

Dumani Mail

Published simultaneously from Bhubaneswar (Odisha), Keonjhar (Odisha) and New Delhi.



Manufacturing growth sentiment remains positive despite rising costs in Q4 FY26: FICCI Survey

New Delhi : India's manufacturing sector remained on a steady growth path in the fourth quarter of FY 2025-26, supported by strong domestic demand and a stable export outlook, according to a survey by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). The survey said about 93 per cent of respondents reported higher or unchanged production in Q4, up from 91 per cent in the previous quarter, indicating continued growth momentum across sectors.

Domestic demand remained firm, with 89 per cent of respondents expecting higher or similar orders compared to the previous quarter. However, rising costs continued to weigh on manufacturers. Nearly 70 per cent of respondents reported an increase in production costs as a share of sales, compared to 57 per cent in the previous quarter, driven by higher raw material prices, currency depreciation, and increased logistics, power, and utility expenses. However, capacity utilisation saw a marginal dip, with overall

manufacturing utilisation levels at around 72 per cent in Q4 FY26. Among key sectors, utilisation stood at about 76.4 per cent in textiles, apparels and technical textiles, 76 per cent in metal and metal products, 75.7 per cent in automotive and auto components, and 75 per cent in chemicals, fertilisers and pharmaceuticals, while capital goods (69 per cent), electronics and electricals (68 per cent), machine tools (70 per cent), and miscellaneous segments (65 per cent) reported relatively lower utilisation levels. Companies



also highlighted challenges in expanding capacity, citing global uncertainties, trade restrictions, labour availability issues, raw material shortages, and regulatory hurdles. On the export front, sentiment remained stable, with around 80 per cent of respondents expecting exports to be higher or unchanged compared to the same period last year, up from 74 per cent in Q3. The hiring outlook improved, with 41 per cent of firms planning to add workforce over the next three months, compared to

38 per cent in the previous quarter. Access to finance remained adequate, with over 86 per cent of respondents reporting sufficient availability of funds from banks. The average interest rate paid by manufacturers stood at 8.85 per cent. Overall, the survey indicated that despite persistent cost pressures and a slight moderation in capacity utilisation, strong domestic demand, steady exports, and improved hiring intentions continue to support growth in India's manufacturing sector.

PM Modi, Vietnamese President To Lam hold bilateral talks at Hyderabad House

New Delhi : Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a high-level bilateral meeting with Vietnamese President To Lam at Hyderabad House on Wednesday, marking a significant moment in the diplomatic calendar. The engagement followed a ceremonial welcome accorded to the visiting leader at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan earlier in the day, formally commencing his first State Visit to India.



which are expected to span bilateral cooperation alongside critical regional and global issues. Prior to reaching the capital, President To Lam began his journey on Tuesday in Bodh Gaya, where he offered prayers at the Mahabodhi Temple. After being welcomed in Bihar by Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, the leader, who also serves as the "General Secretary of

the Communist Party of Vietnam," flew to Delhi, where he was received by Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai. The diplomatic momentum built further as National Security Advisor Ajit Doval called on the President ahead of the primary summit. According to Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir

Jaiswal, the duo exchanged views on strengthening the "multifaceted, comprehensive strategic partnership," with the Vietnamese leader expressing his keen interest in the formal dialogue with the Prime Minister. According to the MEA, this visit represents a "significant juncture" as both nations mark a decade of their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Beyond the capital, the President's itinerary until May 7 includes a visit to Mumbai to attend a business forum at the National Stock Exchange (NSE) and interact with state leadership to boost economic ties. These engagements reflect the evolution of "longstanding historical and civilisational ties" into a robust modern strategic relationship.

Delhi HC to Appoint Amici Curiae for Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia in Liquor Policy Case

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court said it will appoint senior lawyers as amici curiae to represent AAP leaders Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and Durgesh Pathak in the CBI case against their discharge in the liquor policy case. The former Delhi chief minister and MLAs boycotted the hearing before Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma after the judge refused to recuse herself on their applications alleging conflict of interest and apprehension of bias. Justice Sharma deferred



the hearing on the CBI's petition challenging the trial court decision till May 8, observing that it would be appropriate to proceed with the matter once someone is appointed to represent them. Earlier, Kejriwal, Sisodia and Pathak wrote to Justice

Sharma, stating they would not appear before her personally or through a lawyer as Justice Sharma dismissed their applications seeking her recusal in the case on 20th April. In recusal plea, they had claimed that the judge's children are empanelled

central government lawyers who receive work through solicitor general Tushar Mehta, who appears for the CBI in the excise case. Justice Sharma junked the recusal plea, saying that judges cannot recuse themselves to satisfy a litigant's unfounded apprehension of bias. An amicus curiae ('friend of the court') is an individual or organization that is not a party to a legal case, but that is permitted to assist a court by offering information, expertise, or insight that has a bearing on the issues in the case.

Delhi Police nabs mastermind behind murder of National Boxer Vikas Bhinda

New Delhi : The Delhi Police Crime Branch on Wednesday arrested a 38-year-old man wanted for the July 2025 murder of national boxing champion Vikas Bhinda.



constantly changing his hiding spots across multiple states. Acting on a secret tip and using technical tracking, a special Crime Branch team finally located Rana. They successfully arrested him in Adarsh Nagar, Delhi, without any conflict. Meanwhile, on

Tuesday, the Anti-Auto Theft Squad (AATS) South team arrested six members of the notorious Kachha Baniyan gang following an encounter, police said yesterday. During the investigation, police received specific intelligence that suspects linked to the Malviya Nagar

theft were present near Jhapa Park. Acting on the input, AATS personnel launched a targeted operation that led to an encounter with members of the Kachha Baniyan gang. Police said that during the encounter, three accused opened fire, discharging around six rounds towards the police team. The police retaliated with eight rounds of firing. In the exchange, all three attackers sustained gunshot injuries in their legs. The injured accused have been identified as Nirmal alias Nikhil, Amber alias Devin, and Samrat alias Samar alias Kala. Officials further stated that a total of six gang members were apprehended in the operation. Police added that one of the arrested suspects carries a reward of ₹10,000. All the accused are originally from Madhya Pradesh. The gang is known for operating across multiple states, with its members often disguising themselves and applying oil and grease on their bodies to evade capture during crimes.

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Former Teacher Convicted in Disproportionate Assets Case; Sentenced to 2 Years Rigorous Imprisonment

Rayagada : In a significant development in the fight against corruption, Sri Unna Rajendra Patro, a retired teacher of SSD (ST & SC Development) High School, Dukum under Bismacuttack block of Rayagada district, has been convicted in a disproportionate assets (DA) case.

The conviction was pronounced today by the Hon'ble Special Judge, Vigilance, Jeypore. The court found him guilty under Section 13(2) read with Section 13(1)(e) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, for possessing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income.

Following the verdict, the court sentenced Sri Patro to undergo rigorous imprisonment for a period of two years. Additionally, a fine of ₹50,000 has been imposed. In case of default in payment of the fine, further legal consequences may follow as per provisions.

The case was earlier charge-



sheeted by Odisha Vigilance after a detailed investigation revealed accumulation of assets beyond his legitimate earnings during his tenure as a government teacher.

In a further development, Odisha Vigilance has announced that it will move the competent authority to initiate proceedings for the stoppage of pension benefits of the convicted retired teacher, in accordance with

existing rules and regulations governing government servants.

This conviction underscores the state vigilance department's continued efforts to curb corruption and ensure accountability among public servants. It also sends a strong message that unlawful accumulation of wealth will not go unpunished, irrespective of position or retirement status.

KIMS Achieves Breakthrough: Doctors Correct Five Cardiac Defects in Single High-Risk Surgery

Bhubaneswar: Doctors at the Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) have successfully performed a complex heart surgery, correcting five critical cardiac conditions in a single operation. The intricate procedure included a Bentall operation, mitral valve replacement, tricuspid valve repair, and ASD closure, a major achievement in advanced cardiac care in the state. The success of the surgery has been made possible because of state-of-the-art infrastructure, distinguished physicians and the expertise of its medical team.

The operation, a first of its kind in Odisha, was performed at the KIMS super speciality hospital by a team of highly-experienced physicians, marking a major achievement in advanced cardiac care in the state.

The patient, a 32-year-old local resident, had been suffering from severe heart disease for a prolonged period but could not undergo treatment earlier due to lack of facilities and financial constraints. His condition deteriorated sharply last month, leaving him breathless, fatigued, and unable to lie down for days, with persistent chest pain and palpitations.

He had approached several government and private hospitals, but his case was deemed too complex and high-risk. Eventually, he was admitted to KIMS Super Speciality Hospital, where he consulted cardiac surgeon Dr. Nimai Charan Behera. Detailed investigations revealed that he was suffering from Marfan Syndrome, along with multiple life-threatening cardiac complications, including severe leakage in three heart valves and an aortic root aneurysm.

Given the complexity, the medical team undertook a meticulously planned high-risk surgery, addressing all five conditions in a single operation. The procedures included a Bentall operation, mitral valve replacement, tricuspid valve repair, and ASD closure.

Allegations of Financial Irregularities in District Chief Minister Sports Competition; Complaint Filed with Collector

Puri : The Chief Minister Sports Competition for the financial year 2026 was held in Puri district. Allegations have surfaced that lakhs of rupees were misappropriated during the event.

Senior Advocate Binay Nrusingha Mahapatra has made this allegation. He has submitted a written complaint to District Collector Divyajyoti Parida. According to him, the competition (CM Trophy) was organized by the district sports department, featuring events like kabaddi, kho-kho, volleyball, and football.

The competition was conducted twice, in February and April. The state government had provisions to supply kits (jerseys, boots, socks, and bags) to all participants. Additionally, financial assistance was to be provided for travel expenses.

However, it is surprising that many participants were deprived of these facilities. Reports indicate that some participants returned home in tears without receiving jerseys or prizes.

When contacted, the District Sports Officer said he was unaware of the issue and claimed he had only gone

to supervise the sports events. He stated that sports equipment and financial assistance had been transferred to the personal accounts of two former sports council members, who handled the expenditures, and that he had no involvement in the matter.

Despite this, it appears evident that a large amount of money allocated for the competition has been misused. Questions have been raised about how government funds were transferred to the personal accounts of these individuals and under what official guidelines.

Mahapatra has requested the District Collector to conduct an impartial inquiry into the alleged financial irregularities and to take disciplinary action against the officials involved.

The District Collector has assured that a proper investigation will be conducted and necessary action will be taken. During the submission of the complaint, Advocate Bhagabat Prasad Pattanayak, Senior journalist Laxminarayan Pattanayak, and Pradeep Kumar Nayak were present.

Today, tribals protested in solidarity against the tragic incident involving Jitu Munda.

Keonjhar : Thousand of tribal men and women from different parts of Keonjhar district, under the Adivasi Mahasangha, Odisha, Kendujhar and Birsamunda Ho Samaj Marsal Akala, Kendujhar, staged a protest rally on Tuesday in Keonjhar, holding banners and placards to demand protection for tribal people in this district. They staged the protest primarily regarding Jitu Munda of Diamali in Patna block of Keonjhar district who was taken skeleton of his sister, whose body was buried about 4 months back to the bank at Malipasi to the rural bank to withdraw his sister's savings and was tortured by the bank, local administration, and police and returned with the skeleton of her body walking in bare foot in scorchy summer about three kilometers to his village and buried again in the graveyard.

They held the procession from Kali Padia in Keonjhar and reached the collectorate office while holding placards and raising slogans. They submitted a 12-point demand letter to the President through the District Administration. Former MLA Dhanurjay Sidhu said, "Like Jitu Munda many innocent and poor tribals from our communities have been neglected

and tortured by the officials. This incident opened our eyes to how our people are living under development. Our demands are genuine, and we hope the president and others will take action on them.

The demands include strict action against the bank officers, block and tehsil officers, along with police personnel who brutally misbehaved and tortured Jitu Munda. They also demanded to provide justice to the entire tribal community by punishing the culprits severely, to stop the harassment and oppression of the tribal community, to protect the inherent and constitutional rights of the tribals. They demanded to implement the PESA Act 1996 immediately to empower the Gram Sabha and village leaders, protection of the tribal language along with culture and tradition, to take immediate steps to return tribal land encroached upon by the government or non-tribals. They also demanded an end to the heinous acts of threatening and intimidating the innocent, poor and uneducated tribals. Furthermore, they demanded that tribal language education be made compulsory for employees/officers working in tribal areas.

Three arrested for setting fire to the forest

Keonjhar : The Forest Department Special Squad formed to prevent forest fires, has arrested three people for setting fires in various places in the Kanjipani section of Bhuyan Juang Pidha (BJP) Range of Keonjhar forest division on Monday and forwarded to court in the evening. According to sources, the Forest Department has prepared special squads to protect the forest from fire. The forest team gathering intelligence and raiding different place and arrested the three people in two cases related to cutting and burning trees for poddu cultivation in the Kakharua forest of the said area. The Forest Department has come to know during the investigation that about 110 valuable shrubs, including various varieties of trees, were cut and burned for podu cultivation.

In this connection Lalmoan Naik (59) of Lungajhar village has been arrested for the said incident. Similarly, the other two arrested identified as Shirpani Juang (45) and Suba Juang (42) of Kanjipani village, arrested with the incident of cutting down and setting fire to hundreds of trees in the Kanjipani reserved forest of the Telkoi-Kanjipani construction division road. "The three were arrested under the Odisha Forest Act of 1972 and the Odisha Forest (Fire Protection) Rules of 1979 and forwarded to court." "After the court rejected the plea, they were sent to judicial custody," said Nayankanta Sahu, forest range officer BJP Range.

6 Beneficiaries Receive Aid from Dr. Raseshwari Panigrahi Welfare Trust.

Sambalpur-06/05(DMS) : The Dr. Raseshwari Panigrahi Welfare Trust has extended financial assistance to six individuals for education and healthcare purposes. The decision was approved during a trust meeting held on Tuesday under the Chairmanship of member Dr. Nirupama Badapanda.

Out of the total beneficiaries, two individuals received aid for medical treatment, while four were supported for educational needs. Altogether, financial assistance amounting to ₹1,07,500 was distributed.



Additionally, the trust approved a monthly educational support of ₹2,500 for one beneficiary, which will continue until April next year. During the meeting, a

proposal by Burla resident engineer Debashish Mishra, along with trust member Dr. Badapanda and treasurer Swaroop Purohit, to contribute monthly donations to the trust fund was also accepted. The trust expressed its gratitude for their commitment.

The meeting was coordinated by Trust Secretary Sudhir Pujari. Treasurer Swaroop Purohit and members Dr. Pramod Purohit, Bipin Panda, Subrata Panda, and Shiva Nanda participated in the discussions.

ACF Jeypore KL Division Inspects Kendu Leaf Procurement Across Bissamcuttack Range

Rayagada: In a move to ensure transparency and efficiency in forest produce operations, the Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF), Jeypore KL Division, conducted a detailed inspection of Kendu leaf procurement and transportation across multiple phadis under the Bissamcuttack KL Range.

The inspection covered key sections including Theruvali, Bissamcuttack, Muniguda, and Ambadola. During the visit, the ACF reviewed the ongoing

procurement process, interacted with field staff, and assessed the quality and storage conditions of the collected Kendu leaves. Special attention was given to verifying whether standard procedures were being followed during collection, bundling, and transportation.

Officials were instructed to maintain proper records and ensure timely payments to pluckers, many of whom belong to tribal and rural communities dependent on Kendu leaf

collection for their livelihood. The ACF emphasized the importance of transparency in procurement practices and directed staff to avoid any irregularities.

The transportation system was also examined to ensure that leaves are being safely and efficiently moved from phadis to designated storage points without damage or delay. Necessary guidelines were issued to streamline logistics and minimize losses.

Local stakeholders welcomed

the inspection, expressing hope that such proactive monitoring would strengthen accountability and improve income opportunities for collectors. The forest department reiterated its commitment to supporting forest-dependent communities while maintaining sustainable practices in Kendu leaf trade.

The inspection is part of ongoing efforts by the department to enhance governance and ensure smooth functioning of Kendu leaf operations in the region.

From Scarcity to Security: Vedanta's Water Initiative Transforms Rural Life in Sijimali

Rayagada : For years, water scarcity has made life difficult in the remote Sijimali hill region under Kashipur block of Rayagada district. In villages like Dumerpadar, Sagabari, Chulbadi, Sunger, Dhamanaghat, Siadimal, and Ladakhman, access to water was uncertain and largely dependent on uneven terrain and unpredictable weather conditions.

Burden on Women
The worst impact of this crisis was borne by women. Every day, they had to walk long distances to fetch water, consuming a significant portion of their time. As a result, they were unable to devote adequate attention to their health, livelihoods, and family care.

Vedanta's Initiative Brings Hope

To address this pressing issue, Vedanta Aluminium has taken a significant step under its 'Nirmal Project'. Solar-powered deep borewells have been installed in seven villages of the Sijimali region, providing year-round access to safe drinking water to more than 3,000 people.

Natural Challenges and Sustainable Solution

The region's impermeable plateau causes rainwater to quickly run off, while groundwater is found at depths of around 750 feet. During summer, natural springs dry up, worsening the water crisis. In such conditions, solar-powered borewell systems have emerged as a sustainable and reliable solution.

Voices from the Ground
Chandrika Nayak from



Dumerpadar village shared, "Earlier, half of our day was spent fetching water. During

summer, we had to travel even farther. Now, water is available near our homes—it is a great

relief for us."

Another villager said, "We no longer have to wait for water

tankers or electricity. This has completely changed our daily lives."

Improvement in Health and Quality of Life

Earlier, villagers depended on unsafe stream water, which often led to health issues. With access to treated and safe drinking water, there has been a noticeable improvement in hygiene and overall health conditions.

A Gift of Time for Women
With reduced time spent on fetching water, women now have more time for household responsibilities, income-generating activities, and family care, significantly improving their quality of life.

Long-Term Water Security Efforts

Vedanta is not limiting its efforts to borewell installations. Through hydrogeological studies, the company is also working on spring rejuvenation, rainwater harvesting, and groundwater recharge initiatives. More than 20 locations have already been identified for these efforts.

Technical assessments indicate that the bauxite reserves in Sijimali lie well above groundwater aquifers, suggesting that mining activities and water security can coexist sustainably.

Redefining Development
Sijimali is now emerging not just as a mineral-rich region, but as a model for water security, improved healthcare, and enhanced rural living standards.

Odisha Class 10 Results 2026 Declared: Pass Rate at 95.33%

Bhubaneswar: The Board of Secondary Education, Odisha has officially declared the Class 10 (High School Certificate) examination results for 2026.

The announcement was made at the board's office in Cuttack in the presence of School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond. This year, the state recorded an impressive overall pass percentage of 95.33%, reflecting strong academic performance across districts. Over 5.19 Lakh Students Pass the Examination

A total of 5,19,251 students in the regular category successfully cleared the examination. This includes: 2,56,099 boys 2,63,152 girls

Among all districts, Gajapati district emerged as the top performer with an outstanding 99.31% pass rate.

Grade Distribution Highlights
The results showed a wide distribution of grades among students:
A1: 2,453 students
A2: 15,684 students
B1: 43,565 students
B2: 86,103 students
C: 1,29,813 students
D: 1,46,152 students
E: 95,481 students
F: 17,055 students
In the ex-regular category, 217 out of 1,433 students passed, resulting in a 14.16% pass rate.

Odisha Declared Maoist-Free : DGP YB Khurania

Bhubaneswar: Director General of Police (DGP) Y.B. Khurania officially declared Odisha completely free from Left Wing Extremism following sustained counter-insurgency operations.

The milestone was highlighted during a medal distribution ceremony at the Civic Centre in Rourkela, where he praised the collective efforts of the police, Special Operations Group (SOG), and central forces like the CRPF.

While active Maoist presence within state boundaries has been eliminated, the DGP noted that the administration will not let its guard down. Security forces continue to maintain a strict vigil along interstate borders—particularly along the Saranda forest area in Jharkhand—to prevent any infiltration or resurgence of extremist elements.

Demand for Construction of a Protective Embankment Along the Salandi River

Keonjhar: People of Kanpur village in Anandpur sub division are demanding the construction of a protective embankment along the Salandi River. This village is located on the banks of the Salandi River, has faced severe riverbank erosion over the past few years due to flood water. Hence, residents of that area are living in high risk, causing concern among themselves.

According to the sources more than 10 families of that village severely affected due to soil erosion during the flood in August last year. Due to erosion, parts of their houses, cattle sheds, and toilets collapsed as the ground beneath them washed away and submerged into the river. Besides that, the affected residents have not received compensation for last year's damages.

Although officials including the Sub-Collector of Anandapur, the Superintending Engineer of the Vidyaharpur Division, and authorities from the Irrigation Department, visited the site earlier and assured solutions, but the villagers alleged that no concrete action has been taken so far. Local villagers fear that if a protective



embankment is not constructed before the upcoming monsoon, continuous soil erosion may cause devastation, and more than 10 houses will be washed out in the river. If the monsoon arrives, it will become difficult to carry out any protective work. Hence,

they demanded earlier construction of the embankment. Villagers have accused the department officials of making repeated false promises without taking a permanent solutions.

Sources said that a few days ago, following recent rainfall the Assistant Engineer of the Water Resources Department, Purastam Marandi visited the site and reported the matter to higher authorities. As the rate of erosion is increasing every year, hence if immediate action is not taken, several houses will be submerged in the river and families will be destitute said Prahalad Behera, Dharmapada Behera, and Sanjay Behera, whom houses have already sunk nearly three feet due to soil erosion beneath their foundations.

Villagers, along with Salandi Development Forum Secretary Bishwaranjan Panigrahi and several local residents including Ranjulata Behera, Rashmiprabha Khatua, Mataji Sethi, Sanjulata Behera, Sulochana Panigrahi, and others, have urged the Keonjhar District Collector to take immediate steps to resolve the issue and ensure safety measures along the river bank. (EOM)

"Shri Ajay Singh Yadav Takes Charge as Head of Project at NTPC Talcher Kaniha

Talcher Kaniha, May 6, 2026: Shri Ajay Singh Yadav has taken over the charge of Head of Project (HOP) at NTPC Talcher Kaniha, the third largest power generating station of NTPC Limited, the Maharatna company of Govt of India.

With a cumulative experience of more than 36 years in NTPC, Shri Yadav brings strong technical expertise and leadership acumen. His professional journey in NTPC started on 5th September 1989 as an Executive Trainee in the Mechanical stream.

Sh Yadav holds a Bachelor of Engineering



degree in Mechanical Engineering from Jiwaji University, Gwalior, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Management from Management Development Institute (MDI), Gurgaon.

During his illustrious career, he has worked in

various technical and non-technical domains such as fuel handling, operations and maintenance functions, project management and corporate planning. He has served at major NTPC stations including Korba, Anta, Khargone and Tanda

as well as at the NTPC Corporate Centre in New Delhi. He has also served as Head of Project, Talaipalli Coal Mining.

Shri Yadav is known for his focus on safety, efficiency and planning. He has also attended several inhouse and external training programs in leadership, risk management, safety systems.

In his new role at NTPC Talcher Kaniha, his primary focus would be to strengthen operational performance with sustainability and build stronger relationships with the external stakeholders and the community."

Odisha Government Proposes New Framework for Metro Project Linking Puri, Bhubaneswar, and Cuttack

Bhubaneswar: Odisha government has reiterated its commitment to the proposed metro project connecting the twin cities and Puri under a revised framework.

Following discussions regarding project viability, Urban Development Minister Krishna Chandra Mahapatra clarified that the ambitious transport initiative has been kept on hold rather than cancelled.

The administration is currently evaluating alternatives to ensure the system is financially sustainable and properly

integrated with the region's broader transit networks.

"Addressing Feasibility and Transit Concerns

"Earlier, the state cabinet had terminated the agreement with the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) and approved the expenditure incurred on the initial phase (amounting to ₹273.51 crore) following recommendations from an inter-ministerial committee. The committee cited feasibility challenges, including lower-than-expected ridership projections and non-compliance with the National

Metro Rail Policy (2017). Minister Mahapatra emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to modern infrastructure: "If the metro is implemented without alternative roads, people will face inconvenience." "The state government is focused on developing alternative road networks and support mechanisms alongside the transit project to ensure long-term public welfare and smooth urban connectivity. Key Highlights of the Transit Transition

Project Status: Temporarily suspended for review and framework restructuring, not entirely scrapped.

Proposed Route: Planned corridor connecting Puri, Bhubaneswar, and Cuttack to stimulate economic growth.

Strategic Focus: Ensuring multi-modal integration, first- and last-mile connectivity, and alignment with the National Metro Rail Policy.

Agency Status: The Bhubaneswar Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCCL) office remains operational while evaluating future funding and execution models.

Union leader Santosh Pattnaik nominated as BJD state secretary

Paradip - Prominent trade union leader Santosh Kumar Pattnaik of Paradip has been renominated as the state secretary of Biju Janata Dal (BJD). Santosh Pattanaik has expressed his gratitude to BJD supremo and former Chief minister Naveen Patanaik for entrusting him with this important responsibility. It is worth noting that Santosh Pattanaik is known as a prominent organizer of BJD in the Kujang Paradip area. When the BJD organized a voluntary blood donation camp across the state to alleviate the blood crisis in the state, Santosh Pattnaik was highly praised for collecting more than 5,000 units of blood in the blood donation camp organized by him and won the first place in the state. Similarly, Santosh helped in strengthening the party organization at the grassroots level by organizing party programs. He has made a special mark by working as the head of several organizations. He is a disciplined worker of the party and works according.

Three arrested for attacking, harassing elephants and posting video on social media

Keonjhar : Keonjhar Forest Department has apprehended four persons including two minor in connection with the incident of attacking and harassing elephants, recording a video and posting it on social media. According to the sources some youths organized themselves, went to Malipasi forest under the Patna range, chased an elephant herd and recorded a video showing the agitated herd running around. They attacked the elephant with a stick. Sources said that this was a dangerous game for their own lives and created danger for others. Many lives have been lost in the past due to such negligence and irresponsible behavior. The arrested persons were identified as Akash Kumar Mahanta of Badasiadimal village under Harichandanpur block, Dushmantha Behera of Chinamalipasi under Ghatagaon block. The Forest Department seized one drone, four mobile phones used for videography and one motorcycle used by them were seized from them. It is a big wildlife crime, as elephant is considered as scheduled one animal. After verifying the social media video, they were arrested today under Section 9 of the Wild Life Protection Act and produced in court. Divisional Forest Officer Dhanraj HD has said that strict legal action will be taken against anyone who teases or attacks wild elephants. Besides the four three more involved in this crime will soon be apprehended. It is a wildlife crime. Legal action will be taken against those who chase or tease elephants and take the law into their own hands. Sources said that due to shrinking habitations and food shortages in the forest area, elephants in different groups prwling in different areas of Keonjhar district. Often, elephants enter human habitation and cause damage. But many people enjoy seeing the elephants. Sometimes mischievous people attack them by beating them with sticks or throwing stones, causing injuries. Many people dangerously teased the elephants by pulling their tails and beating them with sticks from a close proximity while filming and circulating videos on social media to earn money.

Odisha Matric Exam Result 2026 to Be Declared on May 2

Bhubaneswar: The Board of Secondary Education Odisha (BSE Odisha) will announce the Class 10 (Matric) examination results on May 2, 2026. Officials confirmed that the results will be declared at around 4:00 PM, while students can access their scorecards online from 6:00 PM onwards.

Where and How to Check Odisha Class 10 Results

Students can check their results on the official websites:

www.bseodisha.nic.in
www.bseodisha.ac.in

To ensure inclusive access, especially for students in areas with limited internet connectivity, BSE Odisha has also provided an SMS facility.

SMS Method to Check Results

Students can follow

these steps to receive their results via SMS:

Discover more Educational Resources education Education

Type: OR10<Roll Number>

Send to: 5676750

This option helps ensure that all students, regardless of internet availability, can access their results conveniently.

Results for Other Examinations Also on Same Day

Along with the Class 10 results, the board will also declare the results for:

State Open School Certificate Examination

Madhyama Examination

This coordinated announcement will allow students from multiple streams to access their results on the same day.

Tabulation Register for

Schools

School authorities will be able to download the Tabulation Register from the official websites starting at 7:00 PM on May 2. This will help institutions manage records and support students with further academic processes.

Exam Overview

In 2026, a total of 5,61,979 students appeared for the Class 10 examinations across 3,082 centres in Odisha. The exams were conducted between February 19 and March 2, 2026.

Ensuring Smooth Access for All Students

BSE Odisha has taken steps to make result access simple and inclusive. With both online and SMS options available, students from urban and rural areas alike can check their results without difficulty.

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.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL WORKS ELECTRICAL DIVISION, BHUBANESWAR Email: - eerwel_bhsr@yahoo.co.in			
No. 1787 Dt. 05.05.2026			
1st CORRIGENDUM			
In continuation to this office N.I.T No. Tender Online- Electrical Division, Bhubaneswar- 01/ 2026-27 dt.30.04.2026 issued vide this office letter No.1650 Dt.30.04.2026, partial modification of N.I.T has been made as follows.			
Sl.No	Item	Time schedule as per original N.I.T	Time schedule as per corrigendum notice
1	Date & time of availability of bid documents in the portal	From Dt.06.5.2026 at 12:00 A.M to Dt.18.05.2026 up to 5:00 P.M	From dt.12.05.2026 at 12:00 A.M to Dt.20.05.2026 up to 5:00 A.M
2	Date & time of opening of tender	Dt.19.05.2026 at 01:00 P.M	Dt.21.05.2026 at 01:00 P.M
All other terms & Conditions are remain unchanged.			
CAPTION NO.- 25001/97/2627			Executive Engineer Rural Works Electrical Division Bhubaneswar

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, NAYAGARH (R&B) DIVISION, NAYAGARH WORKS DEPARTMENT Tender call Notice E-mail: pwwdoffngd34@gmail.com	
Bid Identification No. S.E-Nayagarh (R&B) Division- Online 03/2026-27	
The Superintending Engineer, Nayagarh (R&B) Division, Nayagarh on behalf of Governor of Odisha inviting percentage rate bid in Single cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for construction of Building work as detailed in the table below:	
1. Nature of Work	: Building & Road Works.
2. No of Work	: 6 Nos
3. Tender Cost & EMD	: To be remitted online through a process as mentioned in DTCN.
4. Class of Contractor	: As mentioned in DTCN
5. Available of Bid Document in the Website	: From Dt.12.05.2026 11.00 AM to Dt.21.05.2026 Up to 5.00 pm.
6. Date of opening of Bid	: Dt.22.05.2026 at 11.00 AM
7. The have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Website: https://tenderodisha.gov.in . Any Addendum / Corrigendum / Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.	
34001/169/2627	Superintending Engineer, Nayagarh(R&B) Division, Nayagarh

Defiant Mamata

THE acrimony witnessed during the West Bengal Assembly elections has intensified following the declaration of results. The aftermath is not unfolding as a routine democratic transition — outgoing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has refused to accept the verdict, describing it as a “conspiracy” rather than a popular mandate. Ruling out her resignation, she has reiterated that the Election Commission of India worked for the BJP all along in the state. It’s apparent that her agitational politics will keep the new government on its toes right from the word go. Mamata’s shift towards strengthening the Opposition’s INDIA bloc suggests a strategic recalibration, prompted by her party’s defeat. Her outreach to the Congress is replete with irony, considering the friction between the two parties in recent years. Political expediency might persist unless genuine efforts are made to rebuild the fragile alliance.

Even as Mamata strives to keep her flock together, post-poll violence has again reared its head in Bengal. Ransacking of TMC offices and attacks on party workers have reignited concerns about the entrenched culture of political retribution in the state. Mamata’s party has squarely blamed BJP supporters, while the saffron party has hinted at factionalism within the TMC or isolated acts by miscreants. Notably, state BJP president Samik Bhattacharya has condemned the incidents of vandalism and warned of strict action against those involved. The call for restraint following the BJP’s sweeping victory is laudable.

The responsibility now lies with both the incoming government and law enforcement agencies. Swift, impartial action against those responsible — irrespective of their political affiliation — will be vital for restoring public confidence. Also, the political leadership should go beyond rhetoric and actively discourage a culture where violence becomes synonymous with electoral rivalry.



Hate Speech

THE Supreme Court has observed that existing legal provisions are sufficient to deal with hate speech, an offence which poses a threat to public order as well as communal harmony. Putting the onus on the executive, the Court has flagged uneven enforcement of laws as a major concern. The SC has sounded a moral alarm by asserting that hate speech is “fundamentally antithetical” to the constitutional value of fraternity. Its message is clear: the erosion of civil discourse strikes at the very foundation of the republic.

Laws that remain dormant or are selectively applied are as ineffective as laws that don’t exist. The executive, particularly law enforcement agencies, needs to act without fear or favour. However, the efforts of governments to curb hate speech have left a lot to be desired. Powerful politicians often get away with divisive and communal remarks because the police are reluctant to take action against them. It’s this brazen dereliction of duty that the courts must closely monitor and firmly reprimand. When offenders go unpunished, the rule of law and public trust in institutions are undermined.

The judiciary’s refusal to create new legal mechanisms shifts the responsibility to the legislature. Parliament must now assess whether the current framework of provisions is adequate in an age where speech travels instantly and widely through digital platforms. If gaps exist, they must be addressed through carefully crafted legislation that balances free expression with the constitutional vision of unity, dignity and equality. Public figures, in particular, must exercise restraint as their reckless remarks can fan the flames. Ultimately, combating hate speech requires a collective effort. The State must enforce the law impartially, the legislature ought to remain responsive and the citizens should uphold the spirit of fraternity. And the judiciary needs to step in whenever the other pillars of democracy falter.



Madhu Babu: The Architect of Modern Odisha – II

Tejeswar Patnaik

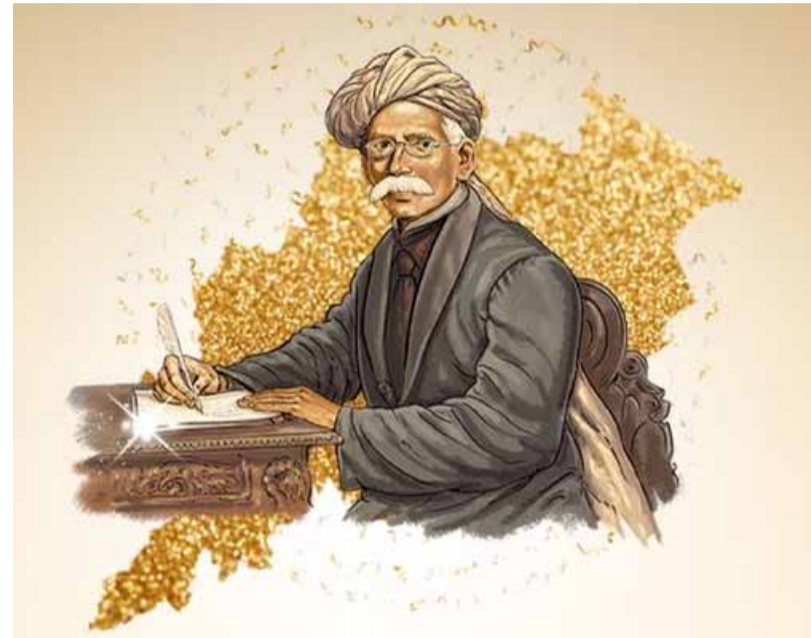
Madhusudan Das was not only the architect of modern Odisha but also one of the earliest champions of ethical governance, Swadeshi industrialisation, and democratic public life. His contribution goes far beyond linguistic nationalism. He laid the foundations of political integrity, economic self-reliance, and social justice in Odisha.

A fearless defender of Odisha’s interests, Madhu Babu was elected to the Bihar and Odisha Legislative Council and remained an influential voice there until 1924. During his tenure, he strongly opposed a bill passed in the Bengal Legislative Assembly that was intended to protect the vested interests of landlords in Odisha at the cost of the peasantry. Determined to safeguard the rights of farmers and the rural poor, he personally persuaded Lord Hardinge not to give assent to the bill. As a result, the bill was returned without approval—an extraordinary political victory and a landmark moment in Odisha’s legislative history.

Madhu Babu became the first Odia to be a member of the Legislative Council and the Central Legislative Assembly. From 1921 to 1923, under the dyarchy system introduced by the British Government, he served as Minister of Local Self-Government in the Bihar–Odisha Government. During his ministership, he played a major role in the passage of the Local Self-Government Act, strengthening administrative decentralisation and civic governance.

Remarkably, he never accepted his salary as either a minister or a legislator, considering public office a responsibility rather than a privilege. Madhu Babu was a man of extraordinary personal ethics. In public life, he remained uncompromising in his principles and deeply committed to transparent governance. His conduct in public life set a benchmark for elected representatives.

He was also the first Odia leader and the third Indian to address the British Parliament, where he forcefully articulated Odisha’s concerns and aspirations. His repeated emphasis on rural development, public health, and



local administration reflected his deep understanding of grassroots governance.

In private life, he was a true democrat. Despite ideological differences with his disciple Gopabandhu Das, Madhu Babu regarded him with affection and admiration. He openly praised Gopabandhu’s patriotism, dedication, and sacrifice for the state and the nation. This ability to respect disagreement while valuing character reflected the uniqueness of his leadership.

He was also a precursor of the Swadeshi industrial movement. Long before Swadeshi became a national movement, Madhu Babu advocated the exclusive use of indigenous goods and campaigned against dependence on foreign products. He organised one of the earliest Swadeshi industrial exhibitions in London in 1897 and pleaded for tariff protection for Indian industries. He also appealed to people to embrace country-made goods.

His economic nationalism found practical expression in 1906 with the establishment of Utkal Tannery. Through this pioneering industrial venture, he sought to promote employment, industrial development, and the dignity of labour. The tannery produced high-quality leather goods that eventually

reached international markets, including exports to England. More importantly, it challenged caste prejudice by involving communities traditionally considered “untouchable” in dignified economic activity.

When Mahatma Gandhi visited the tannery in Cuttack in 1925, he highly appreciated Madhu Babu’s efforts, especially the social dimension of fighting untouchability through productive employment. Though the tannery was later closed in 1927 due to recurring financial losses, it remained a remarkable experiment in combining industry with social reform. Madhu Babu had invested his own personal wealth into the venture, reflecting his lifelong commitment to public good over private comfort.

He also established Odisha Art Wares in 1894 to promote traditional handicrafts and cottage industries. More than one hundred artisans found employment there, producing silver filigree, gold work, ivory craft, horn products, brass items, and weaving materials. His efforts preserved Odisha’s artistic heritage while strengthening local livelihoods.

During the visit of the Thomson Commission to Odisha in 1885, Madhu Babu submitted a charter of demands on behalf of the Odia people. He demanded

railway expansion, the appointment of Odias to higher administrative posts, industrial training for workers, and the amalgamation of all Odia-speaking areas. These demands reflected not merely regional aspiration but a comprehensive developmental vision for Odisha.

His literary and cultural contributions were equally profound. Madhu Babu inspired people through his poems, speeches, and writings, all deeply rooted in patriotism and self-respect. His famous poem “Utkal Sintaan” remains a stirring call to courage and collective identity. Its opening sentiment—asking why one should fear when Mother Odisha is in tears—continues to resonate powerfully with every Odia.

His love for the Odia language was uncompromising. He opposed attempts to impose Bengali and later Hindi in administrative and judicial spaces where Odia rightfully belonged. His struggle ensured that linguistic dignity became a central part of Odisha’s identity.

Even decades after his death, his relevance remains undiminished. In 2019, former Governor Ganesh Lal, during his visit to Madhu Babu’s birthplace at Satyabhamapur village, observed that such a legendary son of the soil deserved the Bharat Ratna posthumously.

Today, the ruling establishment must promote the Odia language and protect Odisha’s identity, which would be the most fitting tribute to Madhu Babu. Political leaders must emulate his courage, sacrifice, and commitment to public service rather than merely invoking his name ceremonially. All political parties of Odisha, irrespective of their differences, should collectively demand that the Central Government confer the Bharat Ratna posthumously on Madhubabu for his immense contributions to Odisha.

Madhusudan Das was not simply a leader of his time—he was the moral foundation of Odisha’s modern consciousness. His legacy in law, education, politics, industry, and culture continues to inspire generations. He remains the eternal voice of Odia pride, dignity, and self-respect—the true Utkal Gourab.

ibility; it’s possible only with the participation of every segment of society. A coordinated effort means everyone—government, industry, communities, and individuals—working together.

The government has launched several schemes for water conservation, such as the Abhiyan run by the Jal Shakti Ministry and the Atal Bhujal Yojana.

These schemes aim to improve groundwater management, rainwater harvesting, and water use efficiency. However, their success is only possible with the active participation of local people.

4. The role of community participation

Community efforts can prove to be extremely effective for water conservation in villages and cities.

If traditional water structures—such as ponds, wells, and stepwells—are revived, the water crisis can be significantly alleviated.

Additionally, if local communities are empowered to make decisions in water management, they can conserve their resources more responsibly.

5. Responsibility at the individual level

It’s everyone’s duty to use water wisely. Small steps—like not leaving the tap running, harvesting rainwater, and preventing water wastage—can make a big difference.

If every person adopts water conservation in their daily lives, the collective impact will be extremely positive.

6. Technical and scientific solutions

Modern technology can play an important role in water conservation.

Drip and sprinkler irrigation systems, water recycling, and smart water management systems help save water.

Furthermore, monitoring and management of water resources can be made more effective by using data and digital technology.

7. Education and awareness

It is very important to spread awareness about water conservation.

Through schools, colleges and social campaigns, people have to be made to understand the importance of water and why its conservation is necessary.

Unless there is a change in people’s thinking, no plan can be completely successful.

8. Environmental balance and water

Deforestation, encroachment of water sources and pollution—all these are major causes of water crisis.

If we maintain environmental balance, water sources will automatically be protected. Therefore, water conservation cannot be seen as separate from environmental protection.

conclusion
Water conservation is not just a necessity, but a responsibility—towards us, society and future generations.

Solving this challenge is impossible without coordinated efforts. Only when government policies, social participation, and individual responsibility come together can a lasting and effective solution emerge.

Today the need of the hour is that we consider water not just a resource but the basis of life and work together for its conservation.

Because if we do not save water today, tomorrow will never forgive us.

Dr. Vijay Garg Retired
Principal Malout Punjab

Beyond human calculation: AI enters mathematics

Dr. Vijay Garg

Mathematics has long been considered the purest form of human reasoning. This discipline is based on logic, abstraction, and proof. For centuries, progress has relied on human insight, patience, and creativity. However, today artificial intelligence (AI) is making powerful inroads into this field, raising a fundamental question: Are advanced AI models transforming the practice of mathematics?

The answer is neither a simple yes nor no. Instead, AI is reshaping mathematics in layered, complex ways—enhancing it, accelerating it, and challenging its very philosophy.

1. From calculation to collaboration
Traditionally, mathematicians spent a lot of time performing calculations, examining proofs, and detecting patterns. AI systems are now automating many of these tasks.

Modern AI models can:
Solve complex equations and optimization problems

Generate step-by-step solutions
Verify mathematical proofs with formal rigor
Research shows that AI can even write complete proofs from high-level notations using formal mathematical languages similar to programming code.

This is a big change: AI is no longer just a calculator – it is becoming a collaborator.

2. AI is an idea generator
Perhaps the most exciting development is that in addition to solving existing problems, AI is also playing a key role in creating new mathematics.

AI tools are now capable of:
Suggest conjectures (possible mathematical truths)
Identify hidden patterns in large datasets
Provide examples that challenge assumptions

Recent reports show that AI systems have contributed to research-level results, including resolving long-held assumptions and generating new evidence.

This leads to a new paradigm: mathematical discovery is no longer solely human-driven.

3. A blow to mathematical ability
One of the most dramatic changes is the rapid improvement in the problem-solving skills

of AI.
In 2023, AI grapples with advanced math problems

By 2025, these same systems could solve the most difficult problems in graduate-level courses

Even more astonishing is that AI systems have achieved near-gold medal performance in competitions like the International Mathematical Olympiad, once considered the benchmark of elite human reasoning.

This rapid leap is forcing educators and researchers to reconsider

what is the meaning of mathematics
How Mathematics Should Be Taught

4. Changing the role of the mathematician
As AI takes over routine and structured tasks, the role of human mathematicians is evolving.

The AI’s particularly strong in:
Algebraic manipulation
Pattern Recognition
Repetitive logical steps

This means that traditional procedural skills are becoming less important.
Instead, human mathematicians are moving towards

Asking Deep, Meaningful Questions
Interpreting the results
Ensuring correctness and rigor
Bringing intuition and creativity

In short, mathematicians are moving from problem-solvers to problem-makers.

5. Limitations of AI in Mathematics
Despite its advancements, AI still has significant limitations.

1. Lack of true understanding
AI often relies on pattern recognition rather than actual understanding. It can give the correct answer even when the reason is not fully understood. B. Errors and hallucinations

AI can produce credible but inaccurate evidence, which is dangerous in a field where accuracy is essential.

C. Dependence on human guidance
Even advanced systems perform best under the guidance of expert mathematicians.

Some mathematicians are still skeptical, arguing that AI is still far from making deep contributions to abstract, fundamental theory.

India, Japan Ink Pacts On Health Research, Quantum Technologies

New Delhi, 6/5: India and Japan have signed agreements to strengthen cooperation in health research and quantum technologies, further deepening their strategic partnership in science, technology and innovation, the Ministry of Science & Technology said on Wednesday. The agreements were exchanged during a high-level meeting between Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and Japan's Minister for Science and Technology Policy and Minister of State for Space Policy, Kimi Onoda, who is on a visit to India with a high-level delegation. Moreover, a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) in the field of health and medical devices was exchanged among the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED), the Indian Council of Medical Research



(ICMR) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST), the ministry said. In addition, a Letter of Intent (LoI) on cooperation in quantum science and technology was signed between the Cabinet Office of Japan and the Department of Science and Technology, opening new avenues for collaboration in next-generation technologies. The government has

highlighted that engagement builds on the outcomes of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Japan in August 2025, during which both sides agreed to expand cooperation under the India-Japan Science, Technology and Innovation Partnership across sectors, including industry and startups. Addressing the meeting, Singh said that India and Japan share

a natural synergy in science and technology, with Japan's advanced technological capabilities complementing India's vast pool of skilled human resources. He noted that India's expanding national missions in quantum technologies, cyber-physical systems, electric mobility, clean energy and advanced computing are creating new opportunities for joint research, co-development and industrial partnerships.

Meanwhile, Japanese Minister Onoda appreciated India's rapid economic growth and its growing focus on innovation, particularly the large-scale adoption of artificial intelligence across sectors. However, in the health sector, both sides deliberated on expanding joint research programmes, capacity building and structured funding mechanisms to support collaborative projects.

India Soaring Ahead As Centre Of Innovation And Growth In World: Vietnam President To Lam

New Delhi, 6/5: Vietnamese President To Lam on Wednesday hailed India's rise, describing it as a "centre of growth and innovation in the world", while stating that India and Vietnam give high priority to their bilateral ties. Addressing a joint press meet with Prime Minister Narendra Modi following their talks here, To Lam said: "I am very impressed, and I would like to congratulate India for its leaps and bounds progress. India has been soaring ahead as a centre of growth and innovation in the world. Mr Prime Minister and I have had a very successful discussion. We attach great importance to the outcomes of the 50 years of relations as well as the 10 years of the comprehensive strategic partnership, and we would give high priority to our bilateral relations." "We also shared our vision on the region and the world, and we reached a high level of mutual understanding as to how important the relationship between India and Vietnam is to both countries. We would link together our strategic vision and development strategies to better address the turmoil of the situation in the world today," he added. The Vietnamese President announced that he and



PM Modi agreed to elevate defence and security cooperation to become a "strategic pillar" for contributing to strengthening an environment of peace and stability. "Given this foundation, we agreed to continue to upgrade bilateral relations to an enhanced CSB in the spirit of sharing vision, strategic convergence and substantive cooperation and bring relations between the two countries into greater depth in the following ways. First, we agreed to continue to further deepen political trust, step up high-level engagement and increase the effectiveness of existing cooperation mechanisms. Second, we will elevate defence and security cooperation to become a strategic pillar to contribute to strengthening an environment of

peace and stability," he said. He stated that science, technology, innovation and digital transformation will be a new driver for cooperation between India and Vietnam. He announced that two nations will bring a change in economic cooperation, trade corporation and investment corporation through value chain connectivity, removing barriers and expanding market access. To Lam announced that India and Vietnam agreed to work closely together at regional and international forums, contributing to the maintenance of peace, stability, security and development in the region and the world. He thanked PM Modi and the people of India for extending a warm welcome to him and his delegation. "We would strengthen

people to people to cultural to educational relationship and religious connection to bring about a strong social foundation for bilateral relations. We have also agreed to work closely together at regional and international forums, contributing to the maintenance of peace, stability, security and development in the region and the world on the foundation of respect for international laws, the UN charter and the fundamental principles of international law to protect the legitimate rights and interests and ensure the voice of the developed countries that they shall be heard." He expressed Vietnam's support for India assuming a greater position and role at multilateral forums and working closely with New Delhi to address common challenges faced by the region. "Vietnam supports India assuming a greater position and role at multilateral forums and we would like to work more closely together with India in addressing common challenges facing the region and the world. We also reasserted the importance of the maintenance of an environment of peace, stability, ensuring security, safety and freedom of navigation over flight, addressing of disputes through peaceful means on the basis of international law, including the UNCLOS 1982."

Rajnath Singh To Attend Swearing-In Ceremony Of New Bihar Cabinet In Patna On May 7

New Delhi, 6/5: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will be attending the swearing-in ceremony of the new Bihar Cabinet in Patna on May 7. Rajnath Singh took to social media 'X' and said, "Tomorrow, 07th May, I shall be in Bihar to attend the swearing-in ceremony in Patna. Later in the evening, I shall be visiting Rajasthan to attend the Joint Commanders' Conference to be held in Jaipur. Looking forward." This Cabinet expansion marks a pivotal moment in Bihar politics. It follows the transition of power after Nitish Kumar vacated the Chief Minister's post for senior BJP leader Samrat Choudhary, who was sworn in on April 14. Earlier in the day, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government held a crucial meeting ahead of the much-anticipated Cabinet expansion. The meeting is being viewed as the final round of consultations before the formal announcement of the new ministerial team. According to an official communication issued by the Information and Public Relations Department, Bihar, the Cabinet meeting will be held today at 5:00 P.M. in the Cabinet Hall at the Chief Secretariat in Patna. This will be followed by a press conference at 6:00 P.M. in the Information Building, where key decisions taken during the meeting are expected to be shared with the media. The meeting, led by Chief Minister Samrat



Choudhary, is expected to focus on finalising preparations for the upcoming expansion and ensuring coordination within the NDA alliance. Governor Syed Ata Hasnain will later administer the oath of office and secrecy to the newly-inducted ministers during the expansion ceremony. The Cabinet expansion follows extensive consultations between state leadership and central NDA leadership, including discussions with senior figures of the Bharatiya Janata Party. A key meeting with Union Home Minister, Amit Shah, played a decisive role in shaping the final list of ministers. Further consultations were also held with NDA allies, including Rajiv Ranjan Singh (Lalan Singh), Jitan Ram Manjhi, and Chirag Paswan, reflecting efforts to maintain coalition balance and political coordination within the alliance. In a notable political development, Samrat Choudhary also met

JD(U) National President and former Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. The meeting is being interpreted as a signal of unity within the NDA ahead of the expansion. Sources indicate that the Cabinet expansion will focus on caste balance, regional representation, and inclusion of both experienced leaders and new faces across alliance partners, including JD(U), BJP, LJP (Ram Vilas), HAM(S), and Rashtriya Lok Morcha. The decisions taken in today's meeting are expected to directly shape the final structure of the new Bihar Cabinet. While Choudhary has already taken the oath alongside Deputy Chief Ministers Vijay Kumar Choudhary and Bijendra Prasad Yadav from the JD(U), the upcoming expansion will finalise the distribution of portfolios. All eyes are now on the final number of ministries and the power-sharing agreement between the coalition partners.

India, Vietnam Elevate Ties To Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership: PM Modi

New Delhi, 6/5: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday announced that ties between India and Vietnam have been elevated to Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. While addressing a joint press meet with Vietnamese President To Lam following their talks at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Wednesday, PM Modi called Vietnam a "key pillar" of India's Act East policy and Vision Mahasagar. PM Modi said, "One decade back, during my first visit to Vietnam, Vietnam became India's first Comprehensive Strategic Partner in ASEAN. Since then, our relations have made rapid and comprehensive progress. Along with the civilisational ties, our trade, technology and tourism ties have also strengthened. Building on this strong foundation, today we are

taking our relations to the level of an Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership." Extending a warm welcome to the Vietnamese President, PM Modi said, "I am immensely pleased to extend a hearty welcome to President To Lam in India. After becoming President of Vietnam, his visit to India within just one month, accompanied by a high-level delegation along with several business leaders, clearly demonstrates the priority he accords to India-Vietnam relations." "President To Lam of Vietnam started his visit to India from Bodh Gaya. This reflects the shared civilisational and spiritual heritage of our two nations. Through his visit and our meaningful discussions, we are transforming the goodwill

between us into concrete outcomes," he added. PM Modi stated that more than 1.5 crore people had darshan of Buddhist relics when they were exhibited in Vietnam in 2025. He noted that heritage and development hold significance in the India-Vietnam partnership. He stated that the two nations share a common outlook in the Indo-Pacific region. He announced that India will broaden its ties with ASEAN with Vietnam's cooperation. "Vietnam is a key pillar of India's Act East Policy and Vision Mahasagar. In the Indo-Pacific region as well, we share a common outlook. Through our strengthening defence and security cooperation, we will continue to contribute to the rule of law, peace, stability, and prosperity.

TVK Leader Vijay Meets Governor, Stakes Claim To Form Government In TN

Chennai, 6/5: Seeking to follow through on the dramatic Tamil Nadu Assembly election results, C. Joseph Vijay on Wednesday formally staked claim to form the next government in the state after his Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) emerged as the single-largest party in the 234-member Assembly. Vijay arrived at Lok Bhavan to meet Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar amid unprecedented political excitement and intense speculation over the formation of the next government. Senior TVK leaders, including 'Bussy' Anand, K.A. Sengottaiyan, Aadhav Arjuna, and Arun Raj, accompanied Vijay during the crucial meeting with the Governor. According to sources, Vijay submitted a formal letter to Governor Arlekar seeking an invitation to form the government and assured him that the party would prove its majority on the floor of the Assembly within the stipulated time. The meeting is being viewed as the first major constitutional step towards the formation of a new government in Tamil Nadu under Vijay's leadership. The development comes after the TVK scripted a stunning electoral debut by winning 108 seats in the recently concluded Assembly elections, becoming the single largest party in the state. However, the party fell short of the halfway mark of 118 seats required to form a government on its own. Following the results, Vijay held consultations with newly elected MLAs and senior party leaders. On Tuesday, TVK legislators unanimously elected him as the leader of the legislative party, paving the way for him to stake claim before the Governor. Meanwhile, hectic political activity continues in Chennai, with several parties weighing their options in the post-poll scenario. The Congress has already extended conditional support to TVK, while Left parties and smaller regional outfits are expected to hold internal discussions before taking a final decision on supporting a Vijay-led government.

SC Flags 'Egregious Error' In Granting Bail In Dowry Death Case

New Delhi, 6/5: The Supreme Court has cancelled the bail granted by the Allahabad High Court to a man accused in a dowry death case from Uttar Pradesh, terming the relief "not sustainable in law" and cautioning courts against taking crimes against women "very lightly". A Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Vijay Bishnoi allowed the appeal filed by the father of the deceased woman and directed the accused husband to surrender before jail authorities within one week, failing which coercive steps may be taken. The case relates to the death of a woman, who was found dead under suspicious circumstances at her matrimonial home in Ghaziabad on July 11, 2024, within seven years of her marriage solemnised in February 2019. An FIR lodged by the deceased's father alleged that despite spending over Rs 30 lakh at the time of marriage, including an i20 car, cash, jewellery and household articles, the husband and his family continued demanding an SUV and an additional Rs 10 lakh as dowry. According to the



complaint, the woman was subjected to physical and mental harassment, beaten, abused, and threatened with death over the dowry demands. The FIR further alleged that shortly before her death, the deceased had informed her father over the phone that her in-laws had been assaulting her and threatening to kill her. Investigation in the case culminated in a charge sheet against the husband and his parents under various provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. The Allahabad High Court had granted bail to the

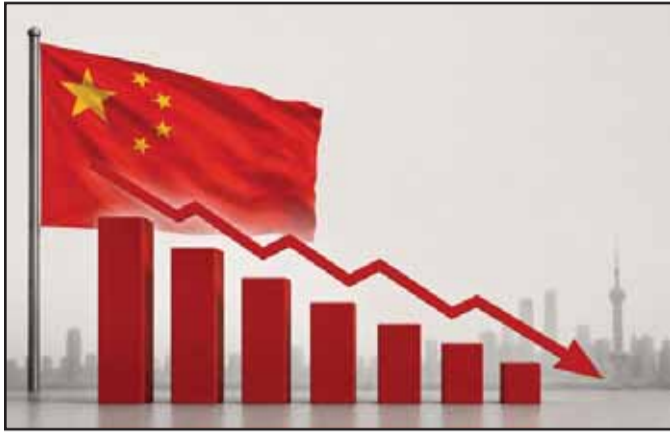
accused husband in August 2025, observing that the cause of death was "asphyxia as a result of ante-mortem hanging" and referring to an alleged delay in lodging the FIR. Setting aside the bail order, the Supreme Court said the Allahabad High Court committed an "egregious error" while exercising discretion in favour of the accused in such a serious offence. "When bail is prayed for, the High Court is expected to consider the nature of the crime and a prima facie case. The allegations levelled by the father in the FIR do disclose more than a prima facie case," the Justice

Pardiwala-led Bench observed. It added that the deceased had died in her matrimonial home within seven years of marriage and there were serious allegations of dowry harassment, attracting the statutory presumption under Section 118 of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023. Referring to the post-mortem report, which recorded multiple ante-mortem injuries, including contusions on the face, chest, and arms, as well as a ligature mark around the neck, the top court said, "The post-mortem report indicates a ligature mark measuring 32 x 2 cm around the neck. What does this indicate? Prima facie, it suggests that the deceased was strangled to death." Expressing concern over rising dowry deaths, the Supreme Court said that young married women were being "killed mercilessly" in matrimonial homes for want of dowry. "A young girl does not get married to be killed mercilessly at her matrimonial home for want of dowry. This is a serious problem in some sections of the society in this country, more particularly in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Karnataka,

respectively," the Justice Pardiwala-led Bench said, adding that despite educational progress and efforts to empower women, they continue to suffer due to dowry demands after marriage. Citing official data, the apex court noted that 6,156 people lost their lives in dowry death cases across the country in 2023, with Uttar Pradesh recording the highest number of such deaths at 2,122, followed by Bihar with 1,143. It further observed that bail courts must remain cautious so that their orders are not perceived by society as trivialising serious crimes against women. "All that we want to convey is that a bail court at any level should remain very careful to ensure that its order... should not be seen or read by the society at large that the courts are taking serious crimes against women very lightly," the Justice Pardiwala-led Bench said. While cancelling the bail, the apex court clarified that the observations made in its order were confined to the question of bail and should not influence the trial court while deciding the guilt or innocence of the accused.

China's Economy Loses Steam Amid Weak Demand, Ageing Population: Report

New Delhi, 6/7: China's economy is losing momentum as weak domestic demand and a rapidly ageing population weigh on growth, signalling deeper structural challenges despite the country maintaining around 5 per cent expansion in 2025 and early 2026, a report has said. A report by Modern Diplomacy highlighted that the headline growth figure suggests a clear slowdown from the double-digit expansion China once recorded and the 6-8 per cent range seen in the previous decade. It further flagged that the biggest concern is persistently weak household spending. "People are not buying enough to drive strong growth," the report said. At the same time, external demand is also under strain. Exports, which have historically supported China's economic rise, are slowing due to global uncertainty, geopolitical



tensions and rising trade barriers. Moreover, between 2012 and 2017, China's growth was supported by strong consumption, robust investment and stable trade. However, from 2017 onwards, GDP growth weakened as domestic demand softened and export contributions declined. Adding to the challenge is China's changing demographic

profile. According to the report, the country's population is ageing and shrinking, leading to a steady decline in the working-age population. With labour supply tightening, productivity gains have become the primary source of growth. However, productivity improvements have also slowed in recent years, raising concerns about the sustainability of

future expansion. In addition, investment has shown signs of fatigue. Fixed investment turned negative in 2025, reflecting weaker business sentiment and structural adjustments within the economy. Exports are also facing growing pressure from shifting global supply chains, with some manufacturing activity moving to alternative destinations in Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, higher tariffs and trade restrictions, particularly from the US, have further impacted China's export competitiveness. Looking ahead, the report said China's growth outlook will depend heavily on its ability to boost productivity and offset the impact of a shrinking workforce. However, slow progress in strengthening consumer demand remains a key risk.

Time For West To Appreciate Strength Of Indian Democracy: Norwegian Diplomat After BJP's Historic Bengal Win

Oslo: After the BJP's historic win in West Bengal for the first time after Independence, Erik Solheim, Norwegian diplomat and former minister of Climate and Environment of Norway, said that it is time the West appreciates the strength of Indian democracy. Erik Solheim took to social media 'X' and said, "Big victory for Prime Minister Modi in India state elections. It's time the West appreciates the strength of Indian democracy! BJP has won a massive victory in state elections in West Bengal and Assam. The turnout was extraordinarily high, more than 90 per cent, far above normal participation in European and American elections. With a population of 106 million, West Bengal is much larger than any nation in the European Union, so this matters." Erik Solheim further



said that the result should give western media a pause. "The result should give western media a pause. They very often present Prime Minister Modi as a threat to democracy and his policies as some sort of Hindu extremism. The reality is exactly the opposite. India is not only the world's largest democracy in size - it is also one of the most solid in content because it is not a western

transplant but rooted in Indian traditions and history," he claimed. He further said that the state election produced surprising results in West Bengal and Kerala and a shocking one in Tamil Nadu. "The election produced surprising results in West Bengal and Kerala and a shocking one in Tamil Nadu. Still the losers accept defeat. The turnout was high. There was close to zero violence. Every citizen gets the ballot papers - even in the most remote places. The right to free speech is uncontested and Indians use it widely," he said. The Norwegian diplomat further said that when the BJP performed below expectations in the 2024 Parliament elections, many in western media wrote as if it was the beginning of the end for PM Modi. "When BJP

performed below expectations in the 2024 Parliament elections, many in western media wrote as if it was the beginning of the end for Modi. Since then the BJP has won state elections in Odisha, Haryana, Delhi, Maharashtra, Bihar - and now Assam and West Bengal. What a revenge," he said. "At a time when democracy is threatened in the US and European democracies struggle to deliver, we should look to India for inspiration, not fear," he said. Meanwhile, on Tuesday, US President Donald Trump congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on what the White House described as a "historic, and decisive election victory" in West Bengal, where the BJP has secured a breakthrough win.

Hormuz Crisis Fuels Global Oil Fears

Washington, 6/5: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio warned that Iran's actions could trigger broader economic instability as the increasing tensions in the Strait of Hormuz and fears of prolonged disruption to one of the world's busiest energy corridors are increasing pressure on global oil markets. At the White House news conference, Rubio said Iran's attempts to control shipping through the Strait of Hormuz threatened fuel supplies, global trade and international shipping lanes relied upon by major economies around the world. This is approximately a quarter of the world's oil trade," Rubio said, referring to the Strait of Hormuz. "The Iranian regime cannot be allowed to dictate who uses this vital waterway." The remarks came as the Trump administration launched "Project Freedom", a military operation designed to escort commercial vessels through the narrow maritime corridor linking the Persian Gulf to global markets. Rubio said commercial ships carrying fuel, fertiliser and

humanitarian supplies had been stranded for weeks because of Iranian attacks on shipping and the laying of mines in international waters. "There's humanitarian aid destined for different countries in the world that's stranded in the Persian Gulf right now," Rubio said. "It's the fertiliser that they need for their food and crops that's stranded." Rubio acknowledged growing concerns over fuel prices inside the United States as global oil markets reacted to the crisis. "The average price of gas in the country right now is \$4.50," one reporter noted during the briefing. Rubio said the US economy remained more insulated than many others because of domestic energy production, but admitted Americans were still feeling the impact. "We're obviously still vulnerable to some extent to global prices," Rubio said. "That's not welcome news to Americans that are paying more at the pump." He argued that the situation demonstrated why Washington

viewed Iran's nuclear ambitions as a direct threat to global economic stability. "If Iran had a nuclear weapon and they decided to close the Straits and make our gas prices like \$9 a gallon or \$8 a gallon, we wouldn't be able to do anything about it," Rubio said. Rubio repeatedly accused Iran of trying to establish permanent control over an international shipping lane. "We cannot live in a world where a country can decide now we own the international shipping lane and you have to pay us if you want to use it," he said. The secretary of state also warned that allowing Iran's actions to go unaddressed could encourage similar behaviour elsewhere. "I can identify for you six or seven vital shipping lanes around the world that some countries can decide, guess what? If Iran was able to do it, we're going to do it too," Rubio said. The administration said the US military had already begun escorting vessels through the Strait under a "protective bubble" created by naval and air assets.

India's Mobility Pacts With 23 Countries Must Be Expanded To Protect Migrants: MOS Kirti Vardhan Singh

United Nation, 6/5: India has made 27 migration and mobility agreements with 23 countries and such partnerships must be expanded to provide safe pathways for emigration and protection of the diaspora, according to Kirti Vardhan Singh, the Minister of State for External Affairs. The agreements facilitate "structured and skills-based mobility, with a strong emphasis on worker welfare, social protection, and fair recruitment practices", he said on Tuesday at the Second International Migration Review Forum (IMRF). "We believe such partnerships must continue to be strengthened and expanded for safeguarding the rights of our citizens abroad", he said. Among the agreements covering worker mobility, the significant ones include pact with the European Union signed in January, with Britain last July, and most recently with New Zealand last



month. The IMRF is a review of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, adopted in 2018 at the UN, undertaken every four years. Singh said that for India, enhancing to an international level the skills of people wanting to go abroad is "a cornerstone of our migration governance". "Skill India International Centres and digital platforms align our workforce with global standards" and "we

are working with partner countries to advance mutual recognition of skills", he said. India also has pre-departure orientation programmes to ensure that migrants are well-informed and better prepared for their jobs abroad, he added. The Digital Public Infrastructure has played a "transformative role" in protecting migrant workers and ensuring transparency in the recruitment and deployment

processes. The digital platforms used for this are the eMigrate system, the National Career Service portal, and the Skill India Digital Hub, he said. The welfare and protection of overseas Indians are at the core of the nation's migration policies, he said. "We have strengthened mechanisms to support migrants particularly those in vulnerable situations through initiatives such as the Indian Community Welfare Fund, and the MADAD portal", Singh said. The MADAD portal, which gets its name from the Hindi word for help, enables overseas Indians to register complaints online with their phones about their employment, and other issues with Indian government agencies and monitor their progress. "Our responsive consular services also provide timely assistance, legal, financial, and insurance coverage to our nationals overseas", Singh said.

EAM Jaishankar Arrives In Suriname, To Hold Bilateral Talks With Top Leadership

Paramaribo: External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar on Wednesday (Indian time) arrived in Suriname in the second leg of his three-nation visit and was welcomed by his counterpart, Melvin Bouva. In a post on X, the EAM said, "Arrived in Paramaribo, Suriname, for my first visit. Really touched to be personally received by FM Melvin Bouva. Looking forward to our talks tomorrow." He will hold a series of bilateral talks with

the Suriname leadership during his visit to boost cooperation. Following this, EAM Jaishankar will also visit Trinidad and Tobago. Earlier, he visited Jamaica. The MEA said these countries share a special connection with India owing to the presence of Girmitiya communities. 'Girmitiyas' were Indian indentured labourers who left India in the mid to late 19th century to work in British colonies, where many eventually settled.

The term 'Girmit' is a mispronunciation of 'agreement', referring to the contract under which they migrated. Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said that India will be supplying 30 dialysis units along with 40 fishing boats with engines, 200 GPS devices and related equipment to Jamaica. EAM Jaishankar had announced the decision to supply dialysis units, fishing boats and GPS devices as support to Jamaica's recovery

following last year's devastating Hurricane Melissa. He also handed over 10 BHISHM emergency medical units to the Caribbean nation during the first-ever bilateral visit by an External Affairs Minister of India to Jamaica. During his May 2-4 visit, EAM Jaishankar also called on Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness and held delegation-level talks with Kamina Johnson-Smith, Jamaica's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. The

MEA stated that three Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were signed between India and Jamaica in the areas of health cooperation, solarisation of The Hugh Lawson Shearer Building, and broadcasting. Both sides also reviewed the status of implementation of existing agreements in digital transformation, culture, sports, and digital payments, and emphasised the importance of ensuring tangible outcomes. According to the

statement, both sides discussed expanding cooperation in priority sectors, including healthcare, infrastructure, digitalisation, agriculture, education, tourism, and capacity building. India reiterated its commitment through enhanced ITEC training slots, particularly for defence training, from six to 34 slots. They also discussed capacity building with ICCR scholarships, and digital learning platforms such as E-Vidyabharati and iGOT

Karmyogi. India appreciated Jamaica's support for its candidature for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for 2028-29, it added. The statement mentioned that both sides condemned terrorism in all its forms and reiterated the need for early finalisation of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT). EAM also announced a contribution of JMD two million for the celebration of India Arrival Day on May 10.

Excited To Build Stronger Ties: US Ambassador Ahead Of Marco Rubio's India Visit

New Delhi, 6/5: US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor on Wednesday spoke about the growing and evolving partnership between United States and India while also sharing excitement about future partnerships that will take the bilateral relations to new heights. The US Ambassador's comments come ahead of US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's upcoming India visit. Gor described Rubio as a "good friend" and underlined the importance that the US attaches to its ties with India. "Looking forward to welcoming my good friend Secretary Rubio to India! The United States deeply values our growing partnership with India, and we are excited to build even stronger ties that will benefit both our nations and the world. See you soon, Mr. Secretary!" Gor posted on X. Gor's statement comes amid growing diplomatic engagement between India and the US. Notably, last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump had a telephonic conversation, discussing the current situation in West Asia as well as ways to



further strengthen the bilateral partnership. "Received a call from my friend President Donald Trump. We reviewed the substantial progress achieved in our bilateral cooperation in various sectors. We are committed to further strengthening our Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership in all areas," PM Modi posted on X after the phone call on April 14. "We also discussed the situation in West Asia and stressed the importance of keeping the Strait of Hormuz open and secure," he wrote further. Last month, Sergio Gor extended a warm welcome to Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri to the

White House during his official visit to the US and stated that Rubio looks forward to visiting India in May. In a post on X, Gor wrote, "Welcome to the White House Vikram Misri! Productive meeting with Marco Rubio that focused on our bilateral relationship, especially trade, critical minerals, defense and the Quad. Secretary Rubio looks forward to visiting India next month!" India and the United States expanded cooperation on energy, critical technologies and defence during Vikram Misri's meetings with senior US officials, signalling closer strategic alignment.

Indian Companies Plan To Invest Over \$20.5 Billion In US: Sergio Gor

New Delhi, 6/5: Indian companies have lined up investments worth over \$20.5 billion across sectors such as technology, manufacturing and pharmaceuticals in the United States, US Ambassador to India, Sergio Gor, said on Wednesday, describing the momentum as a direct outcome of President Donald Trump's economic leadership. In a post on social media platform X, the envoy said that 12 Indian companies announced fresh investments worth \$1.1 billion in a single day, adding to a growing pipeline of commitments that he said were creating 'real American jobs' and strengthening supply chains between the two countries. "These partnerships are creating real American jobs and building stronger supply chains," Gor wrote. He further added that the investment flow was 'proof that when the world's largest democracies do business together, everyone wins.'

The ambassador's remarks come at a time when India and the United States are deepening economic ties across multiple fronts, with bilateral trade, defence cooperation and technology partnerships all gaining pace under the current administrations in both countries. Gor, however, did not disclose the names of the 12 Indian companies that announced investments in the US. Earlier in March, the US trade deficit widened as imports outpaced exports, even as the American goods gap with India narrowed compared to the same period last year. The US Census Bureau and the Bureau of Economic Analysis said the overall goods and services deficit rose to \$60.3 billion in the month, up \$2.5 billion from a revised \$57.8 billion in February. Moreover, US exports in March stood at \$320.9 billion, an increase of \$6.2 billion from February, while imports climbed by \$8.7 billion to \$381.2 billion. The detailed country data showed US exports to India rose to about \$4.3 billion in March, while imports from India totalled around \$8.4 billion.

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SBI Distributes Tablets to Meritorious MBBS Students at SCB Medical College

Bhubaneswar, 6/5 (DMS): State Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Circle, distributed tablet computers to 13 underprivileged yet meritorious MBBS students of SCB Medical College and Hospital in a function organised at the SBI SCB Medical College Campus Branch. The programme was graced by the Dean of the institution, Dr. Pratibha Panda, who attended as the Chief Guest. Addressing the students, she remarked that they are truly blessed to have secured admission to SCB Medical College and advised them to strive for excellence in the medical field and serve society with dedication. The Regional Manager of SBI, Cuttack Region, Ashmin Anupam Praharaj, also graced the occasion and delivered motivational advice



to the students. He highlighted the Bank's continued commitment towards the upliftment of needy and underprivileged sections of society and assured ongoing support to meritorious students in their academic pursuits. The

function was conducted by the Chief Manager, Biswajit Routray. All staff members of the SCB Branch were present, along with officials from the Regional Business Office, including Niranjan Mohapatra, Bijaya

Kumar Mohapatra and Sanjit Das. The initiative reflects SBI's dedication to promoting education and empowering deserving students through meaningful support.

India's Real Estate Sentiment Enters Cautious Phase Over Global Volatility, Office Market Strong

New Delhi, 6/5: Stakeholder sentiment in India's real estate sector entered into a cautious phase in Q1 2026 over global macroeconomic volatility, a report said on Wednesday. The report from Knight Frank and NAREDCO said its quarterly index Current Sentiment Score fell to 49 from 60 and the Future Sentiment Score eased to a neutral 50 from 61. The index captures supply-side and financial institution views on economic conditions and funding availability. "The moderation in sentiment is largely driven by global macroeconomic volatility. Elevated crude oil prices have intensified inflationary trends, impacting construction and logistics costs, affecting project viability," the report said. Even as India's economic fundamentals remain largely stable, geopolitical conditions are beginning to influence real estate demand and supply dynamics. Residential activity showed signs of



recalibration after a prolonged growth cycle as sales and new launches moderated in Q1 2026. "Demand is expected to further soften in the near term, even as property prices remain firm or continue rising. This divergence between demand moderation and price resilience highlights the structural cost challenges currently shaping the market," the report noted. Around

52 per cent of respondents expect housing sales to drop, even as 73 per cent foresee prices rising or remaining stable due to rising materials costs, labour costs and loan costs. The divergence between weakening demand sentiment and firm pricing expectations highlights that rising structural costs are driving the residential market, it added. "Real estate sentiment has moderated amid global

macroeconomic headwinds and inflationary pressures; however, this reflects short-term caution among stakeholders rather than any weakening in the residential market's underlying strength," said Praveen Jain, National President, NAREDCO. He called the recent softening in residential sentiment a natural recalibration following a sustained growth phase, with end-user demand and steady price appreciation continuing to support resilience. The report noted that nearly half of stakeholders expect fewer new project launches in the near term. By contrast, the outlook on office segment remained strong, with 41 per cent of respondents expecting improvement in leasing demand. A similar trend is observed in the office supply outlook with nearly half of the stakeholders expecting more completions, and others expecting stable or lower supply.

India's Air Traffic Dips In April Amid Disruptions Due To Middle East Crisis

New Delhi, 6/5: India's air traffic registered a sequential slowdown in April compared to March for both domestic and international passengers, according to data compiled by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The downturn comes in the backdrop of the Middle East conflict which led to sharp decline in international flights. Domestic air traffic stood at 140.8 lakh passengers, which represents a 4 per cent drop (year-on-year) as well as month-on-month. International traffic saw a sharper decline of 20 per cent in April compared to March as the number of air passengers fell to 28.3 lakh passengers. Meanwhile, the UAE General Civil Aviation Authority announced full resumption of normal air navigation operations within the UAE airspace and the lifting of temporary precautionary measures on Saturday. Consequently, Indian and the UAE carriers have started operating more flights from the UAE to various destinations in India.

Gold, Silver Prices Gain Up To 3 Pc On Weak Dollar, Oil Prices

Mumbai, 6/5: Gold and silver traded higher on Wednesday, tracking weakness in oil prices and the dollar index, with both precious metals gaining up to 3 per cent. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures (June 5) opened at Rs 1,52,000 per 10 grams, up Rs 2,247 or 1.5 per cent from the previous close of Rs 1,49,753. At 11:30 am, gold was trading at Rs 1,52,419, up Rs 2,666 or 1.78 per cent. So far in the session, the yellow metal has touched an intraday high of Rs 1,52,450, up Rs 2,697 or 1.8 per cent. At the intraday low, it was still trading higher by Rs 1,900 or 1.26 per cent at Rs 1,51,653. Meanwhile, silver futures (July 3) opened at Rs 2,49,316 per kg — also the intraday low so far — a jump of Rs 5,000 or 2.04 per cent from the previous close. At the time of filing the report, it was trading at Rs 2,51,699, up Rs 7,383 or 3.02 per cent. In the international market as well, precious metals were trading higher. COMEX gold



was up 1.92 per cent at \$4,656 per ounce, while silver gained 3.45 per cent to \$76.12 per ounce. Analysts said gold prices edged higher after recovering from a one-month low, supported by easing concerns over US-Iran tensions and some stability in oil prices. However, elevated crude prices and expectations of a prolonged higher interest rate environment continue to cap gains in bullion, they added. In addition, the dollar index slipped 0.34 per cent to 97.97. The

dollar index measures the US dollar's strength against a basket of six major currencies, the euro, Japanese yen, pound sterling, Canadian dollar, Swedish krona and Swiss franc. Typically, a weaker dollar supports prices of precious metals like gold and silver. On Tuesday, international oil benchmark Brent crude fell 2.30 per cent to \$107.33 per barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate crude declined 3 per cent to \$99.12 per barrel.

Claude Mythos AI sparks urgent national security review for Indian banking systems

NEWDELHI, 6/5: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman chaired a high-level meeting in New Delhi to address emerging threats from an unreleased Artificial Intelligence model called Claude Mythos. This advanced system, developed by the research firm Anthropic, possesses a startling ability to identify and exploit software vulnerabilities at a speed that far exceeds human capacity. During the session, which included top officials from the Reserve Bank of India and major public sector banks, the Minister stressed that the financial sector must prepare for a new era of "AI-born" risks. Claude Mythos is not a typical generative AI tool but a specialized cybersecurity model. Internal evaluations suggest it can uncover "zero-day" vulnerabilities — flaws unknown even to the software developers — within hours. It has already

identified thousands of security gaps in major operating systems, including bugs that have remained hidden for nearly thirty years. While Anthropic has restricted access to a small group of global tech giants to help patch these holes, Indian regulators fear that similar technology in the hands of malicious actors could devastate digital infrastructure. Finance Ministry officials directed the Indian Banks' Association to establish a real-time threat intelligence sharing mechanism. This framework will work in tandem with CERT-In to ensure that any detected vulnerability is neutralized before it can be exploited. India is also reportedly engaging with international partners, including the United States, to seek early access to such defensive tools.

Sensex Surges 940 Points, Nifty Tops 24,300 Amid US-Iran Deal Hopes

Mumbai, 6/5: Indian equity benchmarks staged a strong late-session rally on Wednesday, with both the Nifty and the Sensex closing sharply higher as global cues turned favourable following a steep drop in crude oil prices. The Nifty climbed 298.15 points, or 1.24 per cent, to settle at 24,330.95, while the Sensex surged 940.73 points, or 1.22 per cent, to end at 77,958.52. Commenting on Nifty technical outlook, experts said that the markets staged a strong rebound, with Nifty closing above the immediate resistance at 24,300 levels.

"The index has established a strong support zone around 24,000, which aligns with both the 21-DMA and 50-DMA," an analyst stated. "Additionally, Nifty has broken out of a symmetrical triangle pattern on the daily chart, indicating a positive shift in the short-term structure with potential upside towards 24,500 levels," as per the expert. The rally gathered momentum in the second half of the trading session after reports suggested a potential



breakthrough in diplomatic talks between the United States and Iran. On the equities front, gains were led by heavyweight stocks such as InterGlobe Aviation, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, and Shriram Finance, which emerged as the top performers on the Nifty index. Broader markets mirrored the upbeat sentiment, with the Nifty MidCap index advancing 1.76 per cent and the Nifty SmallCap index rising 1.93 per cent. Sectorally, banking and real estate stocks led the rally. Indices tracking PSU banks, private banks, banking stocks and realty

companies outperformed the broader market, benefiting from improved risk appetite. In contrast, the FMCG sector lagged behind, emerging as the worst-performing segment of the day. Experts said that the sharp fall in crude prices, coupled with optimism over easing geopolitical tensions, provided a strong tailwind to domestic equities, helping markets close near the day's highs. "With input cost pressures and FX risks still present, a selective investment approach is advisable," an analyst explained.

India-EU Launch Rs 169 Crore EV Battery Recycling Drive, Proposals Open Till Sept 15

New Delhi, 6/5: India and the European Union have deepened their clean energy partnership with the launch of a third coordinated call for proposals on recycling electric vehicle (EV) batteries, under the India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC). The initiative, part of Working Group 2 on Green and Clean Energy Technologies, sets a submission deadline of September 15, 2026. The joint programme comes with a funding pool of about Rs 169 crore and aims to address one of the most critical challenges in the EV ecosystem — sustainable battery recycling and recovery of key raw materials. The funding will be supported by the European Union's Horizon Europe programme, while India's Ministry of Heavy Industries will back domestic participation. The call for proposals is designed to boost innovation in advanced recycling technologies, with a focus on high-efficiency recovery of valuable materials such as lithium, graphite and cobalt. It will also prioritise the development of safe, digitalised collection systems and support pilot-scale demonstrations of new processes. A key highlight of the initiative is the establishment of a



joint India-EU pilot line in India, which will enable real-world testing and faster industrial deployment of these technologies. The programme will specifically target areas such as achieving high recovery rates, handling mixed battery chemistries, improving logistics with an inclusive approach, and ensuring safety standards while promoting second-life applications of batteries. These efforts are expected to contribute to a circular economy while reducing dependence on imported critical minerals. Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, Prof. Ajay Kumar Sood, described the launch as a significant step in strengthening the India-EU strategic partnership.

He noted that as India's EV market expands rapidly, building a strong domestic recycling ecosystem is crucial for both resource security and environmental sustainability. Echoing similar sentiments, European Union Ambassador to India Herve Delphin highlighted the central role of batteries in the global green transition. He said the initiative aims to bridge the gap between innovation and real-world application, while also strengthening mineral security and advancing shared climate goals. Dr. Parvinder Maini, Scientific Secretary at the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser, said the collaboration would accelerate India's transition towards a circular economy.

Future of Finance Arrives As Anthropic Unveils Ready to Run Agents for Finance Institutions

NEWDELHI, 6/5: Anthropic has officially deployed ten specialised AI agent templates designed to automate core functions within the banking and insurance sectors. Revealed at a major industry event in New York, these tools target high-volume tasks such as screening Know Your Customer (KYC) files, building financial pitchbooks, and performing valuation reviews. By integrating directly into existing workflows, these agents aim to streamline operations that traditionally require hundreds of manual hours from junior staff. Financial services now represent the second-largest revenue stream for Anthropic, trailing only the technology sector itself. This strategic pivot toward high-stakes enterprise applications comes as the firm deepens its partnership with major data providers. Through new connectors, including a dedicated Moody's app, Claude can now access the specific data environments that professionals use daily. Users can deploy these agents as plugins within Claude



Cowork or as autonomous managed entities on the broader Claude platform. Industry analysts are monitoring the potential ripple effects on the global software services market. Previous releases from this AI developer triggered significant volatility in the valuations of major SaaS firms like Infosys and TCS, as investors weigh the cost-efficiency of autonomous agents against traditional human-led outsourcing models. In Odisha, where the growing IT sector in Bhubaneswar relies heavily on financial backend processing, such shifts in

automation technology are particularly relevant for future workforce planning. Efficiency remains the central pitch for these templates. A "pitch agent," for example, can simultaneously generate a comparable model in Excel, a presentation in PowerPoint, and a draft cover note in Outlook. Despite the high level of autonomy, the developer maintains that human oversight is baked into the system, requiring professionals to review and approve all AI-generated outputs before they are finalized or sent to clients.

Kangana Ranaut's 'Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata' to release on June 12



The makers of 'Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata' have locked June 12, 2026, as the film's theatrical release date, unveiling a striking poster that pays tribute to unsung heroes who chose duty over fear during a night of terror. Starring Kangana Ranaut, the edgy true-story thriller shifts focus from conventional depictions of violence to the quiet resilience and humanity displayed inside government hospitals during a crisis. Inspired by real events, the film spotlights the courage of hospital staff who stood firm while chaos unfolded outside. Set against a backdrop of terror, the narrative places its nerve centre within hospital corridors and wards-spaces defined by pressure and urgency, where fear was met with compassion, presence of mind, and collective resolve. The story chronicles how nurses, ward boys, cleaners, lift operators, security staff, and administrative workers came together to protect lives. While terror claimed lives outside, inside Cama Hospital, 400 lives were saved, underscoring a night when humanity rose above fear. Reflecting on the film, Kangana Ranaut said, as per a press statement, "We usually celebrate big, dramatic acts of heroism, but real courage is much quieter, it steps in, stays back, and does what needs to be done. Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata tells an untold story of courage, sacrifice, humanity, and unity, of ordinary people who stood between terror and life itself. This is desh bhakti in its truest sense, where duty turns into action. I feel proud to be part of a story that pays tribute to those who held the city together in its toughest moments, and I'm excited for audiences watch it on the big screen on June 12." Producer Jayantilal Gada of Pen Studios emphasised the film's core message and said, "At Pen Studios, we've always believed that the spirit of the country lies in its people. Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata brings that out through a story of a vulnerable time and strong women. We trusted Manoj's vision and Kangana's performance to do justice to it, and we're proud to present it on June 12." Writer-director Manoj Tapadia described the film as more than a thriller. "On June 12, audiences will witness a tense, emotional, and deeply human thriller. But at its core, Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata is about something much larger than terror, it is about the triumph of courage over fear, compassion over chaos, and sacrifice in the face of danger. It tells the story of ordinary people, especially women, who made extraordinary life-and-death choices when it mattered most. For me, this film is about honoring the unsung heroes who remind us that true bravery often comes from the most unexpected places," he said. Presented by Pen Studios, the film is produced by Pen Studios, Manikarnika Films, and Paramhans Creations, in association with Eunoia Films LLP and Floating Rocks Entertainment Pvt Ltd. It will be distributed by Pen Marudhar. Alongside Kangana Ranaut, the ensemble cast includes Girija Oak, Smita Tambe, Amrutha Namdev, Esha Dey, Priya Berde, Asha Shelar, Suhita Thatte, Rasika Aghase, Aditya Mishra, and Zahid Khan. 'Bharat Bhhagya Viddhaata' is slated for a theatrical release on June 12, 2026.

Nick Jonas gives romantic 'Princess Diaries' nod to Priyanka Chopra, fans call her "queen"



Delighting the fans across social media, singer-actor Nick Jonas shared a throwback video featuring wife-actor Priyanka Chopra from their Golden Globes 2026 appearance, offering a glimpse into their off-carpet chemistry. Taking to Instagram, Jonas posted a reel from a hotel room where the couple were seen getting ready for the prestigious event. The video is set to the iconic dialogue from the 2001 film 'Princess Diaries': "Princess, look out the window, and welcome to Genovia." The line was dedicated to Priyanka, who appears in the clip standing by a window in a blue gown, while Jonas captioned the post with a simple blue heart. The couple had turned heads at the Golden Globes 2026, arriving together and making a striking impression on the red carpet. Priyanka wore a blue off-the-shoulder tiered Dior gown paired with Bulgari jewellery, while Jonas complemented her look in a classic tuxedo and bow tie. Soon after Jonas shared the video, fans flooded the comments section with affectionate messages. One follower wrote, "Princess is now a Queen," while others called for "more cute couple stuff" and praised their "good bonding." The post comes at a time when the couple's absence from the Met Gala 2026 has been noted by fans. At the 2025 edition of the event, themed "Superfine: Tailoring Black Style," the duo made a memorable appearance in coordinated retro-inspired black and white outfits. Known as regulars at the Met Gala, they have often treated the event as a high-fashion date night. Their association with the Met Gala dates back to 2017, when they made their first public appearance together, before they were a couple. Both dressed by Ralph Lauren, they attended the event as "friends," marking the beginning of a relationship that has since become one of the most adored couples of the tinsel town. Priyanka and Nick, who became parents in 2022, are raising their daughter Malti Marie. On the professional front, Priyanka was last seen in 'The Bluff' and is preparing for her upcoming film 'Varanasi,' directed by SS Rajamouli, slated for release in 2027. The second season of her series 'Citadel' began streaming on May 6. Nick Jonas, meanwhile, continues to expand his acting portfolio. He is set to star in an untitled romantic comedy directed by Ari Sandel. The film follows a bachelor whose life changes after inheriting his cousin's infant child, with complications arising when the child's godmother enters the picture.

SPORTS

Sanju Samson Hammers Unbeaten 87 as Chennai Super Kings Crush Delhi Capitals In IPL 2026

NEWDELHI, 6/5: Chennai Super Kings revived their playoff ambitions with a commanding eight-wicket win over Delhi Capitals at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Tuesday. Chasing a target of 156 on a surface that offered grip and low bounce, the visitors reached the finish line with 15 balls to spare. Sanju Samson played a masterclass, finishing on an unbeaten 87 from just 52 deliveries, including seven boundaries and six maximums. Earlier in the evening, the home side struggled to find rhythm after choosing to bat. Left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein set an early tone with an economical spell of 1/19, bowling 14 dot balls to frustrate the top order. Noor Ahmad further tightened the screws by removing Nitish Rana and Karun Nair in quick succession. Delhi slumped to 69/5 before a 65-run partnership between Tristan Stubbs and Sameer Rizvi helped them reach 155/7. This venue historically favors spinners during the later stages of the



tournament, a factor that the Chennai management exploited perfectly by utilizing their slow-bowling arsenal. Chennai lost captain Rituraj Gaikwad early, but the arrival of Samson changed the momentum. He navigated the tricky middle overs with composure before launching a fierce attack on the Delhi bowlers. Kartik Sharma provided excellent support at the other end, scoring 41 not out as the pair shared an unbroken 114-run stand. Their partnership ensured the required run rate never became a concern, allowing Chennai to boost their net run rate significantly. This win pushes the defending champions to sixth place on the points table with ten points from ten matches. While Delhi Capitals now face a must-win situation in their remaining games, Chennai heads back home with renewed confidence for the final stretch of the league stage.

Asian U15 & U17 Boxing: Indians Continue Strong Showing With Multiple Wins In Tashkent

Tashkent, 6/5: India's young boxers delivered another day of impressive performances at the Asian Boxing U15 & U17 Championships 2026, registering multiple victories across U-15 and U-17 categories in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. In the U-15 boys' competition, Nongpoknganba Meitei Oina (46kg) secured a convincing 5:0 victory over Kazakhstan's Abdurakhman Vushanlo, while Parshant (49kg) mirrored the result with a dominant 5:0 win against Bakdaulet Akhmet. Mohd Yasser (58kg) stood out with a commanding performance, sealing his bout via RSC in the first round against



Kyrgyzstan's Akbarzhan Nabidzhanov. Nivesh Pal (54kg) also impressed with a 5:0 victory over Kazakhstan's Adilet Galiyev, while Ranveer (66kg) progressed after a

walkover win against Chinese Taipei's Ying-Chieh Chen. In other bouts, Lilmani Singh Lukram (61kg) went down via RSC in the first round against Uzbekistan's Azizbek Egamberganov, and Mehul Rana (70kg) suffered an RSC loss in the opening round against Kazakhstan's Ayan Bauyrzhan. In the U-17 boys' evening session, Pal Nivesh (54kg) continued his strong form with another 5:0 win over Adilet Galiyev of Kazakhstan. Ranveer (66kg) registered a victory by ABD against Chinese Taipei's Ying-Chieh Chen. Lakshay Phogat (75kg) delivered a dominant display, clinching a first-round RSC win against Sri Lanka's R a n c h i g o d a g a m a Arachchila. However, Pradeep (63kg) and Hanjra Jaideep Singh (80kg) faced tough opponents and went down 0:5 against Uzbekistan's Rusheen Saydullaev and Kazakhstan's Alibek Alpamys, respectively.

Shashi Shekhar Vempati appointed as CBFC Chairperson

Shashi Shekhar Vempati has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). "The Government of India, through a notification issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting dated May 6, 2026, has appointed Shri Shashi Shekhar Vempati as the Chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). He shall hold office for a period of three years from the date of joining," said an official release. Consequent upon the elevation of Prasoon Joshi as Chairman of Prasar Bharati, he has stepped down from the position of Chairperson, CBFC leading to the present appointment. Vempati brings with him extensive experience in media, broadcasting, and public communication. His appointment is expected to further strengthen the functioning of the CBFC. The Central Board of Film Certification is a statutory body under Ministry



of Information and Broadcasting, regulating the public exhibition of films under the provisions of the Cinematograph Act 1952. Films can be publicly exhibited in India only after they have been certified by the Central Board of Film Certification. The Board consists of non-official members and a Chairman (all of whom are appointed by Central Government) and functions with headquarters at

Mumbai. It has nine regional offices, one each at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Thiruvananthapuram, Hyderabad, New Delhi, Cuttack and Guwahati. The Regional Offices are assisted in the examination of films by Advisory Panels. The members of the panels are nominated by Central Government by drawing people from different walks of life for a period of two years.

Rajinikanth, Chiranjeevi pay tribute to RB Choudary after film producer passes away in road accident

: Superstars Rajinikanth, Chiranjeevi Konidela and many South cinema celebrities paid tribute to producer RB Choudary after he passed away in a road accident near Joontha village in Rajasthan on Tuesday. The producer was 76 years of age. Actor Rajinikanth paid tribute to RB Choudary, calling him a "top-notch producer" and "wonderful human being" who has given opportunities to "countless young directors." He offered his condolences to

Choudary's family. "My dear friend, Super Good Films RB Choudary was a top-notch producer. A wonderful human being. He has given opportunities to countless young directors and kept the film world alive. His untimely death news has left me in great shock and immense sorrow. My deepest condolences to his family. May his soul rest in peace," wrote Rajinikanth. Superstar Chiranjeevi Konidela recalled his work association with the producer RB

Choudary for the film 'Godfather' in 2022. He paid tribute to the producer by remembering his "contribution to the Indian cinema." "Deeply heartbroken to hear about the sudden and tragic loss of Legendary producer R.B. Choudary garu. I have known him for many years and was recently associated with him on my film 'Godfather' through Super Good Films. He has shaped the careers of many talented directors and actors and brought countless stories to life.