

Dumani Mail

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India Will Not Tolerate Terrorism Under Any Circumstances: Rajnath Singh

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reaffirmed India's uncompromising stance against terrorism while addressing the National Security Summit in New Delhi. He stated that under no circumstances will any act of terrorism be tolerated, emphasizing the government's zero-tolerance approach.

Highlighting "Operation Sindoor," along with surgical strikes and airstrikes, Singh said these actions demonstrate that India is no longer limited to issuing diplomatic statements after terror attacks. Under the leadership of Narendra Modi, the government has moved beyond intent and rhetoric, showcasing its firm commitment through decisive action.

He described terrorism as a product of a distorted and malicious mindset, calling it a blot on humanity. According to him, the fight against terrorism is not merely about national security but about protecting fundamental human values. He termed it a battle against a barbaric

ideology that opposes all human principles.

Singh also warned against attempts to justify terrorism by giving it religious or ideological color, including linking it with violent movements such as Naxalism. Such narratives, he said, are dangerous as they indirectly aid terrorist objectives. Terrorism, he added, has multiple dimensions—operational, ideological, and political—and must be countered on all fronts.

Criticizing Pakistan, he remarked that while India is globally recognized for information technology, Pakistan is often viewed as a hub of international terrorism.

Praising "Operation Sindoor," Singh highlighted the coordination among the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force as a model of joint military strength. He asserted that the operation was executed and concluded entirely on India's terms, adding that the country remains fully prepared for prolonged conflict and can rapidly enhance its capabilities during crises.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan to launch 1,698-crore PMGSY-IV road projects in Rayagada on May 1

New Delhi: Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, will visit Odisha on May 1, where he will launch a major rural infrastructure initiative under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-IV (PMGSY-IV) in Rayagada. During the programme, to be held at IACR Ground in Barijhola, the Union Minister will unveil rural road projects worth ₹1,698.04 crore in the presence of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

Under PMGSY-IV, a total of 827 road projects covering 1,701.84 kilometres will be undertaken, providing all-weather road connectivity to 898 habitations for the first time. The improved connectivity is expected to enhance access to schools, hospitals, markets, and other essential services, while also driving local economic activity and employment opportunities. As per the official schedule, Chouhan will hand over the PMGSY-IV approval letter to Chief

Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, followed by the inauguration and foundation stone laying of the projects. Beneficiaries will also be felicitated during the event. The programme will be attended by Odisha's Minister for Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water, Rabi Narayan Naik, along with public representatives and senior officials from both the Central and State governments.

Odisha has already made significant progress under various components of PMGSY. So far, 17,963 roads covering 74,725 kilometres and 707 bridges have been sanctioned in the state, out of which 17,760 roads spanning 71,742 kilometres and 658 bridges have been completed. The May 1 programme is expected to further accelerate Odisha's development journey by strengthening rural connectivity and contributing to the broader vision of a "Viksit Bharat" through enhanced infrastructure and economic growth.

Rajya Sabha chairman approves merger of 7 AAP MPs with BJP; Total members strength rises to 113

New Delhi: The total number of Members of Parliament of the BJP in the Rajya Sabha has been increased to 113. In a social media post, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju today informed that the Chairman of the Upper House, C.P. Radhakrishnan, has approved the merger of seven Aam Aadmi Party turncoat MPs. The MPs include Raghav Chadha, Dr Ashok Kumar Mittal, Sandeep Pathak, Swati Maliwal and Harbhajan Singh. After the merger, the number of Aam Aadmi Party MPs in the Upper House has been reduced to three. Mr Rijiju welcomed these MPs into the BJP, saying that they will contribute to nation-building under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Man arrested for land grabbing, forgery in Haryana

New Delhi: Police have arrested a man here in connection with a case of land grabbing using forged documents, officials said on Wednesday. The accused has been identified as Aman Goyal. He was arrested on Tuesday night. The case pertains to a plot in Sector 35, Faridabad, which has been in dispute for several years.

ECI introduces QR code-based ID system to secure counting centres

New Delhi: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has introduced a QR code-based Photo Identity Card system to enhance security and prevent unauthorised access at counting centres during elections.

The new system will be implemented starting May 4, during the counting of votes for Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Puducherry, as well as bye-elections in seven constituencies across five states. The poll body said the mechanism will subsequently be extended

to all future Lok Sabha and Assembly elections.

As part of the initiative, the ECI has integrated a QR-based identity verification module into its ECINET platform, aiming to ensure secure and streamlined access control at counting venues.

The ECI said a three-tier security system has been put in place. At the first and second levels, identity cards issued by Returning Officers will be manually verified. At the innermost security layer near the counting halls,



entry will be granted only after successful QR code scanning. The QR-based ID

cards will be mandatory for all authorised personnel, including Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, counting staff, technical teams, candidates, election agents, and counting agents.

The move is part of a broader push by the Commission to strengthen election management, following a series of over 30 reforms introduced in the past year, including QR-based identity cards for Booth Level Officers. To facilitate media coverage, dedicated media

centres will be set up near counting halls, while journalists will continue to be granted access based on authorisation letters issued by the Commission.

The ECI has directed Chief Electoral Officers, District Election Officers, and Returning Officers to ensure proper implementation of the system, including deployment of trained personnel at checkpoints to maintain high standards of transparency, efficiency, and security during the counting process.

Vietnamese President To Lam to visit India from May 5–7

New Delhi: Vietnamese President To Lam will undertake a State visit to India from May 5 to 7 at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced on Thursday.

President To Lam, who also serves as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including ministers, senior officials, and a business delegation. This will be his first visit to

India after assuming office earlier this month.

During the visit, President To Lam will be accorded a ceremonial welcome at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan on May 6. He is scheduled to hold wide-ranging discussions with Prime Minister Modi, covering the full spectrum of bilateral relations as well as regional and global issues of mutual interest.

President Droupadi Murmu will also meet the visiting leader, while other senior Indian dignitaries are

expected to call on him during the visit.

As part of his itinerary, President To Lam will visit Both Gaya and Mumbai, reflecting the cultural and economic dimensions of India-Vietnam ties.

The visit coincides with the 10th anniversary of the elevation of India-Vietnam relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, established during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Vietnam in 2016. The MEA noted that the engagement between the

two sides is expected to provide fresh momentum to bilateral ties and open new avenues for cooperation.

Earlier this month, Prime Minister Modi had congratulated President To Lam on his election, expressing confidence that the longstanding friendship between India and Vietnam would continue to strengthen under his leadership and reaffirming India's commitment to deepening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Rahul Gandhi meets Ladakh delegation; Says 'They want jobs, industry'

New Delhi: Congress MP Rahul Gandhi on Thursday met with a Ladakh delegation and stated that the people of Ladakh want jobs and industry.

Rahul Gandhi, who is Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, expressed hope that Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who earlier in the day arrived in Leh for a two-day visit, can "understand this reality".

People of Zaskar earlier in the day welcomed Union Home Minister Amit Shah with their traditional dance and song in Leh, Ladakh.

Congress shared the images of the meeting on its official social media account.

"The youth of Ladakh told me how their beautiful homeland has been turned

into a police state. Their voices have been suppressed, democratic rights have been crushed, and their land and fragile environment are being handed over to Modi ji's billionaire friends. The people of Ladakh are not against development. They want jobs and industry, but development that benefits the local people. I

hope that during his visit, the Home Minister can understand this reality," Rahul Gandhi posted on X.

Meanwhile, Ladakh Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Monday approved the notification for the creation of five new districts in the Union Territory in a step aimed at strengthening grassroots governance and decentralizing administration.

Nubra, Sham, Changthang, Zaskar and Drass are the new districts and the number of districts in the Union Territory has gone up to seven.

Ladakh became a Union Territory on October 31, 2019. It is renowned for its remote mountain beauty and distinct culture.

BJP to retain Assam, win Bengal; NDA to emerge strong in TN, Kerala, Pondy; Pradhan

New Delhi: Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Thursday said the BJP would retain power in Assam, while expressing confidence that there would be a change of government in West Bengal, citing people's continued faith in PM Narendra Modi and the party.

Asserting that NDA is likely to return to power in the union territory of Puducherry, he expressed confidence that the BJP-led alliance would emerge strongly in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

The counting of votes for all five Assemblies—West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala, and Assam—will take place on May 4.

Delhi Police dismantles leadership of Mewat-based burglary gang

New Delhi: The Delhi Police Crime Branch has dismantled the leadership of a notorious Mewat-based burglary gang with the arrest of its elusive kingpin, Arman (26). The high-stakes operation ended a three-year chase across state lines.

According to the police, Arman, a resident of Nuh, Haryana, was the mastermind behind a series of high-profile "uprooting" heists targeting mobile stores across Delhi-NCR. His most notable crime involved a January 2023 raid on a Delhi Cantt showroom, where his gang used a vehicle with falsified plates to loot expensive stock. While his accomplices were caught in 2023, Arman vanished, leading the Patiala House Courts to declare him a Proclaimed Offender in June 2025.

To infiltrate the tight-knit Mewat region, a specialised team under ACP Umesh Barthwal deployed an undercover officer fluent in local customs for six months. This deep-cover intelligence, combined with technical surveillance, finally paid off on April 29, 2026, the police said.

Detectives spotted Arman leaving the safety of his village alone. Moving with precision, the team intercepted and apprehended him near the Nuh Court Complex before his network could intervene.

Police records reveal that Arman is a habitual offender involved in multiple robberies and thefts across Haryana and Rajasthan. Following his arrest, investigators are interrogating him to uncover his links to other unsolved heists in the NCR. He remains in custody pending further legal proceedings.

Vaishnav flags off Jammu-Srinagar Vande Bharat Express, promises rail link to Uri

New Delhi: As the first direct Vande Bharat Express from Jammu chugged into the Kashmir valley on Thursday, Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnav promised to focus on connecting remote areas like Poonch, Rajouri and Uri to the country's rail network.

Following the completion of the ambitious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL), Vaishnav said

detailed project reports (DPRs) have been prepared on projects to connect the Poonch-Rajouri region to the national rail network and to extend the railway line to Uri, a border town in Baramulla district.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office, Jitendra Singh, were among the dignitaries present at the flagging off ceremony.

Delhi HC issues notice in textbook delay contempt plea; Govt assures supply before summer break

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Thursday issued notice on a contempt petition filed by Social Jurist alleging non-compliance with earlier court directions on the timely supply of textbooks to students in government schools.

Justice Sachin Datta pulled up the Delhi Government over the lapse affecting lakhs of children and questioned the delay in distribution.

On instructions, the Standing Counsel submitted that textbooks would be supplied to all students before the commencement of summer vacation.

Recording the submission, the Court bound the respondent to the assurance and directed the filing of a status report and reply. The matter is next listed on September 30.

Appearing for the

petitioner, Advocate Ashok Agarwal submitted that despite undertakings given before the Court, students of Classes I to VIII have not received textbooks even after the start of the 2026-27 academic session, impacting their studies.

The contempt plea alleges wilful disobedience of earlier directions issued by the Delhi High Court in a public interest

litigation concerning the supply of textbooks to nearly 10 lakh students in Classes I to VIII. Filed under the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, read with Article 215 of the Constitution, the petition seeks action against the Secretary (Education), GNCTD (Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi).

According to the plea, despite assurances

recorded in April 2024 and directions issued in July 2024 mandating the timely procurement and distribution of books and learning materials, students have been left without textbooks weeks into the academic session that began on April 1.

The petitioner has argued that the delay has disrupted foundational learning and widened disparities between

government and private school students, especially as schools are set to close for summer vacation on May 9. It is further contended that students are being forced to rely on outdated or shared materials, undermining their rights under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 and Article 21-A of the Constitution.

Timely Action Ensures Smooth Functioning of Irrigation Project in Bandhugam Block

Garidi : Minor technical issues identified in the irrigation project at Gazabadi village under Garidi Panchayat of Bandhugam Block have been promptly addressed, ensuring that the project continues to benefit local farmers without disruption.

The project, which includes the construction of a check dam and canal system, was designed to strengthen irrigation facilities in the region. During routine inspection, some small shortcomings were observed in the structure. However, Junior Engineer Satyanarayana clarified that

these issues were minor in nature and had already been identified by the department.

He stated that immediate corrective measures have been implemented, and the project is now functioning smoothly. The engineering team is maintaining close supervision to ensure durability, quality, and long-term benefits.

The Gazabadi Check Dam (CD) project has an ayacut area of 25 hectares and is expected to benefit around 600 farmers. The irrigation facility is providing support to multiple villages, including Gajabadi, Dimbaguda, and Belapat, improving



agricultural productivity and water availability.

Local farmers have expressed satisfaction with the swift response of the irrigation department. With proper monitoring and timely intervention, the project is now set to play a crucial role in enhancing crop yield and supporting rural livelihoods in the region.

Officials emphasized that such proactive measures reflect the government's commitment to strengthening rural infrastructure and ensuring that development projects deliver intended benefits efficiently.

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Opposition to Proposed Airport in Sipasarubali Strong resentment expressed in village meeting

Puri: There is growing opposition among local residents regarding the proposed Shree Jagannath International Airport in the Sipasarubali area. At a village meeting held at the Gorual Cyclone Shelter Center in Brahmagiri block, villagers voiced strong dissatisfaction and decided to submit a memorandum to the District Collector on the 30th.

The meeting, chaired by Gorual Sarpanch Niranjana Mishra, was attended by intellectuals, social workers, farmer leaders, and a large number of locals. Speakers stated that the proposed international airport in Sipasarubali is misleading and accused the government of making false promises to the people.

They pointed out that during earlier public hearings held under Section 16 in Sipasarubali and Sandhapur, local residents had already opposed the project. At that time, villagers had placed several demands before the



government, including:

• Compensation of ₹10 lakh per family

• 30% employment for local youth in the airport based on qualifications. A multi-facility hospital in the Brahmagiri area. Allocation of 2 acres of land in the name of the (village council) for development. However, none

of these demands were included under Section 20. Villagers also said that people from Gorual and Ambapada panchayats depend on collecting cashew, mangoes, and firewood for their livelihood. They allege that the government has failed to fulfill its promises regarding their livelihoods. There are also accusations that certain

land mafias and industrialists are conspiring to take control of this land.

Farmer leader Bhimsen Swain, advocate Sukanta Pradhan, Panchayat Samiti member Jitendra Behera, Deputy Sarpanch Kalyani Bhoi, and other representatives clearly stated that strong opposition to the proposal will continue.

Schlorian Fest- 2026

Jagatsinghpur : Annual Festival of Schlorian English Medium School (Scholarian Fest- 2026) inaugurated by local MLA, Amarendra Das at Adikavi Sarala Das Sanskruti Bhawan to-day, Eminent Educationist Sarat Chandra Barick presided over the meeting. Ex-President Zilla Parisad Natabar Barick, BEO, Jagatsinghpur Madhusmita Pati address the gathering. Local MLA said that, Children's are the future of the Nation and they will take major responsibility of the Nation in future. Ex-Guardians and Teachers and the atmosphere of the School will help the innocent chaps to go ahead. Principal Manas Kanungo presented the Annual report. Prize giving ceremony and Cultural programme followed latter on.

Health Camp held in Bari



Jajpur:- On occasion of Madhu Babu Jayanti, Bari Bar Association organized a mega health camp cum free medicine distribution held on this Tuesday morning here in Bari Pragati Club premises. Notable Physician Rotarian Dr. Nihar Ranjan Kar, MOI Kabatabandha PHC, Jajpur DHH's Eye Department Dr. Pravas Swain, Bari CHC Ayush Dr. Shashikant Sahoo, Bari PHEO Prafulla Nayak along with staff of Bari CHC's Mobile Team and others were attended provided medicines to the parents as per their

requirements.

Free Blood Test, Blood Pressure monitoring, Diabetic awareness also provided by Dr. Kar in this regard. The camp was also visited by the Baripal Court Judge Madam Anushree Jena, Bari Tehasildar Smt. Diptimayee Behera and other dignitaries in the region.

Members of Pragati Club along with the President of the Bar Association Rajkishore Samal and team were coordinated the camp smoothly for why hundred above people able to take benefits from the camp.

BJP Adivasi Morcha District General Secretary Resigns Over Jitu Munda Issue

Keonjhar : The resignation of BJP Adivasi Morcha General Secretary Maturam Munda over the Jeetu Munda incident has become a topic of discussion in Keonjhar.

In his resignation Maturam mentioned that he was ashamed and shocked that evidence is being sought to withdraw money from the bones of the Birsa Munda community in Keonjhar district. For this reason, I am resigning and have submitted this resignation letter to District BJP President Shukdev Mahanta. He alleged in the letter that on the 27th the incident took place but the local BJP MLA Akhil Kumar Naik took no action, and the MP Anant

Nayak celebrated his birthday. At the same time, the district MLA and tribal chief minister Mohan Charan Majhi is in the district. Therefore, it implies that they are hating, disrespecting and ignoring the Ho (Munda) community, he mentioned in the resignation letter. "A person is buried after death. But Jeetu Munda took out the skeleton to prove that his sister died for withdrawing money from the bank. At this time, the MP and the Patna MLA were walking with the Chief Minister and participating in different programs. But they did not go near him. I am also a Munda community member. "Such an incident affected me a lot", said

Maturam. "I saw on social media that the MP was celebrating his birthday. I cannot leave the house because I have chickenpox. That is why the District President has been sent on the 28th. I sought votes from the people in my community during the elections. So now I feel ashamed about this incident. The MLA or the MP did not give importance to such a sensitive incident. That is why I have resigned", he further said. On the other hand, when I asked the District President Shukdev Mahanta about this, he remained silent, saying that he did not know anything. On the other hand, the Patna MLA said that he himself went to meet Jitu Munda

and discussed with him about the problems and provided incentives.

Maturam Munda mentioned that he has been associated with the Viswa Hindu Parishad, RSS and BJP since the age of 18. He has worked as a booth agent, booth president, mandal morcha president, district morcha member and now serves as the general secretary of the district Adivasi morcha. Along with this, he has been working as the president of the primary school, the president of the middle and high English schools, and the president of the milk production committee.

Currently, he works as a member of the All India Ho Language Action Committee for the Ho community in Keonjhar district.

DFO Rayagada Conducts Extensive Field Visit to Muniguda Range, Reviews Nurseries and Plantation Works

Rayagada: Sachin Anna Saheb Ohol, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Rayagada, carried out a comprehensive field visit to the Muniguda Range, inspecting various forest development activities and ongoing plantation works.

During the visit, the DFO inspected the nurseries at Jhiliguda and Bahinibasa under the Muniguda section. He also reviewed the plantation site at Doragaon, assessing the progress and quality of plantation activities undertaken in the area.

Further, Sachin Anna Saheb Ohol visited the water body and nursery at Raghubari under the

Ambadola section, where he emphasized the importance of proper maintenance, survival rate of saplings, and sustainable water management practices.

The field visit was conducted in the presence of Prabin Dash, Deputy Range Officer, Muniguda Range, along with Forester Pramodini, Forester Majhi Mahapatra, and Forest Guards Bidyadhar Pandey, Samista Bada Jena, and Ronit Maharana, who were actively present during the inspection.

The DFO interacted with field staff and reviewed ongoing afforestation and conservation

measures, directing officials to ensure effective implementation of forestry schemes and to strengthen green cover in the region.



Jitu Munda has been neglected: Niranjana

Keonjhar: While the incident of Jitu Munda going to the bank to withdraw money with the skeleton of his dead sister has now created a stir across the country, there after BJD, a Congress fact team went to the Patna and interact with Jitu and others.

Former minister and former PCC president Niranjana Patnaik said in a press report after visiting the said area today said Jitu Munda, a tribal man from Keonjhar district, came to the Odisha Grama Bank, Patna Block, Mallipasi Branch, carrying the skeleton of his sister as a death certificate, the harassment and misbehave by the bank authorities and the complete neglect of the tribals by the administration is a sensitive incident. The injustice towards an innocent tribal is certainly a heartbreaking incident.

"The state Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, the

representative of Keonjhar district and a tribal community, is not paying attention to it. Every day, tribals, Dalits and women are not safe in the state" he added.

Today, the Congress party has visited Jeetu Munda in Dianali village of Patna block and discussed the incident. Then, after discussing with RDC Sangram Keshari Mohapatra and Keonjhar Collector Vishal Singh at the spot, he expressed his concern. Similarly, former PCC president who accompany the team Jaydev Jena demanded that the Chief Minister should investigate the incident thoroughly and immediately provide Rs 10 lakh to the deceased's family.

This included State Tribal Congress President Yashwant Singh Narayan Laguri, District Congress President Manoj Kumar Jena, former Congress MP candidate Vinod Bihari Naik among others present with the team.



Belpahar English Medium School Shines in CISCE Results

Jharsuguda : Belpahar English Medium School recorded an outstanding performance in the 2025-26 CISCE examinations, achieving a 100% pass rate in both Class 10 and Class 12.

Pranit Manna topped Class 10 with 96%, followed by Samridhi Agrawal (95.80%) and Prabhas Patel (95.60%).

In Class 12 (Science), Eashan Sahu and Vikas Sahu jointly secured the top position with 96.75%, while Arpit Kumar Singh (90.5%) and Kamya Khamari (90.25%) stood second and third respectively.

In Class 12 (Commerce), Prachi Bansal emerged as the topper with 98.5%, followed by Gunjan Jaipuria (93%) and Siya Agrawal (91%).

On this achievement, TRL Krosaki Refractories Limited Managing Director Prasant Kumar Naik, School Management Committee President Kumar Heramba Narayan Naik, Vice President Manoj Kumar Patel, and Secretary Ambarish Ghosh congratulated the students and teachers.

Shri Himanshu Jain takes charge of additional CVO at Mahanadi Coalfields Limited

Bhubaneswar/Anugul : Shri Himanshu Jain is an officer of the Indian Railway Service, currently serving as the Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) at South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL). He is also holding additional charge of CVO, Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) since 28.04.2026 and has earlier looked after the charge of CVO, Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL).

He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering from the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Raipur, securing the first position. He achieved All India Rank 13 in GATE 2007 and went on to pursue his Master's degree in Microelectronics and VLSI Design from the Indian Institute of

Technology (IIT) Bombay, where he was actively involved in research projects related to VLSI Design, Semiconductor Device Modeling, and System Design. He was selected through the prestigious UPSC Engineering Services Examination 2007, securing All India Rank 9 and joining the Indian Railway Service (IRSSE).

In the initial years of his service, he worked in the Signal and Telecommunication Department of the Bilaspur Division under South East Central Railway (SECR). During this period, he contributed to projects such as the doubling of the Pendra Road-Anuppur section, commissioning of signaling systems at Junadih and Dipika sidings, and works related to Intermediate Block

Huts, additional loop lines, multitracking, and speed upgradation. Subsequently, as the Coordinating Branch Officer in the Bilaspur Division, he led the Signal and Telecommunication Department and contributed to the execution of major projects including the Bilaspur-Jharsuguda 4th line, Anuppur-Katni 3rd line, and auto signaling initiatives.

During his distinguished career in Indian Railways, he has also served as Deputy General Manager (DGM), Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO), and Secretary to the General Manager. In these roles, he handled responsibilities related to administrative coordination, public relations, arbitration, and RTI matters.

Under the Japan



International Cooperation Agency (JICA), he received international training in High-Speed Railway Operations, gaining exposure to Japan's advanced railway technology and operational systems.

Currently, as Chief Vigilance Officer at SECL, he

has promoted transparency and accountability through the 'DigiCOAL' initiative. This initiative was presented as a model of transparent governance at the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) National Workshop.

During his service, he has

been honored with several prestigious awards, including the National Railway Award in 2016, the Director General's Medal at National Academy of Indian Railways in 2019, and the General Manager's Award in 2012 and 2022.

Trade union leader Bibhab Jena Elected State Vice President of INTUC Odisha; Also Named National Secretary at BWI-Affiliated Federation

Bhubaneswar: Bibhab Jena, a Senior trade union leader from Angul, has been elected as the State Vice President of the Odisha unit of the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC). The announcement was made following the declaration of the new office bearers of Odisha State INTUC by Dr. Ramachandra Khuntia, President of Odisha State INTUC and National Vice President, who constituted the state committee for a three-year term. Currently serving as the General Secretary of the INTUC-affiliated Nalco Shramik Congress Union (Recognised Union, NALCO), Bibhab Jena has been actively associated with trade union activities and the cause of workers' rights for many years. His elevation to the state leadership is widely seen as recognition of his sustained efforts and commitment to protecting the interests of workers, particularly in the public sector. In a parallel development, at the 28th National Convention of the Indian National Building, Construction and Forest Workers Federation held in Bengaluru, which is affiliated with Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI), Bibhab Jena was also elected as a National Secretary. The leadership has emphasised the need to address workers' concerns effectively and to work in close coordination with INTUC at both the state and national levels. It is noteworthy that Bibhab Jena is the son of Trade union leader & former MLA late Ramesh Jena, who was a prominent voice in Odisha's labour movement.



Workshop on Accelerating Low-Carbon Construction in Odisha Concludes Successfully at IIT Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar: A multi-stakeholder workshop on "Accelerating Low-Carbon Construction in Odisha: Technologies and Strategies" was successfully organized at Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar, in association with Development Alternatives.

The workshop brought together over 70 participants from key government departments, industry, academia, and international organizations, reflecting strong and growing interest in sustainable construction practices in Odisha. Participants included senior officials from the Housing & Urban Development Department (HU&DD), Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Works Department, Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB), and Rural Works Department, along with representatives from leading cement companies such as Dalmia, UltraTech, and Ramco, as well as stakeholders from L&T, ready-mix concrete companies, architects, builders, and UN-Habitat.

The workshop was graced by Shri Sourindra Routray, Additional Secretary, HU&DD,

Government of Odisha, as the Chief Guest. Dr. Surender Singh, Associate Professor at Indian Institute of Technology Madras, attended as the Guest of Honour. Shri Binaya Dash, Additional Secretary, HU&DD, emphasized the need to mainstream low-carbon construction materials like C&D waste based blocks and LC3 through strong policy push, market readiness, and convergence across departments to drive sustainable urban development in Odisha.

The sessions commenced with a brief address by Prof. Dinakar Pasla (IIT Bhubaneswar) and context-setting by Dr. Soumen Maity (Development Alternatives), followed by a presentation on baseline assessment findings by Ms. Shaloni Dash (Development Alternatives), highlighting key policy gaps and opportunities for scaling low-carbon construction materials in Odisha.

Technical sessions were delivered by Dr. Surender Singh on recyclability of construction and demolition (C&D) waste and its role in sustainable infrastructure,

and by Dr. Ashok Kumar Singha on climate finance options and LC3 material handling. These sessions provided valuable insights into technological innovations and financing mechanisms critical for transitioning to a low-carbon construction ecosystem.

Panel discussions formed a core part of the workshop, focusing on Scaling LC3 in Odisha: From Innovation to Market Transformation and Scaling C&D Waste Management in Odisha.

The discussions witnessed active participation from representatives of HU&DD, Development Alternatives, IIT Bhubaneswar, UN-Habitat, and industry stakeholders. Key deliberations centered around cost competitiveness, market adoption challenges, policy support mechanisms, and institutional pathways for scaling LC3 (Limestone Calcined Clay Cement) and strengthening C&D waste management systems in Odisha.

Notably, LC3 and C&D waste management emerged as central themes, with stakeholders emphasizing the need for:

- Stronger policy

incentives and mandates

- Market development and awareness

- Integration of circular economy principles in construction

- Strengthened implementation of the C&D Waste Management Rules, 2025

Officials from HU&DD shared ongoing initiatives and policy directions being undertaken by the department to promote low-carbon construction materials and sustainable urban development practices in the state.

The workshop served as an important platform for knowledge exchange, stakeholder consultation, and co-creation of actionable strategies. It reinforced the need for collaborative efforts between government, industry, and academia to accelerate Odisha's transition towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient, and circular construction sector.

The event concluded with a shared commitment from all stakeholders to take forward the recommendations and translate them into concrete actions on ground. The vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Umesh C Sahoo (IIT Bhubaneswar).

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The workshop brought together over 70 participants from key government departments, industry, academia, and international organizations, reflecting strong and growing interest in sustainable construction practices in Odisha. Participants included senior officials from the Housing & Urban Development Department (HU&DD), Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Works Department, Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB), and Rural Works Department, along with representatives from leading cement companies such as Dalmia, UltraTech, and Ramco, as well as stakeholders from L&T, ready-mix concrete companies, architects, builders, and UN-Habitat.

The workshop was graced by Shri Sourindra Routray,

Additional Secretary, HU&DD, Government of Odisha, as the Chief Guest. Dr. Surender Singh, Associate Professor at Indian Institute of Technology Madras, attended as the Guest of Honour. Shri Binaya Dash, Additional Secretary, HU&DD, emphasized the need to mainstream low-carbon construction materials like C&D waste based blocks and LC3 through strong policy push, market readiness, and convergence across departments to drive sustainable urban development in Odisha.

The sessions commenced with a brief address by Prof. Dinakar Pasla (IIT Bhubaneswar) and context-setting by Dr. Soumen Maity (Development Alternatives), followed by a presentation on baseline assessment findings by Ms. Shaloni Dash (Development Alternatives), highlighting key policy gaps and opportunities for scaling low-carbon construction materials in Odisha.

Technical sessions were delivered by Dr. Surender Singh on recyclability of construction and demolition (C&D) waste and its role in sustainable infrastructure, and

by Dr. Ashok Kumar Singha on climate finance options and LC3 material handling. These sessions provided valuable insights into technological innovations and financing mechanisms critical for transitioning to a low-carbon construction ecosystem.

Panel discussions formed a core part of the workshop, focusing on Scaling LC3 in Odisha: From Innovation to Market Transformation and Scaling C&D Waste Management in Odisha.

The discussions witnessed active participation from representatives of HU&DD, Development Alternatives, IIT Bhubaneswar, UN-Habitat, and industry stakeholders. Key deliberations centered around cost competitiveness, market adoption challenges, policy support mechanisms, and institutional pathways for scaling LC3 (Limestone Calcined Clay Cement) and strengthening C&D waste management systems in Odisha.

Notably, LC3 and C&D waste management emerged as central themes, with stakeholders emphasizing the

need for:

- Stronger policy incentives and mandates

- Market development and awareness

- Integration of circular economy principles in construction

- Strengthened implementation of the C&D Waste Management Rules, 2025

Officials from HU&DD shared ongoing initiatives and policy directions being undertaken by the department to promote low-carbon construction materials and sustainable urban development practices in the state.

The workshop served as an important platform for knowledge exchange, stakeholder consultation, and co-creation of actionable strategies. It reinforced the need for collaborative efforts between government, industry, and academia to accelerate Odisha's transition towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient, and circular construction sector.

The event concluded with a shared commitment from all stakeholders to take forward the recommendations and translate them into concrete actions on ground. The vote of thanks was proposed by Dr. Umesh C Sahoo (IIT Bhubaneswar).

NALCO Clocks Record Net Profit of Rs.5816 crore with Revenue from Operations at Rs. 17843 crore in FY26

Bhubaneswar : National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO), the Navratna CPSE under the Ministry of Mines, Govt of India, has once again rewritten its own record by delivering its highest-ever financial and operational performance in FY26, surpassing its previous best achieved last year.

As per the audited financial results approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held today, NALCO has achieved a historic milestone by recording its highest-ever net profit (PAT) of Rs. 5816 crore, compared to Rs. 5,325 crore in the previous financial year, registering a robust year-on-year growth of 9.22%. The Company also reported its highest-ever revenue from operations of Rs.17843 crore for FY26, surpassing last year's revenue of Rs. 16,788 crore.

In the fourth quarter of FY26, the company has

posted a net profit of Rs.1718 crore, compared to Rs. 1601 crore in the preceding quarter, marking an increase of 7%. Revenue from operations during the quarter stood at Rs. 5103 crore, as against Rs. 4731 crore in the preceding quarter of FY26.

The stellar performance was driven by higher production volumes, improved realizations, and strengthened operational efficiencies across business units, highlighting the Company's resilience in a dynamic market environment. Worth mentioning that in FY26, NALCO also achieved its best-ever operational performance since inception, setting new records across production and sales.

The Company recorded its highest-ever bauxite excavation at 77.01 lakh tonnes and bauxite transportation at 77.07 lakh tonnes. Alumina hydrate

production reached 23.00 lakh tonnes, while calcined alumina production stood at 22.75 lakh tonnes. Cast metal production registered an all-time high of 4.72 lakh tonnes, accompanied by a record net power generation of 6,953 MU and coal production of 40 lakh tonnes. On the sales front, NALCO delivered unprecedented results across key segments. Total alumina sales reached 14.46 lakh tonnes, including 1.38 lakh tonnes of domestic alumina sales. Aluminium metal sales stood at 4.74 lakh tonnes, with the highest-ever domestic metal sales of 4.61 lakh tonnes.

Higher production volumes, favourable pricing, and our ability to effectively leverage market opportunities with strong operational discipline have driven this outstanding performance. Our continued focus on plant, people, and process efficiency has enabled us to

consistently surpass targets," said Shri Brijendra Pratap Singh, CMD.

"This achievement reflects the dedication of our motivated workforce, supported by a strong emphasis on efficiency and cost optimisation, along with the guidance of the Ministry of Mines, Govt. of India and the continued cooperation of the Government of Odisha", he added.

Shri Singh also reaffirmed the Company's commitment to long-term, sustainable growth through strategic expansions and operational excellence that will provide a strong foundation for resilient growth and further strengthen NALCO's position.

The company has further announced 3rd interim dividend of Rs.2 per equity share (40% on the face value of Rs.5 each), amounting to Rs.367.33 crore for FY26.

Odia Entrepreneur led Ethos Global unveils PHANTOME, an Energy Drink for Fast Moving Generation

Bhubaneswar: Ethos Global, an leading business house led by odia entrepreneur Ankit Khandelwal, has officially unveiled FANTOME, its latest energy drink crafted to match the pace, ambition, and lifestyle of today's fast-moving generation. Designed for those who thrive on hustle and creativity, FANTOME enters the market as a bold new contender in the energy beverage segment.

From late-night study sessions and intense gaming marathons to rigorous workouts and ambitious career pursuits, FANTOME positions itself as a reliable source of sustained energy. Infused with a balanced blend of caffeine and essential B-vitamins, the drink promises to keep consumers energized, focused, and refreshed without the typical energy crash associated with conventional beverages. Its distinct flavor profile further sets it apart, aiming to appeal to a generation that values both performance and taste.

Speaking on the launch, Ankit Khandelwal, Group Chairman at FANTOME, emphasized the brand's vision. He stated that the company has gone beyond creating just another energy drink, instead developing a product that reflects a lifestyle and mindset. According

to him, FANTOME is designed for individuals who are constantly striving, creating, and pushing boundaries, offering energy that aligns with their ambitions.

The product is tailored to modern consumption patterns, offering both low sugar and zero sugar variants to cater to health-conscious consumers. With its convenient packaging and wide availability, FANTOME is set to become a staple across college campuses, fitness centres, retail outlets, cafes, and digital marketplaces.

With this launch, Ethos Global aims to tap into India's rapidly expanding energy drink market while building a brand that resonates with youth culture and evolving consumer preferences. FANTOME is now available across leading retail and online platforms, inviting consumers to experience a new standard of energy and performance.

FANTOME is a next-generation energy drink brand focused on fueling ambition, creativity, and everyday achievements. With an emphasis on innovation, quality, and lifestyle relevance, the brand seeks to empower individuals to stay energized and inspired in everything they do.

Prime Minister condoles the loss of lives in an accident in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh


Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has expressed deep grief over the loss of lives in an accident in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh.

The Prime Minister extended his heartfelt condolences to those who have lost their loved ones in this mishap and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Shri Modi announced that an ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakh each from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) would be given to the next of kin of the deceased, and the injured would be given Rs. 50,000.

"Deeply pained to hear about the loss of lives in an accident in Dhar, Madhya Pradesh. I extend my heartfelt condolences to those who have lost their loved ones in this mishap. Prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured.

An ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakh each from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of the deceased. The injured would be given Rs. 50,000: PM"



Govt of Odisha
Office of the Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Nayagarh
At/Po-Nabaghanpur, Dist-Nayagarh, Ph-06753-252049 E-mail-nayagarhrw2006@yahoo.in

CANCELLATION OF TENDER
Tender for 24(Twenty Four) nos of NHM Building projects invited by this office vide this office Tender Call Notice No.01/2026-27 dtd.07.04.2026 is hereby cancelled under administrative ground.

25001/72/2627

Executive Engineer
Rural Works Divr. Nayagarh

ard Rules



THE image from Odisha's Keonjhar district is haunting: a tribal man walking to a bank carrying his dead sister's skeletal remains to prove she had indeed passed away. His purpose was painfully simple. He wanted to withdraw around Rs 19,000 from her account for urgent family needs. That such a desperate act was required should shake the conscience of the system. For the man, repeated visits to the bank had reportedly yielded the same response: produce proof of death. In many remote tribal regions, obtaining a formal death certificate is neither simple nor quick. Deaths often occur at home, registration systems remain weak and families are left navigating unfamiliar procedures without guidance. What should have been a humane administrative verification turned into public humiliation.

The bank has clarified that only standard documents were sought and that the matter has since been resolved. But such explanations do little to address the larger moral question of why the poorest citizens must perform extraordinary acts of distress to access their own money. Odisha saw such a moment in 2016, too, when Dana Majhi walked nearly 10 km, carrying the body of his wife, Amang Dei, on his shoulders after allegedly being denied an ambulance. That image too shocked the nation, triggering outrage and official promises of reform. A decade later, the recurrence of such an episode points to a deeper failure. Systems designed for efficiency and accountability end up becoming inaccessible to those they are meant to serve.

Rules are necessary, but when applied without empathy they harden into barriers. Financial inclusion cannot be reduced to the opening of accounts. It must ensure dignity in withdrawal, access, and grievance redress. Similarly, public health services cannot end at treatment. They must extend to humane support in death.

UAE Exit

AMID the war in West Asia, the UAE has taken a drastic step with far-reaching ramifications. It has decided to part ways with OPEC+, which comprises the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and the bloc's allies such as Russia. The war, now in its third month, has massively disrupted global energy supply in terms of oil production, besides laying bare tensions among Gulf nations, including the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Abu Dhabi's ties with Riyadh - the de facto leader of OPEC+ - have worsened over the years due to the conflicts in Sudan, Somalia and Yemen. The UAE's growing closeness to the US and Israel is another key factor that has hardened the battle lines in the Gulf region.

The UAE's exit will weaken the bloc's hold on the oil market, even as it will free Abu Dhabi from the quota regime imposed by OPEC+ to balance supply and demand. As an independent oil producer, the UAE will join the ranks of nations such as the US and Brazil. However, the virtual closure of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz implies that Abu Dhabi may have to wait and watch before it steps up production and exports.

The immediate challenge for the oil cartel is to keep its flock together. US President Donald Trump is set to up the ante against the bloc, whom he has accused of "ripping off the rest of the world" by inflating oil prices. He has also declared that the US may reconsider military support to the Gulf because of OPEC oil policies. The developments have opened a window of opportunity for India, which has strong energy ties with the UAE. New Delhi must play its cards deftly to capitalise on the shifting sands in the oil arena.

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Decline of United Nations and World Peace

Suresh Chandra Sarangi

The UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, has urged an immediate end to the Iran-Israel war, with Israel being backed by the USA. He has warned that this could lead to further escalation into a wider war. Therefore, he has warned that if the war is not stopped, then there will be catastrophic consequences. His concern for world peace is ascertainable from his observations that led to a shift from a "strategy of escalation" to a "strategy of diplomatic ladder". This comes when the war in West Asia is taking an ugly turn, but his advice is unheard, and the fragility of UN system is exposed and his helplessness is a matter of fact. 80 years of this citadel of peace, having presently 193 members, is today a pale shadow of its earlier existence. Hence, the time has come to reshape the world body as the ultimate arbiter of peace.

The United Nations in the 21st century witnesses changing power dynamics, new threats to peace and security, amidst issues like refugee migration, the COVID-19 pandemic, the existential challenges of climate change and sustainability, and two wars, the Russia-Ukraine war and the Iran-Israel and America war. The United Nation took birth from the ashes of the second world war and after the failure of the League of Nations. The preamble of the UNO says that we, the peoples of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime brought untold sorrow to mankind. It also says to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large or small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of International law. Another aim is to promote social progress and better standards of life in the larger interest of freedom. It advocates living together and posits faith in the unity of strength of mankind to maintain International peace and Security.

The charter very clearly defines maintenance of international peace and security, to develop Good neighbourliness, to achieve international cooperation, to restore faith in the sovereign equality of each member, to resolve disputes without jeopardising international peace, security, cooperation, and to observe that international justice is not endangered. The nations are not to use force to establish the territorial integrity and

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is redeeming the pledge to arrest the climate disaster. Under the Paris Agreement, the Conference of the Parties is growing under the stewardship of the UN. Overall, the UN has achieved much more, fostering decolonisation and arresting global conflicts. The International Atomic Energy Agency, one of its organs, has attempted to prevent nuclear proliferation. Treaties like the chemical weapons conventions and the nuclear test ban treaties are examples of its formidable job in nuclear deterrence.

settle disputes, if any, by peaceful means. These rosy epithets have fallen into deaf ears. Just after its formation, the Cold War threatened the very basis of peace. In its journey as the supermost organizations there are many trials and tribulations and the charter and preamble, the purpose and aim has been thrown into winds, in the 21st century, and the resolutions appears like the platitudes and destroys the pristine hopes of a frustrated mankind that supports peace, while the big powers violate peace and international security with scant respect to the very purpose of forming the United Nations.

Though the UNO has played a very constructive role in shaping world politics, as a conflict resolution mechanism, it faces hurdles and becomes a silent spectator, which is what the average common man understands after the two international wars that threaten world peace. Multilateral diplomacy is a gone word. The UN's significance as a world body that could restore peace is debatable. Of course, how can a world beset with the Cold War think of collective security, when there is no unity among the great powers, when each one is ambitious, and when they crush all canons of justice to obviate their own narrow, selfish desire. The very organisation that dreamt of putting colonialism into the museum of antiquities, today harbours colonial ambitions, with flagrant violations of the principles of justice, fair play, and equity.

It would be proper to ruminate over the achievements of its inception and its lasting contribution to world peace. It goes without saying that the UN has justifiably contributed to and shaped international relations since 1945. Its peacekeeping missions that saw the liberation of 80 colonies, eradicating deadly smallpox, setting global human rights standards, and finally, standing as a fortress to protect the individual human rights are acts of faith, hope, and justice for the teeming millions.

The UN's role in resolving the Suez crisis, the Congo crisis, and the Sudan

crisis is a milestone of its deepening success. The UN's role in aiding the transition of about 60 countries into freedom, resulting in the birth of sovereign nations that are fully independent and crushing the last vestiges of colonialism, is remarkable. Many agencies like UNHCR, UNICEF, AND WORLD FOOD programme stands out as marvels of achievements of the world body, keeping in tune with the hopes and aspirations of the teeming millions. It would be really a matter of rejoicing to say that the UN's humanitarian aid provides critical support to millions of refugees, coming out of war zones or unprecedented natural disasters.

Agencies like the WHO have played a stellar role in fighting diseases. The UN remained the epitome of hope during the Covid 19 that shattered the hopes of millions, fighting for survival. Protection of human rights and human dignity is the most important action set out by the UN, which establishes human dignity. The UN has facilitated environmental action, including the Montreal Protocol for the Ozone layer and the Rio conference on the environment. It acts like a lighthouse in action, on climate, the most existential crisis that the world faces today. Overall, its peacekeeping job in Lebanon, Cyprus, etc., is like a light post supporting the vulnerable.

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is redeeming the pledge to arrest the climate disaster. Under the Paris Agreement, the Conference of the Parties is growing under the stewardship of the UN. Overall, the UN has achieved much more, fostering decolonisation and arresting global conflicts. The International Atomic Energy Agency, one of its organs, has attempted to prevent nuclear proliferation. Treaties like the chemical weapons conventions and the nuclear test ban treaties are examples of its formidable job in nuclear deterrence.

With all these positives, today, the UN is at the eye of the storm. Some even take an extreme stand in labelling the UN as a joke. When the world is

facing two wars, which may escalate into a world war, the silence of the UN is deafening. For some, the UN is a white elephant, and an empty voice sounds much. Before we delve deep into the UN functionalities, the apathy and indifference to two current wars that are ravaging the planet at present are pointers to the fact that it no longer stands as the citadel of world peace.. The very organizational structure is flawed in the creation of a Security Council, which is structurally weak. Endowing only 5 nations with the veto power and a single veto can paralyse the entire system. This is draconian, devoid of equity, and although the UN preamble speaks of equal treatment of 193 member nations, that is only in theory.

The Security Council is not truly representative as it does not represent all the continents, or the absence of the most populous countries like India. Therefore, the UN needs reforms to make it democratic, and instead of being bestowed on one member who can veto, it has to be democratically distributed by making the decision of a single member redundant, and at least, more than half have to work on behalf of the fifteen present members, which would make the Security Council valuable. And the UN is viable.

There are many failures of the UN, like the present one, the Iran-Israel war, and America war. This has wider and catastrophic ramifications, like the world economy is on a slowdown, the energy shock is unbearable, there is large-scale migration, an additional refugee problem, inflation on the rise, etc. The most interesting fact is that the UN has no teeth to stop the war, nor the power to send a peacekeeping force. It is not known when the war will end. Nobody takes the UN seriously. Is it possible without a strong UNO? Can globalization grow with such antics of the superpowers, who believe that might is right? Are we again retreating back to the Hobbesian state of nature, where kill whom you can, take what you can, and do what you can shall have a free dance.

The world needs to think without believing in procrastination. Despite the role of the UN in the evolution of international law, human rights, its anti apartheid movement, the women's rights agenda, LGBTI issues, abolition of human trafficking, and arresting genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, the UN still stands strong. A little reform giving it the power to enforce in the interest of world peace, perhaps, shall solve many of the problems of the 21st century.

The Spiritual Dimension Of Voting

Dr. Kali Prasanna Satapathy

Whenever elections come up, people are bombarded with different ideologies, debates, criticisms, promises and futuristic visions. According to political psychology, in this emotionally charged atmosphere there are many voters who get fervently swayed by the rhetoric, and so, find it hard to make a rational choice. They usually vote for a candidate who mirrors and reinforces their psychological, occupational, social, ethnic or religious identity in a hope that once selected, the candidate will help them in safeguarding and consolidating this identity. It is also observed that individuals dislike candidates who seem to challenge their identity and worldview and may go to extremes to lobby against them.

Usually, in selecting political candidates, we are guided by these selfish interests, conscious biases and unconscious prejudices. Therefore, the outcomes of such electoral choices are never exceptional. Our representatives are forever worried of antagonising their support groups and a lot of their work is directed at keeping their voters happy, often ignoring the larger collective good. All this has sabotaged our growth as a nation.

The Tamil spiritual classic, Thirukkural, clearly states that a representative who guides the country wrongly is worse than numerous external enemies. It says that an ideal minister is the one who is physically and mentally strong, morally upright, hardworking, intelligent and compassionate. He enquires deeply, takes correct and firm decisions and executes them boldly.

For the growth and betterment of our nation, we must learn to rise above our narrow identities and choose wise representatives. But many are of the opinion that there are no ideal candidates and therefore does one simply settle for the best of a bad bunch? But an ideal can manifest at a collective level when many amongst

us strongly invoke, relentlessly aspire and work hard for it.

We can make a new beginning by relinquishing our selfish interests, renouncing divisive groups and think like a nation. This movement will surely encourage candidates to think, feel and act from a higher level. In short, a transformation in the collective psyche of voters can bring a similar transformation in the collective psyche of candidates and turn them into more enlightened representatives.

Before casting your vote, read manifestos carefully, listen to speeches of various candidates attentively and scan through their past work records trying to figure out how they touch the facets of your deeper self — compassion, empathy, integration, growth, peace and righteousness. We need representatives who feel strongly for all those who are ailing, suffering and the marginalised and who are willing to walk that extra mile to support them. Peoples' representatives should transcend man-made boundaries of class, caste, region and religion and look at the nation as an indivisible whole — bringing different castes, classes and subgroups together and slowly forming a cohesive collective.

This will end meaningless conflicts and instil cooperation, harmony and peace and put the growth of our country on a fast track. While nonviolence and peace are very important, we also need representatives who are righteous and do not shy away from confronting and uprooting an evil if all deliberations have failed. The goal of spirituality is to touch and transform all facets of life and therefore, we must let it transmute our voting behaviour as well. Let us all become more evolved and inspire our representatives to transform themselves.

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Child Labor & Society

Alekha Chandra Samal

The effects of child labor can be very dangerous to an underage worker. Some of the effects include greater risks of hearing loss, a much greater need for food and clean water, and also a higher chemical absorption rate. Children who work run a greater risk of hearing loss because the loud noises of the machines can cause permanent damage to their eardrums. The children in factories aren't always given food therefore they need food and water. Children working in the brassware industry constantly inhale toxic chemical fumes from applying chemicals to the wares causing them to have a lower tolerance for chemicals.

There are several products made by children in India including bidis, textiles, fireworks, and gems. In the bidi industry children are used because of their small hands needed to roll up the small cigars. Many girls in the textile industry are treated as if they were in jail as they try to save money for their dowry or help their parent's income. These girls are promised a lump sum of an amount between 700 and 800 dollars after three years, but they are often not paid or given faulty checks. In one factory in India children stuffing powder into fireworks are well aware of the dangers that come with producing them, but if they didn't work they wouldn't be able to eat because their families are so poor. When working in the gem industry, children have to drill holes, polish, and string gems for 8 hours with a salary of 50 rupees a month.

Child labor is something akin to slavery. Many of the children are forced to work long hours every day for minimal pay, and the work they do is pretty dangerous. Some of the industries in India that need child labor force children to work for no pay. The food received by the children is less than stellar, and the conditions they work in are absolutely horrible. If I could work my will on every idiot who believes that using young children in a working environment like that, then there would be far less use of children as workers in the near future. Child labor is something that India's economy thrives on. Without the huge child labor force there then many of the things we see and use every day would be super expensive or not there all. Although there are laws against child labor in India, they are not strongly enforced because the economy relies so much on it. Child labor is wrong and immoral, but there is not likely to be a decline in it any time soon in India.

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Assembly Polls Vote Counting Day: ECI Introduces QR Code-Based Ids For Officials, Authorised Persons At Centres

New Delhi,30/4: Ahead of the counting of votes of ongoing Assembly elections on May 4, the Election Commission of India (ECI) on Thursday introduced a QR code-based Photo Identity Card module on ECINET to eliminate entry of unauthorised persons into counting centres, an official said. Starting with the counting for the general elections to the Legislative Assemblies of Assam, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Puducherry and the bye-elections in seven Assembly constituencies of five states, the system will be extended to all future general and bye-elections to Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies, the ECI said in a statement. "This initiative is in continuation of the series of more than 30 measures taken by the ECI over the past one year, which included introduction of standardised QR Code based photo ID Cards for booth level



officers," Deputy Director P. Pawan said in a statement. "A three-tier security mechanism has been prescribed for verification of identity at counting centres. At the first and second tiers, photo identity cards issued by the Returning Officer will be checked manually," it added. "At the third and innermost security cordon near the counting hall, entry would be permitted only after successful

verification through QR code scanning," it said. The new QR code-based photo identity cards will be applicable for the categories of persons authorised by the ECI to enter counting centres and halls, which include Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, counting staff, technical personnel, candidates, election agents and counting agents, among others. "District Election Officers

and Returning Officers have been directed to make all necessary arrangements for the effective implementation of this system, including deployment of trained personnel at designated checkpoints to ensure seamless and secure access control," the statement said. "All Chief Electoral Officers, District Election Officers, Returning Officers and Assistant Returning Officers have been directed to ensure strict compliance with these instructions for transparency, security and efficiency in the counting process," the statement added. "For facilitating media coverage of the counting proceedings, a media centre will be set up near the counting halls in each counting centre for the facilitation," the statement said. Entry of media persons will continue to be permitted based on authority letters issued by ECI, it added.

70 Pc People Declined To Speak': Axis My India On Skipping Bengal Exit Polls

New Delhi,30/4: Bucking the trend of releasing Exit poll numbers for Bengal Assembly elections, Axis My India – a renowned polling agency- on Thursday said that it has chosen not to release any seat or voting projections for the state because of the unprecedented silence of voters and their refusal to share inclination towards any outfit. Pradeep Gupta, the Director and MD of Axis My India, stated that his team observed an exceptionally high non-response rate from the voters, with approximately 70 per cent of the voters declining to participate in the survey, and hence, this left him with "very little choice" to present reliable and survey-based data on the electoral outcome. "The degree of hesitancy has been factored into the sampling models; a refusal rate of this magnitude exceeds historical norms and introduces a high degree of non-response bias," he further said, shedding light on the reasons behind withholding the poll estimates. The noted psephologist, in a press note, stated, "Such elevated non-response levels constrain the



reliability of vote-share estimation. In a competitive electoral context, the risk of skew arising from selective disclosure and silent voter behaviour becomes disproportionately high, thereby limiting the robustness of any derived projections." According to him, the Axis My India deputed a team of 80 surveyors to conduct surveys across the state and gather the opinions of over 13,000 respondents to gauge the public mood on the ground. He also ventured into the field to assess ground conditions and validate survey processes. After failing to garner it on the ground, largely

due to "voters' silence," the polling agency has deliberately chosen not to release the exit poll estimates for the Bengal elections, which witnessed a spirited campaign by the BJP and TMC, followed by a high-voltage contest. Out of 8, 4 exit polls have predicted the uprooting of the Mamata regime, 2 have forecast a neck-and-neck BJP vs TMC battle, while 2 others believe that TMC will get a comfortable mandate, facilitating its return to power for a record fourth term.

SC Warns Of Contempt For Defying Abortion Order For Minor

New Delhi,30/4: The Supreme Court on Thursday issued notice on a contempt petition alleging non-compliance with its earlier order permitting medical termination of a 15-year-old minor's pregnancy, warning that contempt of court charges could be framed if its directions were not implemented. A Bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan, while hearing a contempt plea filed by the minor's mother, directed the Union Health Secretary and the Director of AIIMS, New Delhi, to appear via video conferencing on May 4. "If they do not comply with our order by Monday, then let them be prepared for further directions in the contempt proceedings. We are not concerned with anything but that the order of this court is complied with. If they do not comply by Monday, we will frame the charges. We will hear them before framing charges," the Justice Nagarathna-led Bench observed. In its April 24 ruling, the apex court had set aside the Delhi High Court's refusal to permit termination of the 28-week pregnancy and held that the reproductive autonomy



of the minor girl must receive the "highest importance". "No court ought to compel any woman, and more so a minor child, to carry a pregnancy to full term against her express will," the Supreme Court had said, adding that such compulsion would disregard the decisional autonomy and inflict "grave mental, emotional and physical trauma". It had further ruled that in cases of unwanted pregnancy, Constitutional courts must weigh the welfare of the pregnant woman rather than prioritising the unborn child,

observing that "what is of relevance is the choice of the pregnant woman rather than the interest of an unborn child". The bench had recorded that the girl, herself a minor, had allegedly attempted suicide twice after learning of the pregnancy and said forcing continuation of the pregnancy would amount to a "direct affront to her right to live with dignity". It had then directed that the termination procedure be carried out at the earliest at the AIIMS with all medical safeguards in place. Subsequently, the AIIMS

challenged the ruling through a review petition, which was dismissed by the top court on Wednesday in unusually sharp terms. "It is strange that the review petitioner, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, is not inclined to obey the order of the Supreme Court and instead, is assailing the order of this Court dated 24.04.2026 in order to defeat the constitutional rights of the minor daughter of the appellant herein," the bench said while rejecting the plea. Earlier in the day, a Bench of Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi also refused to entertain AIIMS' curative petition against the abortion order. The CJI-led Bench stressed that "unwanted pregnancy cannot be thrust on a person", adding: "Minor child cannot be forced to bear a pregnancy." It further urged the Medical Termination of Pregnancy law to remove gestational restrictions, remarking: "Please amend your law... that when there is pregnancy due to rape etc., the time limitation will not be there. The law needs to be organic and in sync with evolving time."

President Murmu Greets Citizens On Eve Of Buddha Purnima

New Delhi,30/4: President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday greeted citizens on the eve of Buddha Purnima, describing Lord Buddha's teachings as the answer to the challenges faced by the world today. In a message, the President said, "On this auspicious occasion, let us resolve to imbibe his ideals and contribute to building a peaceful, inclusive and just society." "On the auspicious occasion of Buddha Purnima, I extend my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all citizens and to the followers of Bhagwan Buddha across the world," she added. "This sacred day marks the epoch-making advent on the earth, enlightenment and Mahaparinirvana. His eternal messages of compassion, non-violence, peace and knowledge will continue to guide the entire humanity," President Murmu said. "In today's world which is

facing numerous challenges, the teachings of Bhagwan Buddha inspire us to tread on the path of peace, tolerance and mutual harmony," she added. The President is currently on a five-day summer sojourn to her official residence at Mashobra in Shimla, where she took a round of various areas in Rashtrapati Niwas and reviewed the amenities for visitors on Thursday. She also planted a Khumani sapling in the lawn of the official residence, a statement said. During her visit to Himachal Pradesh, which started on April 27, President Murmu attended a banquet hosted by the Himachal Pradesh Governor Kavinder Gupta at Lok Bhavan in Shimla. The Rashtrapati Niwas at Mashobra opened its doors to the public in April 2023. At present, the authorities provide a free bus service to tourists to the President's summer

retreat. The Shimla to Mashobra service was started to celebrate President Murmu's two years in office on July 25, 2024. The complimentary bus service of the Himachal Road Transport Corporation operates from the lift parking at Mall Road in Shimla on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. A guide at the presidential residence said that visitors can explore the 174-year-old Rashtrapati Niwas, nature trails and other parts of the building, including its lawns and parks. Constructed in 1850 by the King of Koti in European architectural style, the Rashtrapati Niwas, previously known as the Retreat Building, is one of four existing presidential residences in India. The other three are Rashtrapati Ashiana, a Presidential retreat in Dehradun; Rashtrapati Nilayam in Telangana; and Rashtrapati Bhavan, the official residence of the President, in New Delhi.

India-New Zealand FTA To Help Ayush Join Global Healthcare Mainstream

New Delhi,30/4: Ayush Ministry said on Thursday that the conclusion of the India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) marks a significant milestone in India's global outreach in traditional medicine and holistic healthcare, placing Ayush systems at the centre of a new framework for international cooperation. The pact not only expands India's trade footprint but also opens unprecedented opportunities for global recognition, mobility, and institutional collaboration for India's traditional systems of medicine. For the first time, New Zealand has agreed to a dedicated 'Health and Traditional Medicine Annex' under an FTA with India, creating an enabling environment for trade in Ayurveda, yoga, and other traditional medicine services. This landmark provision formally acknowledges India's rich wellness heritage and positions Ayush as a contemporary, globally relevant healthcare solution, alongside indigenous Maori health practices. According to the ministry, the agreement facilitates market access across a wide range of service sectors, creating new opportunities for Indian Ayush practitioners,



wellness institutions and service providers to engage with the New Zealand market. By promoting cooperation in Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy, the FTA strengthens India's leadership in preventive, promotive and integrative healthcare models. "The framework is expected to boost medical value travel, foster institutional partnerships, encourage research collaboration and support the international expansion of India's wellness ecosystem," said the statement. Notably, a dedicated visa quota will enable Ayush practitioners and Yoga

instructors, along with other Indian cultural and knowledge professionals, to work in New Zealand for extended durations. The FTA also institutionalises technical cooperation in Ayush and traditional knowledge systems, laying the foundation for long-term collaboration in education, training, standards development and wellness services. By integrating traditional medicine into a modern trade framework, the Agreement reflects a shared commitment to sustainable health practices and people-centric development. The FTA represents a defining step in taking Ayush from national heritage to global healthcare mainstream.

'JeM Hit Again': Top Commander Salman Dead As Mysterious Killings Mount

New Delhi,30/4: In yet another blow to Jaish-e-Mohammad, which is already facing immense losses, its top commander, Maulana Salman, died after being hit by an unidentified vehicle at Pakistan's Bahawalpur on Wednesday. Salman was a close aide of Jaish-e-Mohammad chief, Masood Azhar and was instrumental in numerous attacks that were carried out on Indian soil. Some of the major attacks that he was involved in included the 2001 Parliament attack and the 2019 Pulwama attack that targeted personnel of the CRPF. His funeral was held at the Markaz Subhanallah in Bahawalpur at 4 p.m. on Wednesday itself. The funeral was attended by hundreds of people, including some officials of the ISI. Salman was one of the many who were injured in the bombing at the Jaish's Bahawalpur headquarters when the Indian armed forces carried out Operation Sindoor. While Salman may have survived, many top leaders of the terror outfit and the closest family members of Masood Azhar were eliminated. This had led to Masood Azhar releasing an official statement mourning the death of his loved ones. This is another incident in which top commanders or operatives of the Jaish and Lashkar-e-Taiba have been killed under mysterious circumstances. Just two days before Salman's death, Sheikh Yusuf Afridi, a top cadre of the Lashkar, was assassinated by unidentified persons at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). He was a top commander and

handled the Lashkar's operations in KP. Last year, the Jaish lost its key strategist, Maulana Abdul Aziz Azar, under mysterious circumstances. Although the official version stated that he died of a heart attack, there is still a mystery surrounding his death. On April 16 this year, Maulana Amir Hamza, one of the founding members of the Lashkar, was shot at by unidentified gunmen in Pakistan. He was targeted when he was inside his vehicle. Following the shooting, he was rushed to the hospital and reports state that he survived the attack. In March last year, Abu Natal, a top terrorist of the Lashkar, was also shot at by unidentified gunmen in the Jhelum district of Pakistan's Punjab. An official said that this spate of mysterious deaths has dealt a severe blow to both the Jaish and the Lashkar. Both have been in revival mode since Operation Sindoor, and these deaths have only been a spoke in the wheel for them. In both outfits, there is a leadership crisis, with many questioning the top rung. There is confirmed news that Masood Azhar's health is in a very poor condition. Under the guidance of the ISI, the Jaish has been looking to put up a new leadership with very few people at the helm. Moreover, there is also an unofficial ban on the Pakistani media from reporting anything relating to Azhar. The case with the Lashkar is similar. Many are questioning its boss, Hafiz Saeed, and there is a growing clamour for new leadership, preferably a younger one.

JP Nadda Highlights Shift To Holistic Healthcare Under PM Modi

New Delhi,30/4: Highlighting the transformative shift to holistic healthcare under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare J.P. Nadda on Thursday inaugurated a national summit showcasing path-breaking innovations and best practices in the health sector. Speaking at the 10th National Summit on Innovation and Inclusivity: Best Practices Shaping India's Health Future in Chandigarh, J.P. Nadda reflected on India's healthcare transformation over the past decade. He said that under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country has made significant strides towards the vision of Viksit Bharat. A key milestone in this journey has been the shift from a predominantly curative

approach to a comprehensive and holistic healthcare framework, he said. He highlighted that while the earlier National Health Policy of 2002 focused largely on curative care, the National Health Policy 2017 brought a paradigm shift by incorporating preventive, promotive, curative, and palliative aspects of healthcare, thereby ensuring a more inclusive and people-centric system. The Minister underscored the critical role of over 1.85 lakh Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, which now serve as the first point of contact for nearly 1.5 billion people. These centres have significantly strengthened preventive healthcare, including large-scale screening for non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, and cancers (oral,

breast, and cervical) for individuals above 30 years of age. The Union Health Minister stated that institutional deliveries have increased from 79 per cent to 89 per cent, reflecting improved access to maternal healthcare services. Maternal Mortality Ratio has seen a significant decline, with sustained progress over the years. Citing recent global estimates, the Minister noted that India has achieved a 79 per cent decline in under-five mortality and a 73 per cent decline in infant mortality. He highlighted India's progress in disease control, stating that despite having nearly one-sixth of the world's population, India accounts for only a small fraction of the global malaria burden.

US Naval Blockade Doomed To Failure: Iran President Pezeshkian

Tehran,30/4: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Thursday that any US attempt to impose a naval blockade and maritime restrictions against Iran is "doomed to failure."

Pezeshkian made the remarks in a statement to mark Persian Gulf National Day, which falls on April 30. He said the "enemies" have changed their approach and shifted their pressure to the economic and maritime arenas, using a naval blockade on the Strait of Hormuz and restrictions on maritime trade as a new tool against the Iranian government and people, according to the statement published on his office's website. He stressed that the Gulf "is not an arena for imposing unilateral foreign wills, but rather part of the international interactions' system, and its security makes sense only in the light of collective cooperation and mutual respect for the sovereignty of the coastal countries," reported Xinhua news agency. Pezeshkian emphasised that "any attempt to impose a blockade and maritime restrictions on the waterway is



contrary to international law and a threat to the regional nations' interests and global peace and stability, and is doomed to failure." Iran has repeatedly stressed that foreign presence and interventions only serve as a cause of escalating tensions and disrupt

lasting peace in the region, said the Iranian President. He noted that during the 40-day US-Israeli war against Iran, US military bases in West Asia failed to ensure the host countries' security and allowed Iran to attack the origin of strikes against its territory as legitimate

targets. Pezeshkian said that Iran, as "the guardian of security" in the Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, continues to adhere to the principles of freedom of navigation and maritime safety, except for hostile countries, adding that Iran believes the

implementation of these principles must be accompanied by respect for the Iranian nation and sovereignty. He stressed that the responsibility for any insecurity in the waterway lies with the United States and Israel. The United States imposed its blockade on the Strait of Hormuz after post-ceasefire negotiations with Iran in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, on April 11 and 12 failed to lead to an agreement. The ceasefire between Iran, the United States and Israel took effect on April 8 following 40 days of fighting, which started on February 28 when the United States and Israel launched joint attacks on Tehran and other Iranian cities, killing Iran's then-Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, senior commanders, and civilians. Iran responded with waves of missile and drone strikes targeting Israel and US assets in the Middle East, and tightened its grip on the Strait of Hormuz, barring passage to vessels belonging to or affiliated with Israel and the United States.

Putin To Decide Ceasefire Dates For Victory Day: Kremlin

Moscow: Russia's President Vladimir Putin is going to decide the dates and timings of the ceasefire with Ukraine for the 'Victory Day' celebrated on May 9, the Kremlin spokesman stated on Thursday. Victory Day is celebrated annually on May 9, which marks the surrender of Nazi Germany in 1945, commemorating the Soviet victory. Putin announced his readiness to declare a ceasefire for the Victory Day celebrations during a phone call with US President Donald Trump on Wednesday. Trump supported the initiative, Russia's Tass news agency reported. "As for the Kyiv regime, we have not yet heard a reaction to this," said Presidential spokesperson Dimitry Peskov while addressing media in Moscow on Thursday. "Of course, one telephone conversation can hardly improve the situation in the world, because, unfortunately, the concentration of conflicts is so great and the consequences of a whole series of conflicts for the international situation, for the

international economy, are so serious that, of course, it is very difficult to stop these trends in an instant," Peskov said regarding the conversation between Putin and Trump. During the phone call, Trump and Putin agreed to continue mediation in resolving the conflict, but there are no dates set for new negotiations or visits by authorised representatives, he added. According to the report, Putin did not invite Trump to the Victory Day parade on May 9. The press secretary also stated that Russia considers the ownership of the Donbas and Novorossiia regions, while Kyiv currently holds a different view. Peskov also commented on the current situation in Mali while referring to a statement made by a representative of the Azawad Liberation Front that the Tuareg rebels' goal is to force Russia to leave Mali. "Russia will continue, including in Mali, the fight against extremism, terrorism, and other negative manifestations," said Peskov.

Large-Scale Deployment Gives Adani Group Global Edge In Clean Energy Transition: Jeffrey Sachs

New Delhi 30/4: Renowned American economist Jeffrey Sachs has praised the clean energy push of the Adani Group—highlighting how large-scale deployment can create a decisive advantage in the global transition to green technologies. At the Resilient Futures Summit 2026, Sachs said that one of the key lessons from the rollout of new technologies is the power of scale, noting that companies like Adani Group are able to drive down costs and build expertise through rapid and extensive deployment. "Such an approach not only helps create national champions but can also position firms as global leaders in emerging sectors like renewable energy," he added. However, he cautioned that while individual players and countries like India are making

progress, the global response to climate change remains inadequate. Sachs pointed out that despite over three decades of discussions on decarbonisation, most countries still lack a clear and actionable strategy. He warned that the world has already reached around 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming, with the pace of temperature rise accelerating, potentially pushing global temperatures close to 1.8-1.9 degrees Celsius by the mid-2030s. Referring to India's long-term vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, Sachs said the country has an advantage in thinking ahead but must translate that vision into concrete planning across sectors such as energy, education, infrastructure, and transport. He emphasised the need to prepare for

a future where the world could be at or above two degrees Celsius of warming, which would pose significant challenges but can still be managed with the right policies. He also underscored the importance of institutions like NITI Aayog as central planning hubs that can guide long-term strategy through data, technology insights, and policy coordination. "While large corporations like Adani will play a crucial role in driving investments and innovation, a strong national framework is essential to align efforts," Sachs said. Looking ahead, Sachs expressed confidence in India's global rise, projecting that the country could become the world's second-largest economy by 2047 and eventually the largest in the decades beyond.

Germany Committed To Ending Strait Of Hormuz Blockade: Merz

Berlin,30/4: German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said on Thursday that Germany is committed to bringing an end to Iran's blockade of the Strait of Hormuz and stands ready to engage militarily to ensure the freedom of navigation, if necessary conditions are met. Speaking during a visit to the German Army Bundeswehr in the northern city of Munster, Merz warned that a prolonged blockade of the Strait of Hormuz would cause "massive economic damage for us all." "The work carried out by the Bundeswehr in Munster is not only impressive, but also represents an important and indispensable contribution to a strong, united NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation)," said Merz,



Xinhua news agency reported. US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday on social media that the United States is studying and reviewing a possible reduction of troops in Germany. More than 36,000 US troops are known to be stationed in Germany. In recent

days, Trump and Merz lashed out at each other over the Iran war. Merz criticised the United States for its "planless" military engagement in Iran, saying that the United States "is being humiliated by the Iranian leadership." In response, Trump wrote on social

media that Merz "doesn't know what he's talking about" and is indifferent to Iran's nuclear ambitions. In the midst of the war against the Islamic Republic, Trump repeatedly criticised NATO members for not acceding to his call for naval assistance to help secure the crucial Strait of Hormuz that Iran has effectively blocked with retaliatory missile and drone strikes. Trump called NATO "cowards", saying the US will "remember" its members' reluctance to support the US military campaign against Iran. He has also rebuked South Korea for being "not helpful" to the US, noting that America has put its troops "in harm's way" in the Asian country "right next to" North Korea's "nuclear force."

As Terror Networks Converge Across West Asia, India Emerges As A Trusted Balancer

New Delhi: An instability persists across the Middle East from Gaza to the Gulf, regional voices are increasingly warning that the real threat is no longer confined to state rivalries, but lies in the growing convergence of terror networks and ideological movements. Amidst this, India is beginning to be seen as a potential balancer. In an interaction titled "Crisis in the Middle East: Are We Entering a New Regional Order?",

Egyptian parliamentarian Mohamed M Farid told think-tank Usanas Foundation CEO, Dr Abhinav Pandya, that India's role as a constructive partner will be welcomed in the region. He pointed to the scope of deeper strategic and economic cooperation as the region recalibrates. The remarks come at a time when governments across West Asia are grappling with a complex security landscape where militant groups, ideological organisations, and geopolitical interests are increasingly intertwined. While underscoring that the nature of terrorism has changed, Farid said that these groups are not just a regional threat—they are a global threat. He said that these networks must be weakened, but also said that this should be tackled through negotiations. In the current situation, many countries have been raising concerns about the Muslim Brotherhood. The



organisation has been operating through various layers, which also include media outreach, recruitment and a vast network of charities and NGOs. The experts say that it is such a situation that is ongoing in the Middle East that the Muslim Brotherhood thrives on, especially when it comes to radicalisation and recruitment. Farid says that the organisation thrives on victimhood and uses any vacuum to recruit, especially among the youth. He also pointed to the emergence of parallel networks that operate beyond Egypt, including formation-linked elements that fled the country and continue to run propaganda and organisational activities abroad. These developments have led to fatigue among the population

who are caught in never-ending cycles of conflict. For instance, in Lebanon, there is frustration among the people with Hezbollah for repeatedly dragging the country into wars, he said. The same is the case in Gaza, where the people are tired of Hamas, and younger generations have started to demonstrate against the outfit. On Iran, Farid said that the regime is influenced by hardline elements, especially the Islamic Revolutionary Guards (IRGC). Their support for proxy actors continues to pose a challenge. He, however, noted that engagement remains essential. Any resolution must address enriched uranium, nuclear capabilities, ballistic missiles, freedom of navigation, and the

restraint of proxies, he said. Since the war in Iran began, India has advocated for peace. It has welcomed ceasefire efforts and hoped for lasting peace in West Asia. However, India has expressed concern over the disruption of trade through the Strait of Hormuz and emphasised the need for free navigation and securing the flow of energy. India has maintained diplomatic and balanced relations with all key parties, including the US, Israel and Iran. Experts say that despite all that has been going on, India has positioned itself as a trusted, neutral actor capable of facilitating dialogue. For India, this evolving landscape presents a clear opportunity, the experts say.

Putin Calls For Building Nuclear-Weapon-Free World

United Nations: Russia, as a responsible party to and one of the depositaries of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), strictly abides by the letter and spirit of the treaty, Russian President Vladimir Putin said in an address to the 11th NPT Review Conference. "We believe that amid the current complex international situation, additional multilateral efforts are required to create conditions for further progress on the path to building a nuclear-weapon-free world, while strictly upholding the principle of not compromising the security of any party," Putin said in a statement read out by Andrey Ivanovich Belousov, ambassador-at-large of the Russian Foreign Ministry, at the conference at the UN headquarters in New York on Wednesday (local time). Russia, as a leader in nuclear energy, stands ready to develop cooperation in this field with interested NPT parties, the statement noted. Moscow holds that countries conscientiously fulfilling their NPT obligations are entitled to peaceful nuclear energy access without undue restrictions, reports Xinhua, quoting the Russian President's statement. Putin stressed that greater efforts are needed to create conditions for advancing toward a world free of nuclear weapons amid a challenging global security environment. Russia expects the conference to be productive and contribute to the global nuclear non-proliferation

regime, the statement added. The 11th NPT Review Conference started on Monday and will last until May 22. Earlier, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Monday called for renewed efforts to "bring life" into the Treaty on the NPT. Across the decades, the international community developed a web of instruments to prevent the use, proliferation and testing of nuclear weapons, and achieve their



total elimination, with the NPT as the bedrock of those efforts, Guterres said at the 11th Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. Warning that the treaty has been eroding, commitments remain unfulfilled, trust and credibility are wearing thin, and the drivers of proliferation are accelerating, Guterres said: "This conference provides a timely opportunity to stand together and safeguard humanity from the grave threat of nuclear annihilation." Noting that "a state of collective amnesia has taken hold" and "nuclear sabres rattle once more," the UN chief said that for the first time in decades, the number of nuclear warheads is "on the rise" and

nuclear testing is "back on the table." "We need to breathe life into the treaty once more," he stressed, urging countries to keep their promises under the NPT. "It's time to re-commit to disarmament and non-proliferation as the only true path to peace, by reinforcing the norm against nuclear testing, by strengthening the safeguards system and the IAEA's (International Atomic Energy Agency) oversight, and by agreeing (on) the measures needed to prevent nuclear war," he said. The UN chief underlined that the nuclear threat is compounded by new dangers from rapidly evolving technologies such as artificial intelligence and quantum computing, noting that the treaty must grapple with the nexus between nuclear weapons and new technologies. "With your support and engagement, the treaty can remain an active and strong foundation for a world free of nuclear weapons in our fast-moving age," said the secretary-general. "So before it's too late: let's break the collective amnesia around nuclear weapons. Let's renew faith in what we can achieve when we stand as one. Let's act with urgency to lift this cloud hanging over humanity," he said.

Vedanta Delivers Record FY26 Performance: Q4 Profit jumps 89% YoY to 9,352 crore & 22% to 25,096 crore for the full year

BHUBANESWAR, 30/4(DMS): Vedanta Limited (BSE: 500295 & NSE: VEDL) today announced its Unaudited Consolidated Results for the fourth quarter and full year ended 31st March 2026, delivering its strongest financial performance to date. Vedanta achieved its highest-ever quarterly revenue of ₹51,524 crore, up 29% YoY, while annual revenue rose to ₹1,74,075 crore, up 15% YoY. EBITDA for the quarter surged to a record ₹18,447 crore, up 59% YoY, with margins expanding sharply by 915 bps YoY to 44%. For FY26, EBITDA stood at ₹55,976 crore, up 29% YoY, with margins at ~39%. The company reported a record-breaking Profit After Tax of ₹9,352 crore in Q4 FY26, up 89% YoY. For the full year, Profit After Tax stood at an all-time high of ₹25,096 crore, reflecting a 22% YoY increase. This performance was driven by robust operational delivery and cost efficiencies. The



company's balance sheet strengthened significantly, with Net Debt to EBITDA improving to 0.95x, its best level in the last 14 quarters, compared to 1.22x a year ago. Credit ratings for Vedanta Limited were reaffirmed

at AA by both CRISIL & ICRA, while the rating for Vedanta resources, the parent company, was upgraded to BB- by Fitch Ratings. Vedanta generated strong free cash flows, with pre-capex free cash flow of ₹11,930 crore in

Q4 (up 53% YoY) and ₹26,013 crore for FY26, supporting higher liquidity and capital allocation flexibility. Cash and cash equivalents increased 38% YoY to ₹28,485 crore. The Return on Capital Employed (ROCE)

improved to ~32%, up 539 bps YoY, reflecting enhanced capital efficiency. The company delivered strong operational performance across its key businesses in FY26, underpinned by record production and improved efficiencies. The aluminium business achieved its highest-ever annual production at 2,456 kt (up 1% YoY), while alumina output surged 48% YoY to a record 2,916 kt. Zinc India recorded best-ever mined metal production of 1,114 kt (up 2% YoY) and refined metal production of 851 kt (up 3% YoY), while Zinc International production rose 27% YoY to 225 kt. Ferro chrome production reached a record 101 kt (up 21% YoY), iron ore - pig iron output stood at 895 kt (up 10% YoY), and copper cathode production increased to a record 170 kt (up 15% YoY). The power business reported annual sales of 18,571 MU (up 14% YoY).

East Coast Railway Augments Coaches in Multiple Trains to Manage Summer Rush

Bhubaneswar, 30/4(DMS): East Coast Railway has undertaken temporary augmentation of additional coaches in several trains originating from Bhubaneswar and Sambalpur to cater to the increased passenger demand during the summer season. As part of this initiative, KSR Bengaluru- Prashanti Express (Train No. 18463) will be augmented with one additional 3rd AC coach from 1st to 31st May 2026. Similarly, Bengaluru - Bhubaneswar Prashanti Express (Train No. 18464) will be added one additional 3rd AC coach from 2nd May to 1st June 2026. The Odisha Sampark Kranti Express (Train No. 12819) from Bhubaneswar to Anand Vihar Terminal will have one extra 3rd AC coach from 3rd May to 31st May 2026. The Odisha Sampark Kranti Express (Train No. 12820) Anand Vihar Terminal - Bhubaneswar will have one extra 3rd AC coach from 5th May to 2nd June 2026. Similarly, the Bhubaneswar - Tirupati Superfast Express (Train No. 22879) will be augmented with one additional 3rd AC coach from 2nd May to 30th May 2026. Tirupati- Bhubaneswar Superfast Express (Train No. 22880) will be augmented with one additional 3rd AC coach from 3rd May to 31st May 2026. The Sambalpur-



Rayagada-Sambalpur Intercity Express (Train No. 18301/18302) will run with one additional AC Chair Car coach from 1st May to 31st May 2026. Further, the Mahima Gosain Express (Train No. 20832) Sambalpur - Shalimar will run with one Sleeper coach from 3rd May to 31st May 2026. Shalimar - Sambalpur (Train No. 20831) will run with one additional Sleeper coach during 4th May to 1st June 2026. While the Bhubaneswar-Purnakatak Intercity Superfast Express (Train No. 12893) will have two additional General coaches from 1st May to 31st May 2026. Purnakatak - Bhubaneswar Intercity Superfast Express (Train No. 12894) will have two additional General coaches from 2nd May to 1st June 2026. In addition, the Hirakhand Express (Train No. 18447) running from Bhubaneswar to Jagdalpur will

be augmented with one 3rd AC coach from 1st May to 12th May 2026 and from 14th May to 31st May 2026. Similarly, Jagdalpur- Bhubaneswar Hirakhand express (Train No. 18448) will run with one 3rd AC coach from 2nd May to 13th May 2026 and from 15th May to 1st June 2026. Puri-Gunupur Express (Train No. 18417) to Express will be augmented with one 2nd class AC- chair Car from 1st May to 31st May 2026. Similarly, Gunupur- Puri express (Train No. 18418) will run with one additional 2nd class AC- chair Car from 2nd May to 1st June 2026 respectively. This temporary augmentation is expected to enhance accommodation capacity and improve the chances of confirmation for waitlisted passengers during the peak summer travel period.

Vedanta Aluminium launches VedSwad, expanding entrepreneurial avenues for rural women in Jharsuguda

Jharsuguda, 30/4(DMS): Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, has launched VedSwad, a new snack production initiative under the ambit of its Subhalaxmi Udyogini community development project. Marked by the inauguration of a new food production unit at Kurebaga in Jharsuguda, the initiative aims to further expand the range of sustainable livelihood opportunities available to women in the region. A product rooted in authentic, traditional snacks that celebrate the culinary heritage of Odisha, VedSwad presently offers more than ten varieties of snack items. They are prepared by women entrepreneurs from the Maa Baishnabi Self Help Group, which is part of Vedanta's Subhalaxmi Cooperative, Western Odisha's largest self-help group initiative with over 5000 women members. The company's comprehensive support for the initiative includes providing the unit with facility upgrades and



modern machinery. These efforts aim to strengthen the unit's production capacity, improve process efficiency, and enhance the overall quality of the products, enabling the women entrepreneurs to scale their nascent enterprise with confidence. The initiative also benefits from the strong legacy and network of Subhalaxmi Udyogini,

among Vedanta Aluminium's key women empowerment programs that was established in 2008. Operating across more than 100 villages in Jharsuguda, it provides mentorship, training, and financial support to help women build sustainable enterprises and drive development within their communities, while empowering more than 5,000 women through

440 self-help groups. Speaking on the initiative, C Chandru, CEO, Vedanta Jharsuguda, said, "We are focused on creating long-term livelihood models that are owned and led by communities. Subhalaxmi Udyogini has consistently demonstrated that with the right support, women can build enterprises that are both sustainable and market-

ready. The new VedSwad initiative is another step in this direction, where traditional skills are matched with wider quality controls and market access." Suniti Patel, a member of the Maa Baishnabi Self Help Group, said, "The VedSwad initiative helps us move from small-scale efforts to running a structured unit with better tools and marketing opportunities. Our products now reach more people, and our income has become more stable." The VedSwad Food Unit in Kurebaga reflects Vedanta Aluminium's approach to transformative community development, where impact is built through consistency, and local ownership. By strengthening grassroots entrepreneurship, the company continues to build improve socio-economic resilience and create added pathways for rural women to lead community progress.

IDBI Bank Limited - Financial Results for FY 2025-26



Bhubaneswar, 30/4(DMS): IDBI Bank today announced its results for FY 2025-26. The Net Profit stood at ₹1,935 crore for Q3 FY26. The operating profit stood at ₹1,943 crore for Q4 FY 26. NIM was recorded at 4.15%, YoY growth of 15 bps. CRAR was recorded at 26.65% with YoY growth of 160 bps. Return on

Assets (ROA) stood at 2.27%, YoY growth of 29 bps. Net NPA ratio remained at 0.15% as on March 31, 2026. Gross NPA ratio improved to 2.32% as on March 31, 2026 as against 2.98% as on March 31, 2025. PCR stood at 99.39% as on March 31, 2026, consistently above 99% since September 2023.

Odisha Society of UK Celebrates Seventh Utkal Dibas

London, 30/4(DMS): Odisha Society of United Kingdom (OSUK) celebrated Seventh edition of Utkal Dibas here with pomp, splendour and much fanfare recently. The Celebration venue Ilford County High School's Auditorium at Fremantle Road in London was aesthetically and elegantly decked up befitting to the auspicious occasion. The entire ambience was agog with festive fervour. The Landmark Event was a salutation to the essence, excellence and ebullience of Odisha and Odias. The Mega Ceremony was designed to showcase the rich art, vibrant culture, lofty tradition, amazing heritage, linguistic pride and humanitarian values of Odisha. Hundreds of members of OSUK, prominent non resident Odias and leading lights of Odia Diaspora gathered here from different corners of UK and Europe to witness the Gala Jamboree. Delivering Welcome



address Senior Member of the Core Group, Sumant Mansingh declared that Utkal Dibas symbolizes spectacular display of Unity, emotional bonding and common pride of Odia fraternity in UK. Reciting the poem: "Matrubhumi Matrubhava Remamata ja hrude janami nahin... Taku jadi jnani ganare ganiba agyani rahibe kahin..." "Shri Mansingh invoked the emotional sensitisation of Odia identity. The Celebration commenced with the lighting of ceremonial lamp by the Directors of OSUK, Dr Bibhuti Bhusan Pattanayak, Partha Sarathi Panda, Pravat Mishra, Dipti Mohanty and Srikanta Kumar

Padhi, symbolising salutation to enlightenment, unity and advancement of the community. Soul soothing rendition of State's anthem "Bande Utkala Janani," by lady members of OSUK was a listeners delight. The special attraction of the Utkal Dibas was the presentation of a colourful cultural extravaganza by established and upcoming artistes. Odissi dance recital by superbly talented children and group presentations by Odia and Bengali performers were quite impressive. The audiences were captivated throughout the evening by a sumptuous blend of music, dance and creative articulations. The

Major Highlight of the Supersonic Show was the mesmerising melody performed by Ollywood Star Singer Asit Tripathy. Odia superstar Shailendra Samantray enthralled the crowd with his scintillating singing and electrifying dancing synthesising Sambalpuri, Odia and Hindi musical numbers. The Celebration also featured food stalls of Odisha and other Indian States offering a variety of mouthwatering recipes. Guests thoroughly enjoyed the authentic Odia cuisine alongside other regional delicacies served by Chilika Restaurant. The Ceremony was supported by sponsors like ICICI bank UK, Waterland Ltd, SBI UK, Paymetryx, Amadeus, and Freedom Circle. On behalf of the Organising Team Dr Prakash Dey and Pravat Mishra thanked all the attendees, volunteers, sponsors and performers for their contributions in making Utkal Divas a memorable and milestone Celebration.

The Puri District Level Taekwondo Championship 2026 concluded

Puri 30/4(DMS): The 19th Kyorugi (sparring) and 11th Poomsae (forms) championship saw participation from more than 253 boys and girls representing 11 academies across the district. Competitions were held in both categories, showcasing the athletes' skill, discipline, and determination. Among all the teams, the Royal Bengal Tiger Taekwondo Academy delivered an outstanding performance, winning a total of 25 medals across both Kyorugi and Poomsae events.

Cleantech Startup NovorbisItus Raises 13.35 Crore Seed Round Led by Rainmatter

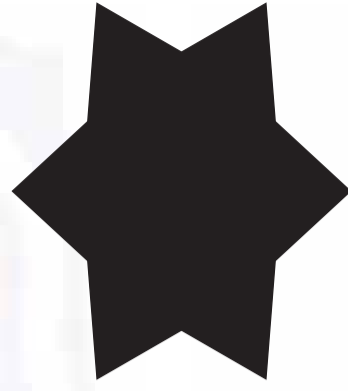
Bhubaneswar 30/4(DMS): NovorbisItus Pvt. Ltd., a Pune-based cleantech startup, has raised ₹13.35 crore in a seed funding round led by Rainmatter, the investment initiative of Zerodha. The company develops emission control and air purification systems for decentralised pollution sources such as diesel generator (DG) sets and crematoriums, including retrofit solutions for existing infrastructure. The round also saw participation from Rockstud Capital, an early-stage fund focused on



manufacturing-led companies. The transaction was advised by Indorient Financial Services Ltd. NovorbisItus was founded by Harsh Neekhra, Gagan Tripathi and Divyank Gupta. The company's first product was a filter-less Retrofit Emission Control Device (RECD) that can be retrofitted to existing DG sets, enabling companies to meet emission norms without requiring equipment replacement. This was followed by a product for crematoriums called Crematorium Air Purification System (CAPS). Harsh, CEO, said, "We started NovorbisItus as second year college students in Indore with an idealistic view to fix air pollution at its source and leave clean air for future generations. Over the past few years, we have translated that vision into deployable solutions that are now being used across industrial and commercial settings in India. With this investment, we aim to scale our technology, expand our product portfolio, and accelerate adoption across sectors where emission control has traditionally been limited." Abhinav Negi, Investment Lead - Climate and Deep-tech, Rainmatter, said, "At Rainmatter, we look for problems that are urgent, undeniable, and underserved. DG set emissions and crematorium pollution tick all three. NovorbisItus is solving both with technology built for Indian conditions, where global solutions have simply not worked. What gives us confidence is not just the product but the team behind it. Harsh Neekhra, Gagan Tripathi, and Divyank Gupta started this in college and have stayed the course through everything that hardware throws at you. That kind of persistence, combined with real deployments and a compliance tailwind that only gets stronger, is why we are backing them."

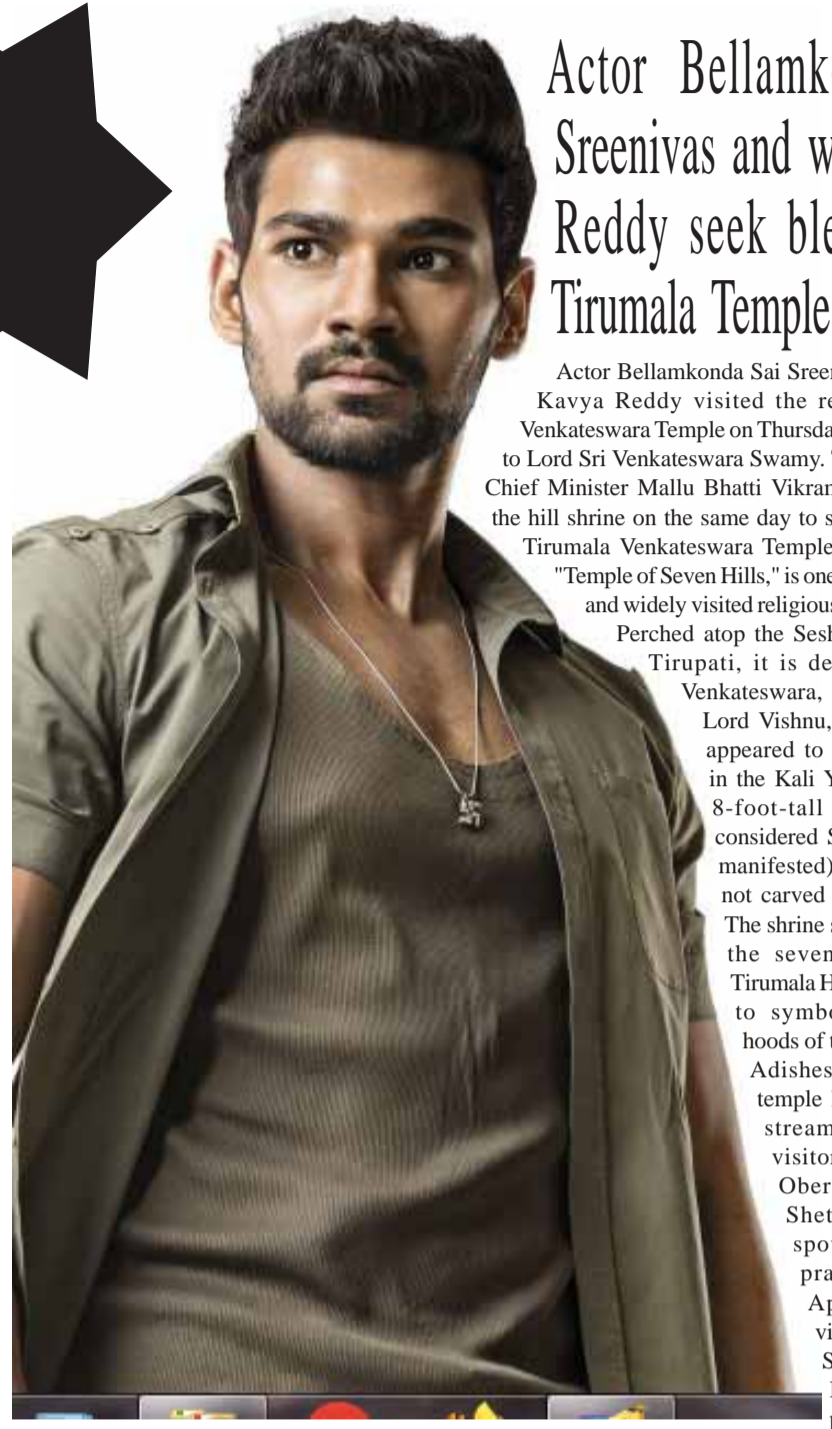
"Always in our hearts...": Neetu Kapoor shares heartfelt tribute on Rishi Kapoor's death anniversary

Veteran actor Neetu Kapoor on Thursday paid an emotional tribute to her late husband, Rishi Kapoor with a heartfelt post on social media marking six years since his passing. Taking to Instagram Stories, Neetu Kapoor shared a candid photograph of the couple, capturing a warm, smiling moment between them. She captioned it with the words, "Always in our hearts". Rishi Kapoor, one of Hindi cinema's most celebrated stars, passed away on April 30, 2020, at the age of 67 after a prolonged battle with leukemia. Known for his charm and versatility, he delivered memorable performances in films such as Bobby, Karz, Chandni and Kapoor & Sons, among many others. The anniversary of his death continues to draw tributes from across the industry, including family members, colleagues, and admirers who fondly remember his "Chintu ji" persona and enduring contribution to Indian cinema. Adding to the emotional remembrance, film distributor Raj Bansal also posted a tribute on his Instagram handle. The image features Rishi Kapoor alongside Sanjay Dutt and Neetu Kapoor, capturing a candid moment of laughter. It was captioned as, "Missing my dearest buddy." Kapoor and Dutt had shared screen space in films like 'Hathar' and the 2012 remake of 'Agnepath'. Joining her mother, daughter Riddhima Kapoor Sahni also shared a deeply personal tribute. Posting a portrait of her father, she wrote, "Until we meet again. I'll keep celebrating you, loving you and missing you, always." Riddhima, known to have shared a close bond with her father, has often commemorated him through photographs and personal memories, keeping his legacy alive for followers. Rishi Kapoor and Neetu Kapoor, who married on January 22, 1980, were one of Bollywood's most beloved couples, both on and off screen. They starred together in several popular films including Amar Akbar Anthony, Khel Khel Mein, Rafoo Chakkar, Kabhi Kabhie and Besharam. In the years since his passing, Neetu Kapoor has returned to films and television, often sharing glimpses of her life and memories with her late husband. Rishi Kapoor's final film, Sharmaji Namkeen, was completed with Paresh Rawal stepping in to finish portions left incomplete.



Actor Bellamkonda Sai Sreenivas and wife Kavya Reddy seek blessings at Tirumala Temple

Actor Bellamkonda Sai Sreenivas and his wife Kavya Reddy visited the revered Tirumala Venkateswara Temple on Thursday, offering prayers to Lord Sri Venkateswara Swamy. Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka also visited the hill shrine on the same day to seek blessings. The Tirumala Venkateswara Temple, often called the "Temple of Seven Hills," is one of the most sacred and widely visited religious sites in the world. Perched atop the Seshachalam Hills in Tirupati, it is dedicated to Lord Venkateswara, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, believed to have appeared to protect humanity in the Kali Yuga. The temple's 8-foot-tall main idol is considered Swayambhu (self-manifested), meaning it was not carved by human hands. The shrine sits on Venkatadri, the seventh peak of the Tirumala Hills, which are said to symbolize the seven hoods of the cosmic serpent Adishesha. Recently, the temple has seen a steady stream of celebrity visitors. Actors Vivek Oberoi and Shmita Shetty were also spotted offering prayers, while in April, Sonu Sood visited with his wife Sonali and son Ishant to participate in the



sacred Thomaala Seva ritual. With centuries of history, the Tirumala Venkateswara Temple remains one of India's most revered Hindu shrines, attracting millions of devotees from across the country and abroad each year.

SPORTS

India Men Drawn To Face Taipei In Thomas Cup QF

Horsens, 30/4: Indian men's team has been drawn to face Chinese Taipei in the quarterfinal of the BWF Thomas Cup Finals after the knockout draw was made here on Thursday. The 2022 champions finished second in Group A and had already qualified for the quarter-finals following 4-1 and 5-0 wins against Canada and Australia, respectively, in their first two matches. But they suffered a 3-2 defeat against China in their last group game on Wednesday. Chinese Taipei did an intimate dance with disaster before somehow scrambling through by the hardest route imaginable to take their place in the quarter-finals of the Thomas Cup. Needing to win the final Group C tie over hosts Denmark - who only needed to win one match - Chinese Taipei would have looked to their strength in second and third singles to see them through on Wednesday. Defending champions China, who remained unbeaten to top Group A, will take on Malaysia. Group B toppers Japan will lock horns with France, who staged a stunning takedown of pre-tournament favourites and 14-time champions Indonesia.



Meanwhile, host Denmark, who finished second in Group C, are slotted to face Thailand. After Indonesia, China are the second most successful team with 11 titles. The Chinese, winners of five straight titles from 2004 to 2012, suffered a shock semifinal defeat in the 2014 edition to Japan, who went on to take their first-ever title beating Malaysia in an exciting final in New

Delhi. It was then Denmark's turn to create history in 2016 as they became the first non-Asian country to win the Thomas Cup, which they did beating Indonesia in the final in Kunshan. The 2018 edition saw China once again storm to the title, beating Japan 3-1 in the final in Bangkok. The 2020 edition was held in October 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Indonesia broke a 19-

year drought, beating China 3-0 in the final. The 2022 saw history being made in Bangkok, as India won their first major team title beating Indonesia 3-0 in the final. India thus became only the sixth country to win the Thomas Cup, and the third first-time winners in eight years. China, denied the title for a decade, roared back on home turf in Chengdu, beating Indonesia 3-1 in the final.

Heartbreak for Mumbai At Home While Head and Klaasen Mastermind Record Chase

Horsens, 30/4: Sunrisers Hyderabad achieved their fifth consecutive victory by successfully chasing a massive 244-run target against Mumbai Indians at the Wankhede Stadium. Despite a historic maiden century from Ryan Rickelton, the visitors showcased relentless batting depth to secure a six-wicket win with eight balls to spare. This result marks the fourth-highest successful run

chase in the history of the tournament. Mumbai Indians initially appeared to be in a commanding position after being put in to bat. Ryan Rickelton delivered a masterclass, smashing an unbeaten 123 off just 55 deliveries. His innings, which included ten boundaries and eight sixes, became the highest individual score for Mumbai Indians, surpassing the long-standing record held by Sanath

Jayasuriya. This performance follows a growing trend where international batters find the Wankhede track ideal for strokeplay, similar to how Odisha's Barabati Stadium often favors high-scoring T20 encounters. Hyderabad's response was nothing short of explosive. Travis Head set the tempo immediately, racing to 76 off 30 balls. Supported by Abhishek Sharma's quickfire 45,

the opening duo dismantled the Mumbai bowling attack, putting 92 runs on the board within the powerplay. Even veteran pacer Jasprit Bumrah struggled, finishing with figures of 0 for 54 as the batters refused to let the momentum slide. Heinrich Klaasen ensured there was no late drama, remaining unbeaten on 65 from 30 balls. He partnered with Salil Arora, who contributed a rapid 30, to guide their side home in the 19th over.

Trailer released for Campus Zombie thriller Indian Institute of Zombies

The makers of Indian Institute of Zombies (IIZ) have released the official trailer, teasing a campus-based zombie story set against the pressures of college life. Directed by Gaganjeet Singh and Alok Dwivedi, the film is backed by Kuku as their maiden feature, produced by Kunj Sanghvi, and penned by Hussain Dalal and Abbas Dalal, known for hits like Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani and Farzi. The cast includes Mohan Kapur, Anupriya Goenka, Jesse Lever, Shivani Paliwal, Rose Sardana, Sachin Kavetham, and Tanishk Chaudhary. The trailer introduces a world where top-performing students are mysteriously transformed into zombies,

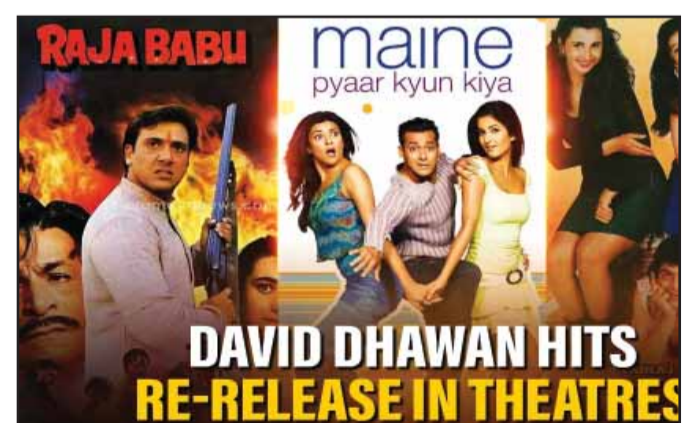


spreading chaos across classrooms and hostels. As the outbreak escalates, the unlikely heroes emerge from the backbenches, tasked with restoring order. The trailer promises a mix of

suspense, fast-paced storytelling, campus-centric comedy, and a high-energy background score. Indian Institute of Zombies is scheduled for a nationwide theatrical release on May 15.

David Dhawan's classics 'Raja Babu', 'Maine Pyaar Kyun Kiya', 'Aankhen' set to return to theatres

David Dhawan is preparing for the release of 'Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai' - a project that the veteran filmmaker has suggested as his final directorial venture. Ahead of its theatrical opening, PVR Inox is set to celebrate David Dhawan's cinematic legacy by screening five of his most popular Hindi-language comedies across the country, reported Variety. In a nod to Dhawan's career that spans over four decades, PVR Inox's screening lineup includes the titles 'Aankhen', 'Raja Babu', 'Maine Pyaar Kyun Kiya', 'Partner', and 'Main Tera Hero'. Niharika Bijli, lead strategist at PVR Inox Ltd, spoke about the initiative, describing it as an "honour." "It is an honour for us to host a festival dedicated to Mr. David Dhawan's remarkable legacy. Over decades, his films have defined mainstream Hindi entertainment, bringing joy to audiences across generations. This festival is a rare opportunity for newer audiences



to rediscover some of his iconic films in the format they were originally created for" she said, according to Variety. David Dhawan also expressed his excitement for his classics to return to the theatres. "I have always believed in making films that entertain people and help them forget the struggles of their daily lives. My idea has always been simple: make people laugh, feel good about life, even if just for those three hours, and walk out of the theatre with a smile.

To see PVR Inox curate a festival around my work and bring these films back to the big screen is heartwarming. These films were made with a lot of love, energy, and instinct. I am excited to see audiences return to cinemas to relive the madness, the music, and the joy all over again," he said. Earlier in a conversation with ANI, David Dhawan hinted at retirement plans. "...I don't think I should do more. Vo to chahta hi nahi mai kaam bhi karu healthwise dekhkar..