliament's extended budget session's three-day special sitting. Debate commenced post-formalities, with voting slated for Friday at 4 p.m.; Home Minister Amit Shah will respond.Bills Introduced Amid Procedural VotesAt 11 a.m., Minister of Law and Justice (Independent Charge)



Arjun Ram Meghwal proposed the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill-2026 and Delimitation Bill-2026. Shah moved the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill-2026. The motions passed 251-185, meeting the simple majority threshold for constitutional amendments. The Speaker allocated 12 hours for combined discussion, extendable per opposition demands. Rajya Sabha follows April 18 with

10 hours allotted.Partisan Clashes EruptCongress MP K.C. Venugopal opposed all three; Shah retorted he could raise only technical objections, not merits, vowing firm rebuttals in debate.Samajwadi Party's Dharmendra Yadav affirmed opposition to the package but backed women's quota unwaveringly as their staunchest proponents.The bills aim to secure 33% women's reservation in Lok Sabha and state assemblies post-delimitation.

Turkish School Massacre: Death Toll Climbs to Nine in Second Attack Within Days

Ankara, 16 /4(H.S.):Tragedy deepened in southern Turkey as five more victims from Wednesday's middle school shooting succumbed to their injuries, raising the total fatalities to nine. Interior Minister Mustafa Ciftci confirmed the grim update, noting six survivors remain in intensive care, three critically. The assault unfolded at Aysel Calik Middle School in Kahramanmaraş's Onikisubat district, where a 13-year-old eighth-grader, armed with guns allegedly from his police officer father, stormed two classrooms and fired indiscriminately. Governor Mukerrem Unluer reported the attacker also perished at the scene, having used five firearms and seven magazines. Among the dead are one teacher and eight students, with 13 others wounded; initial chaos claimed four lives on-site. Authorities detained the suspect's father as investigations probe access to the weapons.



This horror follows Tuesday's attack in Sanliurfa's Siverek district, where an 18-year-old ex-student wounded 16 at Ahmet Koyuncu Vocational High School before suicide. Such school shootings, once exceedingly rare

in Turkey, now spark urgent scrutiny—last May, an Istanbul student fatally shot a principal months after expulsion. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan pledged parliamentary action, promising repercussions for negligence and

detailing post-Siverek measures: one suspect arrested, four officers suspended, and the school shuttered for four days. The back-to-back incidents have shattered Turkey's sense of security in educational havens.

Nepal Court Mandates Probe Directives in Oli-Lekhak Murder Case

Kathmandu, 16 /4 (H.S.):Kathmandu District Court has issued a four-point directive to police investigating murder charges against former Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and ex-Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak, ensuring the probe persists despite their release on appearance bail. Per the District Government Attorney's Office, the Supreme Court's order freed Oli and Lekhak on bail over the past week, conditional on their availability for police summons and cooperation. To prevent any halt in proceedings post-release, prosecutors outlined specific investigative mandates. SP Pawan Kumar Bhattacharya of Kathmandu Police Range confirmed initial statements: Lekhak's at the

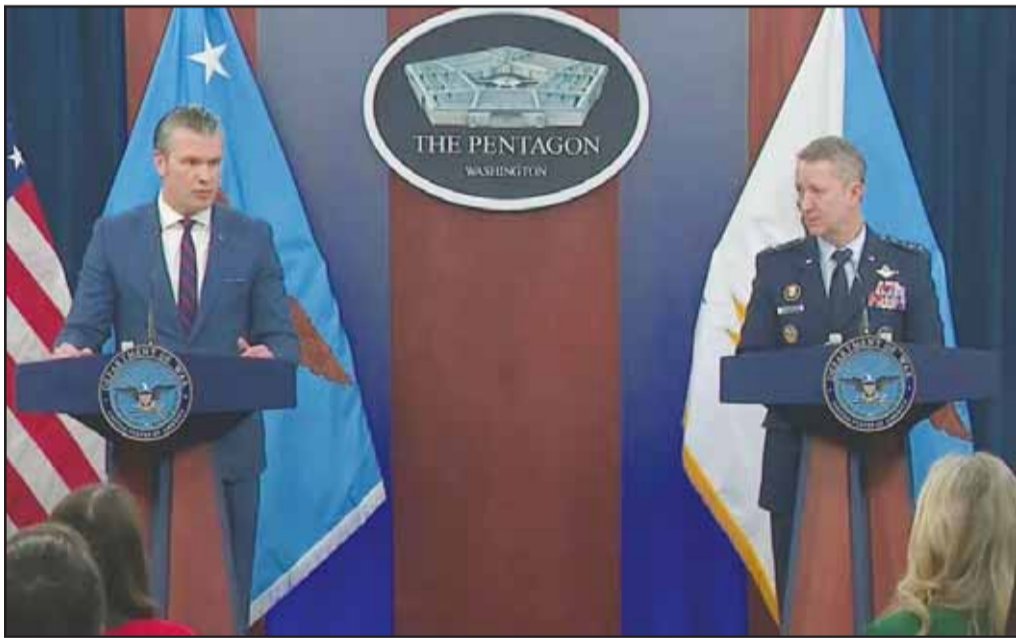


prosecutor's office, Oli's at the hospital where he remains admitted for health issues since arrest day. Key Investigative Directives Authorities must annex post-mortem reports for all deaths during the September 8, 2025, Gen Z movement clashes. Eyewitnesses to that day's

events require identification and statement recording. CCTV footage from the incident site must serve as evidence, with provisions for supplementary statements from the accused if new facts emerge. These steps uphold rigorous scrutiny amid Nepal's high-profile political scrutiny.

U.S. Signals Next Moves in Iran Conflict as Hegseth-Ken Briefing Looms

Washington/Islamabad/Tehran, 16/4 (H.S.): The United States is poised to unveil its forthcoming strategy on the Iran war today, potentially startling the global community with bold declarations during a critical Pentagon press conference. Scheduled for 8:00 a.m. Eastern Time—5:30 p.m. Indian Standard Time—Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Dan Caine will address the two-week ceasefire amid escalating tensions. Pakistan has launched discussions for a second round of peace talks between Tehran and Washington, dispatching Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir to Tehran on Wednesday for high-level consultations with Iranian officials. White House spokesperson expressed optimism about ongoing dialogue, hinting that the next session could reconvene in Islamabad. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, during an extended meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh, briefed him on



Pakistan's de-escalation initiatives and secured assurances of Islamabad's full backing. Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar accompanied Sharif, underscoring the military-civilian coordination in these diplomatic maneuvers. President Donald Trump radiated optimism, stating the conflict is

"very close to ending" and signaling potential direct peace negotiations with Iran alongside Pakistani Premier Sharif. This comes as Iran challenges U.S. claims of fully blockading its economic sea routes, threatening retaliation by disrupting another vital Middle Eastern waterway if

the naval chokehold persists. Reports from CBS News and Al Jazeera confirm the Pentagon's X announcement of the briefing, framing it as a pivotal moment in the fragile truce. As global stakeholders watch closely, these developments could reshape Middle East dynamics.

Nepal Gears Up for Legislative Overhaul: Over 100 New Laws on Horizon



Kathmandu, 16 /4 (H.S.):The Government of Nepal is poised to enact more than 100 new laws while amending existing legislation, with subject identification now complete across key sectors. Government spokesperson and Education Minister Sasmit Pokhrel revealed that 103 topics for fresh

legislation and targeted amendments have been finalized. All 22 ministries, in coordination with the Prime Minister's and Cabinet offices, are prioritizing these initiatives to expedite drafting and implementation. The Ministry of Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs is rigorously reviewing compliance

with legislative frameworks and processes, while issuing directives to other ministries on a priority basis. From this comprehensive list, the government aims to steer 40 to 45 bills through the upcoming federal parliament session, signaling a bold push for systemic reforms.

UN Approves \$12 Million Lifeline for War-Torn Iran Amid Escalating Crisis

New York/Tehran, 16.4 (H.S.): The United Nations has announced the release of \$12 million (approximately ₹100 crore) in emergency humanitarian aid for Iran, ravaged by conflict. This assistance comes in response to the deteriorating conditions in the country and the pressing needs of its civilians. UN relief chief Tom Fletcher stated that the 40-day conflict has resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians, alongside severe damage to critical infrastructure. Essential services such as healthcare, water supply, and electricity have been profoundly disrupted. He emphasized that the funding will bolster relief efforts at the grassroots level through various partner organizations. Priority will be given to delivering food, medical aid, clean water, and other vital services to those affected. According to the United Nations, a large number of people have been displaced amid the current situation, requiring immediate support. This financial aid could prove lifesaving in these circumstances. Humanitarian agencies warn that the ongoing conflict is complicating conditions relentlessly, and without a swift, lasting resolution, the crisis risks deepening further

US Escalates Economic Siege on Iran's Oil Lifeline Amid Strait of Hormuz Standoff



Washington, 16/4 (H.S.):In a bold escalation of its financial warfare, the United States unveiled sweeping new sanctions targeting Iran's oil sector on Wednesday, aiming to choke Tehran's revenue streams as the Islamic Republic maintains its stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz. The measures, announced by the Treasury Department, strike at the heart of a shadowy petroleum shipping network led by Mohammad Hossein Shamkhani, imposing penalties on over two dozen individuals, companies, and vessels that facilitate Iran's illicit oil trade. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent framed the action as part of an "Economic Fury" campaign, zeroing in on regime insiders like the

Shamkhani family, who stand accused of profiting amid the suffering of ordinary Iranians. "These elites exploit their positions to sustain the regime's aggression," Bessent declared in a statement, referencing the network's operations across Iran and the United Arab Emirates. The sanctions dismantle a web of front companies masquerading as legitimate consulting and shipping firms, which have long evaded prior restrictions to keep Iran's oil flowing. This move compounds mounting pressures on Iran, which shuttered the Strait of Hormuz—the world's most vital oil chokepoint—in retaliation for the US-Israeli military campaign that ignited the broader Middle East conflict. The closure has

sent global energy prices soaring, prompting the US to impose a naval blockade on Iranian ports and refuse extensions on waivers for oil already in transit. State Department officials underscored the strategy's intent: "We are decisively curtailing Iran's capacity to fund its hostage-taking of the Strait." The Shamkhani network's targeting carries personal sting. Mohammad Hossein, son of the late security chief Ali Shamkhani—an advisor to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, killed on February 28 alongside his father in the war's opening salvos—orchestrated a fleet that dodged sanctions through deceptive practices. In a parallel strike, the Treasury also sanctioned Iranian financier Seyed Naimeaei Badroddin Moosavi and three linked firms for laundering oil proceeds into Venezuelan gold, bolstering Iran-backed Hezbollah militants. As tensions simmer, these sanctions signal Washington's resolve to outlast Iran's gambit without direct confrontation. Yet, with reports of potential ceasefire extensions and backchannel peace talks swirling, the economic vise could either hasten negotiations or harden Tehran's defiance. Global markets watch anxiously, as the Hormuz impasse threatens to ripple into widespread energy shortages and inflation.

Clashes Rage in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as Pakistan Police Overrun Terrorist Hideouts



Islamabad, 16 /4 (H.S.):Security forces in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province are locked in an intense gunbattle with militants, leaving two terrorists dead and at least one police officer martyred, while several others have been wounded. The operation, launched late at night in the Baghoto Top Serki and Chambar Gul areas, marks the latest chapter in Pakistan's ongoing counterterrorism campaign in its volatile northwestern belt. According to local police reports, security teams cordoned off the two mountainous zones late Wednesday and launched a major raid against a group of suspected terrorists. A senior police officer in Kohat confirmed that the operation

has been underway for several hours and will continue until every trapped militant is neutralised. "The operation is now in a decisive phase," the Kohat Superintendent of Police told reporters, underscoring that no terrorist would be allowed to escape the encircled area. Officials say two militants were killed in the initial exchange of fire, while at least one police officer lost his life in the operation. Several other police personnel sustained injuries but are reported to be stable. The high-alert security environment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has prompted authorities to intensify search and clearance operations across the region, as part of a broader drive to disrupt militant networks and prevent further attacks on civilian and security targets.

Pakistan-Mediated Path to Peace: US Signals Optimism on Iran Deal as Tehran Tests US Blockade

Islamabad / Tehran / Washington, 16/4 (H.S.):The United States has described itself as "optimistic" about striking a second-phase peace deal with Iran, even as Tehran escalates its rhetorical defiance of a US-led naval blockade and threatens to shut down vital Red Sea and Gulf trade routes. The diplomatic momentum is now being funneled through Pakistan, whose senior delegation arrived in Tehran on Wednesday carrying a fresh message from Washington ahead of a potential new round of talks in Islamabad. Pakistan's army chief, General Asim Munir, led the delegation to Tehran at the invitation of both Washington and Iran, underscoring Islamabad's role as a neutral intermediary in the six-week war between the US-led coalition and Iran. Pakistani officials say their modest but crucial goal is not to announce an immediate breakthrough, but simply to "keep the talks going" and prevent a slide back into full-scale hostilities. In Tehran, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi welcomed the Pakistani delegation, underscoring the importance of multi-track diplomacy and the fact that "several messages" have already been exchanged via Islamabad since the inconclusive first-round negotiations in Islamabad ended last Sunday. White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters that a second round of negotiations "would very likely" be held again in Pakistan's capital, though the exact dates and format are still being negotiated.

Gold Shines Brighter, Silver Gleams: Domestic Bull Run Ignites Jewellery Markets

New Delhi, 16/4 (H.S.): India's domestic bullion markets opened with robust gains on Thursday, as gold prices surged by ₹1,300 to ₹1,42,410 per 10 grams in early trading. Silver followed suit, climbing ₹11,800 per kilogram, reflecting heightened investor sentiment amid global cues. Internationally, spot gold advanced 0.63% to \$4,820.45 per ounce, while silver traded at \$78.61 per ounce, bolstering the domestic rally. This uptick propelled 24-carat gold to trade between ₹1,55,360 and ₹1,56,230 per 10 grams across major markets, with 22-carat gold ranging from ₹1,42,410 to ₹1,43,300 per 10 grams. Silver, meanwhile, reached ₹2,70,100 per kilogram in Delhi's bullion hub. City-wise, Delhi saw 24-carat gold at ₹1,55,510 and 22-carat at ₹1,42,560 per 10 grams. Mumbai quoted 24-carat at ₹1,55,360 and 22-carat at ₹1,42,410; Ahmedabad



at ₹1,55,410 and ₹1,42,460 respectively. Chennai led with 24-carat at ₹1,56,230 and 22-carat at ₹1,43,300, while Kolkata and Bengaluru mirrored Mumbai's levels at ₹1,55,360 and ₹1,42,410. Bhopal

and Patna both recorded 24-carat at ₹1,55,410 and 22-carat at ₹1,42,460; Lucknow and Jaipur hit ₹1,55,510 and ₹1,42,560. Strength persisted in southern and eastern states, with Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and

Bhubaneswar aligning at ₹1,55,360 for 24-carat and ₹1,42,410 for 22-carat gold. These gains signal sustained momentum in regional markets, driven by festive demand and global factors.

Profit-Taking Jolts Early Trade, Yet Sensex and Nifty Hold Green Amid Selling Pressure

New Delhi, 16/4 (H.S.): Bolstered by strong global cues, India's equity benchmarks displayed resilience in early trading on Thursday, opening higher before profit-taking triggered dips. Despite bouts of selling, both the Sensex and Nifty remained in positive territory, with the BSE Sensex up 0.19% and the NSE Nifty up 0.21% as of 10 AM. Blue-chip performers included Hindalco Industries, JSW Steel, Tata Steel, Infosys, and Larsen & Toubro, which gained between 1.37% and 2.73%. In contrast, Sun Pharma, Tata Consumer Products, Apollo Hospitals, Coal India, and Nestle declined 0.50% to 0.86%. Among active stocks, 2,746 saw trading volume, with 1,866 advancing and 880 declining; Sensex's 30 constituents had 20 gainers versus 10 decliners, while Nifty's 50 stocks showed 32 green and 18 red. The BSE



Sensex opened 566.32 points higher at 78,677.56, peaking at 78,730.32 before sliding to 78,241.63 on sustained selling. It stabilized at 78,255.73, up 144.49 points by 10 AM. Similarly, the NSE Nifty debuted 153.90 points up at 24,385.20, touched 24,400.95, then dipped to 24,275.20 amid

profit-taking, closing the first half-hour firmly green at 24,281.80, up 50.50 points. This followed Wednesday's robust close, where Sensex surged 1,263.67 points (1.64%) to 78,111.24 and Nifty rose 388.65 points (1.63%) to 24,231.30, setting a bullish tone for today's session.

Iran Tensions Cloud US Gas Price Outlook

Washington: The Trump administration has linked the outlook for US fuel prices to developments in the Iran conflict, saying a sustained drop in gasoline costs will depend on the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and progress in ongoing negotiations. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told reporters at a White House news conference on Wednesday (local time) that the timing of lower gas prices remained uncertain, citing disruptions in global oil flows linked to tensions involving Iran. "I'm optimistic that sometime between June 20th and September 20th, we can have \$3 gas again," Bessent said, while noting that outcomes would depend on how negotiations

evolve. He said the Strait of Hormuz had not been "completely reopened," adding that energy markets would stabilise once shipping lanes return to normal operations. Bessent said discussions with Middle Eastern finance ministers indicated that oil production could resume quickly once conditions improve. "Once the Straits are open, they can start pumping again within one week," he said. The administration said it was closely monitoring fuel pricing behaviour, urging retailers to pass on reductions as crude prices ease. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said current price pressures reflected a broader strategic effort tied to the Iran situation. "This is a short-term

disruption for the long-term strategic goal of the United States," she said, referring to efforts to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. Leavitt said the administration expected fuel prices to decline once operations conclude and the Strait reopens, pointing to the government's focus on domestic energy production. Bessent described the approach as "short-term volatility for long-term gain," suggesting that temporary economic strain was part of a wider strategy. The administration also highlighted efforts to stabilise global energy flows, including coordination with allies and regional partners.

Global Optimism Ignites Asian Rally: Peace Hopes Fuel Bullish Surge Across Markets

New Delhi, 16/4 (H.S.): Global markets radiated positive signals on Thursday, buoyed by rising hopes of a West Asia peace accord, with U.S. President Donald Trump signaling that the Iran conflict is nearing resolution. Wall Street closed robustly higher in the prior session, propelling Dow Jones futures up 0.10% to 48,514.27, while European indices delivered mixed results: FTSE down 0.47% at 10,559.58, CAC weaker by 0.64% at 8,274.57, and DAX marginally up 0.09% at 24,066.70. Asia embraced widespread buying fervor, with all nine major indices



trading green. Gift Nifty climbed 0.59% (143 points) to 24,392.50; Taiwan Weighted rose 0.68% (251.39 points) to 36,973.53. Japan's Nikkei soared 2.27% (1,320.76 points) to 59,455. Korea's Kospi gained 1.90% (115.82 points) to 6,207.21, and Hong Kong's Hang Seng advanced 1.60% (414.68 points) to 26,362. Gains extended to Shanghai Composite (+0.53%) at 4,048.64, Jakarta Composite (+0.18% at 7,637.07), SET Composite (+0.06% at 1,507.67), and Straits Times (+0.04% at 5,023.22), underscoring broad-based momentum amid de-escalation optimism in U.S.-Iran talks.

10-Year Yield May Dip Below 7 Pct As GDP Seen At 7.1 Pct: Report

New Delhi, 16/4 (H.S.): India's benchmark 10-year government bond yield could ease below the 7 per cent mark by June, even as near-term volatility persists due to global and domestic factors, a report said on Thursday. As per the analysis of Crisil Intelligence, bond yields witnessed significant volatility in March, driven by a sharp rise in crude oil prices and heightened geopolitical tensions, which pushed the benchmark yield to its highs for the current financial year. However, easing inflationary pressures, supportive liquidity conditions, and policy expectations are likely to help stabilise yields in the coming months, it said. The report added that, in its base case, India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth is expected at 7.1 per cent in the current fiscal, supported by healthy private consumption and steady investment growth. Export growth is also expected to benefit from lower US tariffs, although



disruptions to global trade due to the West Asia conflict and slower global growth may act as a drag. It further noted that government measures to cap retail fuel prices could support consumption. On

inflation, Crisil projected CPI inflation to average 4.5 per cent in fiscal 2027. It said domestic liquidity remains comfortable, which is expected to act as a cushion against external shocks,

even as global uncertainties continue to weigh on sentiment. The report also highlighted that crude oil prices and geopolitical developments, particularly in West Asia, remain

key risk factors for the bond market. Elevated oil prices could stoke inflation concerns and limit the pace of any decline in yields, it said. At the same time, global cues, including movements in US Treasury yields and the US Federal Reserve's policy trajectory, are expected to play a crucial role in shaping the direction of Indian bond yields. On the domestic front, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) liquidity management measures and policy stance will be closely watched, with the central bank expected to play a stabilising role amid volatile conditions. Crisil added that its base case assumes the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will maintain policy rates during the current fiscal. Despite these headwinds, Crisil maintained that the outlook remains moderately positive, with yields expected to gradually soften as macroeconomic conditions improve and volatility subsides.

Wipro Q4 Profit Slips 1.9 Pct To Rs 3,501.8 Crore; Announces Rs 15,000 Crore Buyback

Mumbai: Wipro, a leading global end-to-end IT transformation, consulting and business process services provider, on Thursday reported a 1.89 per cent year-on-year (YoY) decline in its consolidated profit after tax to Rs 3,501.8 crore for the fourth quarter of FY26, compared to Rs 3,569.6 crore in the same period previous financial year (Q4 FY25). On a sequential basis, however, the company posted a 12.27 per cent rise in profit, according to its stock exchange filing. Earnings per share stood at Rs 3.34 (\$0.041), up 12.1 per cent quarter-on-quarter but down 2.1 per cent year-on-year. Revenue from operations rose 7.69 per cent year-on-year to Rs 24,236.3 crore in the March quarter, as against Rs 22,504.2 crore a year ago. Sequentially, revenue increased 2.88 per cent, as per the exchange filing. Looking ahead, Wipro said it expects revenue from its IT Services segment to be in the range of \$2,597 million to \$2,651 million for the June 2026 quarter. This translates into a sequential growth guidance of -2.0 per cent to 0 per cent in constant currency terms. The company's board also approved a share buyback of up to 60 crore fully paid-up equity shares, representing 5.7 per cent of its total paid-up equity capital, for an aggregate amount not exceeding Rs 15,000 crore at a price of Rs 250 per share, subject to shareholder approval. Commenting on the performance, CEO and Managing Director Srinji Pallia said advancements in artificial intelligence are reshaping client priorities and opening up new opportunities for deeper partnerships. "To strengthen our position in an AI-first world, we are pivoting to a services-as-a-software model through the AI Native Business & Platforms unit," he added. Chief Financial Officer Aparna Iyer said the company has continued to invest in clients, capabilities and talent while maintaining margins within a narrow band. "During the year we have returned substantial portion of our cash generated to shareholders in the form of dividend," Iyer mentioned.

India's Technology Talent Key In Global Crypto Race

Washington, 16/4 (H.S.): India's deep pool of technology talent is emerging as a critical factor in the global race to build digital asset infrastructure, participants at a policy discussion have said. The discussion, held under Chatham House Rules on Wednesday (local time), highlighted India's growing importance in the crypto ecosystem, driven by its large base of software developers and expanding digital capabilities. Participants said the shift towards digital assets — including stablecoins, tokenised securities and blockchain-based finance — is increasing demand

for specialised engineering talent. India, they noted, is well-positioned to meet that demand. The country accounts for a significant share of global software development activity. Its experience in building and scaling digital systems was cited as a key advantage in the next phase of financial innovation. Noting that the open-source nature of blockchain technology lowers barriers for new entrants, the participants said this creates opportunities for Indian firms to compete globally without the legacy constraints seen in traditional financial



systems. Some participants pointed to the potential for Indian companies to emerge as major players in digital finance, including the rise of new fintech firms focused on crypto infrastructure and payments. At the same time, India's regulatory approach remains cautious. Concerns around monetary sovereignty, capital controls and financial stability continue to shape policy discussions, particularly on privately issued digital currencies. Participants said this caution reflects broader risks associated with cross-border digital assets, especially

for large and complex economies. India's digital public infrastructure — including real-time payments and identity systems — was cited as a strong foundation for future growth. Participants said these systems could support the integration of new technologies into financial services. There was also growing interest among global firms in India as both a talent hub and a long-term market. A large consumer base, rising digital adoption and strong technical expertise make the country strategically important, participants said.

"Big honour for years of consistency": Vikas Khanna on TIME 100 milestone, reveals Priyanka Chopra among first to congratulate

Celebrity chef Vikas Khanna has been named in the popular TIME magazine's 2026 list of the 100 most influential people, marking a proud moment for Indian culinary artistry on the global stage. Celebrating the remarkable milestone with the coveted spot, Vikas Khanna, in a conversation with ANI, expressed much gratitude and pride. "I feel more for all the people who have stood by me all these decades. This is a big achievement for both our Indian culture and cuisine. I believe this will help volumise our voices in Indian cuisine," Khanna said. He spoke about how the recognition brings a "big honour for the years of consistency" for him. "Even if people don't show up, I believe Indian food is the game," Vikas Khanna added. As the recognition sparked a wave of joy for proud Indians, Khanna received one of the first greetings from Priyanka Chopra Jonas. "Priyanka Chopra is among the first people in the world to text me for such a big moment. She is one of the first people I told when we heard the news," Khanna said, adding that in her text, she said, "This is a big moment for our cuisine and our culture right now." Released on Wednesday, TIME magazine's 2026 list of the 100 most influential people featured Vikas Khanna alongside the likes of Bollywood star Ranbir Kapoor, chef Vikas Khanna, and Google CEO Sundar Pichai. Vikas Khanna has expressed his happiness at making it to TIME's 100 list. Sharing his thoughts, Vikas, in a press note said, "Being on the 2026 TIME 100 list of the most influential people in the world is a matter of immense pride for me. I owe this recognition to my grandmother, mother, and sister; they always believed in me, and it is their sacrifices, blessings, and guidance that have helped me reach where I am today. This achievement is a victory for India and our culinary legacy that is appreciated by people across the world. With this honour, I hope to inspire the people of my country to follow their ambition and represent India on the global stage." The coveted list also features the names of Ralph Lauren, Kate Hudson, Ethan Hawke, Mark Kelly, and Hilary Knight, among others.



Madhuri Dixit, Triptii Dimri's 'Maa Behen' has a latest update

Actors Madhuri Dixit and Triptii Dimri starrer 'Maa Behen' is now moving to the next stage. Director Suresh Triveni, in a social media post, shared a glimpse from the film's sets featuring the lead stars in a candid moment. "Agle padav ki taiyaar #maabeheh," he wrote. Madhuri Dixit, along with Triptii and Dharna Durga, could be seen joining the frame as the trio smiled, looking at the mobile phone. Many commented on the post, as many expressed high anticipation for the film. Triptii dropped heart emojis in the comment section. The teaser of 'Maa Behen' was unveiled in January this year. Directed by Suresh Triveni, the film centres around the constantly squabbling mother and daughters who find themselves in the "middle of a situation with a dead body in their kitchen." Madhuri plays Rekha, while Triptii Dimri and Dharna Durga play her daughters in the film. In the teaser, the 'Animal' actress was seen fighting with her on-screen mother, Madhuri Dixit, over her mannerisms as she wears a sleeveless blouse in the house. The situation takes a downturn when they discover a dead body in their kitchen. After getting over a panic attack, the trio decides to team up to cover the crime. Ravi Kishan also plays a prominent role in the film.



SPORTS

Pat Cummins Cleared for IPL Return, Fully Fit to Bowl Unrestricted

New Delhi, 16 /41 (H.S.): Australian pace spearhead Pat Cummins has received medical clearance to bowl without restrictions following recent scans in Sydney, paving the way for his eagerly anticipated comeback in the Indian Premier League (IPL). The all-clear confirms his back stress injury—sidelining him to just one professional match since August last year—is now fully healed. Cummins heads back to India on Friday to rejoin Sunrisers Hyderabad for the remainder of the tournament, partnering compatriot Travis Head. Though SRH face Chennai Super Kings this weekend and Delhi Capitals next Wednesday at home, he plans a measured return, targeting the April 25 clash against Rajasthan Royals in Jaipur. His reintegration could restore his captaincy, vacated by Ishan Kishan during absence; SRH sits fourth with two victories. This aligns with Cummins' strategy to feature in the IPL's business end and playoffs, priming for



Australia's grueling Test slate—potentially 21 matches over 12 months starting August against Bangladesh. In a recent 'Business of Sport' podcast, Cummins reaffirmed commitment to all formats, prioritizing key Test and ODI series as captain while scheduling 2-3 month breaks for fitness. "I still want to play all three formats... Test cricket

means the world to me. Hopefully, I can keep going for the next 3-5 years without dropping it," he shared. Australia's Tests kick off with two in Bangladesh (Darwin, Mackay), followed by three in South Africa, four versus New Zealand at home, five in India (Jan-Feb 2027), the MCG's 150th anniversary Test in March,

a likely Lord's World Test Championship final in June, and five-Ashes clashes. SRH coach Daniel Vettori hailed Cummins' "outstanding" conditioning after prolonged layoff. "Preparing to bowl fully fit is a long, arduous process—he's excelled in strength and conditioning," Vettori noted, underscoring Cummins' resolve to honor his near-AS4-million IPL contract.

Bayern Munich Stuns Real Madrid in Thriller to Reach Champions League Semis

Munich, 16 /41 (H.S.): Bayern Munich overcame a resilient Real Madrid 4-3 in a pulsating UEFA Champions League quarter-final second leg on Wednesday night, clinching a 6-4 aggregate triumph and booking a semi-final clash with defending champions Paris Saint-Germain. Late strikes from Luis Díaz and Michael Olise sealed a memorable comeback after Real's early dominance. The match exploded into life as Arda Güler stunned Bayern with a 35th-second opener, capitalizing on Manuel Neuer's errant pass. Aleksandar Pavlovic leveled via



header in the 6th minute, but Güler's sublime 29th-minute free-kick restored Real's lead. Harry Kane equalized eight minutes later, only for Kylian Mbappé to nod home just before halftime, tying the aggregate at 4-4. Tempo slowed post-interval, with Neuer's heroics preserving parity. Real's hopes crumbled in the 86th minute when Eduardo Camavinga earned a second yellow; Díaz pounced in the 89th, and Olise struck in injury time for glory. Arda Güler later saw red for dissent, compounding Madrid's woes.

'Force 3' shoot begins: John Abraham returns as ACP Yashvardhan Singh



The third instalment of the 'Force' franchise is officially in production, with 'Force 3' currently deep into its first shooting schedule. Headlined by John Abraham, Harshvardhan Rane and Tanya Maniktala, the action-thriller is directed by Bhav Dhulia and aims to build on the gritty legacy of the series. Backed by John Abraham's JA Entertainment and Sheel Kumar's Karolina Corporation, 'Force 3' marks a significant addition to the franchise with Harshvardhan Rane joining the cast. While John Abraham reprises his role as ACP Yashvardhan Singh, Rane's character details remain under wraps. Speaking about the film, John Abraham said, "Force has always been a franchise I've believed in deeply. What makes it special for me is that it has a certain grit and a strong identity that audiences have connected with over the years. With Force 3, we're taking that legacy forward in a big way. I'm also really excited to introduce Harsh as an action hero. He has the presence, the energy and the hunger for it, and I think audiences are going to enjoy watching him in this space," in a press note. Producer Sheel Kumar highlighted the longstanding collaboration behind the project, stating, "My relationship with John and JA Entertainment goes back many years.

Coming together for Force 3 feels both familiar and deeply special. I've believed in the Force franchise from the very beginning, and Force 3 is a film that comes from a place of trust, comfort and a shared conviction in the story that we want to tell."

"It's Still Not Final!" Yash Reacts to Ramayana VFX Criticism, Promises 'Top-Notch' Visuals

Yash has finally responded to the ongoing criticism surrounding the visual effects of the upcoming film Ramayana. The debate intensified after the teaser featuring Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Rama received mixed reactions online. Addressing the concerns, Yash clarified that the film's visuals are still under development and not the final version. "Work in Progress," Says Yash speaking during an interview, Yash emphasised that the VFX seen so far is incomplete: "It's still a work in progress. I'm sure it will be even better with the finished product. We are aiming for

something top-notch." He also highlighted the involvement of DNEG, an internationally acclaimed VFX studio known for delivering high-quality cinematic visuals. Global Expertise Behind the Film's Visuals DNEG has worked on several award-winning films such as Inception, Interstellar, and Dune. Their involvement has raised expectations for Ramayana to deliver world-class visual effects. Yash expressed confidence that the final product will meet global standards and audience expectations. The teaser had earlier sparked discussions within the film industry, with Hrithik Roshan also

weighing in. He noted that VFX criticism should consider creative intent. Minor inconsistencies can affect realism. Audience expectations must align with the chosen visual style. His remarks added a balanced perspective to the ongoing debate. Film Progress and Production Updates Yash confirmed that he has already seen a preliminary version of the film and that continuous improvements are being made. The film is directed by Nitesh Tiwari and features Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Rama, Sai Pallavi as Sita, Yash as Ravana. It is produced by Namit Malhotra along with Yash under Prime Focus Studios.